

**Jamaica in the Age of Development:
Petitions, Small Farming, and Agricultural Planning, 1895-1972**

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This dissertation analyses the development models pursued in Jamaica from 1895 to 1972. It is concerned with three lines of inquiry throughout different historical junctures from the late nineteenth century to the late 1960s. To what extent did colonial and post-colonial ideas around the peasantry's role within the island's economic development change over the course of the twentieth century? In what ways did the colonial and national development policies, drafted throughout the different historical junctures, reflect those changing ideas? Whose voices were heard and whose needs were met in the articulation of the policies on the ground?

By reconstructing the evolving models of development in the island, this dissertation illustrates the significant role of small and middle-sized growers, tenants, and agricultural laborers in the political process. Based on records from the Jamaican National Archives in Spanish Town, the U.S. National Archives, official government reports, and contemporary newspapers and journals, I map how the visibility and salience of each of these groups changed over time. I contend that these rural inhabitants shaped island-wide development visions and rhetoric in Jamaican society. Building on recent literature on international development, I also demonstrate how the participation of various political, social, and economic actors in small-scale, bottom-up spaces helped define the outcomes and subsequent transformations of colonial and post-colonial development agendas. I conclude that 'development' was not a top-down process formulated

abroad and applied in Jamaica, rather that actors on the ground in the island molded colonial and national development over time.

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1.0 Introduction

In an article for *Foreign Affairs* published in 1970, Michael Manley – future Jamaican Prime Minister – suggested an alternative North-South narrative to the Cold War divide. He argued that “the fundamental problem of the world” was “not so much a question of conflicting ideologies as of the economic relationship between the developed economies of the metropolitan world and the less developed economies of the third world.”¹ Manley critically contended that third-world nations’ economic dependence on international powers undermined their sovereignty and development. In this dissertation, I demonstrate that the novelty of Michael Manley’s vision lay in his radical global development rhetoric rather than in the development policies he proposed and carried forward as Prime Minister of Jamaica during the 1970s. More precisely, I argue that rather than a radical rupture, the agricultural and industrial development vision Manley embraced in the 1970s fit smoothly within the historical continuum of colonial and post-colonial development policies pursued on the island from the late-nineteenth century to the late 1960s. This dissertation is about that historical continuum.

The economic and social problems of Jamaica, as well as their potential solutions, were not new. As colonial officials and nationalist leaders did before him, Michael Manley sought to solve the island’s land distribution problems, low agricultural production, and rampant unemployment. In his article for *Foreign Affairs*, he suggested restructuring Jamaica’s economy

¹ Michael Manley, “Overcoming Insularity in Jamaica,” *Foreign Affairs* 49, no. 1 (1970): 109. For an analysis on Michael Manley’s article in *Foreign Affairs*, see Adom Getachew, “The Welfare World,” *Boston Review*, no. 8 (2018): 30; Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2019), 142–75.

through a program of “land reform, import substitution in relation to food consumption and the planned use of interindustry linkages so as to ensure a growing measure of internal viability to the economy.”² In 1972, Manley was elected in office, and his political platform of democratic socialism sought to strengthen workers’ rights, nationalize and control strategic industries, and expand social welfare services. As a critical component of his plan, he launched a land redistribution program and cooperative farming for the domestic and export markets, placing Jamaican farmers and agricultural laborers at the core of his economic and political platform.³

Manley’s ambitious national program had a far-reaching global dimension. He, alongside other post-colonial leaders, articulated a radical call for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) in 1974, which, according to historian Adom Getachew, served as the international corollary to Manley’s program at home.⁴ The articulation of an NIEO vision marks the break with the postwar “age of development,” which academics have defined as the period when economic growth, planning, and state investment became critical across the globe from 1940 to the 1970s.⁵ By understanding development “as state-centered efforts to effect linked social and economic

² Manley, “Overcoming Insularity in Jamaica,” 102–5.

³ On Michael Manley’s first tenure as Prime Minister see Michael Kaufman, *Jamaica under Manley: Dilemmas of Socialism and Democracy* (London; Westport, Conn; Zed Books, 1985); Michael Manley wrote extensively about the struggles of the transition from decolonization to neocolonialism: see Michael Manley, *The Politics of Change: A Jamaican Testament* (London: Deutsch, 1974); Michael Manley, *Jamaica: Struggle in the Periphery* (London: Third World Media Limited, 1982); Michael Manley, *Up the down Escalator: Development and the International Economy : A Jamaican Case Study* (Washington, D.C: Howard University Press, 1987); Michael Manley, *A Voice at the Workplace: Reflections on Colonialism and the Jamaican Worker* (Washington, D.C: Howard University Press, 1991).

⁴ Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination*, 168.

⁵ Odd Arne Westad emphasizes the bipolar framework of the Cold War in the ‘age of development,’ while Sara Lorenzini focuses on its transnational and global reach. Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge University Press, 2005); Sara Lorenzini, *Global Development* (Princeton University Press, 2019).

transformation,”⁶ recent studies have reconstructed the intellectual and institutional networks that defined the objectives and meanings of international development in the twentieth century.⁷

Complementing the surge of recent academic interest in post-war international development institutions and ideologies, this dissertation analyses two aspects of the development models pursued in Jamaica from 1895 to 1972. First, it explores the place and role small and middle-sized farmers, landless farmers, and agricultural laborers had within the development visions and rhetoric voiced by a myriad of actors across Jamaican society and how the visibility and salience of each of these groups changed over time. Second, it demonstrates that the interaction of the various political, social, and economic actors in small-scale bottom-up spaces of participation fundamentally helped define the outcomes and subsequent transformations of colonial and post-colonial development agendas. Therefore, rather than following a top-down explanatory path that sees “development” as something developed abroad and applied in Jamaica, this dissertation shows how actors on the ground on the island helped mold colonial and national development models over time.

Based on records from the Jamaican National Archives in Spanish Town, contemporary newspapers and journals, official Government reports, and specific records from the U.S. National Archives, this dissertation addresses three questions throughout different historical junctures from the late nineteenth century to the late 1960s. To what extent did colonial and post-colonial ideas concerning the peasantry’s role within the island’s economic development change over the course

⁶ David C. Engerman, “Development Politics and the Cold War,” *Diplomatic History* 41, no. 1 (2017): 2.

⁷ To name just a few from the last two years, see David C. Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2018); Corinna R. Unger, *International Development: A Postwar History* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018); Lorenzini, *Global Development*.

of the twentieth century? In what ways did the colonial and national development policies, drafted throughout the different historical junctures, reflect those changing ideas? Whose voices were heard and whose needs were met in the articulation of the policies on the ground?

1.1 Historical Findings

The development vision that evolved in Jamaica by the late nineteenth century combined much of the British colonial development ideology with the local elite's impulse to diversify its agricultural production beyond its traditional monoculture plantation economy. The concept of "development" was used by European policymakers for most of the nineteenth century to describe a set of solutions to ameliorate the social and economic problems of the post-Industrial Revolution societies.⁸ For nineteenth-century European imperialism looking outwards, "development" was "an instrument of rule through the investment of capital in, extraction of raw materials or labor from, and improvements of the infrastructure of hitherto "undeveloped" areas."⁹ Specifically, for late nineteenth-century British imperialists, the concept of "development" was related to a set of state-centered interventions to affect social and economic transformations to secure the transition

⁸ For an overview on development thinking see H. W. Arndt, "Economic Development: A Semantic History," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 29, no. 3 (1981): 457–66.

⁹ Corinna Unger, "Histories of Development and Modernization: Findings, Reflections, Future Research," *H-Soz-Kult*, September 12, 2010, www.hsozkult.de/literaturereview/id/forschungsberichte-1130; The concept also came to imply 'to develop' individuals – a civilizing mission – and incorporated efforts to transform "less developed" societies into "modern" ones. Thus, the relationship between imperial expansion and colonial responsibility shaped the notion that 'development' was a political duty. James Louis Hevia, *English Lessons: The Pedagogy of Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century China* (Hong Kong; Durham; Duke University Press, 2003).

of its colonies from traditional to modern economies. Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies from 1895 to 1903, articulated a vision of state-directed imperialism that aimed to develop the natural resources and land throughout the colonial empire. His program included capital investment in infrastructural projects and technical assistance and research in tropical medicine and agriculture.¹⁰ The objective was to improve colonial agricultural exports and increase the quantity of British goods imported in turn.

In Jamaica, the colonial development vision addressed concern over the declining sugar industry and thus sought to diversify agricultural exports. When the colonial system abandoned mercantilist market protection in favor of free trade economics and repealed protectionist duties on sugar in 1852, the British West Indian sugar industry entered a period of crisis that reached a critical point in the 1890s.¹¹ By the end of that decade, the Colonial Office and colonial governments balanced alternatives for the West Indian economy's future. This dissertation shows that Jamaica's proposals to ensure the island's agricultural prosperity included two aspects. First, the colonial office, administration, and the island's economic elites agreed upon the state's responsibility to support with infrastructure, technology, and research the modernization of the sugar industry, on the one hand, and alternatives to diversify agricultural production beyond sugar and bananas, on the other hand. Second, alongside the modernization and diversification of the agricultural export structure, colonial officials encouraged the administration to settle the Afro-Jamaican peasant population as landowners in small plots near to estates. The objective of the

¹⁰ Based on that vision the British Colonial Office gradually built up its capacities for technical expertise and articulated specialist bodies on education, agriculture, husbandry, fisheries, nutrition, and other areas, from the late nineteenth century into the early twentieth century. Joseph Morgan Hodge, *Triumph of the Expert: Agrarian Doctrines of Development and the Legacies of British Colonialism* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007).

¹¹ Eric E. Williams, *From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean, 1492-1969* (London: Deutsch, 1970).

proposal was twofold. It would allow the further expansion of an independent peasant class able to produce for its subsistence and also participate in the island's agricultural export economy. Furthermore, this peasant class settled near estates would serve as a reliable labor force for seasonal work in the monoculture plantation economy.

The policies that emerged from this historical juncture included a public land distribution policy and the formation of a body in charge of overseeing and improving the island's agricultural production: the Jamaica Agricultural Society. This dissertation illustrates how both of these developments broadly benefitted an already well-established stratum of prosperous middle-sized farmers dedicated to agricultural production for the export market. Through the new policies, they were able to increase their landholdings and political influence in rural areas. This dissertation reveals that these middle farmers' influential political position became a critical component that drove development policies throughout the twentieth century. By the 1920s, middle-sized farmers, their class peers, and their political allies increasingly came to work as intermediaries between the colonial administration and the disenfranchised Afro-Jamaican masses in the rural areas who were exploding in numbers as a result of natural growth and return migration. These disenfranchised masses of small farmers, tenants, and laborers were increasingly demanding recognition as part of the island's agricultural wealth. As this dissertation shows, by the late 1920s, the collaboration between middle farmers and their allies and sectors of the rural masses pressed the colonial administration to facilitate land titling to small and tenant farmers, insisting on their role as the backbone of the island's agricultural production.

The British colonial development vision of the interwar period furthered the emphasis on a small landowner agricultural export model in Jamaica. The notion of "development" that was systematically coming out from the Colonial Office and economists from the London School of

Economics was framed in terms of “economic development,” which meant active, yet not exclusive, government activity to develop the empire’s resources.¹² The Colonial Development Act of 1929 gave the imperial government a more active role in investing in infrastructure in the colonies to build up their agricultural exports and, therefore, allow a more consistent market for British exports. This dissertation argues that through the 1930s, the colonial administration in Jamaica gradually embraced—first in rhetoric, then haltingly in practice—a role for itself in providing land titling for small and tenant farmers and infrastructural investment, in each case seeking to build up the island’s banana exports and remedy increasing unemployment. By the end of the decade, the colonial administration had moved closer to a vision that pursued development not only in terms of building up agricultural exports and economic development but including ideas of social welfare as well.

Nevertheless, that embrace was not driven from the top down. Throughout the 1930s, wealthy white planters and merchants, urban middle classes, trade unionists, small and middle farmers, tenants, and unemployed and other rural dwellers all pressed the colonial administration to ensure land access, infrastructural improvements to benefit export production, employment alternatives, and welfare measures. Scholars have found that across Europe’s colonial empire, labor organizing and unrest in the 1930s spurred new debate about the state’s role in colonial society.¹³ Jamaica was no exception. This dissertation uncovers how as a result of the massive and

¹² Arndt, “Economic Development: A Semantic History,” 458.

¹³ In African and the West Indies, the depression, urbanization, and wage labor intensified the pressures until a series of strikes broke out throughout the empire between 1935 and 1938, including Jamaica, Trinidad, Guyana, Northern Rhodesia, and several African port cities. Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Moses E. Ochonu, *Colonial Meltdown: Northern Nigeria in the Great Depression* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009).

multi-sector labor rebellion in 1938—and the claims raised by urban and agricultural laborers, tenants, farmers, and unemployed—there emerged a new consensus that the state should provide land title for small farmers in land settlements and jobs through public works. Though the pace of actual investment still lagged behind demand, what is significant from this historical juncture is that the colonial administration actively sought to attack poverty and unemployment. In this context, middle-class spokespersons—including landowners, urban professionals, and politicians—strengthened their position as intermediaries between the rural masses and the colonial administration. Through the channels established by these middle-class intermediaries, rural folk sought access to land, jobs, relief, social welfare services, and overall attention to their social and economic needs.

By the end of the 1930s, those channels of intermediation were particularly visible in two ways. First, through the role of organizations such as the Jamaica Agricultural Society and the recently created Jamaica Welfare Ltd., a private company financed by the foreign banana corporations, founded by a prominent “coloured” Jamaican lawyer: Norman Washington Manley. The objective of the JWL was to improve the wellbeing of the rural peasant population through the organization of village cooperatives and community education programs. Second, in the diligent work of local politicians, who pressured colonial bureaucracy to carry out public works or allocate relief measures in specific villages and areas. These mechanisms of intermediation and representation would come to be of utmost importance in the process of decolonization and development.

By the late 1930s, the Colonial Office had come to see “development” as encompassing, indeed requiring, metropolitan investment to raise colonial living standards.¹⁴ Britain’s Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 directed funds not only for economic and infrastructural transformations but also for housing, education, and social welfare services. In the West Indies, the colonial development and welfare vision implied direct state support over small peasant production and farming. The goal was to foster a peasant prosperity model in which small self-sufficient peasants would produce enough food for themselves, the local market, and exports. In the years that followed the revolts of 1938 and into a period of constitutional reform that granted universal suffrage and self-government in 1944, Jamaican politicians and bodies such as the Jamaica Agricultural Society and the Jamaica Welfare Ltd. became fundamental in the administration of this colonial development and welfare mission—and fundamental in gaining access to colonial funds.

The colonial development and welfare mission both created opportunities for and also marginalized rural dwellers. This dissertation shows that the community education policies and cooperative organizations that surged based on a rhetoric that advocated for the inclusion of small peasant sectors were, nevertheless, very class-restrained. The organizing channels created by development and welfare policies mostly positioned middle and upper-middle farmers in leadership roles, giving them political leverage in the emerging self-government apparatus. As those technocratic development institutions mostly addressed, on the one hand, the very specific needs of agricultural export middle farmers, they fueled, on the other hand, the transition from ad hoc practices of petitioning and reliance on middle-class intermediaries towards systematic

¹⁴ Frederick Cooper and Randall M. Packard, *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 7.

political party-run clientelist dynamics. In other words, what was visible before the 1940s as personalized contacting of middle-class intermediaries who channeled the voice of disadvantaged rural classes to help them get the attention of colonial bureaucracy, was absorbed into the core political mobilization practices of the Jamaican Labor Party and the People's National Party.

After WWII, across the rapidly decolonizing world, the mission of development was adopted by nationalist politicians on whose shoulders now rested the responsibility of self-government towards independence. Colonial development became national development. According to historian Frederick Cooper, the reconfiguration of colonial development policies and the appropriation of the concept of development by nationalist and anti-colonial movements constituted a departure point as relevant as later independence across the British Empire. As colonial development and welfare policies attempted to reestablish imperial legitimacy in the colonies, many of the soon-to-be post-colonial leaders began debating development issues, appropriating the concept as a tool for post-war social and political mobilization. This dissertation follows the emergence over the 1940s of a new consensus among policymakers, trade union leaders, and politicians that what was needed for Jamaican national development included a combination of strong state involvement in small hillside farming activities as a way to develop the island's agricultural production, complemented by industrialization by invitation policies as prescribed by international development theorists.¹⁵ The national development vision expected

¹⁵ Denis Benn, *Ideology and Political Development: The Growth and Development of Political Ideas in the Caribbean, 1774-1983* (Mona, Jamaica: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1987), 75; Mary Proudfoot pointed at the similarity between the economic policies advocated by Norman Manley in Jamaica and the program in Puerto Rico. Mary Macdonald Proudfoot, *Britain and the United States in the Caribbean: A Comparative Study in Methods of Development* (United States: Praeger, 1954), 159.

that this model would improve the island's trade balance, ensure employment opportunities outside the agricultural sector, and secure economic growth.

Nevertheless, the bauxite mining industry's arrival into the rural landscape produced significant changes to the plans and practice of agricultural production during the 1950s. Indeed, this dissertation shows that the bauxite mining industry played a significant role in Jamaica's development model. Bauxite ore is the chief source of aluminum, which was integral in transformations of the twentieth-century military, transportation, electrical, construction, aeronautics, and ship-building industries.¹⁶ After bauxite-bearing lands were discovered in Jamaica during WWII, the island quickly became the primary bauxite supplier to North American-based aluminum companies. By the time agricultural policies to improve small hillside farmers were coming to be seen as a failure by agricultural officials in late 1950s, the bauxite-alumina industry's agricultural operations and mining activities emerged as an attractive development model and questioned the very viability of small farming activities on the island. This dissertation illustrates how by the end of the 1950s and early 1960s, Jamaican national development leaders in the government and the Jamaica Agricultural Society abandoned the idea of continuing to support small farming activities, instead concentrating on commercial agricultural operations on efficient middle to large landholdings.

The agricultural policy of the early 1960s specifically benefited two constituencies: middle-sized domestic producers and politicians' electoral interests. First, middle and upper-middle commercial farmers who competed against food imports benefited from a set of policies that directly facilitated their access to capital, infrastructure, and markets. Second, the political

¹⁶ Mimi Sheller, *Aluminum Dreams: The Making of Light Modernity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2014).

class, directly dependent on fulfilling people's short-term necessities to maintain their influence, benefit from channeling access to employment and development resources.

By the second half of the 1960s, some voices called out the shortcomings of this emerging model. Certain sectors of the middle-class producers for the domestic market joined Jamaican academic economists in diagnosing the increasing inequalities, poverty, and unemployment as a result of the absence of state planning the economic structure. In other words, their concern was not so much the commercial agricultural development model that had emerged in the context of bauxite expansion, but the need for more active state control of the different economic aspects of the model: specifically, land tenure, agricultural production, and the link between industries. Producers for the domestic market organized through branch societies of the Jamaica Agricultural Society and university economists brought to the table a vision to reconcile what they argued had been the disconnection between national development objectives and local development problems and inequalities. While their proposal might have sounded like a rupture from past development models, it was, in fact, consistent with colonial and middle and upper-middle-class rhetoric since the 1930s. By the end of the decade, that model had become the basis of the PNP's ideological platform facing the elections of 1972.

1.2 Scholarly Context

Emerging in the 1940s, the concept "development" portrayed history as a linear progression towards incremental growth. "Development" was seen by theorists and practitioners as a science of historical change from a timeless "traditional" society to a modern industrial one. The belief was that under the right circumstances and policies, all societies could converge into

one ideal state of economic growth and prosperity. The linear conception of history and development as was similar in the classical ‘modernization’ texts of Daniel Lerner and Walt. W. Rostow in the late 1950s, as in the sharp criticism from *dependencia* and world systems camps in the 1970s.¹⁷ However, that notion of “development” as a science of linear historical change started shifting during the 1980s. Social scientists began to treat “development” critically as a set of ideas, institutions, and practices in its historical context and not as a set of prescriptions to economic and social problems. These scholars approached “development” as history.¹⁸ In other words, rather than constructing theories that explain past national trajectories and guide future routes, they used historical research as a method to understand the ideas and practices of “development” in the twentieth century, encompassing the cold war and decolonization.

Scholars who studied development discourses in the 1980s understood development as a top-down imposition on the developing world. Social scientists in the late 1980s started exploring development as a rhetorical and institutional apparatus of state control and surveillance, a power-knowledge regime to ensure capitalism and exploitation, rather than an effort to improve the lives of the poor. Post-development writers criticized the emergence of development thinking and practice after WWII as having served as justification for a series of interventions in poor countries

¹⁷ For classical texts on modernization theory, see Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (Glencoe, Ill: Free Press, 1958); W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge [Eng.]: University Press, 1960); For the similarities between Modernization theorists, *dependentistas*, and World system analysis, see Nick Cullather, “Development? It’s History,” *Diplomatic History* 24, no. 4 (2000): 641–53.

¹⁸ Cullather, “Development? It’s History”; Joseph Morgan Hodge, “Writing the History of Development (Part 1: The First Wave),” *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 6, no. 3 (2015): 431–34.

to ensured capitalist control.¹⁹ While such analyses show the top-down power structures of post-war development institutions and rhetoric, post-development writers also tended to reify peasant communities and indigenous culture, romanticizing the rural Third World and the “noble South,” and disregarding class interests and socioeconomic inequality within local communities.²⁰

Meanwhile, also beginning in the 1980s and through the 1990s, anthropologists and ethnographers explicitly explored “development” as an encounter between “modernizers” and their “subjects.”²¹ Two contributions remain as the classics on the technocratic character of development: James Ferguson’s *The Anti-Politics Machine* (1990) and James C. Scott’s *Seeing Like a State* (1998). Both Ferguson and Scott situate “development” power in a set of international

¹⁹ See for example the works of post-development writers such as Claude Alvares, Jonathan Crush, Arturo Escobar, Gustavo Esteva, Ashis Nandy, Gilbert Rist, Wolfgang Sachs, and Vandana Shiva; Ashis Nandy, *Science, Hegemony and Violence: A Requiem for Modernity* (Delhi;New York;Tokyo, Japan; United Nations University, 1988); Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development* (London: Zed Books, 1989); Claude Alphonso Alvares, *Science, Development, and Violence: The Revolt against Modernity* (Delhi;New York; Oxford University Press, 1992); Wolfgang Sachs, “The Archaeology of the Development Idea,” *INTERculture* 23 (Fall 1990): 2–7; Wolfgang Sachs, *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power* (London; Atlantic Highlands, N.J; Zed Books, 1992); Arturo Escobar, “Power and Visibility: Development and the Invention and Management of the Third World,” *Cultural Anthropology* 3, no. 4 (1988): 428–43; Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2012); Gustavo Esteva and Madhu Suri Prakash, “Beyond Development, What?,” *Development in Practice* 8, no. 3 (1998): 280–96; Jonathan Crush, *Power of Development* (London;New York; Routledge, 1995).

²⁰ Tom Brass, “The Agrarian Myth, the ‘new’ Populism and the ‘New’ Right,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 24, no. 4 (1997): 201–45; Ray Kiely, “The Last Refuge of the Noble Savage? A Critical Assessment of Post-Development Theory,” *The European Journal of Development Research* 11, no. 1 (1999): 30–55.

²¹ See for example the works of Akhil Gupta, Timothy Mitchell, and Tania Li Akhil Gupta, *Postcolonial Developments: Agriculture in the Making of Modern India* (Durham [N.C.]: Duke University Press, 1998); Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Tania Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

and “high modernist” state-building projects against local captive populations’ wishes.²² My dissertation moves away from this notion of the top-down imposition of development. Instead, it demonstrates that much of the vision policymakers had of what was needed in the rural areas or in the island as a whole in fact came from debates and spaces of participation in which the voices of middle and small farmers, tenants, and laborers—sometimes a wide array of them, sometimes a narrow few—were heard by colonial officialdom or nationalist politicians.

Thus this dissertation explores the role of Jamaican farmers in impacting, and being impacted by, the meanings and policies of colonial and post-colonial development. To study “development” as history, I have found inspiration in David Engerman’s article “Development Politics and the Cold War,” in which he suggested exploring three components in the study of development: rhetoric, practice, and the networks and groups of actors.²³ First, Engerman highlights the importance of observing how “development” “provided a rhetoric for making claims and pursuing interests.”²⁴ Second, “development” encompassed a series of practices which, studying them from an on-the-ground perspective, show how different contexts could alter “a project in favor of one or another vision of the economic future.”²⁵ Third, Engerman sees “development” as “a story of groups and networks, not just nations”; in many cases, he argues, the state has been as much an instrument as it was an agent defining the terms of development projects. I borrow from this toolbox to examine how different actors in Jamaica invoked “development”

²² James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (University of Minnesota Press, 1994); James C. Scott, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

²³ Engerman, “Development Politics and the Cold War.”

²⁴ Engerman, 5.

²⁵ Engerman, 5.

meanings to address specific social and economic tensions and explain how those tensions played out in specific policies and interactions among actors.

I have also taken great inspiration from Africanist historians who have studied colonial and post-colonial development beyond the top-down discourse of postwar development. Since the mid-1990s, there has been an interest in the concept of empire drawing from post-colonial theory. The ‘new imperial history’ has focused on examining the cultural and discursive impact of imperialism in Europe as well as in the colonial peripheries by placing the metropole and colony within a single analytical framework.²⁶ Michael Cowen and Robert Shenton, and Frederick Cooper, examined the early roots of ‘development,’ uncovering the colonial origins of the framework, rather than treating it as a post-war construct, as they traced the shifting meanings and practices of colonial development.²⁷ What makes their works so relevant is that they opened up, as explained by Africanist historian Joseph Hodge, the possibility of a history of development rooted not only on its European backdrop but also its colonial antecedents and afterlives.²⁸ Following their footsteps, other Africanists historians have explored the continuities across the colonial-postcolonial divide.

²⁶ On imperial history and postcolonial studies see Dane Kennedy, “Imperial History and Post-colonial Theory,” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 24, no. 3 (September 1, 1996): 345–63; Dane Kennedy, “The Imperial History Wars,” *Journal of British Studies* 54, no. 1 (2015): 5–22; Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, “Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda,” in *Tensions of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019), 1–56.

²⁷ Cowen and Shenton located the genesis and invention of ‘development’ in the nineteenth century. Michael Cowen and Robert W. Shenton, *Doctrines of Development* (London; New York; Routledge, 1996); Frederick Cooper placed the genesis of contemporary development policies and interventionist practices in French and British colonies in the 1930s and 1940s. Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa*.

²⁸ Hodge, “Writing the History of Development (Part 1: The First Wave),” 454.

They have highlighted the persistence of development visions and initiatives that ran from the 1930s and 1940s into post-colonial elites' attitudes in the 1970s.²⁹

That emphasis on the continuities and changes between colonial and post-colonial development highlights the importance of local practices and actors. My dissertation follows this historiographical tradition and shows that assessing development as a late colonial and post-colonial process allows rethinking not only its periodization but also how Jamaican farmers and other social and political actors intersected development rhetoric and policies. Several historians have explored how development projects in different parts of Africa emerged from the interaction of colonial and local priorities and how they operated on the ground as a convergence of visions.³⁰ My dissertation adds to this list of accounts of how small-scale interactions among a myriad of actors played a significant role in defining the outcome of development agendas on the ground and their subsequent transformations.

²⁹ For studies on the continuities and ruptures from late colonial and early postcolonial development philosophies and practices see Christophe Bonneuil, "Development as Experiment: Science and State Building in Late Colonial and Postcolonial Africa, 1930-1970," *Osiris* 15, no. Journal Article (2000): 258–81; Maurits W. Ertsen, "Controlling the Farmer: Colonial and Post-Colonial Irrigation Interventions in Africa," *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa* 4, no. 1 (2008): 209–36; Elizabeth Lunstrum, "State Rationality, Development, and the Making of State Territory: From Colonial Extraction to Postcolonial Conservation in Southern Mozambique," in *Cultivating the Colonies*, 1st ed. (Ohio University Press, 2014), 239; Allen F. Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman, *Dams, Displacement, and the Delusion of Development: Cahora Bassa and Its Legacies in Mozambique, 1965/2007* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2013).

³⁰ To name just a few of a very extensive list: Monica M. Van Beusekom, *Negotiating Development: African Farmers and Colonial Experts at the Office Du Niger, 1920-1960* (Oxford, Cape Town, and Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002); Andreas Eckert, "Regulating the Social: Social Security, Social Welfare and the State in Late Colonial Tanzania," *The Journal of African History* 45, no. 3 (2004): 467–89; Helen Tilley, *Africa as a Living Laboratory: Empire, Development, and the Problem of Scientific Knowledge, 1870-1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Andrew Bowman, "Ecology to Technocracy: Scientists, Surveys and Power in the Agricultural Development of Late-Colonial Zambia," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 37, no. 1 (2011): 135–53.

Since the early 2000s, more historians than just Africanists historians have focused on local actors' role in international development processes. Such has been the case of historians who have explored cold war international relations, who have increasingly paid attention to the interactions between international and local actors. The essays in Engerman, Gilman, Haefele, and Latham's 2003 collection *Staging Growth*, for instance, explored development along the North-South axis, offering an emphasis on "development" as a political practice, a process of negotiation among donor and recipient countries or groups.³¹ In other specific case studies from India, Latin America, and the Caribbean, the literature on foreign aid shows how development was negotiated and provided symbolic, technical, and financial resources to advance internal political and economic agendas.³² While many of these contributions mostly address US foreign policy's role, they nonetheless offer insightful notes on the interaction between international and local geopolitical visions of development.

Scholars of the US foreign policy have also suggested that agricultural development promotion was not only a matter of top-down imposition of policies. Recent research on the history of international development has challenged the notion that US development practice was

³¹ David C. Engerman, Nils Gilman, Mark H. Haefele, and Michael E. Latham, *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003).

³² Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India*; For Latin American examples of development programs as external and internal political tools by groups of interest see Jason Pribilsky, "Development and the 'Indian Problem' in the Cold War Andes: 'Indigenismo', Science, and Modernization in the Making of the Cornell-Peru Project at Vicos," *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 3 (2009): 405–26; Jeffrey Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy: The Alliance for Progress in Latin America* (Routledge, 2012); Thomas C. Field Jr, *From Development to Dictatorship: Bolivia and the Alliance for Progress in the Kennedy Era* (London and Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014); Stephen G. Rabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana: A Cold War Story* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

exclusively “high modernist in character.”³³ The most recent scholarship suggests that constant contingencies between local government actors, local non-governmental actors, and the targeted communities themselves drove the adaptation of international development programs. Daniel Immerwahr has underlined that states, and development ideologies or visions within, are not homogeneous unified actors. David Ekbladh has argued that instead, states contain a set of alliances of power moving through different institutions.³⁴

By understanding development as a political practice in which colonial, international, and local visions competed or co-evolved, my dissertation shows the importance of considering local visions, practices, and negotiation processes on the ground. The local context shaped whose voices were heard in elaboration and implementation of policies, whose needs were being met, what forms of pressure were available for those who felt marginalized, and how these dynamics led development visions to change over time. My dissertation adds a view from Jamaica, where “development” as a colonial process was also shaped and reinterpreted on the ground by the interaction of multiple actors, interests, and practices. I show how the agendas of different actors faced tensions once they met on the ground and how those tensions played out, steering the direction of development and shaping how political leaders grappled with it at specific moments in time.

Considering the importance of local processes in molding development visions and agendas, my dissertation offers analytical insights into two classic scholarly bodies of literature

³³ Daniel Immerwahr, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge, Massachusetts ; Harvard University Press, 2015), 189.

³⁴ David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

that shaped knowledge of Jamaican agricultural and political development: first, the literature on the formation of the West Indian peasantry and its relation to the persistent plantation system, and second, the literature on the emergence of political clientelism on the island as part of its political development process from Crown Colony to self-government to independence.

The West Indian peasantry's development was closely related to the system of sugar plantations with forced enslaved labor that shaped colonial economies since the seventeenth century. By 1730, Jamaica was the major sugar producer in the British Empire and one of its wealthiest colonies. The extensive flatlands were one of the essential factors for sugar production, and the planter class competed for these lands among themselves. The enslaved population had access to cultivate foodstuffs for their own consumption or for market, on tiny areas on the estates or 'provision grounds' located on unused plantation hillsides and other marginal lands.³⁵ After emancipation in 1838, the ex-enslaved population became either wage laborers or tenant farmers on the estates, or moved into the interior and carved their plots out from the hillside forest.³⁶ Away from the estate's regime, the newly freed population reorganized their labor and agricultural production and entered various arrangements to manage their relationship with the plantation system. During the first several decades after emancipation, Afro-Jamaican peasants sought to

³⁵ Authors have identified the contrasts between large estates in good soils and small plots on marginal lands as the historical basis of the islands' structural problems in the agricultural sector. See for example David Barker, "Dualism and Disasters on a Tropical Island: Constraints on Agricultural Development in Jamaica," *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie* 84, no. 5 (1993): 332–33.

³⁶ Sidney Mintz tracks the formation of the Caribbean peasantry –proto-peasantry—back to the provision grounds and domestic markets developed by the enslaved. Proto peasants were enslaved people to whom planters assigned individual plots for independent small-scale cultivation for subsistence and marketing. In the British West Indies, 'higglering' – marketing of agricultural products, was highly gendered activity. Mintz emphasizes on the continuity between slavery and post-slavery in the production and marketing practices (provision ground/marketing system). Sidney W. Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co, 1974), 151–52.

establish themselves as independent landholders, while the white planter elite attempted to restore control over the plantation-based society.³⁷

This summary, now accepted as incontrovertible among historians, is itself the product of research and interest in the era my dissertation studies. By the 1960s, West Indian historians started extending their analysis of the post-emancipation interdependent relationship between the peasantry and the plantation system models. The first historiographical debates focused on whether people abandoned the estates because of land opportunities outside the plantations ('pull' factors) or in response to the low wages and abusive conditions on estates ('push' factors). Authors like George Cumper, Douglas Hall, and Swithin Wilmot foregrounded the "push," arguing that the negative experience of slavery and peoples' limited ability to affect wages and the rent charged for small portions of estate land determined whether they stayed on or left the estates.³⁸ The "pull" interpretation argued that cultural and objective factors encouraged ex-slaves to leave the estates and that land availability outside the plantation was determinant. This version was shared by Colonial Office, and echoed the views of some abolitionists and slave-owners at the time of emancipation: Herman Merivale Oxford Professor (and later Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies) had argued in 1841 that small and heavily populated islands like Barbados,

³⁷ A. J. G. Knox, "Opportunities and Opposition: The Rise of Jamaica's Black Peasantry and the Nature of the Planter Resistance," *The Canadian Review of Sociology* 14, no. 4 (1977): 381–95; Mimi. Sheller, *Democracy after Slavery : Black Publics and Peasant Radicalism in Haiti and Jamaica* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000).

³⁸ G. E. Cumper, "Labour Demand and Supply in the Jamaican Sugar Industry, 1830-1950," *Social and Economic Studies* 2, no. 4 (1954): 37–86; Douglas Hall, "The Flight from the Estates Reconsidered: The British West Indies 1838-42," *The Journal of Caribbean History* 10–11 (1978): 7–24; Swithin Wilmot, "Emancipation in Action: Workers and Wage Conflict in Jamaica 1838–1848," 1984.

Antigua, and St. Kitts would not experience labor shortage; however, larger and less populated territories like Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad would suffer major labor problems.³⁹

Both those who emphasized the “push” and those stressing the “pull” agreed that there was a contradiction between West Indian peasantry and the plantation system, and this assumption strongly influenced West Indian economists writing from the 1960s to the 1980s, who came to be known as the “plantation school.” During the 1960s, a growing cadre of Caribbean economists had started criticizing the development model followed in the region since the late 1940s for its dependence on foreign and the persistent structures of inequality.⁴⁰ Inspired by Latin American structuralism, these Caribbean economists associated the development problem with external economic dependence they saw as an inherent feature of the region’s traditional economic structure.⁴¹ That traditional economic structure, they argued, was based on the hegemony of a plantation-type economy that had historically restricted the peasant sector’s development. In 1968, Lloyd Best published “Outlines of a Model of Pure Plantation Economy,” where he characterized the plantation type economy as ‘export-propelled’ and structurally linked to (and dependent on) an overseas economy, thus generating unequal exchange structures between the ‘hinterland economy’ and the ‘metropolitan economy’ respectively.⁴² In that model, Best traced the historical

³⁹ Woodville K Marshall, *The Post-Slavery Labour Problem Revisited: The 1990 Elsa Goveia Memorial Lecture Presented at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, March 15, 1990* (Department of History, University of The West Indies, Mona, 1991), 2–3.

⁴⁰ Benjamin Timms, “Development Theory and Domestic Agriculture in the Caribbean: Recurring Crises and Missed Opportunities,” *Caribbean Geography* 15, no. 2 (2008): 105.

⁴¹ Benn, *Ideology and Political Development: The Growth and Development of Political Ideas in the Caribbean, 1774–1983*, 85–89.

⁴² L. A. Best, “Outlines of a Model of Pure Plantation Economy,” *Social and Economic Studies* 17, no. 3 (1968): 283–326.

pattern of economic development in the Caribbean back to the plantation system and identified the “institutional, structural and behavioural features” which had prevailed and perpetuated the plantation’s position in the system. Two of the ‘pure’ plantation economy’s main characteristics, he argued, were its structural links with the metropolitan economy based on production for export and a high import-orientation, and, secondly, its ‘totality’ as an economic system within the hinterland.

Economists such as George Beckford, Norman Girvan, and Michael Witter saw foreign-owned multinational mining and manufacturing as reinforcing the traditional plantation sector. In the 1960s, in the context of industrialization-by-invitation policies, they argued, industry produced a division between the high wage modern mining/manufacturing sector and the domestic agricultural sector and prevented structural transformation within the economy that would require the establishment of linkages between the two sectors.⁴³ Subsequent scholarly analyses of neoliberal policies of the 1980s and 1990s have shared the view on the persistent dependency structures of these “plantation school” thinkers, emphasizing the relation to globalization, debt crisis, and the dependency on tourism and services sectors.⁴⁴

⁴³ Norman Girvan, “Multinational Corporations and Dependent - Underdevelopment in Mineral Export Economies,” *Social and Economic Studies* 19, no. 4 (1970): 490; Norman Girvan, “Why We Need to Nationalize Bauxite, and How,” *New World Pamphlet*, no. 6 (1971): 378–419; Norman Girvan, *Foreign Capital and Economic Underdevelopment in Jamaica* (Kingston, Jamaica: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1971), 265; George L. Beckford, *Persistent Poverty: Underdevelopment in Plantation Economies of the Third World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972); George L. Beckford and Michael Witter, *Small Garden ... Bitter Weed: The Political Economy of Struggle and Change in Jamaica*, 2nd (expand) (London; Morant Bay, Jamaica; Maroon Pub. House, 1982).

⁴⁴ Clive Thomas, “Globalization, Structural Adjustment and Security: The Collapse of the Post-Colonial Development State in the Caribbean,” *Global Development Studies* 1, no. 1–2 (1998): 67–84; Anthony Payne, *Charting Caribbean Development* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001).

While the writing of plantation school economists offered insightful analyses of the internal structure of Caribbean economies and the role of foreign capital and the plantation complex in the persistence of inequalities, historians have offered a more nuanced analysis of the development of West Indian peasantry and its relation to land and labor systems. By the late 1970s and 1980s, Caribbean historians began to focus on bargaining and power conditions over land and labor access.⁴⁵ Different from the focus on the conditions of structural dependence and the contradictions between the plantation and peasant systems as studied by plantation school writers, scholarly contributions from Michel Rolph Trouillot, Woodville Marshall, Jean Besson, Thomas Holt, and Michaeline Crichlow have highlighted processes of negotiation and change over time in terms of land, farming practices, and employment. Afro-Jamaican peasant communities emerged, they have shown, through different, active efforts such as purchasing land, squatting on available unoccupied lands, or establishing settlements near estates.⁴⁶

These scholars have shown the need to break down the very category of “peasant” or “smallholder” and notice the divergent experiences contemporary usage of the terms often masked: and how these internal divisions varied over time and across space. In the literature and contemporary sources alike, the peasants or small-scale producers received several tags, such as

⁴⁵ William A. Green, *British Slave Emancipation: The Sugar Colonies and the Great Experiment 1830-1865* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976); O. Nigel Bolland, “Systems of Domination after Slavery: The Control of Land and Labor in the British West Indies after 1838,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23, no. 4 (1981): 591–619; Michel-Rolph Trouillot, “Labour and Emancipation in Dominica: Contribution to a Debate,” *Caribbean Quarterly* 30, no. 3–4 (1984): 73–84; Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Peasants and Capital: Dominica in the World Economy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988); Marshall, *The Post-Slavery Labour Problem Revisited: The 1990 Elsa Goveia Memorial Lecture Presented at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, March 15, 1990*.

⁴⁶ Douglas Hall, “The Flight from the Estates Reconsidered: The British West Indies 1838-42,” *The Journal of Caribbean History* 10–11 (1978): 16–24.

small cultivators, farmers, settlers, laborers, or land-based working people. In many instances, the source uses the labels loosely and interchangeably. What is essential to highlight is that the differences among them, as sociologist Michaeline Crichlow points out, have to be historicized to assess their role in colonial and post-colonial development initiatives throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁴⁷

Some peasants dedicated themselves to subsistence production of ground provisions; some worked as wage laborers in plantations at least part of the year; some were also involved in the manufacture of raw sugar for the domestic market and agricultural exports such as arrowroot, logwood, coffee, and bananas.⁴⁸ The land size, agricultural production, and labor systems are also important characteristics by which they differ. One group comprised small farmers: landowners who owned less than 5 acres of land, depended on family labor, and supplemented their income with wage labor in nearby estates, big farms, or government public works. Middle farmers were landowners who sometimes owned between 5 to 25 acres or even 50 acres, depending on the source and author. The most prosperous and wealthiest farmers did not work as farm laborers and instead employed labor for their holdings but had limited capacity to expand in scale or to hire more workers. Below small farmers, tenants and agricultural laborers remained at a level of subsistence and were consistently underemployed or unemployed.⁴⁹

Land tenure systems also played a significant role in shaping differences within the peasantry. First, in the freehold system, the owner has permanent possession of the land, including

⁴⁷ Michaeline A Crichlow, *Negotiating Caribbean Freedom: Peasants and the State in Development* (Lexington Books, 2005), 26–27.

⁴⁸ Hall, *Free Jamaica, 1838-1865: An Economic History*, 192.

⁴⁹ Ken Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath* (The Hague; Boston; Nijhoff, 1978), 39, 104–31.

formal title. In the leasehold system, the leaseholders entered a contract to gain access to farmland and own the crops they could produce there, in return for a fixed rent.⁵⁰ The third form of tenantry, family land, exists alongside the legal freehold system, but rests on often unwritten collective title rather than formal, individual ownership. Jean Besson describes family land as a reaction to the monopolization of agricultural lands by the plantation sector. A family plot has both economic and symbolic value for family members because it represents economic independence and offers identity and place of origin for the growing number of people, some of whom may have opted to leave rural Jamaica entirely.⁵¹ Families regard land ownership as a symbol of independence and upward mobility, and some landowners had no formal ownership proof other than oral tradition.

My dissertation shows that attention to the contemporaries discussion of (or silences around) land tenure forms, plot size, labor systems, production, and distinction is a crucial counterpoint to the top-down story of development projects, because it helps see who received officialdom's attention, who benefited, or who was not even being seen by those designing or implementing development policies at given times. This is a crucial point of the story of development: its visions, policies, and practices hit rural society differently according to the differences between middle, small, landless, and tenant farmers and agricultural laborers and their points of leverage, in ways that varied systematically over time.

⁵⁰ Marleen Angella Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980" (M. Phil, Mona, Jamaica, University of the West Indies, 1997), 21–26.

⁵¹ For an exploration on the importance of family land in the consolidation of Afro-creole peasant culture within the colonial institutions and the contradiction between peasant society and new economic activities such as large-scale and export-oriented plantation system, tourism, and industrialization see Jean Besson, *Martha Brae's Two Histories: European Expansion and Caribbean Culture-Building in Jamaica* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

The question of who benefited from development, and how and when, and who was left out is fundamental for a nuanced analysis of political clientelism on the island. “Clientelism” is broadly defined as an unequal relationship between clients and patrons that nevertheless involves the mutual exchange of goods, services, and support. The relationship implies that patrons or brokers provide access to resources and markets from which clients otherwise are excluded. With the advent of modern states and democratization at the end of the nineteenth century, clientelism acquired a political dimension associated with access to public resources, often entailing votes and support in exchange for jobs and other benefits.⁵²

The approach that dominated the study of clientelism in the 1960s and 1970s assumed that it was a vestige of early modern traditional and agrarian societies that was bound to fade away as modern states progressed through stages of political development.⁵³ By the 1980s, due to the persistence of clientelism in political systems, especially in the developing world, scholarly literature on the subject began to concentrate the characteristics that allowed it to continue, change, and adapt. Client-patron relations were recognized as an instrument for integrating segments of society within nation-states.⁵⁴ Those characteristics were related to clientelism’s function as a

⁵² Luis Roniger, “Political Clientelism, Democracy, and Market Economy,” *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 3 (2004): 352–54; Jean-Briquet Briquet, “Clientelism,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, December 29, 2015, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/clientelism>.

⁵³ For two compilations of the first wave of studies on clientelism mostly carried out by anthropologists and political scientist, see Steffen W. Schmidt, ed., *Friends, Followers, and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientelism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt and René. Lemarchand, eds., *Political Clientelism, Patronage, and Development*, Sage Studies in Contemporary Political Sociology; v. 3 (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1981).

⁵⁴ Sharon Kettering, “The Historical Development of Political Clientelism,” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 3 (1988): 420–23.

social exchange model and a political strategy of both mobilization and control, one that is historically located but not part of a specific evolutionary pattern of political development.⁵⁵

Political scientists who studied Jamaican clientelism in the 1980s characterized it as a system of interdependent political relations and power dynamics that cemented inequalities on the island.⁵⁶ Later, historian Nigel Bolland characterized the hierarchies and systems of exchange of both the trade union movement and political parties in Jamaica as part of a clientelist authoritarian democracy style.⁵⁷ These scholarly contributions portrayed clientelism as a pathology of the modern political system that emerged on the island during the 1940s. According to these scholars, clientelism hindered democratic institutions and economic development by diverting scarce resources through its corruption networks.

In the last two decades, echoing the early insights of Terry Lacey in the 1970s, scholarly contributions from Mark Figueroa and Amanda Sives have linked Jamaican clientelism to the political and gang violence characteristic of the island's urban centers since the 1950s.⁵⁸ Most of

⁵⁵ Allen Hicken, "Clientelism," *Annual Review of Political Science* 14, no. 1 (2011): 297; See for example Sharon Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers, and Clients in Seventeenth-Century France* (Cary: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1986); Kettering; For examples in Latin America see Richard Graham, *Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1990); Luis Roniger, *Hierarchy and Trust in Modern Mexico and Brazil* (Praeger Publishers, 1990).

⁵⁶ Carl Stone, "Political Aspects of Postwar Agricultural Policies in Jamaica (1945-1970)," *Social and Economic Studies* 23, no. 2 (1974): 145-75; Carlene J. Edie, *Democracy by Default: Dependency and Clientelism in Jamaica* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publisher, Inc., 1991).

⁵⁷ O Nigel Bolland, *The Politics of Labour in the British Caribbean: The Social Origins of Authoritarianism and Democracy* (Ian Randle, 2001).

⁵⁸ Terry Lacey, *Violence and Politics in Jamaica, 1960-70: Internal Security in a Developing Country* (Totowa, N.J: F. Cass, 1977); For explorations on how the patronage system shaped Kingston's poor neighborhoods and the mechanisms to access economic and social improvements such as job opportunities, housing, and security, see M. Figueroa and A. Sives, "Homogenous Voting, Electoral Manipulation and the 'Garrison' Process in Post-Independence Jamaica," *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 40, no. 1 (2002): 81-108; Amanda Sives, *Elections,*

the studies on the subject focus on the geographical-political strongholds of the two political parties': the Jamaica Labor Party (JLP) and the People's National Party (PNP). These strongholds were established by assigning housing benefits and employment to political supporters, especially as the population of Kingston swelled in the 1960s and 1970s. Overall, most scholarly work on clientelism has centered on urban and national perspectives, and paid little attention to rural areas.⁵⁹

Complementing those existing contributions, my dissertation explores clientelism instead as an intrinsic component of colonial development practices through which rural populations, who were otherwise marginalized by officialdom, carved channels of communication through the middle sectors of rural society, channels that altered participants' vision and rhetoric over time. I have found inspiration in scholarly works from Latin America that have, over the last two decades, addressed the role of political clientelism as integral to broader transformations in the civil society and as instrumental in securing transactional benefits from the state and in articulating local collective demands.⁶⁰

This dissertation shows that networks of intermediation and negotiation that were later depicted as "clientelism," a specific characteristic of the local political parties, were at their origins closely tied to colonial development policies. Through these practices of networking and collective

Violence and the Democratic Process in Jamaica: 1944-2007 (Kingston, Jamaica;Miami; Ian Randle Publishers, 2010).

⁵⁹ With the exception of Nancy Foner's pioneering study where she explores the impact of Jamaica's national political structure on one small rural community in St. Ann. Foner found that local political leaders distributed benefits to community members and acted as middlemen between the villagers and elected officials. Rather than an ideological concern, party membership mattered for access to economic assistance, to jobs, government-subsidized homes, and education. Nancy Foner, "Party Politics in a Jamaican Community," *Caribbean Studies* 13, no. 2 (1973): 51-64.

⁶⁰ See for example Robert Gay, "Rethinking Clientelism: Demands, Discourses and Practices in Contemporary Brazil," *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, no. 65 (1998): 7-24; Luis Roniger and Ayşe Güneş-Ayata, eds., *Democracy, Clientelism, and Civil Society* (Boulder, Colo: L. Rienner Publishers, 1994).

demand-formation, the rural middle classes and their political allies served as hinges between small farmers, tenants, and laborers on the one side, and colonial officialdom on the other. By the time Jamaica's modern political parties emerged in the first half of the 1940s, petition and clientelist practices were important channels for collective demands, used by those marginalized from development to articulate claims and access state resources. In other words, this dissertation demonstrates that rather than being a specific characteristic of the Jamaican political system that emerged during the 1940s as rural sufferers moved to the city, clientelism was an intrinsic component of how colonial development was envisioned, articulated, and negotiated on the ground in rural Jamaica.

1.3 Chapter Outline

The chapter 2 explores how throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, the economic interests of middle, small, and tenant farmers overlapped in locally organized contexts and channels of communication with middle-class peers and politicians. Together, they expressed the vision that the island's agricultural and economic prosperity depended upon the successful development of a small-size peasant proprietor class and not on the prevalence of large plantations. The first section of the chapter focuses on the emergence of middle farmers as a separate social sector from small farmers, tenants, and laborers after emancipation, and their consolidation as influential economic and political actors in the rural areas. The second section of the chapter explores the impact of the colonial policies adopted to stimulate agricultural production on the island for the non-sugar export market, which was disproportionately in small and middle farmers' hands. The last two sections of this chapter use case studies from the banana industry and

Clarendon to address how the diverse interests of tenants, small farmers, and middle farmers came to be locally articulated in new ways with potential new political allies.

The chapter 3 traces why and when policies that attempted to increase the number of “peasant proprietors” gathered a growing number of allies from the colonial officials, planter and merchant elite, the middle rural and urban classes, and the nascent trade union movement during the 1930s. The chapter explores how British officials attempted to stimulate the Jamaican banana trade and local support of small landownership through new trade structures and some new public investment forms after 1929. The second section focuses on small farmers’, tenants’, and rural laborers’ petitions and organizing before and after the massive and multi-sector labor rebellion of May and June of 1938. As case studies in specific areas of the island show, by the end of the 1930s, more confrontational petitions and organizing had begun to mold the implementation of colonial land redistribution policies and the creation of employment opportunities in public works.

The chapter 4 argues that British colonial development and welfare initiatives opened the door for diverse actors on the island articulate an economic development model based on peasant production and welfare. The new colonial development and welfare mission implied increasing direct state intervention and control over the peasant farming methods and social and family organization aspects. The first section of the chapter studies the early program of Jamaica Welfare Limited (JWL) at the end of the 1930s. This private company sought to “build a new Jamaica” based on self-help rhetoric and community education. The second section of the chapter analyzes the new West Indian Development and Welfare Organization’s rhetoric regarding land, agricultural production, and social organizing. The third section studies colonial development advisers’ efforts to expand locally and nationally organized groups, cooperatives, and producers’ associations under self-help and cooperation principles. The final section explores the routes

through which client-patron practices spread and strengthened throughout the 1940s. First, ties to politicians became a central route through which broader sectors of the disenfranchised rural masses sought relief and employment benefits. Second, patronage networks became increasingly intertwined with development institutions and structures of local governance and planning.

The chapter 5 addresses the contradictions of the “period of optimism,” from the second half of the 1940s to the end of the 1950s when the nationalist development model was expected to contribute to national and local development. During this period, the Jamaican government articulated a development policy that stressed the need for greater state involvement in foodstuff production as well as in creating employment alternatives to absorb the agricultural sector’s labor surplus. The first section of the chapter focuses on articulating a development model that stressed state control over small hillside farming and industrialization, starting in 1945. The second section of the chapter explores the most important policies launched during this decade: the land authorities and several pilot areas under the farm development scheme. The third section of the chapter shows that the decline of the “period of optimism” was directly related to the expanding bauxite-alumina industry throughout the 1950s. By the end of the decade, the government reconsidered the state-led agricultural planning model’s goals, taking the bauxite-alumina industry’s agricultural operations as the development model for the decade to come.

Chapter 6 explores the main tenets and consequences of the development model that had emerged, which across the 1960s stressed efficient middle and large commercial agriculture enterprises. The first section of this chapter covers the new commercial agricultural development model and its relation to unemployment and political patronage. The second section follows the trajectory of a new rural development and planning model promoted by branch societies and economists: one that became the ideological platform of the PNP by the end of the decade.

In 1972, two years later after he critically wrote about the North-South global divide and the inherited neocolonial structures of the international trade system in *Foreign Affairs*, Michael Manley became Prime Minister of Jamaica under the promise to adopt a series of recommendations proposed by Plantations School economists and social scientists. Although Manley's rhetoric resonated for its radical criticism of the international system that evolves from the post-war period, his policies were related to questions that had remained at the front fore of development debates in Jamaica since the late nineteenth century.

2.0 The Politics of Representation: Middle Farmers and the Rural Masses, 1895-1929

In the decades following full emancipation in 1838, the Afro-Jamaican peasant population evolved into a set of strata determined by their limited, if any, access to land and agricultural production. The differentiation over time into rural laborers, landless farmers renting plots from estates, small farmers, and middle farmers depended on their opportunities to hold land, accumulate capital, and engage in agricultural production for export. By the end of the 1890s, a stratum of prosperous middle farmers had achieved an upper social, political, and economic position among the masses of laborers, small farmers, and tenants in the rural areas. They linked their economic interests to sectors of the colonial bureaucracy, large landowners, professionals, and merchants who sought to diversify agricultural export production as an alternative to the monoculture plantation system.

Between the 1890s and the 1910s, the stratum of prosperous middle farmers maintained some access to land and expanded their influence in rural areas thanks in part to new colonial agricultural policies, which at least rhetorically were meant to increase the number of “peasant proprietors” and promote the cultivation of export crops. By the 1920s, the middle farmers had achieved representation in the branch societies of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, the Parochial Boards, and the Legislative Council. Their representatives in these spaces of participation came to operate as conduits between the colonial administration and the large proprietor elite on one end and the mass of disenfranchised small and tenant farmers on the other. This chapter explores how throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, the economic interests of middle, small, and tenant farmers came to coincide at locally organized instances and through channels of communication with middle-class political representatives. Together they conveyed the idea that

the island's agricultural and economic prosperity depended on the successful development of small landed peasant cultivators, not on the prevalence of large plantations.

The first section of this chapter focuses on the emergence of prosperous middle farmers among the masses of small farmers, tenants, and laborers after emancipation and their consolidation as influential economic and political actors in the rural areas. In the decades that followed full emancipation, the differences grew between small farmers and a growing stratum of middle farmers specializing in agricultural production for the export market. Middle farmers producing agricultural exports benefited indirectly from the British adoption of *laissez-faire* trade economics and the subsequent decline in the sugar industry. This resulted directly in the increase of Jamaican agricultural trade with the U.S. market beginning in the 1850s.

Agricultural trade with the U.S. transformed the island's economy and society between 1870 and 1890. Bananas became the most important agricultural export on the island, strengthening the strata of prosperous small and middle farmers, who had access to land. However, banana production also led to the entrenchment of large banana estates and transnational corporations, which by the 1890s had started curtailing land access opportunities. Standing between the rural masses of laborers, small farmers, and tenants, and the white planter elite, the stratum of black and colored middle farmers maintained their economic position and their share of political representation in Parochial Boards and the Legislative Council.

By the end of the nineteenth century, officials from the Colonial Office started suggesting agricultural diversification (beyond sugar and bananas) and the expansion of small 'peasant proprietors' as an alternative to, and a settled reservoir of laborers for, the plantation system. The second section of this chapter explores the impact of the colonial policies adopted to stimulate agricultural production on the island for the export market. These policies linked questions on land

ownership and questions about how to bring unused public land to production. In 1895 the colonial administration announced a land redistribution policy to foster peasant proprietorship, increase cultivation for export, and counterbalance the accumulation of land in a few hands.

While the formulation of the Crown lands policy of 1895 sought to increase the number of agricultural export products, the formation of the Jamaica Agricultural Society that same year aimed to oversee and improve agricultural production quality on the island. The Society's political impact was equally or more important than the Crown lands policy. The locally organized bodies of the Society in rural Jamaica, the branch societies, served as a political platform increasing the influence of prosperous middle farmers and their representatives in the rural areas. The leadership position of influential middle farmers within the Jamaica Agricultural Society ranks—and alongside them, significant numbers of school teachers, politicians, and priests—allowed them to participate in the debates that generated the island's agricultural policies. During the 1920s, middle farmers' representatives in the branch societies, Parochial Boards, and Legislative Council amplified the voices of—or claimed the right to speak on behalf of—the disenfranchised small and tenant farmers.

The last two sections of this chapter use case studies from the banana industry and the parish of Clarendon to address how the diverse interests of tenants, small farmers, and middle farmers came to be locally articulated in new ways with potential new political allies. By the late 1920s, elected delegates from branch societies of the banana districts affected by the spread of the Panama disease laid out proposals at the Jamaica Agricultural Society meetings to benefit small banana producers, such as opening more crown lands for cultivation and less destructive treatment methods. In Mid-Clarendon, small and middle farmers and their political representatives on the Parochial Board criticized the colonial government's backing of large landowners' agricultural

development at small and middle farmers' expense. In Upper Clarendon, a new de facto alliance of middle farmers' representatives and disenfranchised tenants pressed the colonial administration to enact a new land redistribution policy in 1929.

2.1 The Emergence of the Rural Masses and Middle Farmers, 1838-1895

In the decades between full emancipation in 1838 and colonial policies to expand agricultural export production in 1895, the formerly enslaved Afro-Jamaican peasant population evolved into multiple strata. These strata were determined by their access to land, the size of their holdings, their ability to hire labor, and the type of crops they cultivated. This change over time corresponded to a series of material transformations in the island's economy, which allowed sectors of the peasant population, with more or less success, to cultivate for the export market. In the first few years that followed full emancipation, the rural mass of the Afro-Jamaican population encompassed independent farmers growing in small plots, landless tenants, and laborers on sugar estates. Those who moved away from the estates established themselves in free villages in the island's interior or squatted on Crown lands or on marginal abandoned estates. Those who could not become independent farmers leased plots from planters seeking to retain the labor force nearby their estates.⁶¹

Thus, the degree of economic independence of the Afro-Jamaican peasant population from the plantation systems was first determined by their opportunities to access land. Those who were

⁶¹ For more of the Jamaican peasantry and free villages after emancipation, see Hugh Paget, "The Free Village System in Jamaica," *Caribbean Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (1964): 38–51.

able to hold a small portion of land had a better chance of gaining economic independence from the plantation system. Those who organized into Baptist settlements called ‘Free Villages’ established themselves as small farmers, growing ground provisions for subsistence and selling products through the internal higgler marketing system or to local merchants for export. They earned cash from selling coffee, ginger, logwood, and later bananas or supplemented their income as wage laborers on sugar estates. Others who could not access land on their own account had to rent it from planters through cash payments or in exchange for their labor on the estates. The amount of land leased to each farmer varied from ½ acre to 5 acres and was rented to cultivate ground provisions, bananas, sugar cane, or ginger. The insecurity of such tenancy arrangements made tenant farmers particularly vulnerable to landowner interests.⁶²

Between 1840 and 1866, variances such as farm size, labor system, and degree of agricultural specialization separated a stratum of prosperous middle farmers from the peasant masses. Differences between farmers that hold between five and fifty acres, if they depended on family labor or were able to hire labor, and whether they cultivated for subsistence, for the local market, or export market determined the status of small and a growing number of middle farmers. By 1845 around 19,000 peasants had established themselves as small farmers, owning less than ten acres (see Table 1). By the 1850s, some farmers had set up middle-size farms somewhere between five to fifty acres. Between 1860 and 1866, the number of holdings under fifty acres grew from 50,000 to 60,000, including holdings possessed by squatters without land titles. The more prosperous middle farmers whose holdings were at the larger end of this scale were able to employ labor—the labor of neighbors with little or no access to land of their own—and produce for the

⁶² Patrick E. Bryan, *The Jamaican People, 1880-1902: Race, Class, and Social Control* (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2000), 134.

growing agricultural export market, including products such as coffee, logwood, pimento, ginger, and bananas (see Table 2).⁶³

The differences between small and middle farmers it is in some cases not that straight forward. Even though in tallies produced at the time there is often a standard cut below and above five acres to distinguish between small and middle farmers as shown in Table 1, people who lived around the line would have had much more similar circumstances than people closer to the median for the strata these dividing lines create. Moreover, conditions outside acreage per se—such as the number of family members (that were support but also served as labor), crops, and the location of the plot (near a market or far up in a hill with no roads)—could drive sharp distinctions in terms of living conditions and vulnerability, also shaping where families fell within the complex spectrum of small, middle, or more wealthy farmers.⁶⁴ What it is important not to leave out of sight is how those conditions determined how and when different strata or rural populations benefited from specific policies throughout time.

The British adoption of *laissez-faire* economics and the increase of Jamaican agricultural trade with the U.S. market benefited small and middle farmers that grew in the generation after emancipation. The British West Indian sugar industry entered an extended period of crisis when the colonial system abandoned the mercantilist market protection in favor of free trade economics and repealed protectionist duties on sugar in 1846. The repeal of protectionist duties removed the preferential treatment that West Indian sugar had enjoyed on the British market. Jamaica's sugar

⁶³ Ken Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath* (The Hague; Boston; Nijhoff, 1978), 31–32; Bryan, *The Jamaican People, 1880-1902: Race, Class, and Social Control*, 131–32.

⁶⁴ A minimum of four acres could support a family of 4-5 people in St. Mary and Portland in the 1930. In Trelawny and St Elizabeth, for the same number of people, the estimate was on eight to ten acres. Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 115.

plantations reached a critical point by the 1890s as a result of the competition from other tropical colonies and European sugar beet production.⁶⁵ The share of the sugar industry within Jamaican agricultural exports plunged from 58.2% to 14.7% between 1850 and 1890 (Table 2). During those four decades, many estates on the island went bankrupt and were sold or abandoned, with total numbers declining from 513 to 162 estates.⁶⁶

As a result of the crisis in the sugar industry, Jamaican agricultural exports diversified. The island's agricultural diversification is first visible in the increase in the share of products such as logwood, pimento, ginger, and coffee, and more prominently in bananas later (Table 2). The shift went hand in hand with a reorientation to new consumer markets. Jamaican exports to the United States grew from 6% in 1850 to 53.1% in 1890 at the expense of exports to the U.K.

The agricultural trade to the U.S. significantly transformed the island's economy and society between 1870 and 1890. The traditional white plantocracy was joined at the top of the socio-economic ladder by urban-based merchants, businessmen, and professionals that invested in land and agricultural exports.⁶⁷ Many of these were people identified as "Coloured," descendants of families of recognized mixed ancestry that had emerged during the eighteenth century. Old and new large proprietries diversified, and by 1890 several had expanded to logwood and pimento production or converted sugar estates into cattle pens. For example, St. Ann became a stock-raising parish, with pens varying between 200 to 2,000 acres. By 1894, most estates of over 1,000 acres

⁶⁵ Williams, *From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean, 1492-1969*.

⁶⁶ The highest rate of abandonment occurred in the parishes of St Andrew, St. Thomas, Portland, St. Mary, St Ann, St Catherine, and St. Elizabeth. Sugar plantations in the western parishes (Hanover, Westmoreland, Trelawny, St James) and Clarendon were better able to hold their position. However, wages declined, or at best remained static, in the last three decades of the nineteenth century. Bryan, *The Jamaican People, 1880-1902: Race, Class, and Social Control*, 145.

⁶⁷ Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 36.

had mixed cultivation, dedicating large portions to sugar, coffee, bananas, logwood, pimento, and grazing, alongside sectors that were ‘ruinate’ (a term used for areas abandoned) or were rented to tenants.⁶⁸

Bananas became the most important agricultural export on the island between 1870 and 1890, helping to strengthen small and middle farmers who, by that moment, had plenty of access to land and an export market. As a result of sugar’s decline, property values on the island had plunged, contributing to an increase of small farmers who acquired land from estates. The number of farms under five acres grew by over 160% between 1880 and 1890 (Table 1). In the areas abandoned by sugar estates in St. Mary, St. Thomas, and Portland, small farmers cultivated bananas as subsistence crops or for sale in the local market up 1870.⁶⁹ Over the next two decades the number of small and middle farmers soared in Portland most of all. Their production, most of which took place in holdings smaller than ten acres, supplied up to 80% of the bananas for the U.S. trade. The growth of the number of small depositors in Port Antonio’s banks by the late nineteenth century suggests the growth of thriving small and middle farmers.⁷⁰ Furthermore, on the island more broadly, as the number of recognized landholdings under five acres doubled and then tripled between 1882 and 1902, the number of holdings between 5 and 50 acres also grew (see Table 1).⁷¹

⁶⁸ Bryan, *The Jamaican People, 1880-1902: Race, Class, and Social Control*, 5–6.

⁶⁹ By the 1870s, small growers started selling bananas to U.S. Captain Lorenzo D. Baker, launching the North American banana trade. On May 29, 1871, Baker landed the first cargo of Jamaican bananas in Boston. Ansell Hart, “The Banana in Jamaica: Export Trade,” *Social and Economic Studies* 3, no. 2 (1954): 214; Thomas C. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 347–48.

⁷⁰ Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938*, 349.

⁷¹ Stone, “Political Aspects of Postwar Agricultural Policies in Jamaica (1945-1970),” 153; Bryan, *The Jamaican People, 1880-1902: Race, Class, and Social Control*, 216–22.

The improvement of their economic position came with a small quota in political representation and influence. Sitting between rural masses of laborers, small farmers, and tenants on the one hand and the white planter elite on the other, the stratum of black and ‘coloured’ middle farmers were able to grab a share of political representation in Parochial Boards and the Legislative Council by the 1890s. By the 1880s, black middle farmers had joined the coloured population and rural professionals who, through acquired or inherited wealth, gradually achieved levels of political representation thanks to their income and status as property holders. The expansion of the system of elementary education after the 1860s served to establish a lower middle class of primary school teachers who became a reservoir of middle-class rural leaders as well. Under the Crown colony government—established with the dissolution of the elected House of Assembly in the wake of the Morant Bay rebellion in 1865—political power was firmly concentrated in the hands of the white minority and colonial officials. The island’s sole structures of representative governance were parochial boards the Legislative Council, whose members were elected after 1884 by property-owners and taxpayers who met the voting qualifications at elections.⁷² Through

⁷² The Crown colony government balanced the interests between the old, weak sugar plantocracy and merchants and professionals who joined the ranks of the Jamaican elite thanks to the increasing agricultural exports to the U.S after 1866. In 1884, the Legislative Council incorporated elected members under a limited franchise. The Parochial Boards were also based on an elective process and were comprised of the custos, the member of the legislative council for the parish and from nine to fifteen persons elected by taxpayers who met the qualifications for voting at elections. Under the Crown Colony Government since 1866, the Legislative Council consisted of the Governor, nominees of the Governor, and ex-officio members. The new constitution in 1884 provided that the Legislative Council consisted of fourteen elected members. The first elections to the legislative council that were held in 1884 resulted in representatives who were either white or passed as white. By 1910 there were five coloured and one black among the fourteen elected members. For more on local government bodies and franchise in Jamaica from 1865 to 1910 see Bryan, *The Jamaican People, 1880-1902: Race, Class, and Social Control*, 11–21; Colin A. Palmer, *Freedom’s Children: The 1938 Labor Rebellion and the Birth of Modern Jamaica* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina

these structures, by the end of the nineteenth century, representatives from the rural and urban middle classes worked to advance their economic interests in connection to land and agricultural exports.

The improving position of the rural Afro-Jamaican population did not go unchallenged. In the 1890s, the growth of large banana estates and the Boston Fruit Company started curtailing rural populations' land access and economic opportunities. Banana cultivation became an estate crop by the 1880s, and in a matter of a decade, there were over a hundred banana plantations owned by merchants, professionals, and former sugar planters.⁷³ While sugar planters held their position in Westmorland, Hanover, and Clarendon, in other areas, their counterparts turned to banana production or sold their estates intact to segments of Jamaica's white elite. Thus, far from weakening the oligarchical structure, the banana industry was strengthening it by the century's end.⁷⁴

The colonial administration played an active role in the resurgence of plantations. The Boston Fruit Company was the first to expand, purchasing several sugar estates in the northeast of the island. The company benefited from land concessions allowed under the Aliens Law Amendment of 1871, which lifted land sale restrictions to foreign investors. Between 1881 to 1884, the Boston Fruit Company operated approximately 10,500 acres in the parishes of St. Thomas and Portland.⁷⁵ In 1899, the Boston Fruit Company merged into the United Fruit Company, linking the

Press, 2014), 9–10; Eris Dawn Schoburgh, *Local Government Reform: The Prospects for Community Empowerment in Jamaica* (Kingston, Jamaica: Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, UWI, 2006), 63–72.

⁷³ John Soluri, "Bananas Before Plantations. Smallholders, Shippers, and Colonial Policy in Jamaica, 1870-1910," *Iberoamericana* 6, no. 23 (2006): 148–49.

⁷⁴ Bryan, *The Jamaican People, 1880-1902: Race, Class, and Social Control*, 70–75.

⁷⁵ Michaeline A Crichlow, *Negotiating Caribbean Freedom: Peasants and the State in Development* (Lexington Books, 2005), 41–42.

West Indian and Central American banana production and trade.⁷⁶ The Company secured and monopolized shipping arrangements, prices, and sources of supply in Jamaica and elsewhere. Very rapidly, the United Fruit Company forced most of its competitors out of business, and small, and middle banana growers became dependent on the company prices as the transnational increasingly controlled not just commerce but the production itself across the Caribbean.

The expansion of large banana estates severely affected small and middle farmers' ability to continue accessing land in the island's north-eastern parishes. By the turn of the 1890s, the expansion of banana production increased the commercial value of land in the banana parishes of St. Mary and Portland, diminishing the land available within reach of small and lower middle farmers, who had to search for land elsewhere in Manchester, St Elizabeth, and St Ann, or remain as wage laborers in the banana plantations.⁷⁷ Between 1897 and 1903, the number of farmers below 20 acres dramatically declined in St. Mary, Portland, and St. Thomas.⁷⁸ It was farmers from above the 20 acres, more prosperous stratum, who would benefit the most in the following decades from colonial policies that sought to stimulate the diversification of agricultural exports market alongside the reigning large plantation monoculture.

⁷⁶ Lorenzo D. Baker established the Boston Fruit Company in 1885 and merged it into the conglomerate United Fruit Company in 1899. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938*, 350.

⁷⁷ Bryan, *The Jamaican People, 1880-1902: Race, Class, and Social Control*, 133–35.

⁷⁸ Soluri, "Bananas Before Plantations. Smallholders, Shippers, and Colonial Policy in Jamaica, 1870-1910," 149–50.

2.2 “Peasant Proprietors” and Agricultural Diversification, 1895-1920

By the end of the nineteenth century, agricultural diversification for the export market was embraced by small and middle farmers and big plantation proprietors. Therefore, from 1895 to the 1920s, the colonial administration in Jamaica enacted policies to distribute crown lands to “peasant proprietors” and launched a series of bodies that would promote agricultural research and extension services to improve agricultural production. As it will be seen in this section, most of the agricultural policies enacted by the colonial administration, and under the ideological endorsement of the Colonial Office, furthered the middle farmers’ stratum who benefited from the government’s land distribution policies and strengthened their leadership position in the rural areas through new agricultural bodies.

The increasing interest in diversifying the Jamaican agricultural economy formed part of a broader nineteenth-century colonial development vision. By the 1880s and 1890s, officials in the Colonial Office started supporting the diversification of the West Indies' agricultural exports as part of a new vision of colonial development. This notion of colonial development implied a degree of imperial intervention to secure the effective use of the natural resources, both monoculture estates and crown lands, and the ability to transform colonial territories into prosperous producers of agricultural commodities and raw material for the empire and the global market.⁷⁹ These officials maintained a preference for the large-scale plantation agriculture model but questioned its long-term stability in the West Indies. They indicated that the West Indian economy was highly specialized and vulnerable to fluctuations in the world market. Therefore, agricultural

⁷⁹ Lorenzini, *Global Development*, 10.

diversification in smaller land units was suggested as a viable alternative that sought, not to compete with large-scale estates, but to improve the region's trade balance and manage its labor during times of crisis.⁸⁰

This position of sectors of the Colonial Office was promoted during Joseph Chamberlain's tenure as Secretary of State for the Colonies between 1895 and 1903. During his tenure in the Colonial Office, Chamberlain fostered the new ideology of state-directed imperialism under the premise of developing the "imperial estates." Chamberlain's "imperial estates" policy meant strengthening British competitiveness and efficiency through the explicit development of its vast colonial natural resources. His program included capital investment in infrastructural projects and technical assistance and research in tropical medicine and agriculture. He promoted the diffusion of scientific knowledge, expertise, and capital to stimulate agricultural production of raw materials and foodstuffs in the colonies, while at the same time rising purchasing power and demand for manufactured goods from Britain.⁸¹

By the end of the century, the colonial administration in Jamaica took several steps to advance its agricultural staples for the export market. More importantly, those policies display the growing alliances between the colonial administration, some large landowners involved in exports to the U.S., and middle farmers, all more or less represented in the Legislative Council, to advance in the agricultural diversification agenda. During the 1880s and 1890s, the colonial administration improved the communication system: rail lines and roads. Previous efforts to extend rail lines were designed to revive the sugar industry and then support the profitable banana industry. The rail lines

⁸⁰ Hodge, *Triumph of the Expert: Agrarian Doctrines of Development and the Legacies of British Colonialism*, 54–89.

⁸¹ Hodge, 21–24, 44–47.

built by the last two decades of the century sought to connect small farmers' properties in the interior of the island to the ports that linked the island to its markets in New York and Boston. Governor Anthony Musgrave (1877–1883) had initiated two rail line extensions to the banana districts in the interior: one connecting Porus, in Clarendon, and the second connecting Ewarton, in St. Catherine, both finished in 1885. In the 1890s more lines were expanded from banana-growing districts to ports: from Clarendon to Montego Bay in the North Coast by 1895, and from Bog Walk, St. Catherine, to Port Antonio in 1896.⁸²

The policies promoted by the colonial administration, export planters, and merchants included putting Crown lands into production in the hands of 'peasant proprietors.' In 1895, the colonial administration launched the Crown lands scheme, a policy designed to sell public lands in plots that ranged from five to fifty acres. Since the expansion of banana plantations during the 1890s had increased the commercial value of properties, thus curtailing the opportunities for small and lower middle farmers to access land, the colonial administration sought to alleviate some land pressure and encourage the production of export crops in the hands of a stratum of 'peasant proprietors.' Emphasizing on diversification of export, the policy encouraged buyers to reserve one-fifth of the land for "non-staple" export crops such as coffee, citrus, or cocoa.⁸³ The program

⁸² The colonial administration built the first railway in 1845 from Kingston to Angels, St. Catherine, near Spanish Town, connecting sugar estate. It added an extension from Spanish Town to Old Harbour in 1869. Veront M. Satchell and Cezley Sampson, "The Rise and Fall of Railways in Jamaica, 1845–1975," *The Journal of Transport History* 24, no. 1 (2003): 1–21.

⁸³ Don Robotham, "Agrarian Relations in Jamaica," in *Essays on Power and Change in Jamaica*, ed. Carl Stone and Aggrey Brown (Kingston, Jamaica: Jamaica Publishing House, 1977); Veront Satchell, "Government Land Policies in Jamaica During Late 19th-Century," in *Plantation Economy, Land Reform and the Peasantry in a Historical Perspective: Jamaica, 1838-1980*, ed. Claus Stolberg and Wilmot Swithin (Kingston, Jamaica: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 1992), 39–68.

envisioned this outward-facing improvement of the export array and an inward-facing improvement of labor utilization as going hand in hand. The Crown Lands Scheme sought to alleviate land pressure on areas where the decline of sugar estates diminished labor opportunities or where the banana plantations increasingly limited land access.

The Crown land policy fitted in theory the broader colonial development vision promoted by the Colonial Office and reflected in the recommendations of an investigatory commission. Joseph Chamberlain appointed the West India Royal Commission (WIRC) of 1897 in response to the severe sugar economic depression and a series of riots in the eastern Caribbean islands.⁸⁴ The WIRC was charged with investigating the depression of the sugar industry, finding prospects for its improvement, and considering alternative sources of employment and agricultural endeavors in the colonies. After visiting British Guiana, the Lesser Antilles, and Jamaica, the WIRC published a series of recommendations to revitalize the sugar industry and stimulate new agricultural products.

⁸⁴ The economic depression due to the decline of the sugar industry hit harder in the small islands dependent on sugar by the last decades of the nineteenth century. In Antigua, Barbados, St. Kitts, and St. Vincent, planters lowered wages, reduced sugar cane acreage, and offered less work to the rural laborers. A series of disturbances took place by the end of the nineteenth century in the smaller eastern islands. Some of the most serious riots took place in St. Vincent in 1891 and disturbances carried by sugar workers in St. Kitts and British Guiana in 1896. For accounts of disturbances in the Eastern Caribbean since the 1880s see Bonham C. Richardson, "Depression Riots and the Calling of the 1897 West India Royal Commission," *New West Indian Guide / Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 66, no. 3/4 (1992): 169–91; The commission was chaired by Henry Wylie Norman (ex-Governor of Jamaica), David Barbour, Edward Grey, Sydney Olivier (who would later become Governor of Jamaica), and Daniel Morris (Assistant Director of Kew Gardens. He also had been Chief Agricultural Officer of Jamaica). Bonham C Richardson, "The Importance of the 1897 British Royal Commission," in *Caribbean Land and Development Revisited*, ed. Jean Besson and Janet Momsen (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 21.

As a fundamental component of both recommendations, the WIRC encouraged the settlement of laborers “on small plots of land as peasant proprietors.”⁸⁵ Thus, next to recommendations to modernize the sugar industry through a series of grants and research, the commissioners recommended encouraging petty proprietors who could support their subsistence practices and serve as a labor reservoir for estate production when needed. Among other recommendations, the commission advised the improvement of minor agricultural industries, agricultural research, and extension services to stimulate the production of the ‘peasant proprietors’ and increase fruit exports to the United States.

After the WIRC recommendations, the sugar industry received immediate attention from the Colonial Office and colonial governments. In 1898, the Colonial Office approved the foundation of the Imperial Department of Agriculture for the West Indies in Barbados to give scientific assistance, research, and technological innovations for both estate and peasant cultivation. However, most of the research conducted by the Imperial Department of Agriculture revolved around the sugar industry.⁸⁶ Additionally, the Colonial Office transferred a grant of £80,000 to finance the modernization of the sugar industry on the island.⁸⁷ In Jamaica, the Legislative Council guaranteed government backing for interest payments on loans used to modernize the industry through Law 31 of 1902.⁸⁸

In Jamaica, the policy to establish self-sustained ‘peasant proprietors’ with some export crops, available as wage labor on the plantations, was not as successful, at least not as colonial

⁸⁵ Richardson, “The Importance of the 1897 British Royal Commission,” 22–23.

⁸⁶ Hodge, *Triumph of the Expert: Agrarian Doctrines of Development and the Legacies of British Colonialism*, 54–89.

⁸⁷ Richardson, “The Importance of the 1897 British Royal Commission,” 23–26.

⁸⁸ Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 38.

officials expected. The land distribution policies as envisioned by the Colonial Office and the WIRC aimed to increase colonial government support for—and also oversight of—cultivation on farms that were sizable enough to sustain peasants with some permanent export crops, yet not enough to completely prescind from wage labor when they were needed on the plantations. The ideal plot size for a ‘peasant proprietor’ was considered between 5 to 15 acres and located in the vicinity of a labor source.⁸⁹ However, in the Jamaican Crown lands policy, colonial officials had fundamentally misunderstood that if a farmer had enough money to buy plots that ranged between 5 to 50 acres, it was from a middle sector who would probably not work for wages on plantations within Jamaica. Overall, lands available under the scheme remained inaccessible for the landless farmers aiming to access plots for subsistence cultivation, usually under the 5 acres.

Nevertheless, even for most middle farmers, the Crown lands scheme was not ideal. The policy became a route for some lower sectors of middle farmers who wanted additional land but overall suffered from several complications – including land quality and accessibility – that made it unattractive even for middle farmers with capital willing to invest. First, the lands selected and sold by the administration in 1897 were in the country’s heavily forested, steep, and rugged areas. These were low-quality lands not even suitable to cultivate bananas. Second, the lands were peripheral and marginal, located in remote locations that lacked roads and infrastructure development, limiting the possibilities to access crop-buying agents and markets for both export and domestic consumption.⁹⁰ Between 1897 and 1900, the administration only sold 771 lots

⁸⁹ In the eastern islands of Dominica, Nevis, and St. Vincent, the colonial administration established several land settlements thanks to a series of grants between 1898 and 1911. Richardson, “The Importance of the 1897 British Royal Commission,” 23–26.

⁹⁰ Marleen Angella Bartley, “Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980” (M. Phil, Mona, Jamaica, University of the West Indies, 1997), 41–44; Crichlow, *Negotiating Caribbean Freedom: Peasants and the State in Development*, 42.

covering 9,574 acres, with averaging around 12,3 acres per lot (see Table 3). There was, in addition, a high rate of default on payments and land forfeited.⁹¹

The colonial administration sought to give a new life to the policy in 1902 and 1916. However, during the first two decades of the twentieth century, and especially after 1916, the policy remained exclusively accessible for wealthy middle farmers. In 1902 the Government put in sale land that already had access roads, yet land transactions took a downward turn from 1905 to 1916 when no new lands were put in sale.⁹² As a result of food shortage on the local market during the First World War, the Government attempted to increase food supply by reviving the land policy in 1916.⁹³ The Government changed the rules governing the sale of Crown lands, but instead of making it accessible for laborers and landless farmers, it raised the upper limit on the lots available from 50 to 300 acres. Only the most prosperous of rural dwellers benefitted from the policy within the next decade.⁹⁴

In addition to the Crown land scheme, the colonial administration established agricultural bodies to improve agricultural production. While the formulation of the Crown lands policy of 1895 sought to increase the quantity of ‘peasant proprietors’ and agricultural export products, the formation of the Jamaica Agricultural Society that same year sought to oversee and improve agricultural production quality on the island. The desire for an agricultural body to promote scientific knowledge of farming techniques linked the interests of middle farmers, large banana

⁹¹ For example, only in 1898, around 36,000 acres were forfeited, most of them in Dry Harbour and Pedro Districts in St. Ann. Bartley, “Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980,” 46–48.

⁹² Bartley, 51.

⁹³ Erna Brodber, *The Second Generation of Freemen in Jamaica, 1907-1944* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004), 130.

⁹⁴ Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 117; Bartley, “Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980,” 53.

and coffee planters, and penkeepers. In 1894, middle-sized farmers in Clarendon organized the Clarendon Agricultural Association, with the objectives of seeking the Government's assistance and practical training in agriculture.⁹⁵ That same year, Thomas Hicks Sharp, member for Clarendon of the Legislative Council, took the initiative further and proposed the creation of a colony-wide committee "to enquire into the Agricultural position in the island" and recommend the necessary measures "for the advancement and progress of agriculture within the Island." In 1895, that committee recommended the formation of a 'Society of Agriculture' to obtain "useful information and disseminate it, encourage improved cultivation of products, improved breeds of stock, and watch over the interests of the Agricultural Industry."⁹⁶

The foundation of the Jamaica Agricultural Society in May of 1895 reflected the tight entwinement of island governance and agricultural export mission. The Board of Management consisted of Governor Henry Arthur Blake as its president, four members of the Legislative Council as Vice Presidents, thirteen members elected by the Board from various parts of the island, and thirteen members appointed by the Governor, including influential sugar and banana planters.⁹⁷ Among its first steps with an initial grant from the Legislative Council, the Society offered grants for the cultivation of coffee, tobacco, vegetables, citrus, and improvement of the island's livestock industry. The grants were granted to proprietors occupying 100 acres or less or tenants holding tenure of not less than five years. One acre of land was to be the minimum area for any product and mostly targeted for investment products that were exported to the United States.

⁹⁵ Bryan, *The Jamaican People, 1880-1902: Race, Class, and Social Control*, 219–20.

⁹⁶ Jamaica Agricultural Society, *JAS, 60 Years, 1895-1954*. (Kingston, Jamaica: Central Information Service in the Jamaica Agricultural Society, 1955), 1–2.

⁹⁷ Hoyte, *History of the Jamaica Agricultural Society: 1895-1960*, 8–9, 16.

Only 25 persons from the district of Trinityville, St. Thomas, most of them coffee cultivators, received these initial grants.⁹⁸

Despite the rhetoric to promote agricultural diversification of the hands of ‘peasant proprietors,’ the process was articulated to secure top-down control of production and export. Directly managed by the colonial bureaucracy and the Legislative Council, the Jamaica Agricultural Society was intended to work as a platform to guide and supervise cultivation practices, products, and organizations across the varied *non*-plantation agricultural spaces on which Jamaica’s export prosperity had come to depend.⁹⁹ This required a presence far beyond the Kingston offices where colonial officials labored, or the rural manors most Board of Management members also owned. In 1896, the Jamaica Agricultural Society started establishing branches of the Society as the local bodies to articulate agricultural enterprises across the island. The first six branch societies had a total of 300 members, consisting of both big and medium farmers.¹⁰⁰ Over the years, the number of branches, members, and instructors increased, reaching 63 branches, with 3,500 members, by 1910 (Table 4).

The branch societies of the Jamaica Agricultural Society created a space for middle farmers and their middle-class representatives, which they did not have before. Over the first two decades of the twentieth century, they occupied positions of leadership within the branches, which allowed them to deepen their influence in the rural areas, on the one hand, and to establish connections with colonial agricultural bureaucracy, political, and economic elites, on the other hand. Together

⁹⁸ Jamaica Agricultural Society, *JAS, 60 Years, 1895-1954.*, 6–8.

⁹⁹ Bryan, *The Jamaican People, 1880-1902: Race, Class, and Social Control*, 221.

¹⁰⁰ The Western St. Ann Branch Society was the first one organized in February 1896; the second one was the Christiana Branch Society in July, followed by Trinity Ville, North Clarendon, Darliston, and Trelawny. Hoyte, *History of the Jamaica Agricultural Society: 1895-1960*, 13–15, 25.

with the Jamaica Union of Teachers and some local organizations such as mutual aid and self-help societies and savings groups, the branch societies occupied an increasingly influential position in the rural areas.¹⁰¹ Teachers, priests and artisans, and other people identified as from the middle class who had become leaders in rural areas since the establishment of free villages: all these came to occupy the leadership positions within the Jamaica Agricultural Society branches.

Therefore, while the Crown lands policy gave middle farmers some access to land, the Jamaica Agricultural Society's branch societies increased these farmers' political access. The branch societies became a space where middle farmers could voice their interests alongside larger penkeepers and banana and sugar planters. Under the leadership of middle farmers and their social peers and allies in rural areas such as schoolteachers and priests, the branch societies grew increasingly influential in the countryside. After the hurricanes of 1903 and 1912, the branch societies expanded in the hilly interior. The Society's instructors spearheaded restoration efforts and organized branches in charge of influential community members in remote rural areas to distribute seeds plants.¹⁰² The meetings of each branch society were spaces of deliverance where their members promoted their economic agendas and concerns. The resolutions passed in these meetings were generally related to land, roads, farming supplies, and irrigation. As it will be addressed later in the chapter with case studies from Clarendon, by the 1920s, some branch

¹⁰¹ Sybil Francis, "The Evolution of Community Development in Jamaica (1937-1962)," *Caribbean Quarterly* 15, no. 2-3 (1969): 42-43.

¹⁰² Jamaica Agricultural Society, *JAS, 60 Years, 1895-1954.*, 18; Hoyte, *History of the Jamaica Agricultural Society: 1895-1960*, 19.

societies had become a potential middle-class counterweight and a collaborative force against the United Fruit Company's influence.¹⁰³

The leadership positions of middle farmers within the ranks of the Jamaica Agricultural Society linked them to and growing colonial agricultural bureaucracy as well. During the 1910s, the Jamaica Agricultural Society and the Department of Agriculture, founded in 1908, became the leading bodies in charge of the island's agricultural policies, with a strong emphasis on training of instructors drawn from the rural middle classes and research to improve peasants' holdings. The Department of Agriculture became in charge of agricultural research and information for the Jamaica Agricultural Society, the body responsible for training, instruction, and organization.¹⁰⁴ The Society first established model farms to conduct experiments in plots between five and ten acres, which agricultural instructors considered was the desirable size for the average smallholding on the island. The first two model farms (one of six acres at Kellits, in Upper Clarendon, and ten acres at Chilton in the Darlington Mountain) aimed to increase the quantity and quality of cultivations under improved farming methods. In 1910, both the Department of Agriculture and the Jamaica Agricultural Society established the Farm School – later transformed into the Jamaica School of Agriculture – to train agricultural instructors, many of whom were schoolteachers in rural areas.

¹⁰³ Distributed among members of the branches, instructors, and people involved in agricultural practices in general, the printed the organization's meeting minutes, news from the branch societies, and extracts from other agricultural magazines.

¹⁰⁴ Jamaica Agricultural Society, *JAS, 60 Years, 1895-1954.*, 4, 15; Jamaica Agricultural Society, *75th Anniversary Souvenir Programme, 1875-1970 / Jamaica Agricultural Society.* (Kingston, Jamaica: The Society, 1970), 20–21; Hoyte, *History of the Jamaica Agricultural Society: 1895-1960*, 15, 18–22, 29.

By the turn of the 1920s, as it will be explored in the following sections, the stratum of middle farmers had consolidated its influential position in the rural areas and became important intermediaries, along with the middle-class political allies, between disenfranchised rural masses and the colonial administration.

2.3 Branch Societies and Petitions, 1920s

By the 1920s, the middle farmers who benefited from colonial policies started operating in the representation of the mass of disenfranchised small and tenant farmers. As specific case studies in this and the following section will show, between 1922 and 1929, small and middle banana and sugar cane farmers and landless tenants established new alliances with each other through the branch societies and their middle-class political operators in the Parochial Boards and the Legislative Council. Throughout the decade, middle farmers, small farmers, tenants, and middle-class politicians insisted that the answer to the island's agricultural prosperity was in the expansion of the ranks of 'peasant proprietors' instead of the prevalence of large unproductive tenanted estates or the entrenchment of foreign banana corporations. The locally organized alliances above and below served to press the colonial administration to consider agricultural, infrastructural, and land redistribution projects that would benefit farmers with less than five acres of land.

The expansion of the branch societies throughout the island opened new political participation spaces that increasingly voiced farmers' interests settled in the hilly interior. The bi-annual meetings of the Jamaica Agricultural Society in Kingston were the hub where diverse actors involved in agriculture converged, negotiated, and confronted their interests. From the representative positions within the branch societies (president, vice-president, and secretaries),

influential middle farmers, school teachers, politicians, and priests participated as delegates in the meetings of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, where they debated the articulation of the island's agricultural policies.

By the 1920s, no agricultural policies were more important on the island—for small and middle farmers alike—than measures to respond to a new soil-based pathogen: Panama disease. Panama disease is caused by a fungal pathogen (*Fusarium oxysporum* f. *Cubense*) that affects banana plantations, especially the highly susceptible Gros Michel (*Musa acuminata*) variety that dominated the export market from the late nineteenth century to the 1960s. The fungi associated with Panama disease are transmitted through the roots of the banana plants and spread by contacting neighboring plants' roots. The fungi cause the leaves of the infected plant to turn yellow and brown before wilting.¹⁰⁵ From the early 1890s to 1920, the disease appeared and spread to Panama, Costa Rica, Surinam, Cuba, Trinidad, Puerto Rico, Honduras, and Guatemala. The disease first appeared in Jamaica in Portland in 1911.¹⁰⁶

As the disease spread, small and middle-size banana farmers found their own interests in the treatment measures, access to land, and infrastructural development aligned. In the meetings of the Jamaica Agricultural Society and branch societies, delegates of the banana districts affected by the Panama disease articulated proposals that would link the interests of small banana farmers and tenants to those larger banana planters by proposing the opening of Crown lands and criticizing the existing methods to curtail the propagation of the disease. As several examples show, delegates from the branch societies criticized and firmly rejected the “nine-root” treatment system applied

¹⁰⁵ John Soluri, “Accounting for Taste: Export Bananas, Mass Markets, and Panama Disease,” *Environmental History* 7, no. 3 (2002): 395.

¹⁰⁶ *The Gleaner* May 23, 1929: 12

by the Department of Agriculture, specifically calling out its impact on the smaller banana cultivator.¹⁰⁷ For example, in a meeting of the Jack's River Branch Society, in October 1929, sixty "farmers" of Northern St. Mary insisted on the *one-root* treatment of the Panama disease. The secretary of the branch, Mr. P. M. Whittaker, drew attention to the severe damage caused by the "relentless destruction of the nine roots of bananas" and emphasized the damage brought upon "small planters." Mr. Whittaker insisted that

whereas the large proprietors could find land room to continue cultivation, the small man with his two acres was being confronted with the proposition as to what was he to do to earn a living, when through the present system of treatment his land was slowly but surely being tied up.¹⁰⁸

Some of the alternatives raised by delegates of the branch societies were to reduce the quarantined areas, to increase the payment of compensation for the plants destroyed, and allow small farmers to experiment with less harmful measures, for example, in general meetings of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, Rev. W. J. Thompson, the delegate from the Clarendon Branches Associated, unsuccessfully requested H. H. Cousins, Director of Agriculture, to allow experimentations with the one root system. In addition to Thompson requests, the delegates of the Cove River Branch Society, St. Ann, asked to minimize the treatment in areas where the banana plants were the shade of coffee cultivations and manifested that "the present method of treating Panama Disease in mixed cultivations is to an alarming extent depriving coffee fields."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ In the nine-root system, inspectors from the Department of Agriculture uprooted and burned not just the diseased plant but the eight healthy plants surrounding it, and then forbade planting in the area for several years.

¹⁰⁸ *The Gleaner* October 31, 1929: 16.

¹⁰⁹ Half-Yearly Meeting of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, July 1929, *Journal of the Jamaica Agricultural Society*, Vol. XXXIII: 25-27

By the 1920s, the branch societies started also agitating to speed up public lands' distribution in favor of small and landless farmers. The insistence on building roads and distributing crown lands were policies that often met the interests of landless farmers and large plantation owners alike. For example, the Moore Town Branch, located in the mountains in the eastern end of Portland, requested the colonial administration to build roads in the “virgin lands of the interior,” and principally “in the Parishes where the disease is most rampant.”¹¹⁰ In Mount Felix, St. Thomas, small banana growers gave their free labor to build roads that benefited large properties and into Crown lands, the “most fertile and productive lands,” “which the Branch Society had long agitated.”¹¹¹ Similarly, in Somerset, Port Antonio, the Parochial Board financed the materials, and the “inhabitants of the district” provided the free labor – including that of men, women, and school children “under the leadership of their headmaster, Mr. E. W. Roberts” – to build a bridge that opened up Crown lands. As informed in the Journal of the Jamaica Agricultural Society in praising the collaboration of the people:

No wonder the boast of the Somerset Branch is that the bridge is designed by one of their members and built by labour largely contributed by the members of the Branch and through their enthusiasm by residents in the district. The district is bound to improve by the opening up of this fertile bit of country. There are Crown Lands in the vicinity which the Branch is now almost demanding from the Government.¹¹²

The celebration of inter-class alliances to improve the island's agricultural production in the hands of ‘peasant proprietors’ became commonplace across the island. The Parish of Clarendon serves as a prime example of alliances between middle farmers, locally-organized through branch

¹¹⁰ *The Gleaner* July 23, 1926: 35.

¹¹¹ *Journal of the Jamaica Agricultural Society* Vol. XXXIII, No. 4 (April 1929): 111-112.

¹¹² *Journal of the Jamaica Agricultural Society* Vol. XXXIII, No. 4 (April 1929): 111-112.

societies, and their representatives in the Parochial Boards and Legislative Council, with disenfranchised small farmers, tenants, landless farmers during the 1920s. Clarendon, located on the southern part of the island, encompasses plains in its southern and middle stretches and the mountainous interior in the north. In the early twentieth century, the southmost plains (known as Vere) were extensively covered in sugar estates irrigated by a scheme that extracted water from the Rio Minho river and Milk River.¹¹³ In the plains of Mid-Clarendon, north of Vere, both small farmers and a “thriving and influential middle-class proprietorship”¹¹⁴ grew cane and citrus. In the north and north-eastern parts of the parish, Upper Clarendon covers hills rising into the Mocho Mountains and the Bull Head Mountains, which the Rio Minho cuts through as it runs down to the plains. In Upper Clarendon, small farmers settled on the northern side of the Mocho Mountains and southern slopes of the Bull Head Mountains since emancipation grew cane, bananas, coffee, cocoa, and citrus. In the valley between the mountain ranges, former large sugar estates rented land to tenants.¹¹⁵

By the 1920s, most small and middle farmers in Upper and Mid-Clarendon produced sugar cane and bananas. Sugar cane producers sold it for local consumption in Manchester, St. Ann, and St. Catherine or sold it to nearby sugar factories. They supplied a third of the cane milled on the island. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, small banana farmers benefited from

¹¹³ Proposals for irrigating the arid regions of Mid-Clarendon and Vere (lower Clarendon) go back to the nineteenth century. As a result of requests from several estate proprietors from Mid-Clarendon and Vere, Law 38 of 1897 was passed, setting up the Vere Irrigation Commission and granting this body permission to extract water from the Rio Minho and Milk River for an irrigation scheme. S. A. G. Taylor, “An Account of the Development of the Water Resources of the Clarendon Plains,” *Social and Economic Studies* 4, no. 3 (1955): 216–30.

¹¹⁴ *The Gleaner* September 20, 1934: 19.

¹¹⁵ S. A. G. Taylor, *A Short History of Clarendon* (Kingston, Jamaica: Ministry of Education Publications Branch, 1976), 38–39.

the expansion of the parochial road system, which reached several districts in the interior. In 1913, the railway was extended from May Pen, the parish capital and market center located alongside the Rio Minho, to Chapelton in Upper Clarendon, allowing the bananas produced in the interior to reach Kingston. In 1925, the railway was extended from Chapelton to Frankfield, further north-west, and as a result, Upper Clarendon became an important banana-producing area.¹¹⁶

Throughout the 1920s, delegates of the branch societies raised their voices when the negligence of the colonial administration left small and middle farmers at the verge of starvation or at the expense of large plantation interests. For instance, branch societies and the Parochial Board agitated for public irrigation for ‘peasant proprietors’ after sugar cane farmers in Mid-Clarendon were severely affected by a fire that destroyed their crops in July 1922. The fire had spread across the region between Four Paths and St. Jago, lasting five days and destroying farmers’ cane and other crops. The tragedy of the fire was followed by five years of drought¹¹⁷ In 1924, the Mid-Clarendon Branch Society in representation of small and middle farmers living in the most affected north-western corner of Mid-Clarendon began pressing the Government to build an irrigation scheme to supply water to their holdings.

¹¹⁶ Taylor, 42–46.

¹¹⁷ After the tragedy, the Government provided £1,000 for relief, £300 for house material, and £700 for seeds. The Parochial Board and the Jamaica Agricultural Society managed the money for building and planting expenses, respectively. Furthermore, the Government provided a recovery loan of £4,000 through the May Pen Peoples Co-operative Bank Ltd., targeted at small farmers who agreed to plant sugar cane exclusively. To secure the loan, the farmers had to mortgage their properties. The problem came when after the fire, the region suffered a severe drought that lasted from 1923 to 1928, killing seeds and small farmers’ plantations. Also, the factories that purchased cane from small farmers closed. The Custos of the Parish turned his estate, Denbigh Sugar Estate, into a cattle pen, and Parnassus property had to limited to a small quantity of cane milled at Sevens Estate. These properties, Denbigh, and Parnassus were one of the few who purchased cane from small farmers. *The Gleaner* August 04, 1930: 17.

As the irrigation problem of Mid-Clarendon show, the promotion of the ‘peasant proprietorship’ mostly carried by the branch societies and political allies was constantly challenged by the entrenched interests of the United Fruit Company. In 1927, the Mid-Clarendon Branch Society pressed the Legislative Council to appoint an irrigation expert to investigate the viability of irrigating the plains of Mid-Clarendon who suggested a series of significant and minor irrigation projects.¹¹⁸ However, by the end of the decade, the United Fruit Company had acquired large propertities in Vere and Mid-Clarendon. In 1928 the United Fruit Company bought three of the thirty-nine factories accounting for about a third of total production.¹¹⁹ By 1929, the United Fruit Company owned and leased over 129,000 acres of land, around 12,000 under banana cultivation, and 6,500 under sugar. In Clarendon, the United Fruit Company purchased Caswell Hill and Dry River Estates.¹²⁰ That year, the United Fruit Company drilled the first modern borehole wells around Caswell Hill and several more on the northern edge of the lower plains, where they purchased all the sugar estates in lower Vere between the Braziletto Hills and Round Hill.¹²¹ Thus, by the end of the decade, the investments of the United Fruit Company increased the cultivable

¹¹⁸ One of the most ambitious proposals was the construction of a dam at Trout Hall to trap the rainfall of the upper reaches of the Rio Minho. The water from the dam, together with the flow of the principal tributaries of the river, would be then distributed and used to irrigate 14,000 acres of land on the Mid-Clarendon plain. *The Gleaner* August 04, 1930: 17.

¹¹⁹ Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 38, 88.

¹²⁰ S. A. G. Taylor, “An Account of the Development of the Water Resources of the Clarendon Plains,” *Social and Economic Studies*, 1955, 223.

¹²¹ Herbert Harry Croucher and S. A. G. Taylor, *Reports by H. H. Croucher on A Soil Survey of a Portion of the Lower Clarendon Plain with Special Reference to Irrigation, and by S. A. G. Taylor on The Irrigation of Lands in Mid-Clarendon* (Kingston: Government Printing Office, 1938), 15; Taylor, “An Account of the Development of the Water Resources of the Clarendon Plains,” 1955, 224–25.

lands in the parish—but reduced the colonial administration interest in developing public infrastructure that would benefit local farmers.

The growing influence of the United Fruit Company prompted the concerns of the Mid-Clarendon Branch Society and local politicians. Anticipating the lobby of the company, the Mid-Clarendon Branch Society passed several resolutions in July 1929 demanding the Governor Sir Reginald Stubbs to carry out the efforts “for the execution of the irrigation scheme,” “despite the tremendous forces that might” oppose it in an area “suitable for the growing of bananas.”¹²² However, the administration rejected the irrigation expert’s recommendations.¹²³ The expenses of the irrigation projects versus the possible economic returns held the colonial administration back, under the argument that it was more viable if large landowners purchase lands in the area and develop their irrigation schemes.¹²⁴

The locally articulated efforts of branch societies and middle-class representatives in the Parochial Board confronted the administration’s *de facto* preference for large-scale private agricultural development at the expense of small and middle farmers’ properties. In a public meeting of the Mid-Clarendon Branch Society held on November 1929, O. L. A. Rennalls, member of the Parochial Board, contrasted the “wonderful agricultural development of Vere with the barren condition existing in Mid-Clarendon to appreciate the inestimable benefits of an irrigation system

¹²² *The Gleaner* July 29, 1929: 3.

¹²³ H. H. Croucher and S. A. G. Taylor, *Report by H. H. Croucher on A Soil Survey of a Portion of the Lower Clarendon Plain with Special Reference to Irrigation, and by S. A. G. Taylor on The Irrigation of Lands in Mid-Clarendon* (Kingston: Government Printing Office, 1938), 15; Taylor, “An Account of the Development of the Water Resources of the Clarendon Plains,” 1955, 222.

¹²⁴ Taylor, “An Account of the Development of the Water Resources of the Clarendon Plains,” 1955, 223.

where the land is naturally fertile and readily adapted for cultivation.” Rennalls attributed the “barren conditions” existing in the “naturally fertile” lands in Mid-Clarendon to the

inroads of large capitalists in procuring of all valuable irrigable lands which, if continued, will eventually shut out the small land owners who as a result of lack of water for irrigation purposes are compelled to give up their holdings at a sacrifice.¹²⁵

As shown in the case of the Panama disease and irrigation in Mid-Clarendon, the manifestations of branch society delegates in the Jamaica Agricultural Society meetings reveal the challenges that the advocacy for the development of a peasant propertied class faced on the ground. Nevertheless, the branch societies increasingly became a space through which middle- and small-farmers and middle-class politicians converged and pushed the colonial administration to promote further agricultural production in small and middle farmers’ hands. However, in contrast to colonial officials at the end of the nineteenth century who saw the development of a propertied peasantry as a labor reservoir for estate production, the position voiced through the branch societies advocated for peasant production as a primary alternative source of the island’s agricultural prosperity. As will be shown in the following section, that vision was clearly articulated in the petitions for a new land redistribution policy for small and landless farmers by the end of the 1920s.

2.4 Land Redistribution for Small and Tenant Farmers in Upper Clarendon

During the 1920s, the promotion of a model of agricultural prosperity through the expansion of ‘peasant proprietors’ came to include a robust contingent of small and tenant farmers’

¹²⁵ *The Gleaner* December 02, 1929: 9.

voices. The interactions that linked rural middle classes and their political allies to the petitions of small and tenant farmers started taking form early in the decade and was completely articulated as a consistent policy with the purchase of Kellits, a large property in Upper Clarendon, by the colonial administration for a land settlement in 1929. After the limited impact of the Crown land scheme of 1895, the colonial administration pursued a land distribution policy to remedy the growing unemployment of landless ex-servicemen and migrants in the early 1920s. As a result of the demands for farming land for ex-soldiers of the British West India Regiment and returning migrants, the administration started buying specific properties to subdivide them and sold them as small farming plots.

What was new in this new land settlement policy was that it directly addressed disenfranchised tenants' security as a constraint to agriculture improvement on the island. Under this policy, the government started purchasing partially abandoned or tenanted properties, subdivided them into small plots under 5 acres, and sell it back to its tenants or other landless farmers. With the first properties purchased under the new model to ease unemployment in St. Catherine and St. Thomas, the colonial administration sought to "create a new generation of agriculturalists owning their own land."¹²⁶ In 1922 the government bought land at Woodhall, St. Catherine, of which it sold around 490 acres in 198 plots, averaging 2.5 acres each. In 1923, 190 acres in Spring Garden Estate, St. Thomas, were subdivided to eighty-one people, with an average of 2.3 acres each.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Jamaica. Lands Department Commission, *Final Report: 6th September 1935*. (Kingston: Government Printing Office, 1935); *The Gleaner* March 15, 1939: 23.

¹²⁷ Marleen Angella Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1923-1949," in *Jamaica in Slavery and Freedom: History. Heritage and Culture*. Kathleen Monteith and Glen Richards, Ed, ed. Kathleen Monteith and Glen L. Richards (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2002), 327–28.

The explicit connection that sought giving land to disenfranchised tenants and other farmers as a condition to the island's agricultural prosperity came during the second half of the 1920s with the explicit involvement of middle-class politicians as active intermediaries. Perhaps one of the most outspoken politicians of this cause was J.A.G. Smith, the member of the Legislative Council for Clarendon. Smith emerged as a representative of prosperous middle-farmers in the Legislative Council and performed as a hinge between them and the disenfranchised tenants and small farmers, and a voice for the promotion of small 'peasant proprietors.' From a peasant family of Hanover himself, Smith was an Afro-Jamaican barrister and elected to the Legislative Council for Clarendon from 1917 until 1942. As one of the few black members of the Legislative Council, he became one of the most eager advocates for a new Constitution and grew a reputation as a champion of the black masses.¹²⁸

J.A.G. Smith first brought the proposal for redistribution of large properties in Upper Clarendon to the Legislative Council in 1926. He justified his proposal based on the best interests of the "people, agriculture and the Government."¹²⁹ In a series of debates of the Legislative Council in 1926, Smith criticized landlords' abuse of their tenants as a constraint to permanent land improvements. He worked behind the scenes as well. In letters to the Colonial Secretary, Smith

¹²⁸ For more on Smith's role and influence during his tenure as member of the Legislative Council, see James Carnegie, *Some Aspects of Jamaica's Politics, 1918-1938*, vol. 4 (Kingston: Institute of Jamaica, 1973), 63–95; As an example of his reputation as champion of the black masses: In a U.N.I.A. meeting held in Kingston in 1921, Marcus Garvey addressed a crowd and criticized the lack of good statesmanship in Jamaica. Garvey stated the need for a leader in Jamaica "who would devote himself to the cause and interests of the people -whether he was a J. A. G. Smith (cheers) or a Gordon Somers." Robert A. Hill, *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*, vol. Volume III September 1920-August 1921 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1984), 295, n.2.

¹²⁹ *The Gleaner* April 14, 1926: 6

urged the Government to acquire properties controlled by Leonard Sutton in Upper Clarendon to divide them and sell them back to tenants or other small farmers. Smith was mindful not just of land access but the transportation that export promotion required, pointing out to the properties nearby the newly finished railway extension at Frankfield and expressed that it was in “the greatest interest to the Parish to have these lands developed to the fullest extent and this will be brought about by a Land Settlement Scheme for this District under Government Control.” Smith insisted that it was of “considerable importance both from the Government standpoint and to a very large number of people in that part of the Parish.”¹³⁰ In his speeches to the Legislative Council and his communications to colonial officials, Smith asserted that the island’s agricultural prosperity was contingent on the transformations of the landless and tenant masses into landed classes.

Smith was not alone in his deliberations. By the early 1920s, the numbers of landless farmers who had to rent lands in unused or ruinated estates that large landowners were reluctant to sell had increased.¹³¹ Many of the farmers who entered these unequal and dependent relations hoped that the owners would eventually sell them a plot to become independent farmers. However, as in several cases indicate up until the 1920s, large landowners rented out land to farmers only to then evict them after had made improvements on the land. Therefore, many voices, including colonial officials, politicians, and branch societies started promoting turning land-insecure farmers into landed proprietors in the same properties they rented as a strategy secured the island’s agricultural production. Similar to J.A.G. Smith, R. O. Terrier, delegate of the Clarendon Branches

¹³⁰ Letters from J.A.G. Smith, member of the Legislative Council for Clarendon, to Colonial Secretary, May 28 and July 12, 1926, 1B/5/77/338 – 1926, Land Settlement Scheme - Upper Clarendon, Colonial Secretary Office [hereafter C.S.O.], Jamaican National Archives [hereafter J.N.A.], Spanish Town, Jamaica.

¹³¹ Brodber, *The Second Generation of Freeman in Jamaica, 1907-1944*, 63–95.

Associated spoke up at the Jamaica Agricultural Society's January Half-Yearly Meeting in Kingston in 1929, criticizing the mistreatment of tenants that were denied compensation for improvements on properties, including houses and "permanent plantings such as coconut trees, citrus, coffee, cocoa and bananas."¹³² Smith presented tenants' insecurity and lack of compensations at the Legislative Council and Terrier at meetings of the Jamaica Agricultural Society as a constraint to the islands' agricultural improvements.

Smith's relationship with tenants in Upper Clarendon was an effort to secure land for them in the face of the growing interests of the United Fruit Company in the banana-growing hilly interior. In 1927, Smith took on a special interest in Kellits, a large 5,000-acre property, with at least 420 tenants renting around 2,000 acres. He had received letters from tenants at Kellits property worried about rumors that the United Fruit Company would purchase the property, or part of it, and evict them. In September, a tenant named Othniel Adolphus Thyme wrote that the "whole of Upper Clarendon is dependent on this property owing to the fact that no more lands around is available for small settlers with the exception of the said property." In October, another resident explained how "many hundreds are tenants on this side of the property will be turned off our possessions."¹³³ The writers believed that through Smith they would have some chance of making their voices heard, and they were not wrong: Smith cited these letters in turn in his own correspondence with the Governor, doubling down on his role as a conduit for the concerns of rural cultivators.

¹³² *Journal of the Jamaica Agricultural Society* Vol. XXXIII, No. 4 (April 1929): 31-32

¹³³ Letters from J.A.G. Smith, member of the Legislative Council for Clarendon, to Governor R. E. Stubbs, January 21 and February 21, 1928, 1B/5/77/338 – 1926, Land Settlement Scheme - Upper Clarendon, C.S.O. J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

In his interactions with small and tenant farmers, Smith suggested that the island's agricultural prosperity in landed farmers' hands and the procurement of their welfare was the government's obligation. On January 28th, 1928, Smith addressed large gatherings at Croft's Hill and Far Enough, Upper Clarendon, where residents welcomed him with banners stretching across the road, manifesting people's need for lands and roads. At the meetings, small farmers and tenants expressed hope that he would use his influence not only to secure the property but for further improvements in the region – roads, schools, and houses. They were “basing their hopes of a land settlement scheme, fostered by the Government.”¹³⁴ At Crofts' Hill, Smith commented on foreign corporations' interest in Upper Clarendon as a disaster to the people and the region. Moreover, he articulated an expectation of the state's role in promoting not only the island's agricultural prosperity but also local well-being through a community of landed farmers, explicitly blaming the Government if that was not to happen.

I further understand that one of the foreign corporations is negotiating for a certain property in Upper Clarendon, a property which is eminently suitable for Land Settlement; the Government has been asked to help the hundreds of tenants and other peasants by purchasing it and reselling it to them – Here again the Government is not acting in the interest of the people and I hate to picture the calamity it will be for the entire District of this Parish if one of these Corporations should purchase this property.¹³⁵

In the processes that led up to the establishment of Kellits Land Settlement, Smith articulated his role as one of intermediary between small and tenant farmers and the colonial administration. At Far Enough, Smith urged “his constituents” “to pass a resolution that afternoon to strengthen his hands,” and “telling him [the Governor] that it would be a calamity to the district

¹³⁴ *The Gleaner* January 30, 1928: 6

¹³⁵ *The Gleaner* January 30, 1928: 6

if Kellets [sic] was not secured for a land development scheme.” Smith would use the resolution to press the matter further on the Government to insist on land in Upper Clarendon.¹³⁶ In addition to the resolutions passed at Croft’s Hill and Far Enough, in February 1928, in a resolution “unanimously passed at a very large gathering of tenants of Kellits property and others in the District, who would purchase land from the property if it were acquired by the Government” they asked Smith “to bring their position before the Government.” Smith had warned the Governor earlier that year on the “serious consequences” “if the Government should persist in its refusal to acquire this property for the purpose of a land Settlement.”¹³⁷

These emerging routes for pressure to push the colonial government for action worked to gain colonial officialdom attention. Through influential allies like J.A.G. Smith, small and tenant farmers in Upper Clarendon were able to directly tell the Governor the constraints of the tenancy as opposed to the potential benefits of small, landed proprietorship to agricultural production on the island. In August 1928, the Acting Governor Sir Arthur S. Jelf visited Kellits and surrounding districts, accompanied by J.A.G. Smith. After inspecting the property, the party went to the schoolroom at Good Hope, where the Governor met with small farmers and tenants from the area. There, he informed them that the arrangements to acquire the property for land settlement were on the way.¹³⁸

The Acting Governor’s visit to Upper Clarendon illustrates how the idea that the expansion of small landed proprietors would pave the way towards prosperity was shared by the masses of

¹³⁶ *The Gleaner* January 30, 1928: 19

¹³⁷ Letters from J.A.G. Smith, member of the Legislative Council for Clarendon, to Governor R. E. Stubbs, January 21 and February 21, 1928, 1B/5/77/338 – 1926, Land Settlement Scheme - Upper Clarendon, C.S.O. J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

¹³⁸ *The Gleaner* August 13, 1928: 6

small and tenant farmers and their middle-class peers alike. At the meeting with Jelf, Mr. Jennings, a schoolteacher and influential member of the district at Kellits, explained to the Governor that despite many of them have been “tenants for 10, 20, 30, or 40 years,” none of them “would improve [the] lands” that “were in the hands of the large landed proprietors.” In contrast, if the lands “were in the hands of the people as small holdings they would plant staple products such as coffee, cocoa, coconuts and timber which would be a great help towards afforestation of the property.” Jennings concluded by arguing that many people were “prevented from building suitable houses because the land was not theirs and they might be turned off it at any time and the money spent would have been wasted.”

In similar terms spoke Mr. Richard, a tenant on Kellits for over 30 years, indicating that like his father and grandfather before him, had been tenants at Kellits probably for eighty years. Mr. Richards stressed that “landless people would always be a dependent people” and that neither they would fully engage in agriculture “without lands of their own.” Mr. Richard compared the agricultural conditions in the surrounding area in terms of its land tenure system:

Let His Excellency look the other side and he would see the rented lands occupied by the same inhabitants and then on the other side they had Kellits left behind without any proper settlement. Kellits sold to the people was a beautiful district and if they were able to purchase the whole thing it would all be put under beautiful cultivation.

Mr. Richard insisted that the Governor “consider the tenants first and give them first preference” as opposed to “bigger people outside,” “who were able to handle bigger money,” and “buy up large tracts of the property if it was to be sold.” Another tenant, Mr. Alfred Johnson, mentioned that his great grandfather was a tenant before him and that his family had been paying rent for over eighty years. Mr. Johnson expressed his desire to plant more cocoa plants, from which

he has had good results, and someday tell “the poorest tenants” that with their little holdings, they could “make themselves independent.”¹³⁹

The specific language used by these tenants at Kellits revealed not only the circumstances that the disenfranchised rural masses faced on the island but also the historical trajectory of the policies that brought the Governor and a member of the Legislative Council to their community schoolroom. By the end of the 1920s, the explicit support of various sectors of Jamaican society, from influential exporters, colonial officials, to middle-class politicians and farmers, to the expansion of a peasant proprietor class, illustrates two aspects. First, different from late colonial policies that sought the settlement of ‘peasant proprietors’ as an attachment to the plantation system, by the 1920s, there was a growing belief that the potential agricultural and economic development of the island laid in the hands of small independent and fully cultivated holdings, including plots below five acres, as opposed to the prevalence of large, tenanted proprietries. Second, that this belief was not imposed from the top-down by colonial officials, economic elites, nor philanthropic politicians, but was built through organizing spaces and communication channels that forged alliances between landless tenants and small and middle farmers vis a vis common concerns over disease, drought, or curtailing the influence of large foreign landed interests.

2.5 Conclusion

Between 1895 to the 1920s, most of the policies directed at what colonial bureaucracy thought of as “peasant proprietors” directly benefited – more or less – the stratum of middle

¹³⁹ *The Gleaner* August 13, 1928: 15

farmers on the island, those whose families generally owned farms ranging from five to fifty acres, or more. This policy orientation went hand in hand with the building of bureaucratic and professional structures that created a constrained but a real political voice for that same sector. Thus, the Jamaica Agricultural Society created a critical and new social and political platform for middle farmers. While these policies did not clearly define who exactly the intended beneficiaries were, up until the 1920s, these policies marginalized small and tenant farmers. That set of disenfranchised and disadvantaged rural masses was increasing in numbers by the late 1920s and increasingly demanded recognition from colonial officialdom as part of the island's wealth.

That recognizing came from different venues that raised their voice. The strong stance that delegates of branch societies located in banana areas took against the Panama disease treatment, combined with the speeches delivered by J.A.G. Smith at the Legislative Council, the disappointment expressed by O. L. A. Rennalls, member of the Parochial Board, when the government failed to finance the irrigation of Mid-Clarendon, the resolutions presented by R. O. Terrier, delegate of the Clarendon Branches Associated, addressing the injustices suffered by tenants, and the hopes raised the residents of Kellits to the Governor at Kellits; all saw in the small landed farmers the pathway to the agricultural prosperity of the island.

The steady locally organized interaction between the disenfranchised tenants, small farmers, and middle farmers with representatives in the Jamaica Agricultural Society, Parochial Boards, and the Legislative Council meant that their grievances received an actual hearing, and sometimes resulted in action. As shown in the following chapter, as a result of those interactions, the colonial administration steadily pursued a broader land settlement policy on the island, aiming to increase the number of small farmers on the ground in properties between 3 to 25 acres after 1929.

3.0 Petitions and Protest: Colonial Development and the Small Independent Landowners, 1929-1940

In a series of articles published by *The Gleaner* in 1931, ex-Governor Sidney Olivier celebrated the entrepreneurial spirit of the small Jamaican farmer. He claimed that “small personal ownership and cultivation” was destined to become the most widely established economic system on the island. Olivier argued that the only sector of Jamaican society protesting the increase of small proprietors was “the most old-time-spirited planter.”¹⁴⁰ British officials posted to Jamaica joined Olivier in insisting that the future of the island’s economy depended on small farmers’ cultivation rather than large-scale plantations and foreign capital.¹⁴¹ Over the course of the 1930s, support for policies to increase the number of “peasant proprietors” on the ground grew amongst the planter and merchant elite, the middle rural and urban classes, and the nascent trade union movement. This chapter explores how the colonial vision of economic development based on a peasant-oriented export model evolved to incorporate ideas on the importance of the state’s role in securing land, agricultural extension services, and employment as a form of social welfare.

The first section of the chapter illustrates how colonial development’s vision included expanding Jamaica’s “small independent land-owner” as a fundamental part of the diversified agricultural export model. The group that directly benefited from colonial attempts to increase the island’s export capacity by the end of the 1920s were Jamaican banana planters and exporters. The

¹⁴⁰ *The Gleaner* November 23, 1931: 17

¹⁴¹ See for example, H. H. Cousins’ intervention at the Half-Yearly Meeting of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, July 1929, *Journal of the Jamaica Agricultural Society*, Vol. XXXIII: 25

financial support from the Colonial Office led to the rise of the cooperative Jamaica Banana Producers' Association (JBPA). This local association successfully broke the shipping monopoly of transnational United Fruit Company (UFCo) became an institution which protected the interests of midsized and small producers from 1929 to 1936.

Nevertheless, this changed when two hurricanes caused a fruit shortage in the early 1930s. Competition between the JBPA and the UFCo increased; the latter increased the prices it paid to small and middle producers. The JBPA, (unable to match the increase), faced a reduced capacity to purchase fruit. The effects of the fruit shortage and the high prices that the UFCo offered to small banana producers were twofold. It helped accelerate the sale of small plots to rural dwellers under a new land settlement policy. It also damaged the JBPA's finances and its capacity to repay loans.

The land settlement policy was the first colonial policy that explicitly gave land to rural society's lower sectors. As explored in the previous chapter, after 1929 the colonial administration enacted the land settlement policy to redistribute large unused or tenanted properties to small landowners. Small farmers, tenants, and other rural dwellers actively participated in this process, advancing the idea that small landowners were fundamental to the island's economic growth. By the mid-1930s, the land settlement policy included officials from the Department of Agricultural who stressed the policy's role as part of the vision to improve the island's agricultural production for exports by establishing "successful and prosperous small holders."¹⁴²

Some wealthy Jamaican planters, merchants and urban and rural middle classes also supported the push to establish "successful and prosperous small holders." By the mid-1930s, sectors of the island's economic elite and middle classes referred to "development" not only in the

¹⁴² Jamaica. Lands Department Commission, *Final Report: 6th September 1935.*, 23.

colonial economic sense—development of natural resources, infrastructure, agricultural exports— but also on its potential to improve the living conditions of broader sectors of society. Perhaps the most important organization that came out of this period was Jamaica Welfare Limited. Founded in 1937 by urban professionals and members of the middle class, the organization sought to assist in “the cultural advancement of the peasantry of Jamaica.”¹⁴³

During the second half of the 1930s, the colonial administration started facing questions around poverty, unemployment, and welfare beyond the colonial economic development tenets. The second section of this chapter describes how, in the second half of the decade, conceptions of the state’s responsibility expanded beyond economic growth to include popular welfare. The white elite and middle classes held a broad concept of “development” that principally referred to economic growth and vaguely included notions of “cultural advancement.” In contrast, the trade union movement and rural dwellers encouraged the colonial administration to expand the land settlement policy as a practical solution to alleviate the island’s rampant unemployment.

The petitions of trade unionists, small farmers, tenants, and the unemployed requested the colonial administration’s direct intervention in their social and economic challenges. The Jamaica Workers’ and Tradesmen’s Union (JWTU) advocated for state intervention in solving the island’s social and economic problems and endorsed the land settlement policy as a practical and long-term solution to unemployment. Tenants, small farmers, the unemployed, and other rural dwellers from the interior also wrote petitions to the colonial administration, members of the Legislative Council, and the Parochial Boards, requesting relief works, water supplies, roads, schools, and more prominently, land for “peasant agriculture.” In other words, demands for public employment to

¹⁴³ Francis, “The Evolution of Community Development in Jamaica (1937-1962).”

help those without work and support for those without land were not separate alternatives promoted by separate groups, rather a single solution supported by the diverse actors who made up rural communities.

The impetus for the state to transition to a development model that incorporated the pursuit of social and economic improvements for all social sectors came in June 1938. Government measures taken up until this point proved insufficient to stop the labour revolts that spread across the island from May and June 1938.¹⁴⁴ Known as the “Labour Rebellion,” urban employees, dockworkers, estate laborers, public and private workers, and the unemployed went on strike, organized demonstrations, and rioted throughout the island. The colonial administration offered more land settlements in the interior to console tenants, farmers, and unemployed.

The “Labour Rebellion” had profound impacts on Jamaican history. The Labor Rebellion paved the way to universal suffrage, constitutional reform, and self-government in 1944. This chapter shows how the uprising of disenfranchised tenants and the unemployed in the interior also profoundly impacted public conceptions of the state’s role in land redistribution and social welfare. As a result, in June 1938, the colonial administration enacted a new land settlement policy which included administrative changes, more funds, and agricultural services. Additionally, the colonial administration provided more public relief employment as a solution to raging unemployment. This chapter shows how those changes within the colonial administration went along with a strengthened and increasingly formalized role for intermediary middle-class leaders. As the late 1930s drew on, contemporary sources offer evidence of the increased personalized relationship

¹⁴⁴ Palmer, *Freedom’s Children: The 1938 Labor Rebellion and the Birth of Modern Jamaica*.

between rural masses and middle-class intermediaries and politicians, who secured direct access to the colonial administration.

3.1 Export-oriented Agriculture and Small Landowners, 1929-1937

The first half of the 1930s saw a marked shift from a development vision that saw economic potential in the landholding peasant population to one that considered their social welfare as well. In this period, the white elites and black and “coloured” middle classes embraced the “small landowners” as central to the economic and cultural development of the island. Their vision of development, which included the expansion of the Jamaica small “peasant proprietorship,” was much in tune with British attempts to increase colonial export capacity at the end of the 1920s. The British Parliament’s Colonial Development Bill of 1929 sought to increase – through loans and grants – the economic capacity of its colonies and thus stimulate the British export trade and bring down metropolitan unemployment. Under the Colonial Development Act, ‘development’ meant optimizing the colonies’ economic resources by expanding their export potential and capacity to import British goods and materials. The bill created a Colonial Development Advisory Committee, which controlled an annual budget of £1 million earmarked to fund proposals by colonial governments.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵ E. R. Wicker, “Colonial Development and Welfare, 1929-1957: The Evolution of a Policy,” *Social and Economic Studies* 7, no. 4 (1958): 174–78; George C. Abbott, “A Re-Examination of the 1929 Colonial Development Act,” *The Economic History Review* 24, no. 1 (1971): 68–81; Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa*, 1996.

The group that most directly benefited from the CD Act of 1929 were Jamaican banana planters and exporters. In 1929, the Colonial Development Fund gave Jamaican large banana planters and exporters a loan of £50,000 to form the Jamaica Banana Producers' Association (JBPA). The cooperative aimed to challenge the United Fruit Company's (UFCo) monopoly and control the banana trade to Great Britain. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the UFCo had monopolized the banana trade, controlled the local fruit prices through buying agents and banana dealers, and became a large landowner in St. Thomas, Portland, and St. Mary.¹⁴⁶ When the JBPA started operations, the UFCo owned and leased over 129,000 acres; 12,000 of those were under banana cultivation¹⁴⁷. The loan from the Colonial Development Fund allowed the JBPA to purchase and recondition refrigerated ships to export bananas to the British market, breaking the shipping monopoly of UFCo.

The JBPA quickly became a powerful force in the industry, representing the interests of Jamaican large banana planters, merchants, and middle and small banana producers from 1929 to 1936. The JBPA operated based on contracts that offered flat prices per banana bunch, which favored small and middle banana producers that had been victims of the agents and dealers of the UFCo and the Standard Fruit Company.¹⁴⁸ In 1929, the JBPA transported over 4 million stems of bananas from 7,694 contractors. This was almost 20% of the island's total banana exports from 1927.¹⁴⁹ Almost half of the fruit came from contractors owning less than 50 acres, small and middle banana growers. By 1935, the JBPA controlled a strong base of small and middle banana

¹⁴⁶ Hart, "The Banana in Jamaica: Export Trade," 213–21.

¹⁴⁷ Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 90.

¹⁴⁸ A "count bunch" or just "bunch" means a whole "stem" of fruit of nine hands or more. The stem of one plant has layers called each a "hand" and each individual banana is called a "finger"

¹⁴⁹ Hart, "The Banana in Jamaica: Export Trade," 220.

contractors as opposed to the UFCo, which continued to use contractors holding above 50 acres for its supply (see table 5).

Nevertheless, the emergent influence of the JBPA was quickly jeopardized by the economic impact of the Great Depression. Between 1929 and 1932, Jamaican export demand and prices sharply contracted, affecting the island's agricultural sector.¹⁵⁰ In addition to the contraction of the export market and prices, two hurricanes in 1932 and 1933 severely affected banana production and caused a fruit shortage. Under these conditions, the competition between the JBPA and the UFCo intensified. In an effort to secure the supply of the small and middle producers, the UFCo increased the amount they paid for their fruit. In 1932, the roughly 11,000 contractors of the JBPA produced about 32% of the bananas shipped from the island. By 1933, this dropped to 27% of the bananas on the island.¹⁵¹ The fruit shortage and the high prices that the United Fruit Company offered to small banana producers had two effects. First, the loss of income suffered by the JBPA damaged its financial security and compromised its ability to repay its loans. Second, it helped accelerate the sale of small plots to rural dwellers under a new land redistribution policy: the land settlement scheme.

The colonial administration soon saw reason to expand their land settlement policy. In 1929, the colonial administration had enacted the land settlement policy to purchase unused or tenanted properties to sell to tenants, small farmers, or returning migrants who would produce in

¹⁵⁰ Its three primary products – sugar, coffee, and bananas – accounted for 74.5% of the island's exports in 1930. Between 1929 and 1932, export prices plunged by 44%. From 1929 to 1931, the price of sugar dropped by 31%, bananas by 24.5%, and coffee by 28.4%. Richard L. Bernal, "The Great Depression, Colonial Policy and Industrialization in Jamaica," *Social and Economic Studies* 37, no. 1/2 (1988): 36–39.

¹⁵¹ Hart, "The Banana in Jamaica: Export Trade," 221; Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938*, 356–57.

secured conditions. However, the competition of the banana companies, rising banana prices, and the state's investment in boosting banana exports coincided with increasing numbers of returning migrants to incentivize more people to become small landowners.¹⁵² During the second half of the 1920s and early 1930s, Jamaicans' net return significantly increased from 5476 between 1925 to 1929 to 22560 between 1930 and 1934 (see Table 6). After the purchase of Kellits in 1929, the colonial administration enacted the land settlement policy to purchase more unused or tenanted properties to subdivide them and sell them to tenants, small farmers, or returned migrants who would produce in secured conditions. The high number of plots allotted under the land settlement scheme in 1934, with an average of 2.4 acres (see Table 7), suggests that the increasing number of applications—from rural laborers, tenants, and returning migrants willing to establish themselves as small banana producers—surpassed the acreage available for sale under the scheme.

The reports of colonial officials demonstrated the administration's interest in fostering a diversified-export oriented economy with participation of a small landholding peasant stratum. Under the 1929 land settlement policy, applicants had to deposit 25% of the total purchase price of the plots that ranged between three and twenty-five acres and pay the remainder over five years before getting the land title.¹⁵³ From 1929 to 1938 (table 7) the administration established 31 land

¹⁵² By the early 1920s, Jamaican migrants started returning from Latin American countries and the United States, countries no longer receiving Afro-Caribbean workers. The rise of state racism throughout the circum-Caribbean Latin American countries led to the enactment of anti-black laws, which halted emigration from the Caribbean islands during the 1920s. Lara Putnam, "Foráneos al Fin: La Saga Multigeneracional de Los Antillanos Británicos En América Central, 1870-1940," in *La Negritud En Centroamérica: Entre Razas y Raíces*, ed. Lowell Gudmundson and Justine Wolfe (San José, C.R.: Editorial Universidad Estatal a Distancia, 2012), 367–403; These first few migrants' returns prompted the colonial administration to precisely purchase the first properties to settle them in small farming plots in the early 1920s, as explained in the previous chapter.

¹⁵³ Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980," 71; Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1923-1949," 328.

settlements, amounting to 28,778 acres subdivided into 5,897 lots averaging less than 5 acres each. The subdivision of plots was accompanied by reports on their potential to produce agricultural exports and crops for the domestic market. The reports of E. N. Bancroft, Surveyor-General in 1931, show the administration's aspiration to revitalize abandoned or poorly managed properties and put them back in production. For example, celebrating colonial investment in the constructions of roads that gave entrance and exit to smallholdings in Tobolski, a grazing property of 2,500 acres situated within 2 miles of Brown's Town, a market town in St. Ann parish, Bancroft wrote:

Although this property is primarily a grazing one, it will grow good provisions and citrus, and as this is the chief need in that district, there is every hope that in a short time the property will be completely sold and in the hands of small settlers.¹⁵⁴

Jamaica's rural population actively participated in this process of colonial investment in lands and infrastructure. In the language of their petitions, small farmers and tenants reinforced how their role as landowners was fundamental for the island's agricultural prosperity and economic growth. For example, in April 1933, eighty-one tenants in Manchester addressed a petition to the Legislative Council, urging the purchase of Melrose property to establish a land settlement in the area. The petitioners stated that there was a lack of suitable lands in the district for cultivation and that the 1033-acre property, which adjoined the main road between market towns, was ideal for growing ground provisions and especially suited for the cultivation of citrus.

Your petitioners are now, more than ever, desirous of becoming owners, instead of as is at present the case, Tennants [sic] in the majority of instances, so that agricultural pursuits may be carried on without fear of being turned off the lands.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ 1B/5/77/178 – 1931, Land Settlement- Report by Surveyor General, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

¹⁵⁵ 1B/5/77/316 – 1933, Land Settlement - Melrose, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

In spite of the eager interest of rural populations, the implementation of the land settlement policy presented several shortcomings. These limited the ability of the new small proprietors to develop their agricultural prospects to the fullest. The shortcomings were related to infrastructural improvements, agricultural assistance, and the administration of the policy in the hands of the Surveyor-General of the Lands and Survey Department. Several petitioners complained about the lack of infrastructural improvements. Many new properties were located in less fertile hillside areas and marginal plantation properties, with inadequate infrastructure and new owners were without access to credit or extension services.¹⁵⁶ Residents at Kellits Land Settlement—the first settlement established in 1929—continuously denounced the complete absence of roads, bridges, and medical facilities in the area. The lack of roads constrained their economic growth. They argued that they could not take their products out on time, arriving, in many cases, “too late for shipment with the result of heavy losses to the poor producers.”¹⁵⁷ The problems outlined by the residents of Kellits showed a complete disassociation between land distribution and diligent infrastructure improvements.

Failures in the policy’s administration led small farmers to complain about communication and agricultural services. In light of these complaints, the colonial administration made a series of changes in 1933 and 1935 to improve the Lands and Survey Department’s capacity to address the infrastructural limitations and agricultural assistance. The colonial administration created the

¹⁵⁶ Claus Stolberg, “Plantation Economy, Peasantry and the Land Settlement Schemes of the 1930s and 1940s in Jamaica,” in *Plantation Economy, Land Reform and the Peasantry in a Historical Perspective: Jamaica, 1838-1980*, ed. Claus Stolberg and Swithin Wilmot, 1992, 39–68; Helen McBain, “Constraints on the Development of Jamaican Agriculture,” in *Plantation Economy, Land Reform and the Peasantry in a Historical Perspective: Jamaica*, ed. Claus Stolberg and Swithin Wilmot, 1992, 127–44.

¹⁵⁷ *The Gleaner* September 12, 1934: 17

Central Lands Advisory Board in 1933, consisted of the Surveyor-General, the Assistant Director of Public Works, and members of the Legislative Council. The Board assisted the Surveyor-General in selecting and dividing properties, the administration of the schemes, and their economic viability.¹⁵⁸ Two years later, the administration added an officer from the Department of Agricultural to the Board, emphasizing the vision to improve the island's agricultural production for exports by establishing "successful and prosperous small holders."¹⁵⁹ The land settlement policy included setting demonstration plots on each settlement to teach better cultivation practices, and appointing a small number of field officers to assist in agricultural education.¹⁶⁰

Neither Colonial officials nor the rural inhabitants were alone in this desire to establish "successful and prosperous small holders." By the mid-1930s, wealthy Jamaican planters and merchants – represented by the JBPA and the Jamaican Imperial Association – along with urban professionals and the rural middle class all vocally supported the expansion of small "peasant proprietorship." These groups saw land settlements as a source of economic stability and social improvement on the island. The growing nationalist rhetoric of wealthy planters, merchants, urban professionals, and the rural middle class linked the small farmers' "personal ownership" and economic independence to the island's civilizing endeavor.¹⁶¹ They promoted small private

¹⁵⁸ *The Gleaner* March 15, 1939: 23

¹⁵⁹ Jamaica. Lands Department Commission, *Final Report: 6th September 1935.*, 23.

¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, historian Marleen Barley argues that there was "hardly anything new" in the land settlement policies after 1935, and the administration failed to provide any substantial help in subsequent settlements. Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980," 75–77.

¹⁶¹ Urban professional and middle classes linked to charitable and cultural organizations developed by the mid-1930s, a nationalist rhetoric that included a series of commercial platforms and civic initiatives encouraging the expansion of Jamaican-owned enterprises and agricultural production. Middle- and lower-class manufacturers, merchants, and shopkeepers affected by the economic depression developed a nationalist posture in defense of Jamaican business and

proprietorship, small farmers' economic independence, and the black rural masses' cultural improvement as intertwined components.

When the JBPA started experiencing serious financial problems after 1933, it justified its existence in terms of its role in the development of the island and small peasants. Due to the banana shortage and the competition from the UFCo, by 1935 the JBPA found it increasingly challenging to pay loans granted to its contractors. To save itself from economic collapse, the JBPA applied to the colonial administration for direct financial support and temporary interest relief on its debts. During the ensuing debate on whether to assist the JBPA in its financial crises, the failing cooperative argued that the UFCo intended to bankrupt them and reestablish a monopoly on the island. The JBPA underlined its role in raising “the worth and value of the peasant proprietors of this Island,” its great potential as a “civilising agency,” and its impact as the cause of the island’s “comparative prosperity” despite the economic crisis.¹⁶² In a July 1935 letter to Malcolm MacDonald, Secretary of State for the Colonies, the JBPA leadership described the organization as a body able to guide the economic and cultural development of the peasant proprietors:

The policy of the Government has been to encourage the growth of the peasant proprietor class, and it is now fully appreciated that the future development and prosperity of Jamaica is largely dependent upon the intelligent development, culturally and economically, of this multitude of small independent land-owners. The wants of the peasant proprietor are bound to expand with his cultural development and his requirements cannot entirely be met by this ability to produce for his own consumption and the small internal trade in foodstuffs. The existence

local production. Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 89–116, 205–9; Bernal, “The Great Depression, Colonial Policy and Industrialization in Jamaica,” 41.

¹⁶² Jamaica Banana Producers Association Ltd., *The Petition, Memorial and Apprentices of the Jamaica Banana Producers Association Limited and Members of the Island Committee Appointed at the Public Meeting Convened to Consider the Problems Confronting the Jamaica Banana Producers Association and the Banana Industry of Jamaica, on 18th July 1935, to the Rt. Hon. Malcolm Macdonald, His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies*. (Kingston, Jamaica: s.n., 1935), 5–10.

of some exportable crop which will secure to him a cash return is essential, but such a crop cannot be regarded as satisfactory unless there is a reliable market for that crop continuously available to that class of producer.

What is striking from JBPA argumentation is not simply how omnipresent the concept “development” became, but how intertwined economic and cultural factors were in its implementation. There is a marked shift during the 1930s in which wealthy Jamaican planters and middle classes increasingly referred to “development” not only in the colonial economic sense—development of natural resources, infrastructure, and agricultural exports—but on its potential to improve the living conditions of the peasant population. The JBPA argued that the United Fruit Company’s monopolizing practices threatened small banana producers’ economic independence and hindered, as a consequence, the island’s economic and cultural development. The JBPA saw itself as a protective body which would safeguard landowners from “commercial exploitation.” They advocated instead the development of “self-supporting, independent, small and large landed proprietors.” That economic independence, protected from foreign exploitation, would provide “the most wholesome background for their educational and cultural evolution” and create “the ideal atmosphere in which such a community could healthy develop.”¹⁶³

This vision of a small-peasant export economy became widely accepted during the 1930s. Although the colonial development model from the late nineteenth century acknowledged the importance of the “peasant proprietorship” to the agricultural export model and the monoculture plantation system—as explained in the previous chapter—by the 1930s, more sectors had explicitly joined the call to promote small farmers as the backbone of the export economy. In addition to the JBPA, wealthy Jamaican planters and merchants belonging to the Jamaica Imperial

¹⁶³ Jamaica Banana Producers Association Ltd., 13–20.

Association (JIA), the most influential planter-merchant association on the island, shared the vision.¹⁶⁴ In the annual meeting of the JIA in 1936, Arthur Farquharson, a prominent planter and president of the association, emphasized that “the future of the island depends on our small settlers.” He also highlighted the importance of state assistance to guide small farmers’ production:

They provide about 2/3 of our exportable products and it is of the first consequence that they should be helped in three ways. First of all, they must have suitable land allotted to them - a good deal has been done during the last ten years and a great deal more should be done [...] education on proper lines [...] facilities for credit [...] proper markets for their produce.¹⁶⁵

Perhaps the most important organization that emerged from this period in terms of economic and social welfare services the Jamaica Welfare Limited. This organization, which will feature more prominently in the following chapter, was founded by urban professionals and middle classes that linked the small-peasant export-oriented model’s importance to a growing nationalist movement. The organization was financed, ironically, as part of a deal that restored the UFCo’s banana export monopoly on the island in 1936.

The UFCo came out on top of its battle with the JBPA. Although the Legislative Council granted JBPA a moratorium on its debt payments, a special investigatory commission on the banana trade in Jamaica sided with the UFCo. Appointed by the Colonial Office, the commission, mirroring the position of the UFCo, reported that the inefficiencies and inadequate management of the JBPA, the poor fruit quality it was able to afford, and its volatile price system could discredit

¹⁶⁴ By 1936 the Jamaica Imperial Association had 240 members, primarily wealthy planters, merchants, and professionals. Through its members, the association had direct access to the government and the local press, particularly *The Gleaner*. Stone, “Political Aspects of Postwar Agricultural Policies in Jamaica (1945-1970),” 172, n.7.

¹⁶⁵ Jamaica Imperial Association, Annual Report, 1936, p.24, cited by Stone, 152.

the Jamaica trade. The Banana Commission recommended that the only way for the JBPA to stay in business was to cooperate with UFCo. Ultimately, the JBPA agreed to sell its ships to a subsidiary of UFCo, abandon its cooperative structure, reorganize as a limited-liability company, and merely collect the fruit of its members and sell it to UFCo for marketing in the British market.¹⁶⁶ With the JBPA no longer competing against the UFCo, the transnational corporation, in alliance with urban professionals, agreed to finance a program to assist in “the cultural advancement of the peasantry of Jamaica.”¹⁶⁷

Jamaica Welfare Limited was created as a result of this agreement. While Sam Zemurray, Manager of the United Fruit Company, was steadfast in terminating the competition from the Jamaican planters and merchants, he also benefited from small banana growers’ production. Along with Norman Washington Manley, one of the most prominent lawyers in the island and representative of the JBPA, Zemurray agreed to form a social welfare organization committed to “the cultural advancement of the peasantry of Jamaica.” Under this agreement, the UFCo would set aside one US cent for every count of bananas exported from the island to finance the Jamaica Welfare Ltd. The new organization, managed by Manley, was formed in June 1937 to assist in the island’s peasantry’s economic and social development.

By the time Jamaican Welfare Ltd. was created there was a widespread awareness that “development” in the colonial sense, which generated the conditions for the expansion of small “peasant proprietorship” through land settlements, was not enough to secure the island’s social stability. The following section turns to how the pressure from small and middling farmers, tenants, laborers, and the unemployed forced the colonial administration to take more active steps to

¹⁶⁶ Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938*, 356–65.

¹⁶⁷ Francis, “The Evolution of Community Development in Jamaica (1937-1962).”

address their social and economic concerns. The result of this pressure was more land settlements, infrastructural development, and unemployment relief.

3.2 ‘Noisy and Unruly’ Petitioners, 1935-1940

The model of development that came into prominence in the second half of the 1930s featured a peasant-based export-oriented system where the state’s responsibility lay in pursuing popular welfare and not just economic growth. Agricultural laborers, small farmers, tenants, the unemployed, and other rural dwellers played significant role in this shift. By the mid-1930s, agricultural laborers and banana dockworkers started joining the emerging trade union movement. Unlike middle-class spaces such as the branch societies, the trade union movement drew its rank-and-file members from the disenfranchised rural dwellers. After 1935, trade unionists joined the voices of wealthy Jamaican planters, merchants, and urban middle-classes in highlighting the importance of the land settlement policy. What set trade unionists apart from the elite and middle-class’s defense of small independent landownership was their sense of urgency and pragmatism. The concept of “development” espoused by the white planter elite, wealthy merchants, and the black and coloured middle classes framed “small independent land-ownership” as part of a system that included the agricultural export model and a vague notion of the “cultural advancement” of the peasantry. In contrast, the trade union movement encouraged the colonial administration to expand the land settlement policy as a practical solution to alleviate the island’s rampant unemployment.

The labor movement surged in Jamaica among urban and rural wage laborers, the underemployed, and the unemployed during the second half of the 1930s. The movement gained

traction after a series of riots and strikes among banana workers and loaders in Oracabessa, St. Mary, and Kingston in 1935.¹⁶⁸ After 1935, Allan G. S. Coombs—a contractor for the Public Works Department, a former policeman, and an ex-serviceman in the British West India Regiment—formed the Jamaica Workers’ and Tradesmen’s Union (JWTU). It was the first modern trade union in Jamaica and was officially registered in June of 1937.¹⁶⁹ The JWTU was opened to all categories of workers, mobilizing urban and non-agricultural workers, public and private workers, agricultural workers in the sugar and banana industries, and the unemployed. By the end of 1937 the union had around 950 dues-paying members, mostly in St. Elizabeth, St. James, Westmoreland, St. Ann, and St. Mary.¹⁷⁰

Demographic shifts influenced the growth of the trade union movement. Rural-to-urban migration and return migration led to growing urban population. Rural inhabitants who had not benefitted from land settlement policy remained underemployed or unemployed, and they swarmed to the slums of western Kingston. Since the 1920s, the populations of Kingston and St. Andrew’s had experienced significant growth, alongside a decline in most of the other parishes’ population.¹⁷¹ The limited and unreliable opportunities for non-agricultural work such as dock work (including women), labor on public roads, construction, or private manufacturing blurred the line between the employed and unemployed. Many unskilled workers might belong at one time to

¹⁶⁸ On the surge of trade unionism across the British West Indies, see W Arthur Lewis, “Labour in the West Indies: The Birth of a Workers’ Movement,” *Fabian Society Research Series*, no. No. 44 (1939); George Eaton, “Trade Union Development in Jamaica,” *Caribbean Quarterly* 8, no. 1 (1962): 43–53; George Eaton, “Trade Union Development in Jamaica Part 2,” *Caribbean Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (1962): 69–75.

¹⁶⁹ Before 1937, the union was known as the Jamaica Workers’ and Tradesmen’s Association.

¹⁷⁰ Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 240–60; Palmer, *Freedom’s Children: The 1938 Labor Rebellion and the Birth of Modern Jamaica*, 107, 116.

¹⁷¹ Gisela Eisner, *Jamaica, 1830-1930: A Study in Economic Growth* (Manchester University Press, 1961), 182.

the employed and another time to the unemployed. The most marginalized urban inhabitants, who had no prospects or land to fall back on, resorted to activities that ranged from petty peddling and shoe cleaning to begging.¹⁷²

In rural areas, the trade union movement drew its members from plantation wage laborers and banana dockworkers with insecure or no land access. In 1938, most of the adults in the agricultural sector were small farmers who supplemented their income with, or entirely depended on, wage labor in industries such as banana (plantation and dockworkers), sugar, coconuts, citrus, and cattle estates. Thus, in these workers' cases, wage labor—especially seasonal wage labor—did not exclude them from land ownership or tenancy.¹⁷³ The intermittent nature of agricultural work and limited options to acquire land, despite the existing land settlement program, heightened underemployment and unemployment in the rural areas, making the trade union movement attractive as a forum to raise their land claims.

After 1935, the colonial administration took action to address growing underemployment and unemployment in both rural and urban areas. Governor Edward Denham raised colonial funds for more land settlements and unemployment relief work. He also appointed several commissions to investigate the social and economic conditions on the island. One of the commissions appointed in 1936 was charged with investigating and giving recommendations on the problem of unemployment on the island. The Unemployment Commission found that 11% of Jamaicans were “genuinely unemployed” and an alarming 50% underemployed.¹⁷⁴ Concerns over rising

¹⁷² In 1936, eleven of the fourteen parishes had spent more than a third of their estimated revenues on Pauper Relief. At the end of 1936, there were 9,681 people on the island on outdoor relief and 2,300 in institutions. Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 135–39.

¹⁷³ Post, 119–25.

¹⁷⁴ Don Robotham, “The Emergence of Sociology in Jamaica,” *Social and Economic Studies* 33, no. 1 (1984): 107.

unemployment were widespread. Mr. H. V. Lindo, one of the wealthiest and most influential sugar and banana planters on the island, expressed these concerns in the 1936 annual meeting of the Jamaica Imperial Association:

What is going to happen in my district if I have thousands of people around me not having anything to do? They will literally starve and that is more important than the question of more increase in output. Then they will burn my fields and knock down my factory On Monday morning when I have to face 500 people who have come out to work and can only take 100 and send away 400, the position is serious.¹⁷⁵

The policies proposed by the colonial administration were similar to those used in the early 1930s: land settlements and public infrastructure investment. What was new was the addition—reflecting the rhetoric of wealthy Jamaican planters and middle classes—of state investment in policies designed to address the social and economic problems of the poorer sectors of society. As expressed by the trade union movement, the commission appointed by the administration, and wealthy whites, the most pressing illness was underemployment and unemployment.

State investment in land settlements and public infrastructure in the second half of the 1930s was implemented with the express intention to alleviate unemployment on the island. Between 1936 and 1938, the acreage and plots allotted under the land settlement policy significantly increased compared to the previous years (table 7). Most of the properties were located in Portland, St. Mary, and St. Elizabeth, many near to large estates recommended by the Unemployment Commission.¹⁷⁶ To fund the relief work, the Legislative Council approved an budget for the period of 1936 to 1939 for projects related to roads, construction, and housing. In

¹⁷⁵ Jamaica Imperial Association, Annual Report, 1936: 31-33, cited by Stone, “Political Aspects of Postwar Agricultural Policies in Jamaica (1945-1970),” 152.

¹⁷⁶ Bartley, “Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980,” 73–74.

the first months of 1938, the colonial administration started road and railway improvements, construction on the new Palisadoes Airport, and clearing slum dwellings in western Kingston.¹⁷⁷

The JWTU endorsed the land settlement policy as a practical and long-term solution to unemployment. Its members petitioned for flexible procedures and prices for the impoverished working-class and unemployed. In 1936, employees from the Public Works Department in Westmorland, Manchester, and St. Andrew, members of the union, wrote to the Governor, asserting that “the solution to the problem of unemployment rest with Land Settlement.”¹⁷⁸ Allan G. S. Coombs, president of the JWTA, was critical of short-term solutions like relief works in Kingston and St. Andrews, arguing that “the only practical means of relieving them [unemployed] is through Land settlement.” As outlined by Coombs in his letter to the Governor in August 1936:

These men [unemployed] would be very glad of the opportunity of settleing [sic] down on lands but being [sic] out of work for lengthened periods they finds it utterly impossible to find money to make desposits [sic] on these lands as laid down by the regulations that governs the schemes, so they has now asked the officers of the association to take up the matter with the Government.¹⁷⁹

The JWTU and Coombs advocated for direct state intervention in solving the island’s social and economic problems. That request for further state intervention was explicit in Coombs’ proposal to make the land settlement policy accessible to “the bulk of unemployed sufferers...desirious of settleing on lands with the easiest possible terms,” and not just for those

¹⁷⁷ Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 269.

¹⁷⁸ Letter from Charles T. Knuckle, Philip Tompson H. Thompson, and George Oliver Smith to Acting Governor C. C. Woolly on July 22, 1936. Land Settlement: Scheme to relieve unemployment, in J.N.A., C.S.O., 1B/5/77/164 - 1936

¹⁷⁹ Letter from A.G.S. Coombs, Secretary Jamaica Workers and Tradesmen Association, to Acting Governor C. C. Woolly, August 3, 1936, 1B/5/77/164 – 1936, Land Settlement: Scheme to relieve unemployment, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

who had some income—even if limited—to make the initial payments. Moreover, Coombs suggested leasing land to unemployed people first to enable them “to plant crops” so they could earn “sufficient money to pay down the amount specified in the Regulations.” Coombs’ trade union represented the rural masses’ disenfranchised sectors, mostly employed in the public sector and agricultural industries.

Petitioners advocating for direct state intervention also came from tenants, small, and middling farmers from the hilly interior. These petitioners wrote to the colonial administration, members of the Legislative Council, and the Parochial Boards requesting relief works, water supplies, roads, schools, and more prominently, land for “peasant agriculture.” In November 1935, Robert de Roux – a young barrister later appointed Justice of Peace in Manchester—represented a group of 47 residents from districts in central Jamaica in sending a petition to the Governor and the Legislative Council, concerning the “regrettable economic plight” on the area.¹⁸⁰ The signatories included members of the local middle class, farmers of small and mid-sized properties, clerks, merchants, shopkeepers, tavern keepers, druggist, planters, carpenters, fruit agents, priests, and cultivators. In their letter to the island’s political authorities they explained:

The ravages of the storms of 1932 and 1933, were hardly recovered, when during this year we were again struck by damaging winds which destroyed our bananas. Several planters and cultivators have found it impossible to recondition their fields because of lack of capital, consequently a serious situation arising, and this threatens a considerable diminution of the yield of this area and has already started great suffering. Your petitioners consequently pray that loans be immediately granted to growers of bananas in this area, to aid in resuscitating their fields.

¹⁸⁰ Letter from residents Central Jamaica to His Excellency the Governor, President and members of the Honorable Legislative Council, Jamaica, November 18, 1935, 1B/5/77/148 – 1935, Petitions from Citizens Concerning Relief Works for Manchester, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

In addition to the appeal for financial and agricultural assistance, they requested improvements to public infrastructure. They requested urgent intervention so that, through Public Works, relief work could be created for the “sufferers” and the “general development of a fertile section of North-West Manchester.” Faced with the intense economic straits of the 1930s, demands for public employment to help those without work and for support for those without land were not separate alternatives promoted by separate groups but fused demands supported by the diverse actors who made up rural communities. Public employment would serve to build exactly the infrastructure needed for the newly opened lands to get crops to market.

Locally organized associations advanced these requests to revitalize cultivation, build roads, or open lands for “peasant agriculture” in rural areas. Between 1935 and 1936, a short-lived organization in St. Thomas, the Tax and Rate Payers Association, petitioned the Governor, the Legislative Council, and the Parochial Board to improve “peasant agriculture.” First, the Association petitioned for loans to compensate for hurricane damage while issuing mild threats against large local landowners. This was followed by a more militant demand for improving the lives of rural working people through the land settlement scheme, water supplies, roads, and schools.¹⁸¹ Up until 1938, petitions such as the ones from South Trelawny, North Manchester, North West Clarendon, Southern St. Ann, and St. Thomas expressed their demands in the context of the economic crisis, growing population, and unemployment.

The state’s steady investment in land settlements and public infrastructure since 1936 could not contain the revolts that spread across the island in May and June of 1938. Now known as the “Labor Rebellion,” the unrest started as an isolated strike at Westmoreland Frome Estate belonging

¹⁸¹ Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 246–47.

to the West Indies Sugar Company. The strike quickly turned into a riot.¹⁸² The situation arose after the company had briefly expanded its labor force in mid-April, and then reduced it to its normal capacity. This left a large number of unemployed around the factory hoping to be hired. Tensions outside the factory increased until, at the end of the month, a misunderstanding over the wages of field laborers caused the volatile situation to erupt. The laborers went on strike; the unemployed joined. The conflict escalated on May 2nd when the strikers clashed with the police. Three WISCO cane fields—including Frome—were burnt by the striking laborers. The clash ended with eighty-five arrests, fourteen wounded and four people shot dead. Amongst the dead were two women, an older one older and a pregnant one. When word spread across the island, trade union leaders started organizing meetings, and dockworkers in Kingston and St Ann’s Bay started their own strike.¹⁸³ In the following weeks, the frustrated working poor went on strike, organized demonstrations, blocked roads, burned cane fields, looted foreign-owned shops, and confronted the police.

The demands of urban and rural workers had to do with wages and working conditions. Meanwhile, their contemporaries in the hilly interior were motivated to action by a call for land. Tenants in Upper Clarendon took over properties and expelled landlords during the island-wide labor rebellion. In late May, an outbreak at Whitney estate on the borders of Clarendon and Manchester required police intervention. Reports of the incident indicate that protesters destroyed several acres of bananas and a bridge between Porus and Whitney.¹⁸⁴ The tenants banned the

¹⁸² For a detailed account on the events between May and June 1938 see Palmer, *Freedom’s Children: The 1938 Labor Rebellion and the Birth of Modern Jamaica*, 28–63.

¹⁸³ Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 276–77.

¹⁸⁴ *The Gleaner* May 31, 1938: 1.

owners, overseers, and bookkeeper from the estate until protesters were “satisfied” that they would obtain land for themselves.¹⁸⁵

Faced with civil unrest on numerous fronts, authorities saw expanding the land settlement policy as a way to deescalate the riots in the rural areas. Kingston dockworkers, public employees, private workers in the manufacturing sector, and sugar estates laborers settled after negotiating improvements in their working conditions and wages.¹⁸⁶ Although the JWTU played a significant role in the negotiation, two “coloured” middle-class intermediaries jumped into the political arena on behalf of the rural and urban wage laborers: Alexander Bustamante and Norman Manley. However, in rural areas where the revolts were not about wages or working conditions but land, the colonial administration had to ease the protests through land settlements.¹⁸⁷

After the 1938 labor revolt, the colonial administration paid more direct attention to the rural masses’ petitions and their middle-class representatives and intermediaries, ultimately investing in more land settlements. Historians have examined the labor rebellion for its legacy in Jamaican politics. The events of 1938 laid the groundwork for the emergence of the two most important political parties—the People’s National Party and the Jamaican Labour Party—and their charismatic leaders—Norman W. Manley and Alexander Bustamante. 1938 also set Jamaica on the path towards universal suffrage, constitutional reform, and self-government in 1944.¹⁸⁸ As evidence from the rural areas reveals, the revolt of the disenfranchised tenants and unemployed

¹⁸⁵ 1B/5/77/8 – 1938, Land Settlement in Whitney Clarendon, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

¹⁸⁶ For a profile on the demonstrators, see Ken Post, “The Politics of Protest in Jamaica, 1938: Some Problems of Analysis and Conceptualization,” *Social and Economic Studies* 18, no. 4 (1969): 377–80.

¹⁸⁷ Banana workers (dockworkers and plantations laborers) were either supplementing incomes derived from growing bananas on their smallholding or wished to get some land to become growers themselves. Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 293–96.

¹⁸⁸ Palmer, *Freedom’s Children: The 1938 Labor Rebellion and the Birth of Modern Jamaica*.

also profoundly impacted popular understandings of the state's role in encouraging agricultural production in the hands of small landowners and searching alternatives for the unemployed. The labor rebellion in the rural areas among banana plantation workers, tenants, and the unemployed came to an end after June 5th, when acting Governor C.C. Woolley announced a new land settlement policy.

The new land settlement policy included administrative changes, more funds, and agricultural services. The newly created Land Settlement Department established had a budget intended for the acquisition of new properties, an expanded field staff, and for infrastructural improvements on the properties. The policy included a special provision for agricultural extension services and training programs for the new small landowners. In Clarendon the administration prepared properties at May Pen and Twickenham Pen for vegetable gardening and dug a well to supply water to produce vegetables and other crops.¹⁸⁹ What was truly remarkable was the policy's expansion over the following two years. Between 1929 and 1938 the administration only created thirty-one land settlements; in 1939 and 1940 alone, sixty-five new land settlements were established. The 11,348 plots—each an average of 4.6 acres each—allotted by the colonial government in two years was almost twice as the total created in the previous decade (Table 7).

While the new policy was enacted in an attempt to calm protests, its rapid expansion can be attributed to the increasing mobilization of tenants to obtain land. After the Governor enacted the new land policy, small and midsized farmers, tenants, and the unemployed started organizing public meetings to sign petitions for land settlements.¹⁹⁰ The Governor, the Colonial Secretary,

¹⁸⁹ *The Gleaner* June 07, 1938: 1; March 15, 1939: 23

¹⁹⁰ See for example in Chapelton, in *The Gleaner* June 17, 1938: 12. Another example in Mt. Airey, see 1B/5/77/8 – 1938, Land Settlement in Whitney Clarendon, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

and J.A.G. Smith, member of the Legislative Council for Clarendon, received several petitions from branch societies and other groups urging the colonial government to purchase the Whitney estate and turned it into a land settlement. In July 1938, the Mount Airy Branch Society sent a petition, signed by 181 people, to the Colonial Secretary describing how “thriving” districts in the area were unable to grow “due to deficiency of lands.” According to the petitioners, in some instances “a father and six sons have to work on the only available two acres of land.” In March 1939, the Richmond Park Branch Society wrote that there were “over 2000 names of prospective purchasers and the majority of these are willing, in order to facilitate a speedy purchase, to pay the first installment of the purchase money as soon as they are put in possession of the land.” The Richmond Park Branch society passed a resolution to serve as a testimony of:

the great need there is for more land area among rapidly growing population to whom perpetual rent, impoverished and limited holdings, and increasing unemployment are a hopeless menace.¹⁹¹

Government officials on the ground were sympathetic to tenants and urged the colonial administration to address the petitions promptly. We see this, for instance, in the reports from officials from the Land Settlement Department surveying Upper Clarendon. In June 1938, as the strikes of the labor rebellion were just abating, the Assistant Land Settlement Commissioner, R. S. Martinez, visited the areas around the district of Chapelton. There he found that tenants were “more or less imbued with the idea that these properties are to be acquired and then distributed to them.” The commissioner acknowledged that the tenants had a “good case” and persuaded the

¹⁹¹ *The Gleaner* March 07, 1939: 19.

colonial administration to purchase and redistribute several tenanted properties in the area, mostly planted in bananas.¹⁹²

In assessing prospective land settlements, field officers of the Land Settlement Department emphasized the agricultural potential of small landownership. In his report, Martinez highlighted tenants' agricultural skills and the properties' proximity to market towns, main roads, rail lines, irrigation possibilities, and the potential to expand the existing banana, cane, citrus, and ground provision cultivations. At one property, Martinez emphasized that the attorney of the absentee owner had been unable to collect rent during the entire year and that the 2,000-acre property was in complete control of the tenants. Martinez characterized tenants at another property planted in bananas near Spaldings, as a "very good type of tenant" because the property had a similar appearance to a company-run banana plantation. Martinez described how these same tenants expressed a strong desire for the government to buy the property and make plots available for purchase because they feared the owner would take back the property due to its profitable development. Another colonial official, P. O. Robertson, Land Settlement Officer, described several meetings as "noisy and unruly" because the tenants did not trust his presence. Robertson urged the colonial administration to give serious consideration to the tenants' proposals in order to "create a feeling of confidence, in the Administration, and this Department in particular."¹⁹³

¹⁹² The properties he mentioned were Pennants, Ritchies, Tavanore, Ballard's River, Teak Pen, Mt. Hindmost, and Suttons. Report Mr. R. S. Martinez, Assistant Land Settlement Commissioner, June 1938, 1B/5/77/202 – 1938, Proposals re provision by government of land settlement schemes especially Upper Clarendon, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

¹⁹³ Progress Report – Situation Upper Clarendon, Mr. P. O. Robertson, Land Settlement Officer (Agriculture) October 15, 1938, 1B/5/77/202 – 1938, Proposals re provision by government of land settlement schemes especially Upper Clarendon, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

Tenants' organizing was not necessarily homogeneous: government officials emphasized a series of factional and leadership subtleties on the ground. Though these subtleties did not represent radical differences across tenants' grievances, they did display how tenants and other rural dwellers utilized the different institutional venues available: for example, churches, parochial boards, and the Legislative Council. In meetings with tenants, R. S. Martinez noticed a factional division among local leaders, especially between Reverend Robert Whaites and J.A.G. Smith, both campaigning on behalf of the tenants. According to Martinez, both leaders were advocating for land settlements "without any Communist expropriation and free division."¹⁹⁴ Their difference was merely one of political prestige. The divisions commented on by Martinez complicated the implementation of the policy and created unnecessary tensions in the districts as both Whaites and Smith ran parallel signature collection campaigns and public meetings. Robertson noted a potential ally in E. L. Allen, a member of the Parochial Board who was "somewhat radical" but in favor of "development on rational lines." It was the opinion of Robertson that Allen, due to his prestige and influence among rural dwellers, could be "of considerable use to the Department in the area... if properly handled."¹⁹⁵

The factional division based on political prestige reveals an interesting aspect of these middle-class intermediaries and the nature of their political influence. As the late 1930s drew on, contemporary sources offer evidence of the personalized relationship between rural masses and

¹⁹⁴ Report Mr. R. S. Martinez, Assistant Land Settlement Commissioner, June 1938, 1B/5/77/202 – 1938, Proposals re provision by government of land settlement schemes especially Upper Clarendon, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica; *The Gleaner* June 25, 1938: 11; July 04, 1938: 19.

¹⁹⁵ Progress Report – Situation Upper Clarendon, Mr. P. O. Robertson, Land Settlement Officer (Agriculture) October 15, 1938, 1B/5/77/202 – 1938, Proposals re provision by government of land settlement schemes especially Upper Clarendon, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

middle-class intermediaries and politicians. This might be a result of the political leverage that urban and rural working classes gained after 1938. It may also reflect the anticipated political reforms aimed at establishing some form of self-government with a broadened electorate. Whatever the cause, even as the rural masses were dependent on middle-class leaders' favor, these leaders' political influence was linked to their ability to deliver to their constituents.

While Whaites, Smith, and Allen represented different formal political and civil organizations, the Government officials also described leaders that emerged within tenants' ranks. Both Martinez and Robertson reported to his superiors between July and October that one Robert E. Rumble was distributing misleading propaganda in Upper Clarendon. Rumble had founded a short-lived organization, the Poor Man's Improvement Land Settlement and Labour Association (PMILSLA), in 1937 for the "poor peasantry seeking tenant rights" and the "landless agricultural workers." Rumble was a returning migrant from Cuba, where he worked as an agricultural laborer in the sugar industry. Upon his return to Jamaica in the mid-1930s, he became a tenant in Pennants' property, where he started advocating non-rent payment as a form of protest and voiced a program based on small proprietorship as a necessary first step towards economic independence. In 1937 and early 1938, Rumble published columns in newspapers denouncing the "oppression of these iron-handed landowners" and petitioning the colonial administration for land ownership.¹⁹⁶ In meetings organized by him, Rumble would tell tenants at Pennants and Ballard's River that the

¹⁹⁶ Robert Hill and Richard Small, who interviewed Robert E. Rumble in the 1970s, described him as "the political leader of the sole peasant-originated movement to emerge in the struggle for West Indian independence against British imperialism." Robert A. Hill and Richard Small, "The Teaching of Robert E. Rumble: A Jamaican Peasant Leader," in *Education and Black Struggle: Notes from the Colonized World*, ed. Institute of the Black World (Cambridge: Harvard Educational Review, 1974), 127; Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath*, 248–49.

...arable land of Jamaica had been given to their ancestors in the reign of Queen Victoria and that the white men and the Government of Jamaica had robbed the true owners of the lands and had deprived them of the enjoyment of same upwards of 99 years. He had further told them that certain lands, which the Government had proposed to acquire from their present apparent owners for re-sale to the peasantry in pursuance of Land Settlement scheme was in fact already the property of his hearers and other peasantry of Jamaica, and that the monies which the Government had proposed to pay the present apparent owners were the interest on the value of such lands which the people had been wrongfully deprived of.¹⁹⁷

Rumble's rhetoric created fear among authorities who dreaded a repeat of the May and June uprisings. While rumors spread across Upper Clarendon, government officials continued visiting districts in an attempt to appease tenants all the while urging the Government to accelerate development plans in the region. Ultimately, in December, Rumble was incarcerated for creating island-wide anxiety on Emancipation Day, "which necessitated the concentration of armed forces in several parish capitals."¹⁹⁸ Tenants strategically organized in collaboration with both prestigious politicians such as J.A.G. Smith and controversial "agitators" such as Robert Rumble in order to ensure their grievances were heard.¹⁹⁹

In addition to demands for land settlements, rural dwellers consistently petitioned for public works employment as a temporary solution to the raging unemployment. Just as in the case of land settlements, middle-class intermediaries played a critical role in allocating relief measures for the unemployed. What changed after 1938 was that the petitions of the small farmers, tenants, and the unemployed, mediated through middle-class organizations such as citizens' associations

¹⁹⁷ *The Gleaner* December 21, 1938: 9.

¹⁹⁸ *The Gleaner* December 24, 1938: 1.

¹⁹⁹ For example, tenants' organizing along more belligerent rhetoric did not end with Rumble's incarceration. In April 1940, a newly formed Small Settlers and Tenants Organization in Upper Clarendon warned the government of unrest in Chapelton and Spaldings and the responsibility of landlords. Letter from the Small Settlers and Tenants Organizations to Governor, April 1939, 1B/5/77/202 – 1938, Proposals re provision by government of land settlement schemes especially Upper Clarendon, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

and branch societies, acquired a slightly more belligerent tone.²⁰⁰ Rural dwellers petitioned—sometimes almost demanded—that justices of the peace, reverends, members of the Legislative Council, and anyone with influence intervene on their behalf. Petitions tended to go up the institutional ladder: from citizens’ associations or branch societies to parochial boards and the members of the Legislative Council, and from them to the Director of the Department of Labour or the Department of Public Works, and the Governor or the Colonial Office. The sudden increase in the number of petitions held in the Jamaican National Archives for the months following June 1938 suggests that either colonial bureaucracy started keeping better records of social discontent, or that people petitioned more insistently, seizing the leverage they gained after the protests—or both.

Likewise, after June 1938, politicians and the government began paying closer attention to petitioners’ requests, reinforcing the state’s role in providing popular welfare. When Governor Arthur Richards increased spending on public works to relieve unemployment, members of the Parochial Boards and Legislative Council took on a more active role in the allocation of government resources.²⁰¹ It is particularly relevant that when, at the end of the 1930s, state

²⁰⁰ Urban and rural middle class-led citizens’ associations popped up throughout the island by the mid-1930s. These associations defined themselves as self-organized citizens who sought “communal improvements, water, streets, sanitation, lighting facilities, etc.,” and in general local improvements “still long overdue.” The membership of the citizens’ associations overlapped and collaborated with the work performed by Jamaica Agricultural Society branch societies and teachers’ associations, “working in conjunction with them,” dealing with local community matters that fell “outside the scope of their constitution.” *The Gleaner* December 2, 1936: 27. For a brief description of citizens’ associations, see Patrick E Bryan, *Philanthropy and Social Welfare in Jamaica: An Historical Survey* (Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1990), 46.

²⁰¹ See for example, Letter from the Extreme South Manchester Citizens Association, March 9, 1939, 1B/5/77/165 – 1938, Unemployment: Manchester, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica; Petition Residents Comfort Hall to

bureaucracy disregarded local politicians' sense of urgency, the politicians pushed back by agitating for peoples' welfare as opposed to economic practicability. After 1938, the colonial administration responded more proactively to the influence and apprehension of local politicians. When the Director of Public Works refused to approve funds requested by the Central Clarendon Citizens' Association in February 1939, J.A.G. Smith scoffed that the funds were "not so much a question of knowledge of engineering as ordinary common-sense."²⁰² In this case, the government approved relief work funds against the negative assessment regarding its technical and economic practicality.

3.3 Conclusion

Throughout the 1930s there was a marked shift in which the diversified-export oriented economy, pursued by the colonial administration and wealthy Jamaican planters and exporters, started incorporating ideas on the social well-being of the population. The shift began in the late 1920s, when the Colonial Office, the administration, and Jamaican economic elites sought to expand the island's export capabilities by including the "small land-owners" as part of their economic development vision. By the mid-1930s, the rhetoric of the white Jamaican planter and

Governor and Parochial Board, March 29, 1940, 1B/5/77/165 – 1938, Unemployment: Manchester, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

²⁰² Letter from Central Clarendon Citizen's Association to Colonial Secretary, December 3, 1938, 1B/5/77/284 – 1938, Unemployment in Clarendon: Petitions & Representations for Relief, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica; Letter from J.A.G. Smith, member of the Legislative Council for Clarendon, to Colonial Secretary, February 18, 1939, 1B/5/77/284 – 1938, Unemployment in Clarendon: Petitions & Representations for Relief, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

merchant elite and urban/rural middle classes included the expansion of “self-supporting” and “independent” small proprietors as a centerpiece for the education and cultural development of the rural black masses.

In spite of this rhetorical shift, it was pressure from the trade union movement, agricultural laborers, farmers, tenants, and unemployed that moved the needle towards a state involved in the social necessities of the population beyond concerns of economic growth. By the second half of the 1930s, the emerging trade union movement voiced their support for the land settlement policy in pragmatic terms. They proposed expanding the land settlement policy to make it affordable to the rural poor in order to alleviate unemployment on the island. Through their petitions and the labor protest in 1938, agricultural laborers, small farmers, tenants, the unemployed, and other rural dwellers steadily advanced the idea that their role as landowners was fundamental not only for the island’s economic growth, but also to solving the island’s social problems.

In response to these petitions and protests, by the second half of the 1930s the state took on the responsibility of pursuing popular welfare and not just economic growth. State investment in land settlements and public infrastructure in the late 1930s was implemented to alleviate unemployment on the island. After 1938, local politicians also developed a sense of urgency around addressing the constant claims raised by the uneasy rural populations. By the end of the 1930s, the colonial vision of economic development based on a peasant-oriented export model had started incorporating the role of the state in securing popular welfare.

4.0 Building a New Jamaica: The Emergence of State's Social and Agricultural Planning Platform, 1937-1950

By the mid-1930s, sectors of Jamaica's colonial officialdom, wealthy landowners, rural middle classes, and urban professionals voiced their support for small peasant landowners as a potential source of economic growth and a solution to unemployment on the island. That rhetoric was imprinted on Jamaica Welfare Limited (JWL), a private company founded in 1937 to improve the welfare of the rural folk through a series of cooperative-organizing and community education programs. In the two years that followed, massive labor unrest rocked Britain's Caribbean colonies in 1938, and British officials' quest to increase war-time foodstuff production in 1939, opened the door for a colonial effort to articulate an economic development model based on peasant production and welfare.

This chapter explores the rhetoric, organizing and client-patron practices of the new colonial development and welfare mission. Colonial officials and middle and upper-middle-class Jamaicans sought direct state intervention and control over the peasant farming methods and social and family organization aspects. The goal of Colonial officials was to foster a new peasant prosperity model in which self-sufficient peasants would be able to produce enough food for the local market and capable of sustaining well-established family life. In theory, the vision they proposed prized community involvement and encouraged the expression of collective voice through civic entities. However, the myriad groups, councils, cooperatives, and producers' associations that emerged throughout the decade were mostly headed by members of the middle and upper-middle classes and not members of the lower rural classes these programs claimed to value and represent. As a result, the grand majority of small and landless farmers, laborers, and

unemployed continued seeking immediate relief through client-patron networks with influential middle-class representatives and political allies much as they did by the late 1930s. Throughout the 1940s, client-patron practices became so prevalent that they became an intrinsic and enduring feature of the allocation of relief grants, public works improvements, employment prospects, and development schemes in the decade that followed.

The first section of the chapter studies Jamaica Welfare Limited (JWL) in the late 1930s as it launched its earliest programs. Inspired by the promise of self-help rhetoric and community education, the JWL sought nothing less than to “build a new Jamaica.” Founded in 1937, the JWL launched a series of cooperative organizing and community education programs specifically designed to improve rural people’s welfare. The first program carried out by the JWL, building two large community centers in the hilly interior of St. Catherine and Manchester parishes, aimed to encourage a sense of cross-class community cooperation. However, members of the rural middle-class controlled both centers from the start. The JWL also established cooperative farming groups and presaged colonial efforts to organize similar bodies at the beginning of war in 1939. The colonial administration prioritized the formation of small farmers’ cooperative groups to produce as much food as possible for the domestic market. In addition to the JWL, the Jamaica Agricultural Society and the Lands Department began experimenting with their own cooperative and community education programs in 1939.

The second section of the chapter analyzes the development and welfare rhetoric of the early 1940s. In 1940, the Moyne Commission, a fact-finding mission sent to the West Indies to investigate the social and economic conditions in the West Indies behind the labor unrest and rebellion of 1938, published and heralded a new top-down model of colonial development and social welfare not only for the region but across the colonial empire. The enactment of the Colonial

Development and Welfare (CD&W) Act of 1940 responded to the Moyne Commission's urgent calls for investment in colonial agricultural and social welfare services in the colonies. The new development mission brought the creation of a new colonial bureaucracy as well. The Colonial Office created an advisory body, the West Indian Development and Welfare Organization (WIDWO) in the 1940s, headed by a comptroller and a group of advisers charged with working out the development and welfare projects financed under the CD&W fund.

Between 1940 and 1943, WIDWO promoted policies that advocated direct state intervention over peasants' farming methods and social and family organization aspects. Although the land settlement policies of the 1930s continued to redistribute small plots, its intensity diminished drastically amid the rise of these new welfare and institution-building programs. Thus, instead of focusing on the land redistribution of previous policies, the WIDWO implemented a new development model in which self-sufficient peasants, routinely envisioned as male heads of households, would produce enough food for local and export markets, generating the income and stability necessary to support family life.

The third section studies colonial support for the expansion of these local and island-wide groups, cooperatives, and producers' associations organized under self-help and cooperation principles. The bodies organized by the Jamaica Agricultural Society and the Jamaica Welfare Limited became the leading colonial development and welfare planning structures on the island early in the 1940s. Despite these organizations' rhetoric, middle-class members led peasant clubs and groups, councils, and cooperatives. As the case studies show, despite their nominal inclusiveness, middle class members turned these bodies into instances of middle-class intermediators through which government investment could reach sectors of lower rural society. Middle and upper-middle-class control was even more marked in the commodity producers'

associations. These commodity associations, mostly controlled by middle and upper-middle farmers and big landowners, excluded all small farmers from negotiation and decision-making structures. As these associations came to be controlled by a small group of middle-class farmers and planters during the postwar years, they institutionalized client-patron networks.

The final section explores the routes through which client-patron practices spread and gained strength throughout Jamaica in the 1940s. First, ties to local politicians became a central route through which broader sectors of the disenfranchised rural masses sought relief and employment benefits. Second, patronage networks became inseparable from the operations of development institutions and local government planning. The advocates of this new colonial development and welfare mission proclaimed that their intention to create an autonomous, self-sufficient citizenry by teaching rural people new forms of interaction with local government bodies. However, in practice, the grand majority of small and tenant farmers and other rural dwellers continued seeking immediate relief through long-established client-patron networks with middle-class representatives and political allies.

As case studies from the early 1940s show, politically-connected petitioners' pressure determined the outcome of relief grants, public works improvements, and employment prospects. Even though the persistence of client-patron practices' might have seemed counter-intuitive to the state's commitment to technocratic development through welfare agencies, in practice, local organizing structures, were dominated by middle and upper-middle-class intermediaries, entrenching client-patron practices. By the end of the 1940s, client-patron practices had become, in fact, integral to the working of local development assistance and planning.

4.1 “We are out to build a new Jamaica,” 1937-1940

By the end of the 1930s, Jamaican middle classes and members of the colonial administration came to treat “development” and “welfare” as inseparable projects. They placed private and colonial resources behind projects that actively pursued a comprehensive peasant prosperity program designed to teach the most impoverished segments of rural society to take responsibility for pursuing their welfare under the guiding hands of the Jamaican middle-classes. The massive labor rebellion of 1938 opened a new avenue through which the colonial administration pursued the goal of peasant prosperity first embraced two decades earlier. Between May and June 1938 sugar and banana plantation laborers, dockworkers, urban workers, unemployed, and landless farmers engaged in widespread strikes across Jamaica. In response to these coordinated strikes the Moyne Commission, a fact-finding mission tasked by the Colonial Office to investigate the social and economic conditions in the West Indies. They met with multiple sectors and newly organized constituencies on the island. The ten-person, all-white commission toured the island in November and invited Jamaicans to submit memoranda, and called upon government officials, planters and merchants, urban professionals, and trade union leaders to give their testimonies.²⁰³

²⁰³ For example, the Jamaica Imperial Association, the Jamaica Progressive League, the Jamaica Union of Teachers, the Bustamante unions, the churches, the East Indians, the Chinese, and others. For a detailed account on the commission’s hearings in Jamaica see Palmer, *Freedom’s Children: The 1938 Labor Rebellion and the Birth of Modern Jamaica*, 87–114 The chairman of the commission was Lord Moyne, a conservative member of Parliament. The vice chairman was Sir Edward Stubbs, former governor of Jamaica. The commission was also integrated most notably by Sir Walter Citrine, prominent trade unionist, and two women: Dr. Mary Blacklock, an authority on tropical medicine, and Dame Rachel Crowdy, a social worker.

Although it had been the actions of economically distressed working classes that prompted the Moyne Commission's appointment, the interlocutors who commanded the commission's attention mostly represented more privileged constituencies in colonial society and not necessarily the vast majority of the poor and disenfranchised masses. The two testimonies that reflected sectors of society's lower strata came from the labor leaders Allan George St. Claver Coombs and Alexander Bustamante. Coombs, president of the Jamaica Workers and Tradesmen Union (JWTU), gave a detailed account of the conditions in rural Jamaica and emphasized the challenges of rampant unemployment, terrible housing conditions, low wages, and physical mistreatment that agricultural laborers endured. Alexander Bustamante, the leader of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU), voiced concern over workers' wages, hours working conditions, and compensation, among other issues. Bustamante proposed no systemic changes or land settlements, nor did he recommend self-government or universal suffrage. Instead, Bustamante suggested expanding the sugarcane industry would restore the island's economic prosperity.²⁰⁴ Bustamante, and to a lesser extent Coombs, articulated proposals related to waged rural and urban laborers' interests and not to the interests of tenants small and middle farmers.

Intellectuals and members of the island's middle class rather than these labor leaders led the advocacy for peasant landownership and cultivation as the keys to the island's social and economic. One of the highlights of the Moyne Commission hearings was the testimony given by the prominent "coloured" Jamaican lawyer and future leader of the People's National Party (PNP), Norman Washington Manley. Manley was accompanied by eleven distinguished members of Jamaica's professional and intellectual classes and spoke in representation of the Jamaica Welfare

²⁰⁴ Palmer, 99–108.

Limited (JWL).²⁰⁵ Manley covered a wide range of issues concerning the island's social and economic conditions. Speaking in the name of all peoples on the island, Manley proposed a comprehensive program to improve the rural poor's living conditions. Manley proposal was essentially an extensive land settlement scheme, placing beneficiaries with plots large enough to keep them out of the labor market while simultaneously expanding social services, housing, and education for the rural black masses. He also supported the island's self-government and the introduction of universal adult suffrage.²⁰⁶

Others shared Manley's conviction, and indeed, his program was not necessarily a novelty. However, Manley did articulate a rhetoric that treated "development" and "welfare" as inseparable. Manley's testimony represented a new stage in the formal articulation of a development model that explicitly linked small independent landownership with broader social welfare. His testimony reflected the consensus that had been forged among sectors of colonial officialdom, wealthy planters and exporters, rural middle classes, and urban professionals for a "peasant proprietorship"-based model that had come to be seen, over the course of the 1930s, as a potential engine of economic growth, the solution to unemployment, and a source of "cultural development" on the island. His testimony represented this transition towards a development and welfare vision in which private and colonial resources were put behind concrete actions that actively pursued a comprehensive peasant prosperity program on the island by the end of the 1930s and early 1940s.

²⁰⁵ Manley was accompanied by Noel Nethersole, Lewis Ashenheim, Philip Sherlock, Edith Clarke, and H. P. Jacobs. Palmer, 108.

²⁰⁶ Palmer, 109.

The organization he represented, the JWL, became one of the main vehicles driving this transition. As detailed in the previous chapter, middle-class representatives of large banana planters and the United Fruit Company (UFCo) founded the JWL in 1937 as a negotiated initiative to improve the welfare of rural folk and promote the cooperation “as a general factor of development of civilization in the country.”²⁰⁷ Norman Manley and Samuel Zemurray, Manager of the UFCo, had agreed that the UFCo would set aside one cent, US, per stem exported from Jamaica to form a fund for “the cultural development of the peasantry” amidst the growing impoverishment and unemployment in the rural areas.²⁰⁸ Manley managed to draw in the entire banana industry’s backing when the Standard Fruit & Shipping Company also agreed to participate in the fund. The JWL was founded to administer the banana fund and

promote, manage and control schemes for and to do any act or thing which may directly or indirectly serve the general interests and the social or economic betterment and aid of the agricultural or working peasantry, small settlers, farmers, labourers and working people of and in Jamaica.²⁰⁹

Consequently, the organization founded a series of cooperative and community education programs devoted to assisting the most impoverished segments of rural society. However, the makeup of the Company’s board and staff did exclude the very people it claimed to assist. Instead, it was comprised of urban middle-class professionals linked to charitable and cultural organizations and the growing nationalist movement. They were also included large landowners and colonial bureaucrats. The first Board of Directors under the Chairmanship of Norman Manley

²⁰⁷ Roger Marier, *Social Welfare Work in Jamaica, a Study of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission*. (Paris: UNESCO, 1953), 14–15.

²⁰⁸ *The Gleaner*, July 7, 1937.

²⁰⁹ *Memorandum of Association of Jamaica Welfare Ltd.*, Section 3. pars. (b) and (c); cited in Marier, *Social Welfare Work in Jamaica, a Study of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission*, 16–17.

consisted of ten members of the wealthy and middle classes of varied racial backgrounds: a representative of the foreign banana corporations, the Jamaica Banana Producers' Association, Jamaica Agricultural Society, government officials, the commercial sector, a physician, a social scientist, and an educator.

The paid staff were recruited from existing religious and charitable organizations, civil servants, and overall people with experience in cooperative organizing, education, and businesses.²¹⁰ Among the first field officers of the JWL were Major Rupert Moxsy, Mr. E. B. Hallett, Miss Haggeth Moore, Mr. E. G. Donaldson, Mr. Eddie N. Burke, and Mr. D. T. Girvan. In 1937, Major Rupert Moxsy, a landowner from Clarendon with administrative experience and “a great deal of practical experience with the peasantry,” was appointed executive secretary for projects on agricultural settlement and production. Mr. E. B. Hallett, secretary to the YMCA in Kingston, was appointed organizing officer in charge of exploring the formation of peasant associations.²¹¹ Miss Haggeth Moore, a teacher in an elementary school with training in social work, was appointed the first assistant area secretary in charge of carrying social and economic surveys in specifically deprived rural areas. By 1939, three new members, Mr. E. G. Donaldson,

²¹⁰ It is important to highlight that the JWL explicitly avoid charitable work as was customary from social welfare and religious organizations on the island, which mostly came from religious sectors. Horace Levy, “Jamaica Welfare, Growth and Decline,” *Social and Economic Studies* 44, no. 2/3 (1995): 350; T. S. Simey, *Social Administration in Jamaica; Notes of the Lecture / with an Introduction by Mrs. Ansell Hart and a Foreword by Miss Edith Clarke*. (Kingston, Jamaica: Central Council of Voluntary Social Services, 1942), 6.

²¹¹ Moxsy had served as chairman of the Parochial Board of Clarendon, where he attempted to organize a semi-cooperative association of “peasant proprietors for the purpose of growing Vegetables for the Canadian market.” Moxsy was described as “a person capable of gaining their confidence [the peasantry] and maintaining a high degree of organizing efficiency.” Hallet was an Englishman who arrived in Jamaica in 1919 “for the very purpose of organizing such work [peasant organizing] in the sugar areas in Clarendon.” Memorandum Re Jamaica Welfare Ltd, 1937, 3/24/1165, United Fruit Company, Statutory Bodies [hereafter S.B.], J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

Eddie N. Burke, a young teacher, and Mr. D. T. Girvan, a businessman interested in welfare services, were appointed and sent to Nova Scotia and England to study cooperative organizing and community education.²¹²

The JWL aspired to instill a “self-help” mentality within impoverished rural communities, which would, thereafter, inspire social and economic entrepreneurialism. The staff’s expertise in organizing agricultural cooperatives was a reflection of previous middle-class and big landowners’ attempts to organize and control peasants’ production for the domestic and export markets. What was new in 1937, however, was that the JWL connected ideas on the importance of peasant’s cultivation to a community education approach in the rural areas based through the rhetoric of self-help. All of these efforts were portrayed as part of a shared mission to “build a new Jamaica.” The “cultural development of the peasantry” articulated by the JWL meant teaching rural black masses the benefits of self-help – pushing them to take personal responsibility for pursuing their welfare and the improvement of their economic and social conditions. Their respectable middle-class allies would guide and model their progress.

The JWL’s first programs displayed this preference for middle-class leadership, and a sense of middle-class responsibility to fix what they perceived as the true cause of peasant poverty; peasant attitudes. The JWL’s fieldwork started in Guys Hill in 1938. Guys Hill was located on the border of St. Catherine, St. Mary, and St. Ann in a densely populated area predominantly inhabited by impoverished small farmers who, according to Miss Haggeth Moore, lacked ambition. Hence the job of the JWL was to teach them how to improve the cultivation of “crops for home consumption,” their housing conditions, and ameliorate their deplorable living conditions. Field

²¹² Marier, *Social Welfare Work in Jamaica, a Study of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission.*, 19–21, 67.

officers' reports attributed the poverty of Guys Hill to an absence of leadership, entrepreneurial spirit, and cooperative drive among the people living in the area.²¹³ The Company built the Guys Hill Community Center, St. Catherine, in alliance with the Northern St. Catherine Citizens' Association, in October 1938.²¹⁴ A second community center was launched in Porus, Manchester, another a densely populated area of "very poor peasants with a sprinkling of fairly prosperous business men and salary-earners."²¹⁵ The Porus's initial objective was to bring people from the "wealthiest" strata, middle-class members, and people from the "lower stratum of life" to work together. Eddie Burke started canvassing in 1939, visiting schools and houses, recruiting local leaders, and participants with the explicit aim of "mixing classes."²¹⁶

The rural middle class controlled the managing committees of both community centers in the hilly interior of St. Catherine and Manchester. The centers, sponsored by the colonial administration and the transnational banana corporations, were nominally designed to encourage a sense of cross-class community cooperation through adult handicraft and cooking education

²¹³ Letter from Major A. R. Moxsy (Secretary of Jamaica Welfare Limited) to Miss Edith Clarke, Board Supervision, May 26, 1938; Report of District Visiting 10/5/38 to 19/5/38 by Miss Haggeth Moore; Report of Organising Officer for Community Centres, presented June 21, 1938; Guy's Hill Community Centre Jamaica Welfare Limited. Report Annual Meeting January 26, 1939, 4/60/10a/6, Committee on Community Centres, Minutes of Meeting 1938 – 1945, Gifts/Private [hereafter G.P.], J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

²¹⁴ For a brief account on the history of Guys Hill Community Center from 1938 to 1941 see Marier, *Social Welfare Work in Jamaica, a Study of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission.*, 55–61.

²¹⁵ Third Annual General Meeting of Jamaica Welfare Ltd. February 6, 1939; Report of Organising Officer to March 31, 1939, 4/60/10a/2, Jamaica Welfare Limited - Annual General Meeting: Minutes, Reports, G.P., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica; Welfare Reporter, August 1948, p.3.

²¹⁶ For a brief account on the history of Porus Community Center from 1939 to 1947 see Marier, *Social Welfare Work in Jamaica, a Study of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission.*, 61–65.

programs. They also organized social events that included uplifting religious activities, games, and entertainment for adults and children of all walks of life.²¹⁷

In addition to the community centers for “the cultural development of the peasantry,” the JWL founded small farmers’ cooperative groups to improve rural villages’ economy. During its first two years, the JWL reached over ten villages, recruiting leaders from citizens’ associations, branch societies, churches, and teachers’ associations. These recruits became instrumental to the foundation of more community centers and in organizing small farmers. Edward B. Hallet traveled around the island that year, finding “fertile” districts in St. Thomas and Clarendon, where a combination of poverty and “intelligent leadership” provided “an awakening desire for Community improvement.”²¹⁸ Large and small community centers founded during those years hosted citizens’ associations, branch societies, small farmers’ groups, and cultural events.²¹⁹ Through those bodies, the Company started distributing grants to organized groups of small

²¹⁷ Jamaica Welfare Ltd. General Scheme for Community Centers, 4/60/10a/6, Committee on Community Centres, Minutes of Meeting 1938 – 1945, G.P., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica; Constitution and Rules of the Community Centre Associations in affiliation with Jamaica Welfare Ltd., 3/24/1/1, Community Centre – affiliated, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

²¹⁸ Districts such as Gaule, Windsor Castle, Wood Park, Jeffrey Town, Mt. Angus, Spaldings, Grantham, Frankfield, and Kellits. Report of Organising Officer for Community Centres to February 20, 1939; Report of Organising Officer to March 31, 1939, 4/60/10a/2, Jamaica Welfare Limited - Annual General Meeting: Minutes, Reports, G.P., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

²¹⁹ For example, the Frankfield Community Center or Four Paths Community Center in Clarendon. The Frankfield Community Center hosted organizations such as the Citizens’ Association, Shakespearean Club, Old Boy’s Association, Jamaica Agricultural Society, Jamaica Banana Growers’ Association, Teachers’ Association, and People’s Co-operative Bank. Four Paths Community Center gathered the activities of organizations from across Mid-Clarendon, showing an example of district regional cooperation. 3/24/1363, Community Centre Affiliated, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica. In other areas, the Company organized smaller village centers ran by local voluntaries. For example, in South St. Elizabeth. 3/24/2447, Community Centres Committee (No. I), S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

farmers. Declaring it necessary to break from previous customary charitable work and keeping its emphasis on self-help, the JWL rejected grant applications from benevolent organizations, orphanages, and individuals and instead only accepted applications from organized farmers' groups.²²⁰

The JWL's efforts to organize small farmers' groups coincided with colonial efforts to organize similar bodies at the beginning of war in 1939. In September, the colonial government established the Food Production Board to "produce without delay a greater quantity of native foodstuffs" for the local market to avoid shortages during the war.²²¹ The formation of small farmers' cooperative groups became a top priority for the colonial administration faced with disrupted trade and, in collaboration with the JWL, the Jamaica Agricultural Society and the Lands Department started organizing small farmers' associations and cooperative groups as part of the campaign to produce as much food as possible for the domestic market.

The Jamaica Agricultural Society and the Lands Department started experimenting with their own cooperative and community education programs in 1939. Instructors of the Jamaica Agricultural Society registered and organized growers in food-producing areas, while the branch societies developed savings and marketing groups to enable small farmers to buy agricultural

²²⁰ For example, in 1938, "a man who had applied for help to purchase a tractor to be used by small settlers, was advised that the tractor should be obtained by the growers on the cooperative basis." Marier, *Social Welfare Work in Jamaica, a Study of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission.*, 23

²²¹ The Food Production Board was composed of the Director of Agriculture (chairman), the Commissioner of Lands, a deputy of the Marketing and Trade Commissioner, the secretary of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, a member of the Jamaica Imperial Association, and a member of the Legislative Council. *The Gleaner*, August 28, 1939: p.1, 10; September 7, 1939: 1, 13; September 14, 1939: 10.

implements and equipment and distribute their crops for the local markets.²²² The Lands Department set up associations in the land settlements, similar to the JWL's community centers. The Department formed settlers' associations with the objective of "encouraging the co-operation of settlers among themselves with a view to improving their condition socially, economically and educationally."²²³ The tasks of the associations were twofold. First, they cooperated with the Food Production Board to improve smallholders' agricultural methods and organize marketing operations. Second, they promoted community-building and home life programs, especially for women, such as household management and vegetable gardening courses, poultry and small stock rearing, and childcare. These initiatives assumed Jamaican men to be the heads of rural households, which was only true for wealthier middle and upper-middle class households.

By the end of the 1930s, welfare and self-help meant to assist and teach impoverished rural dwellers how to employ modern techniques of cultivation and collaborate more. When the Moyne Commission published its recommendations in 1940, which encouraged the expansion of "subsistence peasant farming" to reduce unemployment and increase food production in Jamaica, a small but very enthusiastic cadre of nationalist urban professionals, middle-class volunteers, and colonial officials had already developed an incipient organizing platform of nominally independent peasant associations and cooperative groups. This was no coincidence: as we have seen, it was these professional middle-class and officials who had been the commissioners' interlocutors during their fact-finding mission. In practice, most of the local associations and groups of this kind

²²² Jamaica Agricultural Society, *75th Anniversary Souvenir Programme, 1875-1970 / Jamaica Agricultural Society.*, 42.

²²³ Jamaica. Lands Department, *A Guide to Social Welfare Work on Land Settlements* (Kingston, Jamaica: The Government Printer, Duke St., Kingston, 1941).

created by the end of the 1930s served as vehicles to assert middle and upper-middle-class farmers' leadership within the rural communities and vis a vis colonial bureaucracy. Crucially, as it will become clear in the following section, these organizations became the foundation upon which the colonial administration built its development and welfare policies during the 1940s.

4.2 Colonial Development and Welfare, 1940-1943

In 1940, the Colonial Office's envisioned "development" and "welfare" as inseparable concepts to guide social and economic improvement in the colonies. To actively pursue economic development, colonial governments had the paramount responsibility to pursue the social welfare for ever broader sectors of colonial populations. In Jamaica, that rhetoric in practice meant that state help was fundamental for "self-help" and material advancement. The Moyne Commission's publication in 1940 was part of an ongoing formulation of a new model of colonial development for the entire colonial empire. The Commission suggested creating the West Indies Welfare Fund to pay for long-term programs in education, health services, housing, social welfare services, and land settlements.²²⁴ After deliberations in the British Parliament, funding for the West Indies was incorporated within the Colonial Development and Welfare (CD&W) Act of 1940, which included funds not only for transforming economic and infrastructural, as the Colonial Development Act of 1929 had, but also create funding for housing, education, and social welfare services.

²²⁴ Great Britain. Colonial Office, *West India Royal Commission, 1938-39. Recommendations. Presented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Parliament, by Command of His Majesty* (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1940).

The new development and welfare mission brought not only new ideas and more funds but also the creation of a new colonial bureaucracy. Colonial development and welfare funds for the West Indies were allocated through an advisory body, the West Indian Development and Welfare Organization (WIDWO), headed by a comptroller in charge of working out development and welfare projects with the help of a group of agriculture, public health, education, labor, economy, and social welfare advisers. The Comptroller's proposed projects in collaboration with West Indian colonial governments for submission to the Secretary of State for grants under the Act. The Colonial Office appointed Frank A. Stockdale as the Comptroller of the WIDWO in September 1940. The organization's headquarters were set in Barbados, where Stockdale and his advisers promoted development and welfare projects for the region.²²⁵

The new colonial development and welfare bureaucracy found strong allies in organizations such as the Jamaica Welfare Limited and the Jamaica Agricultural Society. Between 1940 and 1942, Stockdale and his advisers outlined a series of agricultural and social welfare plans for the West Indies modeled after the Moyne Commission's recommendations and the strong 'self-help' organizing bodies they encountered in Jamaica.²²⁶ Specifically for the case of Jamaica, the Moyne Commission found that small farmers' reliance on banana growing had left them economically vulnerable by the end of the 1930s and urged the colonial administration to encourage the expansion of "subsistence peasant farming" to reduce unemployment and increase

²²⁵ Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1940-1942 / Report by Sir Frank Stockdale* (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1943), 1–2.

²²⁶ Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 49–52.

the island's food supply.²²⁷ Expanding on the commissioners' recommendations, A. J. Wakefield, the WIDWO agricultural adviser, insisted that the development of "subsistence peasant farming" had to be built upon a self-help platform of farmers' groups and cooperatives and not "super-imposed from the top." Reflecting along similar lines and addressing the potential of the existing organizations on the island, Thomas S. Simey, the WIDWO social welfare advisor, saw in the JWL a transformative platform to teach "self-help, self-respect, and self-determination."²²⁸ Both Wakefield and Simey saw in the existing bodies the potential to carry forward colonial development and welfare policies to improve small-farming production, reduce unemployment, and expand the social welfare services on the island: and to do so in a way that they believed was not "top-down" but rather expressed and channeled community will.

Jamaica's colonial bureaucracy sought to establish direct state control over the peasant farming methods and organization and moved away from the land redistribution programs of earlier years. Since the mid-1930s, but especially after 1938, colonial bureaucrats expected that the land settlement policy would curb unemployment and discourage rural-to-urban migration. However, after 1940 big landowners continued to dispose of unused and low-quality lands for the

²²⁷ Nigel E Agar, *Colonial Development and Welfare in Jamaica: Problems of Historical Analysis*, Postgraduate Seminar / University of the West Indies, Mona. Department of History (Mona, Jamaica: Department of History, University of the West Indies, 1967), 12–15.

²²⁸ A. J. Wakefield was appointed Inspector-General of Agriculture in the West Indies in July 1940, located in the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad, prior to joining the Development and Welfare Organization as Agricultural Adviser. Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1940-1942 / Report by Sir Frank Stockdale*, 2, 32; Thomas S. Simey, professor of sociology at Liverpool University, advocated strong social policy and the empowerment of local communities by teaching "ordinary rural peoples" how "to measure their problems and to weigh one course of action against another as a scientist would." Simey, *Social Administration in Jamaica; Notes of the Lecture / with an Introduction by Mrs. Ansell Hart and a Foreword by Miss Edith Clarke.*, 9–11.

government to redistribute to tenants or unemployed through this policy. The two years immediately after the disturbances of 1938 accounted for more than half of the acreage allotted between 1938 and 1949. During the 1940s, the plots' averaged under four acres, and many plots fell below the minimum of three acres stated in the rules of sale stipulated by the policy.²²⁹ Thus, land settlement steadily continued over the decade, but the scale of plot redistribution fell between 1938 and 1940. Instead, the colonial policy focused on increased agricultural production. The agricultural programs proposed by WIDWO officials aimed at improving land efficiency and land conservation methods on already established small peasant farms. That task required a greater amount of state intervention.

Therefore, in practice, intervention from above, state help, ensured the success of “self-help” and welfare programs. The concerns of colonial bureaucrats posted in the West Indies related to questions of land efficiency and food production as much as to issues of rural welfare and community building, especially during wartime when the blockage of shipping lanes demanded a greater reliance upon foodstuff production for local markets.²³⁰ In 1941, Wakefield estimated that the productive capacity of the land in Jamaica would not be able to carry the weight of the increasing population, especially if the indiscriminate cultivation of export crops such as ginger, coffee, and bananas on steep hillsides as well as the overall “primitive shifting cultivations of the small settler or peasant” continued eroding hillside land.²³¹ Small farmers' destructive hillside

²²⁹ It was not until the 1960s, when the Jamaican Government established standards of regulation of the quality of the land acquired for land settlements. Bartley, “Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980,” 88.

²³⁰ For an example on food production policies in the Caribbean during the war see Glenroy Taitt, “Domestic Food Production in Guadeloupe in World War II,” in *Caribbean Land and Development Revisited*, ed. Jean Besson and Janet Momsen (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 41–52.

²³¹ For a study on the role of the British Colonial Office had in controlling soil erosion motivated by concerns related to the future of the entire British Empire threatened by environmental degradation and population growth, see

farming methods, Wakefield claimed in his assessment on Jamaica's agricultural development problems, represented a threat to the island's economic future since only around 15% of its total 2,818,160 acres consisted of flatlands.²³²

The existing agricultural and social welfare bodies on the island became the designees carrying forward colonial development and welfare projects. Colonial advisers recommended financial assistance under the CD&W Act for a series of schemes under the authority of the Department of Agriculture and the Jamaica Agricultural Society that aimed to encourage the conservation of soil fertility and the application of mixed farming methods as part of the efforts to produce more food and improve the welfare of rural families and communities.²³³ The promotion of mixed farming—a set of agricultural methods used to balance soil conservation and increase the land efficiency—had been part of the Department of Agriculture and the Jamaica Agricultural Society's plans since the late 1930s. These agricultural officials and instructors had started experimenting with contour strip cropping methods in agricultural stations and smallholdings before colonial development and welfare plans adopted such methods.²³⁴ In addition to the contour

Lawrence Grossman, "The Colonial Office and Soil Conservation in the British Caribbean 1938-1950," in *Caribbean Land and Development Revisited*, ed. Jean Besson and Janet Momsen (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 29–40. Grossman argues that efforts to introduce soil conservation policies reflected broader attempts by the Colonial Office to transform land tenure relationships, introduce more permanent forms of agriculture, and increase direct state intervention in and control over the peasant production process.

²³² A. J. Wakefield, *Memorandum of Agricultural Development in Jamaica* (Kingston, Jamaica: Government Printer, 1941), 6.

²³³ Wakefield, 11–19; Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1940-1942 / Report by Sir Frank Stockdale*, 31–33.

²³⁴ Contour strip cropping is a farming method used to minimize soil erosion. It consists of grass lines around the hill to help slow rainfall water streamflow. Contour strip cropping combines crop rotation and contouring. Mr. A. Thelwell, Secretary of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, wrote instructions on the methods and explain the

strip cropping methods, agricultural officials started experimenting with the rearing of stall-feeding dairy cows and other farm animals to improve small farmers' economies.

The colonial bureaucracy wanted to foster self-sufficient and independent peasants, who would both produce for the local market and sustain well-established family life. In the first place, there was an expressed concern in the nutritional standards of the rural folk. By the early 1940s, medical advisers reported that the most urgent dietary need was animal protein. Although large scale farming supported beef production, the stall-feeding dairying system better fit small farmers' farm size and nutritional needs. In the second place, despite the island's continued dependence on the international prices and markets of major export commodities, WIDWO advisers sought to enable peasant families to expand their income sources through selling agricultural produced on the domestic market, independent from the oscillations of the international prices. A. J. Wakefield described the benefits of educating Jamaican farmers' in self-help and mixed farming methods as follows:

A spirit of sturdy independence and self-reliance is inculcated in farmers who are comparatively independent of the market and of the outside world. They seek their satisfactions and the fulfilment of their wants largely through their own or their village economy. They can feed and house themselves to a great extent by the products of their own labour. They are less tempted to seek profit by the exploitation of the soil. Most important of all, the family life is strengthened. Mixed-farming provides daily and congenial occupation for father and son in the field, and mother and daughter both in the home and around the homestead.²³⁵

Alongside the material developments, WIDWO advisers included aspects of social and family organization. Colonial development and welfare policies had an intrinsically moralizing

popularization of the concept "Soil-Conservation" throughout the island over the last three years. *The Farmer* June-July 1941

²³⁵ Wakefield, *Memorandum of Agricultural Development in Jamaica*, 18.

component that reflected the concerns of social welfare officials, social scientists, and the ‘respectable’ middle classes over what they perceived were the dysfunctional family organization and parenting practices of the black lower classes in the island’s rural parishes. Religious organizations and respectable middle-classes voiced such concerns as early as the late nineteenth century, and by the late 1930s, colonial officials and social scientists suggested that the dysfunctional family structure of the black lower classes stood at the center of the island’s poverty and labor problems.²³⁶ They came to argue that most rural social problems centered around the high rates of illegitimate births, a “careless” upbringing of children, the looseness of common-law relationships, which were customary during the earlier years of womanhood, and the weakness of the family centered around the mother (or grandmother) figure.²³⁷

Therefore, WIDWO proposals included peasant household organizing as a basic unit in the community and a step in the greater intervention in peasant farming methods and social organization. Colonial officials and social scientists believed the patriarchal family structure should help build self-sufficient communities and a new, economically productive Jamaica.

²³⁶ Deborah A Thomas, *Exceptional Violence: Embodied Citizenship in Transnational Jamaica* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 53–86.

²³⁷ For examples on the multiple studies of the West Indian family structure to support policymaking towards the goal of development see Madeline Kerr, *Personality and Conflict in Jamaica* (Collins, 1952); Edith Clarke, *My Mother Who Fathered Me: A Study of the Family in Three Selected Communities in Jamaica* (Kingston: University of the West Indies, 1999); For more on the context of colonial studies and some of the policies, see Barbara Bush, “Colonial Research and the Social Sciences at the End of Empire: The West Indian Social Survey, 1944-57,” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 41, no. 3 (2013): 451–74; Robert Ciski, “Joseph Obrebski, the West Indian Social Survey, and the Ethnology of the West Indian Family,” *Phylon* 41, no. 4 (1980): 345–55; Joan French, “Colonial Policy Towards Women after the 1938 Uprising: The Case of Jamaica,” *Caribbean Quarterly* 34, no. 3–4 (1988): 38–61; Nicole Bourbonnais, “Class, Colour and Contraception: The Politics of Birth Control in Jamaica, 1938-1967,” *Social and Economic Studies* 61, no. 3 (2012): 7–37.

According to WIDWO social welfare advisor T. Simey, the problem was that the “enduring family relationships,” which had a “division of moral obligations and economic responsibilities between a husband and wife and their children,” were the exception rather than the rule.²³⁸ According to the social scientists that researched Jamaica in the 1940s, the more prosperous households among the landowning classes were those in which men labored, and women were in charge of the household’s health and welfare. The landowning and the upper classes displayed proper patriarchal familial structures conducive for economic productivity. Marriage was an economic institution in so far as it was regarded by the population as a hallmark of economic success and social achievement.²³⁹ WIDWO advisors hoped that Jamaican rural households would reach a level of economic security that would support a strengthened “family life.”

The Moyne Commission responded to the labor rebellion of 1938 by outlining a model of colonial development and welfare that put resources and actions behind toward peasant prosperity. Between 1940 and 1942, a new colonial bureaucracy, informed by the needs of an empire at war, outlined a series of proposals that presumed state intervention in peasant farming processes, from planting methods to family life. During that period, the WIDWO found allies and set up processes that would rely on the work carried by existing organizations. By the time the WIDWO published its first report in 1943, as we will see in the following section, the local bodies organized by the Jamaica Agricultural Society and the Jamaica Welfare Limited became the leading structures for colonial development welfare planning.

²³⁸ Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1940-1942 / Report by Sir Frank Stockdale*, 51–52.

²³⁹ T. S. Simey, *Welfare & Planning in the West Indies* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1946), 79–87.

4.3 Developing the State's Planning Organizations

By the early 1940s, colonial development and welfare investment lead to some material, productive, and organizing gains in the rural communities. Nevertheless, that expansion was not necessarily the result of self-help, in the strict sense of lower rural classes self-initiative as a driver of local change, but rather through the creation of formal channels through which middle-classes served as intermediaries for government investment to arrive. Between 1941 and 1943, the JWL became an integral part of the new colonial development and welfare mission, first as a privately financed body and then through direct state funding. The arrival of WIDWO advisors in 1941 with their emphasis on farming methods, family, and peasant community life marked a watershed in the work of the JWL. The JWL's conceptualization of social welfare services as "nation-building" became important to the Colonial Office's goal of transitioning from a Crown colony government towards self-government in 1944.²⁴⁰ By 1941, the JWL had gained a leading position among the island's social welfare organizations, being regarded by T. Simey as a transformative platform to teach "self-help, self-respect, and self-determination."²⁴¹ Simey rejected the definition of "social welfare" services as those that merely served as "relief" or charitable services, directed to the "under-privileged" by their "more fortunate fellow citizens." Instead, he defined the role of the social welfare services as inspiring all individuals, regardless of social class, to actively participate as part of a community in the "nation-building" process. Both Simey and the JWL encouraged

²⁴⁰ For an analysis on the process of constitutional reform, see Palmer, *Freedom's Children: The 1938 Labor Rebellion and the Birth of Modern Jamaica*, 280–308.

²⁴¹ Simey, *Social Administration in Jamaica; Notes of the Lecture / with an Introduction by Mrs. Ansell Hart and a Foreword by Miss Edith Clarke.*, 9–11.

every individual to participate in social welfare services, “whether in Church or school, village club, youth club, or in the most fundamental of all social institutions, the family.”²⁴²

By 1941 the JWL redefined its approach and stressed the organization of peasant cooperatives that were, in practice, mostly headed by members of the middle classes through which government investment arrived. The JWL launch the Better Village approach in 1941 to emphasized that social welfare services were understood as a part of “nation-building.” The Better Village approach substituted the community centers for community councils to strengthened cross-class democratically elected bodies.²⁴³ The councils’ wanted to integrate each community into a single unit in which economic, social, and cultural interests were represented on a council’s board or committee. The Porus Community Council, one of the first councils of that nature, came to coordinate twenty-five middle-class-led organizations, small growers’ groups, religious organizations, education groups, and cooperatives.²⁴⁴ By 1945, the Better Village approach included the formation of smaller committees and councils in charge of coordinating villages and districts’ activities when it was not possible to establish a community council.²⁴⁵

²⁴² Simey used the concepts social welfare services, social services, and welfare services almost interchangeably Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1940-1942 / Report by Sir Frank Stockdale*, 50.

²⁴³ The JWL staff was inspired by developments and publications from the interwar period, specially from India and Africa. For an example on the textual networks see Radhika Natarajan, “‘Village Life and How to Improve It’: Textual Routes of Community Development in the Late British Empire,” in *Reading the Postwar Future: Textual Turning Points from 1944* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2019), 96–112.

²⁴⁴ Some of the organizations include: Citrus Growers Association, Jamaica Agricultural Society, Trinity Housing Group, Credit Union, Citizens Association, Jamaica Burial Scheme Society, Daughters of the King, E. M. People’s Co-op Bank, Mothers Union, Jamaica Women’s Federation, Union Sports Club, Crusaders League, Josephs Sports Club, Egg Co-op. Group, Literary and Social Club, The Wood-craft Club, Pioneer Girls, The Play Centre, Women’s Civic Group, and New Porus Club (High School Group).

²⁴⁵ See Table 8 to see the growth of village and district organizations under the JWL between 1945-1951

The JWL's councils, village committees, and cooperative groups became the main colonial development organizations financed under the CD&W fund in 1943. That year, the colonial administration took over the finance and became a stakeholder of JWL operations after the banana companies withdrew. Since 1941, the JWL faced the severe economic difficulties of Panama disease, Leaf-Spot disease, and the war's toll on the banana industry. Contributions from the UFCo and the Standard Fruit Company to JWL fell from £25,000 in 1937 to £1,314 in 1942. By 1943, banana exports from the island had virtually ceased, and with it, the JWL's income.²⁴⁶ That same year, after negotiations between the JWL, the Government of Jamaica, and WIDWO, a five-year grant was made from Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. Under the new finance model, the Jamaica Welfare Limited was renamed Jamaica Welfare (1943) Limited, and they created a new board of directors, which included fourteen government representatives, the Commissioner of Lands, and the Secretary for Social Services. The WIDWO funding meant that the JWL was now accountable to the Colonial Office and the Government of Jamaica.²⁴⁷

Notwithstanding their claims of being inclusive of lower classes, the leadership of most of the organizing bodies created by the JWL within Jamaica's rural communities was restrained. Middle and upper-middle-class farmers led those groups, meaning that it was through these organizing bodies that colonial investment would be channeled to reach local communities. The cooperative groups under the sponsorship of the JWL grew out of the "study-save-work" plan

²⁴⁶ Wakefield, *Memorandum of Agricultural Development in Jamaica*, 7–9; Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1940-1942 / Report by Sir Frank Stockdale*, 38–39; Francis, "The Evolution of Community Development in Jamaica (1937-1962)," 49.

²⁴⁷ Report – Sixth Annual Ordinary General Meeting of Jamaica Welfare Ltd. May 4, 1943, 4/60/10a/2, Jamaica Welfare Limited - Annual General Meeting: Minutes, Reports, G.P., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica. Philip Sherlock, "Experiment in Self-Help: A Chapter from the Story of Jamaica Welfare Limited," *Caribbean Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (1950): 34.

promoted, since 1939, by JWL staff members Thom Girvan, Eddie Burke, and Evan Donaldson. The “study-save-work” plan’s objective was to help organize small village groups, under the leadership of key middle-class members such as teachers, clergy, and landowners, to work on agricultural, housing, or recreational projects which could eventually grow into permanent cooperative societies.²⁴⁸ In practice, what the cooperative emphasis on cross-class organizing enabled was ongoing middle and upper-middle-class leadership within these organizing bodies and not that of the small farmers and impoverished rural classes they claimed to represent. Through the cooperative movement, middle and upper-middle farmers gained direct access to the state’s bureaucracy, policymakers, and colonial development resources to develop agricultural, processing, and infrastructural enterprises.

The JWL’s own internal reports identify the role of middle-class leadership in most of these bodies as the gatekeepers through which the rural poor had to access government development funds and welfare. Stories such as the tomato industry in St. Elizabeth, the first pioneer group founded by Thom Girvan in St. Ann, or the Mid-Clarendon Development Cooperative were presented as cross-class alliances. But in practice, these were middle-class led initiatives receiving private or colonial funding. Major Rupert Moxsy, first executive secretary for the projects on agricultural settlement and production of the JWL, initially introduced the tomato industry in 1937

²⁴⁸ The objective was that the pioneer groups would become, first, study clubs and savings unions, to analyze village needs, accumulate a small initial capital, and identify potential businesses. Those capital saving groups would become buying clubs able to purchase tools and raw materials (e.g., seeds, fertilizers, and cooperative ownership of mechanical implements for a small farmers’ group.) The final stage was the registration of the society as a multiple purpose cooperative, a cooperative marketing society, or a credit union. Abstract of a memorandum signed by Arthur A. Carney, Secretary Jamaica Co-operative Development Council and Co-operative Officer, Jamaica Social Welfare Commission (undated), in Marier, *Social Welfare Work in Jamaica, a Study of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission.*, 153–56.

in the arid southern plains of St. Elizabeth. Moxsy, a landowner and politician from Clarendon, led a group of 64 small farmers “determined to sacrifice time, comfort and pride to build the new Jamaica.”²⁴⁹ The JWL and the Government of Jamaica provided the initial grants to purchase seeds and fertilizers and help organize the marketing of the fruit through a new central organization, Jamaica Vegetables Ltd.²⁵⁰ By 1943, under the sponsorship of the JWL and the WIDWO, the industry grew to include fourteen associations of growers that processed and marketed their products through the Jamaica Vegetables Ltd.²⁵¹ By 1948, the cooperative tomato movement included several associations from St. Elizabeth and Manchester, with 1400 members. The strongest association was in Bull Savannah with 500 members, followed by Pedro Plains and Ballards Valley.²⁵²

Similar to the tomato industry in St. Elizabeth, the formation of Walkerwood Community Settlement circa 1943 illustrates upper-middle-class intermediation in agricultural organizing initiatives. As one contemporary observer narrates based on internal reports and conversations with the actors, Thom Girvan collaborated with large estate owners to started experiments in the field “to see the peasants grow and develop” in St. Ann. Together, Girvan and his upper-middle-class associates formulated the first pioneer club in 1940 after contacting a few young men from

²⁴⁹ Report Organising Officer (Women’s Work) May-June 1942 – Jessie R. Irwin; Report Organising Officer (Women’s Work) July-September 1942 – Jessie R. Irwin; Organising Officer’s Letter October/November 1942 – Edgar B Hallett, 4/60/10a/15, Jamaica Welfare Limited - Organising Officers: Reports and Letters, G.P., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

²⁵⁰ Simey, *Welfare & Planning in the West Indies*, 205.

²⁵¹ Marier, *Social Welfare Work in Jamaica, a Study of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission.*, 22–23.

²⁵² Minutes of Meeting of Delegates at the Office of Ja. Vegetables Ltd. 1946; Factory Meeting of Delegates, 1948. Interviews, 4/60/10a/26, Jamaica Welfare Limited - Tomato Growers (Bull Savannah Tomato Growers Association), G.P., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

the village of Walkerwood. The Walkerwood Pioneer Club consisted of 21 members, fifteen “belong to the small peasants’ group, the other six including Girvan and his well-to-do friends.”²⁵³

After a few years of existence, the group moved on into a co-operative community settlement.

The Mid-Clarendon Development Cooperative story shows an excellent example of middle-class branch society leadership channeling government investment. In Mid-Clarendon, the small farmers and middle farmers who lived on 8,000 acres of arid unirrigated land and survived by rearing animals or laboring in citrus and sugar cane industries were organized into a formal cooperative by the middle-class leaders of the Race Course Branch of the Jamaica Agricultural Society in 1946.²⁵⁴ Following the JWL template, the Race Course Branch started a study-savings club, whose members agreed that water was, first and foremost, the area’s fundamental problem. In the journal of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, *The Farmer*, C. A. Crearer, Cooperative Officer of the Society, published the story as a “splendid example of co-operation and self-help”:

The Savings Club decided to dig a well and fourteen members co-operated to do the job; the land was provided by Mr. Crawford Weir, a member of the group. While four men dug the well four carried away the earth and four sang songs or prepared the meals. Water was reached at a depth of 48 feet and a further 2 feet were dug for a good flow. A windmill was purchased and in a short time clear, good water was flowing from the well. The families of the first fourteen members were the first to use the water, but soon its use was spread over the whole district of Water Lane and now over 500 families were using water and domestic purposes, but also for watering their cattle, horses, pigs, goats and poultry. Members with adjoining holdings also use the water for irrigation purposes. The water supply is free to the whole community.²⁵⁵

²⁵³ Marier, *Social Welfare Work in Jamaica, a Study of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission.*, 70–71.

²⁵⁴ The Welfare Reporter, June 1950, in Norman Girvan and D. T. M Girvan, *Working Together for Development: D.T.M. Girvan on Cooperatives and Community Development, 1939-1968 / Compiled and Edited by Norman Girvan ; with a Foreword by Sir Philip Sherlock.* (Kingston, Jamaica: Institute of Jamaica Publications Ltd., 1993), 216–18.

²⁵⁵ *The Farmer* Vol. LIV No.6-7 June-July 1950: 136

As a result of the Mid-Clarendon Development Cooperative's initial work, the colonial administration financed several boreholes in Mid-Clarendon after 1947. The first of these boreholes were at St. Toolies, and in the following three years, six wells were drilled in St. Toolies, St. Jago, and at the foot of the Mocho Mountains.²⁵⁶ Later on, small and middle landowners in irrigated lands ventured into the tomato growing industry for export.²⁵⁷ What these case studies in St. Elizabeth, St. Ann and Mid-Clarendon show are that material benefits and productive expansion was not necessarily via self-help, as a local independent initiative taken among rural populations as was formulated in theory, but rather through the creation of formal channels through which government investment arrived. The intermediation of those channels of colonial investment, the cooperative platform's leading positions that organized rural economies and infrastructural developments, were mostly occupied by middle and upper-middle-class members of the rural society.

The impulse to "build a new Jamaica" out of those nominally horizontal and cross-class bodies included bringing some relief and support into the island's hilly interior. For example, welfare officials assisted the once-thriving banana village of Bonnett, in the hills of St. Catherine, after it was severely hit in the summer of 1944 by a hurricane that struck the north side of the island. The work of JWL there did not transform local conditions but—JWL officials insisted—brought a change in the community's outlook and inspired a cooperative housing scheme to reconstruct the houses in their village.²⁵⁸ For colonial officials and middle classes engaged in promoting self-help and cooperative organizing, the main goal was to change what they considered

²⁵⁶ Taylor, "An Account of the Development of the Water Resources of the Clarendon Plains," 1955, 227–28.

²⁵⁷ *The Farmer* Vol. LIII No. 4, 5, 6 April-May-June 1949: 127

²⁵⁸ Sherlock, "Experiment in Self-Help: A Chapter from the Story of Jamaica Welfare Limited," 31–32.

to be the existing attitude among rural populations that expected the government to do things for them, although in practice, they themselves became intermediaries through which rural communities could have some immediate access to relief resources that may otherwise have been out of their reach.

Colonial and middle-class leadership meant that the JWL and its initiatives were particularly out of step with rural Jamaicans' concerning the family organization and parenting practices. The JWL initiatives sought to strengthen the patriarchal family structure as the basic unit of economic productivity. In that structure, welfare offices thought that rural women should take on specific roles in the household's economy, around the homestead, and as members of the community in the "building of a new Jamaica." Leila James Tomlinson, an officer of the JWL, formulated several projects that emphasized the role women should have within the household and the community.²⁵⁹ The account of Canaan in St. James offers examples of the congenial job division JWL officers pursued, in which Jamaican men, is head of the household work in agricultural and infrastructural tasks, and women in household activities:

We met the women and outlined a plan to them, the children being taught organized games, and the women practical work on Home Craft lines. [...] The men who up to then had been silent listeners decided they would help the women in any way they could and offered on their own: "An' why mek we can't mek up we own meetin' place?" – And so, while the women do sewing, cooking or mat making the men go collecting bamboos and posts for their booth. [...] Men, women and children are doing their part, and they enjoy taking a share in the effort to make their district a better place.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁹ Report Organizing Officer (Women's Work) December 1941, 4/60/10a/15, Jamaica Welfare Limited - Organizing Officers: Reports and Letters, G.P., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

²⁶⁰ *The Welfare Reporter* Vol.1 No.1. November 1941: 3

These efforts to build collaborative efforts between men and women within their specific roles in the household and the community can also be seen in St. Elizabeth. In the tomato planting area of St. Elizabeth, Eddie Burke organized women's pioneer clubs as part of the industry. Organized into pioneer groups, women could analyze village needs, accumulate an initial capital through small commercial activities, and identify potential businesses. In Bull Savannah, the women's pioneer club launched the first savings union to help finance the tomato industry. Under slogans such as "Women are out to build a new Jamaica," the JWL promoted its success on the pages of *The Welfare Reporter*, reporting how their small homecraft commercial enterprises and savings programs assisted in the growth of the cooperative tomato industry from "Pedro Plains to Precious Plains, from Bull Savannah to Hampton."²⁶¹

Colonial development and welfare services included programs to train and educate children and youth. The same gendered vision that led the formation of men's groups in agricultural enterprises and women's groups in household and community activities was reproduced in the children and youth clubs of the Jamaica Agricultural Society and the JWL. These programs highlighted agricultural and home life training. The Jamaican Agricultural Society started pioneering juvenile agricultural education in Clarendon in 1935. In the 'juvenile branch societies,' agriculture was the basis for Jamaican youth training and education. In 1940, the JAS joined efforts with the JWL to form 4-H Clubs with the objectives of "training boys and girls in the better methods of farming and home making," stimulating "love for and interest in the beautiful country side," and motivating "right living and good citizenship."²⁶² In addition to the 4-H Clubs, the

²⁶¹ *The Welfare Reporter* Vol.2 No.8 August 1943: 4

²⁶² Third Annual General Meeting of Jamaica Welfare Ltd. February 6, 1939, 4/60/10a/2, Jamaica Welfare Limited - Annual General Meeting: Minutes, Reports, G.P., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica. Hoyte, *History of the Jamaica*

colonial administration promoted agricultural training in schools to enable schoolchildren “to take a useful part of the farm and in the community.”²⁶³

Colonial officials also promoted state assistance in developing agricultural methods, organizing, and processing of the major agricultural export products. The most influential and powerful of these organizations were the commodity producers’ associations. By the early 1940s, the Department of Agriculture and the Jamaica Agricultural Society organized cane, copra, citrus, and coffee growers into island-wide producers’ associations able to control prices, improve production quality, standardize processing, and stabilize supply. The formation of producers’ associations seeking to control and improve the quality of production and processing had existed since the 1920s, with the formation of the Jamaica Banana Producers’ Association, the Citrus Producers’ Association, and the Coconut Producers Association. New to the 1940s, was the colonial state’s direct intervention in the creation of such bodies as part of a nation-building development planning structure, which nominally included the interests of large, middle, and small export producers.

The internal structure of the commodity associations excluded in practice all small farmers from negotiation and decision-making processes. Commodity producers’ associations, supposedly the main vehicles for expressing the demands of all export producers, were, in fact, extensions of the state bureaucracy and were mostly controlled by a small number of middle and upper-middle

Agricultural Society: 1895-1960, 42–44; Jamaica Agricultural Society, *75th Anniversary Souvenir Programme, 1875-1970 / Jamaica Agricultural Society.*, 33.

²⁶³ The Department of Education established three agricultural training centers that offered practical training for youths who intended to settle on the land located in Hanover (Knockalva), Manchester (Holmwood), and St. Catherine (Dint Hill). Wakefield, *Memorandum of Agricultural Development in Jamaica*, 23; Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1940-1942 / Report by Sir Frank Stockdale*, 34–35.

farmers and big landowners owning properties over 50 acres.²⁶⁴ Their membership and internal organization constrained the ability of small farmers' to effectively bargain. The associations were based on a non-voluntary membership, that is that these associations were the only available mechanism for producers to export their products. Internally, the associations were organized in a hierarchical "three-tiered model" structures that de-incentivized small farmers' active participation in the organizing structure. The "three-tiered model" consisted of district branches, area councils (defined regions or parishes), and general or annual meetings to which rank-and-file district branch members had no direct access. The associations' area council level was made up of elected district branch delegates, positions that were traditionally occupied by middle and upper-middle class farmers. They, in turn, elected representatives to the general meeting.

These associations institutionalized formal channels of state investment through middle-class and upper-middle-class intermediaries. As shown in previous chapters, rural middle classes and other political allies traditionally performed as a hinge between rural masses and colonial bureaucracy; what was new in the 1940s was that their leadership position as intermediaries was fully institutionalized into client-patron networks in which the associations and the state negotiated policies related to marketing, credit, processing, labor relations, and extension work. The rural groups and clubs, cooperatives, and producers' associations gave voice and visibility to a very narrow range of rural actors who historically occupied the limited leadership and participation

²⁶⁴ The average middle farmer owned around five to fifty acres and employed labor, the wealthy upper-middle farmer, included urban professionals, bureaucrats, small businessmen, and landowners who owned between 50 and 500 acres of land, the big landowners or planters held more than 500 acres. Stone, "Political Aspects of Postwar Agricultural Policies in Jamaica (1945-1970)," 156-59. Middle farmers and planters such as P. Broderick, W. Henry, O.W. Champagnie, R. Burke, and G.C. Sharp controlled bodies such as the Citrus Growers' Association, the Banana Growers' Association, and even the Jamaica Agricultural Society for over two decades.

instances in colonial development policies in earlier decades. By the early 1940s, some material, productive, and organizing expansion in the rural communities was possible thanks to colonial development and welfare investment. The creation of formal channels through the middle class enabled that expansion and helped government assistance reach rural communities. What was new in the 1940s was that their position became part of the state's nominally apolitical and technocratic planning structures.

4.4 Client-Patron Dynamics in Colonial Development and Welfare

While the work of organizations as channels filtered through the middle-classes made possible some material and productive improvements in the rural communities, state help through clientelist practices became part of government development and welfare investment. Clientelism here refers to a client-patron relationship in which the patron provides access to public resources from which clients usually are excluded in exchange for their support or votes.²⁶⁵ As explained in previous chapters, up until the 1940s, middle-class farmers, their peers, and political allies served as intermediaries, channeling rural classes' voice to help them get the attention and resources of the colonial bureaucracy. In the years that followed the revolts of 1938 and into a period of constitutional reform that granted universal suffrage and self-government in 1944, that personalized middle-class intermediation was absorbed into the Jamaica's party politics and the mechanisms of the Jamaican Labor Party (JLP) and the People's National Party (PNP).

²⁶⁵ Roniger, "Political Clientelism, Democracy, and Market Economy," 352–54.

During the 1940s, self-help rhetoric and state assistance through client-patron practices were intertwined. The rhetoric on welfare and “self-help” included notions of autonomous citizenship and democracy, in which rural populations would take initiatives in improving their economic and social conditions. According to this vision, building a new Jamaica required the replacement of a “dangerous misconception” of democracy in which it was expected, JWL leaders and Colonial advisers claimed, that colonial authorities and local politicians would “do things for [the] people.”²⁶⁶ The goal of colonial development and welfare policies, their architects explained, was to enable the population to be self-sufficient and proactive citizens by teaching them new forms of interaction with each other and with local governance bodies. In its nation-building mission, the JWL distributed pamphlets and study books aimed to teaching the rural citizenry their responsibilities for the welfare of their district and their duty to bring about changes instead of simply petitioning for immediate solutions from colonial authorities.²⁶⁷

Nevertheless, while the rhetoric of self-help meant to advance people’s local initiative, in practice, that local initiative demanded jobs and relief funds from above. In contrast to the nominal emphasis on household self-help and horizontal community cooperation, vertical client-patron networks became the main channel of governance and communication between the people and authorities. The practices where influential middle-class members and politicians worked as a

²⁶⁶ *The Welfare Reporter* Vol. 2 No. 10 October 1943: 6

²⁶⁷ One of those booklets, *The Art of Living Together*, was based on Mr. L. C. Hill’s recommendations on the local government system in the island; Central Council of Voluntary Social Services, *The Art of Living Together. An Outline for Study Groups of the Reform of Local Government in Jamaica, Etc.* (Mandeville, Jamaica: The College Press, 1944); Schoburgh, *Local Government Reform: The Prospects for Community Empowerment in Jamaica*, 68–72. For news on the importance of teaching the people to address the needs in their communities on their own and on the distribution of booklets among clubs, cooperatives, and community centers see *The Welfare Reporter* Vol.2 No.6 June 1943: 3, 11 and Vol.3 No.7 July 1944: 2, 5, 11.

hinge between disenfranchised rural classes and colonial administration were not new to the 1940s. However, by decade's end, they were far more widespread and institutionalized than ever before. Client-patron practices that evolved into partisan loyalties after 1944 served as an alternative through which unemployed, tenants, small farmers and other rural laborers sought access to immediate resources otherwise out of their reach. That happened both through direct petitioning outside the institutions set up by JWL of Jamaica Agricultural Society and through the organizations' nested structures. Citizens associations, branch societies, sporadic collective organizing, and even branches of the nascent political parties, among others, sent petitions and delegations to meetings of the Parochial Boards, requesting land settlements, the allocation of public resources for infrastructural improvements, and relief work for the unemployed.

Notwithstanding the rhetoric of self-help and community cooperation, vertical client-patron practices became integral to colonial development and welfare policies. The practice became, in fact, so prevalent by the early 1940s that the colonial administration deliberately granted relief funds for the unemployed and enabled Jamaican politicians – members of the Parochial Boards and the Legislative Council – to handle the distribution of relief grants to urgently address the needs in the rural areas and maintain peace on the island. The colonial officials urged the administration to follow “the recommendations of certain influential persons - from the Custos of the Parish downwards,” in several cases, even against the recommendations of colonial technocrats.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁸ In 1942 the Legislative Council approved a loan specifically for relief work across the island. The loan lacked a clear execution plan, leaving it on the hand of the Legislative Council and Parochial Boards. Letter from Labour Adviser to Colonial Secretary, October 1942, 1B/5/77/284 – 1938, Unemployment in Clarendon: Petitions & Representations for Relief, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

As correspondence and internal reports from Clarendon shows, public works improvements were determined by the pressures of the unemployed and not by any form of development planning. Such was the case, commented on in the previous chapter when the Director of Public Works refused a request from the Central Clarendon Citizens' Association to fix a road to provide some relief work for the unemployed in the area. On that occasion, J.A.G. Smith, member of the Legislative Council for Clarendon, intervened in favor of the association's request, insisting that the funds were "not so much a question of knowledge of engineering as ordinary common-sense."²⁶⁹ On other occasions, colonial bureaucrats, politicians, or civil servants had to respond to petitioners to de-escalate tense situations. Such was the case when protesters reached the office of R. O. Terrier, former Clarendon delegate to the Jamaica Agricultural Society and member of the Legislative Council. On that occasion, because the unemployed were "adopting a threatening attitude," Terrier had to hire "50 labourers breaking stones on his property," while the Parochial Board and Custos purchased tools "in order to help matters." In both cases, the colonial administration authorized the Public Works Department to proceed with public works as recommended by local politicians "with a view to relieving the situation."²⁷⁰

Client-patron practices meant that politicians had to compete to access relief funds and employment prospects for their petitioners. The fact that politicians had to seek actively to get

²⁶⁹ Communication Labour Officer. In re unemployment in the parish of Clarendon, September 1939; Letter from Central Clarendon Citizen's Association to Colonial Secretary, December 3, 1938; Letter from petitioners Upper Clarendon to Colonial Secretary, January 1939; Letter from J.A.G. Smith, member of the Legislative Council for Clarendon, to Colonial Secretary, February 18, 1939, 1B/5/77/284 – 1938, Unemployment in Clarendon: Petitions & Representations for Relief, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

²⁷⁰ Letter from Commissioner of Police, F. Wright, to Labour Adviser, November 27 1944; Letter from Labour Adviser to Colonial Secretary, November 29, 1944, 1B/5/77/284 – 1938, Unemployment in Clarendon: Petitions & Representations for Relief, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

resources for their constituency also meant that relief grants and employment were not evenly allocated—or at least it enabled complaints about what petitioners perceived was an uneven distribution of opportunities. For example, in August 1941, Clarendon politicians expressed their distress when the Colonial Secretary mobilized unemployed from other parishes to work in the construction of the US Air Base of Sandy Gully. For the Clarendon politicians, such action endangered the social peace in their parish.²⁷¹ On other occasions, petitioners from the May Pen area contended, that according to the newspapers, that they could sense they were getting less work compared to other parishes.²⁷² In a similar case in northern Manchester, petitioners from districts around Christiana suggested Chas A. Reid, a member of the Legislative Council and a resident of Christiana himself, use his influence to secure “a fraction of the Loan money” for “relief work for the labouring classes of this colony.”²⁷³ As these examples from Clarendon and Manchester show, petitions served as an effective means to press politicians and access immediate resources otherwise out of their reach through the self-help cooperative organizations.

These client-patron practices became entwined with technocratic development and welfare bodies. As news reports, internal documents, and debates at the House of Representatives show, the work of the JWL as an apolitical development and welfare institution came into question several times during the 1940s. By 1943, the increasing tensions between the two major political

²⁷¹ Resolution Parochial Board, August 1941, 1B/5/77/284 – 1938 Unemployment in Clarendon: Petitions & representations for Relief, Vol. I - 1938-1942, CSO, J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

²⁷² Letter from Colonial Secretary to Custos of Clarendon, G. W. Muirhead, December 13, 1938, 1B/5/77/284 – 1938 Unemployment in Clarendon: Petitions & representations for Relief, Vol. I - 1938-1942, CSO, J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

²⁷³ Letter from Comfort Hall Local Branch J.A.S. and residents of the surrounding districts to C. A. Reid, M.L.C., J.P., P. C., Manchester, February 12, 1943, 1B/5/77/165 – 1938, Unemployment: Manchester, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

parties, the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the People’s National Party (PNP), questioned the legitimacy of the work performed by the JWL.²⁷⁴ In December that year, Norman Manley, chair of the JWL and leader of the PNP, addressed concerns over the staff’s alleged political activities. Manley warned his staff to “keep its work entirely free from political activities” and emphasized that it was not permitted to use the JWL’s buildings for political meetings or political activities.²⁷⁵ As communications and internal reports of the JWL show, after the first election under universal adult suffrage in 1944, the nominally apolitical nature of the JWL was constantly questioned by JLP officials. For example, in July 1945, a member of the House of Representatives for the JLP assured that the JWL community councils were acting like branches of the PNP

I know very well that your Welfare Centre is merely a PNP nest, and you must have seen in the Daily Gleaner a few weeks ago, a statement made by the Minister of Social Services in respect to these little Welfare Branches. We know their object, and it is our intention to keep our eyes on them in the future, and see that they stand clean from politics, with the hope that they will serve the public as they are intended to do.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁴ The labor movement/political parties that emerged by the end of the 1930s were led by two charismatic middle-class leaders: Alexander Bustamante and Norman W. Manley. Alexander Bustamante was a moneylender and a self-proclaimed undisputable leader. His trade union, the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU), was the largest on the island. In 1943, Bustamante launched his political party, the Jamaican Labour Party (JLP), to contest the 1944 general election. The BITU/JLP was built around the charismatic personality of Bustamante as a hero of the newly enfranchised rural black masses, but also gaining the sympathy of more prominent propertied classes. Norman W. Manley, a leading barrister and chair of the JWL, was the embodiment of the intellectual and professional ‘coloured’ middles-class. His political party, the People’s National Party (PNP), came to represent the interests of the middle classes – urban professionals, teachers, civil servants, and all salaried state bureaucrats. Sives, *Elections, Violence and the Democratic Process in Jamaica: 1944-2007*, 5–10; Edie, *Democracy by Default: Dependency and Clientelism in Jamaica*, 37–38.

²⁷⁵ 3/24/790, Alleged Political Activities of Staff Jamaica Welfare Limited, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

²⁷⁶ 3/24/790, Alleged Political Activities of Staff Jamaica Welfare Limited, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

By the end of the decade, the JLP-Government integrated the JWL into the state's apparatus, shedding any connection to the PNP. When the CD&W Fund entered its final phase in 1949, and the Government of Jamaica began assuming the financial responsibilities of all existing agricultural and social welfare services, the government directly assumed the promotion, managing, and control of social welfare schemes with the establishment of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission (JSWC). The Jamaica Welfare (1943) Limited was absorbed by the new commission, alienating Norman Manley and putting an end to JLP concerns over the potential conflict of interests as chairman of the most important social welfare body and leader of the opposition PNP. Before leaving the organization, Norman Manley accepted that the transformation was necessary to expand and improve social welfare services on the island, yet subtly denounced spiteful actions of political revenge and political persecution against him and his staff.²⁷⁷ The Jamaica Social Welfare Commission Law, 19 of 1949, vested the new Commission with all property, rights, powers, privileges, and interests of Jamaica Welfare (1943) Ltd. The law gave effect to the decision of the government to assume full responsibility for welfare work throughout the island. The new chairman of the JSWC was Rev. T. E. Newlin, the Secretary for Social Welfare Services, described the transition and absorption of the staff of several state and non-state bodies in terms of bureaucratic efficiency—and again, community action.²⁷⁸ In a radio broadcast, Newlin announced:

It is hoped, therefore, that with all these officers employed by the central body, i.e. the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission, it will be possible to cover the whole Island with welfare staff. [...] Social welfare is not intended to deal directly with economic difficulties nor by gift nor to alleviate material distress; it is concerned

²⁷⁷ *The Welfare Reporter* Vol. 8 No. 3 March 1949: 6

²⁷⁸ In principle, Norman Manley agreed with the logic of integration, yet denounced alleged political persecution within the organization. *The Welfare Reporter* Vol. 8 No. 3 March 1949: 6

principally with the provision of trained officers whose main duty it is to build up groups of people in the country areas and to encourage the development of local leadership.²⁷⁹

Despite the fact that Newlin emphasized in his statement on local initiative the terms of community collaboration and local leadership, in practice, client-patron relations represented a central local initiative mechanism for rural populations to access resources out of their reach. In fact, on the ground, bureaucrats contested development grants on factional disputes instead of responding to clear development planning strategies. The centrality of client-patron practices in development became incredibly unapologetic in the Parochial Boards after 1944. The Parochial Boards were the state's bodies of local governance in charge of maintaining markets, public roads, water supplies, and other services. Thus, their position between the population and the central government placed them as intermediary instances through which client-patron practices thrived. The capacity of petitioners to pressure their political representatives and politicians' capacity to distribute immediate relief development through these bodies came to define the nature of the debates in the Parochial Boards in the final years of colonial rule.

The meeting minutes from the Parochial Boards after 1944 are full of examples of how specific political interests, client-patron networks, and the allocation of development resources were enmeshed on the ground. For example, in April 1951, the Parochial Board of Saint Elizabeth received a letter from the Colonial Secretary's office in which they were informed that due to a negative report, the office had not proceeded with a grant to complete a road leading to Fort Charles, along the southern coast. E. V. Allen, PNP member of the House of Representatives for the parish's northern constituency, took responsibility for delivering the negative report and

²⁷⁹ *The Welfare Reporter* Vol. 8 No. 4 Apr. 1949: 3

justified his action by accusing the chairman of the Parochial Board, Mr. John Cecil Sangster, for attempting to benefit from the grant politically. According to Allen and other Parochial Board members, the road in the sparsely populated and unfertile area was a waste of money. They suggested that the scheme aimed solely to favor Sangster's constituents in the region. Sangster, from the ruling JLP and member of the Parish Council for Mountainside, and other members of the Parochial Board, challenged the statement and emphasized that the southern coast of St. Elizabeth was urgently in need of development and that the road was meant to boost the fishing industry and tourism in the region. They condemned the allegation as "influenced by political tendencies" and attempted to move a resolution supporting Fort Charles' road. Allen's continued accusations brought the meeting to an abrupt end.²⁸⁰

As the PNP/JLP quarrel over the benefits of development in St. Elizabeth shows, development schemes were molded or accused of being molded to served specific political interests. Discussions such as the one that took place in that meeting of the Parochial Board of St. Elizabeth in April 1951 were far from exceptional. In fact, similar disputes happened nearly monthly in parochial boards across the island.²⁸¹ In those local spaces of political debate, client-

²⁸⁰ Meeting Parochial Board of Saint Elizabeth, April 1951, 2/10/1/21, Parochial Board Minutes, Local Government [hereafter L.G.] - St. Elizabeth, J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

²⁸¹ For more examples of that dynamic see a letter from the Minister for Social Welfare, forwarding a petition from the residents of Burnt Ground, asking that a new road to be constructed. The Board promised to bear in mind the road mentioned with a view of providing an allotment out of the usual grant from the Government for the relief of unemployment; in Meeting of the parochial Board of Saint Elizabeth held in the Board's Meeting Room at the Court House Cottage, Black River on June 1951. Another example is the case of the work related to the Pedro Plains Water Scheme. See the conversation that ensued to assure the completion of the works in Pongside, Bull Savannah, and adjoining districts including the Colonial Secretary and the Parochial Board in Meeting of the Parochial Board of Saint Elizabeth on December 1949 in 2/10/1/21, Parochial Board Minutes, Local Government [hereafter L.G.] - St. Elizabeth, J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

patron relationships and politicians' abilities to deliver resources to their constituents were interweaved with development strategies on the ground. As an anonymous writer to *The Farmer* denounced in 1949, development schemes and resources were easily manipulated to the service of specific political interests of Members of the House of Representatives and Parochial Boards.

I am a bit mistrustful of these 'schemes' alleged to be in the interests of farming. [...] Mind you, Government at the top may be quite well intentioned. It is when the 'schemes' drift a little lower down the slope that the trouble begins. The principles are quite sound and look fine on paper. It is the manner of application that brings the entanglements and disaster.²⁸²

As the previous example shows, much of the development resources granted for roads, markets, and water supplies, were allocated according to local political interests.²⁸³ The application for development grants included two aspects: the technical and the political one. The political element consisted of a locally articulated petition from residents requesting a specific project. That petitions were used by local politicians to assert the urgency of a project over another one. Thus, a sounded survey of a project included its political viability, rather than just technical consideration.

Overall, the self-help rhetoric and client-patron networks intertwined as part of development practices. While very earnest middle classes worked to create clubs, councils, and cooperative groups for the "cultural development" of a self-sufficient peasantry, it was a very narrow sector of the landed classes (some small, and more middle and large farmers) who were able to voice their interests through these organizations. The persistence of petitioning and client-

²⁸² *The Farmer* Vol. LIII No. 4, 5, 6 April-May-June, 1949: 137

²⁸³ The importance of grants as a source of local finance increased greatly since 1944. For a case study on the K.S.A.C. and references to other parishes see R. D. Thomas, "Local Government Financing in Jamaica, 1944-59," *Social and Economic Studies* 12, no. 2 (1963): 141-59.

patron practices that evolved into partisan loyalties after 1944 and served as an alternative through which unemployed, landless farmers and rural laborers sought to access immediate development resources. These resources were otherwise out of their reach through the nominally cross-class inclusive cooperative programs.

4.5 Conclusion

The colonial development and welfare model in Jamaica during the 1940s linked concerns about food production, land conservation and efficiency, and the improvement of the rural welfare to a rising nationalist rhetoric that asserted it was necessary and possible to “build a new Jamaica” through local community and cooperative organizing. Thus, the new colonial initiative to build a peasant-based economic model was built upon a plethora of groups, council, cooperatives, and associations in the rural areas organized by middle and upper-middle class Jamaicans. Successful examples of such dynamic could be seen on the outskirts of the sugar belt in Bull Savannah, St. Elizabeth, where by the mid-1940s, small and middle farmers practiced mixed-farming methods and planted citrus and tomatoes for the export market as indicated by the Department of Agriculture and the Jamaica Agricultural Society. Organized in cooperative farming supported by the field officers of Jamaica Welfare Limited, their holdings, which ranged from five to ten acres to even up to hundred acres, could support and hold together wives, husbands, and their children in an integrated community.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁴ Edith Clarke, “Land Tenure and the Family in Four Selected Communities in Jamaica,” *Social and Economic Studies* 1, no. 4 (1953): 81.

The impulse to “build a new Jamaica” out of those nominally horizontal and cross-class bodies included bringing some relief and support to the most deprived communities in the hilly interior. For example, welfare officials assisted the once-thriving banana village of Bonnett, in the hills of St. Catherine, after it was severely hit in the summer of 1944 by a hurricane that struck the north side of the island. The work of Jamaica Welfare Limited there did not transform local conditions but—JWL officials insisted—brought a change in the outlook and inspired a cooperative housing scheme to reconstruct the houses in their village.²⁸⁵ For colonial officials and middle classes engaged in promoting self-help and cooperative organizing, the main goal was to change what they considered to be the existing outlook among rural populations that expected government and politicians to do things for them.

However, the fact that those development institutions were also rooted on the ground shallow and exclusionary bodies helps to explain the persistence of client-patron practices, like petitioning local elected officials to get the colonial state’s development apparatus to fund individual public works projects to provide local job, while hierarchical and indeed seen as anti-democratic, were less exclusionary. They served as an alternative means through which the most impoverished sectors accessed development resources. Over the course of the 1940s, client-patron practices were the principle ways disenfranchised rural populations pushed their interests in collaboration with middle-class allies and political representatives. These efforts intensified and shifted into partisan loyalties. However, the client-patron practices were not only related to the power dynamics between the petitioners and their intermediary allies but grew increasingly rooted

²⁸⁵ Sherlock, “Experiment in Self-Help: A Chapter from the Story of Jamaica Welfare Limited,” 31–32.

as part of development practices even within the nominally technocratic and apolitical development institutions on the island.

5.0 “Good Farmers, Progressive Farmers”: Small-Farming and Mining, 1945-1960

In 1957, the journal of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, *The Farmer*, published a note about the Morgans, a family of good “progressive” farmers from the hills of Brokenhurst, Manchester.²⁸⁶ On his five-acre farm, with the help of extension officers, Mr. James Alexander Morgan produced Manchester’s famous sweet potatoes and yams next to small lots of corn, peas, scallions, thyme, citrus, and coffee. The youngest daughter looked forward to the lessons on home economics taught by the Social Welfare Officer. Adolphus, one of the family’s sons, came in second in a parish halter-making contest sponsored by one of the bauxite companies. Like many other stories of small farming families who participated in the government’s agricultural and social welfare programs, the Morgans’ story represents the height of what contemporary observers described as the “period of optimism,” when the development model based on small family farms was expected to contribute to national and local development. Their story also contains the elements that led to the disintegration of the “period of optimism” by the end of the decade.²⁸⁷

On the Morgans’ five-acre family farm brought together all the actors that participated in the Jamaican development model of that decade. From the second half of the 1940s to the end of the 1950s, Jamaica’s government articulated a development policy that stressed the need for greater state involvement in foodstuff production alongside greater state involvement in creating employment alternatives to absorb the agricultural sector’s labor surplus. For the Jamaican soon-

²⁸⁶ *The Farmer* Vol. LXI No.2 June 1957: 518-520

²⁸⁷ J.P. Jacobs, “Introduction” to R. Kirkwood, *A Farm Production Policy for Jamaica*, Sugar Manufacturers’ Association of Jamaica, 1968 cited by G. E. Cumper, “Non-Economic Factors Influencing Rural Development Planning,” *Social and Economic Studies* 17, no. 3 (1968): 243.

to-be post-colonial elite, this was a consistent vision that brought together local and national development. Thus, the agricultural policies of the second half of the 1940s attempted to accentuate the state's degree of control over small peasant proprietorships, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, attract foreign industries to incentivize employment on the island. The industry that benefited the most from these incentives was the developing bauxite-alumina industry, which accumulated extensive land on the island. As shown in the Morgans' case, it rapidly became a very influential actor alongside state institutions in the rural communities inhabited by small farmers.

This chapter explores the decade of the 1950s, which encompasses both the heyday and decline of the "period of optimism." During this decade, the state-led agricultural planning policies were not as successful as expected. Due to the growing influence of the bauxite-alumina industry in the hilly interior of the island, the government reassessed its agricultural approach. By the end of the decade, optimism in the small-farming sector had diminished amid suggestions from social scientists that it would be better to experiment with large-scale developments instead of continuing support for the improvement of individual small farmers.

The first section of this chapter will focus on the articulation of a development model that stressed both state control over small hillside farming and industrialization, starting in 1945. Since the early 1940s, colonial advisers and the government officials promoted policies to increase food production and land conservation on the hills, mostly occupied by small farmers. However, mostly middle farmers benefited from these policies, which in general did not contribute to the island's economic growth. Therefore, the agricultural policies of the second half of the 1940s attempted to increase the state's involvement in the agricultural improvement of small peasant proprietorships. As specific case studies will show, the policies included experiments involving large-scale cooperative settlements, credit programs, and development schemes. All of these received the

endorsement of and technical support from the postwar international development institutions of the early 1950s.

By the second half of the 1940s, agricultural policies were complemented by policies to attract foreign industries to the island. While state-led agricultural policies attempted to keep as many people on the land as possible, political actors were aware that agricultural improvements alone would not solve the island's unemployment problem. In the British Caribbean, the industrialization-by-invitation model of St. Lucia-born economist Sir W. Arthur Lewis included both state-led agricultural planning and industrialization. The Jamaican government enacted several laws to incentivize industrialization by the end of the 1940s. The industry that benefited the most from these incentives was the developing bauxite-alumina industry—which, however, was not labor-intensive, as expected by development theorists, but land-intensive.

During the 1950s, state-led agricultural planning grew and declined, and bauxite mining became king. Bauxite's rise had profound consequences for rural Jamaicans. The second section of the chapter will explore the most important policies launched during this decade: the land authorities and several pilot areas under the farm development scheme. The Land Authority Law was passed in October 1951 and carried out previous proposals for direct state landownership of severely eroded areas into a program of regional assistance and land restoration. The first two land authorities, Yallahs Valley and Christiana aimed to rehabilitate damaged and eroded areas of the island mostly occupied by small farmers. The Farm Development Scheme, launched in 1955, aimed to assist individual farmers' operations in pilot areas throughout the island.

Nevertheless, these policies were not as successful as expected. The policies relied on “formal” organizing bodies such as branch societies, cooperatives, and associations. As we have traced in previous chapters, these had emerged and evolved in ways that were fundamentally class-

restrained: their rank and file members were prosperous small, middle, and upper-middle farmers—not the smallest hillside farmer, in whose operations the policies were intended to intervene. The self-help conditions and requirements, such as initial capital and registered land titles, also precluded the smallest farmers' participation. Therefore, despite policymakers' nominal support for small farmers whose properties covered below ten acres, the organization and requirements of the policies during the decade marginalized small farmers. In fact, the allotted subsidies primarily stimulated the livestock industry in middle and large cattle farmers' hands.

As a result of the agricultural policies' failures and the growing influence of the bauxite-alumina industry in the island's hilly interior, the government reassessed its agricultural approach. The third section of the chapter will show that the decline of the "period of optimism" was directly related to the expanding bauxite-alumina industry throughout the 1950s. By the end of the 1940s, the bauxite companies started expanding into the hilly interior, which was occupied by small farmers and where state efforts were supposedly focused on making agricultural practices sustainable so they could remain there. The issue received the government's attention during the second half of the 1950s when the Jamaica Agricultural Society started questioning the companies' expansion.

Between 1956 and 1957, the Jamaica Agricultural Society denounced that the bauxite companies were buying small farmers' properties, displacing them, and therefore, dismantling the efforts carried by the states' agricultural programs in the hilly interior of the island. Nevertheless, the Jamaican Agricultural Society and branch organizers' appraisal differed from the smallest impoverished farmers' immediate concerns. As discussions from branch meetings show, small farmers preferred to profit from selling their properties instead of participating in government's programs. Also, the PNP government saw clearly that the bauxite-alumina industry had embarked

in agricultural operations on the properties they purchased before and after mining, employing previous peasant proprietors as agricultural laborers in large-scale operations or as tenants in small lands. As the chapter will show, by the end of the decade, the government reconsidered the state-led agricultural planning model's goals, taking the bauxite-alumina industry's agricultural operations as the development model to follow in the following decade.

5.1 Agricultural Planning and Industrialization, 1945-1952

The second half of the 1940s set the groundwork towards a development policy that accentuated state-led small farming development and industrialization in Jamaica. Postwar colonial and nationalist agendas first underscored the importance of agricultural planning. By 1945, changes in metropolitan colonial policy and nationalist political leaders' emergence stressed the need for greater state involvement in foodstuffs production in small hillside holdings. They also stressed the importance of developing employment alternatives to absorb the island's labor surplus alongside agricultural planning. The metropolitan backbone for the build-up of new agricultural planning and industrialization policies was the Colonial Development and Welfare Act's amendment in 1945. The CD&W Act of 1945 raised colonial development funding and extended it until 1955, but not without raising questions first about the colonies' ability to sustain their development and welfare services after independence. The new Act emphasized state-led planning on long-term projects to secure economic growth instead of the previous colonial focus

on social welfare services.²⁸⁸ The stress on economic growth included the Colonial Secretary urging national governments to elaborate development plans.

Development planning in Jamaica combined colonial officers' input and the emerging middle-class and nationalist political leadership. The three documents that served as the source of state-led agricultural planning and industrialization initiatives were drafted by colonial officials and members of the two political parties which emerged from the trade unionist and nationalist movements: the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the People's Nationalist Party (PNP). The three documents were the recommendations of the Agricultural Policy Committee and the Economic Policy Committee published in 1945 and the first ten-year development plan produced by the Development Committee in 1947.²⁸⁹ In contrast to the Economic Policy Committee, under the chairmanship of WIDWO's economic advisor F. C. Benham, the agricultural and development committees consisted of representatives of at least one of the two main political parties. In particular, the Agricultural Policy Committee included the ruling JLP and opposition PNP leaders, which gave the documents the committee produced a sense of political legitimacy and national consensus.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1950 / Report by the Comptroller* (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1951), 35–38.

²⁸⁹ Jamaica. Agricultural Policy Committee, *Report of the Agricultural Policy Committee of Jamaica*. (Kingston, Jamaica, B.W.I.: Government Printer, 1945); Jamaica. Economic Policy Committee., *Report of the Economic Policy Committee*. (Kingston: Government Printer, 1945); Jamaica, *A Ten-Year Plan of Development for Jamaica, 1946/47-1955/56*. (Kingston: The Government Printer, 1947).

²⁹⁰ This committee included Wakefield as a chairman, representatives of the Legislative Council, the Jamaica Agricultural Society, the Livestock Association, Alexander Bustamante representing the BITU, and Norman Manley representing Jamaica Welfare Limited. In addition to its main report, the Agricultural Policy Committee submitted a separate report on the land settlement policy Jamaica. Agricultural Policy Committee, *Special Report on Land Settlement* (Kingston: s.n., 1945).

Jamaican politicians' consensus was that one of the island's economic development challenges was to improve small hillside agricultural production. By the mid-1940s, the island's rural economic activity was centered on large sugar estates on the plains' best agricultural lands, middle to large cattle pens in the uplands, and small farms under five acres producing subsistence ground provisions, bananas, and coffee on severely eroded slopes. Considering that only about one-fifth of the island's land surface was flat or relatively flat, improving cultivation practices on steep sites came to be seen as a crucial piece of improving yields and by doing so, keeping rural families on their farms. From technocrats' point of view, the problem was the state's weak control over smallholders' properties under the existing freehold land tenure system. In their reports from the early 1940s onward, Sir Frank Stockdale, the WIDWO's comptroller, and A. J. Wakefield, the agricultural adviser, repeatedly referred to the "disastrous" consequences of peasant cultivation methods and the potentially dire consequences that the unrestricted expansion of peasant agriculture under the current freehold land settlement policy could have on the island's prospective economic development.²⁹¹

The concern over small farming operations was far from new: since the early 1940s, colonial officials and the administration had addressed the issue. Because one of their main concerns was the severe scarcity of good agricultural land to meet the basic nutritional and employment needs of an increasingly expanding population, the Department of Agriculture established four major regional experimental stations.²⁹² These stations, run by technical

²⁹¹ Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1943-44 / Report by Sir Frank Stockdale* (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1945), 27.

²⁹² According to estimates, the population of Jamaica was expected to double between 1945 and 1980. Simey, *Welfare & Planning in the West Indies*, 5.

specialists, served as model farms, research centers, and breeding centers.²⁹³ These agricultural stations presented a picture of what an efficient mixed farming operation should look like, with as many crops as possible, pasture management, and animal husbandry. While the Department of Agriculture conducted research, investigations, and demonstrations “for the protection and welfare of agricultural development,” the Jamaica Agricultural Society was responsible for agricultural extension work and distributed seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, and equipment as a “liaison between the Government and the people – especially the peasantry and small farmers.”²⁹⁴ However, even as they expanded in the 1940s, colonial development efforts to encourage mixed farming methods and animal husbandry on peasant farms mostly benefited middle cattle pen owners that thrived between the large sugar estates and small farmers.

Consequently, Jamaican planners sought greater state control over resource allocation and peasants’ tenure systems and properties. Notwithstanding the political importance of the land settlement policy as a source of social stability after the labor protests of 1938, colonial advisers and the committees convened in 1945 argued that the freehold redistribution of small plots would make little or no contribution to the island’s economic growth. In addition to the low quality of the land redistributed, the small size of the plots allotted under five acres could hardly support a peasant family, much less bring a substantial increase in domestic food production that would contribute to the island’s economic growth.²⁹⁵ Despite some mixed-farming and dairying methods introduced by the staff of the Agricultural and Lands Departments and the Jamaica Agricultural

²⁹³ Wakefield, *Memorandum of Agricultural Development in Jamaica*, 21–23; Nigel E Agar, *Colonial Development and Welfare in Jamaica, 1940-57: Part 1 (Agriculture)*, Postgraduate Seminar / University of the West Indies, Mona. Department of History (Mona, Jamaica: Department of History, University of the West Indies, 1966), 2, 5–16.

²⁹⁴ Wakefield, *Memorandum of Agricultural Development in Jamaica*, 33–36.

²⁹⁵ Bartley, “Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980,” 87, 195–96.

Society, the Economic Policy Committee reported that the land settlement policy had not resulted in fewer food imports between 1937 and 1943.²⁹⁶

Another concern was whether the land settlement policy had brought real change to the island's land redistribution problem. Indeed, colonial officials asserted that on the contrary, the policy had enabled excessive subdivision and undue concentration of the land. Since 1941, Wakefield had been cautioning that several of the old smallholdings had fallen below the minimum acreage to sustain an average family. For example, in older smallholdings in St. Elizabeth, Wakefield found plots excessively subdivided into small inefficient units that were devastated by erosion. Even when there was not excessive subdivision, there was an undue concentration of land in a few hands. Stockdale and Wakefield were ambivalent about the role of the "right type" of middle farmers within land settlements. On the one hand, these farmers could display appropriate stock-management and mixed-farming methods desirable to inspire the "small man." On the other hand, their operations increased land value making it more attractive for small farmers to sell. Wakefield reported the existence of extensive holdings that ranged from twenty-five to 150 acres within land settlements.²⁹⁷ Although by the end of the 1940s, the colonial administration had sold over 100,000 acres to 21,000 people, the land settlement policy did not bring any significant changes to the problem of land redistribution on the island. By the end of the decade, approximately 300 to 350 large sugar and cattle estates controlled two-fifths of the total farmland, while 70% of the total farming population controlled only 15% of the farming land.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ Jamaica. Economic Policy Committee., *Report of the Economic Policy Committee*.

²⁹⁷ Wakefield, *Memorandum of Agricultural Development in Jamaica*, 28–33.

²⁹⁸ Robotham, "Agrarian Relations in Jamaica."

In response, by 1945 colonial and nationalist leadership proposed a series of projects, not to halt the small peasantry's expansion, but to bring the "small man" under the state's care. The proposals included large-scale cooperative farming experiments and credit alternatives.²⁹⁹ During the second half of the 1940s, the Jamaican government acquired several properties under the CD&W fund to establish mixed-farming settlements and farming training centers, launched credit programs for small farmers, and livestock industry development schemes. By the end of the decade, the Department of Agriculture and the Jamaica Agricultural Society were experimenting in several cooperative farming alternatives in properties purchased for regional small farming groups for the productions of citrus, potatoes, and dairy producers in Manchester and cassava, corn, and peanuts in St. Elizabeth; a Central Farm Improvement Authority set up in 1945 had launched two farm subsidies scheme; and a Revolving Herd scheme had provided 157 heifers for small farmers so they could obtain their first cow without incurring in any capital investment.³⁰⁰

One of the experiments in cooperative farming was the Lucky Hill Cooperative Settlement, formally established in 1945. The government established several families on an 873-acre property on the border of the parishes of St. Ann and St. Mary under the leasehold system, with a grant from the CD&W fund.³⁰¹ The project coordinated the staff of several bodies across the agricultural and social welfare services, including the Department of Agriculture, the Jamaica Welfare Limited, the Jamaica Agricultural Society, and 4-H clubs. The settlement was one of the most ambitious attempts to bring together agricultural extension services with social welfare services promoting

²⁹⁹ Jamaica. Agricultural Policy Committee, *Report of the Agricultural Policy Committee of Jamaica.*, 15–16, 41–42.

³⁰⁰ *The Farmer* Vol. LIII No.1-2 January-February 1949: 13; Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1950 / Report by the Comptroller*, 36–37.

³⁰¹ Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980," 164–68.

family life. Thus, while agricultural staff trained farmers on mixed-farming methods and animal husbandry, the welfare staff focused on women's training on home improvements, gardening, and small-stock rearing. Contemporary commentators blamed the cooperative initiative's deterioration on farmers' preference to cultivate their farms in a freehold system instead of collective endeavor.³⁰²

The government also launched agricultural credit programs to improve smallholders' agricultural operations. In 1945 the government launched the Central Farm Improvement Authority, which handed several farm subsidies schemes. However, the logistics behind the "self-help" rhetoric made the subsidies inaccessible for small farmers since they were meant to work as a complement to encourage smallholdings' development—not considering that, in general, small farmers had no savings or limited sources of investment that might be complemented. The initial farm subsidies under the Central Farm Improvement Authority reflected what agricultural authorities thought would encourage small farmers to invest in their farms, with little input regarding farmers' immediate needs or what risks they were willing to take. First, since the subsidies were meant to work as a complement in addition to small farmers' individual capital investment, the maximum subsidy allotted did not cover the cost of significant changes in any property. Second, the grants were restricted to farming-related activities and not to any urgent need small farmers had. Third, the loan interest rates were too high for small farmers to take risks, and

³⁰² James Wright, "An Experiment in Land Settlement at Lucky Hill, Jamaica," *Caribbean Quarterly* 1, no. 2 (1949): 29–39.

most of them were reluctant to mortgage their properties when they had the land title.³⁰³ This marginalized tenant farmers that rented plots for farming.

By the end of the decade, some amendments on the agricultural credit programs sought to include broader sections of the small-farming community. Agricultural authorities eased some of the restrictions to attract small farmers to develop their holdings. However, the technocratic preoccupation with each farm's methods alienated most small farmers, except for middle farmers willing to follow extension officers' instructions. Amendments to the farm subsidies in 1949 increased the maximum subsidy allotted, allowed for its use on construction projects, and lowered the rate of interest. However, the amendment also required soil, labor, and capital surveys of each farm and development plans drawn by extension officers with which small farmers had to comply. Also, the scheme did not consider farms held under leasehold eligible for capital improvement. Therefore, the 1949 amendment lifted previous limitations but placed new conditions based on officers' assessment of environmental, climatic, and labor conditions on the farm.³⁰⁴ As a result, it continued to be the case that although the colonial administration in theory intended to carry out the financing and development projects mostly on smallholdings, until the first half of the 1950s, it was mostly middle farmers who already had some capital that benefited from these subsidies for improvement scheme.

Despite those contradictions, as postwar international development institutions expanded in the 1950s, Jamaican policies nominally intended to improve small farming operations drew

³⁰³ *The Farmer* Vol. LIV No.6-7 June-July 1950: 108-136; Agar, *Colonial Development and Welfare in Jamaica, 1940-57: Part I (Agriculture)*, 28-34; Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980," 114.

³⁰⁴ For a summary of the main defects of the Farm Improvement Scheme 1947-55 and the plans for a new Farm Development Scheme, see *The Farmer* Vol. LX Jan-Mar. 1956

increasing attention and support.³⁰⁵ After Hurricane Charlie hit the island in August 1951, technical assistance from several international and national development institutions supported Jamaican development bodies and nationalist politicians' emphasis on the "small man." After the hurricane, the Jamaica Agricultural Society urgently called to deepen island-wide small-farming planning to recover and utilize "every scrap of land."³⁰⁶ International technical experts from the World Bank and the Food and Agricultural Organization who visited the island after the hurricane stressed the importance of complete state control of agricultural services, financing, and production to help individual farmers improve their holdings.³⁰⁷ In particular, the World Bank's recommendations stressed accelerating the implementation of soil conservation, pasture improvement schemes, extensive irrigation, agricultural credit for establishing infrastructure—housing and water supply—and a comprehensive scheme of grants and loans.³⁰⁸

The postwar international development institutions also endorsed the pairing of agricultural and social welfare services for national and community development that Jamaica Welfare Ltd. and WIDWO had developed across the 1940s, as seen in the previous chapter. In particular, the

³⁰⁵ For more information on the international development organizations during the postwar, see Cooper and Packard, *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, 8–9; Engerman, "Development Politics and the Cold War."

³⁰⁶ *The Farmer* Vol. LV No.4-10 April-October 1951: 54-55

³⁰⁷ *The Farmer* Vol. LV No.11 November 1951: 99-104; Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1953 / Report by Sir Stephen Luke* (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1954), 30; Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1954 / Report by Sir Stephen Luke* (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1955), 38; Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1955-1956 / Report by Sir Stephen Luke* (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1957), 35.

³⁰⁸ International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, "The Economic Development of Jamaica, Report by a Mission," (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1953).

UNESCO and the US mission in Jamaica worked very closely with the Jamaican Social Welfare Commission's welfare staff. The commission's program became an associate project of UNESCO in the 1950s and received international community development workers every year who attended rural education programs.³⁰⁹ The US mission in Jamaica steadily collaborated with the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission, and in June 1955, the Government of Jamaica signed a collaboration agreement with the International Co-operation Administration (ICA). ICA technical staff advised agricultural extension services and helped delineate coordinated small-farming and social welfare services as a single rural development vision.³¹⁰

Agricultural policies and community development initiatives went along with attempts to secure employment alternatives on the island. As we saw in the previous chapter, JWL's self-help initiatives went along with demands for infrastructure building. Petitioning demands both served to support agricultural production and marketing and also became relevant to politicians to provide direct employment and poverty relief. In the late 1940s state policy shifted to looking to industrialization and mining industry to provide those jobs, in addition to the government's infrastructure building.

The mid-1940s to early 1950s state-led agricultural policies were developed alongside industrialization legislation to incentivize employment. The political actors involved in the new small-farming development model were aware of the initiatives' limitations to secure economic growth. While the government's state-led small farming planning programs attempted to keep as many people on the land, Jamaican nationalist politicians and some colonial officials were aware

³⁰⁹ For example, eleven UNESCO fellowship holders from Pakistan visited Jamaica in 1955. *The Welfare Reporter* Vol. XIV, Nos. 2-3 March-April 1955.

³¹⁰ *The Welfare Reporter* Vol.15 No.2 February-March 1956; *The Welfare Reporter* Vol.15 No.8 December 1956.

that agricultural improvements alone would not solve the island's unemployment. The mounting pressure of population growth and the lack of agriculture capacity to absorb the labor force had increased the rural drift to towns and the Kingston area. For example, between 1942 and 1953, Manchester's population declined 13%, and the labor force in Kingston-St. Andrew's area grew almost twice as fast as that of the city.³¹¹ The Agricultural Policy Committee cautioned in 1945 that land alone would not support a population of 1,200,000 people increasing at an annual rate of 2%. The committee concluded that

having regarded to the normal state of employment and to the rapid rate of population increase [...] it is impossible to suppose that direct and normal occupation on the land can absorb all the available man power of the country.³¹²

Since the land would not absorb all the country's labor force, Jamaican politicians and some colonial officials sought alternatives in the manufacturing sector. The question of viable industrial and manufacturing development alternatives came to the forefront as nationalist political leaders were anxious to encourage economic development through industrialization. Until the 1940s, the colonial administration had discouraged, for the most part, the establishment of industries producing commodities that could compete with Britain's imports.³¹³ However, the start of the war in 1939 provided a stimulus for the local manufacturing sector, particularly for import substitution industries such as shoe factories and a condensed milk factory.³¹⁴ In 1940, the Moyne

³¹¹ Robert L. Aronson, "Labour Commitment Among Jamaican Bauxite Workers: A Case Study," *Social and Economic Studies* 10, no. 2 (1961): 158–61.

³¹² Jamaica. Agricultural Policy Committee, *Report of the Agricultural Policy Committee of Jamaica.*, 11.

³¹³ Bernal, "The Great Depression, Colonial Policy and Industrialization in Jamaica," 41; Richard Hart, *An Historical Approach to Industrialisation in the English-Speaking Caribbean Area (17th Century to 1970)* (Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, 1991), 8–9.

³¹⁴ Hart, *An Historical Approach to Industrialisation in the English-Speaking Caribbean Area (17th Century to 1970)*, 21.

Commission made lukewarm recommendations to facilitate the domestic market's manufacturing sector development. During the war, margarine and soap industries extended in Jamaica and Trinidad, and Barbados followed suit with a cassava-flour factory. These industries were, for the most part, designed to meet the shortages encountered from 1941 onwards.³¹⁵

During the 1940s, Caribbean governments started pursuing industrialization, either through the state's capital investment or foreign capital attraction. Initially, nationalist labor leaders in the English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean who assembled at the Conference of the Caribbean Labour Congress in Barbados in 1945 questioned the benefits of foreign capital investment in the region. They supported the provision of government capital for economic development. They assumed that industrialization would serve a Caribbean regional market.³¹⁶ However, as the decade drew on, the thinking of some of the most influential economists and nationalist political leaders in the British colonies began to show interest in the Puerto Rican industrialization-by-invitation model. The Puerto Rican model provided incentives to US investors to establish industries on the island to produce commodities for the US market.

In the British Caribbean, the theories of Sir W. Arthur Lewis, the St. Lucia-born economist, shaped a model that included both state-led agricultural planning and industrialization. Lewis, who became one of the most prominent development theorists of the postwar period, graduated from the London School of Economics in 1937. During and after the war, he worked as an economic adviser at the British Colonial Office, where he drafted and commented on colonial development plans. From this position, Lewis started debating colonial authorities who actively discouraged

³¹⁵ Simey, *Welfare & Planning in the West Indies*, 127–37.

³¹⁶ Hart, *An Historical Approach to Industrialisation in the English-Speaking Caribbean Area (17th Century to 1970)*, 22–23.

industrialization in the region.³¹⁷ He criticized the report of the Jamaica Economic Policy Committee for its prejudice against the development of local industries and advocated for a strategy of industrialization similar to the one initiated in Puerto Rico based on tax incentives to induce foreign investment. By the end of the 1940s and early 1950s, Lewis highlighted the close link between agricultural improvement and industrialization, indicating that unless industrial and manufacturing sectors generate new jobs away from the land, the agricultural sector would not produce reasonable living standards. Industrialization was not an alternative to agricultural development but an essential part of its improvement. For Lewis, the West Indies' population was too large to be absorbed by agriculture, and that the development of the region depended on the establishment of a large-scale labor-intensive industrial sector.³¹⁸

The centerpiece of industrialization by invitation was to focus on the domestic agricultural sector's productivity and competitiveness. In his argumentation, the dual economy of the Caribbean consisted of a large subsistence sector and a small capitalist industry. The subsistence

³¹⁷ In 1945 the Economic Policy Committee under the chairmanship of Frederic Benham advised against tax incentives, loans, tariff protection, and government investment in manufacturing industries. The arguments adduced were the high costs of locally manufactured goods relative to imports and their limited employment potential. The report emphasized the development of agriculture and to encourage trade unionism and relief policies for the poor and unemployed. Benham adopted an austere attitude to the participation of the government in economic affairs and promoted the view that the burden of economic development should rest on the shoulders of the private sector and not the government. Jamaica. Economic Policy Committee., *Report of the Economic Policy Committee.*; Bernal, "The Great Depression, Colonial Policy and Industrialization in Jamaica," 41–42.

³¹⁸ W. Arthur Lewis, "The Industrialization of the British West Indies," *Caribbean Economic Review* 2, no. 1 (1950): 1–61; W. Arthur Lewis, "Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labour," *The Manchester School* 22, no. 2 (1954): 139–91; Benn, *Ideology and Political Development: The Growth and Development of Political Ideas in the Caribbean, 1774-1983*, 87; Mark Figueroa, "Rethinking Caribbean Agriculture Re-Evaluating W. Arthur Lewis's Misunderstood Perspective," *Journal of Business, Finance & Economics in Emerging Economies* 4, no. 2 (2009): 306–12.

sector was considered unproductive and marginal, so labor could leave it without decreasing production or increasing the marginal wages. Lewis argued that by expanding non-agricultural areas, there would be an increase in incomes and demand for food, thus establishing an incentive for further economic growth in the domestic agricultural industry. In his model, the subsistence sector would shrink as agriculture modernized and became more productive through such investment. Arthur Lewis' analysis of what was needed and the changes he envisioned reflected much of the West Indies' political trajectories. In an international and academic language, he articulated a model of state job provision and sustainable small farming similar to what colonial officials, middle-class nationalists, and trade union leaders had suggested since the late 1930s.

By the end of the 1940s, West Indian political parties and governments adopted the industrialization-by-invitation model. Nationalist governments in Jamaica and Trinidad passed legislation that granted overseas investors concessions to spur manufacturing and industrial development.³¹⁹ In Jamaica, the industrialization by invitation model became the intellectual basis for the economic policies of both the Jamaica Labour Party and the People's National Party.³²⁰ For example, the 1949 Statement of Policy of the PNP proposed tax incentives to attract capital

³¹⁹ Benn, *Ideology and Political Development: The Growth and Development of Political Ideas in the Caribbean, 1774-1983*, 75; Mary Proudfoot pointed at the similarity between the economic policies advocated by Norman Manley in Jamaica and the program in Puerto Rico. Proudfoot, *Britain and the United States in the Caribbean: A Comparative Study in Methods of Development*, 159.

³²⁰ By the late 1940s both parties had developed trade union affiliates and multiclass bases, depended on clientelist politics and patronage to maintain their loyalty, and ideologically resembled each other. The JLP won the first two elections under universal suffrage in 1944 and 1949. The party remained with greater support in the rural areas and from a more conservative segments of the economic elite. The PNP continued to have greater support from urban middle classes and more progressive middle and upper middle classes. The PNP expanded its base and expelled its left wing, including large part of the trade union leadership in 1952, and won the election in 1954 and 1959.

investment and import duties to protect industries from import competition.³²¹ The great concern for creating employment opportunities outside the agricultural sector was related to electoral concerns as well. Support for foreign capital investment was connected to unemployment on the island and the potential negative electoral consequences for JLP and the PNP.³²² The 1943 census revealed that of a labor force of 505,100, 56% were employed although 70% of those wage-earners (around 200,000 people) were casually employed. Therefore, only 30% of all wage-earners held full-time jobs.³²³

The Jamaican government enacted several laws to incentivize industrialization by the end of the 1940s. The Textile Industry (Encouragement) Law of 1947 and the Cement Industry (Encouragement and Control) Law of 1948 marked the beginning of a policy of official support of new industries to compete with imported metropolitan manufacturers. The Pioneer Industries (Encouragement) Law enacted in Jamaica in 1949 marks unrestricted industrialization by invitation. Under the 1949 law, investors were encouraged to import, free of customs duties, building materials, tools, plants, and machinery used in the construction, extension, or equipment of factories. Between 1955 and 1956, the Government of Jamaica extended the incentive legislation providing income tax and customs duty concessions designed to stimulate new investment or expand existing industries. The Export Industries (Encouragement) Law enacted in

³²¹ Bernal, "The Great Depression, Colonial Policy and Industrialization in Jamaica," 41.

³²² Rex M. Nettleford, *Manley and the Politics of Jamaica: Towards an Analysis of Political Change in Jamaica 1938-1968* (Mona, Jamaica: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1971); Adlith Brown, "Planning as a Political Activity: Some Aspects of the Jamaican Experience," *Social and Economic Studies* 24, no. 1 (1975): 7.

³²³ Obika Gray, *Radicalism and Social Change in Jamaica, 1960-1972* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 43.

1956 allowed the duty-free importation of raw materials, containers, supplies for use in the manufacturing process, and items for repair or equipment replacement.³²⁴

Nevertheless, the manufacturing sector had a small impact attracting labor-intensive industries. The policies brought some development to the manufacturing sector by the 1950s. In 1938, the manufacturing sector's share in the Jamaican economy's total production was only 6.5%, to which sugar milling operations contributed 40% of that 6.5% total. By 1950 the manufacturing sector grew to 11.3%. However, it was still small, and by far the more significant part of the Gross Domestic Product was still provided by agriculture, which contributed 31.5% of the total. Thanks to the incentive legislation enacted in 1949 and 1956, the manufacturing share rose to 15.2% by 1968, while agriculture declined to 10.2%. Although this growth created new jobs, the low employment level failed to keep the pace of natural population growth on the island.³²⁵

The development model that emerged by the second half of the 1940s stressed colonial and nationalist concerns on the island's agricultural and employment capacity facing population growth. The policies that were drafted after 1945 included state-led planning of small farmers' agricultural production and the attraction of labor-intensive industries based on incentive legislation to absorb the island's labor surplus. The logic behind was to keep as many of the most

³²⁴ In addition to the legislation enacted, an Industrial Development Corporation was set in 1952 to provide financial and technical assistance to new industries whose development would reduce imports or increase exports and industries. The IDC established sites on which it provided factory space at moderate rentals with access to power, water, and transportation. Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1955-1956 / Report by Sir Stephen Luke*, 29; Owen C Jefferson, *The Post-War Economic Development of Jamaica*. (Mona, Jamaica: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1972), 130–33; Hart, *An Historical Approach to Industrialisation in the English-Speaking Caribbean Area (17th Century to 1970)*, 25–26.

³²⁵ Gray, *Radicalism and Social Change in Jamaica, 1960-1972*, 44.

vulnerable, mostly hillside, small farmers on the land by improving their agricultural operations and living standards while securing employment for those who could not make a living off the land. By the end of the decade, both the state-led small farming promotion and industrialization by invitation models were endorsed by postwar international development institutions and economists. Nevertheless, as will be explored in the following sections, the “period of optimism” fractured by the end of the 1950s.

5.2 Coordinated Small Farming Development, 1951-1960

The decade of the 1950s represents the heyday and decline of the “period of optimism” for the small peasant development and welfare state project. Between 1951 and 1955, the government launched two agricultural programs: land authorities and several pilot areas to develop individual farms. These programs grew out of the proposals outlined by the Agricultural Policy Committee (1945) and the World Bank (1953). Both programs consisted of a series of agricultural centers called bridgehead areas selected to demonstrate soil rehabilitation and mixed-farming methods and provide storage facilities for fertilizers and farm supplies. From the bridgehead area, extension and social welfare officers had to reach out to small farmers, outline individual farming operations plans, facilitate access to subsidies, and guide them through individual or group development and welfare projects on their farms.

In 1945, the Agricultural Policy Committee first recommended establishing land authorities to exercise direct state acquisition of uncultivated or misused lands. The initial objective in 1945 was to allow the government to retain land ownership and control under a

farming system of long-term leases for small farmers.³²⁶ It was not until Hurricane Charlie struck the island in August of 1951 that the proposal for land authorities was considered as a mechanism to rehabilitate the severely damaged slopes of the Yallahs Valley in St. Thomas. As a result of the hurricane, the Land Authority Law was passed in October 1951 and included an emergency provision to accelerate relief measures for the Yallahs Valley. The Land Authorities Law was approved

to encourage and to secure the proper economic and efficient utilization of all land within the area, and to encourage and to assist in improvement work, which embraces work of any nature which is likely to enhance the productivity of any land, or to reclaim or rehabilitate any land or to remedy, retard or prevent erosion or other deterioration of land.³²⁷

The first land authority aimed to rehabilitate small farms affected in the Yallahs Valley as an economic unit. The seventy square miles area (44,800 acres) of the Yallahs River basin extended from Blue Mountain Peak to the seacoast 11½ miles southward. Most of the area, previously large estates growing sugar on the lower slopes and coffee in the steeper northern sections, was occupied by small farmers who mainly produced bananas, coffee, citrus, ground provisions, vegetables, flowers, and livestock products in farms that mostly range from below one to ten acres.³²⁸ Food crops marketing was usually undertaken by women locally and in Kingston.

³²⁶ Jamaica. Agricultural Policy Committee, *Report of the Agricultural Policy Committee of Jamaica.*, 12–15.

³²⁷ G. J. Kruijer, *Sociological Report on the Christiana Area: Sociologist's Contribution to Extension Work in Rural Jamaica* (Christiana, Jamaica: [s.n.], 1956), 4.

³²⁸ D. T. Edwards, "An Economic Study of Agriculture in the Yallahs Valley Area of Jamaica," *Social and Economic Studies* 3, no. 3/4 (1954): 316–41.

Export crops were sold to produce dealers and organized marketing organizations. Many of the farmers complemented their income with seasonal agricultural labor or labor in public works.³²⁹

The island's second land authority was established in 1954 in the Christiana area, and aimed to stop soil erosion in the island's central region. The central mountainous region was characterized by steep ridges and deep valleys that had suffered from severe topsoil erosion due to the heavy annual rainfall and "reckless burning of dense forests and subsequently cultivating crops which hold the soil insufficiently."³³⁰ The Christiana Area Land Authority (CALA) covered approximately 60,000 acres (ninety-four square miles) of high elevation land in the center of the island, including portions of Manchester, Clarendon, Trelawny, and St. Ann. The area was inhabited by 10,000 farmers, of whom 68% cultivated farms under five acres and 28% from five to twenty-five acres. They cultivated ginger, citrus, bananas, canes, coffee, and ground provisions such as yams and Irish potatoes. The area was divided into eight administrative units, called divisions, each with a development and assistance officer in charge of preparing and executing farm plans and performing routine extension duties. Each division was a watershed area that ranged from 600 to 1000 acres in size.

The government also launched a program to assist individual farmers' operations in pilot areas throughout the island. The Farm Development Scheme was launched in 1955 as a five-year plan, financed in part by the CD&W fund and the rest by the Jamaican Government funds. The Farm Development Scheme was based on recommendations from the World Bank's Mission and

³²⁹ C. S. McMorris, "Report on a Sample Survey of Farms in the Yallahs Improvement Area: A Comment," *Social and Economic Studies* 4, no. 2 (1955): 184–87.

³³⁰ Kruijer, *Sociological Report on the Christiana Area: Sociologist's Contribution to Extension Work in Rural Jamaica*, 3–5.

the Agricultural Policy Committee. The goal of the scheme was to assist individual farmers with grants, loans, and planting materials. With the farm subsidy scheme, the government sought to increase agricultural productivity to reduce food imports. Farmers had to apply for assistance and comply with a farm development plan outlined by an agricultural extension officer. The plans indicated the costs covered by grants (between 25% to 75% of the plan), special loans, or by farmers' resources. The grants could cover land clearing, soil conservation, farm buildings, water supply, planting of timber, food crops, permanent crops, and improving pastures. The policy consisted of small pilot areas, or bridgehead areas, one in each parish and land authorities. Later, the pilot areas were doubled to 32 areas.³³¹

The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands coordinated the several agricultural and social welfare services to carry out the work of the land authorities and the farm development pilot areas. The coordinated extension services included the Jamaica Agricultural Society, the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission, and the 4-H Clubs. The extension officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands worked with individual farmers in farm plans and farm subsidies. This initial groundwork included mapping, socio-economic surveys, soil examinations of the farms, and general production schemes for each farmer. The objective was for extension officers to help each farmer decide the most effective productive activity. For example, extension officers could help cane farmers to “cut back” production to keep the price up or plant bananas and coffee instead, and incorporate citrus, yams, pasture, and cattle when necessary.³³²

³³¹ Farm Development Programme - Standing Committee on Extension Services [No. 2 From 2 July 1956 - to Mar 1957], 3/24/1786, Statutory Bodies [hereafter S.B.], J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica

³³² G. J. Kruijer and A. Nuis, *Report on an Evaluation of the Farm Development Scheme: First Plan, 1955-1960* (Kingston: Government Printer, 1960), 2–4.

The Jamaica Agricultural Society and its branch societies were in charge of organizing farmers' groups, called watershed groups. The watershed groups' objective was to enhance farmers' training and collectively make the best use of individual subsidies by encouraging collaborative participation. Watershed groups consisted of around twenty farmers organized by extension officers who were supposed to study each of their farm plans collectively and implement the plans on a cooperative basis. Within each pilot area, but especially within the regions encompassed by land authorities, the watershed groups undertook large-scale projects such as the control of rivers and streams, reforestation, construction of roads, and installation of water and irrigation systems to improve their farming operations.³³³

The Jamaica Social Welfare Commission was in charge of encouraging family participation as part of the farm operations. The agricultural policy included the notion that farm productivity and efficiency had to be reflected in home life and vice versa. Farmers and their families were expected to participate in social welfare projects related to home improvement training and handicraft activities. Although the extension officials did not exclude female-headed rural households, it assumed that all "farmers" were men. It was expected that men would participate in agricultural activities and their wives in home economic activities, rendering the family as an economic unit. The Jamaica Social Welfare Commission had to encourage small farming families to "improve their homes and thus to establish a closer, more intimate and more comfortable home atmosphere."³³⁴ Alongside the agricultural policy, the Jamaica Social Welfare

³³³ Christiana Area Land Authority. Second Annual Report for year ending 31 December 1955, 3/24/1744, Christiana Area Land Authority, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica; Kruijer, *Sociological Report on the Christiana Area: Sociologist's Contribution to Extension Work in Rural Jamaica*, 5.

³³⁴ *The Welfare Reporter* Vol. XIV, Nos. 2-3 March-April 1955; Christiana Area Land Authority. Second Annual Report for year ending 31 December 1955, 3/24/1744, Christiana Area Land Authority, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town,

Commission launched the Home Improvements Program, a program to encourage women in rural households, improve physical living conditions, and create confidence between rural populations and coordinated services staff.

The new development model, which incorporated farm and family life, was highly publicized as a nation-building effort carried by model farmers. By December 1956, the extension services had approved around 2,590 farm plans, accounting for 14,385 acres, within land authorities and pilot areas.³³⁵ News stories on “model” farmers were published in the pages of the monthly *Welfare Reports* and *The Farmer*. For example, small farmers at Treadway Pilot Area, St. Catherine, were highly praised in the *Welfare Reporter* in June 1956. Treadway had a history of participation in the government’s agricultural programs. The 1500-acre district was a property planted in sugar and bananas until the late 1930s when the Lands Department acquired it for Treadways Land Settlement. The new small proprietors continued planting sugar cane throughout the 1940s. After the region was selected as a pilot area, the 280 small sugar cane producers diversified and dabbled in pineapple and coconut production.³³⁶

As several examples show, the small farming families under the program were portrayed not just as model farmers but as model families, the embodiment of a new Jamaican spirit. From the Thatchfield Pilot Area, St. Ann, Mrs. Margaret Jackson, a single mother owner of a seven-and-a-half-acre farm, was publicized as an example of self-determination who won “the respect of the highest colonial authorities.” In 1957, after one year under the farm development scheme and home

Jamaica; Farm Development Programme - Standing Committee on Extension Services [No. 2 From 2 July 1956 - to Mar 1957], 3/24/1786, Statutory Bodies [hereafter S.B.], J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³³⁵ Kruijer and Nuis, *Report on an Evaluation of the Farm Development Scheme: First Plan, 1955-1960*, 4.

³³⁶ *The Welfare Reporter* Vol.15 No.5 July 1956.

improvements program, Mrs. Jackson had pioneered small projects within the pilot area. She had the first water tank, the first cow shed, the only smokeless fireplace, and a home-made shower bath. Mrs. Jackson had Bernetta, a revolving scheme cow, adding milk to the family's diet and a steady income to the household.³³⁷ In Brokenhurst, Manchester, it was the Morgans who were profiled as the model of a "progressive" farming family. Husband, wife, and kids made the most out of their five-acre farm. From their farm, they subsisted and made a small income. The children actively participated in the 4-H clubs and programs carried by the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission.³³⁸

News stories also highlighted the role of small farmers who undertook leadership positions within their communities. Farmers with experience in participating in government's programs and with influence in their districts were highly esteemed as model farmers, regardless of how small and humble their holdings were. In the Christiana Land Authority, *The Farmer* highlighted the role of Mr. Albert Channer, a "good community man." Mr. Channer was the vice-president of Coleyville Branch Society, leader of his watershed group, a delegate at the Authority Area Development Committee, and a member of his coffee group's managing committee. His seven-acre farm was "a model of small farm enterprise."³³⁹ While these publications profiled farmers that benefited from the agricultural policies small farmers that diligently participated in the government's programs, in practices these were not the actual beneficiary stratum of the policies. As it has been typically the case, it was mostly middle farmers who benefitted from agricultural policies in these years

³³⁷ *The Farmer* Vol. LX No.12 February-March 1957: 409-411

³³⁸ *The Farmer* Vol. LXI No.2 June 1957: 518-520

³³⁹ *The Farmer* Vol. LXI No.5 September 1957: 649-651

Notwithstanding the expectations, the agricultural policies were not as successful with smaller farmers as the ones depicted in the publications. Overall, government research in these years identified organizing dynamics and varied economic interests on the ground that directly affected farmers' engagement in the policies. In sharp contrast to colonial policies in the previous decades that labeled bulks of the rural populations all as peasant proprietors without considering class and strata, sociological surveys carried in the second half of the 1950s found sharp contrast among the villages and farmers that integrate land authorities and pilot areas.³⁴⁰ Considerations included mistrust along partisan lines, forms of organization and leadership outside the lenses of extension officers, and misleading expectancy of farmers' prospects and financial possibilities.

First, the policies relied on organizing bodies that had been fundamentally class-restrained since the 1940s. One of the problems was that the policies were planned based on formal organizing bodies such as branch societies, cooperatives, and associations whose rank and file members were prosperous small, middle, and upper-middle farmer, quite different from the small hillside farmer whose operations the policies initially aimed to intervene. Moreover, these institutions were not evenly present across the island. In market towns and larger villages with some institutionalized social life and state presence with public market buildings, post office, school, churches, and justice of peace, rural people had a close interaction with island-wide organizations such as savings unions, credit societies, branch societies, commodity groups, trade unions, and political parties. In stark contrast, fragile hillside smallholds were systematically

³⁴⁰ Kruijer and Nuis, *Report on an Evaluation of the Farm Development Scheme: First Plan, 1955-1960*; D. T. Edwards, *Report on an Economic Study of Small Farming in Jamaica*. (Mona, Jamaica: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University College of the West Indies, 1961); M. G. Smith, *The Plural Society in the British West Indies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965).

located in districts characterized by the absence of state services and dispersed settlements. In such communities, people's social systems centered around informal organizing such as rum shops, revivalist bands, or other recreational settings out of the sight of the state's development bodies.³⁴¹

Second, even where the formal development organizing did exist, the policies' requirements did not secure the participation of the smallest farmers. Not only were these bodies fundamentally exclusionary, but even in places where they had a significant draw among the lowest ranks of the small farmers' strata, the conditions of the schemes essentially prevented small farmers' participation. The expectations that farmers would meet a portion of the cost of developing their farms and the condition that they had to have a land title before they could qualify for a grant under the scheme demotivated small farmers. At Rock River, extension officers reported that the few small farmers initially willing to participate were disappointed by all the requirements.³⁴² In other instances, when small farmers did participate, extension officials realized that these small farmers were more interested in economic relief grants and not actually in engaging in a long term farm development plan. That was the case in CALA, where several of the farmers who received a farm plan abandoned it shortly after. In the words of one of the sociologists appointed to research the programs, a small farmer would usually prefer "to spend money on his farm in a piecemeal way," which generally slowed down the expected development steps detailed in the farm plans.³⁴³

³⁴¹ Kruijer, *Sociological Report on the Christiana Area: Sociologist's Contribution to Extension Work in Rural Jamaica*, 17–18.

³⁴² Progress Report – Rock River Pilot Area Period October 14, 1955, - January 9, 1956, 3/24/1105, Farm Development Scheme Reports Central Division, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³⁴³ Kruijer, *Sociological Report on the Christiana Area: Sociologist's Contribution to Extension Work in Rural Jamaica*, 9–12, 22; Kruijer and Nuis, *Report on an Evaluation of the Farm Development Scheme: First Plan, 1955-1960*, 18–21.

Third, whether or not farmers were willing to participate in government programs was in many cases determined by the political loyalty and trust of the farmers. At Rock River, Clarendon, some small farmers were uncomfortable with the presence of extension officers inquiring into their land titles, income, savings, and family. The mistrust was fundamentally partisan. Some small farmers described extension officers as representatives of the ruling PNP who were going to take their land away. In Newell, St. Elizabeth, Eddie Burke noticed how some of the local leaders supporters of the JLP were “opposed to the scheme” and did “their best to convince the people that the scheme [was] not good.”³⁴⁴ Trust on extension officers based on knowing them personally was also key to the implementation of the programs on the ground. For example, extension officers who were residents of Brokenhurst described a “healthy and sympathetic relationship between farmers and officers.”³⁴⁵

Fourth, there was a fundamental contradiction between local and national agricultural development objectives. On the one hand, the policies that started in 1951 sought to restore and conserve hillside land and improve the smallest agricultural families’ living standards. On the other hand, the government wanted to improve the island’s agricultural trade balance by substituting foodstuff imports and improving exports such as coffee, banana, citrus, and coconuts. However, despite the promotion of model farmers whose properties lay between five and ten acres, the organization and requirements for farm grants marginalized farmers under five acres. Furthermore, the subsidies primarily stimulated the livestock industry in the hands of middle and large cattle

³⁴⁴ 3/24/645, Farm Development Scheme Visits to Pilot Projects and Reports 1956, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³⁴⁵ Brokenhurst Pilot Project – Manchester. Progress Report – January 1956, 3/24/1105, Farm Development Scheme Reports Central Division, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

farmers. Pasture improvements, water supplies, and soil conservation projects received the most significant percentage of expenses (Table 9). Even grants destined to water supply, farm buildings, and land clearing were expenditures related to livestock development. Although that industry was somewhat attractive among the small farmers because livestock had a high value, required little labor, and could be a source of fast emergency income, nevertheless, the requirements for capital investment and land title proved to be barriers for many of them. Therefore, only a few prosperous small farmers and, more commonly, middle farmers ended up making the most out of the policy: invariably, ones who had the capital to invest and were willing to take the financial risk of long-term projects.³⁴⁶

By the end of the decade, optimism in the small-farming sector had diminished. One of the first public questionings of the model came in 1956 when sociologist G. J. Kruijt, appointed by the government to assess the agricultural policies, suggested that farmers with no more than four or five acres could only become a “good farmer” in exceptional cases. In general terms, Kruijer described farmers below that acreage as “hopeless cases” who had a “labourer’s mentality.”³⁴⁷ In 1960, Kruijt suggested experimenting with large-scale developments as opposed to continue supporting the improvement of individual small farmers. Kruijt suggested that the smallest farmers and laborers could benefit more from roads, water supplies, and schools instead of receiving subsidies that would not benefit the island’s economic position.

Despite the emphasis placed on agriculture, the sector had experienced a significant decline by the early 1960s. Agriculture’s contribution to the GDP fell from 31.5% in 1950 to 13.4% in

³⁴⁶ Kruijer and Nuis, *Report on an Evaluation of the Farm Development Scheme: First Plan, 1955-1960*, 4–6, 22.

³⁴⁷ Kruijer, *Sociological Report on the Christiana Area: Sociologist’s Contribution to Extension Work in Rural Jamaica*, 80–82.

1963. However, the economy grew significantly over the 1950s, due mainly to the development of the bauxite-alumina industry and manufacturing.³⁴⁸ By the end of the 1950s, mining, manufacturing, and tourism started displacing government interests away from the small-farming sector. Although some small farmers got access to land under the government's land settlements during the 1940s, as the following section shows, their numbers were soon swamped by a much larger trend, as smallholders island-wide faced huge new pressures to relinquish land in the interest of developing the bauxite-alumina industry by the mid-1950s. By the end of the decade, the small-farming agricultural development model has come under question due to the economic benefits of expanding the bauxite-alumina industry on the island.

5.3 Bauxite Development Model

The decline of the “period of optimism” was directly related to the expanding bauxite-alumina industry throughout the 1950s. Contrary to the logic that incentive-based industrialization was supposed to attract labor-intensive industries to absorb labor surplus from the agricultural sector, the industries attracted in Jamaica ignored Lewis's emphasis on using local raw materials and labor-intensive production.³⁴⁹ Specifically, the extractive bauxite-alumina industry was instead land-intensive, which meant that three new foreign landowners started accumulated land on the island.

³⁴⁸ Helen McBain, “The Impact of the Bauxite-Alumina MNCs on Rural Jamaica: Constraints on Development of Small Farmers in Jamaica,” *Social and Economic Studies* 36, no. 1 (1987): 141.

³⁴⁹ Evelyne Huber and John D Stephens, “Changing Development Models in Small Economies: The Case of Jamaica from the 1950s to the 1990s,” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 27, no. 3 (1992): 61.

The new bauxite-alumina industry started developing in Jamaica by the mid-1940s. Despite some previous reports on high-alumina content soils in Jamaica, the first chemical analysis was carried by the Agricultural Department and Aluminum Limited of Canada (Alcan) in St. Ann in 1942. The Government of Jamaica safeguarded the deposits with the Bauxite Mining Law of 1945 in which took over property rights to all bauxite that might be found on the island.³⁵⁰ The Mining Law and Mining Regulations in 1947 and 1949 regulated mining leases and obligated mining enterprises to restore every mined-out acre of land to the level of agricultural or pastoral productivity before the extraction. By the end of the decade, the government negotiated with three companies that started purchasing land on the island: Alcan (Canada) and its subsidiary Jamaica Bauxite Limited, Reynolds Mining Company (US), and Kaiser Bauxite Company (US). The Bauxite and Alumina (Encouragement) Law of 1950 provided the remission of tonnage tax and customs duties on plant, machinery, and building materials used by the companies for the mining, treatment, and transportation of bauxite and alumina and the construction of facilities.

Reynolds, Kaiser, and Alcan were the first companies to establish mining operations on the island. By the mid-1950s, the bauxite-alumina industry became one of the most significant contributors to the island's export earnings, behind sugar and bananas. Reynolds first shipped bauxite from Ocho Rios on June 5, 1952, followed by Alcan and Kaiser in 1953.³⁵¹ By 1957, the

³⁵⁰ High-alumina content soils in Jamaica was reported by geologists as long ago as 1869. In 1938 infertile red soils in the southern parishes of Manchester and St. Elizabeth were analyzed by the government's agricultural chemist, noting high alumina contents. B. S. Young, "Jamaica's Bauxite and Alumina Industries," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 55, no. 3 (1965): 449–50; Hart, *An Historical Approach to Industrialisation in the English-Speaking Caribbean Area (17th Century to 1970)*, 30.

³⁵¹ *The Gleaner*, May 28, 1952; Great Britain. Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, *Development and Welfare in the West Indies, 1955-1956 / Report by Sir Stephen Luke*, 30.

island was the most important supplier of bauxite in the world.³⁵² The impact of the bauxite industry in Jamaica's economy was very relevant in light of the agricultural sector's decline. Agricultural contribution to gross domestic product sank from 36.2% in 1938 to 23% in 1954, to 13.8% in 1957.³⁵³ The bauxite and alumina industry increase its percentage in Jamaican exports from 2.4% to 28.2% between 1952 and 1956 (table 10).³⁵⁴

The bauxite companies started buying large proprieties, many of those were tenanted, and large and middle cattle farmers. Moreover, by the end of the 1940s, the bauxite companies expanded inward into the hilly interior, mostly occupied by small farmers. Alcan and Reynolds started purchasing properties of 100 acres and over before 1945. Alcan acquired its first bauxite-bearing properties in 1943, mainly from cattle pens that averaged about 500 acres each in Manchester and St. Ann's parishes. A year later, Reynolds acquired large acreages in Moneague, in St. Ann's hills, where extensive cattle pens predominated over smallholdings. By the time Kaiser began purchasing land in 1947, just a few large blocks of single-ownership bauxite land were still available. Therefore, Kaiser started negotiating with hundreds of small farmers in the Essex Valley, St. Elizabeth. Kaiser surveyed, mapped, and purchased as many 5,000 small farms.³⁵⁵ In most cases, the company had to assist its owners tracing the origin of their common-law titles and converted them into registered titles. The companies' land hunger increased as the Bauxite Mining Regulations by the end of the decade came to stipulate that no one could receive

³⁵² Position which maintained until 1971 when the status was took by Australia.

³⁵³ Overall, agriculture GDP fell from 31% in 1950 to 13.4% in 1960 to 7.1% in 1970. Tony Weis, "The Rise, Fall and Future of the Jamaican Peasantry," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 33, no. 1 (2006): 66.

³⁵⁴ Jamaica. Central Planning Unit, *A National Plan for Jamaica, 1957-1967*. (Kingston: Government Printer, 1957), 13.

³⁵⁵ Young, "Jamaica's Bauxite and Alumina Industries," 457.

a mining license for bauxite unless they owned the land. By 1957, the companies had acquired 151,111 acres since 1943, approximately 5.7% of the total acreage of land in Jamaica. (Table 11).

Despite previous concerns voiced by small farmers in the 1940s, it was not until the Jamaica Agricultural Society questioned the companies' land voracity that it received attention. The first concerns over the bauxite companies' presence came from tenants who lived on the properties bought by Alcan in Manchester in 1944. In a petition sent to the Colonial Secretary, tenants in Manchester expressed they were "perturbed over the development that promise to take place [t]here." Facing the bauxite company's expansion, they requested the government intermediate on their behalf to maintain the land at their disposal until mining operations were to begin.³⁵⁶ However, it was only when field officers of the Jamaica Agricultural Society grew anxious about the effects the expansion of the new large landowners could have on the island's agriculture that the PNP government conducted an investigation of the bauxite-alumina land acquisitions and agricultural operations. In 1956, the Jamaica Agricultural Society denounced that the bauxite companies were displacing small farmers from their agricultural lands. The issue was broadly debated in *The Gleaner*, the House of Representatives, and JAS meetings.

The bauxite companies' incursion on small farmers' areas had increased the price of the properties, making it attractive for farmers to sell. In May 1956, in a news report titled "Small Farmers Hit by Land Deals," the Jamaica Agricultural Society made public their struggle to prevent small farmers in Manchester and St. Ann from selling their cultivated lands to the bauxite companies operating on the island.³⁵⁷ According to the Society, the bauxite companies had "turned

³⁵⁶ Letter from Petitioners to the Hon. Colonial Secretary, September 7, 1944, 1B/5/77/170 – 1944, Bauxite Companies- Acquisition of Lands - Eviction of tenants, C.S.O., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³⁵⁷ *The Gleaner* May 11, 1956

from the acquisition of large properties in St. Ann” and were “buying up small farmers holdings in the Dry Harbour Mountains in particular.” The bauxite companies’ prices were attractive compared to the one small landowners previously paid for their plots or market prices. Therefore, numerous farmers were selling their properties “falling victims to rapacious businessmen, and tricksters.”³⁵⁸ W. S. R. Green, Branch Organizer in the Western Division, reported that the “bid of the Bauxite Companies to acquire more lands has caused prices to soar and farmers to fall victims to high prices and promised to get lease of their lands for periods up to 10 years.”³⁵⁹ The problem reached the most remote districts of the Dry Harbour Mountains.³⁶⁰

The companies’ encroachment on small farmers’ areas generated fear among branch organizers of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, extension officers from the Ministry of Agriculture, and politicians about small farmers’ potential displacement and migration. The JAS defined the situation in St. Ann as a “human tragedy.” Winston Jones, PNP Member of the House of Representatives for southern Manchester, also came forward to alert that in his parish, “a similar problem of displacement was being felt.” Those small farmers in St. Ann and Manchester had two- and three-acre properties, “with homes on these and from which they had been accustomed to earn a living.”³⁶¹ The concern went beyond the dislocation of farming communities. In a monthly

³⁵⁸ The same expression was used by Emmanuel Walton Secy. Associated Branches in a meeting of the St. Ann Branches Associated in April 1956. 3/24/2244, Jamaica Agricultural Society. 1944-1958, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³⁵⁹ 3/24/2244, Jamaica Agricultural Society. 1944-1958, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³⁶⁰ The most affected areas were Tobolski, Somerton, Lime Tree Garden, Watt Town, Caledonia, Retirement, Linton Park, Scarborough, St. D’Acre, Green Hill and Rosetta, Armadale, Clydesdale and Caney, Aboukir and Fullerton Park, Inverness, Alva and Higgin Land, and Friendship and a few other areas. 3/24/2244, Jamaica Agricultural Society. 1944-1958, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³⁶¹ *The Gleaner* May 11, 1956

meeting of the Management Board of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, vice-president W. N. Henry warned of the possibility of increasing migration to Kingston:

if this goes on, hordes of small farmers will be no more than squatters on lands they now own, and when the time comes that the owners of the land want it for their purposes, there will be no [other] place for these small people to go than to the parks in Kingston.³⁶²

Branch Organizers also warned of the negative consequences the wide-scale purchase of lands by the bauxite companies would have on rural development and social welfare policies. N. A. Gayle, Branch Organizer in the Northern Division, warned in May about the damage to coffee programs. Branch organizers denounced the impending loss of a wide range of products in the hands of small farmers: coffee, corn, ground provisions, small stock and cattle, annatto, citrus, sarsaparilla, and tobacco. D. T. M. Girvan, JAS secretary, stressed that the companies were undermining “the welfare of the people based on the Farm, the Family and the Land.” Therefore, the Jamaica Agricultural Society urged the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission to introduce educational and welfare activities in the affected areas to prevent the “destruction of their freehold properties.”³⁶³ For the JAS officials such as Girvan, the problem was one of education of long-term planning, rather than of small farmers’ economic opportunities. He thought that education programs would make it less likely for people to sell to the bauxite companies in the first place.

Nevertheless, the Jamaican Agricultural Society and branch organizers’ appraisal differed from the immediate concerns of the smallest impoverished farmers. Some rank and file members of branch societies were taken aback by the branch organizers’ and top-level officials’ declarations and questioned their legitimacy to speak on their behalf. In a meeting of St. Ann’s Branches

³⁶² *The Gleaner* November 14, 1956.

³⁶³ *The Gleaner* May 11, 1956; November 14, 1956.

Associated held at Aboukir, Dry Harbour Mountains, on November 17, 1956, some delegates questioned if the Branch Organizers were acting on a mandate from the small farmers or if they were taking it upon themselves to say what was right for farmers. C. V. Atkinson, chief Branch Organizer, scoffed the question, arguing that the real problem “was not a matter of thinking of the small farmers, but the future and of the generations to come.” His stance was against land accumulation in a few hands, positioning it as part of one of the most fundamental principles of the Society and its struggle for land settlements since the 1920s. Some of the delegates at the meeting, however, strongly disagreed with Atkinson. They said that the sale of their holdings was “a matter of personal choice and opportunity for Farmers to have Money” and that the Society “should not intervene,” since it was “a matter of personal concern.”³⁶⁴ Mr. N. M. Leach, one of the delegates, defended this position based on his experience. He said

he was a man with five children and he was not making £3 per week income from his land. But if he sold out to the bauxite companies, he would get money in his pocket, each of the five children would get £3 per week making a total of £15 per week in the family, and everybody would be better off.

The bauxite companies not only gave small farmers a chance to profit from their properties, but the companies themselves became development institutions in the countryside. Whereas some small farmers were aiming to sell their properties and migrate to a town or Kingston, others were resettled as tenants of the companies, in settlements with houses, roads, schools, water supply, community centers, and extensive agricultural operations.³⁶⁵ In fact, by the mid-1950s, the bauxite companies had already incorporated development and welfare strategies that enhanced their

³⁶⁴ *The Gleaner* November 26, 1956. Similar discussions took place within the Manchester Branches Associated, where small farmers asserted that having the opportunity, they would sell their properties to the companies. *The Gleaner* December 27, 1956

³⁶⁵ *The Gleaner* July 9, 1957

influence in rural communities. For example, Kaiser drilled wells and laid pipelines to supply water for small farmers resettled on Pepper, St. Elizabeth.³⁶⁶ It also sponsored cricket tournaments organized by the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission for the schools in the company's operations vicinity.³⁶⁷ The companies also gave the government small properties to use them as land settlements specifically to relocate tenants selected by the companies from specific mining areas.³⁶⁸

The JAS protest over the bauxite companies' expansion in small farmers' areas that increased in 1955 prompted a governmental inquiry on the bauxite-alumina industry's activities that ultimately laid the groundwork for a new development model. Over three months between 1956 and 1957, the government carried out an inquiry into the bauxite companies' land-acquisition activities. In July 1957, Jamaican Chief Minister Norman W. Manley defended the bauxite companies' work in front of the House of Representatives.³⁶⁹ According to Manley, Reynolds and Kaiser had restored and rehabilitated all 121 acres mined up until 1955, and overall there were

³⁶⁶ Proposal by Kaiser Bauxite Company to provide domestic water supply for the residents who are being resettled on a portion of the Company's property in the parish of St. Elizabeth, 1B/31/625 – 1953, Executive Council Submission. Domestic Water Supply for Pepper – St. Elizabeth, Central Government – Department [hereafter C.G.D], J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³⁶⁷The Jamaica Social Welfare Commission organized a school cricket tournament sponsored by Kaiser in which the company's only condition was to exclude schools that were not under their radio of influence and interest. 3/24/1294, Kaiser Bauxite Cricket Project St. Elizabeth, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³⁶⁸ See case of properties offer by Kaiser Bauxite Company to the Jamaican Government in Mahogany Hall (Trelawny) and Cave Valley (St. Ann) for Land Settlement purposes; 80% of the lots were available to farmers nominated by the company at a price not exceeding £12 per acre. 1B/31/1270 – 1954, Offer by Kaiser Bauxite of properties Mahogany Hall, Trelawny and Cave Valley, St. Ann (settlement), C.G.D., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³⁶⁹ Jamaica Agricultural Society. Central Information and Publicity Service and Jamaica. Ministry of Development, *Farming Operations of the Bauxite Companies in Jamaica*. (Kingston: Published by Central Information & Publicity Service in the J.A.S., 1957).

indications of increasing agricultural yields on bauxite properties. Based on agricultural productivity of mined-out areas, Manley declared that Jamaica had “reached the stage of ‘eating its cake and still having it’” because the bauxite companies were being able to increase agricultural productivity in mined-out properties.³⁷⁰

Government preference for rapid economic growth instead of preoccupation for social dislocation was part of a broader development vision. The 1957-67 National Plan emphasized that the main policy proposal was the attraction of foreign investment capital. Since the mid-1940s, development vision had progressively moved to a position where the long-term goal was to secure economic growth. In theory, that would enable the government to address short-term social objectives such as immediate economic revenue and employment.³⁷¹ Therefore, in fact, the evident displacement of small farmers, the bauxite-alumina industry, gave the opportunity to secure sustained long-term economic growth to the island.

In addition to the positive economic growth, the bauxite-alumina companies had undertaken significant agricultural developments on their properties. The Bauxite and Alumina (Encouragement) Law of 1950 obliged the companies to consider their agricultural responsibility as large landowners on the island. Moreover, indeed, evidence abounds that they took this seriously. In addition to mining, the companies undertook considerable development to increase productivity, yields, and quality of the land and introduced significant improvements in pastures, livestock rearing, water supplies, modern meat processing, and poultry plants. The companies also undertook reforestation and land conservation programs on severely eroded hillside areas

³⁷⁰ *The Gleaner* Jul 3, 1957

³⁷¹ Jamaica. Central Planning Unit, *A National Plan for Jamaica, 1957-1967.*, 1.

previously occupied by small farmers.³⁷² Bauxite companies produced mainly for the domestic market, such as livestock and dairy farming. In Manchester, Alcan produced citrus crops for the export market and engaged in dairy farming for the local market. Reynolds in St. Ann, practically dominated the livestock industry in St. Ann, Manchester, and St. Elizabeth.³⁷³ Indeed, by 1957 the companies seemed to have established on their lands something like what WIDWO advisers or the members of the Agricultural Policy Committee, of which Norman Manley was part, had envisioned for rural regions but been unable to build.

It was not, however, an ideal model for small landowners in this case. The Bauxite Companies' agricultural development included small farmers as laborers in large-scale operations or as small land tenants. The type of arrangement depended on the size of the lands the companies acquired. For example, in its approximately 80,000 acres, Reynolds had acquired in St. Ann, St. Elizabeth, and Manchester properties of 100 acres and over, allowing previous tenants to remain on the properties, working as employees of large agricultural operations or cultivating ground provisions in small lots of two to three acres. If the company decided a tenant had farming abilities, that person would be granted more lots to continue farming. Kaiser, on the other hand, developed a closer relationship with small farming communities, where land ownership by those cultivating the soil had been more common. The company started active mining operations in areas mainly owned by small farmers, so it incorporated extensive resettlement programs. Kaiser's operations

³⁷² *The Gleaner* July 8, 1957

³⁷³ McBain, "The Impact of the Bauxite-Alumina MNCs on Rural Jamaica: Constraints on Development of Small Farmers in Jamaica," 154.

in small farmers' areas involved leasing properties back "to the original owners, to Government or local farmers."³⁷⁴

The bauxite-alumina industry's operations became the model for a new agricultural development model for the new national government and the international planning experts working with it. By 1956, the companies had mined 245 acres of land, and after that, the lands had been restored and rehabilitated.³⁷⁵ Based on that principle, for the Government of Jamaica, the bauxite operations offered an alternative to agricultural production to meet the objective of increasing productivity and land use. For the Government of Jamaica, that meant that it could avoid the high expenses on small farm development projects and the expenses of sustaining large numerous extension staff. As we will see in the following chapter, in the 1960s, the agricultural development programs of the Government of Jamaica focused on middle and large-sized farmers' agricultural efficiency rather than sustaining small-farming operations.

5.4 Conclusion

In the late 1940s, the soon-to-be post-colonial leaders believed they had successfully articulated a development model in which national development objectives were consequent with community welfare. They thought that there could be synergies between industrial and agricultural development: that local development and what was needed for small hillside agricultural

³⁷⁴ *The Gleaner* July 8, 1957

³⁷⁵ *The Gleaner* July 9, 1957; Jamaica Agricultural Society. Central Information and Publicity Service and Jamaica. Ministry of Development, *Farming Operations of the Bauxite Companies in Jamaica.*, 19.

development were complementary with national industrialization policies. By the end of the 1950s, all the pieces of that model were fracturing. The beneficiaries of state-led agricultural planning and the promised economic growth brought by the bauxite companies competed for the same lands. What worked for the community level did not work for the national balance of trade, and what worked for national economic growth was not harmonious with small hillside farmers.

The rhetoric of national agricultural development had radically shifted by the end of the decade. As will be shown in the following chapter, instead of promoting small farming, nationalist politicians started formulating alternatives that more resembled the large-scale commercial operations brought by the bauxite industry. The presence of extractive industry made certain scales of intervention easier for the state, pursuing approaches that would be most beneficial for state actors in terms of national economic growth, not social improvements, in the context of rural spaces. The Jamaican economy grew during the 1950s, experiencing annual per capita growth rates of 5% from 1953 to 1960, fueled by foreign investment in bauxite and tourism and complemented by investment in import commerce and import-substituting industries developed behind high protective barriers. However, income inequality and unemployment grew as well. That tendency became visible in the growing slums in Kingston as a result of rural to urban migration. The 1950s in Jamaica does not necessarily portray a top-down story of the interests of the bauxite-alumina industry, nor a story of small-farming success, but instead a story where agricultural policymakers had to grapple with a landscape continually being shaped by the sometimes intertwined interests of rural dwellers and the contradictions between national economic objectives and local wellbeing.

6.0 “The Spirit of an Independent Jamaica:” Commercial Agriculture and Rural Development Planning, 1960-1972

The agricultural policies backed by the Government of Jamaica, the Jamaica Agricultural Society, and Jamaican economists during the 1960s stressed efficient middle and large commercial agriculture enterprises. The emphasis upon commercial farms mirrored the conviction that these large farms would be more economically favorable than the small hillside farm plots. Commercial farming operations could generate economies of scale, reduce the island’s food imports, and increase employment prospects in the agricultural sector. Nevertheless, the model was a double-edged sword. While it primarily benefited middle and upper-middle commercial farmers, it left the destiny of largely impoverished small farmers and unemployed in the hands of local politicians who administered employment and poverty relief programs in the rural areas. Thus, by the mid-1960s, the Jamaican two-party political system depended entirely on unemployment and poverty to enlarge the patronage networks that sustained the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and People’s National Party (PNP) politicians.

As problems became visible with the emerging system, it did not prompt a return to the vision of small farmers cultivating their own, securely-titled land in cooperation with fellow villagers, but rather state planning of economic activities. By the second half of the 1960s, the Jamaica Agricultural Society and Jamaican economists from the University of the West Indies addressed the contradictions between long-term economic objectives, and the growing inequalities and unemployment on the island. To overcome the economic model’s contradictions, they proposed measures such as further state control of economic planning in an integrated rural development model. The rural development and planning model included top-down management

of the island's lands and human resources. By the end of the decade, that model had become the basis of the PNP's ideological platform.

The first section of this chapter covers the new commercial agricultural development model and its relation to unemployment and political patronage. The Ministry of Agriculture strongly recommended the shift to more efficient, larger agricultural operations during the PNP government, and continued to advocate for the absorption of agricultural labor surplus alongside the developing manufacturing and tourism industries during the JLP government. Putting the weight of state policy behind middle and large-scale commercial farms rather than small, hillside farmers would be far more favorable to the island's national and local development objectives in the long run.

The new agricultural development model involved reorganizing the coordinated extension services, which, during the 1960s, were redirected to work with food producers' organizing and marketing strategies. Farmers with holdings over five acres and engaged in the production of locally consumed foodstuffs had easy access to development resources through the Jamaica Agricultural Society. In contrast, young farmers from small farming families were encouraged instead to participate in skilled agricultural training. In other words, middle-sized farms gained access to capital and commerce; small farmers got the chance to make their labor more valuable. This focus on supporting financial operations for some while expanding agricultural training for others was primarily inspired by the agriculture of the Bauxite-alumina industry, which by the early 1960s had become a prime example of large-scale enterprises with top-down supervision of farming activities.

Overall, in theory, it was expected that the economic growth spurred by manufacturing, mining, tourism, and commercial agricultural enterprises would mitigate unemployment and rural

to urban migration. Meanwhile, the urgent allocation of relief resources was conducted through patronage dynamics. Thus, while the development model primarily benefited middle and upper-middle class commercial farmers, it left impoverished small farmers and the unemployed dependent on clientelism to access employment and development resources in the rural areas. These impoverished rural populations depended on client-patron practices to secure jobs and food. Political clientelism—which, as we have seen, in the 1940s transitioned from ad hoc practices of petitioning and reliance on middle-class intermediaries towards systematic political party-run clientelist dynamics—became even more central in the distribution of development resources that included the use of international development aid for political motives. By the mid-1960s, the Jamaican two-party system relied on unemployment and poverty to sustain JLP and PNP politicians through patronage networks.

The second section follows the trajectory of a new rural development and planning model promoted by branch societies and economists that became the ideological platform of the PNP by the end of the decade. By the second half of the 1960s, middle-class and professional leaders had grown uneasy about the island's mounting inequalities, yet not utterly critical of the commercial agricultural development model's central tenets. What was questioned was not so much commercial agriculture's objectives and its connection to job creation alongside manufacturing and tourism, but rather the absence of cohesive planning hands that would marry national and local development. It was the leadership of the branch societies of the Jamaica Agricultural Society and Jamaican economists from the University of the West Indies who started promoting a new development and planning model by the mid-1960s. They sought to address the contradictions between long-term economic objectives, and the growing inequalities and unemployment on the island. They promoted mechanisms to integrate rural peoples' participation in planning, insisted

on amalgamating local agricultural processes and other economic sectors, and called for radical land reform, which, similar to the recommendations of WIDWO advisers or the Agricultural Policy Committee in the 1940s, sought to increase state's role in promoting and guiding agricultural production.

The branch societies of the Jamaica Agricultural Society launched several pilot projects in rural development and planning starting in 1967. As two case studies in St. Ann and Clarendon described in this section show, the branches' middle-class leadership sought to develop comprehensive plans to control the link between commercial agricultural, public services, and employment opportunities. More importantly, those case studies show the explicit necessity to rely upon top-down agricultural management of the island's land and human resources.

The Jamaica Agricultural Society's rural development and planning projects prompted broader questions on land ownership and the state's role. The questions included the problem of large extensions of idled and misused land. Economists from the University of West Indies that participated in the branch societies' projects insisted that if those were to become a development model for the island, it should include an ambitious land reform that would enable the state to access larger extensions of cultivable agricultural lands in private hands. By the end of the 1960s, the Jamaica Agricultural Society pilot projects on rural development and planning—promoted by middle-class voices and the postulates of university economics writings—served as the practical and intellectual platform of Michael Manley's democratic socialism. In 1972, Manley was elected to the office under the promise to reconfigure the economic structures through an ambitious program of land reform, food import substitution, and the planned linkages of every sector in the economy.

6.1 Commercial Agricultural and Employment

In the 1960s, the Jamaican government shifted its commitment from small farming development towards commercial agriculture and alternative employment opportunities for the smallest impoverished small farmers. Manufacturing and large commercial agricultural operations would generate the jobs necessary to absorb the surplus labor, and the government would fill the infrastructural gaps and tackle urgent social problems such as unemployment and poverty with relief aid. By the end of the 1950s, the development model of the “period of optimism” had fractured. Thus, the Jamaican government, led by the PNP and then the JLP after independence in 1962, no longer saw any productive role for the smallest “unviable” holdings under five acres.

The new economic optimism linked to the bauxite, manufacturing, and tourist industries countered the country’s agricultural sector’s failures. Throughout the 1950s, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased at about 8% per annum, no thanks to the agricultural sector. In the early 1960s, the agricultural sector was contributing only 12% to GDP. Moreover, the composition of the agricultural sector was shifting as well. Between 1943 and 1963, export agriculture increased by 4% per annum as domestic agriculture increased by just 1.8%. The slow increase in the domestic agricultural sector undermined the national development goal of reducing agricultural trade imbalance. Between 1955 and 1964, the percentage of food imports soared from 20% to 70%.³⁷⁶

Therefore, instead of remaining committed to small, unproductive farming operations, the government encouraged a model of efficient commercial agricultural operations. Commercial, as oppose to subsistence, meant agricultural production to fill the demand of the domestic market,

³⁷⁶ Bartley, “Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980,” 113.

substituting food imports. The radical change in the policy came early in 1960. In a speech to the 4-H National Achievement Week at Denbigh, Clarendon, Chief Minister Norman Manley urged the agricultural youth leadership he addressed to engage in commercial agriculture instead of small subsistence production.³⁷⁷ The change to a new emphasis on commercial agricultural production sought to solve two lingering problems on the island: unemployment and imbalances in agricultural trade. Later that year, the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Keble Munn, officially ended the Farm Development Scheme and declared it “unsuccessful.” According to Munn, the policy’s failure was because the farmers who participated in the program did so for their immediate benefit, instead of for the national agricultural production improvement.³⁷⁸ It was expected that in a new commercial agricultural development model, middle and large-scale commercial farms would offer employment in the agricultural sector, reduce national food imports, and establish economies of scale.

The model linked the interests of Jamaican middle and upper-middle-class foodstuff growers to international development theorists’ prescriptions. The new policy developed first by the PNP and followed by the JLP focused more prominently on food production for the local market at a larger scale, as suggested by Arthur Lewis. Throughout decolonization, in the early 1960s, Arthur Lewis continued drawing attention to the importance of agriculture, industrialization, and unemployment. He proposed transforming low productive sectors, such as subsistence and viable small-scale farming agriculture, into productive commercial ones. To address the problem of unviable small farming and prevent the rural-urban drift, Lewis

³⁷⁷ *The Farmer* Vol. LXIV No.5-6 May-June 1960: 133-134

³⁷⁸ Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Jamaica Agricultural Society held on July 13, 1960. *The Farmer* Vol. LXIV, 1960: 8

recommended expanding rural education and training in agriculture and skills applicable in the manufacturing sector. This included building rural schools and reforming the agrarian structure to absorb and hold the schools' products.³⁷⁹

The government launched several agricultural programs between 1960 and 1969 to transform low productive domestic sectors into commercial operations. Three programs, the Agricultural Development Programme (1960), the Farmers Production Programme (1963), and the Farmers Development Programme (1969), shifted the focus away from small hillside farmers to commercial agriculture. The new policy focused on the farming sector that could leap from subsistence to commercial agricultural operations, aiming to extend cultivated land areas, make better use of resources, and focus on regional developments. Thus, to transform low productive sectors into productive commercial ones, the government emphasized developing a larger number of medium and large-sized farms to rapidly increase domestic agricultural production to reduce food imports and offered employment opportunities in the rural areas. The programs included grants, loans, and extension services provided by the government and international agencies such as the Inter-American Development Bank designed to foster commercially viable farms in the 5 to 25-acre category and larger.³⁸⁰

The new programs included reorganizing the staff of the coordinated extension services. Instead of working with individual farmers and families, the coordinated extension services were redirected to work mostly with producers of vegetables and livestock products for the domestic

³⁷⁹ Figueroa, "Rethinking Caribbean Agriculture Re-Evaluating W. Arthur Lewis's Misunderstood Perspective," 310, 314.

³⁸⁰ Hugh Clarence Robotham, *Jamaica Agricultural Society North Clarendon Rural Development (Self Help) Project Survey*. (n.p., 1969), 12; McBain, "The Impact of the Bauxite-Alumina MNCs on Rural Jamaica: Constraints on Development of Small Farmers in Jamaica," 142–44.

market.³⁸¹ The extension officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands were in charge of assisting groups in farming techniques and solutions. The farm development program's credit financing structure came under the authority of an Agricultural Credit Board, which had more flexible requirements for organized farmers capable of administering advances and investments. The Ministry of Trade and Industry was charged with developing marketing strategies for domestic consumption to improve the island's food trade balance. While the marketing of export crops such as sugar, citrus, bananas, coffee, and cocoa was in the hands of producers' association or statutory bodies, the marketing of crops grown for local consumption, particularly ground provisions and vegetables, was still handled by higgler. Thus, under the new policy, the Ministry of Trade and Industry was charged with developing marketing strategies to cut out the middle-women higgler, and ensure domestic products' marketing at farmgate prices for local consumption.

The policy included the formation of the Agricultural Marketing Corporation (AMC) in 1963 that bought vegetables on consignment from farmers organized by the Jamaica Agricultural Society. The Jamaica Agricultural Society was in charge of organizing planting operations and growers of locally consumed products such as vegetables and livestock production. The AMC was in charge of studying local consumption patterns and marketing opportunities. The Corporation signed contracts with farmers, setting beforehand the extent of acreage planted and fixed prices and completed the marketing cycle: collection, packing, and selling.³⁸² By April 1964, the AMC

³⁸¹ *The Farmer* Vol. LXIV No.10 October 1960: 274-280

³⁸² *The Farmer* Vol. LXVIX No.1-2 January-February 1964: 22-25

had established six buying divisions with 44 buying stations throughout the island where the AMC buying agents paid farmers in cash and encouraged others to sign contracts.³⁸³

With the emphasis on commercial agricultural development, the Jamaica Agricultural Society was the leading organization through which middle-class growers voiced their interests and accessed development resources. By January 1962, of a total of 5,374 applications for assistance and projects approved under the Agricultural Development Programme, 79% of the participants were members of the Jamaica Agricultural Society.³⁸⁴ Through the branch societies, farmers of domestically consumed growers received loans and grants to buy lands, transportation, build storage facilities and stores, and buy fertilizers, seeds, weedicides, and insecticides. These project groups and cooperatives who had access to government resources developed infrastructures such as irrigation, plowing, and transportation systems.³⁸⁵ The Jamaica Agricultural Society's monthly journal *The Farmer* became the primary medium of communication to farmers of locally consumed products, including coffee, cocoa, pimento, Irish potatoes, pineapples, vegetables, tomatoes, cabbages, and livestock products.

In addition to becoming the main organizing platform for local food growers, the Jamaica Agricultural Society stressed the training of skilled agricultural laborers. Agricultural training was directed especially towards young farmers from families who owned small and inefficient plots. The 4-H Clubs moved from training youth for subsistence small-farming, to training them as

³⁸³ Brown's Town, Kingston, Morant Bay, Christiana, Chapelton, and Montego Bay (subdivided into St James, Westmorland, Trelawny, and Hanover). For a list of the 44 buying stations of the Agricultural Marketing Corporation see *The Farmer* Vol. LXVIX No.3-4 March-April 1964: 69-73; Vol. LXX No.3-4 March-April 1965: 83.

³⁸⁴ *The Farmer* Vol. LXVII No.1 January 1962: 11, 13, 21

³⁸⁵ See for example Bushy Park Irrigation Co-operative in St. Catherine, the Hayes Development Project, the Deeside Irrigation Project, and the Western Tillage and Transport groups in Hanover. *The Farmer* Vol. LXVII No.1 January 1962: 18

skilled agricultural laborers to secure job opportunities outside the family farm. According to *The Farmer*, young clubbites did not want a project “with a few chickens, a pig or a small plot of vegetables” as they had in the 1950s. Instead, they preferred “tractor training not just for the mastery of the mysteries of the internal combustion engine, but that it will provide them a job.”³⁸⁶ The Jamaica Agricultural Society transformed 4-H training programs, from small-farming to mechanization, presenting the changes as adjustments to new young people’s mentalities:

One remembers almost with a ting of nostalgia, the uninhibited sing-song which characterized the 4-H events in the 1940s. Those early days! One can almost hear even now the echoes of “We’re on the 4-H trails;” the yells— “yea 4-H.” Young people still sing and play, but perhaps with more sophistication. Team games, creative dancing now have pride of place. Ska itself has infiltrated!³⁸⁷

The bauxite-alumina industry’s agricultural operations primarily inspired the newly-embraced development model of efficient commercial operations with skilled workers. By the 1960s, the bauxite agricultural operations, settlements, and community programs had become a model on the island. Distancing itself from its own earlier opposition to the bauxite-alumina industry’s land acquisition patterns, by the early 1960s, the Jamaica Agricultural Society praised the “exceptionally high standards of agriculture” practiced by small farmers in bauxite-owned properties. According to reports in *The Farmer*, “few small-farming areas in Jamaica” so consistently could fashion the same “high standard of husbandry and intensive cultivation” shown in those regions.³⁸⁸ Kaiser’s agricultural operations in St. Elizabeth and St. Ann were used as prime examples of successful large-scale agricultural enterprises that combined top-down supervision of

³⁸⁶ *The Farmer* Vol. LXX No.3-4 March-April 1965: 57

³⁸⁷ *The Farmer* Vol. LXX No.3-4 March-April 1965: 57

³⁸⁸ *The Farmer* Vol. LXVIII No.7-8 July-August 1963: 198-199, 218

farming activities. In 1963, for example, an FAO Mission described farmers' holdings and services at Kaiser's settlements in the following terms. Farmers' holdings

sometimes measured 23 acres, water is distributed everywhere, working capital is plentiful, relatively speaking. A prosperous group of medium farmers has already developed, based on dairy production. Some of them already possess more than 20 cows and more than 40 head of cattle in all. Many of them listen quite attentively to advice from the Extension Service and form productive and efficient economic units. As the size of the units was satisfactory, as well as the working capital at the start, the latter is quickly growing, and the farmers' technical knowledge is improving.³⁸⁹

In the 1960s, the 'model farmer' portrayal changed from a single household head working his plot for subsistence and a small income, to successful commercial enterprises. *The Farmer* repeatedly showcased model farmers to demonstrate the agricultural improvements on bauxite companies and their role in productive agricultural enterprises. One such example, Mr. Alan Spencer, had a glowing profile published in a 1963 edition of *The Farmer*. Mr. Spencer was a farmer resettled by Kaiser Bauxite Company in a twelve acres lot in Lillyfield, St. Ann. He cultivated citrus, pears, breadfruit, ackee, and coconut. Most of the property was covered in pangola grass for his thirteen head of cattle. Mr. Spencer had calculated estimates of how much fertilizer he would need per year and how much milk he would produce. Under Kaiser's agricultural department's supervision, Mr. Spencer represented "the spirit of an Independent Jamaica."³⁹⁰

³⁸⁹ Embassy Kingston, D.C. Tretzel introduces the Kaiser Development Corporation of Jamaica; August 6, 1969: 3, Box #3, Folder: FN Finance 1969, Entry Number P 406, U.S. Embassy, Kingston 1963 - 1975. Classified Central Subject Files, Record Group 84, National Archives and Records Administration [hereafter N.A.R.A.], College Park, Maryland, United States.

³⁹⁰ *The Farmer* Vol. LXVIII No.7-8 July-August 1963: 198

For the government and the Jamaica Agricultural Society, the bauxite-alumina industry's contributions to the island's agriculture were noteworthy. Bauxite experiments and programs on crops, pasture, and livestock constituted a valuable supplement to the Department of Agriculture activities. The companies provided extension services and supplied, for example, growers with citrus plants under the government's Citrus Extension Scheme and sold breeding stock to Jamaican farmers. The companies' commercial developments offered new opportunities for Jamaican farmers. For example, when Reynolds extended its cold storage and meat processing infrastructure, it enabled the company to increase livestock purchases from independent small and middle cattle producers. Reynolds and Alcan supplied the local market with meat, a product in short supply.³⁹¹

The government relied heavily on the bauxite companies to develop public infrastructure in the areas where they operated. In collaboration with the central government and local authorities, the companies established educational funds, community councils, cooperatives, and training courses. According to contemporary observers, the bauxite companies' impact could be measured by the increased number of schools and public health services around the companies' operations. For example, Kaiser employees directly participated in organizations such as the Jamaica Agricultural Society, the 4-H movement, sports associations, parish councils, community councils, and cooperatives.³⁹²

The commercial agriculture development model stressed the benefits of long-term economic growth. In theory, successful economic growth from manufacturing, mining, tourism,

³⁹¹ Young, "Jamaica's Bauxite and Alumina Industries," 462.

³⁹² See for example, Recommendations of the Sub-Committee named to draft proposals for a development programme in the Kaiser Bauxite Area of St. Elizabeth and Manchester, consequent on the Company's offer to make available £2,450 over a five-year period. November 1961, 3/24/536, Sub-Committee Kaiser Bauxite, 4-H Projects, S.B., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica; Kaisbauxco March-April 1962: 6; Young, "Jamaica's Bauxite and Alumina Industries."

and commercial agricultural enterprises would generate the resources to address social problems, specifically large unemployment and rural to urban migration. The government would fill the private enterprise's infrastructural gaps and address unemployment and poverty with relief aid, while manufacturing and commercial agriculture would generate the jobs necessary to absorb the labor surplus. However, as contemporary commentators noticed, the model carried fundamental contradictions. Maximizing the growth of the national income conflicted with the objective of fuller employment. Such a contradiction was reflected in agricultural and land policy.³⁹³ Keeping as many people on the land as possible on small uneconomic units such as those allotted on land settlements meant low agricultural development. Agricultural development in larger commercial operations risked displacing small farmers and enlarging the unemployed masses in Kingston.³⁹⁴

The generation of urgent employment and poverty relief programs were mostly relegated to political bodies. Thus, the destiny of largely impoverished rural dwellers rested in local politicians who administer employment and poverty relief programs. As it had been the case since the 1940s, political clientelism directly influenced infrastructural development projects and employment opportunities.³⁹⁵ In that dynamic, the politician's prime job to his constituency and his party (the great majority of politicians in the era were men) was to secure votes by addressing the electorate's material demands and preventing them from being victimized by the opposing party. Alexander Bustamante, the first Jamaican Prime Minister following independence,

³⁹³ See for example Cumper, "Non-Economic Factors Influencing Rural Development Planning," 243–46; Brown, "Planning as a Political Activity: Some Aspects of the Jamaican Experience."

³⁹⁴ Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980," 121.

³⁹⁵ Contributions on clientelism in Jamaica have mostly focused on urban politics and violence during the 1960s. Terry Lacey for example examined the interrelationship between masses' frustrations and the increased violence of Jamaican society during the 1960s. Terry Lacey, *Violence and Politics in Jamaica, 1960-70: Internal Security in a Developing Country* (Totowa, N.J: F. Cass, 1977).

consistently used the term ‘victimization’ in his letters when he felt parishes controlled by the opposition PNP discriminated against districts controlled by the governing JLP in the allocation of infrastructure projects. For example, in Cross Keys, a JLP district in Manchester, a disgruntled Bustamante vilified JLP councilor Mr. J.W. Shand for leaving his constituency unattended, to be victims of the PNP:

I have been hearing of victimisation for a long time regarding people who are known not to be PNP in the Parish of Manchester but I have just had a Resolution from the people of the Cross Keys Parish Council Division that they get no consideration regarding indigent houses, owner-occupier houses, free food or the maintenance of roads.³⁹⁶

In rural areas, unemployed populations resorted to client-patron practices to secure jobs in public works and criticized when they thought it should go them and not the other side. In the Parish Councils’ public works, the practice was widespread. For example, the JLP branch at Dundee, St. James denounced that employment was being distributed only to PNP supporters in the area. They complained after a group of women requested work for their husbands from the overseer of a road under construction, a request he rejected since no positions were available.³⁹⁷ Bottom-up pressures and accusations regarding ‘victimization’ practices allowed rural populations to influence how resources were allocated from the top-down. Bustamante was particularly sensitive to his supporters’ complaints regarding areas where people in their majority voted PNP.

³⁹⁶ Letter from Alexander Bustamante to Mayor Parish Council, Manchester, October 7, 1964, 4/143/3/15, Correspondence between Sir Alexander Bustamante and Mayors re Local Government Matters (2 folders), Gifts/Private [hereafter G.P.], J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³⁹⁷ Letter from Dundee Branch of the J.L.P. to Alexander Bustamante, December 6, 1964, 4/143/3/15, Correspondence between Sir Alexander Bustamante and Mayors re Local Government Matters (2 folders), G.P., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

Bustamante threatened to stop sending money to such areas under suspicion that PNP parish council members were distributing resources only among its party members. In Manchester, for example, he threatened the Parish Council for what he thought was a preference to specific areas:

Let me be frank as Prime Minister. The people of the Epping Forest to Caenwood and Top Hill Contrivance areas have been complaining to me personally of the wretched condition of these roads and they attribute it to the fact that these roads lie in an area where the people voted mostly for the Labour Party, whilst in the Porus section they voted mostly for the PNP [...] Do you expect Central Government to cooperate with a Council which is reluctant to comply with requests made in the interest of relieving the hardships of the people when it is not going to cost your council one penny?³⁹⁸

Political clientelism became so central in the distribution of development resources that it involved the utilization of international development aid. In 1962, the U.S. Government and the Government of Jamaica negotiated development assistance in infrastructure and food projects to reduce unemployment, rural-to-urban migration, and poverty.³⁹⁹ While that was the rhetoric, on the ground the perception of US personnel was different. These programs served the interests of

³⁹⁸ Letter from Alexander Bustamante to Manchester Parish Council, December 30, 1963, 4/143/3/15, Correspondence between Sir Alexander Bustamante and Mayors re Local Government Matters (2 folders), G.P., J.N.A., Spanish Town, Jamaica.

³⁹⁹ The U.S. aid was related to its hemispheric rhetoric to secure political stability in the region in the context of the Cold War and the Cuban Revolution. Records related to diplomatic communications, negotiations, and meeting provide several examples on how the JLP leverage the island's geographical position, near Cuba, to position its economic and social stability as a priority of U.S. interests. Communication from Ivan B. White, Consul General of the United States of America, in Kingston to Department of State, Washington, May 24, 1962, box 11, folder: 350 Independence Celebrations Invitations, Etc. 1962, entry number UD 2822, Jamaica U.S. Consulate, Kingston; Classified General Records, 1936 – 1962, Record Group 84, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States; Memorandum of conversation between E. Richardson, Jamaican Ambassador to the UN, Hugh Shearer, Minister without Portfolio, Jamaica, and U.S. Delegation to the United Nations, October 5, 1962: 3-6, Box 11; Folder: 350 Jamaica General 1962." Entry Number UD 2822. Jamaica; U.S. Consulate, Kingston; Classified General Records, 1936 – 1962, Record Group 84, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States.

“local chieftains,” according to the US Counsel in Kingston, men who “were taking advantage and did not understand the importance of development.”⁴⁰⁰ The Counsel in Kingston stressed that power competition between these local political chieftains created harmful rivalries between agricultural organizations and rural communities and that electoral emotions gave a political “twist” to virtually anything.⁴⁰¹

In the case of relief aid targeting impoverished populations, the US Food for Peace program became a political bounty on the island. Conceived as a humanitarian program in 1955, the program consisted of distributing US surplus agricultural commodities donated under Title III of Public Law 480. By the early 1960s, the FFP program provided food for school children, milk to mothers and infants, and food distribution to persons on poor relief rolls in Jamaica.⁴⁰² These elements of the program did not cause controversy. However, in 1962, the United States Agency for International Development agreed to include additional food for the “indigent” – Indigent Feeding Program (IFP), which came to represent around 14% of the Food for Peace program in Jamaica. The problem, in the view of USAID/Jamaican mission, came when Jamaican Members

⁴⁰⁰ Despatch No. 254 From American Consul General, Kingston, Jamaica, to the Department of State, Washington “The Agricultural Development Program, 1960-1965,” February 17, 1961: 3, box #234. Folder: Jamaica - Agriculture - Gen 1960, entry number UD 485, Deputy Director for Operation Office of Latin American Operation (Cent America & Caribbean Div) Geographic Files (Central Files), 1952 – 1961, Record Group 469, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States.

⁴⁰¹ Despatch No. 254 From American Consul General, Kingston, Jamaica, to the Department of State, Washington “The Agricultural Development Program, 1960-1965,” February 17, 1961: 3, box #234. Folder: Jamaica - Agriculture - Gen 1960, entry number UD 485, Deputy Director for Operation Office of Latin American Operation (Cent America & Caribbean Div) Geographic Files (Central Files), 1952 – 1961, Record Group 469, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States.

⁴⁰² Report Food for Peace Becomes Political Football, William B. Grant, Second Secretary of the Embassy in Kingston, July 12, 1963: 3, box #1, folder: 1965 - Food for Peace, entry number P 406. U.S. Embassy, Kingston 1963 - 1975. Classified Central Subject Files, Record Group 84, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States.

of Parliament appointed committees to distribute the IFP rather than allowing it to be channeled through the officials who handled poor relief in Jamaica.

The fact that Jamaican politicians determined who would receive distributed food brought the program into question. The first public criticism occurred in March 1963 when a group of women, led by Wills O. Isaacs, PNP Member of Parliament, protested that JLP members distributed food only to persons in possession of party cards. Over the following months, the Ambassador received several letters from private citizens supporting the charges. According to the program records, the greatest single quantity of food was distributed in Alexander Bustamante's constituency. S. A. Webley, Executive Secretary of the Jamaican Christian Council, part of the Board of Supervision who administered the program, also received letters from several clergymen denouncing that Members of Parliament distributed food with no special regard for actual need. These letters underlined that the JLP Minister of Development and Welfare, Edward Seaga, was largely responsible for setting up the system for distributing food to the indigent through local committees appointed by Members of Parliament.⁴⁰³

Through these committees, the people operating the food distribution centers received instructions from Members of Parliament on who qualified as indigent and therefore entitled to received food. For the PNP, the US international development aid was helping JLP politicians maintain their influential position in rural communities. The situation escalated when PNP Member of the Parliament threatened to publicly accuse the US Ambassador of deliberately interfering in Jamaica's internal affairs. For example, in October 1964, Mr. Wills O. Issacs

⁴⁰³ Report Food for Peace Becomes Political Football, William B. Grant, Second Secretary of the Embassy in Kingston, July 12, 1963: 2-4, box #1, folder: 1965 - Food for Peace, entry number P 406. U.S. Embassy, Kingston 1963 - 1975. Classified Central Subject Files, Record Group 84, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States.

telephoned the embassy and insisted that PNP lost in Lucea, Hanover, because Food for Peace was used to buy votes. After several more denunciations that the JLP used the program to win the by-election in Hanover, USAID officials visited twenty distribution centers in five parishes.⁴⁰⁴ In Hanover, most of the distributors in the area asserted with complete normality that they received the food from Mr. Stanhope, JLP member of the House of Representatives, and that they all knew it was “American Free Food.” However, none of them considered it inappropriate. From their perspective, Mr. Stanhope’s duty was indeed to deliver relief for his constituents.⁴⁰⁵ In response to such concerns and controversies, and the debates they spurred among US agents on the ground, the program shrank. By the time AID/Jamaica terminated the program in 1968, it had been reduced to the West Kingston area, where JLP political leaders “graciously accepted credit for the [food] hand-outs.”⁴⁰⁶

By the mid-1960s Jamaican two-party electoral system depended on hierarchical client-patron networks which fed on the unemployment and poverty that fueled demand for the resources they controlled. As preceding chapters have shown, such networks were a fundamental feature of the development model established on the island since the early 1940s. Nevertheless, clientelism

⁴⁰⁴ Report on Indigent Feeding Program Carried Out by Church World Service (CWS) through the Board of Supervision, by Charles T. White, Consultant of Food for Peace USAID/Jamaica; December 4, 1964, box #1, folder: 1965 - Food for Peace, entry number P 406. U.S. Embassy, Kingston 1963 - 1975. Classified Central Subject Files, Record Group 84, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States.

⁴⁰⁵ Report on Field Trips to Hanover Area on November 6-8 and November 11, 1964 by Charles T. White, Consultant of Food for Peace USAID/Jamaica; November 15, 1964: 3, box #1, folder: 1965 - Food for Peace, entry number P 406. U.S. Embassy, Kingston 1963 - 1975. Classified Central Subject Files, Record Group 84, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States

⁴⁰⁶ Embassy Kingston: Food for Freedom: Country Team Considers Effects of Terminating Indigent Feeding Program, March 22, 1968, box #2, folder: Aid 1968, entry number P 406. U.S. Embassy, Kingston 1963 - 1975. Classified Central Subject Files, Record Group 84, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States.

exploded in the 1960s. While foodstuff production had been a feature of the small farming sector, with the exception of the livestock industry, the commercial model of the 1960s marginalized small farmers in favor of consolidating larger operations. Under those circumstances, as the decade marched on, unemployment became a by-product of the development model rather than a temporary challenge, enlarging the ranks of political patronage and sustaining JLP and PNP leaders' position.

International development aid not only sustained but also deepened the development model. Despite the USAID officials' concerns over the overt clientelism that perverted the Food for Peace Program, the truth is that US development aid explicitly endorsed both commercial agriculture and the use of relief resources for political patronage. During the 1960s, US officials from the State Department and the Embassy discussed back and forth the best way to invest Jamaican aid to improve agriculture. By the end of the decade, the State Department and Embassy's reasons to fully concentrate on infrastructural projects that would support the commercial agricultural sector was twofold. First, it would fuel the lagging agricultural sector, on which approximately half of the country's population still depended upon either as farmers or as laborers. Second, it would provide relief to the growing unemployment that was reaching 20% of the population.

The kinds of aid that provided the right incentives or avoided the wrong ones was an object of dispute even among US officials. In communications between officials from the Embassy in Kingston and the State Department, the main challenge on the island was described as "not revolution but lack of evolution." Agriculture was the point in question. How to help Jamaican agriculture more effectively? In a letter from Charles Taquey, the embassy's economic officer wrote to the State Department:

My strongest impression here is that local agriculture is handicapped rather than helped by excessive attention and extension of assistance. There is much evidence that assistance has slaughtered incentives rather than inspired progress. Jamaican farmers receive agricultural aid from the British through preferences; aid from the government through subsidies, marketing assistance and others; and aid from the bauxite companies who acquire their land at inflated prices; from everybody indeed, except the consumer who refuses to pay an economic price for his food. [...] We should not therefore go after a bold new program of assistance to Jamaican agriculture.⁴⁰⁷

Instead of directly providing agricultural technical assistance as was the case during the 1950s, US officials emphasized public infrastructure and unemployment relief programs. Through sustained economic growth alongside immediate unemployment relief, the US Embassy and the State Department thought that political stability could also be sustained. However, they were concerned about Jamaica's "misuse" of resources and were therefore reluctant to spend more on surveys and technical assistance because the island's "agriculture has been studied to death."⁴⁰⁸ The solution, they insisted, was to contribute to commercial agriculture development through programs directly designed to articulate US political and development objectives via infrastructure projects that also provided short-term responses to unemployment.

The US-financed infrastructural development programs displayed the same fundamental contradiction between the long-term national development plans and short-term social urgencies.

⁴⁰⁷ Letters from Charles Taquey, Embassy Kingston's Economic Officer to Caspar D. Green, Officer of Latin American and Caribbean affairs for the State Department, November 27, 1968, box 1, folder: AGR – Agriculture, entry number P79. Records Relating to Jamaica, 1967 – 1974, Record Group 59, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States; Letters from Charles Taquey, Embassy Kingston's Economic Officer to Caspar D. Green, Officer of Latin American and Caribbean affairs for the State Department, January 8, 1969, box 1, folder: AGR – Agriculture, entry number P79. Records Relating to Jamaica, 1967 – 1974, Record Group 59, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States.

⁴⁰⁸ Letter from Caspar D. Green, Officer of Latin American and Caribbean affairs for the State Department to Charles Taquey, Embassy Kingston's Economic Officer, January 7, 1969, box 1, folder: AGR – Agriculture, entry number P79. Records Relating to Jamaica, 1967 – 1974, Record Group 59, N.A.R.A., College Park, Maryland, United States.

These programs sought to benefit farmers engaged in commercial agriculture while providing a significant amount of employment. One such project was the 1970s USAID/Jamaica Feeder Roads. In August 1970, the JLP Jamaican Government negotiated with USAID development assistance to create jobs in the rural areas and ensure the JLP in power in Jamaica.⁴⁰⁹ In 1971, USAID authorized \$10 million to support a \$17 million construction of rural road improvements throughout Jamaica.

In the specific case of the USAID/Jamaica Feeder Roads, the project mostly benefited private economic interests instead of addressing employment problems in the rural areas. Its first objective, to benefit the ruling JLP before the elections, failed as the loan announcement did not create a single job before the 1972 election.⁴¹⁰ The second objective was also failure, as limited local employment was created by the project during the 1972-1976 period either. USAID planned to hire 1750 unskilled workers each year, yet, based upon the Ministry of Works reports, the peak year of employment was 1975 when 500 unskilled workers were employed. The third objective was that the improved roads would increase agricultural production of “average” farmers, described as having about 5-6 acres of cultivated acreage. However, on the ground, this USAID feeder road programs mostly benefited large plantations such as large private pimento plantation and the large Appleton sugar plantation, sugar refinery, and rum distillery.⁴¹¹

By the second half of the 1960s, many on the island had grown wary about the development model’s mounting inequalities. The consequences were visible in the continued decline of

⁴⁰⁹ Robert J. Berg et al., *Jamaica Feeder Roads: An Evaluation*, Project Impact Evaluation ; No. 11 (Washington, D.C.[?]: Agency for International Development, 1980), 1–2.

⁴¹⁰ Berg et al., 1.

⁴¹¹ Berg et al., 5–10.

agricultural production, increasing unemployment, and few job prospects in the mining sector. Between 1960 and 1968, per capita income in agriculture as a percentage of per capita national income declined from 33.8% to 25%, and the contribution of agriculture to gross domestic product fell from 48% to 10%.⁴¹² Meanwhile, by 1963, the bauxite industry was not numerically significant as a source of employment nationally, directly employing some 5,800 persons, a fifth or more of whom were engaged in agricultural activities in terms of labor requirements. The total was less than 1% of the national employed labor force and equal to one-twentieth of the total number of persons seeking work.⁴¹³ In 1970, unemployment was at 20%. The collapse of the agricultural sector, especially small farmers, was visibly enlarging the ranks of unemployed in Kingston's slums, which were expanding at an alarming rate. As will be seen in the following section, voices calling for reform the development model now advocated broader state control of land and agricultural production. This had shifted from the position of the 1950s, as they call for the state's intervention in all agricultural lands and not just in small farming areas.

6.2 Rural Development and Planning

In the mid-1960s, PNP leaders of branch societies of the Jamaica Agricultural Society and Jamaican economists from the University of the West Indies started promoting a "radical" new approach to rural development and planning.⁴¹⁴ By the end of the decade, that approach became

⁴¹² Stone, "Political Aspects of Postwar Agricultural Policies in Jamaica (1945-1970)," 170.

⁴¹³ Young, "Jamaica's Bauxite and Alumina Industries," 452.

⁴¹⁴ The Society was strong in parishes such as St. Ann and Manchester where there was a significant number of middle farmers and middle-class businesspeople and professionals such as teachers. It was among these groups that the PNP

the basis of the PNP ideological platform of democratic socialism. Significant components of the program promoted by middle-class leaders extended ideas on state planning and intervention in the Jamaican countryside's economic activities. In the mid-1960s, the JAS and UWI leaders sought to address the contradictions between long-term economic objectives and the growing inequalities and unemployment on the island. The rural development and planning model they developed promoted mechanisms to integrate rural peoples' participation in the planning process, insisted on integrating agricultural economy into other economic sectors, and called for radical land reform.

First, branch society leadership proposed rural peoples' active participation in formulating integrated planning initiatives through their branch societies. The problem of past development projects, agricultural spokespersons wrote in *The Farmer*, was that government officials formulated them sitting at desks in Kingston, at best able to see the needs of the people "through a glass darkly."⁴¹⁵ In these Kingston-drafted programs, the farmers who were in the best position to know their needs were not present in the design process. According to the writer, one example illustrated this situation best: during the 1950s, many farmers got subsidies to build cow sheds, but few were used by cows. Instead, several small farmers who had access to farm building subsidies used them for other purposes. Storerooms built under the surveillance of extension officers soon became part of the homes. "It's not a storeroom wanted, but a bedroom!" explained the writer in *The Farmer*.

had been strong throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Thus, there was a strong link between the between the PNP and the JAS. Scholars had mentioned that the PNP dominated the leadership of the organization by 1962. According to Helen McBain, the political inclination of JAS leadership towards de PNP, led to a split of branches from the central organization in areas dominated by the JLP during the 1960s. McBain, "The Impact of the Bauxite-Alumina MNCs on Rural Jamaica: Constraints on Development of Small Farmers in Jamaica," 162–63.

⁴¹⁵ *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII Nos. 3-4, March-April 1967: 57

The critique suggested that the fundamental flaw in past development models was that these were narrowly confined to agriculture and not broader aspects of rural life. Such arguments carried some irony, given how central the idea of integrated and participatory initiative had been to the WIDWO and middle-class rhetoric of development in the 1940s. The wide spread of the kind of criticism quoted here suggests that the tendency toward top-down middle-class organizing, discussed in Chapter 4, had in fact been the more common practice.

In addition to agriculture, branch society officers insisted on broadening development and planning to integrate rural living aspects. Officials of the branch society highlighted that the “farmers” were more than their occupational tag. They were father or mother, husband or wife, tenant, landowner, taxpayer, consumer, and commuter. Their problems were not only attached to agricultural production or employment but broader rural concerns. The fulfillment of all their religious, educational, recreational, medical, and other social needs rooted them to rural areas. If the farmer was a father with children and no school in his district, a purely agricultural development program was unlikely to prevent him from migrating to towns or Kingston. Therefore, instead of “agricultural development,” branch society officers insisted instead on “rural development,” which confronted the country folk’s problems as a whole and tried to devise integrated and comprehensive solutions.⁴¹⁶ Again, the approach was consistent with WIDWO’s and JWL’s rhetoric in the 1940s, a time when the JAS itself, in contrast, had been more narrowly focused on subsistence and local market productivity and crops.

The Jamaica Agricultural Society moved beyond agriculture and farmers’ organizing since the late 1950s, and early in the 1960s the branch societies were involved in aspects of social and

⁴¹⁶ *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII No.5-6 May-June 1967: 105-106

rural development. The Jamaica Agricultural Society started systematizing resolutions and petitions from the branch societies on a regional/district basis to address specific development problems. A special section in *The Farmer* started listing regional and parish resolutions passed by branch societies and associated branch societies. In these petitions, agricultural and land requests were secondary. Instead, the petitions came to place infrastructural development, utilities, and services, including electricity, post mail, and other communication and social services, first and foremost. For example, in Trelawny, area development committees based on Jackson Town, Wakefield, and Sherwood Content made representations for telephone call boxes, road improvements, water supplies, fencing of electric pumps, and asphaltting.⁴¹⁷

This body of petitions addressed development issues beyond agriculture. During the first half of the 1960s, development committees and councils organized by the Jamaica Agricultural Society and branch societies undertook social and community development projects. These bodies became the intermediary between the farmers, local governments, and the Government of Jamaica to improve roads, establish postal facilities, and promote fairs and projects.⁴¹⁸ For example, the Mocho Area Development Committee's projects included constructing a community center and sponsoring home economics courses.⁴¹⁹ This body of petitions presaged a new emphasis on rural planning, undertaken by the branch societies' middle-class leadership, beyond the promised economic growth that commercial agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing development would bring to the island.

⁴¹⁷ *The Farmer* Vol. LXIV No.1 January 1960: 10

⁴¹⁸ *The Farmer* Vol. LXVII No.1 January 1962: 13

⁴¹⁹ *The Farmer* Vol. LXVIX No.5-6 May-June 1964: 127

Second, the branch societies' officers encouraged direct state intervention to connect small-farming operations, commercial agricultural enterprises, manufacturing, and tourism development. The commercial agriculture model's problem, according to officials of the Jamaica Agricultural Society's analysis, was that it left most hillside small farmers unable to transition to commercial production without government assistance. Besides, the development of the manufacturing and tourism industries were disconnected from the island agricultural enterprises. To address those issues, branch societies in St. James, for example, argued that only industries that used local agricultural raw material ought to be promoted on the island. Also, the branch societies' officers insisted that it was expected the government would work to situate such industries in the heart of farming areas to provide small impoverished farming families and rural unemployed with the promised job prospects.⁴²⁰

Third, the rural development and planning model included a new approach to land reform introduced by the government and broadened by UWI economists. The land reform approach first sought to transform the land settlement policy. From the late 1930s to the late 1960s, the government acquired 220,000 acres and distributed about two-thirds of that total to small farmers under the land settlement policy. However, the policy did not solve the island's land problems, nor did it improve agricultural production during the 1940s and 1950s. Most of the plots allotted during that time were under 10 acres. Also, most of these were marginal and unproductive lands sold to the government by large landowners. Although the policy indeed favored land ownership amongst small farmers and, as explained before, relieved some political pressures, its productive aspect was not as significant as it should have been. The failure of the land settlements policy was reflected

⁴²⁰ *The Farmer* Vol. LXXI No.11-12 November-December 1966: 240-241

in increasing food imports. Thus, in the Five-Year Independence Plan of 1963, the government outlined a land reform policy to substitute the land settlement policy. Working alongside the commercial agriculture model, the government's land reform vaguely included parameters such as a better selection of land and prospective buyers, greater land use training, and infrastructure to develop successful agricultural operations.⁴²¹

Based on the new land reform concept, rural development and planning aimed to redirect small farming human resources to top-down controlled commercial agriculture operations and social services provision. Since the 1930s, driven by returning migration, and later by natural population growth, rural-to-urban migration had come to be seen as one of Jamaica's major problems. UWI economists argued that it was impossible to stop migration, nor was it desirable to stop people from leaving unproductive small farms that could not support the increasing population. Instead, they suggested that the state should intervene in redirecting those human resources into agricultural and industrial complexes and not leaving them to the goodwill of private and foreign employers, nor political patronage. Asserting that the calls for rural development and planning approach were emanating from those smaller farmers, Hugh Miller, Acting Director of Extra Mural Studies in the University of the West Indies, explained:

If for example, people can say to the government, 'You are quite wrong in believing that we would wish this property of 2,000 acres to be divided up into 1,000 lots of two acres each so that we can make a little bread to feed ourselves'; if the people will say 'No! This is not what we want. We would like you to go into partnership with us in planning to see how the development of the 2,000 acres can make the best possible contribution in raising our standard of life in our community'; then I think the government will be in position where they will not be afraid to move progressively.⁴²²

⁴²¹ Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980," 118.

⁴²² *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII No.8-9 August-September 1967: 243-246

Therefore, the rural development and planning model reasserted that the government's role was in directing local and national development as sides of the same coin. Since the 1940s, it was pointed out that the major constraints of the small farming sector were the size and quality of the inefficient land allotments, which restricted farmers from developing profitable agricultural operations. Thus, the argument was that the state's role should not be limited to facilitating commercial agricultural operations and filling the employment gaps left by private industrial development as had been the case since the beginning of the decade. Instead, the rural development and planning model emphasized the state's centrality in planning the island's economic development. As case studies in St. Ann and Clarendon will show, middle-class led branch societies' proposal was not that different from earlier self-help and community engagement rhetoric and practices. Similar to the programs enacted during the 1940s that combined a vision of small landowners' agricultural improvement and social welfare, the rural development model of the second half of the 1960s pursued the integration of economic and social necessities.

One of the first pilot projects in rural development and planning was in St. Ann in 1967. The pilot project in St. Ann sought to address the massive migration from the parish to Kingston due to both land problems and the absence of public services. Out of 11,653 farms in St. Ann, around 63% occupied 7.5% of the parish's farmland; 95% of all farms in St. Ann accounted for less than 30% of the parish's total farmland. The 63% of the smallest farms, around 7,378 farms that averaged less than 2 acres, supported, in addition to their owners or occupiers, some 30,000 dependents, including children under 15 years old. That meant that some 37,500 people in the parish supported themselves on less than 1/3 of an acre per person.⁴²³ In addition to that, there was

⁴²³ *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII No.1-2 January-February 1967: 12-14

a lack of social amenities and services like housing, water supplies, roads, schools, community development programs, credit, and marketing facilities. Therefore, it was hardly surprising that one of the largest migrant streams flooding into Kingston and St. Andrew's urban areas came from St. Ann's rural areas.

The Jamaica Agricultural Society proposed a land reform experiment near St. Ann's Bay on a 2500-acre property called Seville. The property had around 100 tenants. About 500 acres of the 2500 acres were under cultivation, which supplied a greater part of the food products sold in St. Ann's Bay. The property also produced sugarcane, bananas, and coconuts.⁴²⁴ The objective was to use the property to integrate agricultural and non-agricultural aspects by linking commercial agricultural development, public services, and employment in manufacturing and tourism into one comprehensive plan controlled by a committee appointed by the St. Ann Association of Branches. The development plan drafted by the St. Ann Association of Branches included the recommendations of UWI economists such as George Beckford, Norman Girvan, Leroy Taylor, and Steve deCastro.

Seville's development plan addressed land reform issues, inter-industrial linkages, and the development of social amenities. First, the St. Ann Association of Branches' development plan stated that the sub-division of plots should be based on 'economical size' units capable of developing sustainable commercial agricultural operations and providing full employment in the area. Second, the St Ann's Bay area's manufacturing and tourism development had to complement agriculture developments, serving as the farmers' market opportunities and employment alternatives for their families. Third, the pilot project had to provide services and amenities to

⁴²⁴ *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII No.10-11 October-November 1967: 284-286

make a living in the area viable and attractive for rural populations. The development plan included roads, water supplies, housing, electricity, health services, and schools.⁴²⁵

Another highly publicized pilot project on rural development and planning was in Clarendon. While the land reform pilot of Seville focused on developing one large property, the Clarendon Association of Branches focused on small farmers' hillside areas. Early in 1967, sixteen branches of the Clarendon Association of Branches and the Board of Management of the Jamaica Agricultural Society agreed to launch a pilot rural development and planning project in Upper Clarendon. The program's emphasis was to develop a

comprehensive and integrated system of rural development based upon participation by the people in all stages of planning, including the determination of priorities from development in each area.⁴²⁶

As in Seville, the program's planning and execution included the collaboration of academics, politicians, and branch societies' leadership. The Managing Committee of the North Clarendon Development Project was appointed with the representation of the branch societies within the area and Mr. G. H. Atkinson, JLP Member of Parliament for North-East Clarendon. All committee members were farmers and owners of farms ranging in size from 2 to 400 acres. Two of them were headmasters of primary schools. The pilot area was based on the area covered by four administrative zones. Each zone centered around a village that coordinated the work of branch societies.⁴²⁷ Each of the administrative zones was in charge of drafting development plans based on discussions at the branch level, assisted by JAS technical officers. The objective was that each

⁴²⁵ *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII No.10-11 October-November 1967: 295-297

⁴²⁶ *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII No.3-4 March-April 1967: 56-58

⁴²⁷ The villages were Kellits, Croft's Hill, Crooked River, and Morgan's Pass Robotham, *Jamaica Agricultural Society North Clarendon Rural Development (Self Help) Project Survey.*, 2-3.

plan from the four administrative zones would become the “building blocks” for a parish-wide program that included economic and community welfare objectives.⁴²⁸

The Clarendon Association Branches aimed to direct the transformation of small farmers into commercial agricultural farmers or wage-earners. The surveys carried in the pilot area indicated that there were 2167 farms in 11,604 acres. Of those farms, 60% were less than 4 acres, 30% between 5 to 10 acres, and 10% were 10 acres or more in extent. Therefore, the Managing Committee of the North Clarendon Development Project helped transform farms over the six acres in size. For most of the smallest farmers, mostly operated by young farmers, many already working as part-time laborers elsewhere, the Managing Committee proposed two venues. First, if more land were to become available for redistribution, some of those young and trained small farmers were selected to be considered to increase their holdings and transform them into commercial agricultural operations. Second, for those who lacked the appropriate conditions to manage efficient agricultural operations, such as land, capital, or technical skills, the Managing Committee proposed that the Jamaica Agricultura Society could help train them to become wage-earning employees in more extensive agricultural operations and keep their small parcels for residence.⁴²⁹

The pilot projects at Seville in North Clarendon asserted rural middle-class leadership in rural development and planning processes. Although the model’s emphasis was on rural peoples’ active participation in development and planning, commercial agriculture’s emphasis continued to benefit middle-class producers. Nonetheless, the JAS/branch societies model began arguing for the necessity to count on top-down land reform processes and manage the island’s land and human

⁴²⁸ *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII No.3-4 March-April 1967: 58

⁴²⁹ Robotham, *Jamaica Agricultural Society North Clarendon Rural Development (Self Help) Project Survey.*, 73–74, 126.

resources. As the case in the bauxite-alumina industry's agricultural operations, small farmers' roles in the pilot area were relegated to recipients of community services, marketing operations for their agricultural produce, or employment opportunities managed by middle-class farmers.

The Jamaica Agricultural Society's rural development and planning transcended branch societies' pilot projects, prompting broader land reform and land ownership questions. By the mid-1960s, spokespersons from the Jamaica Agricultural Society, the Ministry of Agriculture, and economists from the University of West Indies thought that land ownership rights should be linked to owners' responsibility, proper land use, and investments. This consideration included small and large holdings alike. The smallest farms' problem, UWI economists argued, was that even with very efficient management, the numerous small farms in Jamaica were too small to reward any farmer adequately. Instead, they argued that larger operations could enable farmers to enjoy economies of scale.⁴³⁰

These economists also raised different concerns in regard to existing large properties. While small farms' main problem was land constraints that hindered the development of efficient operations, the large plantations covered large extensions of idle and misused lands without checks. Such concern significantly increased as land continually concentrated in fewer hands throughout the decade. In 1954, farms over 100 acres in size comprised only 0.61% of the total number of farms on the island yet controlled 48.59% agricultural land. The situation worsened considerably in the late 1960s. By 1968, farms of 500 acres and over in size decreased in number but increased the farmland they controlled. Of these, the bauxite-alumina companies together formed one of the biggest landowning groups on the island.⁴³¹ By the end of the decade, both the

⁴³⁰ *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII No.8-9 August-September 1967:254

⁴³¹ Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980," 146-47.

academics and the JAS leaders were arguing that the concentration of large extensions of idle land had become the biggest handicap to economic and social development on the island. Therefore, as part of the rural development and planning model, UWI economists such as George Beckford and Norman Girvan by 1967 were advocating a “total agrarian reform in Jamaica” to successfully address the economic development model’s challenges.⁴³²

The problem of large extensions of idled and misused land was addressed by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Parliament in 1966. To ensure that large properties were under cultivation, the Parliament passed the Land Development and Utilization Act of 1966. The law included the appointment of a Land Development Commission to recommend to the Minister of Agriculture and Lands large, idled properties to acquire either by purchase or by lease for a period not exceeding ten years. According to the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, there were around a quarter of a million acres of land on properties of over 100 acres classified as idle. Properties that were held in absentee ownership and at the same time were composed of idled lands had a high degree of priority for attention under the act. Although the law had made little to no impact by the end of the decade, the proposals and pilot projects fostered by the second half of the 1960s were acclaimed by members of the JAS, economists, and politicians the “basis of a new deal for Jamaican agriculture – and the landless peasant.”⁴³³

Economists from the University of West Indies that participated in the branch societies planning pilots insisted that the model had to include the whole island. The land reform proposed by the branch societies included regional top-down planning to link agriculture to other industries to ensure employment and markets for agricultural produce. UWI economists such as George

⁴³² *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII No.8-9 August-September 1967:254

⁴³³ *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII No.1-2 January-February 1967: 11-12

Beckford, Steve deCastro, and Norman Girvan insisted that the next step for a real land reform program—beyond experimental pilots such as Seville and North Clarendon—was to build measures to control the island’s land use as a whole to meet national economic growth and local development. In addition to the island’s land use and production problems the UWI economists outlined, they maintained that structural problems were a manifestation of the island’s deficient manufacturing development. The continual increase in food imports was a matter of deficient food processing industries and not only of agricultural production. Thus, the problem was not merely the “backwardness” of agriculture but the backwardness of the industry that had evolved on the island since the late 1940s.⁴³⁴

The questioning of the industrialization-by-invitation model was not new. As early as 1962, academics attached to the University of the West Indies pointed at the industrialization-by-invitation model’s failure to achieve any significant income redistribution and warned about the long-term economic implications of excessive reliance on external capital resources reinforcing the economic dependence of the local economy.⁴³⁵ By the time economists such as George Beckford and Norman Girvan started collaborating with the Jamaica Agricultural Society, they had already become among the most prominent exponents of what would become known as the plantation economy school. In his magnum opus *Persistent Poverty: Underdevelopment in Plantation Economies of the Third World* (1972), George Beckford argued that the persistent

⁴³⁴ *The Farmer* Vol. LXXII No.8-9 August-September 1967:255-258

⁴³⁵ The establishment in 1959 of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies in Jamaica stimulated the formulation of questions to alter the inherited colonial economic structure. The questions and theories articulated by the ‘New World’ group were discussed in their theoretical organ *New World Quarterly*. Benn, *Ideology and Political Development: The Growth and Development of Political Ideas in the Caribbean, 1774-1983*, 84–85.

structural inequalities were to be found in the hegemony of plantation production, which restricted the peasant sector from accessing the best agricultural lands, capital, and technological improvements at the time it had to struggle against food imports. According to Beckford, the foreign capital investment model, which brought modern foreign-owned multinational mining and manufacturing, reinforced the plantation economy model, condemning the island to the persistent inequalities.⁴³⁶ To overcome underdevelopment, Beckford recommended nationalizing plantations and foreign-owned lands and stimulating the peasant sector and domestic production.⁴³⁷

The rural development and planning model followed a trajectory from middle-class branch societies' leadership to university economists to the PNP. By the end of the 1960s, the Jamaica Agricultural Society's pilot projects on rural development and planning fostered by middle-class voices and the plantation school economists' writings together served as the practical and intellectual platform of Michael Manley's PNP. Son of Norman Manley and a new indisputable leader of the PNP, Michael Manley saw state management of agricultural production as the solution to the persistent social and economic inequalities and unemployment. With unemployment at 20%, approximately half of the country's population were agriculture workers or small farmers. Manley contended that foreign trade would continue to grow faster than internally consumed production under the existing circumstances. The economy would remain attached to the colonial dynamic that exacerbated persistent social and economic inequalities. Manley was elected to office in 1972, under the promise to reconfigure the economic structures

⁴³⁶ Beckford, *Persistent Poverty: Underdevelopment in Plantation Economies of the Third World*.

⁴³⁷ Beckford, 196.

through an ambitious program of land reform, food import substitution, and the planned use of inter-industry linkages to ensure a growing measure of internal viability to the economy.⁴³⁸

6.3 Conclusion

The changes in the agricultural policy of the early 1960s had two clear and specific beneficiaries: agricultural producers for the domestic market and politicians and their electoral interests. First, middle and upper-middle commercial farmers who had concentrated on filling the domestic market's needs vis a vis food imports benefited from a set of policies that directly facilitated their access to capital, infrastructure, and markets. Second, the political class, directly dependent on fulfilling people's short-term necessities to maintain their influence, benefitted from channeling access to employment and development resources. Simultaneously, the economic development model came to rely on private, mostly foreign, investment, and tolerance of high degrees of inequality and Jamaican politicians came to rely fully on the clientelist integration of the lower classes into the political system.

By the second half of the 1960s, some of these same beneficiaries would end up integrating an alliance that called for more radical structural change. Sectors of the middle-class producers for the domestic market and Jamaican economists addressed the increasing inequalities, poverty, and unemployment not necessarily as a failure of national development objectives but by the absence of state planning the economic structure. In other words, their concern was not so much on the commercial agricultural development model, but on the need for more active state control of the

⁴³⁸ Manley, "Overcoming Insularity in Jamaica."

different economic aspects of the model: specifically, land tenure, production, and the linking between industries

The rural development and planning model did not dismiss the logic of commercial farming and employment. It emphasized the role and direct intervention of the independent state. Thus, instead of a rupture from the development models of the 1940s to the 1960s, rural development and planning proposals combined the prescriptions of colonial officials and international development agencies that proposed state control over small hillside farmers, the experience of the bauxite-alumina industry in managing extensive operations, and the interests of middle and upper-middle farmers who were competing against food imports. What producers for the domestic market organized through branch societies of the Jamaica Agricultural Society and university economists brought to the table was a vision to reconcile what until that moment was the disconnection between national development objectives to local development problems and inequalities.

7.0 Conclusions

As we have seen, the years from the 1895 to the 1960s, the peoples of rural Jamaica actively proposed and transformed ideas of economic growth and social welfare that directly influence colonial and national development models. After the late 1960s, questions about the role of small- and middle-sized farmers, tenant farmers, and agricultural laborers remained as relevant as they had been since the late nineteenth century. These questions were integral to debates over what the different actors across Jamaican society considered the best development model to secure both national economic growth and social well-being. In 1972, Michael Manley's PNP sought to overcome the North-South global divide, inherited from decolonization and exacerbated by the international trade system, by adopting a series of recommendations proposed by Plantation School economists and social scientists.⁴³⁹ The PNP-led government shifted to a development vision in which promoting the small farming sector once again became fundamental to tackling unemployment, improving food self-sufficiency, and enhancing agricultural exports.

One of Manley's major policies to accomplish those goals was Project Land Lease, launched in 1973. Similar to the land settlement policy of the 1930s, the new land redistribution scheme sought to redistribute large, unused properties among landless rural people to stop rural-urban migration and unemployment, and to create a new generation of small farmers. What was different about this new land policy was that it took action on recommendations that had been voiced during the hearings before the Moyne Commission in 1938 and later insisted upon by

⁴³⁹ Tony Weis, "Restructuring and Redundancy: The Impacts and Illogic of Neoliberal Agricultural Reforms in Jamaica," *Journal of Agrarian Change* 4, no. 4 (2004): 461–91.

WIDWO advisers in the 1940s. Project Land Lease leased idle land to peasants at low-interest rates—rather than give it in freehold—and supported them with credit, fertilizer, seeds, herbicides, insecticides, extension services, and infrastructure development. Private lands declared idle, land from the bauxite companies, government land, and even portions of land settlements were turned over to this program.⁴⁴⁰

The land settlements of bauxite companies inspired much of this policy. In fact, most of the land was leased by the bauxite companies (Alcan, Kaiser, Alcoa, Reynolds, Alpart) to the government, who leased it in turn to small farmers. Moreover, Project Land Lease was inspired by Alcan's land settlement policies. Alcan had 4,600 tenants on its leased lands, farming some 17,000 acres (3.7 acres per tenant), and the length of lease averaged five to seven years. The land that was mined and restored was generally retained by the company for its own management, producing livestock and citrus. The leasing to small farmers involved land acquired but not yet scheduled for mining. Along with the land, Alcan provided small farmers with extension service and access to fertilizer, planting materials, plowing services, marketing services, credit, and export advice.⁴⁴¹ Alcan's land model leased control over agricultural production through extension services inspired by the Ministry of Agriculture's Project Land Lease.

Nevertheless, the reign of this model—which incorporated so many long-standing proposals—proved fleeting. The structural adjustment policies of the 1980s scrapped the land lease project. The emergence of neoliberalism coincided with the rejection of developmentalist

⁴⁴⁰ Gerulf Augustin, "Project Land Lease 1972–80," in *Plantation Economy, Land Reform and the Peasantry in a Historical Perspective: Jamaica 1838–1980*, 1992, 105–25.

⁴⁴¹ United States. Dept. of Agriculture. Office of International Cooperation and Development.; USAID/Jamaica.; Jamaica. Ministry of Agriculture., *The Small Farmer in Jamaican Agriculture: An Assessment of Constraints and Opportunities*. (Kingston: [USAID?], 1978), 74.

policies—with their envisioned strong role for government intervention—and the surge of a market-oriented vision for the world economy, sponsored by the World Bank and IMF. In 1980, the new JLP administration reduced state expenditures, decreased public services and staffing, raised fees for public services, increased taxes, and removed subsidies.⁴⁴² The structural adjustment programs in the 1980s relegated agriculture below tourism, export-processing, and financial services. The new policies included a dismantling of Land Lease and the initiation of a new program to sell land in large blocks to promote non-traditional agribusiness by large commercial farms.⁴⁴³ The objective was to finance large-scale commercial farm ventures. As part of the program, the Agricultural Marketing Corporation ceased purchasing crops from small farmers.⁴⁴⁴

Over the course of the twentieth century, the varied strata of Jamaican peasants (small, middle, tenants, laborers) played a fundamental role in within the island’s economic colonial and post-colonial development rhetoric. The nature and degree of their centrality varied according to specific debates at each historical juncture regarding the role of state intervention in agricultural production, economic growth, and rural communities’ social welfare.

In the late nineteenth century, officials from the Colonial Office and the local colonial bureaucracy came to believe that a landowner peasant population could participate in the diversification of the island’s agricultural export economy and serve as a reliable labor force for

⁴⁴² Carmen Diana Deere, *In the Shadows of the Sun: Caribbean Development Alternatives and U.S. Policy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990).

⁴⁴³ On the impacts of structural adjustment on Jamaica’s agricultural sector, see Weis, “Restructuring and Redundancy: The Impacts and Illogic of Neoliberal Agricultural Reforms in Jamaica.”

⁴⁴⁴ According to a joint FAO and World Bank team reported in 1986 cited by David Barker, “Dualism and Disasters on a Tropical Island: Constraints on Agricultural Development in Jamaica,” *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie* 84, no. 5 (1993): 33.

seasonal work in the monoculture plantation economy. As the twentieth century drew on, the importance that different sectors of Jamaican society gave to the small independent land ownership as part of the agricultural export model increased. By the 1930s, the conviction that economic growth should be accompanied by popular well-being initiatives, specifically to alleviate unemployment on the island, also gained wide purchase. By the early 1940s, economic growth through small land ownership and state-guided social welfare for broad sectors of the population merged as a single vision of colonial development.

By the second half of the 1940s, the national development rhetoric sought a trade balance, employment, and secure economic growth. Small landholding farmers remained central as a key envisioned component of economic growth. Nevertheless, their centrality in the national development rhetoric changed by the end of the 1950s. In the 1960s, national development promoters within government, academia, and national elites alike shifted their focus from small farmers to concentrate on promoting efficient commercial agricultural operations, mostly in middle and large landholdings.

Throughout the different historical junctures analyzed in this dissertation, the development vision was not a top-down creation imposed on the ground. Instead, the policies were transformed and adapted by the different stakeholders on the ground. Central to the negotiation processes was the intermediary position that the Jamaican middle classes occupied between the colonial and, later, national administration and rural dwellers. They helped press the colonial administration to facilitate land titling to small and tenant farmers, jobs, relief, and welfare services. What makes this significant is that it shows that Jamaica's development ideas were not impositions from the colonial bureaucracy—or, later, the international development community. Rather they had deep roots in small-scale participation in the rural communities, even when those communities rarely

got the full access, opportunities, or infrastructure they sought. The importance of local practices and actors was part of the continuities within development visions that persisted from the 1930s into post-colonial elites' attitudes in the 1970s.

Appendix A Tables

Table 1 Number of Landholdings under 50 Acres, 1838-1930

Year	Under 5 Acres	5-49 Acres	Total under 50 acres
1838	-	-	2,114*
1841	-	-	7,919*
1845	-	-	19,397**
1860	-	-	50,000
1866	-	-	60,000
1880	36,756	13,189	49,945
1882	38,838	13,674	52,512
1890	95,942	16,015	111,957
1895	70,740	16,887	87,627***
1899	60,671	16,160	76,831***
1902	108,943	24,226	133,169
1930	153,406	31,038	184,444
1943	179,788	30,046	209,834

* Less than 40 acres

** Less than 10 acres

*** Decline represents inefficient tax collection, not an actual drop in holdings

Sources: Gisela Eisner, *Jamaica, 1830-1930: A Study in Economic Growth* (Manchester University Press, 1961), 220; Carl Stone, "Political Aspects of Postwar Agricultural Policies in Jamaica (1945-1970)," *Social and Economic Studies* 23, no. 2 (1974): 150-51; Ken Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath* (The Hague; Boston; Nijhoff, 1978), 37.

Table 2 Shares of Jamaican Exports, 1832-1930

	1832	1850	1870	1890	1910	1930
Sugar	59.5	58.2	44.5	14.7	8.1	12.2
Coffee	18.4	10.3	15.1	18.2	5.8	5.0
Rum	13.7	20.9	19.3	12.5	6.0	1.8
Bananas	-	-	0.1	19.1	52.0	57.3
Miscellaneous (logwood, pimento, ginger, etc.)	8.4	10.6	21.0	35.5	28.1	23.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Gisela Eisner, *Jamaica, 1830-1930: A Study in Economic Growth* (Manchester University Press, 1961), 238.

Table 3 Sale of Crown Lands, 1897-1900

Parish	No. of Lots Sold	Acres	Average lot acreage
St. Andrew	1	246	246.0
St. Thomas	26	269	10.3
Portland	152	2,075	13.7
St. Mary	135	1,282	9.5
St. Ann	130	1,539	11.8
Trelawny	125	2,666	21.3
St. James	-	-	-
Hanover	14	98	7.0
Westmoreland	-	1,159	-
St. Elizabeth	153	-	-
Manchester	-	-	-
Clarendon	11	103	9.4
St. Catherine	24	121	5.0
Total	771	9,374	12.2

Source: Marleen Angella Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980" (M. Phil, Mona, Jamaica, University of the West Indies, 1997), 49.

Table 4 Branch Societies, Membership, and Instructors of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, 1896-1955

Years	Branches	Members	Instructors
1897	6	300	1
1910	63	3,500	11
1935	298	6,841	21
1945	445	14,332	65
1955	680	41,824	48

Sources: Jamaica Agricultural Society, *JAS, 60 Years, 1895-1954* (Kingston, Jamaica: Central Information Service in the Jamaica Agricultural Society, 1955), 19.

Table 5 Number and Acreage of Banana Contractors, 1929 to 1935

No. contractors and acreage	United Fruit Co.		Standard Fruit Co.		JBPA	
	<i>1929</i>	<i>1935</i>	<i>1932</i>	<i>1935</i>	<i>1929</i>	<i>1935</i>
No. contractors under 5 acres	21	193	148	540	5,502	9,563
Total Acreage	53	700	675	2,364	11,825	21,657
No. contractors 5- 10 acres	133	753	764	1,034	759	931
Total Acreage	979	7,336	6,846	8,812	5,840	6,924
No. contractors 10- 20 acres	153	535	363	539	218	237
Total Acreage	2,046	8,263	5,465	8,322	3,367	3,522
No. contractors 20-50 acres	93	313	259	289	97	140
Total Acreage	2,914	10,021	8,448	9,336	3,309	4,776
No. contractors over 50	72	148	97	82	83	87
Total acreage	11,922	26,311	11,280	9,332	14,311	12,819

Source: Ken Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings: The Jamaican Labour Rebellion of 1938 and Its Aftermath* (The Hague; Boston; Nijhoff, 1978), 126.

Table 6 Emigration and Return of Jamaican Labour, 1881 and 1934

Years	Total Departures	Total Returns	Net Returns
1881-1884*	54,539	26,676	-
1885-1889	29,624	35,349	5,725
1890-1894	2,082	3,920	1,838
1895-1899	3,591	3,069	-
1900-1904*	3,257	3,212	-
1905-1909*	32,839	24,255	-
1910-1914	49,841	39,733	-
1915-1919*	43,909	24,958	-
1920-1924	58,337	58,453	116
1925-1929	22,064	27,540	5,476
1930-1934	5,899	28,459	22,560

* Incomplete Returns.

Source: Gisela Eisner, Jamaica, 1830-1930: A Study in Economic Growth (Manchester University Press, 1961), 147.

Table 7 Subdivision of Properties on Land Settlement Schemes, 1929-1949

Year	Properties	Acreage Acquired	Acreage Allotted	No. Plots	Average Plot Size
1929&1930	3	8542	7036	1193	5.9
1931	4	2059	1932	369	5.2
1932	2	2189	1869	268	7.0
1933	2	989	713	139	5.1
1934	3	2396	1892	786	2.4
1935	1	342	326	128	2.5
1936	3	4406	3792	627	6.0
1937	4	5353	4100	991	4.1
1938	9	7439	7118	1396	5.1
1939	33	36084	30670	6415	4.8
1940	32	26837	22087	4933	4.5
1941	2	818	436	97	4.5
1942	2	1009	703	173	4.1
1943	3	4353	2414	542	4.5
1944	2	1948	1707	409	4.2
1945	1	921	856	138	6.2
1946	6	10118	7549	1538	4.9
1947	9	9854	7509	1792	4.2
1948	15	20931	17004	4141	4.1
1949	1	579	1522	93	16.4

Source: Marleen Angella Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1890-1980" (M. Phil, Mona, Jamaica, University of the West Indies, 1997), 72, 85.

Table 8 Growth of Village and District Organizations under Jamaica Welfare

Year	Village organization		District organization		Total
	Committee	Council	Committee	Council	
1945-1946				1	1
1947-1948	51	44	4	1	100
1948-1949	74	51	6	1	132
1949-1950	86	57	8	4	155
1950-1951	80	69	8	4	161

Source: Roger Marier, *Social Welfare Work in Jamaica, a Study of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission*. (Paris: UNESCO, 1953), 33

Table 9 Farm Development Scheme Expenditure of Grants by September 1959

Item	% of Total Expenditure
Fish Farming	0.00
Food Forest	0.01
Afforestation	0.17
Permanent Crops	1.38
Cocoa Special Assistance	3.23
Food Crops	3.75
Initial Land Clearing	6.63
Farm Buildings	9.94
Soil Conservation	16.64
Water Supplies	18.83
Pasture Improvement	39.42
Total	100

Source: G. J. Kruijer and A. Nuis, Report on an Evaluation of the Farm Development Scheme: First Plan, 1955-1960 (Kingston: Government Printer, 1960), 6.

Table 10 Percentage Jamaican Exports for the Years 1952-1956

Year	Food, Drink, and Tobacco	Bauxite and Alumina
1952	90.6%	2.4%
1953	83.4%	11.3%
1954	76%	20%
1955	68.8%	26.5%
1956	67.2%	28.2%

Source: Jamaica. Central Planning Unit, *A National Plan for Jamaica, 1957-1967*. (Kingston: Government Printer, 1957), 13.

Table 11 The Acreage of Properties Acquired by Bauxite Companies up to December 1956

Companies	Over 500	100- 500	10-100	Under 10	Total
Alumina Jamaica Ltd.	25,251	5,775	918	192	32,136
Reynolds Metals Co.	42,469	8,509	1,795	261	53,034
Kaiser Bauxite Co.	33,002	5,679	7,526	5,055	
For mining					36,623
For Re-settlement					14,670
Total					151,111

Source: Jamaica Agricultural Society. Central Information and Publicity Service and Jamaica. Ministry of Development, *Farming Operations of the Bauxite Companies in Jamaica*, 7

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