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THE AFRO-CARIBBEAN PRESENCE
IN CENTRAL AMERICA

THE MOSQUITO SHORE
AND THE BAY OF HONDURAS
DURING THE ERA OF
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BOOK REVIEWS



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FOREWORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

In the early 1970's two faculty members at St. John's College, Frs. Richard Buhler, S.J., and Richard Hadel, S.J., established the Belize Institute of Social Research and Action, otherwise known as BISRA. The two lecturers, trained in cultural anthropology, believed that a structure that would merge solid social research with Christian social teaching and apply the combined wisdom to the Belizean scene was needed, and that BISRA would provide the needed structure. They wrote: "It is our hope that the Belize Institute of Social Research and Action may reflect the twofold dynamic: to bring the Belizean people to greater self-knowledge through research and, thereupon, to apply the fruits of research to action, namely, to bring influence to bear so as to effect a just, Christian social order."

One of the legs of the structure envisaged by these two cultural anthropologists was a journal called *NATIONAL STUDIES*, which later changed its name to *BELIZEAN STUDIES*. Frs. Buhler and Hadel became the first co-editors of the journal and Vol. 1, No. 1 was published in January 1973. Over the past seventeen years *BELIZEAN STUDIES* has struggled to maintain its vision and mission: to publish research about our peoples and our neighbors in order to come to a better understanding of who we are -- and who we ought to be in the light of the Gospel values. The journal's first editorial put it boldly "We, the editors of this journal, judge Belizean society to be mature enough, generous enough, daring enough to undertake the risk of self reflection. This journal, hopefully, will serve as one means of exercising such communal reflection."

Over the years *BELIZEAN STUDIES* has published a wide variety of excellent articles on the history and culture of the various peoples of the country and articles engaging in theological reflection and social analysis. During this time members of the St. John's College faculty -- Fr. John Maher, S.J., David Price, Andrew Lopez, Herman Byrd and Lita Hunter Krohn -- have provided the journal with capable editorial leadership. Since 1988 in particular Mrs. Lita Hunter Krohn has delicately balanced extraordinary full careers as editor, political candidate and lecturer while exercising competent management over the journal. During this time no little assistance has been provided by Ms. Nadine Estell.

Because of the press of her other important responsibilities, in the summer of 1990 Mrs. Krohn resigned from the position of editor of *BELIZEAN STUDIES*. On behalf of the entire St. John's College academic community, I want to thank Mrs. Krohn for her many years of loyal and capable service to *BELIZEAN STUDIES* and in particular to the vision the journal serves.

One of the many pleasant responsibilities I have is ensuring the on-going vitality of the important publication of St. John's College called *BELIZEAN STUDIES*. The journal's purpose is no less important today than in 1973; it therefore must continue to have the very best editorial leadership possible. I am happy to announce, therefore, the appointment of Mr. Herman Byrd as editor of *BELIZEAN STUDIES*. No stranger to the journal, Mr. Byrd served as acting editor through most of 1985. He combines keen insight and extraordinary skill with sensitivity to the mission of the journal and the vision of its sponsor, St. John's College. He brings to *BELIZEAN STUDIES* the energy, vision, and commitment that the journal needs as it enters the new decade of the 1990s.

With your continued support, *BELIZEAN STUDIES* will continue to serve our country by publishing the fruits of social analysis and research, linking both to the values of the Gospel. The caution and ambitious goal of 1973 are ever valid:

We undertake the self-scrutiny fully realizing that we may raise more questions than provide ready-made answers.... Our goal is to strive for a fully Christian society. Hopefully, this journal may serve as one means toward achieving such a society. ["The Purpose of this Journal", Editorial, Vol. 1, No. 1, January, 1973]

James S. Murphy, S.J.
President
St. John's College

FROM THE EDITOR

Recently, Ralph Lee Woodward, Jr., a leading historian of Central America, observed that studies of the presence of Blacks in coastal Central America have been one of the neglected aspects of historical writing on the region since 1960. The publication of The African Experience in Spanish Central America (Cambridge:1976) by the respected Afro-American historian Leslie B. Rout, Jr., broke new ground and has stimulated a considerable number of studies in the field.

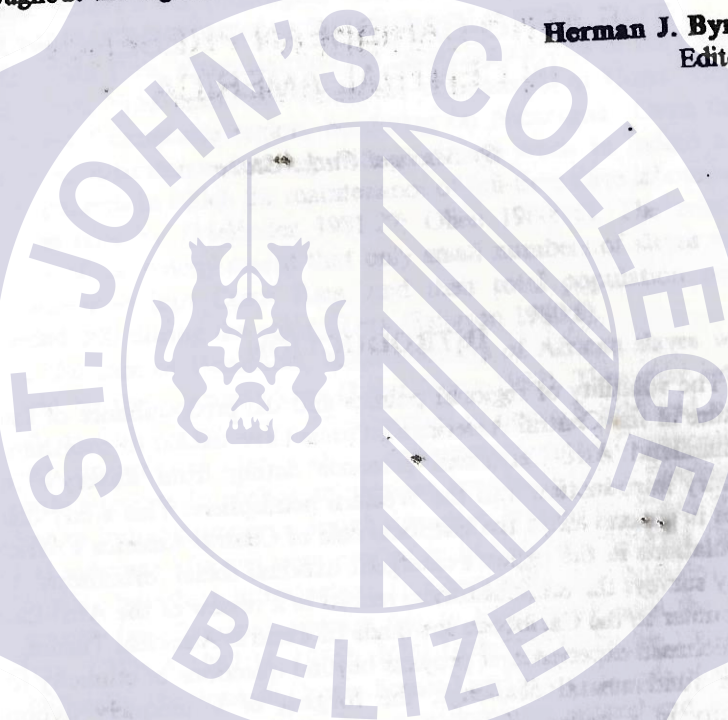
The scarcity of written works on the historical record of Africans in Central America has contributed to the myth, both within and outside the region, that Black people have had very little impact on the history and culture of Central America. A review of the literature should set the record straight: Black people have been present in Central America since colonial times and their impact has been formative and significant in Central America. This issue of *BELIZEAN STUDIES* offers two articles which together make a contribution to our understanding of Central America's Black heritage.

In "The Afro-Caribbean Presence in Central America," Michael Cutler Stone, a Fulbright scholar in Belize, looks at the impact of West Indians on Panama, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. He presents an informative historical overview of Black presence on the isthmus before examining the impact of West Indians in the contemporary period, and concludes with a focus on Belize. Belize offers a unique opportunity to explore one of the challenges facing all black communities in Central America: forging a strong sense of cultural identity in the midst of increasing multi-ethnicity and cultural pluralism.

Wallace Brown's essay on "The Mosquito Shore and the Bay of Honduras During the Era of the American Revolution" contributes to the ongoing quest to understand the many facets of British influence on Central America's Caribbean coastline. He argues that large-scale settlement of American Loyalists on the Mosquito Shore could have transformed the Shore into a major Loyalists haven; however, the abandonment of the Shore for the Bay of Honduras precluded that and secured British commitment to the Belize settlement

This issue concludes with a book review of two recent works of Robert R. Naylor, an authority on the British in Central America. Both offer much insight into the history of Belize's relations with Central America. The first is a detailed study of British economic dominance in Central America after its independence, while the second is one of the first full-length chronicles of the history of the Mosquito Shore to appear in recent times. Our hope is that an appreciation of the African experience in Central America will lead to a renewed dedication to preserve this heritage in Belize and indeed throughout the region.

Herman J. Byrd
Editor



THE AFRO-CARIBBEAN PRESENCE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

By Michael Cutler Stone

INTRODUCTION

The volatility of regional politics and the predominance of Latin culture in the Central American isthmus have tended to overshadow a mainland Afro-Caribbean presence dating from slavery's 16th century introduction into the Western hemisphere. This study delineates in general terms the historical role of Central America's African populations in the region's emergent national social formations. The essay surveys the ethnohistorical record in a review of the Afro-Latin encounter in the Caribbean lowlands of Central America. Turning to the Belizean experience, it projects beyond questions of ethnicity to a more fundamental challenge, the forging of a uniquely national identity in a milieu of cross-cutting cultural, socio-economic, and political influences.

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AFRICANS IN SPANISH COLONIAL CENTRAL AMERICA

Small numbers of African slaves accompanied the Spanish explorers of the early 16th century. The Gil Gonzalez Davila expedition (1522-1523) to Costa Rica was probably the earliest instance, followed in 1544 by that of Sanchez de Badajoz. The 1562 expedition of Juan de Cavallon brought black slaves to Costa Rica's central highlands (Meléndez 1981). Subsequently, slaves were brought to Spanish Central America via Nicaragua, Panama, and probably Jamaica, at least until the latter passed to British control in 1655.

In Costa Rica, slaves worked the cacao plantations of the Caribbean coast. Free mulattoes tended to concentrate in Costa Rica's northwest Guanacaste region, bordering on Nicaragua. There they combined subsistence farming with part-time work in indigo and cattle, pursuits in which the maintenance of full-time slave labour was not cost-effective (Meléndez 1981:27; Olien 1980:16). The relative poverty of the colony meant that only small numbers of slaves were ever imported into Costa Rica, and their total population never exceeded 200 during the colonial era (Seligson 1980:8).

In the case of Honduras, small numbers of African slaves were brought by the conquistadores (Leiva Vivas 1982). They were introduced via Cuba early in the 15th century in Spanish gold and silver mining operations after Indian enslavement proved impossible. Spanish attempts to enslave indigenous peoples led to a precipitous decline in Indian numbers through disease in Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Honduras. Africans were present in El Salvador by 1548 (Rout 1976:263), but their introduction to Guatemala (via Mexico) and Nicaragua (via Panama) appears not to have come until the 17th century (CIDCA 1982:34, 1986b; IGN 1978:525; Meléndez 1981:27).

Officially, the Spanish Crown licensed and taxed the sale of slaves in its New World colonies, but a widespread contraband traffic developed, both in African slaves and in illegally enslaved mulattoes. Contraband slave trading reflected both a desire to avoid the Crown levy and the fact that competitive demand outstripped the supply of African labour (Fortune 1970).

Forces closest to the source of incoming slaves dominated the distribution process. Thus Honduran colonials complained that the proprietors of Isla Fernandina (Cuba), Española (Hispaniola), and Jamaica monopolized the trade. Beginning in 1528, Honduras made

repeated petitions for licenses to import Africans to "populate and pacify" the coastal region, and to work the gold and silver mines. The mining operators presumably resorted to contraband slave sources (the record is understandably mute on the matter), since it was not until 1541 that 300 slaves were finally allocated, with church intervention. The Bishop of Honduras was charged with apportioning the slaves among mining operations in Gracias, Comayagua, San Pedro Sula, and Trujillo (Leiva Vivas 1982:32-3,77).

SPANISH COLONIAL SLAVE RESISTANCE IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND PANAMA

In Panama, more Africans appear to have worked as domestic slaves and urban labourers than in plantations, interacting with the free society to a greater degree than in the West Indian slave societies (Bryce-LaPorte 1973:41). Other Panamanian slaves became literal beasts of burden on the Camino Real, which crossed the isthmus between the port cities of Nombre de Dios and Panama (Diez Castillo 1981:47; Fortune 1970:30). Inadequate security on the trek through the remote interior meant frequent escapes. The escapees, known as *cimarrones*, established the notorious *paleque* rebel communities that harassed colonial Panamanian settlements until their pacification toward the end of the 16th century (Rivera Dominguez 1965:48).

As in other New World slave societies, then, the conditions imposed by slavery in colonial Central America reinforced apprehensions about escapes and uprisings, especially where slaves comprised significant populations. In Honduras, slave revolts occurred in 1541 (the same year that 300 arrived from Cuba) and in 1548 (Leiva Vivas 1982). In El Salvador, fears of an uprising in 1650 failed to materialize, but a slave population numbering 4,000 proved worrisome to the small planter elite (Rout 1976:263).

The first recorded slave revolt in Panama was in 1531, with major uprisings in 1549, 1552, and 1571. The collaboration between slave and Indian was viewed as a serious threat, as evident in Spanish legislation of severe penalties against any slave-Indian union (Fortune 1970). Panama's estimated 3,000 *cimarrones* naturally disregarded such injunctions, allying themselves with renegade indigenous and European forces at every opportunity. In 1571, unable to put down a major allied insurrection, the Spanish colonials came to terms with the territory's two main *cimarron* leaders, who agreed to abandon

their guerrilla warfare in exchange for a pledge of fair treatment, and the acknowledgement of their liberty (Klein 1986:203; Rivera Dominguez 1965:48).

The first group of undefeated *cimarrones* settled Pacora, near Panama City. The second settled Santiago de Principe (known today as Palenque), in the Atlantic coast region of Santa Isabel, displacing the San Blas (Kuna) Indians. This region remains an enclave of the hispanicized, Roman Catholic offspring of colonial-era blacks (Rivera Dominguez 1965:48-9).

Costa Rican *cimarrones* from the absentee landlord cacao plantations joined with their Panamanian counterparts, often in alliance with British buccaneers, who also commanded the loyalty of Miskito Indian and zambo (of mixed African-Indian heritage) warriors. By the end of the 17th century, allied groups like these were attacking the plantations of Matina, Guanacaste, and the Caribbean lowlands, taking the cacao for sale in British markets. The raiders also took captives, regardless of race, for sale into slavery in Jamaica, indicating the persistence of contraband slaving at this late date (Meléndez 1981:42-3; Olien 1980:17).

ASSIMILATION OF SPANISH CENTRAL AMERICA'S COLONIAL AFRICAN POPULATIONS

The free black and colored populations were largely absorbed during the colonial era in Central America. In Nicaragua, Nandaime and Granada were prominent colonial centers of black slavery. There the colonial African phenotype has been absorbed (CIDCA 1982:33), and the same was true of the slave populations of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

Of Panama City's 4,800 total population in 1610, African slaves numbered 3,500 (77.8%), and only 150 were free blacks (Nyrop 1981:73). By 1778 Panama's 63,000 total population included 33,000 (52.4%) free people of color (the offspring of *cimarron* and mulatto unions), and only 3,500 (5.6%) slaves (Klein 1986:221). By 1789, 22,504 (63%) of greater Panama City's population of 35,920 were free people of color, with an unspecified but small proportion of slaves (Rout 1976:273).

A significant Panamanian black colonial-era population has persisted in Darien, made up of *cimarrones*, black immigrants from El Choco, Colombia ("chocoanos"), and a small number of more recent

West Indian arrivals. In the post-emancipation era, blacks tended to concentrate in the major urban areas of Colon and Panama (Adams 1957:50); Garcia Casares 1954; Nunez 1974; Rivera Dominguez 1965; Sharp 1976).

On the Atlantic coast, the offspring of pacified *cimarrones* today remain the dominant population in the Santa Isabel district of north Colon province. They became cultivators and fishermen after coming to terms with the colonial government, producing coconuts, rice, yucca, maize, plantain, sugar cane, and fruits and vegetables. Accessed most easily by boat, the Santa Isabel district remained relatively isolated until the later half of the 19th century, when the Panama railroad was built (Nunez 1974:211; Rivera Dominguez 1965:57-9). That project, the subsequent abortive French attempt to build a canal, and the eventual U.S. undertaking, brought the major influxes of *antillano* (Antillean) or West Indian blacks to Panama (as outlined below).

Costa Rica's non-white population had become largely urbanized in the 17th century, working primarily as artisans and domestics. White Costa Ricans first attempted to isolate the negros and pardos (blacks and coloreds). In 1635 a segregated barrio was established in Cartago, "El Pueblo de los Pardos." It was occupied primarily by immigrants from the Guanacaste region on the northwest coast, formerly employed in cattle and indigo.

In 1719, highland pardos represented three of the ten Costa Rican infantry companies, reflecting the paucity of whites for (or their aversion to) the military task. The 1782 census shows sizeable pardo concentrations in Villa Nueva de la Boca (San Jose, 13 percent), Ujarras (near Cartago, 17 percent), Esparza (on the west coast, 56 percent), and La Lajuela (Alajuela, 13 percent). In 1801, non-whites comprised 17 percent of Costa Rica's total population (Olien 1980:16-18).

By the 1823 emancipation in Costa Rica, less than 100 blacks remained enslaved, and the African population was already dispersed throughout the country. Remnants of the *cimarron* and Mosquito-zambo populations, and of the Atlantic lowland cacao plantations slaves, were largely absorbed and hispanicized. The dwindling black colonial-era population of the Atlantic coast region was augmented by small numbers of immigrant Creole turtle fishermen from Bocas del Toro, Panama, early in the 19th century; other turtlers came from

the Caymans. Their occasional forays north to Costa Rica's Talamanca coast led to permanent settlement beginning in 1828. Other Creoles came south from Nicaragua in small numbers at about the same time. These groups intermingled with the indigenous coastal population (Hall 1985:67; Nietschmann 1979; Olien 1980:18; Palmer 1976:21).

Racial mixing was apparently more socially acceptable in rural than in urban Costa Rica. The 19th century rise of coffee brought the evolution of a predominantly male, racially mixed working class emigration to rural areas, while pardo women stayed in the cities as domestics. This brought men and women of color in contact with those of European blood, fostering interracial unions, whether legitimate or otherwise. Poverty meant late and limited access to matrimony for both pardo men and women (suggesting lower rates of reproduction), and higher rates of infant mortality. Additionally, the salience of the terms pardo (colored), triqueno (wheat-colored), and rubio quemado (burnished red) suggests that the color line in the 19th century Costa Rica was sufficiently fluid and negotiable to ease the colonial black population's assimilation (Gudmunson 1986).

Costa Rica's popular belief in a purely white colonial heritage is belied by history as much as by the results of a recent blood type survey indicating an overall mix of 40 percent European, 48 percent African, and 12 percent Indian blood groups (Hall 1985:70). This reflects both the assimilation (cultural and morphological) of the colonial black population by the mid-19th century, and the Antillean black influx that began in 1872.

Discrimination persisted however. The constructed myth of Costa Rica as a racially democratic society overlooks the second-class status conferred upon the West Indian labour force that began arriving in the 1870s. It is significant that the two countries with the largest influx of black West Indians, Panama and Costa Rica, are those where racial confrontation has been most pervasive (Biesanz 1982; Casey 1979; Conniff 1985; Gudmudson 1978; Lewis 1980; Meléndez 1981; Nelson 1984; Nyrop 1981; Olien 1970).

WEST INDIANS IN PANAMA

Apart from Nicaragua, Panama has arguably been the site of the most pervasive U.S. influence throughout the 20th century. Closely tied to Panamanian development has been the West Indian (*antillano*)

population there. Some 5,000 West Indians came to build the railroad between 1850 to 1855. Most of the 50,000 men who immigrated to work on the failed French attempt (1880-1889) to build a canal were also West Indian. Though many returned to the islands, some stayed on as small farmers and merchants (Conniff 1985:3).

The United Fruit Company began its Bocas del Toro banana plantations in 1899, bringing several thousand Jamaicans for the effort, and attracting Afro-Central Americans as well. In 1919 the local black population numbered 19,000, growing to 24,000 by 1929. The banana plague of the 1930s, the world economic crash, and decimation by tuberculosis reduced the population to about 8,000 by 1939. *Antillano* descendants still live around the now-rehabilitated banana plantations of Bocas del Toro and Puerto Armuelles, in Chiriquí province (Adams 1957:50; Bourgois 1989; Diez Castillo 1981:91; Nyrop 1981:61).

The beginning of work on the Panama Canal (1904-1913) brought an estimated 44,000 men, primarily from Jamaica, Trinidad, and Barbados (Rout 1976:274). Some 9,000 *antillano* women came with them to work in service jobs related to an immigrant population that eventually exceeded 150,000 (Conniff 1985:4; Diez Castillo 1981:68). By 1913, 65,000 men were employed in Canal-related work (Nyrop 1981:26), the majority of them West Indians. But only about a third of them are thought to have worked directly on the Canal at any given time. The balance worked in the terminal cities of Colon and Panama. Canal officials encouraged workers to bring their families, in hopes of fostering production through labour stability (Conniff 1985:29-30).

While virtually all southern European labourers demanded repatriation upon the Canal's completion, at least 20,000 West Indians stayed on (Diez Castillo 1981:68; Rout 1976:275). *Antillanos* not employed in Canal operations and maintenance took up a variety of occupations, including carpentry, painting, cooking, shoemaking, and commercial pursuits (Diez Castillo 1981:93). The war brought another wave of *antillano* and Central American Creole immigrants to work on Canal fortifications in 1939 (Rout 1976:276), and to build the "third lock" in 1941 (Conniff 1985:177), a task that included Belizean labourers. A final wave came during the Korean War (Bryce-LaPorte 1973-42).

West Indians who remained in Panama developed what Conniff

(1985:4) calls a "defensive subculture" in the face of U.S. racism and Panamanian nationalism. They formed English-language schools, enclave businesses, and community associations, and kept to their Protestant faith. Their cultural background served West Indians in economic terms, as North Americans preferred to work with people who spoke English. Black isolation hindered assimilation into the Hispanic culture of Panama, and they remained second-class labourers within the Canal Zone economic structure.

Education became the means for upward mobility for the *antillanos*, especially during the tenuous years of the Depression and World War II. They began increasingly to send their children to Panamanian schools in the 1940s, initiating a process of assimilation which has continued, though not without conflict, to the present. *Antillanos* had entered the national university by the end of the war, increasingly moving out of the restrictive atmosphere of the Canal Zone. The identifiably *antillano* percentage of the population has gradually decreased with assimilation, dropping from 11 percent in 1950 to 8 percent in the late 1970s.

Yet entering the 1990s, the distribution of *antillanos* in Panama continues to reflect the circumstances of their arrival. While a small proportion are found in rural Chiriquí on the north Caribbean coast, the balance are concentrated in the terminal cities of Colón and Panama. As elsewhere in Central America, black immigrants became a largely urbanized population. Though increasingly assimilated, and despite social mixing and intermarriage, they remain culturally distinct. Their situation reflects the paradox inherent in reconciling ethnic origins and cultural background with the social fact of Panamanian citizenship (Bryce-LaPorte 1973; Conniff 1985).

Small numbers of blacks from Panama and Nicaragua began settling along Costa Rica's Talamanca coast in the late 1820s, but they cannot be said to have been truly welcome in "the Switzerland of Central America." The United States also hoped to shuffle at least some of its African population off to Central America. Facing his own black "problem," U.S. President Abraham Lincoln endorsed the Chiriquí Plan in 1862, hoping thereby to settle freed Afro-Americans along the Costa Rica-Panama border, but Central American racism blocked the project (Palmer 1977:21).

Construction of the Limón banana-port facilities and the connecting railroad began in 1871, but the climate discouraged native Costa

Ricans from going to the lowlands. The railroad contract carried a clause for importing foreign workers. These were soon recruited, and the first boatload arrived in April 1872. Men came primarily from Jamaica, where the exhaustion of the sugar plantations had created a vast pool of cheap and eager workers. Workers also came from Belize, Honduras, Panama, and Curacao.

When the railroad was completed, many West Indians stayed to work on the railroad, in the banana plantations, or on the docks in Limón. From 1881 to 1891, of some 43,000 Jamaican emigrants, 10,000 went to Costa Rica. Between 1881 and 1921, an estimated 33,000 *antillanos* came to Costa Rica to work for United Fruit. By 1911, Costa Rica was the world's principal producer of bananas, and blacks made up over 94 percent of the population of Limón province by 1927 (Meléndez 1981:64-69,84; Nelson 1984:27; cf. Bourgois 1989).

Yet the plantations suffered the same natural and economic scourge visited upon bananas elsewhere in Central America in the 1930s, and a 1934 contract prevented blacks from relocating to the new plague-free banana zone around Golfito, on the south Pacific coast. By the late 1930s, the Limón plantations were all but abandoned, and those blacks who remained grew cacao and took up subsistence agriculture. The 1940s brought impoverishment to the black population of Limón, half of which went to Panama during World War II (Casey 1979; Meléndez 1981:105).

As in Panama, blacks viewed the Costa Ricans negatively compared with their North American employers; they shared the anti-Hispanic attitudes of the white British West Indian elite with which they identified. Before the banana crash, Limón had 33 private, mostly Protestant English-language schools, and those who could afford it sent their children to Jamaica for schooling. Spanish was disparaged as a "parrot language," for which they had no use (Casey 1979; Meléndez 1981:90-103; cf. Bourgois 1989).

For its part, Costa Rica attempted to keep the blacks as an enclave apart: they were constrained from owning land, or from migrating to the central highlands (Meseta Central) until the post-war period, and they were not accepted as Costa Rican citizens until 1952 (Nelson 1984:27). After the 1948 revolution, Costa Rican *Mestizos* migrated in large numbers to the Atlantic Coast for the first time, and by 1973, less than a third of the population of Limón was black.

Blacks increasingly left for San José, where women found domes-

tic employment and men engaged in a variety of unskilled jobs. Black children entered Spanish-language schools, and while many remain Protestant, they are commonly baptized in the Catholic Church, as a form of "social mobility insurance." The late 1950s produced the first large numbers of black "hispanicized" professionals. At the same time, emigration, especially to the United States, has become more common (Biesanz 1982:230; Meléndez 1981:133-37; Nelson 1984:91). As in Panama, blacks have taken major steps toward assimilation. Few any longer consider the British West Indies as their cultural homeland, and like many Costa Ricans are oriented toward the U.S. cultural and consumer values.

THE AFRICAN PRESENCE ON THE MOSQUITO COAST

British domination of the Mosquito Coast proved a constant irritant to the Spanish, and the African element was assimilated differently there. Slavery had begun under the Puritan merchant planters at Old Providence island (Providencia) in 1630, and on the coast at Cabo Gracias a Dios (Parsons 1956). Here the British initiated a trading relationship with indigenous coastal groups. By 1638, one hundred slaves were reportedly working on British sugar and indigo plantations along the Río Coco and around the Bluefields lagoon. Some of these were later taken to Nicaragua, captured when the British were driven out of Providence by the Spanish in 1641. Others escaped and were absorbed by the indigenous Mosquito Indians. Survivors of wrecked slave trading ships also found refuge among the Mosquito Indians, as in 1650 when castaways washed ashore at Caratasca and Brus Laguna, near Cabo Gracias a Dios, Honduras (Brautigam-Beer 1982; CIDCA 1982:34; Floyd 1967:21; Leiva Vivas 1982:135-36).

By the end of the 17th century, the British had forged a solid alliance with the group that came to be known as the Miskito (Hale 1988). From there the British moved north, establishing plantations along the Honduran coast in the 18th century, in the numerous riverine estuaries south of the Río Aguan, especially in the Río Tinto or Black River area. By 1778 the British numbered some 450, with 4,500 black slaves, and 100 Indian labourers engaged in logwood cutting. The long British presence, and their trading relationship with the Miskitos and *zambos* of the region, constituted the benign side of a strategic alliance against the Spanish, whose attempts to enslave the

Indians dated from 1520 (CIERA 1981; Hale 1988; Holm 1978b; Leiva Vivas 1982:135-36).

By 1750, the British reinfilitrated the Nicaraguan coast. Moving south from Black River and Cabo Gracias a Dios, they settled Bluefields, Corn Island, Bragman's Bluff (present-day Puerto Cabezas), Punta Gorda, and Nasty Creek, among other areas of coastal Nicaragua (Floyd 1967:56). They established small sugar, coconut, and indigo plantations, cut logwood and pine, gathered forest products, and traded both with indigenous peoples and Spanish colonials of the Central American interior (CIDCA 1986b:7; CIERA 1981:27).

Spanish pressure on British residents along the Mosquito Shore drove some to relocate to Roatán with their slaves beginning in 1779 (Gonzalez 1986a). Following the 1786 Convention of London, and the 1787 Treaty of Versailles, the British agreed to evacuate all its settlements on the Mosquito Shore and in the Bay Islands. Of the 2,214 people removed, 1,677 (75.7%) were slaves. As in past removals from Spanish territory, the resettlement of choice was Belize (Bolland 1988; Everitt 1986:82; cf. CIDCA 1982:35, 1986b:8).

At least a few English planters obtained permission from the Spanish Crown to remain on the Mosquito Shore and in the nearby islands (Providencia, San Andrés, and Isla de Maíz, or Corn Island). They pledged loyalty to the Spanish Crown and converted to Catholicism. Together with their slaves, others moved from the islands to Bluefields, Laguna de Perlas, and Río Negro. These were later joined by freed people of color from elsewhere along the coast, and by Jamaican Creole traders (CIDCA 1982:35-36).

The 1787 evacuation of the Mosquito Shore was only temporary, as British commercial interests continued to dominate the entire area into the mid-19th century, and their linguistic, cultural, and commercial influence there remains evident today. Its remoteness from and hostility towards Spanish-speaking Nicaragua, and the persistent nature of British influence, enabled the local Creole population to consolidate its political and economic position. Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast region attracted a variety of immigrants and visitors: slaves escaped from Spanish masters, Garifuna (see Davidson 1980, 1984), and a constant flow of sailors, merchants, and free blacks from Jamaica and elsewhere in the Caribbean (CIDCA 1986b:8).

The Creole population had consolidated its political and economic

position by the British departure in 1878. They played a key role in the political dynamics of the Miskito Kingdom, overseen by the British from Belize. Many Creoles became proficient in the Miskito language as a consequence (CIDCA 1982:36, 1986b:11; Hale 1988), and Miskito men worked in the forests of Belize until well into the 20th century, with a linguistic effect evident in Belize Creole (Holm 1977).

Creole preeminence, originating in linguistic and cultural ties with the British and the Miskito, was eclipsed with the mid-19th century penetration of British and North American metropolitan interests. The British-American competition to open a trans-isthmus route across Nicaragua (bringing perhaps the first Jamaican labourers to that part of the coast (Coniff 1986:17), placed white expatriates in management positions, with Nicaraguan Creoles in subsidiary positions. The arrival of the Moravian Church in 1849, and the Nicaraguan reincorporation of Mosquitia in 1894 also undermined Creole influence in the long run (CIDCA 1982:36, 1986b:9).

The Moravians focussed their efforts in Bluefields, Laguna de Perlas, and in nearby Creole communities in their first thirty years of evangelization. The massive conversion of Miskitos to the Moravian faith did not occur until the 1880s (Gordon 1985:127). The Moravian Church effectively assumed a quasi-governmental position in the absence of a direct state presence. Through establishing the first educational, health, and social welfare programs in the region, the church propagated a conservative political ideology that persists in the present. Although the church hierarchy was predominantly white and European, Nicaraguan Creoles did secure a favorable representation with respect to other ethnic groups of the coast (CIDCA 1986b:9-10).

Economic activity on the Nicaraguan Atlantic Coast in the 1870s centered around *caoba* (mahogany) lumbering and chicle collection, attracting Mestizos from the Pacific coast for the first time. By 1880, North American capital monopolized more than 90 percent of commerce there. Banana plantations were established, pine began to be more systematically exploited for lumber and turpentine, and mining was initiated. Blacks from the southern United States and the West Indies (Jamaica, the Cayman Islands, and San Andrés) were also brought in to work in these industries. They were unskilled labourers of Creole-speaking Baptist or Anglican backgrounds (Gordon

1985:126; CIDCA 1986b:10-11).

The 1894 reincorporation of the coast by the Spanish-speaking government based in the Pacific region reduced the relative economic and political positions of both the Creole and the Miskito (CIDCA 1986a). In 1900, English was prohibited as a language of instruction in *costeño* schools, and a move to declare Creoles "foreigners" was mounted in 1910 (Sujo 1986:22). While reincorporation brought a growing number of "Spanish" government bureaucrats from the Pacific region, subsuming Creole interests, the Nicaraguan Atlantic Coast largely remained a culturally isolated enclave until the post-1979 revolutionary period.

The North American era corresponded with a boom-and-bust cycle of economic development converting the *costeño* population into salaried workers strongly identified with U.S. cultural, material, and political values. This gave rise to an enduring conservative world-view that posed a major challenge to the revolutionary government's attempt to incorporate the Atlantic Coast into the national polity (Gordon 1985:127-9).

The exhaustion of natural resources, the banana blight, and the resultant salary cuts and unemployment, reflected the worldwide economic crash of the 1930s. This did not impact the Miskito so heavily, who retained a subsistence lifestyle to fall back upon (Nietschmann 1979). While some Creoles continued as farmers and fishermen, the majority became artisans, teachers, shopkeepers, Moravian preachers, and functionaries of the North American concerns.

As members of the educated urban petty bourgeoisie of the Atlantic Coast, this group began to look elsewhere for employment after the flight of U.S. capital. The *somocista* economy expanded, with an unprecedented influx of "Spanish" managers and land-poor campesinos. The Creole response was a massive migration to Managua and the United States (Gordon 1985; CIDCA 1986b:11). The World War II labour demand at U.S. military bases and merchant ships in the region only accelerated a process of Creole emigration from Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast, one furthered by the 1988 hurricane devastation of Bluefields. The role of Creoles and other ethnic minorities in the contemporary Atlantic Coast political autonomy process is examined in detail by Sollis (1989; cf. Gordon 1989).

THE EARLY AFRICAN PRESENCE IN BELIZE

Turning now to Belize, the first slaves may have been brought by British tobacco planters and silk grass gatherers in the early 17th century, but this remains speculative. In the early 17th century Puritan colonists settled the Cockscomb Coast, in the area of present day South Stann Creek, Silk Grass, and Sittée River. When the Spanish drove them from Old Providence (Isla de la Providencia) in 1641, and from Roatán in 1642, the British seem also to have abandoned the Cockscomb area (Winzerling 1946). Many of these "exiles" then sought refuge further north around the mouth of the Old or Belize River.

From Belize the British harassed Spanish logwood ships cutting in the Yucatán from the mid-17th century, to supply the expanding British wool industry with dye materials. These buccaneers switched from stealing Spanish logwood cargoes to cutting their own after the 1670 Treaty of Madrid, when Britain moved to eradicate piracy (Von Dertzen 1985:16-17). The 1717 expulsion of British logwood cutters from Campeche brought more settlers to the Bay of Honduras (Joseph 1989). A major problem was to secure the necessary labour to expand their operations, as the Maya resisted attempts to enslave them. The earliest record of an African presence in Belize is a 1724 Spanish missionary report of slaves brought from Bermuda and Jamaica to cut logwood (Bolland 1986:12-15; 1988:45).

The forced 1787 British evacuation from Nicaragua's Mosquito Shore (Von Dertzen 1985) coincided with a growing interest in mahogany in Belize. While logwood could be cut by a master and a couple of slaves, mahogany labour requirements were more extensive. The timber barons imported growing numbers of Africans to do the slave labour the Mayas resisted. After 1770, 80 percent of all male slaves over ten years of age worked in the forests during the dry or summer season, in gangs of 10 to 50 men with specialized tasks (Bolland 1988:49).

By the mid-18th century, slaves far outnumbered white colonials, by the beginning of the 19th, slaves were 75 percent of Belize's population. Consequently, like the Spanish colonials, the white settlers lived in constant apprehension of slave uprisings. Conditions in the timber camps gave rise to slave revolts in 1765, 1768, 1773, and 1820. Maroon communities existed on the Sibun River ("very difficult to discover, and guarded by poisonous stakes"), and in the Blue Moun-

tains to its north. These maroon communities never engaged in prolonged harassment of white settlements, however, as in Brazil or Jamaica (Bolland 1979:26-29; 1986:15-17), but their ultimate fate is unknown.

Slaves of the British also sought freedom in adjoining Spanish territories. In the 18th century, many fled north to the Yucatán, aiding the Spanish in subsequent attacks on the British. When the newly-independent Central American republics abolished slavery in the early 1820s, slaves sought refuge in the Petén (where they founded San Benito), Río Dulce, Lake Izabal, and the Río Motagua Valley, all in Guatemala; others fled to Omoa and other coastal areas of Honduras. Belizean colonial records abound with frustrated entreaties to the neighboring republics for the return of escapees "seduced from the paths of duty to superiors" (HGCA, 21 April 1827).

As the slave-owning entrepreneurial class represented it, the colony's very survival was at stake. Marshall Bennett, a prominent member of the Belize elite with extensive business dealings in Central America, was sent to Guatemala in 1826 "to remonstrate against, and, if possible, negotiate upon the injustice of encouraging our slaves to desert." But as Belize's *Honduras Gazette and Commerce Advertiser* (HGCA, 1 July 1826) lamented, "our worthy friend and fellow settler ... has not been successful." The desperation of the slave-owning class was evident:

... we regret to find that the prices of our exports are deplorably bad, and we fear the prospect of alteration is far distant. This with the desertion of the slaves to the ports of the neighbouring republic, where they are secreted and employed in the cutting of mahogany, ... bears hard on our settlement; for while the absconding of slave property is an immediate loss to individual proprietors, their service is a powerful weapon in the hands of our rivals in mahogany cutting on that coast; we can stand no competition where they get the wood alone at half the trouble and expence, and inveigle our labourers from their masters, giving them refuge in lieu of wages (ibid.).

The *Gazette* was the mouthpiece for the small but outspoken slave-owning class, which consistently portrayed itself an aggrieved party, and the only barrier against the "machinations and low cunning

of the Guatemala Congress, who pertinaciously persist in their hostile conduct, enticing our labourers from their duty" (HGCA, 15 July 1826).

The *Gazette* also voiced a prevalent self-congratulatory conceit about the putatively humane institution of British Honduran slavery: "We rejoice to observe that the sound of the whip is seldom heard among us, and that offences deserving of death are exceedingly rare" (HGCA, 12 August 1826). West Indian proprietors in this period faced growing metropolitan pressure to abolish slavery altogether, and the rhetoric in the pages of the *Gazette* must be viewed in this light. The trade itself had already been stopped in 1807 (Bolland 1988:53).

Due to the shortage of labour that resulted, some owners had resorted to the legally questionable measure of enslaving *zambos* (following the tradition of earlier British raiders who took slaves along Central America's Caribbean coast regardless of race [Olien 1980:17]). The Belize elite's enslavement of mixed-race (Indian-black) offspring brought a direct confrontation with the Colonial Superintendent. One letter in the *Gazette* refers to

the descendants of Indians mixed with the African race who were ... taken from their owners, and unduly suspended from their employments by an erroneous proceeding of Col. Arthur, His Majesty's late Superintendent ... their state of uncertainty and absence of regular employment is productive of discontent, dissatisfaction, and insubordination, among themselves and the slaves generally... (HGCA, 22 July 1826).

Proprietors were fond of arguing - contradicting the evidence at hand - that slave conditions in Belize were better than those of common wage labourers in England, and the *Gazette* regularly took issue with British abolitionists in a trans-Atlantic debate (e.g., HGCA, 15 July and 16 Sept. 1826; 6 Jan. 1827). But slave "discontent, dissatisfaction, and insubordination" during this period was ubiquitous, and while they couched their temperance in humanitarian terms, owners as a class were constrained more by the prevailing atmosphere of slave hostility in how severely they might discipline their "employees."

Not all owners were so restrained, however, and numerous cases of slave branding, mutilation, and other cruel and unusual punishments - particularly against female domestics - were recorded. Some

were severe enough to warrant elite sanctions against their own members whose rash actions might fuel the growing criticism of an already embattled institution, or lead to slave insubordination or revolt (the most recent occurrence, in 1820, was still fresh in memory). Thus some owners were fined and publicly excoriated for their brutality, always with an eye to placating the slave population; in extreme cases errant owners faced even the loss of their slaves through manumission (e.g., HGCA, 22 July 1826). The slaves themselves were no doubt adept at turning the situation's inherent contradictions to their advantage.

Clearly, there was often reason enough for slaves to choose flight. Escape was made easy because men worked in small, largely unsupervised wood cutting groups, in the untracked interior, and they were armed with both the knowledge and the tools of the bush: "Our slaves can now, with the greatest of facility ... take up their gun, shot-bag, and machete, and walk off in the open face of day, and bid defiance to their poor astonished Masters, whose only consolation is to think that all are not yet gone" (HGCA, 26 May 1827). Another outraged owner complained:

Our slaves in running away do not conceal themselves. They offer to hire to the very Masters they have deserted when those Masters, in the course of business, are obliged to be among the Spaniards; they behave in the most insolent manner, putting on the Cap of Liberty, and shewing their full equality with their original owners. As for those that desert to Peten, a back of us, they make no hesitation to come and tamper with our better disposed people, with their liberty, and ask what [wages] they work for, adding that they do not care now for any man ... Will you believe it, that one of our run-aways has commenced trading in cattle, and has actually brought cattle to the New River [within Belize], and sold them to someone there (HGCA, 9 June 1827).

One constraint upon escape, however, was the relatively stable family life that at least some slaves had, and the masters, recognizing the attachment to family, occupied in domestic service back in Belize City, exploited this fact as a means of social control (Bolland 1988:53).

The impact on the Belize Forestocracy of slavery's 1834 abolition was somewhat softened by the so-called "apprenticeship" period, which evolved into the advance and truck system that conditioned labour relations in Belize into the 20th century (Bolland 1988:159-160). Barred from land ownership in post-emancipation Belize, some freed slaves sought to improve their prospects by emigrating, but in Belize the elite power structure and land tenure patterns prevented the rise of an independent farming class (Bolland 1986:15-17; Bolland and Shoman 1977; Everitt 1986:91-93). Some settlers and former slaves went to the Bay Islands, the Antilles, or Grand Cayman. Cultural and social ties remained especially strong with the Bay Islands, where white British settlement persisted, augmented by freed English-speaking blacks (Adams 1957:634-35; Davidson 1974a; Jones and Glean 1971).

THE GARIFUNA PRESENCE

The end of the 18th century brought difficulties for the administration of Great Britain's New World empire. The expulsion of its settlers from the Mosquito Shore came in the wake of a successful independence bid by its former North American colonies. French antagonism to British colonial interests in North America extended to the Caribbean as well, even as the egalitarian rumblings of the French Revolution threatened the future of Caribbean slavery for France, Great Britain, and Spain alike.

Britain's foothold in the Caribbean was under fire at the end of the 18th century. France had Britain tied up in St. Lucia, Grenada, Dominica, and St. Vincent, where the former enlisted the Black Caribs (known today as Garifuna) in an effort to run the British out of the Antilles. Meanwhile, Britain moved against France in Hispaniola, attempting to capitalize upon the Haitian Revolution (1791-1803). In turn, as already noted, the Spanish made their last, failed effort to dislodge the British from Belize in 1798.

The Black Caribs were an admixture of escaped African slaves and Carib Indians indigenous to St. Vincent. They allied with the French in *la Guerre Caribe* of 1795-1796, with hopes of driving the British out of their native territory. The latter took the extreme measure of arming their own slave population in the effort to subdue the Caribs (a tactic that Belizeans will recall being used again by the British against the Spanish at St. George's Caye). A severe epidemic

appears to have been the deciding factor in the July 1796 Carib surrender. The British debated the relative merits of exiling them to Africa (as it had done with Jamaican maroons), the Bahamas, or Haiti, before finally deporting them to coastal Central America.

They evacuated 4,195 Caribs to the nearby island of Baliseau, where an epidemic further reduced their numbers to 2,248 before their 1797 removal. Some 2,026 survived the journey to Roatán, off the Honduran coast (Gonzalez 1986a/b). The British Crown spent heavily on the move, which Holm (1978a:25) calls "a poisonous love letter to the Spanish, who had recently forced the British to evacuate their settlers from the Mosquito Shore to Belize."

British intentions backfired, however (at least in the short term), for the Caribs allied themselves with the Spanish later that same year. By July 1797, 80 percent of the Carib population of Punta Gorda (Roatán) moved to the mainland port of Trujillo (Gonzalez 1986b:340). There Carib men received military training from French maroon troops (known as "Republican Negroes" to the British) who had fled Haiti in 1793 to join the Spaniards in Honduras. Thus Caribs and French-speaking Haitian maroons joined forces under the Spanish domain in Trujillo. They also became acquainted with the Miskito, and began to intermarry with both groups (Gonzalez 1986b:13-14).

News of the Carib alliance with the Spanish alarmed the Belize settlement. Yet Caribs, at least those settled in the Río Patuca area of Honduras, were beginning to view both the British and the Spanish through Miskito eyes. The Spanish welcome was apparently short-lived. Some Caribs began to accompany the Miskito, who voyaged up the coast seeking work with British logwood cutters, or to hunt and fish. The logwood cutters welcomed them, because the costs of maintaining slaves were high in Belize. They were happy to hire these low-cost migrants (Gonzalez 1986b:342-3). As of late 1802, an estimated 150 Caribs were already employed in Belize (Holm 1978a:26).

By 1804 the Spanish had already begun to question Carib loyalties. Caribs settled Livingston, Guatemala, that same year, and came to be known there as *morenos* (Adams 1957:372). Livingston gave easy access to wage work in nearby Belize. Livingston's oral history holds that it was founded by a Haitian, who would likely have been a French Republican maroon from Trujillo. By 1805 the Belize colonial superintendent was encouraging its settlers to foster friendly

relations with Carib and Miskito alike. This reflected a pragmatic strategy to enlist these groups to attack Trujillo and re-establish a British presence on the Mosquito Shore. The Caribs remaining in Trujillo came into open conflict with the Spanish in 1807, fleeing en masse. Many were taken in by the *sambos* and Miskitos in the Patuca River region to the east, while others appear to have augmented the Carib population in Belize.

Thus, by the early 19th century the Caribs had already established a reputation as mercenaries, and their multilingual talents enabled them to ride the tide of political intrigue and shifting military alliances. The British hired them to protect Caye Caulker, Belize, from the Spanish between 1807 and 1811 (Gonzalez 1986a:15). The Spanish hired them to protect the Guatemalan fort at San Felipe (at the entrance of Lake Izabal) from "pirates and revolutionaries" (Gonzalez 1986b:343). Others continued as mercenaries in Honduras, at Omoa and Trujillo. Those who supported the losing side in the Honduran civil war fled in 1832 for the Carib settlements in Belize (in an exodus that also included what were probably the first "Spanish" or Ladino refugees to enter Belize). Others joined the Miskitos on the Río Patuca (Bolland 1986:26; Gonzalez 1986a:17; Gullick 1976:31-32; IGN 1978:525). This was, however, to be the last involvement of Caribs in the Anglo-Spanish struggle for the Atlantic Coast of Central America.

Thus began the period of a general Garifuna dispersal: by 1849, they inhabited virtually every estuary of the Atlantic Coast as far south as Bluefields, Nicaragua. They displaced the indigenous Jicaque Indians from the coastal Honduran department of Atlántida, forcing them inland (IGN 1978:525). Their settlement pattern reflected a combination of subsistence pursuits and proximity to paid work. Their adaptability to changing conditions is a central feature of their cultural survival struggle. They reproduced their accustomed lifestyle of fishing, sea transport, and subsistence and market farming on the Central American littoral, conditioned by their prior exposure in St. Vincent to the cash economy (CIDCA 1982; Davidson 1974b, 1980, 1982, 1984; Ghidinelli and Massajoli 1984; Gonzalez 1969b, 1986a/b), and occasional engagement in the Caribbean standby of smuggling. Women remained at home, engaged in farming and marketing their produce, and attended to domestic affairs. The men also contracted themselves out as gang labourers, clearing land for roads and plantations, or cutting wood. They developed a reputation as good workers

commanding a premium wage (Gonzalez 1986a:14-16; 1986b:342-44; 1988).

Bolland (1986:58) calls the Garifuna the "quintessential case of cultural synthesis," and they have generally been characterized as the most cohesive and successful Afro-Caribbean group in Central America. In 1951, Taylor (1951:69) estimated the Garifuna population at 30,000. By 1973, the estimated population was 77,000, broken down as follows: Belize (10,000), Guatemala (5,500), Honduras (60,900), and Nicaragua (800). Their major areas of urban settlement and trade were: Dangriga and Punta Gorda, Belize; Livingston and Puerto Barrios, Guatemala; Puerto Cortes, Tela, La Ceiba, and Trujillo, Honduras; and Bluefields, Nicaragua. Smaller rural settlements also exist on Roatán, along most of the north coast of Honduras, and in Laguna de Perlas, Nicaragua (Davidson 1974b, 1980, 1982, 1984).

Prior to widespread long-distance Garifuna migration beginning with World War II, the primary sources of wage labour were Guatemalan and Honduran banana plantations. There they experienced considerable discrimination, and government dispatches from Belize during the 1930s indicate an awareness of "the harsh treatment of the Carib inhabitants by the Government of the Republic of Honduras"; in 1938 the Garifuna petitioned Governor Alan Burns

for land in this Colony on which the Caribs now in the Republic [of Honduras] may settle ... [they asserted] that [they] were anxious to leave a country where they were so badly treated and to settle under the protection of the British Crown (DO 18/1938).

Apart from a ritual invocation of the destitution visited upon Belize by worldwide economic depression, the callous calculation of the Governor's response reflects ethnic stereotypes of the times:

The Colony is in need of additional population but the Caribs in British Honduras are not good agriculturists and those from the Republic are unlikely to be any better. In the circumstances ... this Government is unable to give any help in the matter (DO 18/1938).

Burns was, however, inclined to foster Jamaican peasant immigration as "a far better investment ... The Jamaicans already resident here are among our best agriculturists..." (DO 59/1936). The Governor was also biased because a number of Garifuna farmers in the Stann Creek Valley were in arrears on government loans, rents, and land taxes (DO 136/1938, DO 196/1938), a situation he qualified as "deplorable ... almost insoluble," even though it stemmed in part from the government's leniency on payments after the 1931 hurricane ravaged the valley's farmers (DO 309/1939), compounded by economic depression and the effect of Panama disease on the banana trade.

There is no indication that government refusal of assistance deterred those Garifuna determined to immigrate to Belize, and similar politically motivated migrations took place from Guatemala when the 1954 U.S.-engineered coup brought reprisals against Arbenz supporters, causing some Garifuna to flee Livingston for Barranco, Belize (Holm 1978a). Garifuna migration has been constant between settlements in Honduras, Guatemala, and Belize, but since it has never been closely monitored, its magnitude remains largely a matter of speculation.

In Belize, citrus and logging became important wage pursuits for Garifuna men. Jamaican, Barbadian, and Central American blacks were also imported to work in the plantations, but the Garifuna dominated the better paid tasks of loading bananas on the railroad, the docks, and banana boats, and crewing the river launches, barges, and coastal steamers. The decline of bananas in the 1930s left Garifunas an urbanized group without work, as it had African populations elsewhere in Central America (Adams 1957:635; Gonzalez 1969a). Thus Garifuna emigration has conformed to the urban orientation of Belize Creole emigrants to the United States (Davidson 1974b, 1980; Everitt 1984; Gonzalez 1988; Rodríguez 1986).

BELIZE AFTER SLAVERY

Like elsewhere in Central America, in Belize an increasingly urbanized African population emerged in the post-slavery era. From the administrative center and port of Belize Town, the Creole elite, in concert with absentee foreign capital, directed the country's overall development, shaping its cultural, economic, and political life in a way that reduced most Belizeans, regardless of ethnicity, to the same

dependent and impoverished condition.

The Crown stopped granting freehold land after emancipation in 1838, effectively preventing ex-slaves from becoming landowners. Garifuna and Maya reservations were established to keep these groups from owning the land themselves, in hopes of creating a proletarian labour force, and to contain the "wandering milpa." Such measures shaped and limited the nature of agricultural development to the benefit of the wealthy Belize merchants and latifundists (Bolland 1988:159; Bolland and Shoman 1977).

In the 1860s, Belize joined Latin countries from Mexico to Brazil that hoped to capitalize upon the freed U.S. slave population as a labour force, and on the immigration of unreconstructed Southern white planters (e.g., Sweet 1868). Little success came from Belize's ambivalent efforts to recruit these and other agrarian immigrants. While banana exports were set in motion by the late 19th century, this exclusively involved small producers, many of whom were urban expatriates. Sugar - proven viable by the Maya and Mestizo Caste War refugees who began coming to northern Belize in the late 1840s from the Yucatán - was soon consolidated in some dozen large plantations that sought to reduce smallholders to field workers. It, like bananas, was not destined to become a major agro-industrial export until well into the 20th century.

Bananas, sugar, and a mail route concession strengthened U.S. shipping and commercial ties through New Orleans, and by 1920, 70 percent of Belize's foreign trade was with the United States (Bolland 1986:61). Yet the Belizean economy, tied to the world mahogany market, was in almost continuous decline through the latter half of the 19th century, culminating with a currency devaluation in 1894 that led to a police revolt and subsequent labour riot with distinctly racial undertones (Ashdown 1979, 1980).

The direct experience of British racism by West Indian volunteers in World War I, and the popularity of Marcus Garvey's message in Central America and the Caribbean (Ashdown 1981, 1985, 1986; Wunderlich 1986) combined with the effects of the 1931 hurricane and depression-related unemployment, bringing further manifestations of unrest to Belize through the 1930s (Ashdown 1978), while sowing the seeds for the nationalist movement that surged forth in the late 1940s (Shoman 1987).

Belize's Creole population has long been characterized as indiffer-

ent to agricultural work, but land tenure laws through much of Belizean history militated against the development of an independent farming class, as did the reproduction of the stereotyped bias against farming. As Governor Burns expressed it, "...the people of British Honduras ... regarded agriculture with little or no enthusiasm, and have scarcely any knowledge of agricultural methods" (DO 59/1936).

A little known chapter of Creole history gives quite another indication, however. During the depression of the 1930s, the government made a number of attempts at planned rural resettlement "in pursuance of the policy of trying to move the surplus population of Belize [City] onto the land" (DO 136/1938). The Stann Creek Valley project of 1932-1933 was considered a "failure" by Burns, as was the 1934 project at Salt Creek, in Belize District. Rockstone Pond was judged to be more successful, but these efforts paled beside the effect of the building of the Belize-Corozal road, which began in 1935. That same year, a major piece of Belize Estate and Produce Company land north of Belize City was confiscated for back taxes, making Crown Land available near town for the first time, and the government opened it to freehold tenure. By 1938, at least 637 spontaneous settlers, representing an estimated 2,500 individuals (or about 15 percent of the Belize City population, a remarkable figure), mostly urban Creoles escaping the effects of the depression, were pioneering the area between Belize and Maskall, where in 1934 there had been none (DO 136/1938).

By 1936 the Anglican Church opened a school in Salt Creek, while the Catholic Church followed with one in Santana Reserve, and the area was being visited regularly by the Government Medical Officer. As Burns himself marvelled in mid-1938, "...the construction of the new road has been scarcely fast enough to meet the demands of those settled on the land" (DO 136/1938). Unfortunately, most of the settlers relied for cash upon bananas, whose extensive planting was not entirely immune to Panama disease, even if the presence of more lime in the soils of the north made them more resistant. These largely spontaneous developments indicated that if Belizeans were adverse to farming, it had more to do with structural and historical conditions than any imputed cultural or ethnic characteristic.

But this experiment in semi-spontaneous rural development seems to have been short-circuited by World War II, which sent Belizeans to Scotland as forestry workers, to the United States as farm labourers,

and to Panama to work on fortifications to the Canal. Others served in the Allied armed forces, or in the merchant marine. The war brought a replay of World War I's discrimination against Belizean volunteers abroad (Ford 1985). As the late 1940s saw further decline in the forestry economy (chicle, mahogany, and pine), returning Belizeans, having seen life elsewhere, were more inclined to pursue their fortunes abroad in the absence of opportunity at home.

Emigration to the United States rose dramatically in consequence, involving both Creole and Garifuna (Everitt 1986; Ford 1985; Gonzalez 1986:18, 1988). The 1961 flattening of Belize City by Hurricane Hattie sent many more abroad. Those remaining took sides in the polarized struggle for independence, as played out in controversies over the rebuilding of Belize City, the construction of the new inland capital at Belmopan, and in the smoldering class confrontation between the Civil Service (dominated by an emergent Creole middle class) and the Peoples United Party government (see Grant 1976).

The political disaffection of many younger Afro-Belizeans in the late 1960s gained expression in the black consciousness movement known as the United Black Association for Development (UBAD). The UBAD saga replayed many themes familiar in Belizean history, whose grassroots political mobilizations have typically been consigned to obscurity. UBAD, however, emerged in the volatile and politically opportunistic atmosphere of the pre-Independence period, in the context of the unresolved Anglo-Guatemalan dispute. At the same time, however, as its reigning spokesperson himself has written, Black Power - like so much of the so-called cultural "invasion" - was itself in many ways an exotic import from North America, and its historical experience in many ways did not speak directly to that of Belize (Hyde 1970).

Underemployment and increasing congestion in Belize City and Dangriga also must be seen as linked to Creole and Garifuna emigration. Blending into the American inner cities, Afro-Belizeans do not experience the same language and visibility problems facing undocumented Latin immigrants in the United States (Everitt 1984, 1986; Rodriguez 1986).

In 1984 the U.S. Consulate in Belize estimated that 35,000 to 50,000 Belizeans have settled in the United States (Everitt 1984), in New York, Chicago, Miami, New Orleans, Houston, and Los Angeles. Vernon's (1988) calculation puts the figure closer to 60,000

"hidden persuaders," the suggestive subliminal cues, and the ubiquitous "victimization" of the South. But an effort to understand their popularity is worthwhile if it helps to evaluate whether and how they may threaten to obliterate uniquely local expressions of cultural identity. In this regard, the Afro-Caribbean diaspora, while historically unique, raises universal questions about the nature of dependent societies and the cultures they elaborate.

Consider the observations of a U.S. traveller writing from Belize City in 1868: "There is considerable business done in Belize, though we are inclined to think from the appearance of the stocks in store that too heavy a preparation has been made for the immigrants' accommodation" (Swett 1868:79). Is this merely the expression of an immigrant's inflated sense of self-importance, or did the "stocks in store" reflect already established local tastes - or both?

At about the same time, Father Woollett, a Jesuit priest from Jamaica, observed: "...as at my former visit, I thought the stores better provided than the stores in Jamaica with eatables and drinkables, such a variety of tins of meat &c. &c., and of wines, liquors, &c. &c., and from different countries, and all looking so gay, with a variety of colours" (BA No.102).

These 19th century accounts underscore that Belize has long been integrated into the world capitalist system, and clearly, local consumer impulses are nothing new. A review of 19th century import data, or a perusal of early Belizean newspapers such as the *Honduras Gazette* will confirm that Belize has long been part of the international circuit of capital. Yet a palpably Belizean culture has been anything but destroyed by all that variegated consumer "gaiety" or merchant attempts at "immigrant accommodation."

And what of current demographic and ethnic concerns? In 1874, another Jesuit, Father Pittar, described the workers at the Seven Hills sugar estate (near present-day Indian Creek, Toledo) as follows: "They are of every possible colour and country, there are Indians, Coolies, and Chinese, Blacks and Whites and Browns [Spanish] and Reds; and the motley crowd professes, if anything, at least as many creeds as colours" (BA No.102). Neither is ethnic diversity new, nor is the way incoming populations contribute to a continuous renegotiation of the social norms and cultural values that inform the sense of national identity. If contemporary Latin, Chinese, or gringo "invasions" pose a threat to Belizean culture, they also represent only the

latest in a long line of invigorating, if potentially volatile, cultural influences.

Emigration must be viewed as a similar dialectic. Even as it siphons off some of the country's most valuable Creole and Garifuna talents, it works to revitalize and redefine national culture, and its internationalizing effect should not be seen in solely negative terms. Some of its most vibrant expressions are evident today in the activities of Belizean artists and cultural associations with connections abroad. This has inevitable and largely positive reverberations in Belize that can and should be furthered through more formal links between expatriate and home communities.

Clearly, these things demand careful scrutiny in the unfolding national project. But ethnicity and culture cannot be analyzed apart from the more fundamental issues of class and power they so often obscure. It is the confusion of these issues that poses the most profound and potentially divisive threat to that process. And culture, it must be emphasized - that most mutable human invention - in its very nature manifests a dynamic tension between its remarkable coherence and its characteristic flexibility. From Belize, the evidence suggests a lively capacity for cultural accommodation and survival, in which Afro-Caribbean peoples continue to play a critical role in forging a national identity equal to the challenge of transforming the structure of inequality that is the heritage of all Belizeans.

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THE MOSQUITO SHORE AND THE BAY OF HONDURAS DURING THE ERA OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

By Wallace Brown

This paper offers an overview of the impact of the American Revolution on British settlements in Central America, including a more detailed discussion of the role of the American Loyalists (those colonists who opposed the war) than has yet appeared in print. It also includes an analysis of certain British settlers in Central America who were bracketed with the Loyalists. Finally, the little-known Skelton Papers, located in the Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh, yield interesting information about the economy of the Mosquito Shore.

I

During the 17th century in the Caribbean the English established themselves solidly in Jamaica, the Leeward and the Windward

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Islands. Peripheral settlement occurred in the Bahamas, Guyana, Providence Island and St. Andrew Island, the Mosquito Shore and the Bay of Honduras. Spain destroyed St. Andrew¹ in 1635, Providence in 1641, and Guyana was abandoned to the Dutch in 1664², but on the Atlantic coast of Central America a precarious hold was retained on the Mosquito Shore and the Bay of Honduras, plus a claim to the usually uninhabited Bay Islands of Roatán, St. Andrew and perhaps Bonacca. (The Bay of Honduras was often simply known as the Bay; the inhabitants were Baymen. The Mosquito Shore similarly was the Shore; I use the term Shoremen, but I have come across no such usage in the 18th century.)

The British presence on the Bay began about 1628 and on the Shore a couple of years later. Spain recognized no British rights until the Treaty of Paris (1763), which granted restricted logwood cutting privileges (on the Bay only) while reaffirming Spanish sovereignty. On the eve of the American Revolution a handful of Britons with their slaves were ensconced in both areas primarily engaged in harvesting two wild woods, logwood and mahogany. Logwood was a key dyewood which had first attracted the British who commanded the only non-Spanish source at that time. Mahogany, used as ship timber since the 17th century, became much more in demand in the 18th century because of the fashion set by British furniture makers, Sheraton and Chippendale. By mid-century the two woods were of equal importance and soon mahogany was preponderant. They were harvested by small roving teams of whites and slaves, and periodically floated down rivers and streams to the sea. This commerce did not encourage large-scale slave labour or substantial settlements associated with mines and plantations elsewhere.³ By the 1780s, at least on the Shore, a few cotton and sugar plantations had been established and sarsaparilla was exported to Jamaica.⁴ On the Bay there seems to have been no substantial Indian population, but on the Shore the British were allied to the powerful Spanish-hating Mosquito Indians since the 17th century.⁵

II

The American Revolution impinged on many places beyond the area which became the United States. The War of Independence became a world war, and rebel victory caused a diaspora of thou-

hands of American Loyalists. Both developments profoundly affected the Bay and the Shore.

As elsewhere in the Caribbean the War was a disaster for trade. An undated letter from the Bay to London complained of "the Mahogany Trade ... being sunk to nothing" because of the danger of "French Cruisers," the result being "Mahogany is now generally refused in Barter or Payment amongst ourselves, as an unmarketable drug."⁶ When Spain entered the War in June 1779 the problem worsened. Before the news of hostilities even reached the Bay a Spanish expedition from Bacalar on September 15 "perfidiously surprised, robbed and pillaged the whole British settlers of their property" on St. George's Caye, the chief settlement. The prisoners, 101 whites, 40 coloureds and up to 250 slaves, were force-marched to Merida and many were then conveyed to Havana. By October a further 50 white men and 250 slaves, who were probably out logging when the Spanish attacked, had arrived in Roatán and Bonacca. On the eve of the attack the white population of the Bay was put at 500, which leaves about 350 unaccounted for. Some went to the Bay Islands, some to Jamaica, many to the Shore.⁷

In 1780 the British, with a force that included Mosquito Indians and white settlers from both the Bay and the Shore, captured and sacked the Spanish settlement of Omoa, possibly in revenge for the attack on St. George's Caye.⁸ The Bay, and seemingly hundreds of slaves, were abandoned by the British from 1779 until the Peace of Paris was signed in 1783. In contrast the Shore remained in British hands and was variously involved in the War, a sort of *petite guerre* somewhat similar in a minor way to that which occurred in the New York backcountry. The official in charge was Col. James Lawrie (1722-1799) who was appointed superintendent in May 1776 by Lord George Germain. Whereas the Bay was administered by the Governor of Jamaica, the Shore had a superintendent since 1749. However, as Germain reminded Lawrie, the superintendent was under "the Control & Direction of the Governor of Jamaica" unless London issued specific orders to the contrary.⁹ Lawrie was a Scot who served with the 49th Regiment during the Seven Years War, after which he became a merchant in Jamaica. Lawrie replaced Capt. Robert Hodgson, Jr. Hodgson and his father before him had held the office most of the time since its creation. Hodgson was not pleased and eventually retreated to Jamaica.¹⁰

On August 2, 1782, after Rodney's defeat of de Grasse, Hodgson, now a colonel, was ordered by Governor Archibald Campbell of Jamaica to proceed forthwith on the transport Sally, along with two companies (about 100 men) of the Loyal American Rangers, to Cape Gracias a Dios on the Mosquito Shore. The Rangers, formed in New York in 1780 from prisoners and deserters from the Continental Army, had been posted to Jamaica in February 1781. Hodgson's mission was to cement friendship with the Indians by the disposal of presents, to distribute provisions to "the unfortunate settlers," and above all to attack the Spanish. The force soon reached the Cape where they occupied barracks built for detachments of the 68th and 79th Regiments after their retreat from Black River in April 1782.¹¹ Superintendent Lawrie and many Shoremen refused to serve under Hodgson, of unpopular memory. At this point Col. Edward Marcus Despard, an Irish soldier and Caribbean adventurer, arrived at the Cape. Despard had earlier been involved in a little known footnote to the American War: a crack-brained scheme cooked up in London to cut the Spanish Empire in Central America in half, by proceeding up the San Juan River on the Atlantic coast between Nicaragua and Costa Rica, and thence to the Pacific. The ill-fated 1779 expedition, led by Col. Despard and Capt. Horatio Nelson, included a few hundred troops from Jamaica, plus "a few score boatmen" from Honduras and "a handful" of Mosquito Indians. According to Sir Charles Oman, the next year Despard was given command of Roatán and its population of exiled log-cutters. En route he stopped off at Cape Gracias a Dios where the inhabitants asked him to replace the unpopular Col. Hodgson, in charge "of all the surviving British settlements on the Central American Coast." Despard agreed and promptly organized an expedition, consisting of 600 Mosquito Indians, 500 Shoremen and blacks, plus 80 Loyal Rangers, which sailed for Black River on August 26. On August 31 the Spanish surrendered their fort upon the Rio Negro, "the main hostile establishment in the neighbourhood, and with the aid of the Mosquito Indians he dominated the whole shore as far south as the San Juan River." This success helped Britain retain the Bay of Honduras settlements in 1783.¹² In July 1783 Hodgson preferred charges against Lawrie and Despard for disobeying his orders. A court martial in Jamaica threw the case out.¹³

The peace treaty of 1783 returned the Bay of Honduras to the

British, and for the first time boundaries for wood cutting were drawn (restricted on the "Spanish Continent" to the area between the Belize and Hondo Rivers), but Spain did not (and never did) recognize British sovereignty.¹⁴ The treaty was silent on the Shore which the British government and, following its lead, the settlers, interpreted as retention - the Shore "never belonged to the Crown of Spain." Lord North believed that Spain would acquiesce. Governor Campbell, following North, told Superintendent Lawrie that both the Mosquito Indians and the settlers should "rest satisfied" that their status remained the same as before the war. The Spanish seriously considered attacking the Shore but were dissuaded by a growing British naval and military force in the area.¹⁵ However, the Shore was abandoned at the negotiating table. The Convention of London signed by Spain and Britain July 14, 1786, arranged for the evacuation of the Shore and the Bay Islands in return for an extension of the boundaries of the Bay of Honduras.

III

I now turn to the American Loyalists who perhaps comprised one-fifth (half a million) of the population of the thirteen colonies or states. Up to 80,000 of them went into exile, among other things virtually creating English-speaking Canada. Many southern Loyalists settled in the Bahamas (where they doubled the population), Jamaica and to a lesser extent Dominica. Often these southerners moved first to East Florida, but its return to Spain in 1783 necessitated a second migration.

The exodus affected the Bay and Shore in two ways. First, in July 1782 the Spanish released the St. George's Caye prisoners, allowing them to proceed to Jamaica where they (and other Britons who had drifted in from Central America) were grouped with the American refugees and given the same concessions. Second, in late 1784 and early 1785 a number of East Florida Loyalists went via Jamaica to seek a new home on the Shore, only to be evacuated to the Bay (their third move!) by the Convention two years later. Both of these groups will be discussed in turn.¹⁶

During the last months of 1782 and the early months of 1783 the Honduras "sufferers" in Jamaica "lived on the charitable benevolence of their neighbours" - the newspapers were full of charity drives.¹⁷ On

March 1, 1783, the Jamaican legislature passed an act that exempted the American Loyalists (including the Baymen and the Shoremen) for seven years from all public and parochial taxes (except quitrents) and from import taxes on their slaves.¹⁸ (Similar concessions were granted in the Bahamas and Dominica.) Accordingly, each Loyalist soon took an oath before a Justice of the Peace and was issued a certificate which entitled him to the tax exemption.¹⁹

Some 172 Loyalists were granted certificates (the record of others may not have survived). One hundred and ten of these were from the 13 former mainland colonies (mostly from South Carolina and Georgia) and eight were from East and West Florida. Forty-three were from the Bay of Honduras and eleven were from the Mosquito Shore. (These 54 were not, of course, true Loyalists because there had been no revolution in Central America, no American rebel republican challenge; the enemy was Spain.²⁰ However, the precedent of lumping them with the Loyalists was continued when in 1789 both the Baymen "robbed and despoiled" by the Spanish in 1779 and the Shoremen dispossessed by the Convention of 1786 demanded compensation from the British government along the lines granted to the North Americans and East Florida Loyalists.)²¹ Unfortunately, little information was divulged concerning the 54 (or the other 118 for that matter) during these hearings. For example, there is no indication of place of birth, but as most "Loyalists" indicated how long they had been in Central America the vast majority were clearly immigrants from somewhere. (There is evidence elsewhere that the Mosquito Shore population contained a number who were born there.)²² Nor is there any indication of occupation, but it may safely be assumed that most cut mahogany or logwood.

However, some comments can be made on the basis of numbers and what information was usually given, i.e., cash value of property abandoned, numbers of slaves brought, length of time spent in either settlement. (See Table A.) The outnumbering of Mosquito Shore refugees by four to one reflects the Spanish attack on the Bay in 1779 and the release of the captured Baymen from Havana in 1782. (Also, the Shore presumably had a much smaller population.) The population of the Bay in 1779 is not clear. It seems never to have exceeded 500 whites during this period. One hundred and forty whites were taken prisoner by the Spanish, but they were confined to the inhabitants of St. George's Caye, some of whom escaped. Also the wood-

cutters out on the rivers were not captured. If a total white population of 250 is somewhat arbitrarily assessed, the 43 Loyalists are almost one-fifth of the population finding its way to Jamaica. The proportion is certainly higher because not all the refugees were single: only one specifically mentions his accompanying family, but five were female, only one of whom is noted as a widow. If families were widespread the conclusion is that a substantial number of Baymen fled to Jamaica. It might be thought that the hard, primitive life on the Bay would inhibit the settlement of women and the raising of families. It may have been so, but five women make 11 percent of the total and they had lived in Honduras 16, 14, 12, 10 and 6 years respectively. There is also evidence of family life on the Mosquito Shore: three of the eleven granted certificates were women, two of whom were listed as widows (one having lived on the Shore twenty years) and one presumed widow accompanied by her family.

Sixteen of the Baymen and four Shoremen stated their intention of settling permanently in Jamaica; the terms of the Treaty of Paris were not yet known and even if they were it is impossible to know who actually remained. Suffice it to say that a substantial minority clearly did not expect to return.

The table of length of residence in the two settlement shows that the refugees had generally put in long years: 73 percent were residents of at least ten years. This and other evidence suggests a certain stability. Simple arithmetic indicates the bulk of immigration occurred in 1763 and the years immediately following, doubtless a result of the guarantees for the Bay of the Treaty of 1763.

The number of slaves brought to Jamaica and the value of property lost affords some insight into economic status. There are startling contrasts regarding slaves. Woodcutting, generally regarded as an activity involving small gangs of slaves, is confirmed as such in the Bay where the average number of slave is about four. On the Mosquito Shore, however, the average was about eleven. Further, three owners of sixteen or more account for over 64 percent of the total. Bearing in mind that the number of slaves brought to Jamaica would often be far less than the number of slaves originally owned, the supposition is that the Mosquito Shore was suited to the economics of quite large slave gangs. Why? I do not know.

The amount of property losses does not confirm the expectation that the Mosquito Shore refugees were wealthier than the Baymen.

The seeming paradox is resolved when it is noted that almost half of the few Shoremen gave no value to lost property and only one of the large slave-owners did so. One also notes that the relatively modest wealth of the Baymen is shown by the 46 percent who lost £300 or less and the 56 percent who claimed £500 or less.

Another angle on the Central American "Loyalists" is to compare them with those from the original thirteen colonies who got certificates in Jamaica. Over 60 percent of the latter claimed losses of over £500; which suggests greater wealth for the latter, a conclusion confirmed by the average number of slaves brought from the mainland (South Carolina, 14; Georgia, 40).

On July 14, 1783, governor of Jamaica, Archibald Campbell, informed Lord North that "many of the Loyalists who came from South Carolina and Georgia" had applied "to be transported at the expence of Government to the Mosquito Shore." They also requested nine months' provisions plus "Husbandry Tools" for themselves, their families and their slaves with which to establish themselves on the Shore. Campbell, lacking the authority, asked for Whitehall's guidance. He added: "I conceive the Shore in its present state a precarious Tenure for those unfortunate Men" who would be better off settling in Jamaica.²³

Henry Rugeley, a South Carolina Loyalist, wrote from Kingston, October 10, 1783, that he was one of many dissuaded from a "Trip to the Spanish Main" to see if he would like to settle on the Shore because he had learnt that Spain was demanding the territory and "our wise Ministers mean to do it."²⁴

By next year Campbell was given the green light. Lord Sydney, who succeeded Lord North, at first fully backed the Mosquito Shore. In 1784 he urged Campbell to help the Loyalists settle there and in Sorsby's words "authorized convicts to be sent to Belize and to the Shore to cut wood for the Baymen and to assist the American Loyalists to establish themselves."²⁵ In June 1784, 243 Loyalists arrived in Kingston from St. Augustine, East Florida, with the intention of proceeding "immediately to the Mosquito Shore." Campbell granted them four months' provisions, informed Superintendent Lawrie, and requested him to help the refugees. Campbell commented: "So many Loyal and industrious Subjects settling on the Mosquito Shore cannot fail to render that Settlement in a little time respectable, and of consequence to the Nation." As a sweetener he also told Lawrie to set

up an elected council of whites only. On February 19, 1785, it was reported that an unspecified number of Loyalists from East Florida had "lately arrived" on the Shore and "were on the Eve of great distress for want of Provisions to enable them to form a settlement."²⁶ The total of these South Carolina, Georgia and East Florida Loyalists who actually reached the Shore is not clear. The governor of Jamaica noted "that very few of those who "intended to go to the Mosquito Shore" actually "went thither."²⁷ Certainly, sixty-six American Loyalists took part in the evacuation of 1787; if that were the total only a fraction had attained their goal.

Governor Alured Clarke, who had succeeded Campbell, was instructed to end any migration. In June 1785 Francis Levett, an East Florida planter since 1769, was waiting in St. Augustine for "the removal of myself, family, Servants, Overseer and Slaves about 100 in Number when I found I could not proceed to the Musketts Shore."²⁸ In August Clarke reported the arrival of a transport from East Florida full of Loyalists and their slaves "who intend to proceed to the Mosquito Shore; but, in consequence of your Lordship's directions ..., I have discouraged them going at present."²⁹ By this time the negotiations (forecast by Rugeley) which led to the Convention of 1786 were underway. There is no record of any Loyalist asking to go to the Bay of Honduras.³⁰ The Shore seemingly was universally perceived as the colony with prospects. It could have become a major Loyalist haven like the Bahamas (Levett moved to New Providence), but the Bay settlers and the British government had other ideas.

That some Loyalists actually reached the Mosquito Shore is shown by a memorial to Lawrie, signed by 29 of them on October 16, 1786. (At least two can be identified as South Carolinians who had fled to East Florida.) They lamented that "the too pleasing expectation of" the Shore "being kept a Brittish [sic] Colony" encouraged them to buy land and houses "at pretty extravagant rates" and "make numerous Plantations." They asked Lawrie to ask the governor of Jamaica for some kind of compensation for the property they would be forced to abandon, "Provisions ... to remove their Families to the intended place of debarkation," and, lastly, old hand that they were: "Sir, you will be pleased to endeavour to get them such means of removing that they may avoid the too general confusion attending the indiscriminate Evacuation of a country."³¹

Ten of the twenty-nine petitioning Loyalists were alone, without family or relatives. The total number of Loyalists was only 66. Only 143 slaves were listed; 14 petitioners listed no slaves at all; most of the slaves - 114 - were owned by a mere five of the petitioners (30, 31, 23, 17, 13 slaves respectively). This suggests a small Loyalists elite plus a large group of modest wealth.

IV

At the end of July 1786 Sydney informed Lawrie of the terms of the Convention. The Indian chiefs were guaranteed protection by the King of Spain; all the British inhabitants were to leave (anyone remaining would be abandoned) for the enlarged Honduras (Article 2) where there was lots of room, although those preferring Jamaica would be accommodated.³²

On October 14, 1786, Lawrie wrote from Black River to Governor Clarke describing the reaction of the settlers to the news of the Convention. Lawrie "called a meeting of the principal Inhabitants" who expressed "sorrow and consternation" at having to "embark at so short a notice and so inclement a season of the year." Evacuation was to be completed by March 1, 1787. There was not enough time either to settle their affairs or to ship "the mahogany already manufactured" (interestingly there is no mention of logwood) so that they faced the prospect of arriving as "miserably vagrants" wherever they might resettle. The weather would not be suitable (mainly because of unfavourable winds) for embarkation before the middle of March (Britain got an extension to June 30). Naval transports would be needed because only two ships were available: a "small Craft" useful to ferry the settlers to the transports, and a vessel "of between Forty and Fifty Tons," still on the stocks but nearly finished (interestingly the settlers were capable of building an ocean-going ship). The meeting deputed Major Richard Hoare, a distinguished settler with "long knowledge of this Country," to go to Jamaica and explain the problems in detail to Clarke.³³

The evening of the day of the inhabitants' meeting General Lee of the Mosquito Indians, "a man of determined resolution and very dangerous," arrived at Black River. Already apprised of the evacuation plans, he "sat a considerable time in profound silence," then "with tears in his eyes" declared that "he and his people" would also

remove themselves. Next morning Lawrie, through "a very good interpreter" "had a long conversation" during which he endeavoured to convince General Lee that George III's "first consideration" was to provide for the "future security" of the Indians by a promise from the King of Spain that they would not suffer "for their former attachment to the English Nation." Lee replied that "he well knew what faith to place in Spanish promises which were only held forth to decoy him and his people." Further, he insisted on leaving for Jamaica to meet Governor Clarke, a request granted only, as Lawrie confided, because "he would in this manner become a Hostage for the good behaviour of his people in his absence." He departed with Major Hoare on board the Procupine which arrived, after surviving a bad storm, at Port Royal on October 28.³⁴

The concern of the Indians was clearly widespread and profound. Colvill Briton, "Governor of all the Southern Indians," wrote to Lawrie (signed with an X) dated Tibuppy, November 20, 1786, replying to Lawrie's letter of October 24, which contained "the dreadful orders of His Majesty," orders which he could not believe: "Forbid it Heaven, Forbid it England." Briton begged for arms for defence against Spanish revenge.³⁵ To no avail. Britain abandoned the Mosquitoes just as it had already abandoned its other Indian allies: the Iroquois in New York, the Creeks in South Carolina and Georgia.³⁶

To the usual settler nervousness of their small numbers and lack of troops in the face of the Indians was added Lee's frequent declaration, even when "Perfectly sober," that he would "blow out the brains of the first white man who should attempt to desert him and his people and leave them to the mercy of the Spaniards." Worse, Lee had already invited the Indian chiefs to meet him for a general council at Black River on his return from Jamaica. The Indian leaders would be "numerously attended," in a bad mood and a great threat "from one end of the Coast to the other." Lawrie added succinctly and significantly that the slaves might join in "this business." Lawrie vainly appealed for troops: at least 100 at Black River, 100 at Cape Gracias a Dios and 50 at Bluefields. Without such support Lawrie saw "no alternative left to the miserable settlers but of being cut to pieces by the Indians, perhaps assisted by their own Slaves, or compell'd to retreat to the mountains with the Indians and abide the fury of the Spaniards." Finally, Lawrie requested that the one year supply

of presents to be presented as a sweetener to the Indians be given to General Lee in Jamaica where he could pick whatever he judged "most useful to his Countrymen." The government of Jamaica was not thrilled by the unexpected visit of Lee.

A letter to Lawrie, signed by a committee of five appointed by the inhabitants' meeting, affords some fascinating insights into life on the Mosquito Shore. The settlers complained that the usual floods had not occurred, therefore most of the cutters could not float their mahogany to market. It would be May 1787 before the next chance, meanwhile they could not pay "their debts" for supplies "to the mercantile part of this community" which in turn could not make its "returns to England." Ruin faced both the cutters and the merchants of the Shore if time were not allowed for the mahogany sale. A modest computation put the cut wood of the Black River area alone at one million feet, worth £15 sterling per thousand feet, which equals £15,000. Computed on a proportional population basis the total mahogany crop would be some £20,000. The Mosquito Shore settlers were apparently self-sufficient in food. Requesting provisions for the voyage into exile, the committee stated their "usual dependence for bread" was "entirely on such plantations we have here."

The committee appealed to Hoare who was "no stranger to the manner in which our Negroes have been brought up, and their attachment to this Country" because their "treatment" was "so different" from that in "the West Indies in general." Without troops "to awe" the slaves "a great part may be induced to join the Mosquito-men and thus add (with their advice, as it is well known they have an amazing influence over them) strength to those people, and endeavour to effect our Ruin." Thus we note a confirmation that slavery on the Shore was relatively benign, and a close relationship between Indian and Negro.³⁷

James Lawrie also argued strongly in favour of the benign nature of slavery on the Shore. The slaves there were mainly those transported for crimes from Jamaica, but they "turned out well" because of fair treatment, "in short our System was quite different from that in the Islands." For example, "the Whipp ... was hardly ever used by us," meat was included in the diet (only fish in the islands), and Saturday was added to the traditional Sunday as a day off. Finally, "few Negroes die but of old Age or Accident."³⁸

Some insight into the economics of slavery can be had from the

records of Lawrie who was one of (but not the) richest men on the Shore. When he evacuated Black River in June 1787 he took 159 slaves. His "own family" was put at eleven, including two men who were not his kin, and his son, James Pitt Lawrie. The son did not go to Britain with his father in 1788 presumably because as a free person of colour he would be an embarrassment. In partnership with his father he remained rich and important on the Bay.³⁹

An inventory of the Lawries' estate in Honduras was drawn up on October 21, 1788.⁴⁰ Interestingly the women were more valuable than

Lawrie Estate Inventory, 1788

| | <u>Slaves</u> | <u>Value</u> | <u>Average Price</u> | <u>Highest Price</u> |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| MEN | 41 | £2,150 | £47.7 | £100 |
| BOYS | 18 | £ 670 | £37.2 | £ 70 |
| WOMEN | 34 | £1,845 | £54.2 | £ 70 |
| GIRLS | 11 | £ 290 | £26.3 | ? |
| TOTAL | 104 | £4,955 | £47.6 | --- |
| SLAVES | | | £4,955 | |
| LIVESTOCK | | | £ 544 | |
| SAILING CRAFT | | | £1,189 | |
| TOOLS, ETC. | | | £ 112 | |
| PROVISIONS, | | | | |
| BOARDS, CLOTH | | | £ 35 | |
| HOUSE, WHARF, | | | | |
| LAND | | | £ 250 | |
| TOTAL: | | | £7,850 | |

the men probably because they were of child-bearing age. Also several men were listed as "superannuated." A few occupations were given: a captain (the inventory included one and a half schooners), a barber, a carpenter among the men; two cooks, a washerwoman and an "Indian Nanny" among the women. In addition to slaves the Lawries listed fourteen working steers (£30 each), nine calves, two mules,

trucks and gear for mahogany and logwood (£53); saws, axes and tools; three scows, some pitpans, a dory and a canoe (in addition to the schooners); a house, wharf and land. Logging was clearly labour-intensive.

The inventory also included a "List of White Men Employed." John Lee, Captain of the schooner Welcome; James Bryant, "Occasional Carpenter," James Bearly, "Logwood Cutter," a man with no job description, and finally three persons who were not white - Quao, a free Negro, and Ashy and Tureen, "Mosquito Men" (it seems some Indians were part of the 1787 evacuation).

V

By the end of June 1787 the evacuation of the Shore was complete. The settlers boasted in a petition two years later that although "ruined by the exterminating Convention-treaty" they had loyally complied, and had persuaded the Indians "to receive their new masters without opposition," thus avoiding a "most dreadful scene of blood and devastation."⁴¹ Despite the withdrawal in a strange often-shadowy way, the British alliance with the Indians and British claims to sovereignty lingered on (the latter was formally relinquished in 1860, the former persisted until 1905). Even today English-speaking Mosquito Indians with emotional links to Britain are at extreme odds with the Sandinistas in Nicaragua.⁴²

The impact of the Shore evacuees on the Bay of Honduras was dramatic. By July 2,214 persons (537 whites and free blacks, 1,677 slaves) had arrived on the Bay from the Mosquito Shore. They outnumbered the existing inhabitants five to one, again confirmation that settlers preferred the Shore.⁴³ Col. Despard, who had been appointed the first Superintendent of the Bay of Honduras in 1786, antagonized the old inhabitants by favouring the Shoremen, some of whom had served under him in the expedition against Rio Negro and/or helped him against Col. Hodgson. Nigel Bolland argues that Despard justly, and on orders from Sydney, took the side of the poor emigrants from the Shore when the Baymen tried to limit mahogany cutting to those with "four able Negro men Slaves." Despard realized that this would hurt the evacuees "a number of whom are very poor, but who with one or two Negroes, together with their own labour might support themselves and their families."⁴⁴ These quarrels are

reminiscent of similar problems between the Loyalists and the old inhabitants (favoured by Governor John Maxwell) in the Bahamas. At least one person was of the opinion that if Lawrie's health had allowed him to accept a government offer to return his "presence would probably reestablish tranquility and conciliate the minds and the Old and new Inhabitants one toward the other."⁴⁵ Despard, "the petty despot of Belize," was too autocratic, too pro-Spanish and in 1789 was recalled to London (as was Maxwell). Subsequently Despard became a Jacobin and after involvement in a bizarre plot to assassinate George III was executed in 1803.

The arrival of large numbers of refugees clinched the commitment of Great Britain to British Honduras just as the arrival of the Loyalists clinched the commitment to British North America.⁴⁶

The island of St. Andrew was ceded by the Convention of 1786 to Spain. In March 1787 John Brown, President of the council of the Bahamas, received a letter from Governor Clarke of Jamaica reporting three to four hundred persons, mainly cotton planters "of all descriptions and complexions" from "Saint Andreas Island" wished to settle in the Bahamas. In October 187 settlers actually arrived at Nassau from Jamaica. They were poor but welcome because they would be "useful in instructing our new planters" in cotton production. (The Bahamas were about to begin a brief Loyalist cotton boom. The St. Andrew island migrants provide another example of Central American settlers being grouped in a way with the Loyalists.) The refugees were soon transported at government expense with government provisions to Andros Island, their location of choice. This group are held to be the first permanent settlers on Andros.⁴⁷

There was one more spin-off from the evacuation of the Mosquito Shore. Some settlers moved to the Cayman Islands. Lawrie visited those islands seemingly on his way from the Bay to Jamaica and thence to England in 1788. He found "part of the Moskito people were happily" settled there thriving on the production of "fine Corn, Cotton and Coffee." He recommended that those who cut mahogany and logwood in Honduras should also go.⁴⁸

The exiled American Loyalists virtually created the so-called Second British Empire by securing what became Canada.⁴⁹ The Mosquito Shore with its widely touted-economic attractions and the strength of the friendly Mosquito Indians could have been (and was

briefly in a minor way) a major Loyalist haven. To the chagrin of the settlers, Britain chose to relinquish the outpost but in the process stiffened the population so that henceforth there would be little likelihood of abandoning Belize. What A.P. Newton called the breach in the "uniformity" of the Latin language from the Rio Grande to Cape Horn would be permanent.⁵⁰

FOOTNOTES

1. The Spanish destruction, despite what the standard textbooks say, was not permanent because in 1786 St. Andrew Island was ceded to Spain. See below.
2. Guyana was resettled in 1796.
3. For evidence of the importance of dyewood see Lloyd's Evening Post (London), October 26, 1761. For wood in general see Arthur M. Wilson, "The Logwood Trade in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries" in Donald C. McKay, ed., Essays in the History of Modern Europe (New York, 1936), pp. 1-15; Narda Dobson, A History of Belize, (London, 1973); C.H. Grant, The Making of Modern Belize (Cambridge, 1976).
4. Comwall Chronicle (Jamaica), December 30, 1780; Alan Burns, History of British West Indies (London, 1954), 539. George Henderson, An Account of the Settlement of Honduras (London, 1809), 30 reported good sugar plantations on the Black River before 1787.
5. For the Indians see John A. Burdon, Archives of British Honduras (3 vols., London, 1931-5), I, 5n; Hubert H. Bancroft, The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft (San Francisco, 1883), VII, 595-96; Mario Rodriguez, Central America (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1965), 74.
6. "Extract of a Letter from the Bay of Honduras to a Mahogany Merchant in London," September 2, ?, Skelton Papers (Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh), bundle 3 - henceforth cited S.P.
7. The Case of His Majesty's Subjects, Settled on the Coast of Yucatan... (London, 1789), TS 11/990/368, P.R.O.; R.A. Humphreys, The Diplomatic History of British Honduras 1638-1901 (London, 1961), 4; Dobson, History of Belize, 72; Burdon, Archives, I, 18; O. Nigel Bolland, The Formation of a Colonial Society: Belize, From Conquest to Crown Colony (Baltimore, 1977), 30-31; Thomas Southey, Chronological History of the West Indies (London, 1827), II, 539 writes that many of the displaced Baymen "sought refuge among the Indians

- upon the Mosquito Shore."
8. Wayne M. Clegem, British Honduras: Colonial Dead End, 1859-1900 (Baton Rouge, 1967), 6, 167n.
 9. Germain to Lawrie, May 17, 1776, S.P., bundle 9.
 10. For Lawrie in general see "Colonel James Lawrie...", unpaginated typescript, no author, S.P., bundle 1 and passim.
 11. "Instructions for Colonel Robert Hodgeon," August 2, 1782, S.P., bundle 5; "Estimate of Barracks Built at Cape Gracias a Dios...", September 10, 1782, S.P., bundle 7; Philip R.N. Katcher, King George's Army 1775-1783: A Handbook of British, American and German Regiments (Reading, England, 1973), 90.
 12. Charles Oman, The Unfortunate Colonel Despard and Other Studies (London, 1922), 3-6; W.S. Sorsby, "The British Superintendency of the Mosquito Shore, 1749-1787," Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1969, 282-285.
 13. Deputy Attorney General Alex Dirom to Lawrie, July 31, 1783; statement by Dirom, Spanish Town, October 25, 1783; S.P. bundle 14.
 14. Samuel F. Bemis, The Diplomacy of the American Revolution (Bloomington, Indiana, 1935), 253.
 15. Sorsby, "British Superintendency...", 297, 302.
 16. For an overview see Wallace Brown, "The Loyalists in the West Indies," in Esmond Wright, ed., Red, White and True Blue: The Loyalists in the Revolution (New York, 1976, pp. 73-96.
 17. Cornwall Chronicle, January 18, February 1, 1783; Case of His Majesty's Subjects, 29. In 1784 the Hondurans petitioned Parliament for about £100,000 (96 claims) for losses sustained by the Spanish attack of 1779.
 18. CO 71/8 ff. 212-214
 19. The certificates are most easily found in the Wilbur H. Siebert Papers, Box 35, the Ohio Historical Society (microfilm).
 20. Loyalists are usually defined as denizens of the thirteen colonies which became the United States, plus perhaps inhabitants of East and West Florida.
 21. The Case of His Majesty's Subjects, Settled on the Coast of Yucatan...
 22. Colvill Briton wrote to Lawrie, November 20, 1786, that he did not think those "born in this country" would want to leave, S.P., bundle 6; the settlers' committee at Black River wrote to Governor Clarke of Jamaica, October 14, 1786, of this "natural Country of many of us," CO 137/86.
 23. CO 137/84.
 24. Henry Rugeley to Mathew Rugeley, Henry Rugeley Letters, 1783-1790 (Bedford County Record Office)
 25. Sorsby, "British Superintendency...", 297 and n.

26. Campbell to Sydney, July 3, 1784, CO 137/84; Robert White to Evan Nepean, April 7, 1785, CO 123/3.
27. CO 5/561 f. 822. This paper is scribbled, crossed out and undated. Sorsby (p. 297) writes of "a large migration to the Shore of Loyalists from South Carolina, Virginia and Georgia" and others from East and West Florida, but gives no number.
28. Wilbur, H. Siebert, Loyalists in East Florida, 1774 to 1785, (Boston, 1972), II, 230.
29. Clarke to Sydney, August 8, 1785, CO 137/85.
30. William D. Setzekorn, Formerly British Honduras: A Profile of the New Nation of Belize (Athens, Ohio, 1981), 145, claims without benefit of footnotes that "Several families with British loyalties left the American Colonies during the Revolutionary War and some found their way to Caye Caulker, where today reside many of the colony's oldest families."
31. CO 137/86.
32. Sydney to Lawrie, July 31, 1786, S.P., bundle 7.
33. CO 137/86. A table (Table B) enclosed by Lawrie gives an interesting summary of some facts about the Shore including confirmation that Black River was overwhelmingly the major settlement.
34. CO 137/86; Comwall Chronicle, November 4, 1786.
35. Colvill Briton to Lawrie, November 20, 1786, S.P., bundle 6.
36. Francis Jennings, "Tribal Loyalty and Tribal Independence," Peter Marshall, "First Americans and Last Loyalists: An Indian Dilemma in War and Peace," in Wright, ed., Red, White and True Blue..., 19-53.
37. A Committee appointed at a General Meeting of the Inhabitants to Col. James Lawrie, October 14, 1786, CO 137/86.
38. "Remarks regarding the Mosquito Shore," n.d., S.P., bundle 4. For a challenge to the traditional picture of benign slavery see Bolland, Formation of a Colonial Society, chaps. 5 and 6.
39. "List of Colonel Lawrie's family gone to Honduras," June 1787, S.P. bundle 13; Bolland, Formation of a Colonial Society, 45.
40. "An Inventory of the Negroes, Houses, Sailing Craft, Cattle and other Effects belonging to the Estate of James & James Pitt Lawrie," Honduras, October 21, 1788, S.P., bundle 5.
41. The Case of His Majesty's Subjects having Property ... Upon the Mosquito Shore, 17, 72, Supplement, 14.
42. Patricia Clough, "Long British Link to Miskito Antipathy," reprinted in The Globe and Mail (Toronto, May ?, 1986).
43. Burdon, Archives, I, 162; Dobson, History, 338.
44. Bolland, Formation of a Colonial Society, 33, 40.
45. W. Dolben to Lawrie, London, July 15, 1788, S.P., bundle 7

46. Burdon, Archives, I, 159-184; Oman, Unfortunate Colonel, 2, 9, 19; D.N.B.; for the Bahamas see Brown, "Loyalists in West Indies."
47. Journal of the [Bahamas] Council, March 15, April 18, October 3, 1787, CO 23/27; Paul Albury, The Story of the Bahamas (London, 1975), 245; The London Chronicle, January 5-8, 1788.
48. Draft of a letter from Lawrie "to the Committee of Correspondence of the Mosquito Shore," n.d., S.P., bundle 9.
49. Wallace Brown and Hereward Senior, Victorious in Defeat: The Loyalists in Canada (Toronto, 1984).
50. Burdon, ed., Archives, I, xii - the quotation is from Newton's introduction.



TABLE A

| Length of Residence | | | Slaves to Jamaica | | |
|---------------------|--------|------|---------------------|--------|------|
| Years | B of H | M.S. | Nos. per Individual | B of H | M.S. |
| 30 | 1 | 1 | 22 | 0 | 1 |
| 16 | 4 | 1 | 20 | 0 | 1 |
| 15 | 4 | 1 | 16 | 0 | 1 |
| 14 | 7 | 1 | 12 | 0 | 1 |
| 13 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 2 | 1 |
| 12 | 9 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| 10 | 5 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 0 |
| 9 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| 8 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| 7 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| 5 | 1 | 1 | (? | 34 | 2) |
| 4 | | 1 | | | |
| 3 | 2 | 0 | Total Slaves | 39 | 90 |
| 2 | 2 | 0 | | | |
| ? | 2 | 4 | | | |

Losses Claimed

| AMOUNT | £50 | £100 | £150 | £200 | £300 | £500 | £1000 | £1500 | £2000 | £3000 | ? |
|--------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| B of H | 1 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 4 |
| M.S. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |

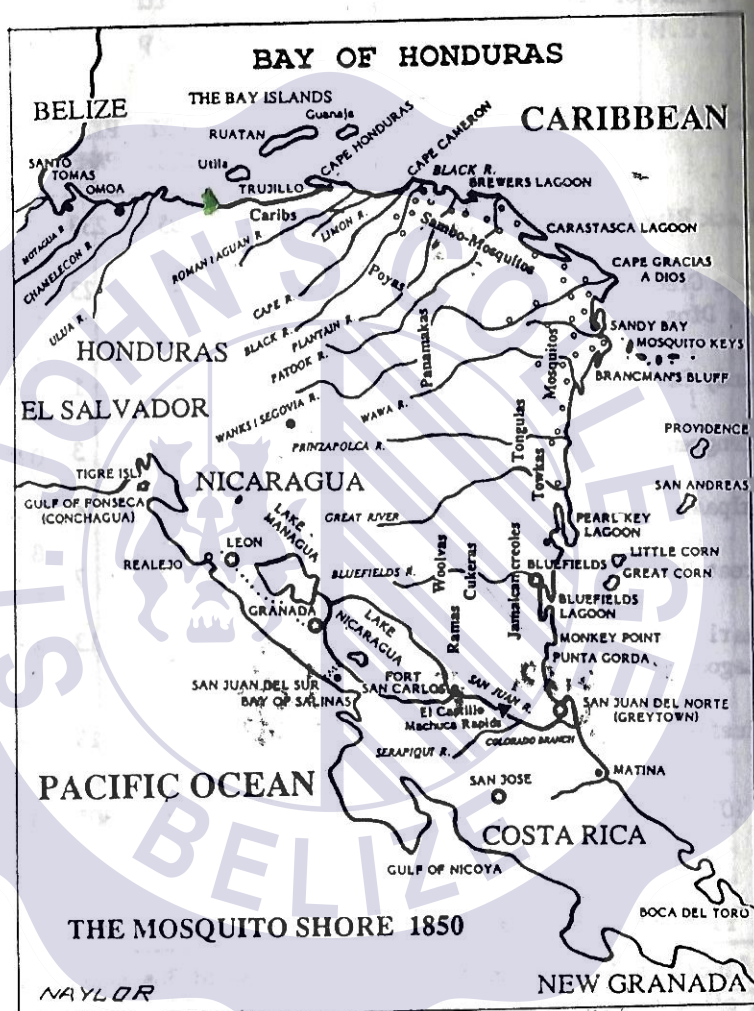
TABLE B

"A List of Settlers, on the Mosquito Shore, with Their Slaves
& C. 16th October 1786" (CO 137/86)

| DISTRICT | SETTLERS | SLAVES | CATTLE | HORSES | SHEEP, ETC. | PIT ¹ HOUSE PANS FRAMES |
|------------------------|------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| Black River | 334 ² | 1,299 | 147 | 99 | 163 | 239 19 |
| Cape Gracias a Dios | 45 | 162 | 108 | 31 | - | 23 - |
| Sandy Bay | 4 | 2 | 2 | - | - | 1 - |
| Brangmans | 6 | 70 | 22 | - | - | 3 - |
| Walpasix | 6 | 20 | - | - | - | 6 - |
| Great River | 6 | 89 | 18 | - | - | 7 - |
| Pearl Key Lagoon | 33 | 63 | 74 | - | - | 13 - |
| Bluefields | 14 | 186 | 44 | - | - | 13 - |
| TOTAL: | 448 | 1,891 | 415 | 130 | 163 | 305 19 |

¹ Flat-bottomed canoes.

² Includes 24 Free Negroes (one of whom owned 3 slaves, one other owned 1 slave).



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BOOK REVIEWS

Robert R. Naylor, *Influencia Británica en el Comercio Centroamericano Durante las Primeras Décadas de la Independencia, 1821-1851* (Antigua, Guatemala: Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamérica, Serie Monográfica: 3, 1988). Mapas. Estadísticas Comerciales. Notas. Bibliografía. Indices. 314 pp. Price: not listed.

Robert R. Naylor, *Penny Ante Imperialism: The Mosquito Shore and the Bay of Honduras, 1600-1914 - A Case Study in British Informal Empire* (Cranbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1989). Maps. Notes. Bibliography. 315 pp. Hardcover: \$42.50 U.S.

Influencia Británica en el Comercio Centroamericano Durante Las Primeras Décadas de la Independencia is the much belated publication of Robert R. Naylor's 1958 Tulane University doctoral thesis, "British Commercial Relations in Central America, 1821-1851." For over a quarter a century it has been recognized by his peers as the leading scholarly work in the field. Robert R. Naylor, a specialist on the British in Central America, attempts to explain not only the *raison d'être* for the British dominance of the foreign trade of the independent Central American nations, but also to provide considerable data on the scope of British trade with Central America. In doing so, he has made a major contribution to our understanding of the British presence in Central America in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In the companion volume also reviewed here, *Penny Ante*

Imperialism: The Mosquito Shore and the Bay of Honduras, 1600-1914, Robert R. Naylor turns his attention to the Mosquito Shore and examines the vacillating British presence on the Shore and their relations with the Mosquito Indians. Together both works enlarge the historical perspective of Belize and show the tremendous impact Belize has had on the course of Central American history.

Great Britain was able to dominate the international trade of Central America in part because of the British foothold in the Belize settlement, and the availability in Belize of merchants with connections in London. The British presence became well established in Belize by the early nineteenth century, after attempts by the Spaniards to remove the small band of logwood cutters failed the century before. In time Belize would emerge as the preeminent British concern on Central America's Caribbean coast largely because it became the leading center of trade for Central America. While this role has been long-known, Dr. Naylor provides us with not only the historical backdrop of Belize's evolution to this status, but also the most detailed statistics available to date on the trade through Belize to Central America.

In 1819, Carlos Urrutia, the Captain-General of Guatemala, authorized trade between Guatemala and Belize, thus providing an official window for Belize merchants into the Central American markets. Soon thereafter the independence movement (1821) promised the birth of a new period of prosperity for Central America. The new era of free trade found the Belize settlement well placed to benefit immensely, thanks to its unmatched port facilities with proximity to the Gulf Dulce and Lake Izabal, and its well-established trade routes and ties with Guatemala. Prior to Central American independence imports from Spain never satisfied local demand and this enabled a lucrative contraband trade with Belize and Jamaica. In addition, the London banking connections of the Belize merchants combined to give them a competitive edge over their rivals.

These developments led to changes among the elites in the Belize settlement: soon British merchants began to establish new merchant houses in Belize which displaced the old elites. Sensing the changing times, established merchants like Marshall Bennett and his associates, William Hall and Carlos Meany, moved to explore new ventures in Guatemala. Others like John Waldon Wright, John Young, James Hyde and Thomas Pickstock took their expertise to London to

establish Commission Houses for trade between Great Britain and Central America.

In the first decades of independence the export of indigo to Spain and the importation of manufactured goods from Cadiz gave way to the exportation of cochineal, indigo, and later coffee to London in exchange for goods from Liverpool, London, and Glasgow.

Despite the failure of British Consul Frederick Chatfield's persistent efforts to sign a commercial treaty between Great Britain and the Federal Republic of Central America (Great Britain felt that the Federal government lacked the stability to safeguard a treaty and the Federal Republic refused to negotiate a treaty in which Britain would not consider renouncing its claims to the Mosquito Coast and the Bay of Honduras), a brisk trade between England and Central America was carried out without the benefit of a formal treaty. Trade flourished under less than ideal conditions: restrictive British trade policies, the lack of good means of communication, and the absence of an interoceanic canal connecting the isthmus with Europe through the Pacific ports. The latter shunted trade overland to the small and ill-equipped Caribbean ports, thus increasing dependence on Belize.

An outstanding feature of this work is the data it provides on the volume of trade passing through Belize to Central America between 1821 and 1851. During the first decade after independence the majority of Central America's indigo and almost all of its cochineal was shipped to England through Belize. In 1823 for example, 41,000 pounds of the dye was exported directly from Central America, while 473,00 pounds were shipped from Belize; in 1825 some 30,000 pounds were shipped to Great Britain through Chile and Peru, while 256,000 left from Belize.

In terms of imports, the majority of British goods reached Central America through Belize. For example, about three to four million yards of cotton passed through Belize annually for Central America. For the decade after independence, the statistics present a similar picture. Belize and Great Britain would retain this position for almost thirty years, up until about mid-century.

The author maintains that Great Britain was able to dominate the foreign trade of Central America primarily because Britain was the major industrial power at the time: Great Britain offered the best market for Central American products and was in turn the best source of manufactured goods for Central America. Belize merchants.

with their access to the London market and long history of trade with Central America, were well placed to become the focal point of the British-Central American trade. Despite the machinations of Frederick Chatfield, Dr. Naylor further argues that the economic control occurred free from any attempts by the British to intervene in the political affairs of the republic.

Above all, Britain did nothing to encourage the break-up of the federation of Central American states. However, dependence on British trade was a double-edge sword: while it sparked economic development in some areas, Central American prosperity rose and fell with that of the London markets. The study concludes by suggesting that Central America won its independence from Spain, but economic dependence on Great Britain frustrated its nationalist dreams.

While the author rightly points out that the number of British residents throughout Central America was never more than twenty – not enough to make any serious impact on internal political affairs – nevertheless, there is one probable case where that charge would not have been groundless. The impact of the commercial activities in Central America of Marshall Bennett, a leading Magistrate and entrepreneur in Belize during the period, have yet to be studied in all their ramifications. This much appears certain, his holdings of land and capital in Guatemala, El Salvador, and the Mosquito Shore far exceeded that of all the British residents in Central America combined. His economic power and political connections in Belize and Guatemala created much concern throughout Central America, and were far more imperialistic than Frederick Chatfield's attempts to enhance British influence in Central America.

Much of those concerns about British designs in Central America centered on what Central American nations considered illegal occupation of their territories in the Belize settlement, the Bay Islands, and the Mosquito Shore. In all three, Dr. Naylor argues, British presence was ambiguous and ill-defined. This was especially true of the Mosquito Shore.

In *Penny Ante Imperialism: The Mosquito Shore and the Bay of Honduras, 1600-1914*, Robert R. Naylor, now a professor of history at Fairleigh Dickenson University, chronicles over three hundred years of British influence on the Mosquito Shore. He marshals compelling evidence to argue that British presence on the Mosquito Shore, contrary to the view of many then and some now, was not the

result of any systematic or well-defined plan to extend British imperial presence in Central America, but, rather, was the result of petty business ventures by displaced Englishmen in which the British Government became entangled, and was, at times, forced to defend.

Shortly after his appointment in Belize in 1837 as the Superintendent of the settlement, Colonel Alexander Macdonald proclaimed that an independent territory of the Mosquito Indians, now under British protection, stretched from Cape Honduras in the north to *Boca del Toro* in the south. His proclamation, and later aggressive attempts to hoist the British flag over that domain, triggered a major international crisis in Central America. The emergent Central American nations protested loudly against British imperialism, and British officials were forced to review their tenuous rights on the Mosquito Shore.

British presence on the Shore spans three centuries: from initial contact in the early 17th century by British Puritan settlers, and later traders and buccaneers, to the establishment of a semi-protectorate over the Mosquito Indians in the mid-eighteenth century -- which led to increased British commercial activity and confrontation with Spanish authorities. However, by the early nineteenth century the rise of the Belize settlement as the leading center of British trade in Central America led to the near-complete abandonment of the Shore.

The Shore's swampy, isolated 350-mile stretch of coastline was quickly bypassed by the Spaniards: it extended from Cape Gracias a Dios on the Honduran coast west to Black River and south to Bluefields Lagoon, Nicaragua. The peopling of the Shore stretches well into pre-Columbian times. Scattered along the Shore were a number of Indian tribes (among them the Sumu, the Ramas, and the Poyas) who had migrated from Colombia into present-day Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua. The famed and most aggressive of the tribes, the Mosquito Indians, lived in the area around Cape Gracias a Dios.

English settlers had a foothold at Black River and fanned out in small bands along the Plantain River and Brewer's Lagoon, living in mixed communities of Mestizos, Mulattoes, African slaves, Free-coloureds, and Indians. The Mosquito Indians developed a fierce loyalty to the British, and the British in turn created, so argues Naylor, a fictitious "Kingship" system to influence affairs on the Shore and, most importantly, win land concessions.

Professor Naylor suggests that when Robert Hodgson, Sr was

appointed the first Superintendent of the Shore in 1749, the intent on the part of British was to forge a triangle in the Bay of Honduras by inter-connecting three key points -- Jamaica, Belize, and Black River - to enhance the logwood trade of the Belize settlement. He goes on to explore the many inter-relationships between Belize and the Mosquito Shore, and what evolves is a dynamic picture of the Bay of Honduras which to date has not been adequately presented in the historical writings on Belize. It becomes quite clear that the British in Belize played an important role in the events on the Shore, and individuals on the Shore influenced events in Belize considerably.

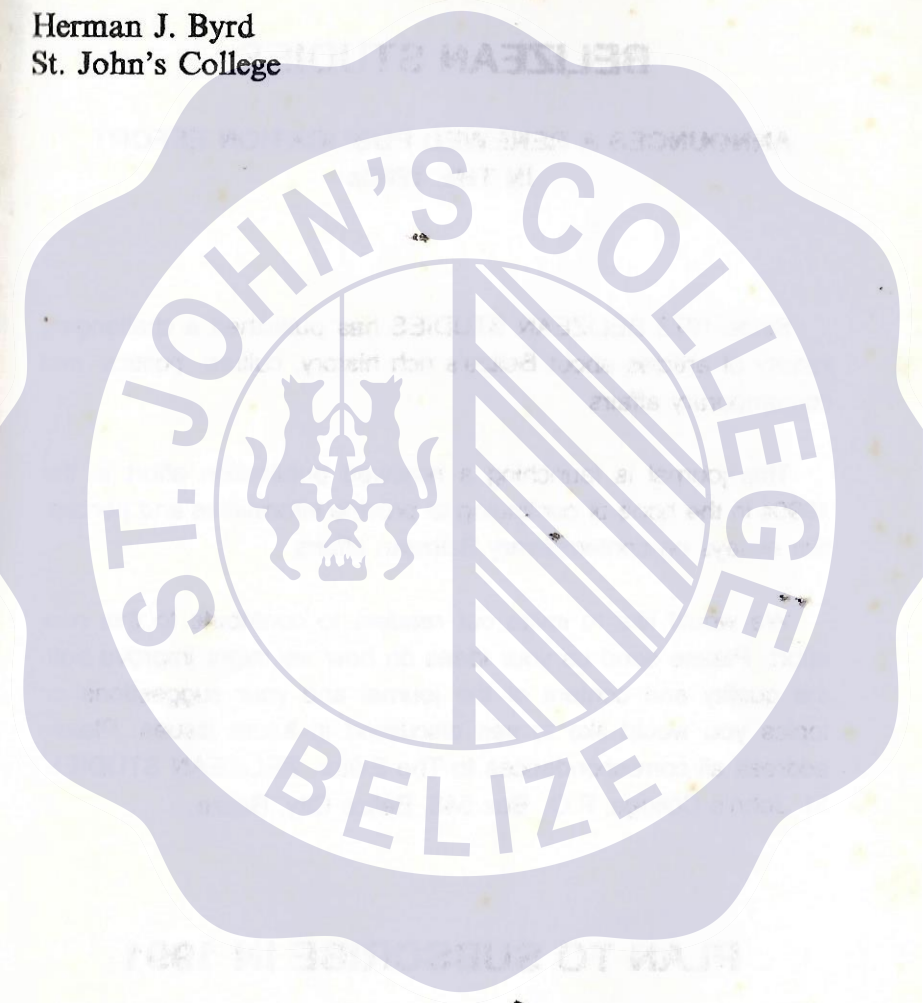
British settlers in Belize sought refuge in Black River in the face of countless attacks by the Spanish, and in 1783 completely evacuated the Belize settlement for safe haven at Black River. In addition, Belize merchants and wood-cutters sought to gain advantages on the Shore; the latter were primarily interested in exploiting the Shore's rich Mahogany reserves after the Mahogany strands within the limits of the eighteenth century treaties were exhausted. As expected, Marshall Bennett was able to gain rights to valuable land along the Roman and Limón rivers in Northern Honduras through his connections with President Francisco Morazán. The hands of the Superintendents in Belize, Colonel Macdonald in particular, reached deeply into the political affairs of the Shore. In 1840 Superintendent Macdonald appointed a board of commissioners to attend to affairs on the Shore in the name of the ailing Mosquito King Robert Charles Frederick.

By mid-century the United States was emerging as a power with increasing interests in Central America, particularly with an interest in an interoceanic canal in Central America. It sought through the 1850 Clayton-Bulwer treaty to limit what it perceived as British expansionism on the isthmus, and by the close of the century the British had severed all formal ties with the Mosquito Shore.

Penny Ante Imperialism: The Mosquito Shore and the Bay of Honduras, 1600-1914 is well-researched and well-written; however, its emphasis on diplomatic relations at times overshadows the depiction of the Shore's cultural and ethnic diversity. For example, it pays little attention to the history of African slavery on the Shore, a subject matter which both Michael Stone's and Wallace Brown's essays in this issue of *BELIZEAN STUDIES* discuss in some detail and, in so doing, supplement Naylor's work. However, this does not detract from the fact that the book makes a significant contribution to our

understanding of the interplay between the Bay of Honduras and the Mosquito Shore. Above all, it sheds new light on the Mosquito Shore which has been neglected in recent historical writings on Central America. Librarians in educational institutions in Belize and the Caribbean would do well to add both books to their collections.

Herman J. Byrd
St. John's College



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OF BELIZE

THE IMPACT OF THE ANGLO-GUATEMALAN
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NO TURNING BACK:
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EDITORIAL

Belizean Studies has been publishing an assortment of challenging articles on Belizean history, culture, economics, archaeology and other topics related to Belize since 1973. Seventeen years later, Belizean Studies is very grateful to its readers, subscribers and writers for their support in the past and looks forward to your continued support as we forge our way into the 1990's.

In this issue we present three totally unrelated topics. In Gold Potential of the Maya Mountains of Belize by French geologist, Jean H. Cornec, an updated and detailed research on gold in Belize is explored. Perhaps it is time to head for the hills and begin handpanning before real gold fever sets in.

Alma and Dennis Young give us a brief overview of that constantly controversial question, Belize and Guatemala, with their article: The Impact of the Anglo-Guatemalan Dispute on the Internal Politics of Belize.

David Kyle explores the expanding relationship between the U.S. and Belize through aid and trade during Belize's post-independence era in the 1980's in his work: No Turning Back: U.S. Aid and Investment in Belize.

Happy Reading! Happy New Decade!

--- The Editor

GOLD POTENTIAL OF THE MAYA MOUNTAINS OF BELIZE

From investigations made in the Maya mountains since the 18th century, it appears that the gold occurrences are controlled by a Permo-Triassic volcanogenic and granitic complex.

By using stream sediment geochemistry and particularly by hand-panning, reports have been made of alluvial gold in numerous places of Belize: San Ignacio, Calla Creek, Mahogany Creek, an area between the headwaters of Rio Frio and Rio On, Guacamallo Raspaculo river, Bald Hills, Rio Ceibo Grande, Rio Ceibo Chico, Esperanza area (Little Quartz ridge), San Pedro Savery, Cattle Landing, Macaroni Creek, and unnamed tributary of the south branch of north Stann Creek and Mullins river (see map, page 6).

Most of those occurrences can be related to two different geological environments:

- 1) a metavolcano-sedimentary pile in the southern Maya mountains (Bladen member of the Santa Rosa group);
- 2) three major granitic intrusions: Cockscomb-Sapote, Mountain Pine Ridge and Hummingbird-Mullins river regions.

Some of the locations mentioned above warrant special attention with respect to placer and lode possibilities:

- Rio Ceibo Chico & Grande
- Northern Cockscomb
- Upper Mullins river
- Raspaculo Branch

RIO CEIBO CHICO & GRANDE AREA

A 40 acres alluvial fan containing plentiful dust, flakes and coarse gold is located at the mouth of Rio Ceibo Chico, and appears to have a potential to sustain a placer operation. More upstream, the combination of alluvial coarse gold frequently found attached to quartz gravels, and quartz floats with impressive amounts of visible free gold (several ounces in a piece of 10 inches in width) or arsenopyrite with gold (up to 9.5 gr/metric tonne) provide definite evidence for the existence of one or several auriferous quartz veins further upstream. Gold is at least partly derived from arsenopyrite quartz veins within the metasediments of the Santa Rosa group. Those veins are metamorphic in origin or genetically related to the metavolcanic pile (Bladen member).

A 2m thick E-W quartz vein with massive amounts of arsenopyrite, some argentiferous galena (up to 4 ounces Ag/tonne) outcrops in the major western tributary of Rio Ceibo Chico, at 1827.9 N, 274.5 E, U.T.M. The gossens of that vein showed visible free gold when crushed. Two one-foot thick mineralized quartz veins have also been observed just upstream from the previous location. Another 2m thick vein outcrops too in that particular area.

Arsenopyrite appears to be an accompanying mineral and also a gold carrier. Arsenic could thus be used as a pathfinder for gold in that region, along with prospection for free gold.

Compilation of the results of a geochemical survey carried out by Anschutz Co. in the late 1970's shows an E-W linear trend of anomalies for both gold (up to .61 ppm) and arsenic (up to 210 ppm), over a length of several kms, from the unnamed river to the west of Rio Ceibo Chico, to Rio Ceibo Grande. That trend includes the quartz stockwork mentioned above.

It is possible to pan gold downstream from that trend in the major western tributary of Rio Ceibo Chico, Ceibo Chico mainstream, the major western tributary of Rio Ceibo Grande and Ceibo Grande itself.

Analysis of satellite imagery suggests a possible alteration pattern from mineralization in the same area.

All those data indicate that the zone of quartz veins is worth to be investigated further for potentially economic lode deposits of gold.

[From Dixon-1956, Derry-1968, Anschutz Co.-1978/79, Thoreson-1978, Morgan & Kroger-1985, Gegg-1985, Cornec-1985, Hall-1985, Johnston-1986.]

NORTHERN COCKSCOMB AREA

Both alluvial gold and lode have been reported there. Colours, flakes and coarse gold were found particularly in the alluvium of the Sittee branch of the south Stann Creek (Bellamy-1889, Ower-1926, Grant-1927, Derry-1968, Bateson & Hall-1977) specially upstream from where the river cut across the Cockscomb range.

Those indications have been checked and confirmed by the author: fine gold was traced for miles, up the Sittee Branch until a point north of Victoria Peak area.

Gold might be coming from the steep tributaries running down the northern slopes of Victoria Peak, or from the western headwaters of the Sittee Branch itself.

Quartz fragments associated with some of the gold flakes indicate that quartz vein(s) appear to be the source here too. Auriferous quartz veins have been reported around the Cockscomb range by Grant (1929), quoted in Dixon (1956, 1m thick vein with up to 11gr/tonne), and Ower (1926, 2.5gr/t).

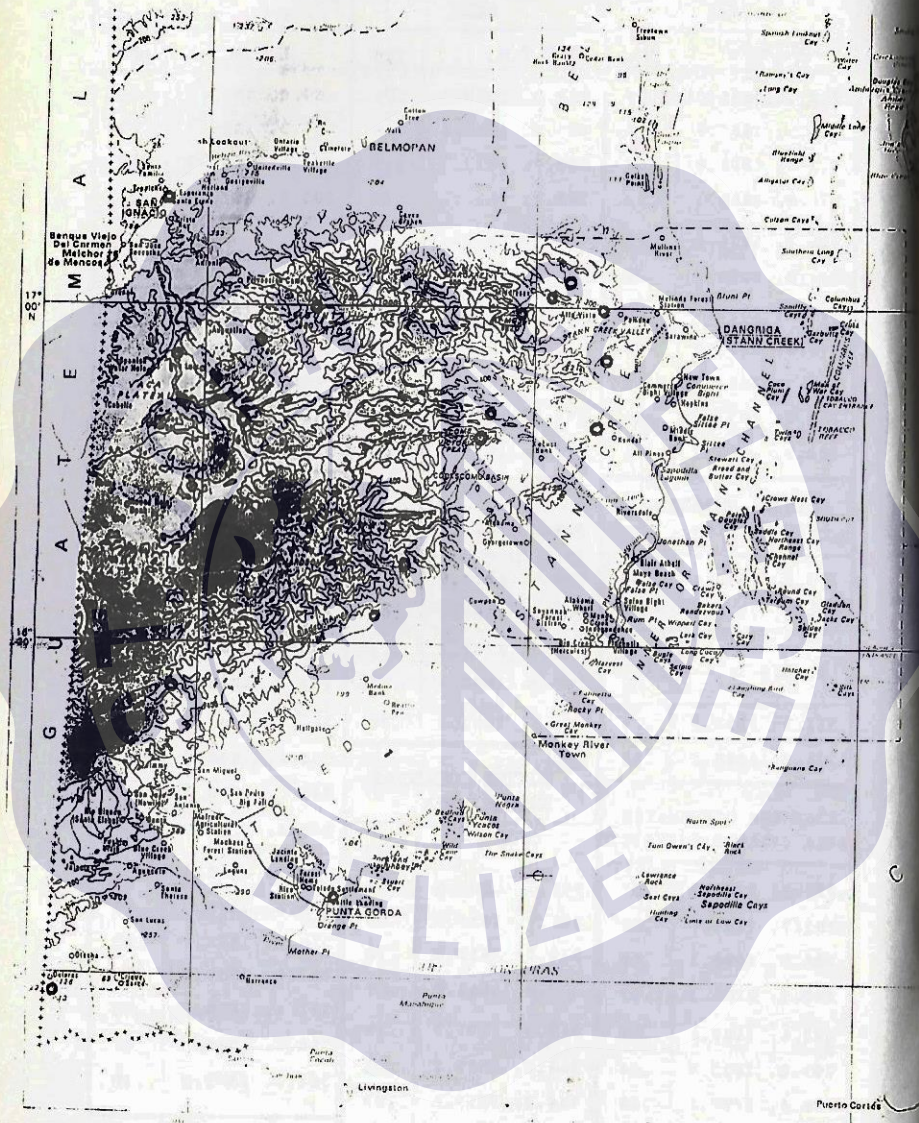
Stream sediment geochemistry analysis in that general area shows several values ranging from .02 ppm up to .20 ppm (see chart, page 5).

Small "nuggets" of gold were found in the Sittee river, some three and a half miles upstream from the Kendall bridge on the southern highway (Derry, 1968).


The author could not confirm the presence of gold at that particular location, but found small flakes in the main creek, just upstream from the Mitchell Creek junction. The gold could be running off Cocoa Branch, where Dixon found some indications.

-- Lower Detection Limit: .02 ppm
 -- Data from Skyline Lab for Anschutz Co.

| CEIBO CHICO-GRANDE AREA | | | MOUNTAIN PINE RIDGE AREA | | MACAL RIVER | |
|---|-----------|--|----------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|-----|
| COORDINATES U.T.M. | AU ppm | | U.T.M. | ppm | U.T.M. | ppm |
| 273.1E, 1828.0N | .08 | | 286.0, 1869.3 | .24 | 289.0, 1865.6 | .06 |
| 273.3, 1827.9 | .03 | | 286.2, 1872.1 | .30 | 290.3, 1863.7 | .02 |
| 273.3, 1802.6 | .02 | | 286.4, 1870.2 | .16 | 299.6, 1867.7 | .07 |
| 274.5, 1828.1 | .61 | | 289.2, 1882.1 | .12 | 305.3, 1876.7 | .03 |
| 274.7, 1824.6 | .02 | | 289.9, 1879.1 | .04 | RASPACULO BRANCH | |
| 274.8, 1829.2 | .06 | | 290.7, 1882.6 | .10 | | |
| 276.1, 1825.9 | .02 | | 291.5, 1887.6 | .02 | 309.3, 1854.0 | .02 |
| 276.2, 1831.8 | .09 | | 292.0, 1903.0 | .03 | SIBUN RIVER, CAVES BRANCH | |
| 277.3, 1827.9 | .58 | | 292.7, 1884.2 | .03 | | |
| 281.2, 1831.7 | .47 | | 293.6, 1875.7 | .06 | 318.1, 1896.5 | .05 |
| 281.7, 1832.2 | .08 | | 293.8, 1875.6 | .80 | 323.2, 1892.2 | .05 |
| LITTLE QUARTZ RIDGE AREA | | | 293.8, 1878.2 | .06 | HUMMINGBIRD-MULLINS RIVER AREA | |
| | | | 294.2, 1877.7 | .14 | | |
| 279.9, 1818.4 | .02 | | 294.3, 1875.9 | .04 | 327.6, 1889.9 | .03 |
| 279.9, 1818.7 | .02 | | 297.2, 1886.9 | .03 | 331.8, 1886.2 | .15 |
| BLADEN-TRIO AREA | | | 298.0, 1887.1 | .03 | 338.4, 1883.8 | .20 |
| | | | 303.1, 1886.3 | .05 | 341.6, 1882.0 | .20 |
| 317.5, 1830.5 | .06 | | 307.3, 1901.6 | .70 | 342.8, 1881.3 | .80 |
| 324.1, 1835.2 | .02 | | SITTEE-COCKSCOMB- SAPOTE AREA | | 346.4, 1876.9 | .08 |
| SOUTHERN CARBONATES AREA (TOLEDO DISTRICT) | | | | | 348.2, 1876.3 | .08 |
| | | | U.T.M. | ppm | 348.4, 1877.7 | .08 |
| 275.3, 1785.8 | .03 | | 333.4, 1827.0 | .03 | 354.1, 1868.5 | .35 |
| 281.7, 1791.7 | .02 | | 333.7, 1835.1 | .06 | 355.8, 1877.3 | .12 |
| 286.8, 1796.1 | .06 | | 339.2, 1836.9 | .20 | 356.0, 1872.7 | .03 |
| 287.1, 1794.1 | .03 | | 342.8, 1841.7 | .04 | 357.0, 1889.1 | .02 |
| 292.4, 1809.4 | .04 | | 343.6, 1855.7 | .16 | 357.4, 1889.3 | .50 |
| 293.8, 1802.4 | .04 | | 344.2, 1855.2 | .02 | 358.7, 1882.3 | .05 |
| 298.4, 1798.0 | .04 | | 344.8, 1855.5 | .03 | 361.3, 1879.9 | .10 |
| 307.9, 1809.8 | .04 | | 348.8, 1848.7 | .07 | | |
| | | | 352.1, 1859.2 | .20 | | |
| | | | 352.2, 1853.5 | .07 | | |
| | | | 352.8, 1855.3 | .05 | | |



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 **GOLD OCCURRENCES**

Scale: 1:750,000

So this region warrants further investigations to identify the location of the gold source(s).

UPPER MULLINS RIVER AREA

It appears that gold has been produced in small quantities in that region, by panning, at the beginning of this century. A quartz boulder reportedly assayed 10 gr/tonne (Ower, 1926).

Gold was also "reported" in Soldier Creek and Manatee River.

RASPACULO BRANCH AREA

Colours of gold have been found in the Macal River, from San Ignacio up to the mouth of Raspaculo Branch, some 40 miles upstream. No attempt was made to trace it further (Dixon, 1956). Tiny flakes can be panned a few yards upstream from the Guacamallo bridge. Observations through microscope reveals that some of the flakes are associated with transparent quartz. The watershed of the Raspaculo Branch is very large, but some panning at the junctions of the main tributaries should help to localize the source quite rapidly.

OTHER AREAS

Assays from other locations are reported by Ower (1926), at Esperanza (7 gr/metric tonne), Cattle Landing (3.5 gr/t.), and Bald Hills (2.5 gr/t.).

A gold bearing quartz vein had been reported at Silk Grass Creek by the end of the last century, around the contact granite-metasediments, just above the waterfall (Logan & Price, 1926).

A visit there confirmed the presence of a quartz vein, located a few hundred yards above the second section of rapids. Some panning in the creek did not give any indications.

Sapper (1896), quoting a letter from Price, mentioned the discovery of a rich quartz vein, which assayed 1 oz of gold and 5 oz of silver/ton. Its location is not reported but could be from Silk Grass Creek, because some exploration activity was taking place there at that time.

D: Derry mentions a "gold rush" at Little Quartz Ridge at that same period too.

By travelling on the fire lines around Mountain Pine Ridge, one can observe a lot of quartz veins and silicified zones striking NNE, which should be worth assaying.

Some post-Cretaceous hydrothermalism had taken place around the limestone hills located just SW of San Luis, with barite and minor sulfide mineralizations associated with silicification of the limestone. That area should also be investigated for gold.

The regions with dark organic limestones and shales of paleozoic age could also be a host for gold ore. The outcrops around Cocoa Branch and Little Quartz Ridge should be interesting to look at.

Finally, the volcanic island arc system located in the southern Maya mountains, appears to be one of the most promising regions in Belize ("Bladen volcanics").

CONCLUSIONS

Further exploration is warranted to confirm the data and assess the economic potential of those areas.

It is recommended to trace the gold by hand-panning and to use some stream sediment and soil sampling program when necessary, along with geological mapping, trenching and sampling around the known occurrences and quartz float zones.

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The Impact of the Anglo-Guatemalan Dispute on the Internal Politics of Belize

by

*Alma H. Young and Dennis H. Young**

In general terms, the framework for dependency perspectives postulates the existence of advanced capitalist economies that subjugate and exploit the natural resources of peripheral economies through commercial and financial mechanisms. Obstacles to the development of peripheral economies include dependence on foreign capital and technologies that do not correspond to needs of the countries, and overall subordination includes political, military, and cultural, in addition to, and because of, economic subordination. Development is viewed, then, as an interdependent process in which some countries or regions acquire a predominant place within the division of labor by reserving for themselves the most lucrative economic activities, while other countries or regions are relegated to serving as sources of cheap raw materials, as markets for manufactured goods, or as arenas for foreign capital.

There is a great diversity of analysis and perspectives within the so-called dependency school (see, for instance, Bodenheimer, 1971: 327-357; Furtado, 1976; Cardoso, 1977: 7-24; Palma, 1978: 881-902; Santos, 1979: 17-26). One of the central issues that divides the theorists is the question of the existence, the character, and the power of a

"national bourgeoisie" in dependent countries (see the discussion in Souza, 1977: 37-40). The most widespread tendency is to negate the existence of autonomous capitalist development based on national bourgeoisies. Through commitment to the export economy rather than to local industry, the bourgeoisie is viewed simply as an agent for the metropole. On the other hand, there are those who argue that within the constraints of the international capitalism system, local forces are capable of creating change.

World-systems theorists have advanced the argument by maintaining that peripheral economies have participated in the unfolding of world history from its very inception, as both object and subject. Therefore, world-systems theorists admit that sources in the periphery contribute to the persistence of imperialism, and thus imperialism is not exclusively something done to them by the metropole, usually viewed as the United States (see, for instance, Amin, 1974; Frank, 1979; Wallerstein, 1979; Amin et al., 1982; Dixon, 1982). One needs to look at the economic and political linkages between the advanced nations and the nations on the periphery. Thus there are two sources on which to base a world-systems theory of imperialism: those internal to the center or metropole, and those internal to the periphery (Addo, 1984: 138-139). These sources refer to the ensemble of interests that compose the respective states in the center and periphery. As Addo (1984) argues, it is precisely the mutuality of the two sets of state interests that constitutes the crucial imperialist link between peripheral and center states.

The extent to which the sources internal to the periphery act to maintain the linkages to the center, thus maintaining a state of dependency, will be explored in this article. The discussion will center not so much on the economic dimension of dependency, although that will be a starting point, but on the impact of that dependency on the political development of a country. Political arrangements necessarily reflect or express the changing economic forces at work in and on the dependent society. Specifically, we will ask how dependency hampers the development of a nationalist orientation. We are influenced by Wallerstein's argument that nationalist movements are constrained by the interstate system and by those forces within the society that are bound to the center and, therefore, are unable to transform the system entirely. In general, both social and national movements have had a difficult time reconciling long-run systemic objectives and short-run developmental objectives, which tend to reinforce rather than undermine the world-system (Wallerstein, 1984a: 65; 1984b: 80-85).

We argue that what we have seen in many of these independence movements is *dependent nationalism*. While the term may appear contradictory, it is really a reflection of the extent to which political developments in peripheral areas are constrained by economic and political factors in the center. More often than not, the leaders of these movements have looked outward for assistance in their "struggle" with the metropole, without first attempting to develop internally those resources necessary to confront the center. Political mobilization tends to be perfunctory and disorganized; there tends to be no sustained process of educating the people about the issues and forces that confront them. Salvation is expected to come from without rather than from the development of political bases within. This has been especially true in the English-speaking Caribbean, where the process of decolonization was gradual and peaceful; instead of power being wrested from the colonizer, there was a process of accommodation between the colonizer and the colonized. Part of the reason has been that the interests of nominally "national" actors have tended to be tied to institutions outside the nation—what has been called the antination within the nation. Thus, even during the nationalist era, when the orientation of national leaders was expected to be most radical, the nominally domestic forces were themselves profoundly conditioned by the interstate system. The nationalist orientation tends to be much more a matter of rhetoric than of meaningful action to bring about systemic change.

The context for exploring this concept of "dependent nationalism" is the nationalist movement in Belize and particularly the impact of the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute on local politics in Belize. The dispute has been the central issue in Belizean politics since the 1950s, when the nationalist movement began. Yet neither government nor opposition has sought to mobilize the people on the basis of the issue. Instead, they have constantly looked to the center for a possible resolution of the issue, without mobilizing support at home. Nor has the local political elite reached a consensus of opinion on how the issue should be resolved. This has been largely due to the fact that competing groups within the political leadership owe their allegiances to different centers of international authority that in turn represent the changing modes of production in the country. The Guatemala issue resulted in Belize being frozen in a transitional political state (between colonial status and independence) for 20 years and continues to hamper the full realization of sovereignty for the nation after several years of constitutional independence.

Guatemala's controversial claim to the territory of Belize, the roots of which lie in a vaguely worded treaty from 1859 between Guatemala and Great Britain, has not only hindered the political development of Belize, but has affected relations between the United States and Britain, and Central America and the Caribbean. Because of the unequal size and might of the two nations, Belize has found it necessary to maintain the military protection of the British government, even though it is now an independent nation. Belize has a territory of 8,867 square miles on the shores of the Caribbean, with a population of approximately 150,000. The country developed from the pirate and smuggler settlements that grew up among the secluded bays of the uninhabited-coast during the seventeenth century; it did not become a British colony until 1862, when its English-speaking inhabitants sought the protection of the crown. It became self-governing in 1964 and an independent nation within the Commonwealth in 1981. Although Belize is a multiethnic country on the Central American mainland, its primary orientation historically has been toward the English-speaking Caribbean.

Belize is a classic example of a dependent (peripheral) economy. The extent of the dependency has been documented elsewhere (see Jones, 1953; Ashcraft, 1973; Bolland, 1977; Bolland and Shoman, 1977). Belize's incorporation in the world economy began with the pirates and smugglers of the seventeenth century who "settled" on the secluded bays off the coast and whose bounty financed English trade with other parts of the world. In the eighteenth century, the economy was based on the exploitation of mahogany and logwood for export to England. Agricultural pursuits were discouraged to ensure an adequate labor force to the forestry activities. During the nineteenth century, Belize served as a bridgehead for British penetration of Central America, with all commercial activities going through Belize,¹ the only part of Central America settled by the British (Naylor, 1960: 361-382; Waddell, 1983). By the twentieth century the major economic activity was agricultural products, with the export of sugar, citrus, bananas, and seafood. Historically, Belize's incorporation into the world-economy has resulted in a pattern² of underdevelopment (see Ashcraft, 1973: 45).

Vast tracts of verdant land in Belize have remained in the hands of foreign interests, and much of the economic activity, especially agriculture, continues to be foreign-owned. The country still lacks infrastructure, due in part to the expense of building roads and bridges in a country with a low population density, and in part to the fact that Britain did little to develop the country. Britain's refusal to provide even

the basic resources necessary to begin a process of development is an indication that Britain relegated Belize to a minor role in its imperialist strategy. This minor role was foreshadowed by Britain's denial of sovereignty to the colony for many years, even though the colonists were producing goods for the mother country. Belize suffered so much at the hands of imperial economic interests that it was considered to have reached "a colonial dead-end" by the turn of the twentieth century (Clegern, 1967).

HISTORY OF THE ANGLO-GUATEMALAN BOUNDARY DISPUTE

The Hispanic conquest of Guatemala was completed in 1524, but no Spanish settlement was ever established in Belize. Guatemala never exercised any authority over Belize. Both as part of the Central America Republic and in its early years as an independent state, Guatemala recognized the existence of Belize. It was in the attempt to establish firm boundaries between the two countries that the dispute developed to the point where Guatemala now claims the territory of Belize.

British settlement on Spanish soil was first recorded in 1638, but it was more than a century later before Spain, under considerable pressure from Britain, recognized the settlers' economic activities. The Anglo-Spanish treaties of 1783 and 1786 gave British settlers the right to cut wood in specific areas around Belize. The territory, however, remained under Spanish sovereignty. After Central America became independent of Spain in 1821, the British government continued to take the view that sovereignty still belonged to Spain and denied Central America's claim that the new federation had inherited all Spain's rights in the area on attaining independence (Waddell, 1983: 4). In 1828 Great Britain claimed the Belizean territory on the basis of conquest, long use, and custom and in 1835 asked Spain to cede the territory. Nothing came of this request (Waddell, 1983: 4).

After failing to obtain a cession of sovereignty over Belize from Spain in 1835, Britain began to exercise its own jurisdiction more formally. By 1850 the British government felt that the Anglo-Spanish treaty of 1786 need no longer be considered in force and that Britain itself had now acquired rights of possession (see Waddell, 1961: 34-37, 1983: 6). However, not until 1862, more than two centuries after British settlers first arrived in the area, did Britain formally proclaim its own

sovereignty by the act of conferring the status of colony on Belize. Guatemala did not formally protest this change in status.

As its interest in Central America increased, Britain found it advantageous to settle its dispute with Guatemala over the territory of Belize. Guatemala now desired the friendship of Britain because it was concerned over potential filibustering from the United States. Therefore, in April 1859 a British diplomat arrived in Guatemala to begin negotiations to solve the problem. Because Britain refused to accede that Guatemala had any "sovereign rights" in the settlement and because the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850 prohibited territorial cessions in the area, Britain made clear that the treaty was one of boundaries only (Grunewald, 1965: 33). The treaty was signed on April 30, 1859. The first six articles of the treaty clearly defined the boundaries of Belize. All future problems between Guatemala and Great Britain were caused by the seventh article, which provided for the construction of a road from Guatemala City to the Caribbean coast. There is no doubt that Guatemala regarded the seventh article as compensation for abandoning its "sovereign rights" in the settlement. (For differing views on the interpretation of the treaty, see Clegern, 1958: 280-297; Humphreys, 1961: 20-47; for conflicting legal analyses, see Mendoza, 1947; Bloomfield, 1953.)

While it is clear that Britain and Guatemala agreed to build a road, the phrase used in the treaty, "mutually agree con-jointly," left unresolved whether Britain was to build the road entirely at its expense (Grunewald, 1965: 34). The dispute over Article Seven led to a Supplementary Convention, which was negotiated in 1863. Guatemala was at war at the time and was unable to ratify the convention within the stipulated period. When Guatemala eventually did ratify it, Britain claimed that the opportunity was lost and that Britain was now released from any obligation under Article Seven. Guatemala replied that Article Seven was compensation to Guatemala for Belize and intimated that it was willing to sign a new convention. Britain denied that the 1859 Treaty involved a cession of territory and repudiated Guatemala's claims to Belize (Grunewald, 1965: 35).

The dispute lagged until the 1930s, when Britain seemed less anxious to repudiate its obligations, as it had done in the past. However, neither side was willing to accept the other's suggestions on who might mediate the dispute and under what terms, or on what kind of compensation Guatemala might receive. Guatemala offered several alternatives, including cessions of territory that would provide it broader access to

the sea. Diplomatic attempts to mediate the dispute continued to be unsuccessful. In 1940 Guatemala stated that it was no longer a question of whether Article Seven could be fulfilled. Guatemala now had the right to recover territory "ceded" in 1859, and the question to be decided was whether Britain was legitimately occupying the territory of Belize or whether or not Guatemala had territorial rights to recover (Bloomfield, 1953: 61-62; Mendoza, 1947). In 1945 Guatemala adopted a new constitution which declared in Article One that "any efforts taken towards obtaining Belize reinstatement to the Republic are of national interest" (Bloomfield, 1953: 67; Grunewald, 1965: 38).

THE EMERGENCE OF NATIONALIST POLITICS IN BELIZE

The history of nationalist politics in Belize has centered around differences in what Grant calls the "external orientations" of the government and opposition parties (Grant, 1976: 306). Positions taken on the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute reflect most clearly that external orientation of the two major political parties. The party that governed Belize from the 1960s to 1984, the People's United Party (PUP), under the leadership of George C. Price, has claimed traditionally that Belize's "economy and way of life is interdependent with the United States and Central America," without close ties to Britain and the West Indies (*The Belize Billboard*, February 5, 1950: 1). Until the 1970s PUP directed much of its efforts at trying to bolster its claim that Belize's economic and political future lay with Central America and, therefore, by extension, that some accommodation has to be reached with Guatemala (Grant, 1976: 155-164).

The main plank of the opposition has been that the country's constitutional advance should be within the commonwealth, in effect denying Belize's connection with Central America. Traditionally, the opposition party accused the PUP government of a willingness to violate the country's territorial integrity in an attempt to resolve the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute. "No Guatemala" became a rallying cry of the opposition. They also demanded that Britain retain control over the country's external security until the dispute with Guatemala was resolved. Eventually their demand would be no independence until a suitable defense guarantee had been agreed upon, an issue that would

hold up independence for 17 years as Britain sought to grant independence without any defense obligations. From 1964, when Belize became internally self-governing, until independence in 1981, the PUP government expended vast amounts of its limited resources in trying to find a resolution to the crisis, a resolution that would respond not only to the demands of Guatemala but to its own opposition.

The history of nationalist politics in Belize demonstrates the limited perspectives and narrowed options of the leadership of a dependent society. Perhaps more significantly, it shows how even "nationalism" is a reflexive response to one's dependent condition. "Far from implying local control of the country's economic destiny, the process of decolonization in Belize seemed to be essentially a question of imperial succession" (Grant, 1976: 123).

Shortly after the First World War, British financial interests (especially the Belize Estate and Produce Company, or BEC) began to experience major competition from U.S. companies. By the 1930s the BEC was in danger of losing control of the forestry industries (especially mahogany and chicle), the mainstay of the economy, to U.S. companies. These U.S. companies enjoyed considerable influence within the local business community because they had created opportunities for the group of local entrepreneurs that the dominance of the BEC and its influence both in London and in Belize City had so long denied them. U.S. companies also enjoyed influence in the Legislative Council, which was divided in its support between rival British and U.S. concerns (Grant, 1976: 80-82).

In September 1949 Britain devalued the British pound and other currencies in the sterling areas, except the Belize dollar. In exempting the Belize dollar from devaluation, the British government recognized the country's dependence on the United States for over 70 percent of its imports. But this consideration ultimately could not prevail over the more compelling British arguments for devaluation. Although at parity with the U.S. dollar, the local currency was backed by sterling securities, and government investments were in sterling. The estimated amount required to make good the depreciation of all these investments and the Currency Board Special Account was \$1,500,000. Recognition of the fact that this amount would have had to be met by the imperial treasury prompted the British government to change its decision. The Belize dollar was devalued on December 31, 1949, through the governor's invoking the reserve powers given him under the constitution. The devaluation of the dollar ensured the continued export of Belize

products to the United Kingdom and other sterling areas and improved the competitive position of British products vis-à-vis those of the United States (Jones, 1953: 139-142).

The devaluation was a very unpopular decision in Belize, and it heightened tensions between the merchant community, the immediate beneficiaries of devaluation, and the working class, which was led by an emerging group of young and radical politicians. The events that followed started a new political era marked by popular agitation, with internal self-rule finally achieved in 1964 and independence in 1981. In spite of the country's heavy dependence on continued British financial assistance, politics, as well as actual policies of the nationalist era, were decidedly anti-British.

While the new political leaders were anxious to rid the country of British rule, they showed an equal alacrity to invite the United States' presence. They spoke in glowing terms of their admiration for the United States and flew the U.S. flag at their rallies. They were also prepared to take their grievance against the British government not only to the United Nations, but also to Washington, D.C. The pro-U.S. attitude can be interpreted in a variety of ways. It can be seen as a psychological reaction to the feeling that Britain regarded the country as a distant colonial outpost that could receive scant and shoddy attention because the British had relatively little vested interest in the colony. There was no large European population and, apart from the BEC, the British economic interests were relatively insignificant.

Because the United States was nearer and wealthier, many Belizeans considered it to be the place to seek their fortunes. The new leaders also felt that U.S. investments would stimulate a more self-sustaining process of development. The contributing influence of the Roman Catholic clerics to this U.S. outlook was strong. Most of the new leaders were Catholics and had received a U.S.-oriented secondary education at Saint John's College in Belize City. Saint John's College was, and still is, run by Jesuits from St. Louis, Missouri. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s the Jesuits continued to serve as advisers to the political leadership.

As one of the leading advocates of a closer economic relationship with the United States, George Price was undoubtedly influenced by his close relationship with his multimillionaire employer, Robert S. Turton. Turton not only had extensive business connections in the United States but was also a large stockholder in two U.S.-financed companies: the Wrigley Company and I. T. Williams Company, formidable rivals of the

BEC in the chicle and mahogany industries, respectively. These U.S.-financed companies had interests not only in Belize, but in Guatemala as well. Thus Turton was involved in the economic life of Guatemala and Belize. As a legislative councillor from 1936 to 1948, Turton was a severe critic of the colonial government. Moreover, he had been one of the principal casualties of the devaluation, having been compelled by the British governor to retransfer his monetary assets from the United States.

Shifting fortunes of the competing imperialist powers had a major impact on the form that the nationalist movement took. Those, like Turton, who wished to wrest control away from the British provided needed resources, including money and advice. But Price also had a vision of what the country's future should be and he used the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute as a vehicle for articulating that vision. Price felt that closer economic association with the United States would bolster his claim that the country's economic and political future lay with the Central American republics and not with the West Indian territories. In other words, his ideas of a Central American destiny were more likely to be realized not through closer identity with Britain and the West Indies but through the United States with its increasing economic and security interests in Latin America. Price stated that "the people do not consider themselves part and parcel of the British West Indies, but rather as part and parcel of Central America on the mainland with whom we have long had existing economic and commercial ties" (*The Belize Billboard*, February 5, 1950: 1). Price downplayed the seriousness of the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute and said that Britain should be forced to resolve the issue as soon as possible.

Price's clear ideas about Belize's relationship with Central America, coupled with his view that the so-called Guatemalan dispute was a matter between Guatemala and Britain, encouraged the colonial administration to accuse him of wide-ranging affiliations with Guatemala. In 1954 Britain established the Sharpe Commission to investigate charges that Price had received funds and other resources from the Arbenz government. A matter that undoubtedly had a bearing on this investigation was the British government's experience with the leftist government of the People's Progressive Party (PPP) in Guyana in 1953. The British had revoked the constitution of that colony on the grounds that the PPP was Marxist. The British claim that the PUP was linked with the communists in Guatemala provided PUP leaders with the excuse to identify themselves with their Jesuit sympathizers as part of their

rebuttal to the specific allegation and also to claim that their election program was based on the principles of social justice. To the colonial administration this was no less discomfiting than the PUP relationship with Guatemala. Upon completing its investigation, the commission found some allegations to be true, but found no clear-cut connection between PUP and the Guatemalan government (Sharpe, 1954; Shoman, 1973: 25-26).

As the PUP's popularity with the people grew, the colonial government began a systematic process of coopting the leadership. Several of the leaders were made members of the executive council and began working within the prescribed colonial framework to overcome the social and economic problems of the country. They were included in delegations to London, where they were entertained by high-level government and business officials. As a result of their official activities, these leaders began to find more value in being oriented toward the West Indies and began to opt for inclusion in the proposed West Indies Federation. They began to question Price's optimism about a Central American destiny for Belize.

In March 1956 Price called a general meeting of the PUP rank and file to discuss the issue of West Indian Federation. Because of the unpopularity of federation, based generally on the fear that West Indians would flood the country and take jobs and economic opportunities from Belizeans, the party membership voted overwhelmingly against federation (Shoman, 1973: 23; Grant, 1976: 170-178). The profederation faction of the leadership subsequently resigned from the party. Shortly afterwards, in September 1956, they formed the Honduran Independence Party, eventually becoming the National Independence Party (NIP), the major opposition party until the mid-1970s. NIP, and its successor, the United Democratic Party (UDP), had as its main plank that the country's constitutional advance should be within the Commonwealth, in effect denying any connection with Central America. They accused George Price of selling out the country to Guatemala. They also demanded that Britain retain control over the country's external security until the dispute with Guatemala was resolved.

In 1957 Price was involved in two incidents that seemed to confirm the opposition's fears that he was willing to "sell-out" the country to Guatemala. Early in the year Price had been in contact with the Organization of the Central American States (ODECA), which was on record as stating that the reincorporation of Belize was a Central American question, and pledging to incorporate Belize in the movement

of economic integration of Central America. Price's opponents questioned whether he was secretly negotiating a settlement with Guatemala through ODECA rather than in conjunction with the British government.

While in London in November for a financial and constitutional conference, Price and three of his colleagues attended a luncheon given by the Guatemalan minister, Jorge Garcia Granados, at which the Belize question was discussed. Specifically, they discussed Guatemala's willingness to assume financial responsibility for Belize if Price and the others would agree to the colony severing its connection with Britain and entering into some form of association with Guatemala that would include the latter's control over the external affairs of Belize (Dobson, 1973: 239; Grant, 1976: 188).

Alarmed by the magnitude of the implications discussed at the luncheon, one of the invitees reported the meeting to the British authorities. Price was immediately sent home to be dismissed from his quasi-ministerial office and the executive council. He was publicly castigated by the governor for being prepared in certain eventualities to hand over the country to the Guatemalan Republic "lock, stock, and barrel." The actions of the British government, however, only contributed to Price's popularity. The disarray in which the London conference ended and Price's subsequent dismissal from office were seen by his supporters as the latest attempt to isolate him from them. Price was given a hero's welcome at the airport. He kept in play the supportive role of the rank and file by holding a public meeting on the same night of his return, before he reported to the party executive council.

As we have seen so far in our discussion, the essence of the nationalist movement centered around an attempt to define Belize. The movement was antisystemic in the sense of being anti-British, of moving the country away from British interests and dominance. The impetus for the movement was Britain's devaluation of the Belize dollar, which had the effect of bringing Belize from the U.S. economic orbit and back more closely to the British economy. The vehicle for the anti-British sentiment was the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute and a turn toward Central America. But in developing the issue there was little attempt to come up with a national (i.e., a Belizean) response. This resulted partly because mobilization was based strictly on charismatic appeal rather than on a fuller understanding of the issue and its impacts on Belize. The split within the nationalist movement was over whose protection should be sought—Britain or the United States. The two elements within the

movement were tied to the two economic interests competing for dominance within the country. Instead of trying to create a Belizean response, there was a reflexive decision to look outward and seek another's protection.

By 1959 Price had emerged as the authentic leader of PUP and of the country. After that an uneasy truce developed between the PUP and the British government. By 1961 Britain conceded Belize could become constitutionally independent whenever it so chose. In 1963 a new constitution was adopted that accorded a large measure of internal self-government to Belize. In preparation for the next constitutional step, the PUP and Britain began to feel that it was imperative that the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute be resolved. However, because an accord had not been reached between PUP and the opposition, negotiations to settle the dispute were hampered and reliance on the imperialist powers to resolve the dispute continued.

THE WEBSTER PROPOSALS

In 1962 Britain agreed to meet Guatemala on "neutral" ground and a conference was held in Puerto Rico. The decisions, if any, taken at this conference were never made public, but it is believed that the key suggestion involved the establishment of a three-man tribunal with a U.S. chairman who would be charged with looking into the dispute without prejudice to the case of either Britain or Guatemala. Two years later President Lyndon B. Johnson nominated a single mediator, the New York lawyer Bethuel M. Webster.

On April 26, 1968, Webster presented his final report in the form of a draft treaty. Known as the Webster Proposals, the draft provided for cooperation between an independent Belize and Guatemala (Webster, 1968; Young, 1976: 60-61, Appendix A). Article One granted independence to the nation of Belize and made the country responsible for all international obligations (including the treaty with Guatemala). However, the sovereignty was rendered nominal by the cooperative aspects of the treaty and the wide powers conferred on a Joint Authority of Belize and Guatemala in its administering of them. The plan placed the defense, foreign affairs, and economy of Belize under Guatemalan control after independence. Belize was to accept a customs union with Guatemala that would allow free access to its Caribbean ports and

territorial waters. In return Guatemala was to sponsor Belize's entry into the Central American community and into the Inter-American community, particularly the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank.

In London the Webster Proposals were welcomed as reasonable. Guatemala also seemed pleased with the prospects of mediation. In Belize the reaction of the opposition party was quick and unrestrained. Within hours of the proposals being made public, the leader of the opposition announced at a public meeting that his executive council had rejected the proposals, which constituted a "sell-out" of the country (see *The Belize Billboard*, April 30, 1968: 1). The proposals also were denounced by other major groups within the society, and the PUP government was forced on the defensive. Five days later, when the opposition had reached a groundswell, the PUP informed the public that its central council had rejected the proposals. It gave as its reason for not speaking earlier its desire to consult a cross-section of the population (see Price, 1968; Young, 1976: Appendix B). On May 14, 1968, the PUP government joined the opposition in unanimously rejecting the proposals in the House of Representatives. The decision put an end to the proposals, since the British government had pledged not to conclude a settlement that was unacceptable to the government of Belize.

The PUP government's rejection of the Webster Proposals did not deter the opposition from stressing their allegation that Price and his government were pro-Guatemala and wished to see Belize become a part of the territory of its neighbor. Price continued to speak of Belize becoming an integral part of Central America, but his government was now committed to becoming independent within the Commonwealth. The kind of quasi-independence proposed by Webster, which was backed by the U.S. government, and the fact that the kinds of U.S. aid and investments the PUP government had envisioned were never forthcoming, made Belize become less enamored of the United States. Beginning in the early 1960s the PUP government launched a campaign of considerable proportions to win the support of Mexico and the Central American republics for its program to carry Belize to independence as a vital part of Central America (Belizean Independence Secretariat, 1972: 61-65, 1980, 1981). The campaign included state visits, promotion of the country's "Mestizo" and "Mayan" affinities, climaxed by the "Mayan-architecture" of the new capital, Belmopan, and a consistent policy of conciliation towards Guatemala. This latter policy,

along with the clear unwillingness of the PUP government to react strongly to Guatemalan provocations or to play on the fear of Guatemala as an internal unifying force, continued to bring strong and bitter condemnation by the opposition.

As part of its approach to look outward to Central America, Belize sought membership in the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Central American Common Market (CACM). When the CACM turned down its membership in 1968, the PUP government changed its strategy and turned to the Caribbean for help, seeking and gaining Caribbean Area Free Trade Association (CARIFTA) membership, and began to seek a defense guarantee against possible Guatemala aggression, an idea advanced years ago by the opposition. Where the defense guarantee would come from was uncertain since Britain had steadfastly refused to make any offer of military protection after independence, nor had the United States made any offer. This new strategy became known as "the internationalization" (Government Information Service, 1975: 8-12). Belize, rather than Britain, would now take the initiative in resolving the crisis so that it could become an independent nation.

THE INTERNATIONALIZATION

After being rebuffed by Central America, Belize turned to its traditional allies, the English-speaking Caribbean, which became frontline states in waging an intense diplomatic offensive on behalf of Belize to help the country win its independence with territory intact. Both Britain and the United States appear to have been unwilling to prejudice their relationships with Latin American countries in general and Guatemala in particular for the sake of Belize's territorial integrity. As a result of Belize's initiatives to internationalize the issue and present its case for independence, immediate and firm support came not only from the countries of the Caribbean Community but also the Commonwealth of Nations and the Non-Aligned Nations (Clegern, 1983). In 1975 the first U.N. resolution on Belize was passed in the General Assembly by a vote of 110 in favor, with 9 against, and 16 abstentions. This large initial support was made possible because of the undertaking by the Non-Aligned Movement, at its Foreign Ministers' conference in Peru that year, to commit its total support to Belize. The Belize delegation had lobbied the conference participants very effectively.

Although U.N. support was substantial, it showed up a major

weakness: None of the mainland Spanish-speaking Latin American countries had voted for Belize. It became Belize's number one priority to win the support of these countries. When Premier George Price met the late General Omar Torrijos, then president of Panama, at the 1976 summit meeting of the Non-Aligned Nations, it is widely believed, he convinced Torrijos of Belize's right to independence. At the next U.N. General Assembly session, Panama voted in favor of the Belize resolution. The Guatemalan government, conscious of the effect this had in undermining its Latin American support, broke off relations with Panama. After Panama many other Latin American countries voted for Belize in subsequent U.N. resolutions. When the Sandinistas won the revolution in Nicaragua in 1979, that country became a major supporter of Belizean independence.

By November 1980 international support for Belize was virtually unanimous. In 1980 a U.N. resolution called for independence for Belize with territorial integrity and security. This time the United States, which had previously abstained on all the Belize resolutions since 1975, voted in favor of the resolution and no country voted against. In November 1981, by an overwhelming majority, the Organization of American States (OAS), which had until then maintained firm support for the integrity of Guatemala's position, endorsed the U.N. resolution calling for a secure independence (Government Information Service, 1981a: 10).

Because of such support, the decision was taken, with the consent of the British government and encouragement of the international community, to proceed to independence and to continue efforts thereafter to develop peaceful relations with the government of Guatemala. The British committed themselves to continue to defend Belize. A 1,600-man contingent of British troops was to be stationed in Belize for "an appropriate period." When, after 17 years as a self-governing colony, the country became independent on September 21, 1981, the territorial dispute had not been settled, nor did Guatemala recognize Belize's sovereignty.

THE HEADS OF AGREEMENT

The last attempt at resolving the dispute before independence resulted in a document known as the "Heads of Agreement" (Hansard,

1981; also see Belize Government Information Survey, 1981). This framework for a settlement of the dispute was signed by Britain and Guatemala, with Belize signing as a witness, on March 11, 1981. According to the Heads of Agreement, Guatemala would accept the independence of Belize in return for, among other things, free access to the sea through Belizean territorial waters, free port facilities, and the right to "use and enjoy" the seabeds around two cay chains, Sapodilla and Ranguana. Led by the then opposition United Democratic Party (UDP), and the Public Service Union (PSU), Belizeans denounced the Heads of Agreement, charging that its provisions violated the nation's territorial integrity. When the opposition's demand for a referendum on the "Heads" was not forthcoming, riots broke out throughout the country and the PSU engaged in paralyzing strikes. The British governor declared a state of emergency on April 2, 1981, and sent out local and British troops to end the paralyzing strikes and riots. Once calm returned, the opposition continued to campaign against the Heads of Agreement and against independence without a suitable defense guarantee.

Early in July 1981, Britain, Guatemala, and Belize met in New York City to try to reach agreement on the proposed treaty, but the talks again failed. Guatemala made new claims relating to land, maritime boundaries, and the basing of troops on the Sapodilla and Ranguana cayes (Government Information Service, 1981b: 8). By late July Premier George Price, meeting in London with representatives of the British government, agreed to move quickly to independence, without a resolution of the territorial dispute. Britain's decision to defend the country by keeping British troops in Belize for "an appropriate period" and to provide more intensive training for the Belize Defense Force (BDF) effectively foreclosed the opposition's position against independence; however, the opposition refused to be a party to independence negotiations with Britain. "Constitutional independence" still found the country divided on the Guatemala issue.

In June 1982 Guatemala sought a meeting with Britain to discuss the territorial dispute, but Britain refused to meet, saying Guatemala had to discuss the matter with the independent nation of Belize. Because Guatemala "does not recognize the independence unilaterally granted by the United Kingdom (Britain)," it had been unwilling to negotiate directly with the Belize government. However, in July 1984 talks between the Belize and Guatemala governments took place in New York City (Government Information Service, 1984: 12). Although the issue of

the territorial dispute was left unresolved, this round of talks was viewed as a positive development. Support for the Belize government to maintain its territorial integrity and to secure an early and peaceful solution to the problem with Guatemala continues to come from the Commonwealth of Nations, the Caribbean Community, and the Non-Aligned Movement.

The dispute is still having a decisive impact on the internal politics of Belize. One of the major issues in the 1984 general elections, in which the ruling PUP government was defeated by a landslide by the United Democratic Party (UDP), was what role the United States should play in helping to resolve the territorial dispute. Elements within the PUP were wary of relying too heavily on the United States and opted to continue to seek the assistance of the nonaligned nations in resolving the dispute. The UDP opted for greater reliance on the United States, including closer ties to the United States for economic and military aid. The UDP view is that the United States can pressure Guatemala to resolve the dispute. The fact that the UDP would now look to the United States for support demonstrates the extent to which the United States and its interests have permeated the Belizean society (see Petch, 1986: 1002-1019). As the British politicoeconomic interests grew weaker, requiring U.S. subsidy and encouragement, the UDP grew closer to the United States, even though culturally it has kept its "Anglophile" perspective.

In recent years, the sociopolitical and military situations in Central America and Mexico have generated increased stress among the elite and politically active elements within the Belizean society. Belize has been the beneficiary of increased international attention, including a significantly increasing number of "in-country" and "attached" U.S. and British diplomatic personnel, as well as U.N. Refugee (UNHCR) advisers. There is much evidence to indicate that U.S. and British interests have converged to find agreement on an immediate and short-term scenario for the Central American crises. Therefore, the Belizean elites now have good reason to hope for a resolution of the "Guatemala question." Nevertheless, as the internal struggle for power continues among the elites, with disregard for the long-term welfare of the Belizean state and masses, there is also reason for great caution in predicting the future of Belize.

In December 1984 the United Democratic Party (UDP), under the patronage of Belizean financial interests with links to elements of the U.S. Republican Party, gained control of the government of Belize,

confident that their Reagan connection assured an eventual amicable solution to the Anglo-Guatemalan territorial dispute. Since assuming office, the UDP has concentrated attention on economic development under the advisement of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), promoting tourism and foreign investment to increase exports. On January 17, 1986, the UDP's leadership became a founding member of the conservative Caribbean Democratic Union (CDU), coordinated by Prime Minister Edward Seaga of Jamaica.

The UDP attention publicly focussed on the "Guatemalan question" following the remarks of Guatemala's newly elected civilian president, Vinicio Cerezo, at the tenth anniversary of the Miami conference on the Caribbean hosted by the Caribbean/Central American Action (CCAA). In the presence of Belize's prime minister, Manuel Esquivel, and foreign minister, Dean Barrow, President Cerezo said:

We again came out and decided to realize at last that in the Caribbean there is another America that we had left to one side as if we who speak Spanish had been the only ones conquered by Europeans. We share the same destiny, the same culture, we have the same type of racial mixing, and we are located in the same region of the world, and for this reason we began already to talk of three Americas, but of one (which), in the last analysis, in order to fulfill common destinies; and for that reason with Belize, we decided to inform you that we are willing to recognize your position, that we are willing to look for honorable solutions, and we are willing to unify efforts and to not discuss insoluble matters that have a long history of insolubility. What we want is to give our peoples peace and good relations, and that is what matters.³

Thus Guatemala signaled to the UDP's government of Belize its readiness to reopen talks concerning a solution for the Anglo-Guatemalan territorial dispute.

Shortly after President Cerezo's appearance in Miami, Britain and Guatemala announced the official resumption of diplomatic relations that were formally severed in 1963. This was followed by an announcement from Guatemala of a formal date to resume talks to resolve the territorial dispute. Belize and Guatemala, including Britain as an interested party, met during the last part of April through May 6, 1987. At the time, however, Guatemala took a "hard line," demanding major land concessions, thereby nullifying the "Heads of Agreement" reached in 1981.

Foreign Minister Barrow, explaining the Belizean government's position to the U.N. General Assembly in October 1987, stated that "there is no room in the contemplation of our continued existence for the encouragement of the pretension to all or part of our territory by any state." He went on to insist that "my government feels that there is now a favourable climate for some degree of normalization to take place in the relations between Belize and Guatemala" (Barrow, 1987).

As the Belize City Council elections and the 1989 general elections draw near, the PUP's leadership found it necessary to respond to speculations in the international press pertaining to potentials for radicalism within the party. In the Sunday, October 18, 1987, issue of the *Belize Times*, an official organ of the PUP, the party announced that ex-prime minister George C. Price, in the capacity of vice president of the "Council to promote Democracy in the Western Hemisphere," was presently attending a consultation at the Carter Presidential Center in Atlanta, Georgia.

Responding to the July 10, 1987, *Amandala's* editorial titled "Extreme disquiet," critical of the UDP's handling of the "Guatemala question," Foreign Minister Barrow wrote, in an open letter addressed to the editor,⁴ "your editorial has caused me to feel that government's communications efforts have been inadequate." The minister went on to explain the quiet diplomacy of the UDP's government to affirm its international linkages.

CONCLUSIONS

For Price and the other early leaders of the PUP, the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute served as a vehicle for voicing dissent, for breaking away from British domination, and, in the process, of achieving political independence. The nationalist movement splintered early because of a disagreement over what the identity of Belize should be. The differing conceptions of the Belizean identity reflected the economic and political interests of the competing metropolises, as the PUP sided with U.S. interests and the opposition with British interests. The nationalist movement was never about changing the social structure or about economic independence; the only real concern was whether the country's allegiance should be with the United States or Britain. It could be said that the nationalist movement was used to renegotiate the country's

linkage within the world economy, as it moved from under the aegis of Britain to the United States.

During the process of renegotiation and in the competition that ensued between the two powers, the nationalist leaders were not just being acted upon but were actors in their own right, albeit within their limited sphere of influence. The PUP, especially, developed issues and created strategies to make political independence possible. In playing off the British against the United States, the PUP gained some leverage and some sense of autonomy. As a strategy for winning political independence, it succeeded; it could never have succeeded in transforming the system, but then that was never its aim.

In the early days the nationalist movement brought into the political mainstream the working classes and the rural elements. The PUP government has been termed "populist," and perhaps it was in the early days when an emphasis was placed on popular agitation to wrest power from the colonial authorities. But in later years it became obvious that the working classes had never been systematically brought into the political process. Periodically the working classes were manipulated so that there would be large-scale demonstrations of support or of protest to change a course of action. Price used them effectively upon his return to Belize after the London incident in 1957. The opposition used them in 1968 to register its disapproval of the Webster Proposals, and again in 1981 to show its disavowal of the "Heads of Agreement." However, there was never any sustained mobilization of the working class because they were not major actors in the attempt to win political independence. While the central issue of the nationalist era was the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute, the working classes (the mass of the people) were never fully informed about the impact (the ramifications) of the dispute on the country. The leaders felt that resolution of the issue would come from outside. Gaining that outside assistance took a long time; it held up political independence for 17 years, making Belize very late in entering the world of nations, and it led to the penetration of U.S. interests throughout the country.

Recently, elements of the semiprofessional, professional, technocratic sector of the Belizean society, a natural constituency of the UDP, have expressed concern that the dogmatic "free-market" orientation of the UDP's government will have detrimental effects on the interests of the dependent-nationalistic sector. In the absence of mass political mobilization, the dogmatic ideological orientation of the UDP may be its undoing.

NOTES

1. As Waddell (1983) notes: "From the achievement of independence in 1821 until the establishment of interoceanic transit routes through Panama and Nicaragua in the 1850s, most of the external trade of Central America was with Britain and passed through Belize."

2. "The trends forming the pattern that led to underdevelopment in British Honduras [on June 1, 1973, by legislative statute, the official name became Belize] began early in the settlement's history and were firmly in place by the end of the nineteenth century. Land, labor, politics and economic activity in general were largely under the control of a few large merchant houses associated with both the export of forestry products and the import of foodstuffs and other supplies. . . . This consolidation of trade activity into a few hands resulted in foreign ownership of land and capital" (Ashcraft, 1973: 45).

3. The English translation of the speech by President Vinicio Cerezo, delivered at the tenth-anniversary Miami conference on the Caribbean held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Miami, November 16-20, 1986, was provided by the Consulado General de Guatemala, resident in Coral Gables, Florida (see page 5).

4. Here is a short excerpt of "Foreign Minister responds to *Amandala* editorial" from page 6 of the Friday, July 17, 1987, edition of *Amandala*:

Allow me to make some observations in response to your last week's editorial "Extreme disquiet. . . ." I certainly welcome your support for my recent visit to Nicaragua. However, your editorial taken as a whole seems to be saying that a visit was necessary precisely to repair the damage done by what you (wrongly) perceive to be the UDP's insufficiently nationalistic foreign policy. . . . I take particular issue with the assertion that "under the UDP, Belmopan has not even tried to appear to have a mind of its own." Similarly, the suggestion that countries formerly supportive of Belize have grown distant because . . . "they have watched Belize become so pro-American as to look like the contra nation itself". . . is simply not true. . . . Almost my first act upon becoming Foreign Minister, was to dispatch an emissary to Nicaragua to attend the inauguration of President Ortega. You will no doubt recall (since you were good enough to write in defense of the move) that this created quite a stir locally. It was done though, to give an early indication of the UDP's intention to pursue a plural foreign policy that would exhibit full respect for the right of all nations to freely determine their own destiny. . . . It is true that Belize experiences a coincidence of views with the United States on many of the subjects that constitute the global agenda" (also, note references to Dean Barrow's recent interview with *Caribbean Contact* in Best, 1987).

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NO TURNING BACK: U.S. AID AND INVESTMENT IN BELIZE¹

INTRODUCTION

In 1981 Belize obtained independence from Great Britain; two years later the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) opened its mission doors, increasing aid by twenty-fold in the 1980's. This paper will explore the expanding relationship between the U.S. and Belize through aid and trade that occurred after Belizean independence and continued through the 1980's. The primary goals will be to first, analyze the political and economic aspects of both societies that encouraged a foreign-led private sector development strategy adopted by the Government of Belize (GOB), and secondly, document the sharp rise in official U.S. assistance to Belize since independence and the accompanying interest by American investors. This development strategy was promoted by the U.S. through programs such as the Caribbean Basin Recovery Act and thus paved the way for greater U.S. influence throughout Belizean society.

While the rise of U.S. influence in Belize has been documented by other authors and the Belizean press, the principal contribution of this paper is a description of specific AID projects that have served to attract and facilitate U.S. investment and how they became de facto planning units deferred to by the GOB, thus influencing the nature of Belizean economic development (i.e., public/private mix, concessions to foreign investors, etc.). By looking at specific AID projects and objectives in Belize and their outcomes we can start to

answer the fundamental question of who has benefited from this development path: Belizeans, Belizean politicians, American investors, and/or American politicians? We will start with the assumption that it is not necessarily a zero-sum game and that all or none may be benefiting from this path. The answer to this question will hopefully provide insight into the nature of increased U.S. influence in Belize in the 1990's and its implications for Belizeans.

BACKGROUND

Socio-economic patterns in Belize reflect the colonial exploitation of the past and the country's resource limitations. In colonial times timber extraction was the main economic activity requiring a minimal amount of infrastructure development and the importation of consumer goods. The control of land and labor was monopolized by a small elite, with agriculture and other economic activities discouraged.

The Belizean economy is still heavily dependent upon imports and is highly susceptible to regional and international economic crises. Its main export commodity, sugar, has suffered badly with the collapse of international sugar prices and, in recent years, by U.S. import quotas. The citrus, banana, and tourism sectors have increased rapidly since the early 1970's which has helped to offset the loss in sugar revenues. Another major source of foreign exchange comes from the presence of 2,000 British troops who defend Belize from a potential Guatemalan invasion, even though tensions have greatly decreased in recent years.

Exports to the U.S. have increased by US\$5 million since 1984, but have not kept up with U.S. imports which have increased US\$20 million during the same period. The percent of the trade deficit due to U.S. trade has been dramatically augmented, illustrating an increased dependence on U.S. goods (see Table 1).

Two important points of economic contact with the U.S. in the 1980's, excluding direct legal investment, have also been crucial sources of foreign exchange: 1) the remittances from Belizeans working in the U.S., and 2) marijuana cultivation and trafficking. Remittances from Belizeans are difficult to estimate, but even conservative calculations based on an estimated 15,000 Belizeans in the U.S. indicate its importance.² Illegal drug trafficking has been a major source of trade with the U.S., and the most important cash crop. The significance

of the U.S. drug trade on Belizean politics will be further discussed below.

The struggle for Belizean independence from Great Britain was a struggle borne out of labor unrest in the 1930's, yet through the 1960's and 1970's it had largely been delayed by the outstanding Guatemalan claim. A full account of this struggle is beyond the scope of this present paper. Yet the dominance of one party that fought for Belizean independence under the leadership of George Price for over thirty years has played an important role in shaping U.S./Belizean relations. Indeed, many of the policies that have drawn Belize into the U.S. fold in the past decade stem from policies and compromises begun under the People's United Party's administration.

TABLE 1. Trade With U.S.
(in US\$ millions)

| | <u>1984</u> | <u>1985</u> | <u>1986</u> | <u>1987</u> | <u>1988</u> |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Exports to U.S. | 42.2 | 38.3 | 45.3 | 43.3 | 47.5 |
| Imports from U.S. | 56.7 | 63.4 | 69.5 | 81.5 | 77.0 |
| Bal. of Trade (-) | 14.5 | 25.1 | 24.4 | 38.1 | 29.5 |
| Percent of Total | 36% | 58% | 68% | 90% | 61% |
| Trade Deficit | | | | | |

(Source: Foreign Economic Trend Report, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, April 1989)

Under the PUP the United States was more a model to emulate than an ally to be cultivated. This period was marked by a decline in the timber industry controlled by British firms and the rapid growth of the sugar and citrus industries, still largely foreign-controlled. The PUP increasingly moved from the Rostow take-off model influenced by the Puerto Rican programs to attract foreign capital of the early 1960's to a more "mixed economy" in the 1970's. The PUP's economic policy was to promote "economic development and social progress by means of a mixed economy in which the public sector works

in partnership with the private sector for increased production, balanced development and social well-being...The public sector engages in direct productive and other economic activities only where necessary, and will do so in partnership with private enterprise where possible."³

In 1983 Price made a "working-visit" to Washington as a guest of the film-maker Francis Ford Coppola who had bought what Price described as "one of the most beautiful place in Belize, Blanceneaux Lodge."⁴ Coppola hosted Price at the Georgetown Club where he was lobbied by Price to make a movie about the ancient Mayan civilization in Belize. During the same visit, at a lunch with President Reagan, Price asked that Reagan encourage the British troops to stay in Belize. A patronizing Washington Post article described the visit as a "coming of age" for Belize.

The "coming of age" metaphor may have been an ethnocentric description of the PUP's willingness to be drawn into the U.S. orbit, but was nonetheless an accurate description of increasing U.S. influence in the country at the time: the PUP signed an IMF stand-by agreement for a \$7 million loan in 1984, it allowed a massive Voice of America transmitter to be installed in Punta Gorda, and encouraged the ballooning of U.S. AID and Peace Corps involvement in 1982. The U.S. also expanded its presence during this period by stationing 29 diplomats in Belize compared to nine from the U.K.

UNITED DEMOCRATIC PARTY TAKES LEADERSHIP

The victory of the coalition United Democratic Party (UDP) in 1984 was not a surprise; but the landslide margin was. Besides the previously mentioned unpopularity of the PUP's drug enforcement policies, the UDP's victory was widely attributed to a feeling among Belizeans that the more centrist UDP would be able to entice foreign investors, principally U.S., through private-sector, free-market policies. Foreign investment would transform the languishing economy by providing jobs and capital.

When the UDP government took office in 1985 Prime Minister Esquivel announced that diversification and promotion of exports would become "the engine for economic growth." Below is an excerpt of a "message from the prime minister" in a promotional section appearing in the Financial Times of London:

We welcome the serious investor who is willing to enter into a partnership of development in a stable, English-speaking country...I invite investors to share with us our vast potential for development, our untapped natural resources. Take advantage of our government's support for private investment, our stable political environment and our nearness to the world's most prosperous market Belize opens her arms to you in welcome.⁵

Given the UDP's foreign-led development strategy to attract private foreign investment, a blow came in June 1985, when the Jamaican multinational, Tate & Lyle, Ltd., who had a virtual monopoly on the sugar industry, announced its decision to pull out, closing the Libertad factory. The pull-out was the outcome of "negotiations" with the new Belizean administration in which Tate & Lyle pressed extremely hard terms. After the plant closing, Tate & Lyle obtained a license to actually import sugar to supply the domestic market.⁶ The Minister of Trade commented, "Tate & Lyle are in a position to make demands on the government and the resources of the country, and the government has little alternative but to go along." This statement demonstrates the often tenuous autonomy of Belize vis-a-vis large foreign investors.

The setback with Tate & Lyle notwithstanding, the UDP government was determined that investment by foreign capital would provide the "engine for growth." The UDP regime's emphasis on foreign sector-led development has been reflected in two ways: 1) increasing privatization of public holdings (e.g., state-owned banana farms have been privatized), and 2) more aggressiveness in seeking foreign investment, primarily in tourism and agri-business.

The UDP's openness to foreign investment with few or no restrictions was in keeping with the trend of other Caribbean and Central American neighbors' adoption of the prevailing U.S. ideology of trickle-down development through foreign investment. It also came during a period in which the U.S. political leadership was keenly focused on Belize's neighbors and greatly interested in the strategic value of a sparsely-populated state on the Central American mainland.

U.S. AID AND INVESTMENT

Like many regional neighbors, were it not for international aid Belize would have virtually no development budget due to a lack of foreign exchange. The sharp decrease in British aid

in the 1980's created an increased opportunity for U.S. presence. This section will look at the political or ideological context of U.S. aid to Belize and the specific USAID programs that resulted and their outcomes.

Coming into the White House with a clear mandate to contain communist regimes with the U.S. "spheres of influence," Ronald Reagan wasted no time in reflecting this posture with both overt and covert action in what was now termed the "Caribbean Basin." The Reagan administration would seek to regain influence and contain communism through both increased private investment and the willingness to use military force without hesitation.

As the economic flagship of the Reagan administration's development-through-investment prescription for the Caribbean, the goal of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) is to make U.S. investment in the region more attractive by cutting or eliminating import tariffs and tax incentives, and in turn provide jobs for the people of the Caribbean. "Trade, not aid" was the rallying cry of U.S. policy-makers.

Due to Belize's participation in the CBI, a wide range of goods can enter the U.S. duty-free. While the range of commodities eligible under the CBI is broad, it did not include or has since restricted so-called political commodities such as sugar, the primary Belizean export for twenty years.

The sugar quota provides a telling example of how the United States' actions have often worked at cross-purposes to the stated goals of the CBI. In 1985 the Congress mandated that the U.S. government sugar program protect U.S. domestic sugar prices at no budgetary cost to the government. To meet this mandate, President Reagan limited sugar imports through quota reductions. The reductions have had a particularly damaging effect on Belize, necessitating increased U.S. aid. Similarly, although citrus nearly equaled sugar in export earnings, AID has discouraged its missions from providing assistance for citrus production due to its concerns for potential impact on the domestic U.S. industry.

The principal impact of the CBI for Belize has been through the expanded role of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), which has in the 1980's narrowed its focus to projects that boost the export sector.

Over the past nine years Belize has received more than US\$70 million in grants and loans from AID (see Table 2). As part of an "economic stabilization program," AID has also lent Belize US\$19.1 million between 1983 and 1986 to reduce its balance-of-payments deficit. Other USAID programs for long-term economic development have involved agricultural diversification, export and tourism promotion, and infrastructure and human resources development.⁸

Table 2. Total U.S. Aid to Belize
(in US \$Million)

| | |
|----------------|------|
| 1946-1981 | 11.2 |
| 1982 | 12.6 |
| 1983 | 6.4 |
| 1984 | 10.0 |
| 1985 | 10.0 |
| 1986 | 11.5 |
| 1987 | 12.0 |
| 1988 | 7.4 |
| 1989 (est.) | 7.6 |
| 1990 (request) | 9.2 |

(Sources: Society for Promotion of Education and Research, U.S. AID Congressional Presentation, Fiscal Year 1990)

Those AID projects that are designed specifically to attract investors have gone through several phases since the mid-1960's. The Michigan Partners, under the aegis of AID's Alliance for Progress, brought together Michigan businessmen and prominent Belizeans to form the Belize Investment Group in 1966. The Group organized an investment bank to obtain matching funds from AID with an initial capital of US\$250,000 provided by Missouri and Michigan investors.⁹ However, at that time no financial assistance was provided to Belize directly by AID, either through loans or grants, due to its status as a British colony.

In 1970, AID contracted U.S. technical advisors to establish a "permanent administrative structure within [the Belizean] government to identify and promote investment opportunities."¹⁰ Five years later, a project appraisal report concluded that all project outputs were considered failures and recom-

mended its termination. The report observed that the Government of Belize "still questions the desirability of foreign investment [deciding] it would no longer fund the investment promotion center and the investment officer."¹¹

The next major attempt by AID to promote investment was the Caribbean-wide Project Development Assistance Program (PDAP) in 1980. The PDAP was originally designed to accelerate the flow of completed public sector project requests from the Eastern Caribbean islands and Belize to the Caribbean Development Bank, with investment promotion a secondary mission. Yet, during the first two years, the project was significantly modified to make investment promotion the dominant activity.¹² The shift in focus of this project signaled the first concrete example of USAID's new emphasis on the promotion of an export sector-led development strategy coupled with incentives for foreign, primarily American, investors.

Caught between the U.S. and its object of obsession, Nicaragua, Belize in the early 1980's began to gain strategic importance for the Reagan administration. On the occasion of Belizean independence the Reagan administration feared that Belize could become a springboard for revolutionary activities - a haven for Guatemalan and Cuban arms deliveries.¹³ It was, in fact, Nicaragua and Cuba that were among the few regional countries to support Belizean independence and establish diplomatic relations with the Government of Belize.

A newly independent Belize was seen by many Washington analysts at the time as a helpless newborn and an easy target for subversive exploitation by the left. At the time CIA sources were leaking reports to the media that weapons were already passing through Belize for the Salvadoran rebels as a result of U.S. pressure to stem the alleged shipments from Nicaragua.¹⁴ A top British official emphatically denied this, stating that "there is not a shred of evidence to support such a claim."¹⁵

Belize presented a policy "quirk" to the U.S.: it wanted to help Belize negotiate with Guatemala, yet it was U.S. actions that threatened to destabilize those very negotiations. By side-stepping human-rights considerations in U.S. law and approving a \$3.2 million military consignment to Guatemala, the U.S. increased the likelihood that Guatemala would use force to reclaim "Belice."

It was, however, the larger concern for the continuing crises in other Central American countries that prompted Reagan in 1983 to name Henry Kissinger to head a bipartisan commission to suggest options for Central American policy. The commission called for increased economic and military assistance throughout the region. Specific recommendations for Belize emphasized "support for investment in export-related agriculture and industry over the long term."¹⁶

1985 was a watershed year for U.S. aid and investment. The Kissinger commission had paved the way for more money and had further supported the prevailing strategy of development through foreign investment. This was also the year that the UDP came to power with its complete acceptance of this strategy. After a courtesy visit to Grenada, Prime Minister Esquivel's first foreign trip was to Houston, Texas, at the invitation of its Chamber of Commerce.

PDAP II, a two year project begun in 1985, continued to promote investment focusing on providing factory warehouses and tourism promotion, and provided management training for the Belizean Chamber of Commerce. This phase of the PDAP combined training and limited infrastructure development with an aggressive U.S.-based international search for investors.¹⁷ PDAP II foreshadowed the creation of the Belize Export and Promotion Unit (BEIPU) in 1986.

BEIPU represents the most mature phase of AID's influence over the Belizean development agenda due to its public/private sector management mix, controlled by both the Belize Chamber of Commerce and AID. AID has provided a US\$2.5 million grant to cover BEIPU's expenses over a five-year period. BEIPU plays a major role in the elaboration of the government's policies in foreign investment, export promotion and domestic policies relating to agriculture, industry, and tourism. It operates as a "one-stop-shop" for investors - mostly Americans. The AID project grant agreement stated that "the orientation of the Belizean private sector to outside markets, particularly the U.S. and the Eastern Caribbean, is one of the major objectives of this project."¹⁸

USAID has scaled down its level of funding and scope of projects for the 1990's, concentrating on only two areas: (1) development of management and entrepreneurial skills; and (2) management of natural resources.¹⁹ Yet, the funding level will still be significantly greater than the aid level in the 1970's.

It should be emphasized that simply the level of U.S. aid may not provide the best barometer of U.S. influence over the development agenda but rather the type of projects that have been attempted and those that are being seriously discussed for the future. One project of particular interest that has been under serious consideration is an export processing zone (EPZ) on the Mexican border.

A lengthy assessment of the feasibility of an EPZ, commissioned by USAID, describes the characteristics of such a zone in Belize given its limitations and resources. The study found that most products would be labor intensive and technologically non-complex. Given other factors the consultants concluded that "apparel/garments operations will be the principal drive of free zone development in Belize for the next 2-5 years."²⁰ They further indicated that, although there was concern over an adequate labor supply, there was in fact enough women between the ages of 15 to 44 years - an estimated 2,400 women - around the Santa Elena area given that "light manufacturing activities utilize almost an entirely female workforce."²¹ By 1992, the total female labor force the appropriate age group will have risen to 6,300. Of special importance to Belizean ethnic politics is the authors' suggestion that foreign "guest workers" from Guatemala and Mexico may offer a cheap supplemental labor pool.²²

The free zone assessment contains, in fact, a very straightforward appraisal of what is important to foreign investors, the willingness of "developing countries" to accommodate, and some of the concrete outcomes. They point out that few free zones have had backward linkages to the domestic economy and have contributed to political repression of the labor force, noting that this has created "short term benefits for employers but ... deep labor-management rifts."²³ Concerning labor, the report finds that although the average Belizean wage of US\$.90/ per hour is slightly higher than the regional average, it's still well below U.S. levels. The report didn't bother to give salaries for upper-level management since "as is common throughout the region, expatriate labor is generally used for upper-level managerial positions in foreign investments."²⁴

What has been the result of the GOB and USAID's effort to attract investors to provide the "engine of growth"? Before we attempt to answer this question we should note that the U.S. is no newcomer to the Belizean economy. C.H. Grant

observed the rise of U.S. financial influence in the 1930's noting that U.S. companies "enjoyed considerable influence in the local business circle and, therefore in the Legislative Council"; they had "created for the group of local entrepreneurs business opportunities which the dominance of the Belize Estate and Produce Co. and its influence both in London, and in Belize City had so long denied them they financed the entrepreneurs' operations and were his most valuable customers."²⁵ Yet, besides a handful of large U.S. investments since the 1960's, until the mid-1980's there had been comparatively little direct U.S. investment in Belize. Efforts to attract diverse foreign investment under the colonial British regime, as well as under George Price, the Prime Minister from 1964 to 1984, were extremely limited.

By the mid-1980's, much interest in Belize by foreign investors was being generated, yet it has been difficult to point to any clear successes, especially in terms of increased employment for Belizeans. During this period, the U.S. Embassy was reporting up to 20 visits a week by Americans considering investments. An AID report in early 1989 describes the somewhat limited success of their investment promotion programs as well as the predominantly American orientation. The report showed the distribution of BEIPU investment inquiries by origin of investment to be overwhelmingly from the U.S., with seventy-five percent of the total inquiries. The Far East and Belize accounted, respectively, for fifteen and five percent of the inquiries.²⁶ The report also found that BEIPU, between 1985 and 1988, had a total of 1,504 investment inquiries with 30 investors actually "captured."²⁷

The UDP's active campaign to attract foreign investors, principally Americans, started to show results relatively quickly by attracting medium-size American investors - especially Texans. Due to the inordinate amount of investment by Texans in 1986 and 1987, several observers commented that Belize was in danger of becoming an extension of the Houston Chamber of Commerce.

The reason for the Texan interest is due to economic and geographic factors. The collapse of oil prices had sent Texan capital out of the state in search of diversified investments. Texans have also been lured by the natural beauty, a consideration that has attracted Texans to other English-speaking Caribbean countries such as St. Thomas. Additionally, there are daily direct flights from Houston that take a comfortable

two hours to Belize City. Belize Promotions, Inc., out of Houston, presents one of the most sophisticated attempts to market Belize, producing a glossy magazine entitled "Belize Currents."

While there has been a virtual flood of American investors exploring investment opportunities, actual success stories are few and far between. Most U.S. investments have been tourism related and are for the most part small operations. Yet the number of failed business ventures has been so great that U.S. investment publications have even been warning prospective investors to "tread carefully" in Belize.²⁸

Even showcase projects have not been immune to bankruptcy. Caribe Farms, a winter vegetable farm owned by a Texan who borrowed USAID money, was featured in a brochure promoting the 1987 Miami Conference on the Caribbean as a success story. Yet ironically, between the press time of the brochure and the conference the project had already failed. Many failures are attributed to a lack of infrastructure due to centuries of colonial neglect, yet many seem to suffer from over-optimistic demand projections or simply corruption.

Since my focus is primarily on the outcome of a development strategy that places foreign investment as the engine of growth, it will be useful to highlight a case of U.S. investment that at first seemed to support this strategy.

The crowning achievement of the UDP's new push for foreign-led development was a land sale to Houston-based Coca-Cola Foods.²⁹ Within months the UDP had successfully "negotiated" with Minute Maid, a subsidiary of Coca-Cola Foods, and two wealthy Texans, Walter Mischer and Paul Howell, to buy hundreds of thousands of acres. Coke would duplicate their Florida operation by planting 50,000 acres in citrus while the intentions of the Texans were less clear although cattle ranching seemed to be their primary intention. Walter Mischer within several months of the sale became a special trade advisor to the GOB, another blurring of the line between the Belizean state and foreign capital.

In the summer of 1987, CCF re-evaluated the status of their project and decided to considerably lower their profile and development plans. In a letter, dated September 25, 1987, Michelle Beale, Vice-President of Public Affairs for CCF,

announced that:

We have now advised the government of Belize that we are placing the proposed citrus project on indefinite hold. That means that we have no near-term plans to begin any developmental activities. Our reasons are two-fold: Number one ... the price of frozen concentrate orange juice has dropped substantially, making the project economically infeasible Secondly, [after OPIC refusal] we have not been able to secure [political risk] insurance In addition, we intend to divest ourselves of the majority of land which CCF owns in Belize through a series of donations and land sales.³⁰

While trying to put a 'good face on CCF's "new plans," Prime Minister Esquivel has expressed regrets over CCF's failure to proceed. Even though it is difficult to gauge the political fall-out, from the beginning the opposition had gotten a lot of political mileage out of the project and may have contributed to the UDP's defeat.

In sum, the principal factors for increased U.S. interest were: 1) U.S. strategic interest in Central America that has resulted in programs such as the CBI, 2) a good investment climate due to political stability and the availability of inexpensive land, and 3) the foreign investment incentive policies of the United Democratic Party (UDP) led by Prime Minister Manuel Esquivel.

In a study of U.S. aid to Jamaica, which had been a showcase of this development strategy, Scott Tollefson observes that this "developmentalist strategy would be difficult to sustain and suffers from the inherent tension of promoting economic aid in areas that would enjoy the confidence of investors."³¹ This has held true for Belize.

THE UNITED STATES AND BELIZE: NO TURNING BACK

By examining the role of the U.S. in Belizean economy over the past several years we have seen how the nature of its involvement was influenced by the economic and political realities of both countries. Just as the confluence of Belizean political change - independence and the UDP leadership - and a U.S. president that elevated the importance of Central America, have shaped U.S./Belizean economic and political relations, changes in the political leadership of both countries within the past year will undoubtedly affect future relations.

The U.S. leadership of George Bush in the first year of his presidency has already highlighted significant policy changes to the region. Likewise, the Belizean national elections, held in early September 1989, returned the PUP to power, yet will probably not affect the Belizean investment climate in any significant way.

This activist approach, which excludes any disengagement or benign neglect alternatives, could have taken two basic paths for U.S. foreign policy-makers: (1) traditional gunboat diplomacy, which is only concerned with geopolitical security issues without much involvement in economic and social aspects of the region; and (2) a development policy that does address these aspects for reasons that can be attributed to an economic understanding of the source of regional crises as well as economic and strategic self-interest. While some might argue that the Reagan administration has used both in light of the Grenada invasion, the U.S. has clearly pursued the latter policy. In the case of Belize, enlightened economic self-interest best characterizes U.S. aid and investment in Belize.

The General Accounting Office (GAO) issued a report in March calling for major changes in foreign policy toward Central America concluding that the policy of the last eight years has not produced stable democracies or economic growth in the region. The report said that policies appear to have been driven largely by a need to counter the threat of Soviet bloc expansionism. But it observed that by giving large amounts of military aid the U.S. has only enhanced the power of the local armed forces, "thereby increasing concerns about the stability of civilian democratic governments," and noted that "large-scale poverty and economic inequities exist at levels worse than a decade ago."³²

Another GAO report assessment of the Caribbean Basin Initiative to date has also called for changes noting that "the resulting trade and investment have not been sufficient to generate broadly based economic growth, alleviate debt-servicing problems, or create lasting employment."³³ The GAO concluded that most nontraditional exports, which are encouraged by the CBI, do not generate much related investment because local content usually consists of only labor and utilities, while materials and machinery are usually imported. This would certainly be the case with a Free Zone on the Belizean border with Mexico.

The Free Zone is, whether it actually materializes or not, a good example of what foreign capital ultimately seeks - a docile labor force, no government regulations except those that prevent unions, and the availability of cheap inputs. From this it is clear that the lop-sided dependence on foreign capital may have unintended repercussions; the encouragement of foreign capital into Belize will likely affect internal migration flows and more importantly facilitate and encourage increased emigration to the United States by Belizeans. As has occurred in other countries, the feminization of the labor force may provide an even greater impetus for young Belizean men to leave. Saskia Sassen's thorough study of international investment and labor flow demonstrates how foreign investment, among other things, provides the objective and ideological linkages to the receiving country necessary for emigration. Sassen especially draws linkages between Export Processing Zones and emigration looking at a range of countries including Mexico, the Dominican Republic and the Philippines.³⁴

The principal point is that the limits of Belizean autonomy in the context of a dependence on foreign aid and investment has much more than economic consequences. The question is how to develop viable policies that give Belize more control over the development path given these constraints.

However one might speculate about the future of the U.S. presence in Belize it can only be in terms of the nature and less so of the degree of involvement. We have seen similar cycles concerning nearly every country in the Caribbean and Central America - the heavy-handed involvement in "development" due to a rationale based on perceived U.S. geopolitical security interests and then the lessening of political interests yet stable or increased economic involvement rooted in the first part of the cycle.

The American foreign policy agenda in Belize, however benevolent its intentions may be, must ultimately act within guidelines set by U.S. leaders whose actions, in turn, are designed to benefit their American constituents. I contend that even with a decline in interest in Central America by U.S. policy-makers and a likely decrease in foreign assistance, an outcome of the overall cooling of the "crisis" in Central America, increased U.S. investments during this period have left their mark and will continue to function structurally as a mechanism of U.S. influence over the Belizean development agenda.

NOTES

1. "On the Right Track, No Turning Back" was a slogan used by the United Democratic Party after gaining control of the Legislative Council in 1985.
2. Hartshorn et al., "Belize Country Environmental Profile," 1986, p.32.
3. Belize Investment Code (Belize, n.d.), pp. 1-2.
4. Sarah Conroy, The Washington Post, 13 April 1983, p. B2.
5. Financial Times (London), 16 October 1985, supplement.
6. Belize Briefing, October 1985.
7. Insight, August 1985.
8. Central American Report, 27 March 1987.
9. International Trade Mart of New Orleans, "Latin American Report: A New Look at Belize (British Honduras)," (New Orleans, n.d.), p. 16.
10. AID document summary, "Human Resources Development (British Honduras)," doc. #PD-AAB-512-D1, 8 February 1972, p. 1.
11. AID document summary, "Human Resources Development (British Honduras)," doc. #PD-AAB-512-F1, 23 July 1975, p. 1.
12. AID, "Evaluation of the Project Assistance Program (Belize)," doc. #PD-AAB-527, 30 August 1984, p. 1.
13. Marlise Simons, "Belize's Independence Amplifies U.S. Worries in Central America," The Washington Post, 4 October 1981, p. H4a.
14. Op. cit.
15. Ibid.
16. U.S. Department of State, "Briefing Book: Central America Democracy, Peace and Development Initiative," February 1984.
17. AID Project Paper, "Investment Promotion and Export Development (Belize)," doc. #PD-AAP-916, p. 1.
18. AID, "Project Grant Agreement (Belize)," doc. #5050027, 1986, p. 9.
19. AID Congressional Presentation, April 1989.
20. The Services Group, Inc., "Belize Free Zone Feasibility Study: Market and Labor Demand Analysis," AID doc. #PW-ABC-032, 20 February 1989, p. ii.
21. Ibid., p. iii.
22. Ibid., p. 40.
23. Ibid., p. 34.
24. Ibid., p. 39.
25. C.H. Grant, The Making of Modern Belize. (Cambridge University Press), 1976, pp. 80-81.
26. USAID, "Belize Free Zone Feasibility Study: Market and Labor Demand Analysis," (prepared for the Government of Belize) doc. #PW-ABC-032, 20 February 1989, p. 75.
27. Ibid., p. 73.
28. See "Muddy Waters," Forbes, 16 May 1988, p. 8.
29. Coca-Cola Foods, whose parent company is the quintessential symbol of the American economic and cultural presence in the world-economy, has perhaps the world's best-known trademark and a market value of over \$17 billion. There are 1,400 Coca-Cola franchise licensees operating in 155 countries. The Wall Street Journal, 18 September 1987, p. 30D.
30. Letter from Michelle Beale, CCF Vice-President for Public Affairs, to "Friends of Belize," (photo-copy) 25 September 1987.
31. Scott D. Tollefson, "Jamaica: The Limits of a Showcase Policy," in The Political Economy of AID and Development in the Caribbean Basin:

- Guatemala and Jamaica, O.P. No. 11, SAIS, The John's Hopkins University, July 1986, p. 72.
32. Robert Pear, "Report is Urging Major Overhaul of U.S. Central American Policy," New York Times, 9 March 1989, p. A11.
33. U.S. General Accounting Office, "Caribbean Basin Initiative: Impact on Selected Countries," July 1988, p. 2.
34. Saskia Sassen, The Mobility of Labor and Capital: A Study in International Investment and Labor Flow, p. 15 (Cambridge University Press), 1988.

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