Regulated group competition between Afro- and Indo-Trinidadians: A mechanism for social, economic and political stability in a multi-racial society.

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REGULATED GROUP COMPETITION
BETWEEN AFRO AND INDO TRINIDADIANS:
A MECHANISM FOR SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND
POLITICAL STABILITY IN A MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY

by

Simboonath Singh

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
through the
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

1990
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ISBN 0-315-61897-3
ABSTRACT

This research examined the extent to which the "regulated" nature of group competition, characteristic of Afro-Indo Trinidadian inter-ethnic economic and political competition, has been responsible for peaceful intergroup relations for the past three decades. The central theoretical construct used in this thesis, that of the Rational Choice Theory of Race and Ethnic Relations, proved essential to the study. It enabled the researcher to adequately explore certain "situational" phenomenon present in Trinidadian society that contributed to the persistence of intergroup and societal stability.

An examination of some of the historical and situational factors at work in the society helped in large measure to mitigate some of the potentially divisive forces prevalent in multiracial Trinidadian society. The granting of Crown Lands to the Indo-Trinidadians, the decline of the colonial colour-class system and the emergence of a bullish oil export economy were some of the factors that contributed to the maintenance of intergroup "stability" within a societal framework characterized by a high potential for intergroup and societal instability.
DEDICATION

To my deceased mother, Kowsilia Jaggernathsingh and my father Mr. Jodhan Singh, whose support and love made this research possible.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A thesis does not reflect the efforts of just the author, but also those who have contributed to his scholastic growth. First and foremost, I owe a great deal to Dr. Subhas Ramcharan for his continued support and guidance throughout this study. It was his initiation and encouragement which made this research possible. I am also indebted to Dr. Tanya Basok for her contribution to this study. Her counsel, advice and unwavering support throughout the study have contributed to the improvement and betterment of my research and organizational skills. I thank my outside reader, Dr. Chris Lakhan for his support and suggestions. I also owe a great deal to Dr. Anthony H. Richmond of York University for his encouragement and support to this study. I will always be indebted to our graduate secretary, Mrs. Sue McGilveary for her time and effort, without which this thesis would not have materialized. My thanks also goes out to a dear friend, Miss Aneesa Mohammed for the efforts she made in obtaining the necessary data that was needed for this thesis. Finally, I express my heart-felt appreciation to my high school English teacher, Miss Sybil Glasgow. My presence in Canada today was largely due to her influence.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In studying the sociology of inter-groups relations, there is a general tendency among sociologists to focus primarily on the dynamics of group competition. This is understandable when one considers the socio-economic and political impacts which the "plural" social structure has had on contemporary multi-ethnic and multi-racial societies. The twin island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago\textsuperscript{1} does not depart from the pluralism that characterizes many of the post-colonial societies and, is therefore, no exception to this rule. But in spite of the fact that racial antagonism continues to be a pervasive element in Trinidadian society and that the social process of accommodation, which usually leads to fairly stable group relations, has not yet been achieved, Trinidad, unlike its other counterparts such as Guyana and Fiji, has, for the past three decades (1956-1986), experienced relatively peaceful inter-group relations between its two major racial groups namely, Afro-Trinidadians and Indo-Trinidadians.\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1} Trinidad and Tobago, a unitary state comprising two islands, is located in the South Eastern part of the Caribbean. It became a Republic within the Commonwealth of Nations in 1976. Henceforth "Trinidad" will be used for "Trinidad and Tobago".

\textsuperscript{2} The term "Afro-Trinidadians" refers to the Black population of Trinidad whose ancestors were brought in from Africa as slaves. The term "Indo-Trinidadians" refers to the Indian population of Trinidad whose ancestors were brought in from India as indentured servants. Henceforth
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The aim of this thesis is to examine the "regulated" nature of group competition that characterizes Afro-Indo competition in Trinidad. The central argument advanced in this thesis is to determine the extent to which the "regulated" nature of Afro-Indo group competition is, and has been responsible for the maintenance of peaceful coexistence between the groups for more than three decades. In order to understand what is meant by "regulated" group competition and the specific applicability of it to this thesis, it will be necessary to examine the groups (especially the Indo-Trinidadian group's) initial socio-historical insertion into Trinidadian society.

Scholars in this area of research have tended to overemphasize the fact that the Indo-Trinidadian group, as a late-comer to the society, was placed in a disadvantaged position (i.e. in all spheres of the society: social, economic and political) and was therefore, to be seen as a "negatively privileged" group. Not only is such an argument an oversimplification of the problems at hand, but it also relegates the Indo-Trinidadian group to an invariant position in the social order by blindly neglecting structural and other dynamic changes occurring in the society which have affected the various groups socio-

Afro will be used for Afro-Trinidadians and Indo will be used for Indo-Trinidadians.
economic positions. While it is true that the Indo-
Trinidadian group initially occupied a low status position
in the society (i.e. as the largest peasant group which
earned them the title "agro-proletariat"), it is equally
true to argue (empirical evidence notwithstanding) that the
presence of economic alternatives such as the developing of
economic niches for economic autonomy and security, the
utilization of the educational system for upward social
mobility and finally, dynamic changes and developments in
the economy, have to a large extent provided the Indo-
Trinidadian group with the necessary alternatives required
for group advancement. So that by the early to mid-
nineteenth century, the Indo-Trinidadian group was fast
moving out of its former disadvantaged positions.

Competition begins when two individuals or groups both
want the same thing and strive for it within a market
(Smith, 1985:490). While not denying that both the Afro and
Indo groups in Trinidad strive for certain social, economic
and political goals for the purposes of group advancement,
the difference lies in the fact that the Indo group competed
with the Afro group by observing (to use Banton's phrase)
"recognized rules of conduct" (Banton, 1983:80). That is, by
understanding the existing power structure of the island
based on racial exclusion and other discriminatory
practices, the Indo-Trinidadian group was placed in a
position where it had to make choices in a situation of constraints.

Consequently, the development of economic alternatives acted to discourage the possibility of high intensity conflict with the Afro-Trinidadian group. The Indo-Trinidadian group's predominance in the agricultural sector of the economy provided them with an independent economic base and thus, enabled it to establish a monopoly in this area of the economy (Dookeran, 1974:80). In other economic spheres also, the Indo-Trinidadian group has made significant strides in the "independent" professions of Law and Medicine, in the private sectors of the economy such as in wholesale and retail commercial activities and in public sector jobs and occupations such as teachers and school principals (Dookeran, 1974:69). Therefore, it can be argued that the Indo-Trinidadian group, in assessing their relatively disadvantaged position in the society, "regulated" or economically adjusted themselves to occupational positions that did not, to any great extent, threaten or aggravate the Afro-Trinidadian groups economic domains and vice versa. This type of inter-ethnic competition is in stark contrast with the type of inter-ethnic competition that characterized the Ugandan situation, for example.

The Ugandan racial/ethnic conflict arising from the "deregulated" type of competition that existed between the
Africans and the Asians remains fresh in our minds. The Asians were overrepresented in the urban personal service industries where a very significant percentage of those occupations were filled by members of the same minority, which in turn, only served to reinforce the African attitude that the Asians were a major economic threat to their well being (Cross, 1972: 24). This culminated in the Asian expulsion that General Amin of Uganda favoured. This study will limit its focus to one critical period in Trinidad's history, specifically, from 1956 to 1986. However, in order to fully understand race relations and the development of racial/ethnic competition between the Afro and Indo Trinidadian groups, the application of a longitudinal analysis starting from the colonial period to the present becomes necessary.

It was in 1956 that Trinidad achieved self-government with the introduction of the People's National Movement led by Dr. Eric Williams, premier and first Prime Minister of Trinidad. The attainment of independence from Britain in 1962 brought with it drastic constitutional reforms. The dismantling of the colonial power structure and the rise in nationalist sentiments created an uneasy atmosphere. This was as a result of the emergence of party politics that was based exclusively on racial lines. Thus, as the society became fractured along racial lines, the attempts at national unification became even more far fetched.
However, the rise of the profitable oil sector during the sixties and early seventies provided Trinidad with an important lever of prosperity that "softened" the impact of racial and ethnic tension culminating in a degree of economic prosperity and political stability (MacDonald, 1986:8).

The word "stability" however, must be operationally defined so as to avoid theoretical and ideological confusion. "Stability", as applied in the Trinidadian context, does not connote a Parsonian structural functionalist approach which stresses that it is the acceptance of a particular value consensus in a society by its members that makes a social system "integrative" and therefore, functional. The historical record of Trinidadian society will reveal that it has not yet shown signs, if ever, to have increased the adaptive, integrative or goal attainment capacity of the system through tension management or co-operative power sharing. This definition of "stability" then is not applicable to Trinidadian society because past and present political events, as well as economic changes, will illustrate that change is an ongoing process in the island - not just structural changes but more importantly, changes that have and continue to affect the positions of the different racial/ethnic groups in the society. Thus, the potential for social, economic and political transformations that have occurred and which
continues to occur in Trinidadian society suggests that social change was and still remains an imminent feature.

The use of the word "stability" then, as used within the context of Trinidadian society, is synonymous with peaceful co-existence between the Afro and Indo groups. Therefore, the existence of intergroup "stability" within a societal framework characterized by a high potential for intergroup and societal instability, is a characteristic feature of Trinidadian society.
CHAPTER II

BRIEF HISTORY OF INDIAN IMMIGRATION TO TRINIDAD

Studies done on Caribbean social structure have been limited to issues and concerns of the Afro-Caribbean populations in the region despite the fact that Indo-Caribbean peoples form a substantial proportion of the Caribbean population. For example, in Guyana they number approximately fifty-two per cent of the population, while in neighbouring Trinidad and Surinam they account for about forty-two per cent and forty per cent respectively (Thakur, 1989:207 and Lakhan, 1990:73). Moreover, there are small pockets throughout the rest of the Caribbean, including Jamaica, Grenada, Belize and St.Vincent. In all, Indo-Caribbean peoples represent more than twenty per cent of the area's nearly five million English-speaking population (Thakur,1989:207). Yet despite this demographic and historical presence, the Caribbean continues to be seen as an Afro-American culture sphere by many Western and non-Western countries. And despite the increasing racial and cultural heterogeneity, the initial civilization of African culture has left an indelible mark on subsequent cultural patterns. According to one critic,

Slavery suggests the image, it is the same type of agriculture, of dwelling places... and overshadowing all else the common denominator of race: despite the mixing of races the people of these islands are negroes (Guerin,1966:12).
In short, the origins of Caribbean society in black slavery and the continuity of African traditions are the source and general determinants of contemporary cultural features (Rubin, 1963:5). However, the influx of Indian indentured workers into the Caribbean region in the late 1830s and the early 1840s, significantly transformed the existing racial/ethnic composition of the region, comprised formerly of the European and African groups.

After the emancipation of the Black slaves in the British West Indies, there developed a serious labour shortage, since many of the ex-slaves deserted the scenes of their degradation (i.e. the brutality that was associated with plantation life). As Weller (1968) stated, "the colony suffered much distress as a result of emancipation, and many Negroes fled the plantations and squatted on crown lands" (Weller, 1968:19). A cheap and steady supply of labour was needed to prevent the ruin of the lucrative sugar industry. Various indentured groups were tried in Trinidad including Portuguese and Chinese workers, but without success. This was because the Chinese and Portuguese indentured workers had proven to be ill-prepared for plantation work (Brereton, 1981:25). East Indian Indentureship\(^3\) had already

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\(^3\) East Indian Indentureship was an immigration system designed by the British colonial government for the purpose of recruiting workers to work on the sugar plantations that were experiencing a chronic labour shortage as a result of the emancipation of slaves. It was a system of contractual labour based on a five year period of work after which the indentured workers could return to their native country.
succeeded in Mauritius, and it would appear that it was introduced in Trinidad as a last resort. The experiment worked, and East Indians were brought to the West Indies from 1838 to 1917 when the traffic ended (Brereton, 1974:25-26).

The granting of Crown lands to the Indians by the colonial administration played a significant role in encouraging the bulk of the Indian immigrants to make Trinidad their established home. The termination of individual contracts for East Indian indentured labourers, at the end of the nineteenth century, was accompanied by land grants in lieu of return passage to India. Partly in this way, East Indians came to occupy much of the arable land in the vicinity of existing plantations. On the other hand, comparative resources were never made available to the black slaves at the time of emancipation. Thus, the Indians were already provided with a base from which they could achieve a viable economic headstart.

Over the whole period of Indian immigration to Trinidad 1845 to 1917, a total of 143,939 Indians settled in Trinidad (Brereton, 1981:103). The demographic changes that have occurred since colonization with the introduction of the White, African, Indian and Chinese groups into Trinidad have

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4 Crown Lands were exclusively owned by the plantocracy. Crown Lands were simply acres of land that the planter classes owned for the purposes of cultivating sugar or cocoa.
resulted in a society that is characteristic of cultural diversity and heterogeneity. And it was only under the umbrella of colonial despotism could such a conglomeration of racial/ethnic groups have come together. Contemporary Trinidad represents a picture of ethnic and racial multiplicity, with distinctions based on race, colour, religion and class largely, but by no means entirely reinforcing each other.

The 1980 Trinidad and Tobago Census\(^5\) revealed that the numerical balance between the peoples of African and Indian descent was roughly equal, 40.8 per cent and 40.7 per cent respectively. Whites constituted 0.9 per cent of the population, while the Chinese population constituted 0.5 per cent. The mixed elements constituted 16.3 per cent of the entire population (Central Statistical Office Annual Statistical Digest, 1980 No.35:11).

The following is the breakdown of the population based on religious/denominational affiliations. Roman Catholics constituted 33.6 per cent of the population followed by the Hindu population which constituted 25 per cent; Anglicans constituted 15.0 per cent whereas the Muslim and Other religious groups constituted 6.0 per cent and 16.6 per cent respectively (Central Statistical Office Annual Statistical Digest, 1980 No.35:14).

\(^5\) Source: Central Statistical Office of Trinidad and Tobago, 1980.
FACTORs CONTRIBUTING TO THE PERSISTENCE OF PEACEFUL INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS IN TRINIDAD

In order to fully understand how and why peaceful inter-ethnic relations is maintained in a multi-racial society like Trinidad, it is necessary to retrace certain historical events. By re-examining particular occurrence(s) during the colonial period, one of the factors that contributed to the maintenance of peaceful inter-ethnic relations will be revealed.

As has already been mentioned in the Introduction chapter, the bulk of the Indian immigrant workers who came to Trinidad from 1845 to 1917, were settled mainly in the rural areas. As a group, it was largely concentrated in the agricultural sector of the economy. Initially, the Indians started as contractual labourers in the sugar plantations. Consequently, the granting of Crown Lands to the Indians by the colonial administration, in their attempt to persuade the Indians not to return to India, encouraged the bulk of the Indians to make Trinidad their established home. The apparent success of the Crown Lands Scheme provided many Indians with the opportunity of owning arable lands in the vicinity of existing plantations. As such, the Indians made full use of the benefits that were derived from obtaining Crown Lands. The Crown Lands provided them with a viable headstart from which they could branch off into large-scale
agricultural operations. In time, many Indians became large-scale agriculturalists.

In other words, the granting of Crown Lands by the colonial administration to the Indian immigrants in mid-19th century Trinidad, was one of the major alternative which the Indian group had at its disposal. This alternative in large measure lessened the occurrence of economic competition between the Afro and Indo groups during the colonial period. The monopoly which the Indo group eventually came to occupy in the agricultural sector provided them with the necessary economic security and autonomy. This, in turn, led to minimal economic competition between the groups.

It must be noted that the monopoly which the Indo-Trinidadians eventually came to occupy did not meet with resistance by the Afro group. As a matter of fact, the Afro group, after emancipation, fled the rural areas to settle in the urban areas where occupations there were seen to be more attractive. The experience of slavery and the harsh conditions of plantation life was probably the main reason why the Afro group was resistant to plantation and agricultural employment. In other words, the withdrawal of the Afro group from agricultural pursuits provided the Indo group with a ready made platform from which they developed an independent economic base in the agricultural sector of the economy.
PRE AND POST INDEPENDENCE STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS IN TRINIDAD

The decolonization process brought significant changes in the social structure of Trinidadian society. For example, the decline of the colour-class system enabled the Afro and Indo groups to take advantage of the economic opportunities open to them (MacDonald, 1986:130). The decrease in the ascriptive criterion as a factor contributing to the pronounced division of labour along racial and class lines was, to some extent, reduced thereby enabling the achievement criterion based primarily on educational qualification to emerge. In other words, opportunities (social, economic and political) became available for both the Afro and Indo - groups that were excluded from certain positions in the society during the colonial era (MacDonald, 1986:83).

Thus, the emergence of a more "open" social system enabled both the Afro and Indo groups to participate fully in the educational system, which in turn provided them with the necessary social, economic and political advancement for group mobility. This is not to say though that a totally fair and open system came into being, for as the record will show, the Indo-Trinidadian group is still underrepresented in the police and the civil services. This was as a result of the victory of the People's National Movement Party (PNM) in 1956. The PNM's emphasis on communal representation
(i.e. it was called the "Negro" party) encouraged the "we-they" type of relation between the Afro and Indo groups. This, in turn, heightened Indo-Trinidadians fears of being swamped by a Creole culture. This fact became apparent as Indo-Trinidadians developed an almost militant desire to protect their culture (La Guerre, 1972:4-5).

From the 19th century Indo-Trinidadians have been forming groups in defence of their culture: the East Indian National Congress; the East Indian National Association; the Young Indian League; the Indian Association of Trinidad and Tobago; and in more recent times the People's Democratic Party which later became the Democratic Labour Party (commonly referred to as the "Indian" party). The DLP consisted mainly of educated middle-class Indo-Trinidadian politicians whose main emphasis was on communal representation. However, divisions within the Indo-Trinidadian community in the form of class and religious differences seriously affected the formation of a strong Indo-Trinidadian political party. Thus, political mobilization arising from the formation of ethnic/racial political parties (PNM and DLP) resulted in the emergence of racially mass centred parties. The emergence of black nationalism in the form of a West Indian Federation and later a Black Power Movement\(^6\), contributed to the further

\(^6\) The Black Power Movement that occurred in Trinidad in 1970 was a radical attempt by a Pan Africanist group in the Caribbean region to curb the country's economic, political
perpetuation of the already existing racial cleavages in the society.

Secondly, and more importantly, was the emergence of a profitable oil export economy as a result of the discovery of substantial natural gas deposits in 1973. This significantly changed the island's economic structure - one that was based on the plantation economy to one based on an export-oriented industrial economy. Such an economic expansion culminated in the emergence of a significant Afro and Indo middle class (Ryan, 1988:132). This shift in the groups' class positions has, to an extent, made ethnicity in Trinidad of variable salience at times. That is to say, the continued bullishness of the economy, coupled with the government's moderate capitalist economic development strategy, not only provided the newly created middle and upper Afro and Indo classes the opportunity for social and economic mobility, but it also provided the Afro and Indo lower class groups with the necessary prerequisites for social and economic mobility. In the analysis chapter a more detailed discussion will reveal (a) the effects which international capitalist penetration has had on the structure of inter-ethnic relations and (b) the effect it has had on the potential for class and ethnic mobilization.

and social problems, which they attributed to the hegemonic control of the "white power structure". It was a movement geared towards nationalism and was therefore anti-imperialist and colonial in its ideology and its rhetoric.
Furthermore, the rapid expansion of the economy produced high rates of urbanization and sub-urbanization which outmoded, to an extent, the traditional pattern of racial residential segregation. In contemporary Trinidad, Afro and Indo Trinidadians as well as other minorities often reside side by side in many sections of the island. In a sense then, the crucial role of such factors as economic divisions and ecological (i.e. rural and urban) differences which the colonial administration encouraged, has to some extent been eroded in Trinidad. Oxaal (1968) pointed out that the limited degree of inter-ethnic "fighting" combined with the small size of the community, has produced features characteristics of a "folk community". (Oxaal,1968:24). In a sense then, Trinidadian society can be described as having the Tonnien Gemeinschaft type of community in that it is characterized by a high degree of personality, intense gossiping and communal interaction.

However, racial residential segregation still exists in some areas. Racially exclusive segregation is still to be found in the Laventille East West Corridor area, the majority of occupants being Afro-Trinidadians. The county Caroni area situated in Central Trinidad is still overwhelmingly Indo in population. These types of racially based residential segregation has had, and continues to have important political ramifications. An examination and understanding of the sociology of the electorate in Trinidad
will reveal that the Laventille East West Corridor area has always been the support base of the former PNM or "negro" party. And it is partly this pattern of voting along racial lines that had kept the PNM in power for thirty odd years. This then was the key to understanding the phenomenon of one party dominance in Trinidad (Ryan, 1988:134).

The demise of the People's National Movement in 1986 brought to the fore a new political awakening for the peoples of Trinidad and Tobago. The victory of the National Alliance For Reconstruction, otherwise known as the NAR party, and which is also the present government of Trinidad and Tobago, was the first ever multi-racial/ethnic political coalition to have emerged in the history of Trinidad and Tobago. Ryan (1988) argues that the main reason for the birth of the new National Alliance For Reconstruction (NAR) party was attributed to the decline in the country's economy. A majority of Afro and Indo Trinidadians found themselves supporting opposing political formations with only fragments of the two dominant communities finding it possible to break primordial ranks to join a multi-ethnic political coalition (i.e the National Alliance For Reconstruction Party).

In other words, the race factor was, to an extent, neutralised in the 1986 election. However, future disruptions within the NAR party indicated that the inter-ethnic political mirage was slowly fading away. Ryan's
research has proven to be invaluable for the sociology or political science professor and student interested in studying politics and Afro Indo relations in 20th century Trinidad.

Nonetheless, Afro Indo relations in present day Trinidadian society, inspite of the many strains in their relations, are still characteristically peaceful in nature. The recent coup attempt is proof of the above assertion. In multi-ethnic/racial societies, politically and economically tense situations may initiate the potential occurrences of "race wars" between the different sections. The recent political and economic turmoil in Trinidad saw both the Afro and Indo elements condemning the coup attempt in favour of more peaceful social change (Windsor Star, August 1,1990:1).
CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Although this thesis utilizes a variety of sociological theories in its attempt to examine the diverse and complex patterns of race relations in Trinidad, the use of one central theoretical construct that can explain the particular type of inter-ethnic economic competition that exists between Afro and Indo Trinidadians will be used.

The Rational Choice Theory of Race and Ethnic Relations as expounded by Banton (1983) together with the research literature will provide us with the reasons as to why inter-ethnic economic competition between the Afro and Indo groups resulted in the "regulated" pattern of group competition (i.e. or the lack of economic competition between the groups). The research hypothesis that is being tested in this thesis is, therefore, based on the RCT model.

The main aim of this thesis is to examine the particular type of inter-ethnic economic competition that characterize Afro and Indo economic group competition in Trinidad. However, it was also stated in the Introduction that emphasis will also be placed on the type of political competition that exists between the groups. It will be shown that from 1956 to 1986 - the period in which political competition between the Afro and Indo groups started - political rivalry was contained as a result of economic forces at play in the society. Economic conditions then,
were instrumental in discouraging the potential for class/ethnic mobilization. Similarly, the post 1986 period saw the rise of political competition again (which the NAR events demonstrate). The current ethnic conflict between the Indo and Afro politicians within the NAR party are based mainly on the issues of unequal allocation and distribution of resources to certain racial/ethnic groups. This current political conflict, however, has not escalated into any major crisis. The conflict in in the form of criticisms of certain politicians in the NAR who are being accused of trying to maintain the PNM's allocation system. Since the Rational Choice Theory does not examine political competition between different groups, a theory which focuses on political competition between different racial/ethnic groups is needed.

Rabushka and Shepsle's (1972) theory of political instability in "plural" or post-colonial societies will be used to examine the nature of political competition that exists between the Afro and Indo groups. Rabushka and Shepsle's theory of political instability is premised on the assumption that primordial factors, such as religion and ethnicity, tend to encourage ethnic voting, ethnic factionalism and political competition, all of which may culminate in overt conflict between groups for political power. However, as will be shown later, "circumstantial" or
economic factors in Trinidad have lessened the potential for overt political conflict between the groups.

Hechter (1975) argues that ethnic political mobilization may ensue not because of primordial sentiments per se but because of economic conditions. In the case of Trinidad, the structure of opportunity (i.e. economic forces) have weakened the potential for overt political and economic competition. This in turn have discouraged the occurrences of class/ethnic mobilization by the Afro and Indo lower classes. As will be seen in the analysis chapter, the potential for overt inter-ethnic conflict arising from economic and political competition between the Afro and Indo groups, was contained primarily because of "circumstantial" or "situational" (i.e. economic) factors.

The applications of the above mentioned theories together with the data will provide some answers as to why economic and political competition between the Afro and Indo groups did not culminate in overt inter-ethnic conflict. In other words, economic developments that have contributed to cross-cutting class alliances coupled with inter-ethnic alignments have lessened the potential for overt economic and political competition between the Afro and Indo groups. An analysis of the following secondary theoretical constructs to be used in this thesis warrant individual attention.
CONFLICT PERSPECTIVES ON THE STRUCTURE OF "PLURAL SOCIETIES"

It can be argued that "plural" societies were created in order to facilitate the economic and political interests of European colonialists. Kuper (1974) argued that the conquest of one people by another of a different race frequently led to the creation of "plural" societies in which "it is the political relations which appreciably determine the relationship to the means of production, and that the catalyst for revolutionary change is to be found in the structure of power" (Kuper, 1974:226). In other words, it is possible to deduce a pluralist theory which presupposes that societies composed of status groups that are phenotypically distinguished, have different positions in the economic order, and are differentially incorporated into the political structure. Thus, Kuper's concept of "differential incorporation" finds empirical support in most societies that were once subjected to imperial rule, including Trinidad, where an economically exclusive and distinct white capitalist class imposed its own political super structure upon the non-white races (i.e. African slaves and Indian indentured servants).

The "plural society" model suggests that the overall cohesion of the society is achieved via the domination of one segment, by coercion, in the political institutional order. Though correct in acknowledging the centrality of questions of power and conflict, it conceives of these
questions in too limited and segmentary a fashion. According to this model, coordination in "plural societies" is not achieved via the means of political institutionalization but by the hegemonic domination of one sector over all the others in every feature of organized social life (Hall, 1977:159).

While not denying that the "plural model" concentrates our attention on plural cultural values, at the same time, however, it does not concentrate our attention on the structure of legitimation. In the period when white settler groups predominated in the political sphere, their values, customs, language and other social and cultural patterns, they also monopolized the sphere of legitimation: an "order of current and historical dominance ... the exact reverse of their relative numerical strength" (Smith, 1965:40).

Kinloch (1974) isolates a social definition of race by hypothesizing that: the more social and economic inequality in the social structure, the more race will be utilized in role assignment and societal definition of behaviour (i.e. race as a role sign) (Kinloch, 1974:206). Similarly, Bienvenue (1985) argued that in the case of Canada, the differentials in power between the native Indians and the Anglo-Saxons and Francophone Canadians were a result of the structuring of the colonial system, which placed the Indians at the bottom of the stratification system (Bienvenue, 1985:200). Porter (1965) would agree with
Bienvenue's contention that the structuring of the colonial system played a pivotal role in determining the position of the native Indians in the overall stratification system. For Porter, however, ethnic (and class) inequality results primarily from the relative control that different groups acquire within the country's economic, political and ideological power structures (Porter, 1965). In contrast to the above theoretical perspectives, the Rational Choice Theory places more emphasis on situational factors rather than primordial factors (racial/ethnic or religious) in its assessment of racial and ethnic competition.

**THE RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY OF RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS**

Patterns of race relations may vary on so many dimensions that the application of a most suitable theoretical framework to a particular situation of inter-group relation becomes a difficult task. A conceptual framework can be constructed by beginning with the actions of individuals pursuing their interests in historically defined circumstances. Banton says: "Only in the more detailed examination of events in the present time is it possible to approach the conditions in which sociological theories can be properly tested" (Banton, 1983:3).

Banton (1983) postulates a Rational Choice Theory (or RCT) which can account for the differential position of minority groups in multi-racial/ethnic societies. Banton
notes that there is a variety of understandings of the Rational Choice Theory in the study of race and ethnic relations (Banton, 1983:103). Banton argues that in order to account for the differential position of minority groups in multi-racial/ethnic societies RCT will need to be set in the context of alternatives.

In order to understand the differential position of minority group(s) in a society, it is necessary to look at migration and its consequences, specifically in a situation where the minority group(s) is/are established in a receiving society that is more powerful than the immigrant groups. That is, the position which a racial/ethnic group will occupy in a particular society will depend on the power of the immigrant group relative to the power of the host society. Banton focuses on the case of migrants (incomers) who are less powerful than the receiving society; in this case the migrants are expected either to seek individual ends or organise as a group to stay separate. Migrants that are less powerful than the host society, will be more likely to seek and optimize the alternatives which may be available to them.

The main axioms on which the RCT is premised are as follows. First, individuals act so as to maximize net advantage (Banton, 1983:104). Secondly, individuals make decisions subject to a set of constraints. Banton says: "It is assumed that people have wants or goals that cannot all
be realized since they live in a world of scarcity" (p.104), and, therefore, 'it is a theory about alternatives as well as choices' (p.107). Thirdly, today's choices constitute part of tomorrow's constraints (p.104). And finally, RCT is a theory of aggregate behaviour (p.107). This last axiom of the theory, however, has been subject to criticisms.

RCT has been criticised for being individualistic in spite of the fact that it lays claim for being a theory of aggregate behaviour. That is, the theory deals with and pertains wholly and only to individuals, something that is often referred to as "methodological individualism". There is and continues to be a strong tradition of anti-individualism within sociology, dating back at least to Durkheim, which has sought to stress that the whole is greater than the parts. This sociological tradition would argue that an individualistic theory, since it applies only to individuals cannot, by definition be sociological. A genuine sociological theory would have to be phrased in terms of social groups.

Undoubtedly RCT is phrased in terms of individual's behaviour. Banton also sees his version of RCT as part, at least, of a microfoundation for macro-sociology. However, Banton does not spell out very clearly how one can move from the individual to the aggregate level of analysis. As such, his statement that "RCT is a theory of aggregate behaviour" (p.107) could justifiably mean that any tests of RCT will
need to be performed on aggregate (or large-scale) data. It is part of a standard testing procedure for this type of theory that the finding of one individual case which runs counter to the predictions will not refute the theory. The predictions of RCT most often take the form that, a change (increase or decrease) in X will produce a change in Y, other things being equal. Any test of this relationship must hold other things constant or controlled in order to test whether it is actually a change in X that produces the change in Y, and for this, multivariate analysis using aggregate or large-scale data is required (Dex, 1985:520). It is, however, beyond the scope of this thesis to conduct such an analysis.

Similarly, RCT's first premise, that individuals maximise their net advantage, has been claimed to be vacuous or tautological by critics. The neoclassical economists' version of this postulate is that individuals aim to maximise their utility or satisfaction. Therefore, the tautology surfaces because there is no way to verify whether individuals do behave in this manner since satisfaction and choice is such a subjective notion. Banton recognizes this problem and discusses the testing of the proposition (p.104). Nonetheless, he believes that the proposition has validity and is necessary since "it is very difficult to interpret social behaviour without it" (Banton, 1983:105). Furthermore, Banton does not think that the proposition is
vacuous because he considers that other types of behaviour like impulse (p.105), miscalculation (p.12) and irrationality (p.12) are also possible. In other words, Banton is saying that individuals generally act rationally.

In a sense then, it is useful to incorporate the concept of Act utilitarianism which is based on the assumption that actions are intended to maximize net advantages. In philosophical discussion this is a criterion for judging the goodness or badness of actions, but in sociology it can be used to differentiate the interpretation of behaviour (Banton, 1985:535). That is to say, social behaviour needs to be placed in a specific sociological context. Depending on the social context, individuals or groups will make decisions based on the outcomes of actions which they may perceive to be the most advantageous to them. In other words, Banton's first premise that "individuals act so to maximize net advantage" is based on the principle of act utilitarianism.

According to Dex (1985), the contention that individuals act rationally is not an unrealistic assumption since it is the predictions of a theory which really count and are the test of it (Dex, 1985:518). Such a proposition is, in fact, a realistic one, since there exists empirical evidence that individuals do act in this way just as there is evidence to point to the contrary. The data that will be presented later on will buttress this view. It can be
argued, then, that Banton's first premise is not tautological (empirical evidence notwithstanding) since he has given it assumptions which claim to be realistic. In other words, most of the time social action is rational. This argument may find support in Hollis' (1978) view that thoughts and actions are predetermined in a strictly cause-effect manner and that in reality, such an argument can be strengthened in a situation where peoples or groups have a limited degree of autonomy, as opposed to being totally self-determined (Hollis, 1978:93-97).

Neoclassical economic analysis is criticised by Dex (1985) and Weinreich (1985) for its neglect of preference formation since preferences are associated with value systems. Banton accepts this limitation when he says:

The Rational Choice Theory cannot explain the initial values which the groups bring to the encounter but it can help to explain why they change in particular directions and at varying speeds (Banton, 1983:115).

However, Banton's RCT model, does in fact provide us with a form of action, i.e., in its capacity to predict decision processes and their outcomes (Chivers, 1985:465-6). This is essentially Banton's approach to rationality i.e. the outcome of social action. People set out to optimise their objectives, selfish or altruistic, but the focus of analysis is the outcome of benefits to the actor(s). Thus, such an analysis will want to know the alternatives that are available to the actors. These will either have to be
discovered or else presumed via accounts of the particular situation under investigation. In other words, Banton's focus is highly specific - the use of a set of propositions with which to analyze outcomes of action.

In neoclassical economics such decision processes will depend on circumstantial or situational factors; that is to say, Banton's version of RCT is based on the concept of "market power" and as such, competition is viewed as the critical process shaping patterns of ethnic relations, so that, according to the theory, "when members of groups encounter one another in new situations the boundaries between them will be dissolved if they compete as one individual with another; the boundaries between them will be strengthened if they compete as one group with another" (Banton, 1983:12).

As regards to competition then, Banton's usage varies more freely. He initially contrasts the "unconscious competition for resource" of plants and animals with "the conscious competition of humans", and says that "people compete with one another by observing recognized rules of conduct" (Banton, 1983:80-1). Thus, for Banton, "competition begins when two individuals or groups both want the same thing and strive for it within a market (Ibid:103). Presumably, since his theory requires populations of individuals whose interactions are governed by their separate cost/benefit calculations to maximise net
utilities, and since such interactions formally resemble transactions in the neoclassical model of price regulating markets, Banton was led to redefine human competition as market relations. Having equated individual and group competition with exchange and trade governed by "recognized rules of conduct" (Ibid:81), Banton says that the most extreme form of group competition is that of physical attack. It counts as competition only in the ecological sense of struggle for resources and in sociological terms is more properly considered as conflict (Banton,1983:121-2).

While not denying that ethnic associations are intimately bound to people's ethnic identities and that they depend upon ethnic factors such as cultural values and folklore, the Rational Choice Theory of Race and Ethnic Relations (R&ER) does not attach overwhelming importance to such "ethnic attachments" in the decision making process; although Banton has shown that he dissociates himself from the view that all behaviour is economically motivated. Such an emotional approach can be detected in Collins' (1981) suggestion that individuals can be assumed to act on the basis of tacit assumptions which he calls "interactive ritual chains" much of which are supposedly based he thinks on emotions rather than cognitive decision making (Collins,1981:985). This calls into question the cultural characteristics associated with particular racial/ethnic groups.
For example, nonviolence and meekness would appear to have been the cultural characteristics of many Jewish communities, probably based in their vulnerability as minority communities. But after the disturbing images of the holocaust and associated folklore, Jewish ethnic identity in Israel has become redefined with highly assertive characteristics (Weinreich, 1985:512). In contemporary Canadian society, East Indian "passivity" coupled with their vulnerability as a minority community can be attributed to the frequent occurrences of "Paki-bashing." However, such primordial "givens" cannot be taken to mean that they are the sole determinants of racial/ethnic groups actions and preferences. Situational constraints play a more important role in determining a group's actions, behaviours and decisions. The Rational Choice Theory, in its analysis of group competition, places more emphasis on situational variables and less on primordial ones. At the same time, however, primordial attachments may remain strong.

THE VALUE OF RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY

Usually, relations between ethnic groups are primarily determined by the political and economic structure within which, as part of a historical process, they were brought into inter-relation. RCT's main argument then is that in inter-group relations, as in other spheres, individuals try
to make the best use of the available resources in order to attain their objectives. Therefore, to understand groups' behaviour it is necessary to pay every bit as much attention to the alternatives open to them (Banton, 1983:33-34). Their action may modify the pattern of group relations and at the same time, alter the circumstances which will face successive generations of their own groups. In other words, the situational constraints individuals may be faced with will presumably guide them in their selection of perceived alternatives open to them. With this in mind, one of the best, and certainly the simplest, ways of organizing information about racial and ethnic relations is to see them as a part of the history of particular societies. This makes the RCT model of race and ethnic relations an essentially developmental one.

Therefore, RCT encourages the study of history from the perspective of actors at a particular point in time. To be applied to historical material, RCT needs to have a thorough understanding of how people or groups saw things at that particular time; what they preferred (valued), and saw as the best possible alternatives. Banton's version of this advantage of RCT is phrased in terms of studying the alternatives so that he is indicating that choices can be made about real or perceived alternatives.

One of RCTs shortcomings is that it directs us away from a crude view of racism in the study of race and ethnic
relations (Banton, 1983: 364 and 388). The histories of the many contemporary multi-racial/ethnic societies were founded with their social, economic and political values based on racism - the "assumed" superiority of white over black. Surely, Banton must have been aware of the fact that African slaves and East Indian indentured servants were brought into a situation that rendered them not only economically and politically weak, but also "culturally" weak given the European ethnocentric attitude that all that is white is well. The failure of RCT to handle vicious race relations is evident from Banton's neglect of incorporating the slaughter of aborigines in the West Indies, Australia and North America, which are all effects of rational decisions by whites to optimise their net advantages. For Banton, the crude view would be that racism is an essentially irrational and immutable prejudice which one group may have towards another. In other words, RCT puts racism in the context of constraints within a particular market situation i.e., competitive interaction between optimising actors will always need to be placed in their historical and political context.

More importantly, however, is the fact that RCT provides predictions under certain specifiable conditions; that is, where ethnic/racial groups respond to clear economic incentives that may or may not forestall the probability of intense economic competition between groups.
In other words, RCT serves to draw attention to the fact that economic interests can often be underlying seemingly non-economic behaviour, although these do not necessarily have to be conscious motives of the actors involved.

Therefore, the Rational Choice Theory of race and ethnic relations draws attention to important characteristics of human thoughts, actions and behaviours. Rational beings have their reasons for what they think and do. They use their intellects, they make choices and they can be creative and innovative. In conclusion then, RCT is an approach which judges all kinds of behaviour in terms of the criterion of rationality, i.e., whether the actor is maximising his or her net advantage. Banton's analysis of the choices and alternatives which different racial/ethnic groups may have at their disposal undoubtedly contributes to an understanding of the maintenance of peaceful economic co-existence between racial/ethnic groups in multi-racial societies. However, his analysis of the social boundaries that separate groups does not explicate processes of economic specialization and the ramifications this may have on inter-ethnic group competition.

AN ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

In all organized social life, what can be made relevant to interaction in any particular social situation is prescribed (Goffman, 1959). If people agree about these
prescriptions, their agreement on codes and values need not extend beyond that which is relevant to the social situations in which they interact. Stable inter-ethnic relations presuppose such a structuring of interaction: a set of prescriptions governing situations of contact, and allowing for articulation in some sectors or domains of activity, and a set of proscriptions on social situations preventing inter-ethnic interaction in other sectors, and thus insulating parts of the culture from confrontation and modification (Barth, 1969:16).

This is what Furnivall (1944) depicted in his analysis of the "plural" society: a poly-ethnic society integrated in the market place, under the control of a state system dominated by one of the groups, but leaving large areas of cultural diversity in the religious and domestic sectors of activity. This allows ethnic/racial groups in multi-racial or poly-ethnic societies to maintain dichotomies and differences, which in turn, will result in the emergence of boundaries. These boundaries will maintain and generate ethnic diversity within larger, encompassing social systems and may lead to complementarity between groups. Such complementarity between groups can give rise to interdependence or symbiosis (Barth, 1969:18).

Such interdependence, according to Barth (1969), can be partly analyzed from the point of view of cultural ecology, and the sectors of activity where other populations with
other cultures articulate may be thought of as niches to which the group is adapted (Barth, 1969:19). Thus, where two or more ethnic groups are in contact, their adaptations may entail the monopolization of clearly distinct niches in the natural environment which may lead to minimal competition for resources. In such a case, the groups interdependence will be limited despite co-residence in the area. Furthermore, the groups may provide important goods and services for each other, i.e. occupy reciprocal and therefore different niches but in close interdependence. These alternatives refer to stable situations (Barth, 1969:20). In such a situation one is confronted with the typical structure of the "plural" society based on economic specialization and symbiotic interdependence between the constituent units.

THEORIES OF SOCIAL CONFLICT

In analyzing the complexity of inter-ethnic relations one must also take into account the possibility of conflict between groups, especially the type of conflict that may fundamentally change the existing social structure. Since the Rational Choice Theory does not address interactive political actions and behaviours that are to be found between different competing groups, an alternative theoretical paradigm is needed to supplement this deficiency.
Rex (1981) expounds a Neo-Weberian conflict theory that can be applied to ethnic political processes. He applies a micro-sociological framework to a macro-sociological (i.e. political processes) issue by analyzing political interactions of a dyadic type between different groups and collectivities that are contained within one political unit. Tension and conflict, according to Rex, are inherent in the relationship between the relative position of groups and individuals within a politically and bureaucratically organized allocative system. That is to say, groups or individuals are in competition and conflict with one another because resources are scarce and some get better treatment than others i.e., there are distinctions to be made between those who control resources and those who do not. In this case the negotiating process takes place immediately at the political level (Rex, 1981:47).

However, Rex argues that conflicts of this type are rarely settled in practice by some kind of medieval disputation, and in many cases, appeal to moral arguments might be used expeditiously and opportunistically to justify action which the parties of individuals intend to pursue in fulfilment of their interest regardless of the moral issues involved. In other words, arguments will consist of special pleading and rationalisation by each party or individual on his/her own behalf coupled with an attempt to expose the dishonest or ideological nature of the other's position.
(Rex, 1981:8-12). And since the control of the production of some resources is in the hands of a political party or political parties, conflict goes on at a political level either between individuals and the party or between parties. Access to resources now depends upon the group's access to political power (Rex, 1981:46-47).

Similarly, Oberschall (1973) examines some of the causes that may give rise to political conflict between members of different groups. For example, he argues that dissatisfaction with inefficient and insufficient authority occurs when the government and ruling groups are incapable of solving pressing societal problems and fulfilling the usual functions of government (Oberschall, 1973:48).

Oberschall goes on to argue that such practices as corruption, maladministration, nepotism and officials' remoteness and unresponsiveness to the people, may not immediately give rise to major political upheavals, but accumulated frustrations and discontents in time will undermine the regime's legitimacy (Oberschall, 1973:48).

Finally, Oberschall argues that discontent and political conflict are caused by contests for greater power or for maintaining one's share of power by already favourably suited groups and organizations (Oberschall, 1973:48). It is here, according to Oberschall, that the State apparatus comes into question. The State apparatus then comes under severe criticisms as the political underdog
seeks to justify its position in the political order. The conflict heightens as the State continues to restrict the sphere of power of organizations or groups by means of administrative regulations (Oberschall, 1973:48). In conclusion, the issues which both Rex and Oberschall examine are the types of political behaviours and actions that characterise political processes in post-colonial societies where contest for political power by different groups usually leads to intense political conflicts.

**Socio-Political Theories and the "Plural Society" Model**

Rabushka and Shepsle (1972), on the other hand, examine from a more macrosociological perspective the issues which contribute to the maintenance of democratic instability in "plural" or post-colonial societies. They argue that much of the racial/ethnic conflict which occurs in many multi-racial/ethnic societies are usually attributed to the primordial elements in the these "plural" societies which, according to Furnivall, are those societies which are comprised of "two or more elements or social orders which live side by side, yet without mingling, in one political unit" (Furnivall, 1944:446). That is, racial, religious, linguistic, tribal and other types of ethnic distinctions severely constrain the prospects for democratic stability in the many newly independent societies in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.
In other words, Furnivall's model of the "plural" society focuses upon conflict as its key political consequence. Others, such as Braithwaite (1953) and Crowley (1957), have departed from Furnivall's conflict model of the "plural" society. They conclude from their theoretical work and field experience that "plural" societies are held together by a shared value consensus among the diverse communities (Morris, 1956:196-198). They, therefore, depart from the conflict model of the "plural" society by adopting a more functionalist approach to the "plural" society framework. Such theoretical applications may find little support when one considers the type of socio-political catastrophes that have arisen as a result of ethnic/racial conflicts in many contemporary post-colonial societies. The feuding factions can be seen in Guyana between Afro and Indo Guyanese, in India between Hindus and Sikhs, in Malaysia between Malays and Chinese and in Sri Lanka between the Sinhalese and Tamils.

Other theoreticians on the "plural" society, including Smith (1965), Depres (1967) and van de Berghe (1967) have aimed at partial modifications of Furnivall's conflict framework, although van de Berghe has attempted a synthesis of the prevailing conflict and consensus views (van de Berghe, 1967). Of overriding concern to this thesis then is the question: Why are cultural divisions sometimes politically salient and sometimes not? Although the
literature in this area tends to emphasize the overwhelming occurrence of the former, some of the research findings for this thesis will indicate that in Trinidad cultural divisions are not always politically salient.

Therefore, Rabushka's and Shepsle's (1972) argument that there always exists patterns of democratic instability in "plural" societies is in fact empirically supported by the prevalence of the many instances of conflicts in post-colonial societies that are caused by primordial politics. That is, they believe that in "plural" societies there exists the steadily increasing phenomenon of ethnic/racial conflict. Although cultural diversity is a near universal phenomenon, only in specific subset of countries does this diversity have important political implications.

In a multi-racial society like Trinidad, politics tend to follow racial/lines, whereas in "pluralistic" societies, (United States and Canada being prime examples), politically relevant issues and actions do not always coincide with racial/ethnic groups (Rabushka and Shepsle,1972:20-21). Thus, the assignment of any given country to either of these categories is determined by observation; e.g., cultural diversity, communal parties, campaign appeals for ethnic solidarity and so forth. In this type of communal politics, strains (racial and ethnic in nature) frequently develop. That is, after independence, the content of politics is distribution.
The colonial power has removed itself as a contender, leaving only fellow nationals to dispute "who gets what, when and how". That is, from the point of view of interracialism as advocated by the political party that takes over after the colonial power departs, the game is reduced from a situation where the colonized is against the colonialists to a situation in which one racial group is in competition with another racial/ethnic group. This is why Rabushka and Shepsle (1971) have argued that loyalty in "plural" societies is communal and not national (Rabushka, et al, 1971:469). This is also why (Nevitte et al, 1986) argue that an ethnic/racial preference in multi-racial/ethnic states is usually a political preference. It is an expression of individual tastes and values which reflect the primordial sentiments of one's own community (Nevitte et al, 1986:1-6). An individual views available political alternatives in terms of their compatibility with his/her own community's preferences and values. There is, thus, a certain "we -they" quality about ethnic preferences (Rabushka and Shepsle, 1971:466). Thus, the political significance of race in Trinidad had prevented the emergence of an interracial alliance (the Butler Afro-Indo Solidarity attempt as well as the National Alliance For Reconstruction Party being exceptions to this rule) among the lower classes despite a common experience of economic exploitation and hardship.
If, as is the case in Trinidad, political loyalty is not always entirely communal (i.e., where a particular racial/ethnic group is not a homogeneous unit in the sense that there are to be found discrepancies in political affiliation and loyalty within that one racial/ethnic group), arguably then, such a situation will reduce the potential for inter-racial/ethnic conflict that may or may not culminate in the occurrence of a more benign type of intergroup relations. In other words, Rabushka and Shepsle main argument is that the salience of "race" makes politics in "plural" societies invariably communal. But the salience of "race" in toto cannot explain the prevalence of democratic instability in "plural" or post-colonial societies. Other factors may contribute to degrees of instability.

For example, Milne (1981) and Ryan (1988) criticize the inappropriateness of the Westminster style political system. They argue that such a model for political development is inappropriate since it encourages politics of competition and discourages politics of co-operation between the different racial/ethnic factions. This system of political development is a legacy of colonialism and has affected the task of nation-building in post-colonial societies. The "Westminster model" is an inherently competitive style of politics which has proven unsuitable in tense societies which were brought together in the quest for plantation labour. A young nation, faced with the task of "cleaning
up" the colonial damage, needs a stable political environment. Ironically, the "Westminster model" is, in essence, a competitive party system which keeps alive the problem of 'race' in countries like Trinidad, Cuyana, Malaysia and Fiji.

One of the main functions of the Cabinet system of government and which is also based on the "Westminster" model, is its emphasis on collective decision making which, for all intents and purposes, is often violated thereby contributing to political instability in post-colonial societies. In theory then, the "Westminster model" - a supposedly "progressive" system - is based on the principles of collective decision making and responsibility. In practice, however, blatant violations of the system by politicians (who engage in such behaviour in order to gain racial appeal and support) reverses the role which the model was intended to carry out in the first place.

THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTS IN THE STUDY OF ETHNO-POLITICAL MOBILIZATION

The word "mobilization" conveniently identifies the process by which a group goes from being a passive collection of individuals to an active participant in public life. Demobilization is the reverse process (Tilly, 1978:69). Etzioni (1968) defines mobilization in the following way:
We refer to the process by which a unit gains significantly in the control of assets it previously did not control as mobilization... By definition, it entails a decline in the assets controlled by subunits, the supraunit of which the unit is a member, or external units, unless the assets whose control the unit gained are newly produced ones... A mere increase in the assets of members, of subunits, or even the unit itself does not mean that mobilization has occurred, though it increases the mobilization potential. The change in the capacity to control and use assets is what is significant (Etzioni,1968:389).

In the above quote, Etzioni offers a rough classification of assets, or resources, one of which is called normative (e.g., loyalties and obligations). A group mobilizes if it gains greater control over its normative resources and demobilizes if it loses that sort of control (Etzioni,1968:390).

In many parts of the world, ethnic diversity remains a significant aspect of social life whether states are pre-industrial or post-industrial, communist or capitalist (McKay,1982:1). Connor (1973) reports that nearly half of the world's states have experienced varying degrees of "ethnically inspired dissonance" (Connor,1973:1-2). States in Asia and Africa face difficulties in resolving ethnic conflicts. The inter-ethnic fighting between militant Sikh extremists and moderate Hindus in India and between the Tutsi and Rawanda tribes in Africa are cases in point. Countries that are less "plurally" structured such as Western Europe and North America also face difficulties in their attempts to settle cultural and/or minority problems. For example, in Canada, the federal and Quebec governments
are divided over the issue of sovereignty. Thus, these and other ethno-political issues have encouraged Glazer and Moynihan (1974) to ask the question: Why ethnicity? And why has ethnicity become a vehicle for mobilization? (Moynihan and Glazer, 1974:33-34).

Glazer and Moynihan (1975) isolate two polar types of positions that may initiate group mobilization: "primordial" and "circumstantial" or "situational" positions. They argue that whereas in the primordial case, men are divided due to "deep" historical and experiential factors, in the situational case, ethnic cleavages arise because of "specific and immediate circumstances" (Glazer and Moynihan, 1975:19-20).

Much sociological analysis, both Marxist and non-Marxist, fail to bestow on ethnic/racial groups the same conceptual riches that are routinely accorded to classes. As a result, analysis of the relationship between the two, and of their salience for political mobilization, is seriously compromised. That is to say, Marxists and non-Marxists scholars, in their analysis of group mobilization, tend to confine their views to the dynamics of class mobilization. While not denying that class interests and organizations are important for collective action and mobilization, the concept of interest per se as applied strictly within the confines of purely class analysis becomes inadequate. It is inadequate since there is a
strong overlap between class and ethnic mobilization (i.e. the two are inseparable). In post-colonial, multi-racial/ethnic societies the overlap is even stronger since political mobilization is initiated as a result of a combination of racial/ethnic economic interests and class interests.

In most multi-racial societies, the members of each ethnic/racial group usually share objective social interests— in having educational instruction for their children in schools conducted in their own language or religion, in being represented politically, in not being excluded from or underpaid in occupations at any class level, and so on. These shared interests will impel them to political mobilization. However, in a situation like Trinidad, where there are disparities in class differences and heterogeneity in political loyalties within a single ethnic/racial groups (as is the case of the Indo-Trinidadian group), ethno-political mobilization becomes a bit far-fetched. What is needed is an approach that focuses on ethnic political mobilization based on class/economic mechanisms.

Hechter's (1975) isolates a Reactive Ethnicity Approach to ethnic political mobilization which focuses specifically on class and economic mechanisms which, he argues, are two of the most important factors that initiate group efforts at mobilization. In this approach, ethnic political mobilization is not regarded as a residual
phenomenon which diminishes with development, but is linked to a particular set of economic conditions. In other words, the Reactive Ethnicity Approach to ethnic political mobilization, places emphasis on the importance of "situational" factors as opposed to purely primordial sentiments based on ethnic bonds.

The theory further advocates that ethnic differentiation per se is not a sufficient cause: only where there is a "class/cultural division of labour," i.e. where members of an ethnic/racial group are systematically assigned to subordinate occupational positions, will ethnic political mobilization occur (Hector, 1975:29).

Morris (1956) in his study of Indians in "plural" East Africa observed that factionalism within racial/ethnic groups forestalled perfect racial/ethnic cohesion, which lead, on occasion, to alliances of expediency across racial lines (Morris, 1956:124-125). Thus, Morris's findings (which will be discussed later on) also find empirical support in the case of Trinidad.

M.G. Smith (1965) argued that in the "plural" societies of the Caribbean, cross-cutting cleavages of class and ideology do not altogether eradicate ethnic/racial distinctions (Smith, 1965:12-13). Although the middle and upper Indo-Trinidadian classes have tended to identify politically with the PNM government, culturally, they take pride in their "Indianess".
van de Berghe (1976) and Bernard (1971) in addressing the issues of class and ethnic mobilization, argue that ethnic symbols, identities and ideologies are retained and stressed in order to influence political, economic and social policy (van de Berghe, 1976:246-250 and Bernard, 1971:56-59). The use of a particular type of rhetoric and ideology (as will be seen later on), however, may culminate in racial/ethnic resistance to the type of rhetoric and ideology being utilized to gain political support.

HYPOTHESIS

The central hypothesis of this thesis is derived from the predictions of the Rational Choice Theory. A racial/ethnic group position in a particular social order is determined by the manner and the time of its socio-historical insertion. This type of historical insertion will inevitably lead to the search for material advantages that might not have been available to one racial/ethnic group since its recruitment was already preceded by albeit, more powerful racial/ethnic groups. Hence, a racial/ethnic group that was recruited lastly will need to search out for economic alternatives that may provide it with the necessary autonomy for its continued persistence and survival. And at the same time, the economic alternatives which a minority group will choose may act to weaken the potential for
intense economic competition with other racial/ethnic groups. This in turn may lead to the emergence of a "regulated" type of group competition - a situation where competition for scarce resources will not be expressed in the form of intense inter-ethnic conflict. The above rationale then becomes a testable prediction of RCT.

The Rational Choice Theory with its emphasis on the historical placement of different racial/ethnic groups and the positions which they eventually occupy, has a role in predicting the events which may ensue from such a situation. And since, according to Banton, competition varies in both intensity and form, and since much depends upon the nature of the units which compete and the kinds of markets in which they compete (Banton, 1983:104), the following hypothesis is proposed.

The form and intensity of competition between groups determine the level of stability or instability which a particular social order will experience. It is, therefore, hypothesized that the more intense or "unregulated" (i.e. unadjusted) group competition is, the more likely it is that overt conflict between groups will occur. The less intense or the more "regulated" (i.e. adjusted) group competition is, the more likely it is that peaceful groups relations will occur. The latter half of the hypothesis finds empirical support for the particular pattern of inter-ethnic economic
competition that characterize Afro and Indo Trinidadian group competition.
CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

According to Denzin (1978), "methodology": represents the principal ways in which sociologists act on their environment ... it is through their methods that they make their research public and reproducible by others" (Denzin, 1978: 6). In dealing with complex multi-ethnic/racial societies, most sociologists and anthropologists are confronted with a wide range of documents of one sort or another. Sometimes, however, the problem is two folds: too much or too little literature that may contain information about the phenomena we wish to study. For the sociologist and anthropologist to derive maximum amount of benefit from published data he/she needs to bring some order in to his/her understanding of it, and for this some classification of documentary sources is needed (Mann, 1968: 55).

QUALITATIVE METHODS EMPLOYED:

The use of qualitative methods then is in keeping with the nature of the study being undertaken in this thesis. The amount of literature on intergroup relations in Trinidad, as was already mentioned earlier on, has been and continues to be modest. Caribbean historians delve into such issues as slavery and indentureship, while political scientists examine the salience of race and politics. From
sociology, however, little has come. Nonetheless, the available sociological work that has been done in this area has proven to be invaluable to this study. For this thesis, the documents relevant to the research question will consists of primary and secondary sources as well as government documents such as demographic and statistical reports and official records. As well, magazines and newspaper reports that cover relevant issues to the research topic at hand will also be used.

In order to examine the development and the specific patterns of inter-ethnic relations between the Afro and Indo Trinidadian groups, it is necessary to recognize the historical conditions that were responsible for the shaping and forming of each group's attitudes and perceptions towards the other. For this reason, a longitudinal socio-historical analysis is needed. Historical research of any kind almost always consists of documentary analysis, and therefore, tends to be more qualitative. Documentary analysis, unlike experiments and survey, is well suited to study over a long period of time (Bailey, 1987:291). Thus, qualitative analysis is capable of addressing the task of delineating historical forms, the various kinds and types of social phenomena and of documenting in precise details the things that exist (Lofland, 1971:13).

In other words, the merging of sociology and history will enable the researcher to better understand the
importance of historical processes and the ramifications which such processes may have on inter-group relations. This methodological approach is in keeping with Abrams (1982) contention. He argues:

The social world is essentially historical and that the process is the link between action and structure. What we choose to do and what we have to do are shaped by the historically given possibilities among which we find ourselves. This shaping of action by structure and transforming of structure by action occur as processes in time. It is by seizing on that idea that history and sociology merge and that sociology becomes capable of answering our urgent questions about why the world is as it is and about why particular (wo)men make the particular choices they do and why they succeed or fail in their projects (Abrams, 1982:3-4).

It can be argued that racial/ethnic groups in the Caribbean were originally recruited as sources of labour for metropolitan capital. However, this recruitment took place at different conjunctures which defined the manner of insertion and the social space available to each racial group. Secondly, the political conjuncture and the social space at the moment of recruitment also provided the opportunity for certain material advantages that might not have been available to other racial/ethnic groups, recruited at another moment in a different political conjuncture.

Hence, the question of the East Indian presence in the Caribbean, like that of any other racial/ethnic group, is not only a question of its sociological locations and specific cultural practices, but also a question of its
historical insertion and the necessary social and political space it occupied at that moment (Thakur, 1989:216). And since, according to Banton, a theory of race and ethnic relations can illuminate historical accounts of why such relations in some given region have developed in particular ways (Banton, 1983:594), the importance of history as a method of inquiry is relevant. Therefore, an examination of Indo-Caribbean peoples within the context of West Indian historiography will elucidate or provide some insights into the position of Indo-Caribbean peoples within a framework of political marginalization.

**INFORMAL INTERVIEWS**

The interview is an especially effective method of collecting information on certain types of research questions and for addressing particular types of assumptions (Mann, 1968:96). For example, it enables investigators to better understand how people perceive or interpret particular things or events. It also enables the social investigator to learn how people come to attach certain meanings to phenomena or events. In other words, interviewing provides a useful means to access.

The most informal interview is characterized in situation where the interviewer, having once started the interview off on the theme which he/she is interested, allows the informant to dictate the subsequent situation.
The interviewer is likely to have a few headings which he/she uses to stimulate the informant to talk, but beyond this he/she simply listens (Becker, 1970: 133-4). This was the exact method adopted for the interviews for this thesis.

Very informal "chit chat" types of interviews were conducted by the interviewer in the summer of 1989 in Trinidad to find out whether or not the 'race' variable was still of paramount importance in determining voting behaviour between Afro and Indo Trinidadians. These interviews together with the 1986 elections result will help to illustrate an important socio-political finding: that politics in "plural" or post-colonial societies are not always inherently communal.

Statistics based on the 1986 election in Trinidad indicated a decline in racial voting patterns in which substantial numbers of both the Afro and Indo Trinidadians voted _en mess_ for the NAR party. This was in stark contrast to earlier voting patterns. Contrary to the popular belief that politics in multi-racial, post-colonial societies are invariably communal, the findings from this interview, although not a representative one by any means, indicated that in the 1986 election in Trinidad, the voting patterns of both the Afro and Indo groups were more nationally based. That is, national politics took precedence over primordial politics.
THE INTERVIEW SAMPLE

As was mentioned earlier on, the sample conducted for this thesis is by no means a representative one. Time limitations and problems with accessibility were reasons for the small-scale nature of the interview project. Also, large-scale interviewing would have taken a much longer time and therefore, would have been very expensive. The interviewees consisted of a total of four respondents: two Afro-Trinidadians, one from a lower class background, the other from a middle-class background. The same was applied for the Indo-Trinidadians interviewed. Elite responses were unavailable. The only relevant variable utilized for the interviews was that of the respondents socio-economic/class position. The respondents were asked to respond to the following one question: "What was your main reason in voting for the NAR party in the 1986 election?".

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS: EFFECTS OF INTERVIEWER CHARACTERISTICS

It must be understood that in undertaking interviews pertaining to race and ethnicity, where there are similarities and differences between the interviewer and interviewees (i.e. in physical or racial characteristics), this might have an effect on the quality of the data received. A large number of studies such as those conducted by Hyman (1954), Stouffer (1950) and Williams (1964) have
shown that these differences can have an effect (although not always large or significant) on the quality of data received (Bailey, 1987:180). The interviews that were conducted by the above named interviewers all indicated that a degree of bias in the data was inversely related to the degree of social distance between respondent and interviewer. That is, white interviewers biased the result more for lower-class black respondents than for upper-class black respondents.

Similarly, Week and Moore (1981) studied ethnicity of interviewers and respondents in a survey of English-language proficiency of Chicanos, Cubans, Native Americans and Chinese. They concluded that for non-sensitive questions there was no significant ethnicity-of-interviewer bias. With this in mind, the interviewer of this study (himself differing in racial characteristics with some of the respondents) was cautious enough not to ask a sensitive question (i.e. one that was not overtly racial or, at least, did not suggest that a racial response was needed) that would have affected the quality of data received.

In the following chapter a number of issues will be dealt with in order to show the development of Afro-Indo relations. It will be subdivided into two sections: A and B. In the first section, attention will be placed on the colonial social structure of Trinidadian society. An examination of the colonial social structure would provide
us with a better understanding of the way in which the society was historically structured. More importantly, it will provide us with some insights into the socio-economic positions of the various racial/ethnic groups in the society, especially, the relative positions of the Afro and Indo groups vis-a-vis the white groups.

The above discussion will be followed by an examination of the Afro group's positions both in the colonial and post-colonial periods. A discussion of the Afro group is not only important because of the fact that it was, and still is, the majority racial/ethnic group in the island, but also, any attempt at an assessment of the Indo-Trinidadian group's position in the society will, of necessity, warrant a discussion of the Afro-Trinidadian group. The remaining part of section A will be restricted to important issues pertaining to the Indo-Trinidadian group such as the impact which Indian immigration had on the social structure of the island, the development of racial/ethnic stereotypes between the groups and the experience of socio-economic mobility and the subsequent social changes that impacted significantly on the position of the Indo-Trinidadian group.

In section 2 of chapter 5 emphasis will be placed on the political relations between the Afro and Indo groups from the 1950s to the present. An analysis of the salience of race and politics in Trinidadian society warrants an examination since political behaviour in multi-ethnic/racial
states, in large measure, affect the level of democratic stability in these societies. This will be followed by a discussion of political economy and the effects it has had on the structure of ethnic relations in Trinidad.

The sixth and final chapter will present conclusions. It will summarize briefly the factors that have contributed to the persistence of peaceful co-existence between the Afro and Indo groups for more than three decades. It will also show how the analysis of data relates to the theoretical constructs discussed in chapter 3. Finally, a brief discussion on an area for further research on race and ethnic relations in Trinidad will conclude this chapter.
CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF DATA

THE COLONIAL SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Trinidad, like other post-colonial societies, has had to deal with its colonial and racist legacy and continues to deal with it even today as the entire Caribbean region has not been fully expunged from this legacy of domination. It is within this environment - one in which multi-racial harmony is enunciated but not always observed - that one must examine the development of race relations and the place and role of each of the racial groups in the society.

In attempting to describe the pattern and development of race relations in Trinidad one has to go back to the era of colonization from the Spanish conquest to the arrival of the East Indian indentured immigrants. As was stated in the introduction, this thesis limits its analysis to one particular period in Trinidad - 1956 to 1986. However, in order to fully understand the positions of the various racial/ethnic groups present position in the society, especially the position of the Indo-Trinidadian group vis-a-vis the other racial groups, some analysis must be placed on the colonial social structure and the impact it has had on the various racial/ethnic groups positions in the society. Particular attention will be placed on the origins and growth of racial animosities between Trinidad's Afro and Indo groups in late 19th century and their subordinate
positions vis-a-vis the local creole (or white) population. Since the main emphasis of this thesis will be on Afro and Indo group relations specifically, the Indo group's position vis-a-vis the Afro group's position, it is imperative that the other groups' positions in the society be examined. That is, to discuss black dispossession something must be said about white power, and to discuss black power, it is necessary to discuss the Indian group's position in the society. Therefore, it becomes necessary to discuss the role of the Indians within the colonial system and their interaction and competition with both the European and African groups up until the close of the pre-independence period. In order to accomplish such a task, the particular historicity of the Trinidadian social structure must be sketched out.

It is in slave society or "slave plantation society" that the paradigm of Caribbean social structures is first laid down. As has been universally noted, Caribbean societies present a picture of complex and changing social structures with varying degrees of cultural pluralism and ethnic diversity. Trinidad is no exception to this rule. The foundation of the West Indian social order based on the colonial-class hierarchy has had effects that remain manifest in every aspect of Caribbean culture. The ascription of inferiority lies at the heart of West Indian racial problems. In the Caribbean, colour is a common
indicator of status, and ethnic identification pervades everyday life; those least favoured by racial circumstance and stereotype comprise a majority that is increasingly conscious of its deprivations (Lowenthal, 1973:XV in Introduction).

In the colonized West Indies, masters and slaves were based on the distinctions of colour and class, hence the existence of the colour-class system of stratification that evolved and was developed out of plantation society in the colonial period. This colour-class system produced a sharp class-cultural differentiation that apparently coincided to a high degree with colour and ethnicity. And in the West Indies, more than anywhere else, this type of stratification system was at its most blatant. Lowenthal (1972), in his breakdown of the stratificational patterns that were to be found in the Caribbean, categorizes Trinidad as a society stratified on class and colour lines. He goes on to show that the Trinidadian social stratification system, already stratified along class/colour lines, became even more complex as additional racial/ethnic groups, such as the large groups of East Indian immigrants who went to Trinidad, Guyana and Surinam, entered these societies (Lowenthal, 1972:18-22). The crucial question then is: what role did the colour/class element played in the structuring of the society?
Undoubtedly, the colour-class system was in many ways similar to a rigid caste system since the colonial stratification matrix profoundly affected the subsequent socio-economic and socio-political positions of both the Afro and Indo groups in relation to the social, economic and political positions of the white groups.

Race and Class Polarity in Trinidad

The period in which Trinidad was considered a "colony society" (i.e. in the colonial period), colour and class status formed the basic stratification matrix. Thus, in the colonial period, a racial stratification system existed where colour and class strongly and powerfully overlapped. This points to Furnivall's view that most colonial societies are the product of economic forces and in such cases the relationship of class divisions to the overall structure is crucial (Furnivall, 1948:304). However, it must be noted that in the Caribbean race or ethnicity are not "pure" categories as they are, say in South Africa, where they are defined legally and genetically rather than socially. This is because miscegenation between master and slave had created a biologically and socially intermediate group commonly referred to as the "mixed" group or otherwise known as the mulatto (Hall, 1977:150).

Typically and overwhelmingly then, the whites (Europeans) and those able to assimilate closest to the
white plantocracy (i.e. the mixed or mulatto groups) in looks, colour, manners, language, education and values rank highest on every social, cultural and economic dimension, and are legitimated as such (Hall, 1977:166). This was one reason why members of the coloureds or mixed population occupied intermediary occupations and statuses in the colonial period and as such, were graded within the legitimation system in terms of their approximation to the white group.

For most of the colonial history of Trinidad this coloured or "mixed" segment of the population were located just below the whites. During the twentieth century many worked as middle-level functionaries in government and in the private sector; they were also to be found among the local professionals. Over the years, however, the "mixed" population have become less distinctive as a group, having developed, by and large, a common identity with the upwa:dly mobile black or Afro middle class. A few of the lighter-skinned upper-class coloureds have become identified with the creole whites (Hentzen, 1989:26).

The racial divisions in Trinidad were cast out of the needs of plantation production. Several groups emerge, of different relative size, with different socio-economic interests, and occupying different power positions in society so that by the end of the nineteenth century, the foundation had been laid for the structure of race relations
in Trinidad. The Trinidadian whites are creole descendants from French and Spanish eighteenth century settlers who, as a merchant-plantocracy in the nineteenth century and as a manufacturing and commercial elite in the twentieth century, matched the British colonizers in wealth, prestige and privilege. (See Table 1 for the distribution of the white population in colonial Trinidad).

**TABLE 1**

*Population, 1803*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Free Coloureds</th>
<th>Slaves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>599</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>1,751</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>1,093</td>
<td>2,925</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,261</td>
<td>5,275</td>
<td>20,464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Taken from Wood's *Trinidad in Transition: The Years After Slavery*, p. 33.

Figure 1 below shows the breakdown of the various stratification patterns that existed in Trinidad from the colonial period to the 1950s.

Pyramid A shows the pattern of stratification under slavery. At the very top of the hierarchy are the whites followed by the coloureds and at the very bottom of the hierarchy was where the majority of African slaves were
Fig. 1. Stratification in Trinidad (B, C and D adapted from Braithwaite, 1953)

SOURCE: Hall, 1977 "Pluralism, Race and Class in the Caribbean" in Race and Class in Post-Colonial Societies
located. The other triangles B and C indicate some social mobility (although very little) by the blacks over time. At the top of pyramid A, power, prestige, status, and wealth rested in the hands of the French-speaking white creole populations, together with a small number of Spanish-speaking settlers who occupied equal prestige, wealth and status. However, both these groups did not have as much political power as the English sugar planters and political administrators had.

As merchants and planters, the members of this group were at the apex of white society in 19th century Trinidad in spite of the greater political power of the British (Hentzen, 1989:21). Just below the white groups were the coloured group, located in the middle stratum of the pyramid followed by the blacks at the very bottom of the pyramid. This particularistic ascriptive basis of social stratification among the white, coloured and black groups became firmly established during the slavery period (Braithwaite, 1953:53). However, from the 1950s onwards, this "particularistic"/"ascriptive" criteria was removed as more and more Afro and Indo Trinidadians, through education and the acquisition of high political office, became part of the dominant class (Craig, 1982:162).

The political system during the colonial period, commonly known as the Crown Colony system of government was, in many aspects, an autocratic form of government headed by
a governor who, ruling in the monarch's name had almost unlimited power. In theory he was the impartial, yet special protector of the unrepresented masses. In reality he usually shared the planters' general political and social views, which was mirrored in policy. While the upper classes (i.e. the white creoles and British) had access to the island's chief executive, the majority of the population remained without political representation. This undemocratic system of government was to remain largely unchanged from 1831 to 1924, when considerable political tension began to surface (MacDonald, 1986:26). Hence, the British, with their implementation of the Crown Colony system of government was able to maintain its political hegemony and control of the island for almost a century.

In other words, this system of government excluded the indigenous and slave populations from wider political participation. That is, political decision making rested solely on the white planter class. Thus, the non-white populations in colonial Trinidad were "differentially incorporated" to use Kuper's (1974) phrase. The non-white peoples, as phenotypically distinguished groups, occupied different positions in the economic and political orders in colonial Trinidadian society. The white groups, on the other hand, being economically and politically distinct, used their powers to dominate and control the non-white groups.
The control of the economic and political spheres in pluralistic societies, like Canada for example, also experienced this type of hegemonic control over non-white peoples. The structuring of the Canadian social system placed the native Canadian Indians at the bottom of the stratification system (Bienvenue, 1985:200). Thus, the structuring of the colonial system was what determined the position of the native Indians, the Anglophones and the Francophone groups in colonial and present day Canada. This was why Porter (1965) argued that ethnic and class inequality results primarily from the relative control that different groups acquire within the country's economic, political and ideological power structures (Porter, 1965).

It is not surprising then that groups of French and Spanish creoles in Trinidad came closest to a local landed aristocracy. For example, when Trinidad's small petroleum industry got under way in 1910, many creoles (Spanish and French) poured capital into spin-off services created by the new industry (Hentzen, 1989:22). Later on in the 19th century, members of the local white population became the major beneficiaries of a phenomenal growth in manufacturing, construction, commerce, and local finance in the economy of the country (Moskos, 1967:109-111). This is why today, local commerce and industry have been dominated by the white creole population. The continued power, prestige and wealth of the creole whites in Trinidadian society are indicated in
the composition of the elite of the country at the time of its independence. Data collected by Charles Moskos (1967) strongly indicate a dominant role for whites in the business affairs of the country. In 1975, it was estimated that whites in Trinidad made up 53 per cent of all businessmen and that a further 24 per cent were near white. Those of the country's major businesses not owned and/or controlled by whites and near-whites were in the hands of a growing Indo-Trinidadian entrepreneurial group (Los Angeles Times, 19 April, 1975). In a study of the powerful and influential leaders conducted in 1977 by Percy Hentzen, it was found that there were seven whites and five Indo-Trinidadians among the 14 business leaders considered to be most important. Only one Chinese and one Afro-Trinidadian were included (Hentzen, 1985:121).

With the above information it is only understandable why the business sector of the creole white population in Trinidad has become organized within a powerful Chamber of Commerce dominated by white businessmen, and around several exclusive clubs which protect and further the economic interest of the group (Parris, 1985:105). Thus, wealth, social prestige and institutional organization have combined to give the white group political influence way in excess of its small number. The entry of a small but economically influential group of Syrians and Lebanese (commonly referred to as the Levantines of the Caribbean) as well as some Jews
(together numbering probably less than five thousand) arrived later on in the 20th century. These groups are almost exclusively involved in business (mainly as hawkers and peddlars in the dry goods area of business) and their members are among the most wealthy in the country. Today, members of these communities have become involved in many industrial enterprises in Trinidad, including construction, garment manufacturing, food processing and canning, brewing and the manufacturing of glazed tiles, steel chairs, paper bags, envelopes and electrical goods such as televisions, refrigerators, air-conditioners and light bulbs (Nicholls, 1981:422-423). Their business successes have increased the visibility of the light-skinned population and have contributed to its domination of the economy.

However, sugar plantations in the last decade of the nineteenth century began to shift away from small planter owned operations to larger, more capital intensive and cost efficient enterprises run by managers and financed by absentee owners resident in Britain. Eventually, the sugar industry was taken over, almost entirely, by multinationals. This shift brought with it the demise of the British plantocracy in Trinidad as English owners of small plantations were forced to sell and eventually returned to Britain (Williams, 1962:120-1).

At the time of Trinidad's independence, the British presence was confined primarily to the offices of the
managerial and skilled staff in the British-owned agricultural, entrepreneurial, and commercial ventures, and to the group of British administrators and civil servants entrusted with running the colony (MacDonald, 1986:30-6). After independence, however, the majority of the government officials was repatriated to Britain. Even though most of the British staff in the private sector remained, they were over the years replaced by locals (i.e., Blacks, Coloureds, Indians and Chinese) as a consequence of pressures exerted by the government directed at ensuring the localization of managerial and technical staff in foreign-owned enterprises (Hentzen, 1989:23). However, this localization of power meant that Indo-Trinidadians were to be excluded from the corridors of power and that the rewards, which the decolonization process supposedly offers to all nationals, were not generously distributed to the Indo group. This argument will be developed later on in the discussion relating to politics and Afro Indo relations in the 1950s. Therefore, the decline in the white population between 1960 and 1970 can be attributed to the repatriation of British functionaries after the granting of independence.
SOCIO-ECONOMIC MOBILITY OF APRO-TRINIDADIANS FROM THE
COLONIAL TO THE POST-COLONIAL PERIODS

Whereas the Europeans had come to Trinidad as
exploiters in search of wealth and prestige, the blacks had
been brought in as slaves from Africa to work in the then
lucrative sugar and cotton plantations in the seventeenth
century. As is well known, the lucrative sugar and cocoa
plantations that were established throughout the entire West
Indies by the white plantocracy needed a constant supply of
cheap labour. As a result, recruitment practices in the
form of slavery was the planters answer to their labour
problem. For more than three hundred years, from the
sixteenth to the nineteenth century, the Europeans brought
African slaves to work their plantations. It was only until
the early nineteenth century that the slave trade was put to
end, consequently leading to the abolition of slavery in

Under the institution of slavery African slaves were
denied some of the most fundamental human rights and
privileges. For example, slavery and the plantation system
were responsible for the prevalence of short-term consensual
unions, matrilocal household and children out of wedlock who
grew up without the authority and support of a father or
definite father surrogate (MacDonald and
MacDonald,1973:171). In other words, slavery destroyed the
patrifocal marriages and patrilineal households which had
been the rule in many African societies of origin. Culturally too, they were denied the right to practice their African languages and cultures as the colonial missionaries were entrusted to proselytize the African to the Christian faith and to inculcate him/her with other Western customs and behavioural patterns. The irony inherent in the duties of the Christian missionaries was seen in their reluctance to stop the general practice of the breeding of slaves like animals at the orders of the planter classes. In other words, Christian missionaries were simply there to reinforce the planter classes capitalists interests so that it was not surprising to know that virtual studfarms were conducted where the slave women were encouraged to produce as many children as they could, thereby keeping a constant supply of free slave labour.

Thus, the manifest function/role of the Church was to provide a "humanistic" service, through Christian indoctrination and western values, intended to teach the African slave about "Christian humility", which in turn, would make him/her a "better" person so to speak, especially in the eyes of the colonizer. The latent function/role of the Church and State, on the other hand, was primarily the main reason for the colonization of supposedly "inferior peoples". That is, religion was just another ploy for safeguarding the interests of the bourgeoisie planter class. In other words, Church and State, to put it simply,
interacted in such a way as to render them pro-planter class. Church and State operated within the same ideological framework: to ensure that labour power was always there when they wanted it and which could only be achieved by curtailing the blacks of certain rights and privileges. Thus, a stable marital union which would have helped the African family to reknit effectively on the plantation was discouraged or disregarded by the planter (Mathews, 1952:15-16). Therefore, the slave knew no family life on the plantation, because "black men could not marry in the days of slavery, that was the rule and law" (Blanchard, 1947:60).

African cultural patterns then were lost as a result of imperial practices designed to deculturate the African slave of his/her culture and to acculturate him/her with the Western cultural tradition such as religion, language, values and attitudes. Thus, the adaptation and "Creolization" of both cultures, European and African, is a prominent and persistent feature of contemporary Caribbean societies today. Lowenthal (1972) states:

Of course whites and blacks in the West Indies were at first ethnically and culturally as well as socially distinct, but the African slaves were stripped off their ethnic identities, were left with only scattered remnants of their cultural heritage, and were forced to undergo creolization. Slave culture became in large measure a creolized form of European culture (Lowenthal, 1972:14-15).
One of the most serious socio-economic ramifications which slavery had on the Afro-Trinidadian group's subsequent position in the society has been manifested in the proletarianization of the group. Overall, Afro-Caribbean peoples have become a proletarianized labour force.

After the emancipation of slavery, the bulk of the Afro-Trinidadian workers were located within the lowest socio-economic categories. This was because of the free slaves unwillingness to be hired as paid workers in the plantation after emancipation when there was a serious shortage of labour. In Trinidad the ex-slave regarded with aversion the scenes of his degradation (i.e. the plantation); the lash from the whip which was the symbol of authority did not serve as an incentive to remain in the plantation (Bahadoorsingh, 1968:8). As a result, most emancipated slaves deserted the estates to improve their condition and to seek a more independent livelihood; the majority of them eventually drifted into urban areas especially Port of Spain. (See Tables 2 and 3 for the percentages of Afro-Trinidadians and Afro-Caribbean peoples to be found in urban areas).
TABLE 2

Proportion of main ethnic groups in urban locations for Commonwealth Caribbean 1970 (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>African</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>East</th>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commonwealth Caribbean, 1970.

This internal demographic shift from the rural to the urban areas had important economic and political implications for the Afro-Trinidadian group. As an urban-based group, this enabled them to become politically involved in mainstream Trinidadian politics. Consequently, through racial appeal and racial mobilization of the Afro-Trinidadian masses by the Afro-based People's National Movement Party (PNM), Afro-Trinidadians, specifically the Afro underclass, were to become the sole recipients of the PNM's racial patronage system. Because of racial appeal and patronage which the PNM government employed in order to secure its black support base, many Afro-Trinidadians were entitled to government jobs in the civil service and public sectors of the economy. Similar types of partisanship under the PNC (People's National Congress) government in Guyana, were also reported.
### Table 3

Percentage distribution of urban and rural populations by ethnic group in main Commonwealth Caribbean countries 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Jamaica</th>
<th>Trinidad</th>
<th>Guyana</th>
<th>Barbados</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Indian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(516,865)</td>
<td>(1,280,536)</td>
<td>(423,280)</td>
<td>(507,791)</td>
<td>(210,767)</td>
<td>(489,077)</td>
<td>(132,754)</td>
<td>(102,473)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commonwealth Caribbean, 1970.
In Guyana, Indo-Guyanese comprise some fifty-five percent of the electorate and Afro-Guyanese thirty-five percent. However, under the Afro-based People's National Congress (PNC) headed by Forbes Burnham, Indo-Guyanese in 1973, comprised only about five percent of the military and one percent of the police force. This type of racist deployment, inspite of a 1965 International Commission Jurists Report which outlined the gross "inequities" in recruitment practices, continues to be the norm till today (Boodhoo, 1983:37). Looked at in terms of categories of job in relation to population proportions in Trinidad, it is clear that in certain jobs such as the civil service and the police force Indo-Trinidadians are still only modestly represented (Actual Figures are unavailable). Nonetheless, some Afro-Trinidadians are still engaged in subsistence farming; but as Hentzen (1989) put it: "the majority of Afro-Trinidadians have been transformed into dormitory villages for urban and semi-urban workers" (Hentzen, 1989:23).

This proletarianization of the Afro populations in Trinidad followed in the wake of burgeoning opportunities for education. The process began in the latter half of the nineteenth century at a time when there was a growing need for a literate group of workers in the plantations and in the expanding urban and semi-urban areas. A system of primary education was developed soon after the abolition of
slavery and this provided for the Afro-Trinidadian population the means of access into unskilled and semi-skilled occupations (Hentzen, 1989:24). Since emancipation many Afro-Trinidadians sought service jobs in Port of Spain (Trinidad's capital city), or road and estate factory work elsewhere which provided higher remuneration and status than estate cultivation (Ramesar, 1976:207).

However, the education of the majority of Afro-Trinidadians remained confined almost exclusively to the primary level during the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. During this time, the right to secondary education remained an exclusive privilege of white groups. The higher educational attainment of the White population is demonstrated in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No Education</th>
<th>Primary Education</th>
<th>Post-Primary Education</th>
<th>Secondary Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Indians</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negroes</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Taken from Dookeren's "East Indians and the Economy," in La Guerre's (ed.) From Calcutta to Ceylon, p. 79.
One quarter of the white population during the close of the pre-independence period had a secondary education; while less than one quarter of the "Other" racial categories achieved some form of secondary education, and the proportion of Afro and Indo populations that received some form of secondary education was negligible when compared to the white and off-white groups. This disparity can be attributed to the lower socio-economic positions that the Afro and Indo groups occupied in the society during that period, reasons for being in such relatively disadvantaged positions vis-a-vis the white population were addressed earlier on. With the expansion of primary education came an urgent demand for teachers which could not be met by the relatively small white population. To meet this need, teachers had to be recruited from the ranks of the Afro-Trinidadians, the vast majority of whom were located in the urban areas. The urban areas were in urgent demand for school teachers then, hence the recruitment of mainly Afro-Trinidadian teachers. The majority of Indo-Trinidadian teachers were more heavily concentrated in the suburban, semi-urban and rural schools. In time, post-primary teacher training served as a springboard for many Afro-Trinidadians, giving them access to the more prestigious and high-paying civil service occupations - areas in which they are to be found in even today (Hentzen, 1989:24).
A career in teaching, promotion within the teaching profession, and access to civil service occupations became the mainstays of Afro-Trinidadian upward mobility in Trinidad in the 20th century. As a result, the economic behaviour of the Afro middle class became for the most part, crystallized within the narrow confines of salaried workers employed by the state (Hentzen, 1989:24). On the other hand, the educated Afro-Trinidadian has, by and large, remained outside of the private sector which has been controlled and dominated by whites, and were later joined by Indo-Trinidadian businessmen and executives. Likewise, today, as in the past, economic power remains in the hands of the whites and the browns or "off-whites" (Nevadomsky, 1982:99).

In a survey undertaken by Camejo (1971) on racial discrimination in employment in the private sector of Trinidad and Tobago, the data showed that 77 per cent of the local business elite were white/off-white; while only 9 per cent were Indo-Trinidadians and 4 per cent Afro-Trinidadians. Camejo concluded that "the Indians have not been moving like lightning" (Camejo, 1971:298-99), a conclusion probably even more applicable to the Afro-Trinidadian group.

Nonetheless, Afro-Trinidadians over the years, have advanced from the most menial levels of civil service to positions from which they now almost totally dominate and control. This was enhanced with the localization of all but
top positions in the services that followed the
democratization of politics in Trinidad during the 1950's.
It culminated, finally, with the total replacement of the
top-level colonial officials by locals when the country was
granted political independence from Britain in 1962
(MacDonald, 1986:74).

Today, most Afro-Trinidadians remain in the
proletarianized labour force. However, the Afro middle
class, which also consists of government officials (commonly
referred to as the Afro-Trinidian technocrats) and
professionals, which has merged and developed a sense of
common identity with a smaller group of coloureds (or the
"mixed" group) - has evolved into a most strategic and
powerful constituency in the politics of Trinidad. What
were the consequences of this concentration of political
power in the hands of the Afro dominated PNM government with
regards to the position of the Indo-Trinidadian group in the
independence period? Later on in this chapter such
pertinent questions will be dealt with in order to throw
some light on what these changes and events meant for the
position of the Indo-Trinidadian group in the post-
independence period. But before moving into that section, a
discussion of the position of Indo-Trinidadian population is
important, from their initial entry into the society to the
subsequent socio-economic and socio-political positions they
were to occupy.
The Impact of Indian Immigration and the Development of Racial and Ethnic Competition

The current position of the Indians in Trinidad can only be understood in relation to colonialism itself and the racist limitations they were subjected to. As Cross (1971) rightly put it: "the role of the Indians in the former British colonies and protectorates must be seen in terms of the division of social power inherent in the colonial system (Cross, 1971:491).

Prior to the arrival of the Indian indentured immigrants to Trinidad, Chinese indentured workers were brought into Trinidad as agricultural labourers to fill the void left by the ex-slaves after the abolition of slavery (Lewis, 1968:100-101). This migration ended in 1866 when Britain bowed to protests from the Chinese mainland government against the transportation and indentureship of its nationals (Johnson, 1987:82-90). Some of the Chinese immigrants chose to remain in Trinidad and today their descendants have become part of the urban middle-class with occupations as middlemen between the import-export merchants and consumers. As well, they are to be found in the retail trade, civil service and in professional fields. Although the Chinese group in Trinidad has notably been "creolized" to a marked extent (intermarriage with Afro and the mixed groups are examples), at the same time, it has been capable of maintaining its own ethnic exclusivity. As Johnson
ted out: "the Chinese have maintained some form of racial affinity which has been kept alive by the formation of Chinese associations (Johnson, 1987:83-91).

Beginning in 1845, Indians were brought to Trinidad under a system of indenture to work out their contracts on the island's sugar plantations, then on the verge of economic collapse following the departure of black ex-slaves who sought to consolidate their emancipation by shifting to urban wage employment and independent small-scale farming (Williams, 1962:97-98). In other words, the Indians were brought in to play a specific economic role: as a workforce that would enable the export of sugar production to be maintained under the plantation system for the benefit of the planter class.

The immigration of indentured Indians to Trinidad began in 1845 and continued, with a short break between 1848 and 1851, until 1917 when the traffic was stopped. During the period 1845 to 1917 a total of 143,939 Indians were imported into Trinidad and only about one-quarter of this number took advantage of the free passage back to India, available up to 1895 (Brereton, 1981:103-104). The rest remained in the colony and through natural increase became a large minority in the society. (See Table 5 below).
TABLE 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Percentage East Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>68,600</td>
<td>5.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>109,638</td>
<td>25.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>200,028</td>
<td>35.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>312,790</td>
<td>35.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>387,418</td>
<td>35.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The presence of such substantial numbers of Indians, arriving in separate groups over the years, placed a serious strain on the fabric of an already fragmented society made up of Europeans (English, French, Spanish and Portuguese), Africans, Chinese and a declining number of Amerindians. Groups of Caribs and Arawaks (Amerindians) had inhabited the colony before the arrival of the Europeans. All traces of these groups have disappeared in Trinidad, their members completely wiped out partly by European diseases and partly by the Spaniards in their attempts to recruit them for plantation labour (Williams, 1944:40-7). Indians then, came into a society which was already heterogeneous and complex. An entire alien racial, cultural and religious group was introduced into a West Indian island where a European
minority had already imposed its Western-oriented culture on the subordinate African slaves.

Undoubtedly then, this substantial numbers of Indians into Trinidadian society had important sociological consequences both for the Indians themselves and for the other racial groups that constituted the host society. For one thing, the Indians did not at first view themselves, nor were they viewed by those who imported them or by other groups in the society, as permanent members of the society, but only as temporary migrants, related to the society in a segmental way, that is, as part of the plantation economy (Singh, 1974:33). Inevitably, the free African slave resented indentureship because it reduced his/her bargaining power as well as his/her living conditions. Indian labour was used to break strikes and limit the ability to undertake effective action. The presence of large numbers of Indians pushed food prices up, lowered the wages of the ex-slaves and reduced employment opportunities for the ex-slaves (Brereton, 1981:112-113). These assertions were made known by the various anti-Indian immigration campaigns. For example, the Port of Spain Gazette, perhaps the leading 19th century Trinidad paper, combined support for immigration with a tradition of anti-Indian prejudice. It warned in 1884

in dealing with Asiatics, a race crafty and intelligent above the common run of ordinary labourers, the greatest firmness is required... Let us not forget that these Asiatics now form one
third of our population, and that, fanatics of an effete superstition and a most corrupt form of ethics, they must as a matter of self-preservation, be kept in subjection to our laws (Port of Spain Gazette, 1884: March 1 and Sept 13).

On the other hand, some have argued that the Afro creoles profited from the work of the Indian indentured workers. Wood (1968) using data that he obtained from the Port of Spain Gazette dated 19th December 1851, argued that the Creoles (another term for Afro-Trinidadians) profited from the work of the Indians. Some were employed throughout the year in the more skilled occupations that had been coveted even in slavery days, such as cooperers, carters, and stock-keepers; many more made a temporary appearance during crop-time, either for harvesting or for work in the boiling-houses and grinding-mills. As the Indians increased in numbers, the Negroes (to use Wood's term) found they could still get those jobs on the plantations which had in their eyes a certain prestige. Whenever an immigrant ship from India was in the roads the Creoles would say, "That's right massa, get plenty of coolies to grow canes for aw we [sic] to grind in the crop season" (Wood, 1968:137).

The British, apparently convinced that they would remain forever to hold the ring between the Afro and Indo groups, did little to teach the one about the other. So in the absence of information, the two groups were left to guess about each other's way of life. Furthermore, the intensification of economic competition between the Afro and
the newly arrived Indo groups coupled with the British deliberate capacity to set the races apart, greatly encouraged the use of stereotypes.

It was only too easy for Europeans and Africans to despise the Indians during the indenture period. Partly as a result of indentureship itself, and partly because of the Indians' religions and culture, a whole collection of unfavourable stereotypes were built up, which did much to form the attitudes of blacks and whites towards Indians. For instance, the Indian was seen as deceitful; he/she purged himself in court and elsewhere with the lightest of consciences. Another element in the stereotype was violence, and especially crimes of passion. The famous "Coolie wife murders" became an essential part of the Creole view of the Indian. The term "coorie" was developed to mean a stingy, unwashed worshipper of flags and idols; and the term "nigger" came inevitably to mean the lazy and uncultured son of a savage (Tapia, Dec.20, 1970:17). These stereotypes, unfortunately, are still with us and continue to dictate the character of race relations in Trinidad. These terms, however, are used privately by members of the Afro and Indo in-groups.

This type of social distancing and separation between the two groups was further reinforced as a result of the colonial presence in Trinidad. That is, the colonial presence in the Caribbean was not only organized around the
axis of cheap labour, but was part of the imperial design to deliberately "divide and rule" thereby perpetuating social and economic cleavages between the various racial groups. The above assertion finds support in Samaroo's (1974) argument that the socialization process of West Indian societies must be viewed from the agencies of European imperialism. European imperialism in the once British West Indies in large measure was responsible for endorsing the widespread belief in the inferiority of non-white peoples (Samaroo, 1974:84-86). The purpose, of course, for such socialization was for the maintenance of the prevailing status quo i.e. the economic dominance by a minority of Europeans. The subject or "subjugated" races were unable to discern that both the European entrepreneur and the European missionaries were exploiters in search of their own material advantages. The Europeans "divide and rule" game apparently worked to their advantage as the colonized was led to believe that his/her fellow-colonized was the competitor and antagonist.

For example, the Protectors of Indian Immigrant during the indentureship period were pressured into becoming protectors of the planters, and squeezed into restricting the meagre rights of the indentured Indians until their status was, as nearly as possible, equal to that of the slaves. Thus, the slaves had been isolated from their fellows on other estates by a harsh system of restriction on
movements: only a person given a "pass" by a planter might venture outside the estate boundary; the rational for this was the fictional tendency of the blacks to wander off without motive (Tinker, 1989:67). This same attribute was ascribed to Indians. Notwithstanding, the myth of Indian restlessness was invoked to justify penal sanctions against any indentured person venturing off the estate. Therefore, the "pass system" that existed during slavery was perpetuated and reinforced by the dual threat of jail and extension of during the indenture period (Williams, 1962:108 and Samaroo, 1987:26-27). The indentureship system then, operated within a legal framework that reduced to a minimum the possibilities of social contact with other groups outside the plantation. This is why Tinker (1974) argued that the Indians served under contracts that could be called "a new system of slavery" (Tinker, 1974).

Therefore, it can be argued that the colonial planters succeeded in using the indentured Indians to deal with the threat of African free labour and, in so doing, arranged the society in a way to ensure continued racial suspicion. The racial divisions created by colonial manipulation vis-a-vis the strategy of "divide and rule", prevented the development of national integration, which, of course, can only be achieved if both racial groups are united in their effort (i.e. in transcending race and class) to change their existing social, economic and political environment.
The above colonial ploy, with respect to the early phase of Afro-Indo relations in colonial Trinidad, resulted in peaceful enmity between the groups. Despite the fact that both group held each other in mutual contempt, mistrust and fear, there was little evidence of inter-racial violence in 19th century colonial Trinidad. Critics on colonialism and imperialism have argued that the lack of national unification in past and present day Guyanese society is attributed to the imperial policy of "divide and rule".

For example, Thakur (1989) argues that the racial conflict that developed in Guyana after 1955 has its roots in the imperial policy of "divide and rule", which was also aided by reactionary elements, which eventually served to block the natural course of Guyanese nationalism (Thakur,1989:210). In other words, race and culture simply served as the mechanisms through which imperial policies were translated. However, in the case of Trinidad, racial conflict between Afro and Indo-Trinidadians of the sort which occurred in Guyana in 1962 (bloody to say the least) was conspicuously absent.

Finally, the Indians' religions, especially Hinduism, were a source of contempt. John Morton, the pioneer Presbyterian missionary to the Trinidadian Indians, expressed strong antipathies towards Hinduism. Indians, Morton thought, had an obsessive respect for their sinister rites and customs, and the "uncleanness" of the Hindu gods
fostered "a low sense of sin" (Brereton,1974:21:). By "putting down" Hinduism so to speak, Morton was simply reinforcing the typical Eurocentric attitude towards non-Christian peoples.

RECIPROCAL FEAR AND MISTRUST

The hostile attitude of the African towards the Indians was reciprocated by the Indians who found them awkward, vulgar in manners and savage. It is possible that the colour of the Africans led some Indians to identify them with the followers of Rawan, the demon king of the Hindu Ramayana epic, and as such feared that contact with them would be polluting (Ryan,1966:3). It seemed then that the mutual contempt between the two groups in 19th century Trinidad led to a situation where they mixed very little. Nearly all evidence suggests that there was a minimum of association between the Afro and Indo groups. For example, relationships on the estate between the Afro and Indo groups were at a low level. And as Brereton put it, "there was a tacit separation of the races" (Brereton,1974:25). This is understandable when one considers the ecological divisions (i.e. urban/rural) between the groups. In the indenture period the Indians were largely concentrated in the sugar belt, and whatever contacts they had with other races was of a momentary nature, such as visits to Port of Spain (Ramesar,1976:73-74).
If the Afro and Indo groups "did not mix", there is little evidence of real hostility between the two groups in the 19th century. When the East Indians came to the Caribbean, they were settled in enclaves, allowed to speak their own language and was generally discouraged from mixing with the Africans (Brereton, 1976:26). Hence, one of the reasons for the infrequency of miscegenation during the colonial period, though there were reported cases of miscegenation practices between the groups. Indeed, there is evidence that the planters were responsible for the maintenance of the separation between the groups.

Work and some of the routines of life in the plantation system brought the Afro and Indo groups into contacts, and there is evidence to indicate that miscegenation though rare, was practised especially, it appears, between Afro men and Indo women (Schwartz, 1964:18-66). In most cases, however, these contacts generated conflict and hostility rather than greater understanding. Indo-Trinidadians resented miscegenation and the fact that the Afro-Trinidadian was given preference in jobs on the plantation and elsewhere in society (Ryan, 1966:3).

Until the 1880s there does not seem to have been any real competition for jobs. W.G. Sewell, who visited Trinidad in 1859, wrote that the creoles (or Afro-Trinidadians) by then had largely withdrawn from field labour on the estates for more profitable or congenial
occupations, and the Indians took their place, performing jobs the creoles refused to do (Sewell, 1860:132). The estates continued to use the Afro groups labour for factory jobs and for the heavier and more skilled work. Where the cultivation of sugar expanded as a result of indentured immigration, the jobs on the estates preferred by the Afro-Trinidadians increased in numbers and became easier to get. Thus, the general economic development which followed immigration in Trinidad opened wider fields of employment to the Afro-Trinidadian group, and so in the first thirty year of immigration, they did not feel any real economic competition (Laurence, 1971:76-78).

Wood (1968) and Brereton (1979) argued that it seemed evident that one of the common causes of tension between immigrants and the host society was absent in Trinidad in the mid-nineteenth century. According to Wood, there was no real competition for jobs, no fear on the part of the Creoles that their livelihood was at stake and that they were being ousted by sweated labour. Nor was there any competition for housing. Land and building materials were to be had for the asking. Afro-Trinidadians built their cottages virtually at will along the roads and in the outskirts of villages and towns (Wood, 1968:137).

The indentured Indians, on the other hand, were provided with housing by the planters which were supposed to measure up to certain legal standards, but of course, they
did not. The houses provided by the colonial planters were, for the most part, generally unsanitary and lacking the most basic facilities such as water supply and proper lighting, to name only a few (Weller, 1968:5-10). In other words, Trinidad was spared the racial riots and other violence that were a feature of life in the rapidly expanding cities of the United States, for instance, where often bitter enmity arose between successive waves of immigrants who crowded into the slums and competed for jobs (Wood, 1968:137).

After the 1870s, however, as more and more immigrants were introduced at a time when the sugar market was depressed and improved technology lessened the number of factory jobs, there was no doubt that the Indians caused unemployment and depressed wages. Furthermore, Indians entered the jobs hitherto filled mainly by the Afro group, and by 1917 some estates employed virtually no Afro-Trinidadians (Brereton, 1974:26). By the late 19th century then, Afro-Trinidadians were well aware of the economic threat the Indians posed, and the latter's willingness to work for lower wages was only too evident (Laurence, 1971:78-9).

Even so, there is little evidence of inter-racial hostility or violence in the 19th century. It has been widely documented that during the early and late 19th century, economic competition between the Afro and Indo groups had never intensified to any great extent so that for
most of the colonial period there was virtually no reports of violent clashes between the groups. As a matter of fact, the general economic developments which followed Indian immigration in Trinidad opened wider fields of employment for both the Afro and Indo Trinidadian groups. These developments will be examined in the analysis section. According to Brereton (1974), this was one of the main reasons why both the Afro and Indo groups did not feel any real economic competition (Brereton, 1974:25).

Thus, in the 19th century, and up to the abolition of the indentureship system in 1917, the foundations of prejudice and mutual antipathy between Afro and Indo Trinidadians were laid. The mutual antipathy between the groups arose out of the indenture system itself, of ideas about Indian religion and culture, and of the actual relationship between Afro and Indo Trinidadians in 19th century Trinidad. And as Wood (1968) put it, neither felt their existence was threatened by the other, or that the other's way of life was dangerous or oppressive to their own (Wood, 1968:135-7). In 1932, as acute an observer as J.L.R. James wrote that though there was no affinity between the Indians and Africans in Trinidad, there was no ill feeling (Singh, 1972:3). This judgement, however, was made before the resurgence of "Indian nationalism" which occurred in Trinidad in the 1940s with the final stage of India's struggle for independence. Later developments such as the
move to self-government, the emergence of black nationalism, the Indo-Trinidadians reactions and the evolution of party politics were all responsible for the highly politicized nature of Afro-Indo relations in post-colonial Trinidad.

In more recent times, however, some have argued that most Trinidadian have learned to tolerate the differences among various groups. Oxaal (1968) argued that the common response among most Afro-Trinidadians towards Indo-Trinidadian life patterns, and of Indo-Trinidadians towards Afro-Trinidadian traits is "negative indifference", frequently accompanied by ridicule or sarcastic expressions of antipathy, mistrust and hostility (Oxaal, 1968:23). Yet, this is almost always a two-way process - Afro-Trinidadians towards Indo-Trinidadian and Indo-Trinidadians towards Afro-Trinidadians - and rarely leads to any large-scale conflict. Oxaal went on to suggest that there is a pervasive state of mind that he called "plural disassociation," which is characterized by the attitude - a cardinal tenet in the philosophy of the Trinidadian - that each should attend to his/her own affairs and not go "interfering" in the business of other groups" (Oxaal, 1968:24).

Contrary to Oxaal's view, Crowley (1957) labelled the pattern of race relations in Trinidad as an example of "plural acculturation". By "plural acculturation" it is meant that there exist a mutual understanding between the various racial/ethnic groups in the society. This in turn
prevents the society from fragmenting to the point of
dissolution (Crowley, 1957: 817-821). How Crowley would use
this framework to explain critical events with racial
overtones that occurred in Trinidad such as Federation and
the Black Power Movement is not clear. These events will be
discussed in section B of this chapter.

However, regardless of the degree of acceptance between
two groups in a society, probably the last area for
assimilation is that of marriage and the family. One of the
best measures of the degree of community separation or
assimilation is the rate of intermarriage. Gordon (1964)
points out that when marital assimilation takes place the
minority group loses its individual identity in the larger
society. "Prejudice and discrimination are no longer a
problem, since eventually the descendants of the original
minority group become indistinguishable, and since primary
group relationships tend to build up an "in-group" feeling
which encloses all the members of the group"
(Gordon, 1964: 80). In contemporary Trinidad, intermarriage
between Afro and Indo Trinidadians is still rare although
there has been a gradual increase in miscegenation
practices, most of which are based on common law unions
since Indo-Trinidadian parents are very much pro-endogamous
and anti-miscegenation. Even marriages between Hindu and
Muslim Indo-Trinidadians are still not fully condoned
(primordial sentiments, specifically religious in nature
still run deep) much less for Afro and Indo marriages. Nonetheless, miscegenation between Afro and Indo
Trinidadians are becoming frequent. Two groups may heartily
despise each other, yet exercise a kind of contemptuous
toleration of each others ways. This seemed to have been
the case. Sewell wrote that the Police records showed no
evidence (up to 1860) of jealousy or hostility between Afro
and Indo Trinidadians (Sewell,1860:132). Cases of violent
conflict between Afro and Indo Trinidadians on the estates
in the 19th century were also reported to be relatively rare
(Ibid). Even today, the level of violence/conflict between
the groups is minimal. Since there was no large scale
violence between the two racial groups, and granted the
numbers involved, the possibilities for conflict and the
long time span (1846 to 1917), one has to conclude that
violent conflict between the Indo and Afro groups during the
indenture period was conspicuous by its rarity.

So far as can be discerned from the literature, there
were never any seriously organized clashes that were
reported to have occurred between Afro and Indo
Trinidadians, though eruptions on an individual or small
group basis there certainly were. Nonetheless, there is no
doubt that during the colonial period that these two groups
were marginalized and were relegated to the bottom of the
socio-economic ladder owing to the strong socio-economic and
political magnitude of the white and coloured elite classes
then. Notwithstanding the existing limitations, however, both groups (Afro and Indo) had found some congenial economic outlets which helped to lessen the intensity of the economic competition between the groups.

ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES

During the nineteenth century, the planters and the colonial government began to offer the Indians small plots of lands, commonly known as Crown Lands, in exchange for the price of the indentured Indians return passage to India (Ramesar, 1974:70-74). While this was done primarily to safeguard the economic interests of the planter class (who, as it was, induced the Indians not to return to India after the expiration of their contractual period so that the Indians would remain to provide the much needed labour that was necessary for the then lucrative sugar industry), the offer of Crown Lands to the Indians around 1870 provided the Indians with a start from which they could develop their own independent economic base and which were to later guarantee them some form of economic autonomy in the agricultural sector. In other words, the opening up of Crown Lands by the colonial government, ironically worked in favour of the Indo-Trinidadian group in as much as it stabilized or mitigated against the many the divisive forces (primarily economic) at work in Trinidadian society then.
The opening of Crown Lands then, enabled many Indians to become small holders by acquiring lands legitimately and with a minimum of administrative obstacles (Ramesar, 1976:196). Thus, dynamic developments such as the opening of Crown Lands, led to widescale agricultural expansion and which in turn, led to crucial economic and social changes that affected the Indians position in the society. So successful was the Crown Land Policy of Land Acquisition that Indians quickly emerged as the largest peasant farmers or "agro-proletariat". At the same time, however, the majority of Indians in Trinidad, during and after indentureship, remained low wage earners, tied to the estates and relegated to the bottom of the social and economic ladder (Jayawardena, 1963:16-17). This stagnant economic pattern, however, were to significantly change prior to and after the period of independence when many Indo-Trinidadians experienced varying degrees of social mobility. (Table 6) shows the distribution of adult creoles (those of African descent), British West Indians and Indians in each of six occupational categories. Nearly, 50 per cent of the total population of working age were engaged in agriculture, the majority of them being Indians.

Some Indians rented land from large proprietors, establishing villages and holdings independent of the estates, especially in the area between St. James on the West of Port of Spain, and where they also supplied most of
the city's milk needs (Ramesar, 1976:207). By the end of the 19th century, over 90 per cent of the indentured Indians had completed their indentures (Brereton, 1979:180). Rice growing proved attractive to some and it enabled Indians to gain some partial autonomy from the estates. Others went into independent cane production. Some Indians gravitated into cocoa, at that time a lucrative export crop. Indians soon owned almost one-fifth of the island's nearly half a million cultivated and alienated acreage (La Guerre, 1976:293).

In addition to semi-independent agriculture and land acquisition, Indians also found suitable outlets in occupations such as retailing and shopkeeping, setting up food and grain shops in their houses, some with spirit licences (Comins, 1893: Report No.16, p.72). Jobs such as these may have been particularly attractive to those moving away from the plantation because they were often in niches either ignored and or underdeveloped by other racial groups.

As Ramesar (1976) observed:

> the main motive in seeking these occupations may have been the immigrants' search for security in those areas where realization was possible (Ramesar, 1976:207).

The aforementioned quote by Ramesar points to the fact that the Indian immigrants, in assessing the economic limitations and constraints which they were confronted with, sought out and consequently developed and monopolized
## TABLE 6

**Occupations of the Main Sectors of the Trinidad Population in 1891**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Categories</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Creoles</th>
<th>British West Indians</th>
<th>Indians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Professional</strong></td>
<td>2,709</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>1,060</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Domestic</strong></td>
<td>16,445</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>7,045</td>
<td>15.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Commercial</strong></td>
<td>4,377</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>1,554</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Agricultural</strong></td>
<td>65,593</td>
<td>47.85</td>
<td>14,613</td>
<td>31.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Industrial</strong></td>
<td>37,854</td>
<td>27.62</td>
<td>16,651</td>
<td>36.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indefinite &amp; Unoccupied</strong></td>
<td>10,096</td>
<td>7.36</td>
<td>5,228</td>
<td>11.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>137,074</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>46,151</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from the 1891 Census Report for Trinidad.
those economic areas that were largely ignored by the Afro and other racial/ethnic groups. Thus, through rational calculation and optimization the Indians were able to take advantage of the alternatives available to them. This points to Banton's argument that immigrant groups that are less powerful than the host or receiving society will be expected to seek out those areas in the economy that may provide them with some form of autonomy and security. Hence, the Rational Choice theory's prediction concerning the outcome based on the actions of individuals or groups – outcomes which may arise in situations where individuals or groups will have to make rational decisions.

Ramesar's quote then provides empirical support for RCT's axiom that individuals or groups placed in a situation based on relative power will need to develop alternatives in the face of constraints. This axiom then becomes a testable prediction of the RCT model when applied to multi-ethnic/racial Trinidadian society.

Barth's (1969) field research findings in a tribal village in Baluchistan, Pakistan was similar to the above. However, Barth's emphasis was not on the outcome _per se_ but more on the various groups economic specialization which he argued produced a degree of economic interdependence amongst the competing groups. That is, one group depended on another group for certain economic provisions and vice versa. In Trinidad, there is proof for this type of
economic interdependence between all the various groups. For example, Afro-Trinidadians depend on Indo-Trinidadians and Chinese Trinidadians for their shopkeeping services and other similar commercial activities. This is easily detectable in the marketplace. Indo-Trinidadians and most of the other racial/ethnic groups, on the other hand, depend on the Afro-Trinidadians for police and military services. Thus, Barth's notion of symbiosis, may very well find empirical support in Trinidad also.

Indians, it was asserted, received 31,766 acres of land from the colonial authorities in lieu of the passages to India which were their due as part of the indenture contract. Afro-Trinidadians, on the other hand, received little land since the plantocracy wanted to retain their labour on the plantations. This differential inheritance was or can be seen as a crucial factor in terms of what occurred in the manner in which the society became occupationally stratified.

The lack of interest by the Afro-Trinidadian group to develop an independent economic base for themselves in the agricultural sector of the economy and their subsequent migration to the urban areas in the island provided the Indo-Trinidadians with the necessary economic base from which they developed a monopoly on the agricultural sector of the economy. This development and control of the agricultural monopoly by the Indo-Trinidadian group
(especially the rural Indo-Trinidadian group) have undoubtedly made the group, at least in the eyes of the wider society, a major contributory element in the development of the economy of Trinidad. This is why, as an agricultural group, the Indo--Trinidadian group, time and again, has been credited for being the backbone of the Trinidadian economy.

Furthermore, the lack of interest by the Afro-Trinidadian group to monopolize the agricultural sector can be viewed as a mixed blessing for the Indo-Trinidadian group. It is a mixed blessing because on the one hand, the Afro's neglect of the agricultural sector enabled the Indo group to monopolize this sector of the economy - a sector where they had proven to be best suited, occupationally that is, and which provided them with the opportunity to build up a broader occupational structure and social base that was not afforded to them in plantation life. On the other hand, the Afro group's movement into the urban areas gave the Indo group sufficient leeway to develop fully not only the agricultural sector, but also their own economic autonomy. However, the shift from the rural to urban areas by the Afro-Trinidadian group proved to be a minus for the Indo group and a positive for the Afro group. This was so because in the long run the Indo group, because of their isolation from mainstream Trinidadian life, placed them in a politically marginal position in the society. As the
political underdog, the Indo-Trinidadian group still
endeavour to secure a political position within the
corridors of power.

Table 7 provides an illustration of the degree of
participation in the cane-farming industry by Indo and Afro-
Trinidadian (referred to as East Indian and West Indian
respectively in the Table) cane farmers. What we observe is
that whereas in the initial stages, West Indian
participation was 15 per cent higher than East Indians, by
1909, East Indian participation was 6.6 per cent above that
of West Indians though there was a numerical increase of
1,454 West Indians, and by 1919, East Indian participation
kept increasing still more than that of West Indians, being
18.2 per cent higher, in spite of the fact that West Indian
participation had increased by 3,244 over the number in
1909.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Total Tons of Cane Crushed</th>
<th>Percentage of Farmers' Cane</th>
<th>East Indian Farmers</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>West Indian Farmers</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>East Indians</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>2,326</td>
<td>20.02</td>
<td>2,826</td>
<td>6,150</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>533,047</td>
<td>25.50</td>
<td>6,807</td>
<td>11,401</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>6,157,464</td>
<td>49.53</td>
<td>8,568</td>
<td>20,938</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>8,26,157</td>
<td>48.39</td>
<td>11,544</td>
<td>18,081</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>1,442,910</td>
<td>43.65</td>
<td>6,883</td>
<td>20,705</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table computed from Appendix C of C.P. 119 of 1938, Cane Farming Committee Report and Proceedings of Agricultural Society vol. 8, Paper no. 284.
CRITIQUE OF EXTANT LITERATURE ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION OF INDO-TRINIDADIANS

This trend in cane-farming was the general pattern in agriculture especially among the Indians in Trinidad. This can be attributed to the withdrawal of Afro-Trinidadian labour into industry. As industry became more separated from agriculture, the Afro-Trinidadians became more alienated from agriculture but more attached to industry, mainly the petroleum industry (Cross, 1972:17). Sebastien (1980) argued that the Indo-Trinidadians, under indentureship until 1971, and not readily accommodated in the towns, became entrenched in agriculture and as removed from urban industry. He goes on to say that this led to an unequal participation between the two major races in the main sphere of the national economy and that it resulted in an emphatic racial division of labour, creating the urbanization of one and the ruralization of the other (Sebastien, 1980:126).

In other words, Sebastien's argument rests on the assumption that the inherent dichotomies (i.e., the rural/urban distinctions or the separation of town and country in Trinidad has created a juxtaposition of races, being theoretically united by class loyalties but separated by objectively unequal material conditions of existence and subjected to uneven development, hence the criss-cross between ethnic and class loyalties, and the persistence of
the race factor. And according to Sebastien, this is the quintessential characteristic of the national question in Trinidad (Sebastien, 1980:126).

While not denying the validity and the negative consequences this type of racial/ethnic patterning could have on Afro Indo relations, it is at the same time true to say that Sebastien based his argument on statistics which were not entirely representative (at least during the time of his research) of the general occupational distribution of the Indo-Trinidadian population. More importantly, however, was the fact that Sebastien ignored the significant transformations that were occurring in the rural areas of Trinidad in the late 1960s and early 1970 such as the transformation of rural villages into semi-urban areas as a result of the rapid economic developments that were occurring in the island then.

Sebastien overlooked the visible evidence of the economic and social transformations occurring within the rural Indo-Trinidadian lower class group. The economic opportunities which the petro-dollar economy provided for all the groups in the society cannot, and must not be underestimated or overlooked. Of course, Indo-Trinidadians have been the one racial/ethnic group that have historically dominated the monopoly on the agricultural sector of the economy, but as a group, they did not remain occupationally static in the agricultural sector.
Sebastein and other sociologists who have studied the Indian groups in the Caribbean region have tended to place a timeless artificiality in their analysis of the data. That is to say, they do not address the issue of social change and its implication for the Indo-Trinidadian group in the wider society. For example, it is often claimed that the Indian communities are usually characterized as ethnic enclaves made up of farmers and sugar cane labourers who are largely isolated from developments in the wider society. Contrary to this view, this thesis will show that the Indo-Trinidadian community is characterized neither by economic stagnation nor by an unwillingness on the part of Indo-Trinidadians at large to transcend provincial ways in the pursuit of goals beyond the confines of a plantation environment.

Using selective census and income distribution data, Dookeran (1974) contends that in terms of general economic well-being the Indo-Trinidadian group fall behind other groups in income, level of education and educational facilities, nutrition and sanitation, and numerous other social, economic and environmental amenities. He concludes that the Indo-Trinidadians, particularly those in the rural areas, are economically disadvantaged, a consequence both of the unwillingness of the wider society to accommodate them and of their own reluctance to discard traditional values and practices (Dookeran, 1974:78-80).
Similarly, other studies such as the community field studies carried out by Klass (1961) and Niehoff (1960) suggested that the attitudes to work and family remain firmly rooted in historical cultural patterns, thus confirming Indian interests and activities to the rural environment (Klass, 1961). Such generalizations, however, have been derived by often regarding all the members of a particular group as having identical and usually immutable social and economic characteristics. For example, the fact that the overall level of schooling among Indo-Trinidadians is low by comparison with other ethnic groups in the society is cited as proof that they are educationally deprived. One of the problems with this kind of analysis, however, is that the level of schooling for the total group is pulled down by earlier generation members—who may have been indifferent to formal education—even though dramatic changes in educational achievement have been registered among recent generations of Indo-Trinidadians.

While both Klass's and Niehoff's studies have contributed to the anthropological understanding of the maintenance and modification of Indian cultural patterns in Trinidad, their drawbacks stemmed essentially from their lack of emphasis on the wider developments that were occurring in the society such as the rise of new elites, the emergence of party politics and rapid urbanization - all of
which had consequences for the Indo-Trinidadian group's position in the society.

The community studies that were undertaken by both Klass and Niehoff are subject to criticisms in so far as they made little allowance for the processes of social and cultural change, thereby imputing an artificial timelessness to rural village life. The community field studies as those stated above seem to suggest that attitudes to work and family remain firmly rooted in historical cultural patterns, thus confirming Indian interests and activities to the rural environment. As such, Klass applied an acculturation model which emphasized cultural persistence and retention. This model which is sometimes called the "retentionist hypothesis" underscores changes taking place in Indo-Trinidadian social organization.

In Trinidad, where the colonial and post-colonial governments have subordinated local autonomy, thereby facilitating cultural contact and social mobility, cultural differences continue to weaken. As Hoetink (1967) notes, one of the problems with both the acculturation model and the "plural" society model is that they freeze the various cultural categories in time, during their "first moment of existence" (Hoetink, 1967:820-1). From a plantation-dominated society Trinidad has become an industrializing and commercial one, and there can be little doubt that this
transformation has altered the traditional integrity of Indo-Trinidadian social organizations and institutions.

Klass, Niehoff and Sebastien were obviously aware of the dislocating effects of indenture and colonialism on Indo-Trinidadian social organization and cultural patterns. However, their case for retention is based on the existence in the post-indenture period of the relatively "static" and predominantly agricultural villages that grew up on the fringes of the sugar estates (Nevadomsky, 1984:34-7). According to Steward (1970) little attention is given to the kinds of "dependency relationships" existing between local units and the larger society that gradually initiate internal transformation and social changes (Steward, 1970:3).

By focusing on the subjective conditions of village life - traditions, customs, rituals, beliefs, etc. - Klass and others neglect the objective conditions of social change - the movement of villagers into new occupational and educational roles - and therefore, the consequences of change on the social structure (Nevadomsky, 1984:37-9). Nevadomsky's contention finds support in Jayawardena's (1968) argument that although migration and indenture exerted a powerful force on Indian social organization, it is the "structure values, inter-ethnic group relations and policies of the host society (following indenture)... that have the most constant and pervasive consequences for the
social organization of overseas Indian communities in the new environments" (Jayawardena, 1968:449).

M.G. Smith (1960) went so far as to say that East Indians in the Caribbean, as a group, had so little in common with other groups that social change could only take place by violent means (Smith, 1960:761-2). In comparison to Smith's pessimistic assessment, R.T. Smith (1967) argued that there was a level of similarity in aspirations to ensure that differences would be accommodated without recourse to violence (Smith, 1967:99). Braithwaite (1953) recognized that the coincidence of class and colour changed during the 1950s, as more and more Afro and Indo Trinidadians, through the emergence of a more "open" society and access to higher education, became part of the dominant class. Today, according to Smith (1970), the Weberian concept of class is the most appropriate analytical tool, and "the major cleavage is between earners of high income and low incomes (Smith, 1970:63). Smith's (1970) analysis highlights much of the growing complexity in the occupational structure as a result of contemporary economic developments.

A similar kind of distortion occurs when comparisons of ethnic distributions in the professions are made. For example, while there can be no denying that in 1965 the number of Indo-Trinidadian barristers lagged behind "other races" (98 to 61), it is probably more significant that
between 1945 and 1965 the number of Indo-Trinidadian barristers jumped from 16 to 61, an astounding increase over two decades (Malik, 1971:15). Also, the 1921 census showed that although 61 per cent of the Indo-Trinidadian labour force were agricultural labourers, 14 per cent had gone into teaching by this time, nearly 5 per cent were "public" officers, and over 5 per cent were in the "professions, police and military (La Guerre, 1976:293). These are some of the reasons why it is unsatisfactory to limit analyses to degrees of underrepresentation (such as what Sebastien, Dookeran and Klass, to name a few, have done) to particular points in time without some attention to historical change and possible trends. According to Nevadomsky (1984), such analyses are misleading because they peg the Indo-Trinidadians to an invariant relative position in the economic system, from which popular stereotypes may be reinforced (Nevadomsky, 1984:33).

How then is all this relevant to the understanding of the nature of group competition between Afro and Indo Trinidadians? The answer to this question can be found by examining the role of the Indo-Trinidadian group within the colonial system and their interaction and competition with both Europeans and Africans. White economic domination coupled with its racist limitations relegated the Afro and Indo groups to the bottom of the stratification system — with the Afro groups concentrated heavily in most of the
menial urban occupations and the Indo groups heavily concentrated in the agricultural sector of the economy as well as in small-business enterprises. This resulted in the conspicuous absence of intense economic competition between the Afro and Indo groups since each group was not vying for the other's economic stronghold. Competition with the Afro-Trinidadian then would have been greater were it not for the fact that Indo-Trinidadians were concentrated in those areas such as business enterprises, law, agriculture and medicine. These areas have been largely ignored by the bulk of Afro-Trinidadians. This then is one of the major reasons for the lack of intense competition between the groups.

And it is partly this lack of economic competition between the groups in Trinidad that has made it possible now and then for racial divisions to lessen in importance. So, this lack of economic competition between the groups, to a large extent, can be attributed to the "regulated" nature of the competition between the groups hence, one of the main reasons for the prevalence of fairly peaceful inter-group relations from the colonial period to the 1960s.

Moreover, it was possible for some small craftsmen who emerged in the late 19th and early 20th century to grow (the unwillingness of the banks to lend notwithstanding) as did the Indo-Trinidadians, the Chinese, Syrians and Portuguese petty traders (Ryan,1988:114). Braithwaite (1953) observed:
From the multitude of occupations such as painters, carpenters, mechanics, shoemakers, from which, in spite of the prevailing limitations, it was possible to launch out some form of business enterprise, one suspects that the "personality" factor is one of strategic significance (Braithwaite, 1953:24-26).

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT TOWARDS THE AFRO AND INDO TRINIDADIAN GROUPS

Discriminatory action can be defined as that class of action in which someone ascribed to a given category is treated differently because of ascription. The position of the Afro and Indo-Trinidadian groups during the colonial period is a case in point. The popular contention that racial discrimination exists in employment in both public and private sector employment received some support from Jack Harewood's findings in his analysis of the census data of 1960. His analysis of occupational groups classified by race and ethnicity revealed marked under-representations of the numerically major racial groups of the country, that is to say, persons of African and East Indian descent, in the highest or most preferred occupations: Executive-Administrative-Managerial, and Professional-Technical. Harewood points out that the data seem to suggest that "given the level of education and training, there might be discrimination in that persons of African and Indian descent, in particular, find it more difficult than others
(i.e whites and off-whites) to obtain suitable jobs commensurate with their training (Harewood, 1971:267).

The mere evidence of differentials in participation in "preferred" occupations cannot, of course, be taken as indicating the existence of racial discrimination. Other factors affecting such differential participation would need to be taken into account. For example, for historical reasons, persons of Indian descent were concentrated in certain rural areas - mainly in the vicinity of sugar plantation and other agricultural areas - and their predominance in occupations which occur mainly in these areas could not be direct evidence of discrimination.

Similarly, if for cultural or other reasons certain races prefer or avoid certain occupations, this must be borne in mind analyzing data on participation by occupations. Further since many of the highest occupations require special professional or technical training, it would be necessary to consider whether there is evidence of differentials in participation even where persons have similar education and qualification. Studies done by Camejo (1971) revealed that among those who were hired into top and middle positions and subsequently promoted to elite positions, the patterns of hiring and promotion seem to suggest the operation of a sponsorship system favouring Whites and Off-Whites with relatively low levels of education when compared with members of other racial/ethnic
groups, particularly Afro-Trinidadians, Indo-Trinidadians and Chinese Trinidadians, the majority of whom had advanced education. (Camejo, 1971:316-317).

Thus, Camejo's research points to the fact that there seemed to have been a tendency to give Whites and Off-Whites preference over other racial groups in the process of selection to middle and top positions, and promotion to elite positions thus allowing universalistic criteria in the form of educational qualification to give way to particularism evidence by informal mechanisms such as "contact" or "pull string" as it is commonly called in Trinidad. The term "pull string" basically means giving preferential treatment in hiring practices, nepotism and racial factors are prime examples.

So far, emphasis has been placed on the extent to which the Trinidadian colonial social structure accounted for the development of structured inequalities between the different racial and ethnic groups, particularly in the extent to which the society experienced the effects of a white colonial elite. It has also been shown that the colonial government encouraged discriminatory behaviour which was revealed in the institutionalization of racism i.e. by the colonial elites towards the Afro and Indo Trinidadian groups. It has also been shown that race relations involve (a) a particular elite which defines certain physical differences as socially significant (e.g. the importance of
"whiteness" over "blackness") and (b) those non-white groups of people who were "differentially incorporated" in the colonial social structure. Furthermore, "race" was used as a role sign which assigned the non-white groups to marginal positions in the society. This negative social definition based on racism and ascription was translated into political policy through the subordination of groups defined as "races".

SOCIAL CHANGE AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY AMONG THE INDO-TRINIDADIANS

The onset of the decolonization process leading to political independence, however, has meant less than a significant transference of economic power. The strong economic position of the whites in Trinidad is enough proof to verify the above assertion. In other words, the use of bureaucratic-achieved rather than the colonial ascriptive criteria in the process of societal role assignment continues to exist, though to a limited degree, after the decolonization process (Kinloch, 1974:207). Although this is a valid assertion applicable to most post-colonial societies, it does not mean, however, that the other racial groups are denied the experience of achieving social mobility. In the case of Trinidad, both the Afro and Indo groups were the recipients of massive economic rewards accrued from the profitable oil sector.
Although the process of decolonization in Trinidad worked in favour of the Afro-Trinidadian group in as much as it provided it with considerable political leverage and advantage over the Indo-Trinidadians - a group that was excluded from the corridors of political power in spite of the decolonization process and the social changes which it supposedly initiates - Indo-Trinidadians (of all classes) were quick to take advantage of the opportunities created by the economic developments occurring in the island. The rise of a significant oil industry as well as the decline of the colour-class system culminating in a more "open" social system based more on egalitarianism and less on particularism provided both groups with the necessary social and economic tools which contributed to the groups experience of social and economic mobility.

Although the depression years restricted economic mobility, the Second World War was a boom for many Indo-Trinidadians. Of immediate advantage were the job opportunities and unparalleled wages provided at American bases established to safeguard Venezuelan oil. In the long run, the war initiated the process of decolonization. For Trinidad this ultimately resulted in the expansion of an administrative bureaucracy, the creation of social and public welfare programmes, the institutionalization of formal education, the emergence of universal adult suffrage and parliamentary democracy, and the repeal of remaining
discriminatory ethnic legislation (Nevadomsky, 1982:98-99). All this added up to a significant structural transformation in the Trinidadian economy and an emerging pattern of occupational re stratification in which the main emphasis was, for the majority of the Indo-Trinidadian population, on formal education and mobility into white-collar jobs.

Generally speaking, Indo-Trinidadians (especially the rural ones) have not been isolated from these changes. As they moved into occupations created by the these developments, occupational differentiation in the rural areas began to approximate nationwide occupational distributions (Nevadomsky, 1984:35-6). Although many Indo-Trinidadians still rely on land as a form of investment and security, the trend over the past few decades has been for occupation and education to become the most important indicators of social status, with education providing the most direct route of social mobility (Ibid). Indo-Trinidadians have made increasing use of secondary and higher education to achieve mobility in civil service and professional occupations. A study done by Cross and Schwartzbaum (1970) indicated that for all Trinidad, Indo-Trinidadian girls were found to be slightly overrepresented in the total secondary school population (Cross et al, 1970:194-195).

Of equal importance, too, is the Indo-Trinidadian group's dominance in the private sectors of the economy
which is easily detected by the monopoly it has on the contracting business, the taxi business, shopkeeping and small commercial (both wholesale and retail) firms. At the same time, however, Indo-Trinidadians compete with members of other groups for jobs at all levels in the petroleum industry. Also, rural Indo-Trinidadians have easy access to urban centres where they compete for employment (Rubin, 1962:15). In law and medicine too, the Indo-Trinidadian group have made considerable advances.

How successful one believes the Indo-Trinidadian group to have been in economic competition depends on one's perspective. From the vantage point of indenture the Indo groups, both rural and urban, have risen gradually into the economic and social stratification system of the wider society, though many are still involved in agriculture and rural occupations.

A closer look at some of the structural transformations which occurred in Trinidad will reveal that a good proportion of the Indo-Trinidadians moved out of the rural areas to develop commercial activities in suburban and semi-suburban areas. This has resulted in the erosion of residential/racial segregation which has proven to be positive in terms of the consequences it has had on Afro-Indo relations. That is, the decline in the pattern of racial/ethnic residential segregation has brought the groups closer to each other which has fostered more favourable
social relations between the groups. More importantly, however, was the fact that educational aspirations and the values towards education played a major role in bringing about social, economic as well as political changes within the Indo-Trinidadian community.

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE AMONG THE INDO-TRINIDADIANS

The Indian population was, by and large, the object of neglect with respect to education until the arrival of the Canadian Presbyterian missionary, Reverend John Morton. The reason for this neglect can be attributed to the fact that the plantocracy, as a means of securing their interests, deliberately discouraged the Indo-Trinidadians from pursuing education since it was not consistent with the requirement of plantation life. By confining the Indo-Trinidadians group to agricultural occupations the planter class would be guaranteed of the labour force it required for the continued production of sugar. Dr. Eric Williams stated the "The worst victims of colonialism in this respect (i.e. education) were the children of indentured Indian immigrants" (Williams, 1962:212). Williams quoted Keenan as observing that:

The Coolie's mind was left a blank. No effort was made to induce him through the awakening intelligence and dawning prospects of his children, to associate the fortune or the future of his family with the colony. It is therefore that...I connect the magnitude of the periodical exodus of the Asiatics with the educational system, which fails to provide for their children
acceptable schools. I cannot call to my mind any other case of a people who, having come to a strange land which they enriched by their labour, were morally and intellectually -- so completely neglected as the Coolies have been during the past twenty-four years... (Williams, 1962:212-213).

Morton founded the first school for Indians in March, 1868. Two years later another was opened by Dr. K.L. Grant, another Canadian missionary. By 1878, fifteen schools had been established for Indians with 694 students enrolled and an average daily attendance of 441 (Kirpalani, 1945:53-54). As late as 1914, the Canadian Mission continued to be the principal body interested in the education of the Indians. It must also be noted that until the 1950s government assistance was not given to Indian Organizations such as the Maha Sabha (the official Hindu religious organization) and the Trinidad Islamic Association (the official Muslim religious organization) that were desirous of managing their own schools. Hence, Canadian mission schools spread rapidly aided by government and planters represented the only ray of hope for the Indians who wished to rise above the level of plantation (Samaroo, 1972:49). Under these conditions, Canadian Mission schools spread rapidly up to 1911 after which there was a levelling off. (See Table 8 below).

It was not surprising then, that in 1868 the Presbyterian missionary Morton said: "Owing to race prejudice there was scarcely an Indian child to be found in
TABLE 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>1892</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1942</th>
<th>1956</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Schools</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Pupils</td>
<td>2,951</td>
<td>8,080</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


the whole island" (Morton, 1916:41-42). One main reason why Indian children were conspicuously absent from the schools in the island was because of Indian parents reluctance to send their children to school. Indian parents feared that the missionary schools were instruments for proselytizing since Christian missionaries proffered education in the hope that the pupils might be converted.

For example, Singh (1974) argued that Indian parents were said to object to sending their children to schools which were dominated by Negro teachers and by a curriculum that provided "role models unrelated to the kinds of activities by which Indians have achieved the economic status they now enjoy (Singh, 1974:103:), the assumption being that Indians, in their attitudes toward education wished to retain their traditional economic and social patterns. Similarly, Depres (1967) contends that Indo-Guyanese feared that formal education would mean the loss of their cultural identity (Depres, 1967:21).
However, such arguments as those stated above by both Singh and Despres, although very much true at one point in time, do not hold true anymore. Since the 1940s and 50s the Hindus and Muslims have been building schools for children of their religion, mainly Hindu and Muslim denominational schools. This type of denominational establishment provided Indian parents with psychological comfort in so far as they provided their children with the necessary religious and cultural socialization that would enable the younger generations of Indians to "hold on" to their culture.

At the same time, however, the establishment of denominational schools encouraged Indo-Trinidadian exclusiveness. The employment of only Indo-Trinidadian teachers in these schools further perpetuated the exclusiveness, and was therefore hardly conducive to the attraction of non-Indians. This maintenance of ethnic separateness in the schools are still prevalent today. These types of sectarian schools or the denominational system of education that exists in Trinidad only serves to perpetuate distinctiveness, thereby strengthening the already existing racial cleavages in the society. However, with the exception of a few Hindu and Muslim organizations, there are no communal or reactionary agencies segregating the Indo-Trinidadians from the other cultural segments in the population.
Thus, Singh and Depres, by using the retentionist framework to analyze cultural persistence, ignore the process of social change on traditional cultural practices. Therefore, their arguments are contradicted by the very fact that both Indo-Trinidadians and Indo-Guyanese have made increasing use of education as a vehicle for social mobility. According to Bacchus (1970):

The greater participation by Indians in the educational institutions at all levels is ... a direct result of their increasing acceptance in the social structure of the overall society. In addition, the opportunities for their upward mobility within the dominant sector helped them to disperse throughout the society; this militated against the possibility of their further becoming strengthened as a sub-society within the total social system (Bacchus, 1970:37).

In Trinidad, wealth still remains an important criterion of status, but its importance is now measured more in terms of income potential and occupation than in terms of actual cash or land holdings (Nevadomsky, 1984:54). Thus, the typical western criteria of status - education, occupation and income - by and large, now form the basis of the Indo-Trinidadian attitude toward education.

Bacchus's aforementioned findings contradict Singh's and Depres's arguments. Both views were limited to the antecedent culture which was revealed in their argument that Indo-Caribbean peoples did not recognized the instrumental value of education in getting ahead. The fact that the teaching of Hindi in the local primary and secondary schools faded away once it became clear to all and sundry Indo-
Caribbean peoples that a knowledge of Hindi did not make a difference in passing an exam is sufficient evidence to disprove Singh's and Depres's views. This prompted Nevadomsky (1982) to rightly point out that "too many references to the antecedent culture have the unfortunate consequences of neglecting evidence which may be more germane to an understanding of local organization" (Nevadomsky, 1982:113).

To recapitulate then, the need for Indian labour on the sugar estates set in motion a pattern of systematic discrimination against members of the group in most other sectors of the economy as efforts were made to confine them to agricultural occupations. Moreover, they were exempted, by and large, from compulsory education laws that applied to all other racial groups, a practice that was fully remedied only during the third decade of the twentieth century. Without legally enforced access to education, Indians became non-competitive in most non-agricultural areas of the economy e.g. in commerce, finance, law and medicine. Today, however, even with enforced access to education, Indo-Trinidadians compete with Afro-Trinidadians for jobs that require secondary and higher education degrees. This, however, has not intensified economic competition to any marked extent between the groups since the majority of the Indo-Trinidadian population are not totally dependent on (except for primary and high school teachers as well as
university professors who are employed regardless of their racial/ethnic background because credentialism and not the ascriptive criterion of race is what is important for job placement in the education system) government and other public sector employment as opposed to the Afro-Trinidadians, who depend to a large extent on government occupations (Harewood et al, 1982:47-51).

What one finds today then is that many Indo-Trinidadians are still non-competitive in most of the non-agricultural areas of the economy such as in commerce, banking, construction and road-building, manufacturing and distributive trades and in the areas such as insurance and para-banking, law and medicine - areas that the Afro-Trinidadian population have not made any significant in roads into yet. Of course, this underrepresentation of the Afro-Trinidadian groups in the above economic categories breathes resentments by the Afro-Trinidadian towards the Indo-Trinidadians. It is common to hear an Afro-Trinidadian saying that "the Indians are taking over the country". Yet still, overt conflict between the groups remains absent. Figure 2 which will be shown later on in section B of this chapter, will give some indications as to why, so far, overt conflict has not occurred between the groups.

Ownership of land also set the stage for upward social mobility for many Indo-Trinidadians. During the twentieth century, many were able to use savings accumulated from
their peasant undertaking to invest in small businesses. In some noticeable instances, such businesses have grown considerably. The pattern of discrimination against Indo-Trinidadians in the public and private sectors impelled them into the professions, particularly medicine and law, by those who managed to acquire a secondary education, and who had the money to afford higher education at overseas universities. These occupations, according to Hentzen (1989), by virtue of their relative independence, provided their practitioners with considerable insulation from the discriminatory practices of state and private sector employment (Hentzen, 1989:25-26).

Thus, through business activities and professional status, Indo-Trinidadians began the climb into the middle and upper classes in twentieth century Trinidad. This has resulted in a significant increase in the group's standard of living. By the 1950's, the rise of Indo-Trinidadian businessmen was impressive, but they have not yet superseded the dominance of the creole white (Hentzen, 1989:26).

It must be noted however that the cultural development of the Indians in Trinidad is quite distinctive. Unlike the rest of the other racial/ethnic groups, Indo-Trinidadians have remained firm in their commitment to Hinduism and Islam, and to the broader cultural trappings associated with these two religious systems. While there has been some conversion to Christianity (specifically in the Presbyterian
faith) by some sections of the group, the numbers of converts have been small. In 1970, three quarters of the Indo-Trinidadian population was either Hindu (80 per cent) or Muslim (20 per cent) (Annual Statistical Digest, 1974-75). Notwithstanding the upward mobility of many Indo-Trinidadians, there is still a sizeable proportion of them who continue to be plantation labourers and small-scale peasants.

While not denying that economic imbalances remain between the Indo-Trinidadian group and the other racial/ethnic groups and that the occupational and educational distributions are not equally allocated in relation to population, the Indo-Trinidadian group, specifically the rural based Indo-Trinidadians, is not characterized by economic stagnation. The main emphasis has and continues to be on formal education and mobility into non-agricultural employment.

We have already seen in the previous section how certain social variables such as education and religion fostered separation between the Afro and Indo groups, which came about as a result of the colonial "divide and rule" policy. Similarly, the marked separation of the Indo-Trinidadian group from the wider political mainstream prior to the independence period had much to do with its political position after independence.
Historically, the Indo group's entry as immigrants and the controversies surrounding that entry made them even more visible and identifiable. Indeed, in the opinion of many, the circumstances of their entry into Trinidad have been the main determinants of Afro-Indo relations, especially in their political relations (Ryan, 1966:3-9). In addition to this political separation between the Afro and Indo groups, the British officials regarded Indo-Trinidadians with increasing suspicion during the 20th century because of their possible connection with nationalist activities in India. Disturbances involving Indians on the estates were linked by colonial officials with "dangerous political groups in India", and in Trinidad where the possibility of discontent from a "suspicious race" were described as a threat to the society (Riviere, 1972:10).

The situation was further compounded as the Indo group's effort at political organization were suspiciously received by both the Afro and British officials. In presenting their memorial to the 1897 Royal Commission the Indo-Trinidadian group was accused of demonstrating its self-interest and aptitude for combining. There was evidence for this as Indo participation in broader-based movements was made known in the strikes of 1919 and 1920 (Samaroo, 1971:206-8).

Since the 1890s Indo-Trinidadians had articulated their rights and their position in a society where most of them
eventually remained following indenture. Nonetheless, they remained aloof from wider political groupings and this was as a result of the defensive political attitude they had adopted until the 1920s. The visit of a Crown-appointed investigatory commission under the Chairmanship of Major Wood (later Lord Halifax) to the colony in 1921 helped in no small way to crystallize the developing political consciousness of the Indo group (Ryan, 1966:4).

The formation of the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) or what was commonly referred to as the "Indian" party whose championship of sectional interests and communal representations (that were encouraged by some well known Indo-Trinidadian political leaders such as Ranjit Kumar, Adrian Cola Reinzi, nee Krishna Deonarine and F.M. Hosein, and Bhadase Sagan Maraj, to name only a few) reflected the diversity in the society, and reinforced the tendencies to divisions. The DLP, under the custody of the Maha Sabha (the Cultural Organization of the Hindu community), led to the merging of culture and politics which became inextricably bound up together.

These political leaders advocated political change, but only on the basis of communal representation. Most of the DLP political leaders were educated and were, therefore, squarely from the middle class. Because the Maha Sabha was seen more in terms of a rallying point for Hindu emotional attachment, this acted to discourage Indo-Trinidadian Muslim
participation. Furthermore, the Maha Sabha was never consequently a force among Indo-Trinidadian youths or the middle class (La Guerre, 1974:100-1). The DLP party was formed to cater to the political needs of the entire Indo-Trinidadian population. But with the Hindu-Muslim divisions and the Indo-Trinidadian middle class alignments with the PNM government, a successful Indo-Trinidadian political party could hardly be envisaged.

The General Election of 1946 was the first to be held under full adult suffrage in Trinidad. Prior to that the electorate had consisted of a propertied and mainly urban elite (Cross, 1972:19). However, it is not really true to say that racial considerations between Afro and Indo groups were of over-riding importance at this time although they certainly had an important influence (i.e. in the form of the colour-class system that was prevalent during the colonial period that excluded the bulk of the Afro and Indo groups from positions of power). It is also important to note that the new constitution of 1946 did not really redistribute power to either of the groups, so that competition between the two groups was less relevant than it was to become later. Nonetheless, the racial cleavage which had been clearly apparent in the years before 1946 became greatly intensified with the appearance of mass democratic politics.
In the following section, attention will be placed on the political events that occurred in the island beginning from 1956 till 1986 - a period that profoundly impacted on the structure of race relations in Trinidad. It will be shown that class/ethnic mobilization was impeded as a result of (a) the rise in racial consciousness and (b) economic developments occurring in the society then. It will also highlight some of the more contemporary political events occurring within the NAR government between Indo and Afro politicians. This section will show that inspite of Indian exclusion from the corridors of political power, the "regulated" nature of group competition between the Afro and Indo Trinidadian groups was still a persistent feature.
SECTION B

POLITICS AND AFRO INDO RELATIONS: 1956–1986

The official dictum that is paraded to the rest of the world via international fora is that Trinidad and Tobago is a multi-racial country where harmony exists among the various racial and ethnic groups. This is true when race relations in the country and the Caribbean are compared with those of white dominance systems such as South Africa, the United States, and Britain. However, the existence of racial harmony amongst the various groups does not mean that all the competing racial and ethnic groups are treated equally. As Williams (1970) rightly pointed out:

Trinidad and Tobago and other Caribbean countries were founded with their economic, political, social and cultural values based on racism - the assumed superiority of white over black (The Nation, 25th September, 1970:25).

Both Afro and Indo groups have had to struggle in their fight for equality, both economic and political against the white colonial elite. The attempt at Afro Indo working class solidarity in the 1930s, saw the coming together of both the Afro and Indo working class populations in their bid to oust the colonial and imperial powers from the island.

AN ATTEMPT AT AFRO-INDO SOLIDARITY

The emergence of a new working class leader in the person of Tubul Uriah Butler witnessed a renewed attempt to
mobilise a left-wing Afro-Indo coalition. The Butler Party, as it was called, was a carry-over from the pre-Second World War era when nationalist mobilization was rooted in labour organization. The depression of the thirties had a disastrous impact on the export-import oriented Trinidad economy (Ryan, 1966:7). As such, in its anti-colonial campaign, the primary emphasis was on lower-class mobilization rather than racial mobilization which later occurred when the People's National Movement Party (PNM) came into power.

Butler enjoyed enormous support from the Afro-Trinadian oilfield workers and he was also successful in forging an association with powerful Indo-Trinidadian contenders for political office. This paid electoral dividends in 1950. Butler's attempt at an Afro and Indo lower class struggle was a turning point in the history of race relations in Trinidad. Butler's supreme goal, like that of Cipriani and Reinzi (Indo-Trinidadian politicians) before him, was to "mix sugar and oil" (i.e. the former referring to the Afro lower class and latter to the Indo-lower class). Both the Trinidad Labour Party and the Butler Party revived their appeals for an effective working class coalition. Workers of every colour, race and nationality were encouraged to unite against the existing white "class dictatorship". Butler argued that while the class struggle was to eschew the politics of class hatred, the "working
class must also be the author and creator of its own progress, welfare and liberation" (Ryan, 1966:12). But only in unity could this be achieved.

Both the Afro urban proletariat and the rural Indo agricultural proletariat joined together to protest against social inequality. The solidarity movement was to try to right the wrongs in the society. The colonial social structure based on the colour-class and ascriptive criterion excluded the bulk of the Afro and Indo lower classes from wider economic and political participation.

The Indo-Trinidadians voted, en masse, for Indo-Trinidadian candidates aligned with Butler (Craig, 1953:166-8). However, racial/ethnic issues took precedence over class issues so any potential for lower class solidarity during that period was destroyed. No doubt, many Indo-Trinidadian workers had a great deal of sympathy and admiration for Butler, but there is little evidence to support the view that they supported him actively (Ryan, 1966:13). The emergence of communal politics discouraged any attempt at an Afro-Indo working class solidarity movement. Furthermore, Butler (an Afro-Trinidadian) and his Indo-Trinidadian supporters became seriously divided over federation. The latter, in an act of apostasy, deserted him for the newly formed Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) which later became the Democratic Labour Party (DLP), headed by a wealthy right-of-centre
Indo-Trinidadian businessman and President General of the Maha Sabha – the organizing body of the Hindu religious community (Hentzen, 1989:44).

**THE IMPLICATIONS OF A WEST INDIAN FEDERATION**

Similarly, there was a growing consensus among non-Indo Trinidadian politicians that Federation with the rest of the British West Indies offered the best post-colonial political arrangement for the colony. This issue, however, inflamed the passions of the Indo-Trinidadian community and its political representatives who were already sensitive to the possibility of Afro-Trinidadian political domination (Lowenthal, 1961:82-5). Indo-Trinidadian leaders were strong in the belief that a federalist constitution would have the effect of relegating the Indo-Trinidadian population to an insignificant and permanent political minority by encouraging and promoting mass migration of other Caribbean blacks from other less developed West Indian territories, which do not contain any sizeable number of Indo-Caribbean peoples (Lowenthal, 1961:83).

The Democratic Labour Party's (DLP or the "Indian" political party) victory in the Federal Election of 1958 served to palliate the fear of the Indo-Trinidadians. A conflict of opinions on the concept of the West Indian Federation subsequently emerged, and as a result of a referendum in September, 1961, the Jamaican government
seceded, and by an Act of Parliament in the United Kingdom the Federation was dissolved in May, 1962. However, the apprehension of the Indo-Trinidadians in respect to being in a permanent minority position had been renewed when the PNM government (the first "national" government to take political office when Trinidad gained its independence) proposed a unitary statehood with Grenada.

Grenada is the closest West Indian island to Trinidad and has a population which is ninety-five per cent Afro-Grenadians. The view of the majority of Indo-Trinidadian electorate was succinctly presented by an Indo-Trinidadian:

To the people who could think and who have been following political trends in Trinidad and Tobago during the last five or six years, the implications are clear. There is ample justification for agreeing with the views expressed by prominent members of the community here that the sole reason for the agitation to incorporate Grenada and other West Indian islands with Trinidad is founded on the PNM racialism against Indo-Trinidadians. It is the means that the PNM have decided to implement in order to nullify Indian voting strength twenty years hence. In a Federation, Grenadian votes cannot assist any party in Trinidad. In a unitary state, Grenada is likely to receive five seats in the Trinidad parliament! Because Grenada is mainly Negro, PNM are hoping they will all vote for PNM (Singh, 1962:11).

Therefore, if unitary statehood had been endorsed, the political consequences for the Indo-Trinidadian population would have had a crippling effect on the political position of the Indo-Trinidadian group.

In Trinidad slightly over 56 per cent of the population comprises the Afro and mixed racial groups (this group
identifies ethnically with the Afro-Trinidadian group) while close to 40.7 per cent is of Indian origin. Thus, there is close numerical parity between the Afro and Indo groups in Trinidad although the Indo groups were assumed to have surpassed the Afro group at some point in time. These differences in ethnic/racial proportions have important and different consequences for political behaviour. Given the combined strength of the Afro and mixed populations in Trinidad, majoritarianism and racial politics favoured an Afro political party (i.e. the PNM) which relied on communal mobilization to gain control of the state (Hentzen, 1989:3). It was only during the 1950s specifically, in 1956, with the birth of the Peoples National Movement (PNM) party headed by Dr. Eric Williams, however, that an appeal to racial sentiment became a central feature of mass political mobilization in Trinidad.

As was mentioned earlier on, in Trinidad, nationalist mobilization had its roots in trade union agitation against colonial and expatriate employers (Ryan 1972:28-45 and Oxaal, 1968:80-95). Political leaders rode the backs of mass economic dissatisfaction during the first half of the century to press for political change. They called for more representative government, for the sharing of colonial power, and for a shift of political control away from the colonial office and its representatives to local decision-making bodies (Ryan, 1972:28-45 and Oxaal, 1968:80-95).
By the 1950s, then, during a "tutelary" period, acknowledged to be one of preparation for eventual independence, mass politics (which was up to that time directed against colonial intransigence to political reform) fell victim to race as the new "idiom" of popular mobilization (Hentzen, 1989:3). The immediate question that comes to mind is: what was the impact of nationalism in the era of independence for the largest single minority group in Trinidad, the Indo-Trinidadians. And to what extent did the transition to independence affect racial/ethnic minorities vis-a-vis their economic and political positions in the society?

By definition, the achievement of independence imply the birth of "meaningful" social change for all and sundry (racial groups). However, in reality, the social structure does not necessarily change drastically as it was in the colonial period; the only difference is that the transition to independence (in the case of Trinidad) signalled that the majority group, the Afro-Trinidadians because of political patronage and an appeal to racial sentiments by a particular racially-based party, were to become the new post-colonial authority. The only difference was that the new political body was uniformly black in colour whereas the old colonial body was uniformly white in colour. Herein then, lies the contradictions inherent in the decolonization process. The
obvious question which arises then is: what was the position of the Indo-Trinidadian group in post-colonial Trinidad?

THE SALIENCE OF "RACE" IN TRINIDADIAN POLITICS

In Trinidad, as in most post-colonial societies, the most important, visible and salient dimension of political cleavage is race (Ryan, 1972). The precise relationship between ethnic cleavages and political stability (or instability), particularly in democracies, has received considerable attention, especially in view of the mounting evidence of ethnically-inspired political activity. Of overriding concern to this thesis, however, is the question: why are cultural divisions sometimes politically salient and sometimes not? Although the literature on this area tend to emphasize the overwhelming occurrence of the former, the research findings for this thesis indicate that in Trinidad cultural divisions are not always politically salient. The findings from the interviews (which will be discussed later on) will support this argument.

The numerical composition of the "plural" society strongly governs the patterns of democratic instability which develop. Rabushka and Shepsle (1971) argue that the Trinidadian polity falls under what they call, the "competitive configuration" category, in which two or three approximately balanced numerical groups appear (Rabushka et al., 1971:474). As was noted earlier on, both the Afro and
Indo Trinidadian groups have near numerical parity with the Afro group, the former comprising 40.8% of the population and the latter 40.7% (Central Statistical Office of Trinidad and Tobago, 1980).

In order to answer the question why cultural divisions are sometimes politically salient and sometimes not, it is necessary to isolate a particular phenomenon present in Trinidadian society. Although there is political competition between the Afro and Indo groups in Trinidad, the lines of conflict between the two groups for political power become softened as a result of the cross-cutting class ties which result from the specific type of developmental strategy or ideology favoured by the state.

Although cultural diversity is a near universal phenomenon, only in a specific subset of countries does this diversity have important political implications. In a multi-racial society like Trinidad, politics tend to follow ethnic lines. In this type of communal politics, strains (racial and ethnic in nature) frequently develop. That is, after independence, the content of politics is distribution. The colonial power has removed itself as a contender, leaving only fellow nationals to dispute "who gets what, when, and how". That is, from the point of view of inter-racialism as advocated by the political party that takes over after the colonial government departs, the game is reduced from a situation where the colonized is against the
colonialists to a situation in which one racial group is in competition with another racial group. This is why Rabushka and Shepsle (1971) have argued that loyalty in "plural" societies is communal and not national (Rabushka et al., 1971:469).

If, as is the case in Trinidad, political loyalty is not always entirely communal (i.e., the type of politics which is not based entirely on the racial or ethnic vote), arguably then, such a situation will reduce the potential for inter-racial/ethnic fighting that may or may not culminate in the occurrence of a more benign type of intergroup relations.

THE EMERGENCE OF RACIALLY CENTRED MASS PARTIES

Racial cleavage in Trinidadian society, which developed during the colonial period, has been perpetuated and remains as a living legacy today. Racial cleavage is nowhere more manifest as it is during political processes such as campaigns and other political actions. Until the 1950s Afro-Indo relations in Trinidad were a combination of mutual tolerance and contempt. By and large, however, an uneasy peace existed and Afro-Indo relations up to the fifties could be summarized as the phase of peaceful co-existence (La Guerre, 1972:1).

Beginning in 1956, Trinidad saw the emergence of political parties that were for the most part communally
based i.e. the PNM and the DLP parties. It was the eruption of party politics in 1956 and the dramatic appearance of Dr. Eric Williams, Trinidad's premier and national leader and Prime Minister then, that brought to the fore the whole question of race once more into Trinidadian politics. Thereafter, politics and political parties became ranged on a racial basis notwithstanding manifestos and slogans espousing multi-racialism and racial equality. Generally speaking, Caribbean governments have done little to make racial/ethnic integration a reality. All that is offered is expert advice and empty cliches such as: "where every creed and race finds an equal place...". The prospect of independence and the general elections of 1961 were instructive of the potential for inter-group conflict between the Afro and Indo groups.

The year 1955 saw a major turning point in the political history of Trinidad. Dr. William's pro-nationalist sentiments and anti-imperial stance, which was responsible for politicizing the population to a great extent, brought him and the People's National Movement (PNM) to power in 1956. The PNM party was identified as the pro-Afro (and hence to Indians, the anti-Indo) party. The Indo-Trinidadian electorate was not assured by the proclamation in the PNM charter to the effect that one of its political aims was the "elimination of racial and other forms of discrimination from our society and the promotion of
interracial solidarity, inviting all sections of the community, irrespective of race, class, colour or creed to work for the Commonwealth" (A Statement of Fundamental Principles, 1956:4).

At this point in time in Trinidad's political history (i.e. nearing the end of the colonial era and the beginning of the independence period), one would have thought that emphasis would have been placed on political integration by all of the different racial/ethnic segments in the society (at least this was what the PNM proclaimed when it took over from colonial rule). Williams' espousal of interracialism as a desirable ideal can be detected by this speech of his:

I repeat, the political line for the society and for the British West Indies in general must be economic and political equality, and cultural autonomy for any minority that wishes it. But I shall use all my influence to fight communal representation, Indians voting for Indians and Blacks voting for blacks (Mahabir, 1978:209).

Although Williams' message was meant to be national, the response was partly group and partly class. Those who responded in a messianic way to his presence were in the main Afro-Trinidadians (specifically, the majority of whom were concentrated in the urban areas and who represented the bulk of the Afro-Trinidadian lower class group) and those who comprised his immediate entourage were squarely of the middle class specifically, the middle-sector comprising of the Afro and coloured intelligentsia who were largely responsible for the implementation of state policies and
therefore, acted as the economic advisors to the government. However, the situation turned out to be the reverse: the PNM party was in fact the Afro-Trinidadian party since many Afro-Trinidadians considered the PNM success as a victory against the Indo-Trinidadians. Similarly, the Indo-Trinidadians viewed the PNM party as a threat to their interests.

Thus, the emergence of the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) and the People's National Movement (PNM) encouraged and promoted the racial divisions that had arisen out of colonial rule. Internationally, this racial polarity did not go unnoticed. The London Times reported that Trinidad had been witnessing "an awakening of political consciousness, which was increasingly and regrettably based on race, in the form of Afro against Indo" (London Times, Sept 24 1956:6). Consequently, the Indo-Trinidadian party joined with the Party of Political Progress Groups and the Trinidad Labour Party to form the major Indo-Trinidadian party, namely The Democratic Labour Party (DLP). In the 1961 elections, four parties competed. In that year, of the thirty seats contested, the PNM won twenty and the DLP ten. Neither of the other two political parties had succeeded in gaining a seat (Bahadoorsingh,1968:31). Therefore, in 1961 two major parties represented the Trinidad electorate: the pro-Afro party (PNM) and the pro-Indo party (DLP). The stage had been set for the appearance of "apanjaht" politics
(to use Depres's term) which, when translated from Hindi to English, means "vote for your own kind" (Depres, 1967: 228-9).

In Trinidad, it is a well known fact that racial appeal was the main factor that largely determined electoral success in the 1956 and 1961 elections. The attitudes of Afro and Indo Trinidadians who voted for the PNM and DLP respectively were obtained from an opinion poll taken in December, 1964 by Bahadoorsingh (1968) to find out whether or not the racial factor was the critical variable that determined voting behaviour. Afro respondents were asked why they voted for the PNM in 1956 and in 1961. The range of racial responses were as follows: "I voted for my own race;" "One of the reasons is that the leader (Williams) is a Negro. On the other hand the DLP cannot rule the country;" "I voted my Negro party;" I would not let the DLP rule. If they did they would kick us;" I am a PNM, can't you see my hair;" "They are my own people. I could not let DLP take over as long as I have the vote." "Williams is my race. Responses from the Indo-Trinidadians, (Hindus, Muslims and Christians) with regards to DLP were no less distinct. Typical responses were as follows. "We are Indians and we have to support our own people;" "I wanted my people on top and I will always do so;" "The party was for Indians;" "Because of race. DLP for the Indians and PNM for the Creole (or Afro-Trinidadians) people. We had no choice
but to vote for our own people;" "DLP was a party for Indian people and I had to do my duty;" "Did not want PNM to rule. I wanted my own people on top. I will continue to do so every time I have to do so" (Bahadoorsingh, 1968:36-37).

Indo and Afro political elites were asked to assess the impact of race in Trinidad politics and explain it. The responses confirmed the view that racial attitudes play a major role. Typical of the responses of the Afro political elites were as follows: "The main core (i.e., race), the most important thing. Policy of the parties took precedence;" "Race played a major part in 1961;" "Race has played a great part. A lot of it is mistrust and fear because of misunderstanding between the two major races". "The Afro-Trinidadians feel that the Indo-Trinidadians will stick together to the destruction or peril of all other groups;" "Race is the basic factor" (Bahadoorsingh,1968:37). Typical of the Indo-Trinidadian political elites in response to the same question were the following: "Race is the predominant issue;" "The Indo-Trinidadian feels that no one would look after his/her own interest but one of his own people;" "After 1956 race was no longer marginal. By 1961 it was complete race -- the lines were clearly drawn;" "Race has moved from the periphery to the core of politics;" (Bahadoorsingh,1968:37).

The parallel or close overlap between race and politics in Trinidad is thus the re-establishment of another order
that poses the characteristic problems of the "plural" society. That is, the departure of the imperial power created a vacuum that gave way to tensions and fears among the constituent units of the "plural" society over the division of the colonial inheritance. As La Guerre (1974) aptly put it "One system was about to pass away, another to be born (La Guerre, 1974:99). Therefore, in countries such as Trinidad, Guyana, Malaysia and Fiji, where there are only two dominant sections, the peculiar problems of the "plural" society are at their most acute. Thus, there is some validity to Nevitte's et al (1986) view that an ethnic preference in multi-ethnic/racial societies is usually a political preference (Nevitte et al, 1986:4-5). In a sense, this supports the view that the salience of racial/ethnic politics in most multi-ethnic/racial contributes to the "we-they" type of distinction. And this also why the political significance of race in Trinidad has prevented the emergence of an interracial political alliance (the Butler Afro-Indo alliance notwithstanding) among the lower classes despite a common experience of economic exploitation and hardship.

Furthermore, the emergence of this type of racial cleavage aggravated the mutual suspicion between the Afro and Indo groups, which inevitably, created a tense political situation. To the Indo-Trinidadians, a PNM victory would have meant a government led by a Black, with a predominantly black membership, backed by a police force and civil service
that was also predominantly black. To the Afro-Trinidadians, a DLP victory would have meant a government led by an Indian, with a predominantly Indian membership, whose frugality earned them the greater proportion of the agricultural lands and small businesses, and whose continued frugality might earn them most of the island (Bahadoorsingh, 1968:34).

The declining importance of India among Indo-Trinidadians was part and parcel of the devolution of power and the emergence of local party politics. The emergence of such politics and the threat of independence forced Indo-Trinidadians into thinking in terms of local destiny (i.e., to Trinidad, not India). It forced them inexorably into a consideration of their relationship with the Afro-Trinidadian community and led to the formation of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and later the DLP (La Guerre, 1974:55). Thus, the Indo-Trinidadian political disposition till 1958 was one of reaction. When it became clear that Williams was leading a Black (Afro) nationalist movement the Indo-Trinidadians, who saw themselves as neither blacks nor nationalist, reacted in self-defense. From then on, the social bases of the PNM and the DLP remained characteristically Afro and Indo respectively. Paradoxically, the political structure based on parliamentary democracy and fashioned on the Westminster model provided a ready-made base for the two party system -
Indo-Trinidadians on one side and Afro-Trinidadians on the other side (James, 1962:150-153).

Consolidation of political power in the hands of the PNM has, as has been mentioned earlier on, triggered extreme apprehension in the Indo-Trinidadian electorate. One of the most important fears expressed by the Indo-Trinidadian electorate is that the policies of the government (PNM) do not benefit them, especially in the area of public appointments, judicial appointments, opportunities for public service (i.e., in the police force etc.) and scholarships (Williams, 1962:278).

The Honourable Simbhoonath Capildeo, in a speech in the Legislative Council charged that "discrimination of the worst sort" had taken place; he discussed among other things the fact that scholarships were not often given to Indo-Trinidadians; of 23 names on a list only one was an Indian (Legislative Council Debates, 1964:4615-4616). Similarly, H.P. Singh argued that not only are Indo-Trinidadians discriminated against in the awarding of scholarships but also in the awarding of government contracts, housing projects, Civil Service appointments as well as other government appointments (Singh, 1962:3-9).

The PNM government had taken great pains to refute such charges of discrimination. In fact, PNM leader Dr. Eric Williams had stated that the PNM government, under his leadership, has taken "a very drastic step forward in the
direction of integration, in the direction of the elimination of the conventional discrimination inherited from the colonial regime" (Legislature Debates, 1964:1210-1211). He pointed out that from 1954 to 1956 only one out of 26 scholarships offered went to person with an Indian name. But from 1957 to 1961, when his party formed the government out of 303 scholarships offered, 68 or 22 per cent went to people with Indian names. In his opinion he thought that such discriminatory practices were something that Trinidad should not be ashamed of because of its "plural nature". He stated that "... in the age of independence and expansion we should proceed on the basis of absolute equality of opportunity for all talented people in the society; and that development, advancement should be done on the basis of merit" (Legislature Debates, 1964:39).

The fact that the society became more "open" fuelled some controversies. One such controversy was whether or not Afro-Trinidadians or Indo-Trinidadians benefited more from the policies and resource allocations made by the PNM regime. Most Indo-Trinidadians held the view that Afro-Trinidadians benefitted more. In a survey conducted by Selwyn Ryan in September of 1987, 58 per cent of the Indo-Trinidadians sampled felt that Afro-Trinidadians had received more from the PNM compared to only 8 per cent who felt that Indo-Trinidadians had benefited more. A majority of Indo-Trinidadians felt that Afro-Trinidadian had
received more by way of patronage in the allocation of houses, jobs, official loans, and utility services, among other things (in Ryan, 1988:112).

CLIENTELISM AND RACIAL PATRONAGE

Hentzen (1989) argued that clientelism and direct patronage based on racial appeal was what contributed to the PNM success from 1956 to 1986. According to Hentzen (1989), the institutionalization of majoritarian politics in Trinidad rendered generalized patronage much more important in the political equation. He goes on to say that patronage resources have to be distributed in such a way as to generate and secure the retention of mass support. This demands a different pattern of patronage distribution than that needed to secure the support of strategic members of the elite and middle classes. Since all segments of the middle classes, together with the lower classes, must be included in considerations of mass support, generalized patronage requires enormous amounts of state resources (Hentzen, 1989:73). The revenues generated from the oil producing sector provided the PNM with the necessary prerequisites for supporting this pattern of patronage. At the same time, the PNM's ability to distribute patronage came to be directly related to the fortunes of the petroleum sector of the economy.
The type of patronage that was employed by state political leaders in Trinidad during the PNM's tenure was in the form of direct generalized patronage (Hentzen, 1989:73). The typical manner in which direct patronage was distributed was through direct allocation of jobs, services, facilities, loans and housing to individuals on a massive scale. Under the PNM government, the beneficiaries of these allocations were primarily the Afro urban-based lower classes who constituted the majority of its supporters. For example, the newly created Development and Environmental Works Division (DEWD) was one of the Special Works Programs implemented by the PNM government to cater for the employment needs of the Afro urban-based lower classes.

In addition, the spatial location of the Afro-Trinidadians in the urban and peri-urban centres and the electorally strategic East-West corridor in particular, made it politically imperative for the PNM to minister to the needs of the lower-class Afro-Trinidadians. This was achieved by administering generous dosages of racial patronage in the form of employment opportunities. Urban based groups normally have an enhanced capacity to embarrass a government by strikes or demonstrations. They also normally have superior access to political and business decision makers and are often able to get more of their demands for wages and amenities accommodated. Rurally based groups often do not have the same capacity to hijack the
allocative process. In Trinidad, the Afro-Trinidadians were in the urban corridors and the Indo-Trinidadians were in the main on the plains (Ryan, 1988:123). Afro-Trinidadians were closer to the locus of power, as was mentioned earlier on.

Some indication of the enormity of this patronage package is provided when one considers that DEWD employed 50,000 to 124,000 workers out of a total workforce of 383,000 in 1982 (Caribbean Contact, September 1980:5; Sunday Guardian, 12 December 1983:6).

Many a times the PNM government was attacked by the political opposition party (i.e. the Indo-Trinidian politicians) for not allocating project work to the unemployed under DEWD of the Ministry of Works to their constituencies (those constituencies where large segments of Indo-Trinidadian population were to be found). That is, patronage was distributed to the Laventille, Port of Spain East, St. Ann's East and San Fernando East - constituencies that were predominantly Afro in terms of population distributions, while none were allocated to Couva North or South, Chaguana, Naparima, Tabaquite, Oropouche or Siparia, all of which were opposition constituencies held by Indo-Trinidadian parliamentarians (Ryan, 1988:69).

It is also interesting to note that within the first few months of the National Alliance For Reconstruction (NAR) government in power, Speaker of the House, Nizam Mohammed, an Indo-Trinidadian politician, attacked the Minister
responsible for the allocation of project work such as DEWD etc, for maintaining the old allocation system that was a hallmark of the PNM government (Ryan, 1988:70). By harping on the old allocation system, Mohammed was simply trying to point out some of the blatant wrongs that existed in the society. There were also some attempts to employ direct patronage to gain inroads into the rural Indo-Trinidadians electoral base of the major opposition (DLP) : the main reason being that this patronage might woo the Indo-Trinidadian voters away from their racial party (Hentzen, 1989:73). In other words, the lion's share of direct generalized patronage, as can be seen from the aforementioned data, fully support Hentzen's contention that the major beneficiaries of patronage was the urban based lower class segment of the Afro-Trinidadian population.

This form of patronage, in the form of class concessions, ensured the PNM of its continued lower-class Afro political support. Thus, the political experience of the Indo-Trinidadian group under the PNM government unequivocally affected their economic positions in the society vis-a-vis equal access to state employment and other opportunities that were afforded to the Afro-Trinidadian group. Control of State power gave the PNM government both the economic and political leverage to secure and maintain the support of the Afro-Trinidadian lower-classes. In this way, the State was able to divide the working classes by
economically disenfranchising the Indo-Trinidadian group, while securing the support of the Afro group through sanction, patronage and racial appeal. That is, as ethnicity became increasingly salient, every political decision by the PNM favoured the Afro-Trinidadian group, more so than it was for the Indo-Trinidadian group.

Also, increased communalism was found to have been existent under the PNM party. Williams vied for the control of independent, decision making authority which enabled him to secure permanent partisan advantaged which was defined in ethnic/racial terms i.e. securing the Afro-Trinidadian lower-class support. Another way of maintaining partisan advantage is for political leaders in post-colonial societies to resort to a variety of manipulative practices. For example, L.F.S. Burnham and his PNC party in Guyana, created a list of 66,000 overseas electors, of whom approximately 93 per cent were of African descent. This device facilitated Burnham's victory in the 1968 Guyanese election, despite the fact that Afro-Guyanese comprise less than one-half of the resident Guyanese population (Rabushka etal, 1971:472).

Similarly, in Malaysia, a Malay-dominated Parliament implemented a constitutional amendment in 1962 which effectively increased the strength of rural voters, who are overwhelmingly Malay in composition, at the expense of urban Chinese (Milne, 1981:43-49). Therefore, given the
institutionalization of primordial sentiments as well as the existence of communal fears and insecurities, it is likely that the fight for control over the distributive power of government will follow the lines of communal cleavages (Rabushka and Shepsle, 1971:470).

Eric Williams, as the then "national" leader of Trinidad, was at the same time an ethnic leader in as much as he and the PNM party "ethnicized" the politics of Trinidad. This emphasis on communal politics in turn encouraged those excluded politicians (i.e. the Indo-politicians such as Basdeo Panday etc) "to ignite and fan the flames of ethnic chauvinism" to use Rabushka and Shepsle's phrase (Rabushka and Shepsle, 1971:470). This in turn further reinforced communal sentiments, which in turn allowed the political minority to breed attitudes of illegitimacy toward the regime. Thus, politics in Trinidadian society is inherently unstable, being vulnerable to ethnic chauvinism by politicians who seek to generate communal issues.

With all this in mind, Afro-Trinidadians, for their part, were more inclined to feel that the PNM did little for them, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. Only ten per cent felt that they benefited more while as many as 35 percent felt that Indo-Trinidadians benefited more. Thirty one per cent felt that no particular group had benefited more than others (SEE Table 9 below).
TABLE 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Benefitting More from PNM</th>
<th>Afro</th>
<th>Indo</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afro-Trinidadians</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indo-Trinidadians</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrians</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Group</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source Taken from Ryan's (1988) p.111.

Afro-Trinidadians felt that Indo-Trinidadian businessmen had obtained a lot of concessions from the PNM, particularly in the construction and road building industries and in areas such as insurance, para-banks, and the manufacturing and distributive trades. It was noted that towns in the "Indian belt" such as Couva and Chaguana had become dramatically transformed during the petro-dollar era (1973-1980) and that Indo-Trinidadians had either overcome or had caught up with the Afro-Trinidadians and other groups which once enjoyed dominance in higher education, the professions and perhaps even in the general public service.

No one disputed the claim that Indo-Trinidadians had made great strides during the PNM era. The question at issue was whether their achievements were due to PNM patronage or the single-minded determination of the Indo-Trinidadians to improve themselves and their communities inspite of their exclusion from the corridors of political power. According to Ryan (1988), it can be argued that it was the majority psychology of the Afro-Trinidadians - the
feeling that they had superior ancestral claims as successors to the colonial authority, a feeling that was fortified by the existence of the PNM as the ruling party, which predisposed many Afro-Trinidadians to take their continued social and political dominance as given. As Karl Hudson Phillips, a former Attorney-General in the PNM government, noted by way of claims that the PNM was for the poor blacks while the NAR was for the rich, "if black people are poor in this country, it is because the PNM made them poor; if black people have nothing in Trinidad and Tobago after 30 years of the PNM, whose fault is that (Sunday Express, 15th August 1981).

Ryan goes on to say that the minority psychology of the Indo-Trinidadians, coupled with their emphasis on thrift and the pooling of resources predisposed them to postpone consumption and use pooled family resources to educate their young and take investment risks in business activities of one sort of another (Ryan, 1988:112). The latter saw the opportunities provided by the petro-dollar boom and grasped them purposefully. As a result, their share of national income increased decisively over the past two decades.

This was confirmed in a recent study by Harewood et al (1986). Harewood and Henry noted, "the traditional view has been that the Indians in Trinidad have been the ethnic group with the lowest incomes, in part due to their being predominantly in rural and agricultural areas. Next lowest
are assumed to be the African Trinidadians, while the "Other" group would have the highest incomes. These views appear to be borne out by data for the 1960's and early 70s, the average monthly income of the ethnic groups being: $240 for Indians, $279 for Africans and $442 for the residual groups. By 1975/76 the average income of Indians ($454) was slightly higher than that of Afro-Trinidadians ($412) and that of the residual group remained appreciably higher ($630) (Ryan, 1988:112).

Afro-Trinidadians who disagree with the thesis that Afro-Trinidadians were the authors of their own economic misfortune assert that the progress which Indo-Trinidadians and other minorities made in the petro-dollar period was due to the historically derived headstart which the latter enjoyed in terms of the ownership of capital assets. As W.C. Clarke argued:

The contention that Africans (Afro-Trinidadians) took the opportunity of the ascendancy of the PNM to sleep and lime (i.e. fool around) instead of taking investment risks is preposterous and neglects an important historical fact. Even at the time of the intervention of the PNM, all other groups were comprised of large segments which already owned substantial capital assets. The Whites owned and controlled the established commercial and trading houses, as well as other major economic enterprises. The Chinese owned small commercial and retail outlets and small service industries (e.g. laundries and restaurants). The Indians owned substantial acreages of real estate. While the Africans were to a large extent skilled in various trades and crafts, they nonetheless did not own any notable amount of physical capital assets (Trinidad Guardian, October, 1988:1 and 4).
As was noted earlier on, Indians in Trinidad had received 31,766 acres of land from the colonial authorities in lieu of the passages to India which were their due as part of the indenture contract. Afro-Trinidadians, on the other hand, received little land since the plantocracy wished to retain their labour on the plantations. This differential inheritance was seen to be a crucial factor in terms of what occurred in the manner in which the society became occupationally stratified. To quote Clarke:

The capital asset bases became effective platforms which had been used by members of these groups to launch (other) economic enterprises, as well as provide for the further education and training of their children. For instance, the large numbers of Indian students travelling abroad during the 1950s and 1960s to train in medicine and law was not an accidental phenomenon (Sunday Guardian, October 1988:4).

Clarke went on to argue that:

Dr. Ryan must have known that the events of 1970-1973 (the Black Power Movement which will be discussed later) were sparked by the perception among Africans (Afro-Trinidadians) in the society that, up to that time, there had been an unequal distribution and ownership of the national economic endowments. It was really not surprising that there had been a notable and noticeable absence of Indo-Trinidadians among those who clamoured for economic equality in 1970, notwithstanding the fact that they had been repeatedly and loudly urged to join (In Ryan, 1988:113).

Afro-Trinidadian activity during the petro-dollar boom was to try and secure public jobs which enabled them to obtain a share of the national assets of the community -
homes, real estates, share ownership, cash in bank, small business etc. Dr. Tony Martin observed:

It would have been economically imprudent for the Afro-Trinidadians to have disregarded these opportunities to acquire capital assets (albeit by a relatively slower and more tedious route). Likewise, it would have been politically unreasonable and suicidal for the PNM government to have failed to provide these employment opportunities and incomes at a time when the nation was earning windfall petro wealth (In Ryan, 1988:112-114).

Former PNM Ministers, Hugh Francis and John Eckstein, also deny that there was ever any official discrimination against Indo-Trinidadians by the PNM. In Francis's view, the problem was in part a result of the different value systems of the two communities. Whereas the Indo-Trinidadians community based status on religious and economic differentials, the Afro-Trinidadian community based theirs on occupational and educational differentials (Sunday Express, April 1988:2).

While it is true that there does exists differences in the value systems of the Afro and Indo groups, Francis's contention, however, that the Indo-Trinidadians based status on the religion variable is not entirely true. At one point in time, specifically in the early period of indenture when the principles of the "varna" or caste system was adhered to, it can be argued that religion (depending on one's caste background) did play a role in so far as one's social status was concerned. To almost all contemporary Indo-
Trinidadians, the caste system is a long lost legacy. As Schwartz (1967) pointed out

It is not the caste structure that has survived among the Indians in Trinidad, but rather certain aspects of caste ideology, its effect and sentiments, that condition to a decreasing degree particular areas of marital behaviour and kinship (Schwartz, 1967:93-96).

Indo-Trinidadians realized that they had to meet the needs of Trinidadian life and so adapted themselves to their host environment. As Nevadomsky (1982) rightly put it:

There is hardly any question but that the Indians in Caribbean societies share with other groups some (although not all) of the dominant societal values and therefore, have been "creolized" (i.e. they have adapted many of the West Indian traits such as language etc). In a society like Trinidad the Indians by and large identify with the dominant material and ideal symbols and participate in the prevalent patterns of prestige, aspirations and consumption (Nevadomsky, 1982:102).

According to Mandelbaum, the Indian family even in India has traditionally been flexible enough to adapt to changing social and economic conditions (Mandelbaum, 1970:44). In other words, although the Indo-Trinidadians have in varying degrees retained some features of their antecedent culture, there is no simple correspondence between culture and social status. There is no doubt but that Indo-Trinidadians by and large have made increasing use of the educational and occupational spheres in Trinidadian society. As Davids (1964) asserted

The authority structure of an ascriptive society (that once characterized Trinidadian society, notably the colonial period) will not remain
intact when egalitarian philosophy is backed up by real equality in the educational and occupational spheres (Davids, 1964:395).

Therefore, it can be argued that the caste system was in fact discarded since it was not seen as an avenue for upward social mobility. Again, Francis's contention is grounded on the principle of ethnic retention and persistence. While not denying that "Indian" culture in Trinidad (expressed in the forms of Hinduism and Islam) does play a role in accounting for cultural differences between Hindu and Muslim Indo Trinidadians as well as Afro and Indo Trinidadians, at the same time, it cannot by itself, account for the changes that have occurred within the Indo-Trinidadian community. Situational factors in the form of economic opportunities (such as jobs and other economic opportunities) and for advancement created by the transformations that occurred in the economy as a result of the oil boom, played a crucial role in the understanding of social change and social mobility as experienced not only by the Indo groups, but also by the Afro and other racial/ethnic groups in the society.

The views advanced by Francis are clearly not refutations of the arguments made by Ryan namely, that it was not only the grants of land which the Indo-Trinidadians received from the Crown Colony government during the indenture period which provided the platform for their achievement and the subsequent development of an independent
economic base. The value system of the Indo-Trinidadians based on thrift and frugality, to an extent, must also be taken into consideration. While it is true that several strategies were used to frustrate the emergence of a black land owning class after emancipation, many Afro-Trinidadians managed to obtain land. The free coloured also held significant acreages during the colonial period (Ryan, 1988:145-6). Moreover, most of the other racial/ethnic groups in the society such the Chinese, Portuguese and Syrian groups took advantage of the economic opportunities that provided them with the necessary economic growth for social advancement.

This eventually culminated in a "regulated" pattern of group competition: Afro-Trinidadians controlling a monopoly in one area of the economy; Indo-Trinidadians controlling a monopoly on another segment of the economy and the Whites and Other groups having their own economic autonomy. Put all this together and the result is a balancing-off mechanism in which the potential for intense racial/ethnic competition, which sometimes culminates in group conflict, is softened. This lack of intense competition between the groups can be attributed to the fact that for three decades (i.e. from the independence period up to 1986) this racial division of labour provided the ethnic/racial groups in Trinidad with the necessary economic autonomy that curtailed
the occurrence of inter-ethnic/racial fighting for scarce 
resources.

And as was mentioned earlier on, social inequality 
(such as underrepresentation and over representation of 
certain racial/ethnic groups in different spheres of the 
Trinidadian economy) has always been a persistent phenomenon 
in Trinidadian society, but the particular type of racial 
division of labour acts as a buffer against the potentially 
divisive consequences that may arise if inter-groups 
competition for scarce resources were at a high level. 
Figure 2 below is a simplified breakdown of the economic 
domains of the various racial/ethnic groups in contemporary 
Trinidad.

This racial division of labour, which on the surface 
level, indicates discrepancies in both the economic and 
political spheres of the island amongst the different 
groups, nonetheless justifies to a large extent the 
"regulated" or the adjusted nature of economic competition 
between the various groups, and which has helped to keep the 
potentially intense racial and ethnic competition for jobs 
and scarce resources at a relatively low pitch.
**FIGURE 2**

A Simplified Breakdown of the Economic Domains of the Various Racial/Ethnic Groups in Contemporary Trinidad

**WHITES**

- Dominate Local Commercial and Industrial Enterprises.

**BLACKS/COLOURED**

- Control of Political System Including Legislative, Executive and Administrative Branches. Dominated by Middle and Upper Class Afro and Coloured Groups.
- Heavy Reliance on Public Sector Employment for Social Mobility

**INDIANS**

- Monopoly on the agricultural sector of Economy. Lower, Middle and Upper Class Indo-Trinidadians well represented in the private sector of the economy. Some Middle and Upper Class Indo-Trinidadians also concentrated in the public sector of the economy. Few Middle and Upper Class Indo-Trinidadians are also represented in local and industrial enterprises.
The diagram shows that the majority of whites and a few Indo-Trinidadians dominate a good proportion of the local and commercial enterprises. The Indo-Trinidadians, especially the rural ones, have a monopoly on the agricultural sector, whereas the Indo middle and upper classes are well represented in the private sectors of the economy and, to a lesser extent, in some areas of the public sectors of the economy. The middle and upper class Afro-Trinidadians and coloured (or mixed) elements control the political system including the legislative, executive and administrative branches of government, whereas the bulk of the lower class and middle class Afro Trinidadians predominate in public sector and government employment. Afro-Trinidadians and the mixed or coloured populations are favoured for government employment and look mainly but not exclusively, to opportunities in the public sector for social mobility, whereas the whites and Indo-Trinidadian population rely more on private sector employment for social mobility.

Hence, as Hentzen (1985) accurately pointed out: "the group of state-controlling elites with which the white and Indo-Trinidadian upper and middle classes align themselves is, for all intents and purposes, Afro" (Hentzen, 1985:126). Herein then, lies a crucial implication for the pattern of race relations in Trinidad. The emergence of the petrodollar economy in Trinidad from 1973-1980 produced a
significant rise of an Afro, Indo and White middle and upper class. And since the PNM's moderate, pro-capitalist path to economic development was largely responsible for the penetration of an abundant amount of international capital into the local economy, these three groups benefitted generously as their business interests coincided with metropolitan business interests.

The debate about who owns what in Trinidad reveals the curious fact that both Afro and Indo Trinidadians consider themselves to be "deprived" groups in both the colonial and post-colonial period. This makes it very difficult for the social scientist or the layman to generalize about race relations in Trinidad for, it is not sufficient for one to simply look at the manifest situation and make generalizations from that. Rather, one has to examine some of the more latent dynamics which operate in the society such as the role of the state apparatus, the ideological framework it adopts in its drive for rapid economic development and the subsequent effects of this ideological orientation upon race and ethnic relations.

Therefore, an analysis of political economy in a multi-racial society would be inadequate without taking into account the interactions of international capitalism with the structure of ethnic relations in Trinidadian society and without taking account of the class dynamics which emerge as a consequence of such interactions. The effects of changing
class dynamics might be to exacerbate or to mediate tensions existing within and between racial/ethnic groups.

INTERNATIONAL CAPITALISM AND THE STRUCTURE OF ETHNIC RELATIONS IN TRINIDAD

International capital has affected inter-ethnic relations in Trinidad in two important ways. Firstly, international capital has created inter-ethnic alignments between the Afro, Indo and coloured middle classes as all of these racial/ethnic groups stand to benefit from the mode of its penetration. Secondly, international capital has weakened both the Afro and Indo groups collective identity (political and cultural) by creating conditions for the social mobility of some of its members into higher strata where they might adopt the life styles of higher status groups and enter into political and social alliances with them (Hentzen, 1985:109). These two effects of international capitalist penetration in Trinidad have contributed significantly to the overall social and inter-ethnic stability between the major racial/ethnic groups in the society.

The pattern of international capitalist penetration in the Trinidadian economy has been the material base upon which rests the development of racial and ethnic consolidation among the upper and middle classes, the intensification of class antagonisms, and the persistence of
inter-racial hostilities among the lower classes (Hentzen, 1985:120). The economic viability of Trinidad and Tobago depends upon the availability of massive amounts of foreign exchange and upon the accumulation of enormous amount of state savings which is pumped into the domestic economy in the form of equity participation in international capitalist ventures, state-owned businesses, state current and capital spending, and as liquidity into the banking system (Trinidad and Tobago Yearbook, 1981:4-5). But the major sources of both foreign exchange surpluses and state savings came for the State-owned Tesoro and Texaco oil refineries as well as from multinational corporations.

The drastic drop in the price for oil in the world market in the early 1980s turned the Trinidadian economic boom in the early 1970s into a bust. The State-owned oil refineries experienced serious financial problems that led to the retrenchment of many workers. Some multinational corporations pulled out and some declared bankruptcy as these corporations depended to a great extent on the profits that the production and export of petro-chemical products provided. Consequently, the prices that were being fetched for petro-chemical products were low and this affected the many industries in the productive sectors of the economy including the multinational corporations.

The economic problems were further compounded since Trinidad relied solely on a monoculture (i.e. the production
and export of crude oil and other by-products). Thus, the lack of diversification of the Trinidadian economy led to serious economic problems. Other potentially profitable sectors of the economy, such as tourism and export oriented agricultural productions, could not be relied on since these sectors of the economy were not fully developed. The economy, therefore, could not provide a substitute economic source to counteract the economic burden which the oil monoculture brought on.

PNM IDEOLOGY AND SECTORAL INTERESTS IN TRINIDAD

Practical ideology has to be consistent with the interests of the most strategic segments of society if a political leader is to succeed in the bid for power. Members of these segments, and others associated with them in one way or another, will mobilize or employ their resources to prevent leaders hostile to their interests from acquiring and holding on to control of the state (Hentzen, 1989:58). In the pre-independence period when colonial control is still intact and when the terms for the transference of power to local leaders are being set, the willingness to protect the interests of foreign economic and political actors become most critical in the efforts of local leaders to gain and retain control of the state (Hentzen, 1989:58). That is, political gradualism allows the colonial regime time to develop the mechanisms which would
guarantee that the regime to assume power after independence is one which is committed to the protection of metropolitan interests. It follows then that the mechanisms developed will be fashioned to suit those whose ideology is in keeping with such interests.

The PNM's ideological position was ideally suited to the interests of the major metropolitan countries and the most strategic sectors of the domestic middle and upper classes (Hentzen, 1989:58). As a result, Britain agreed to fashion a constitution that was guaranteed to ensure that the party inherited control of the state in the post-independence era (Robinson, 1971:126-134).

When this control was achieved, it went unchallenged by strategic and powerful domestic segments of the population. When the PNM was formed in 1956, party leaders explicitly rejected a socialist direction for the country (Ryan, 1972:120-7 and "The Peoples Charter" 1966). Its moderate ideological position meant that Western governments and international investors had nothing to fear if the party managed to assume control of the post-colonial state. Britain became even more committed to a PNM government because of the party's vigorous support for a federal formula that its colonial office had advanced as a condition of independence for the English-speaking West Indies (Hentzen, 1989:59). Thus, the PNM's ideology was highly consistent with the interest of powerful segments of
foreign business. This is one reason why white-economic interests was hardly challenged under the PNM rule.

But despite the success of the PNM, there was still the fundamental conflict between accommodating the interests of the powerful international and domestic private sector and satisfying the nationalist demands of its lower-class supporters. The conflict became manifest as a result of an ideological rift among party leaders. Leftists within the ranks of the PNM, headed by a Trotskyite with international credentials, C.L.R. James, insisted that the party adopt policies which were anti-colonial and anti-imperialist. This, of course, was in direct opposition to Williams commitment to a moderate ideological strategy for economic development - one that favoured the accommodation of western and private capitalist interests.

However, it was important for the PNM to pursue policies which Britain deemed desirable rather than those which catered overtly to mass interests if power was to be guaranteed. Britain employed its constitutional authority to secure unequivocal accommodation to metropolitan political and economic interests and to obtain an absolute rejection of radical nationalism. Williams quickly acquiesced and in the process, it ensured that the radicals were purged (to use Hentzen's verb) from the ranks of the ruling party (Hentzen, 1989:60).
Cleansed of its radical wing, with a constitution extremely favourable to its continued tenure, and with a Afro and coloured population solidly behind it, the PNM fought and won the general elections held in 1961, the last before the country achieved independence from Britain. By then, the ideological position of Williams was unequivocally pro-west and pro-capitalist. Making reference to the former radical members of the PNM, he denounced communism as one of the five "dangers" facing his party (Trinidad Guardian, 1 October, 1961). In the process, the PNM was able to capture strategic domestic support.

Seeing no threat to its own interests in the policies of the party, the white-dominated business sector drifted steadily to the PNM. Similarly, the emergent black (Afro) and mixed middle classes as well as the rise of the Indo-Trinidadian middle class, all of whom benefitted generously from the PNM's moderate and pro-capitalist program of development, saw no threat to their business and economic interests and were, therefore, to support the PNM government. After independence, the PNM granted more concessions to the private sector by giving the latter's representatives direct access to policy formulation. In 1963 it set up a National Economic Advisory Council in which a major role was reserved for the business community. Consequently, private-sector participation was considerably
expanded while trade union input vastly diminished
(Rentzen, 1989:63).

Party Ideology also catered to petit bourgeois interest in pursuit of a mixed economy approach to capitalist development. This translated into considerable state participation in the productive sector and expansion in the state welfare-delivery system. The beneficiaries of such a policy were the state bureaucrats whose jobs and promotion opportunities grew enormously, especially in the lucrative state corporate sector and in areas requiring professional qualification.

Thus, by catering to the interests of foreign and local investors as well as the state bureaucrats, the PNM managed to assure itself of support from a majority of the middle and upper classes despite the retention of its racial appeal. Hence, the Afro, coloured, Indo, white and Chinese middle classes (the last three concentrated mainly in the private sector) have derived enormous benefits from the regimes chosen strategy for development, concentrating as it is on the use of foreign exchange and budgetary surpluses derived directly from international capital to expand the scope of participation of foreign investors in the Trinidadian economy and to expand, develop and strengthen the local business sector (Rentzen, 1985:123).

The above has considerable implications for the structure of ethnic relations in the country which has
become manifest in the pattern of political support. Race, as we saw earlier on, was the critical variable that influenced voting behaviour in the 1961 elections. However, the salience of the race variable became less politically significant among the middle and upper classes of all races. In a 1977 elite study, 67 per cent of both white and Indo-Trinidadian business and professional elites supported the Afro-dominated and Afro-identified ruling party (Hentzen, 1983:123).

This de-emphasis of racial politics was also reflected in electoral returns in the 1970's and 1980's. The PNM received the overwhelming support of the middle and upper classes in 1971 and 1976, irrespective of racial composition (Hentzen, 1983:123). In other words, inter-ethnic cross-cutting ties between the middle and upper classes (i.e. between the better educated and more prosperous classes), have reduced the racial factor to minimal importance in the politics of Trinidad. However, divisions within the Afro and Indo lower income groups continue to have political implications for the structure of race relations in Trinidad.

While the upwardly mobile Indo-Trinidadians appear - from voting patterns - to follow the lead of the business and professional groups in their de-emphasis of race, the Indo-Trinidadian lower-classes especially the rural agriculturalists are still attracted to ethno-cultural
appeal (or apanjaht politics) which informed the group's politicization during the fifties, and which became institutionalized in the formation of an "Indian" political party linked to the Hindu church (the Maha Sabha). The economic interests of the Indo-Trinidadian lower-class are not served by the regime's (PNM) programme for state-building. Government's policy favours industry and commerce over agriculture, and the rather small amount of government financial assistance available to farmers goes mainly to large-scale cultivator rather than to small peasant-operators (Hentzen, 1983:124-5).

Excluded from the benefits of international capital, the Indo-Trinidadian rural lower class has clung on to its ethnic communalism and to its ethnic pattern of political support and participation. The one departure from this pattern occurred in the local government election of 1980 and in the general elections of 1981 when the Afro-dominated PNM party made significant inroads into this ethnic enclave. This was as a result of significant patronage transfers to the Indo-Trinidadian population in these areas (Hentzen, 1983:126). In other words, when the PNM was able to provide the lower class Indo Trinidadians with ethnic concessions that were derived from the financial benefits of international capital, significant changes were seen in the lower class Indo Trinidadian pattern of political support.

This type of political behaviour by the Indo-
Trinidadian lower classes justifies to a large extent the fact that the material and financial benefits that can be derived from a non-Indo government may very well take precedence over primordial politics. This is precisely why the Indo-Trinidadian middle and upper class segments have clung on to the PNM. For the Indo-Trinidadian middle and upper classes, it is the situational factors that have made inter-ethnic alignments with the Afro and White middle and upper classes possible.

The internal divisions within the Indo-Trinidadian community is manifested in the Hindu, Muslim and Christian divisions in their patterns of political support. Although the Indo-Trinidadians at large (i.e. Hindu, Muslim and Christian Indo-Trinidadians) are concerned with preserving their "Indian" culture and "Indian" identity, their political allegiance is not uniform (La Guerre, 1974:100). The vast majority of the lower class Hindus have tended to supported the "Indian" party (DLP) whereas the majority of Muslims, historically, have given their political support to the Afro PNM party.

Dr. Williams' castigation of the Hindus for using their Church (the Maha Sabha Organization) as a basis for political activity betrayed his lack of understanding of the culture that was brought from India (i.e., the divisions between Hindus and Muslims). It must be noted that the Hindu/Muslim division is rooted in religious animosity which
began in India itself and which was brought to the West Indies where it still survives. The many problems with accepting Hindu/Muslim marriages are cases in points. Many Indo-Trinidadian Hindu parents do not approve of intermarriage with Indo-Trinidadian Muslims and vice versa. It is significant that Dr. Williams never condemned the Muslim community for doing what the Hindus were doing (i.e. organizing politically). This then was one of the reasons why the Muslim, however religion - centred their politics was, aligned themselves politically with the interests of the PNM.

The Christian Indo-Trinidadian population too, comprising a good proportion of the Indo-middle class, has, for the most part, tended to support the PNM regime primarily because of the capital benefits that were to be derived from the PNM's moderate economic policies. It must be noted that many Christian Indo-Trinidadians are represented in the private sector, the professional and public sectors of the economy and therefore, were able to climb fairly rapidly up the socio-economic ladder. This is why today the Christian Indo-Trinidadians are well represented in the middle stratum of the island's social hierarchy.

What, then, has been the consequences of this type of internal division within the Indo-Trinidadian community for its potential for political mobilization? As was mentioned
earlier, politics in most post-colonial societies have been characterized by ethnic divisions. The author endeavours to show that it is reasonable for ethnicity to dominate political conflict in those societies in which ethnic/racial communities are politically organized. However, it is also the author's contention that ethnicity per se, at least in the Trinidadian context, ought not to be invariably regarded as the most salient variable for ethno-political participation and organization.

Part of the explanation for the choice of ethnicity lies in the existence of mobilized resources and organizations, well-suited for political deployment on ethnic/racial issues. That is, politics become a rather serious matter "in view of the fact that communal groups are usually more readily organized for political action and are capable of more sustained effort than other forms of pressure groups" (Ratnam, 1961:1). Politics then, according to this explanation, "naturally" follow ethnic/racial lines. This is not always the case. The primacy of ethnicity in Trinidadian society, specifically with regards to that of political organizations and activities which were rooted in racial/ethnic mobilization practices (PNM and DLP being examples).

While not denying that class interest and organization are important for collective action and mobilization, the concept of interest per se as applied strictly within the
confines of a purely class analysis, becomes inadequate in so far as it provides limited application to situations in post-colonial societies like Trinidad. That is, there is a strong overlap between class and ethnic mobilization when the concept of interest is applied to multi-racial societies. That is, ethnic/class economic interests tend to coincide which, in turn, may lead to class/ethnic political mobilization.

In most multi-racial societies, the members of each ethnic/racial group usually share objective social interests in common - in having educational instruction for their children in schools conducted in their own language or religion, in being represented politically, in not being excluded from or underpaid in occupations at any class level, and so on. It was shown earlier on that political and economic discontents by both the Afro and Indo lower class groups stemmed from the fact that as groups, they occupied a disadvantaged position in the social order vis-a-vis the white colonial elites. This, in turn, resulted in an attempt at Afro Indo lower class struggle for social and economic equality.

It is also important to note that the communal appeal of the PNM had been weakened at one time or the other. Class tensions between the politically powerful state-controlling Afro middle class and the Afro lower class had been increasing steadily since independence. Contradictions
of race and class have become manifest in an "intensifying" (to use Hentzen's adjective) economic crisis within the Afro lower class in Trinidad. This group has been most vulnerable to government economic policies. As an unskilled and semi-skilled urban labour force, it is tied completely to wage labour. As a lower-level government work-force, it depends upon expansion in the government sector for its security. As an economic underclass, it depends upon government services for its welfare. It cannot return to the land for subsistence as can the Indo-Trinidadians since its urban life style demands a higher level of expenditure than a rural existence (Hentzen, 1985:127).

THE INDO-TRINIDADIAN REACTION TOWARDS THE BLACK POWER MOVEMENT

At the same time, however, Afro-Trinidadian lower class discontent, like its rural Indo-Trinidadian lower class counterpart, has been high. At times the most vehement opposition to the PNM regime has come from among the rank of its Afro lower class supporters. The Black Power Movement of 1970 was an attempt at ethnic mobilization (i.e. an attempt to mobilize both the lower class Afro and Indo Trinidadian groups). The movement was caused by such factors as the high unemployment among youths as well as a growing nationalism on the part of the young. This was manifested in their criticism of the PNM government. The
young Afro-Trinidadians saw the PNM government as "a devoted puppet" to the white foreign capitalists (Nicholls, 171:451). The movement was also directed to the black (Afro) middle classes - the "Afro-Saxons" as they were sometimes called - who had adopted white values, and had accommodated themselves to a system which involved the exploitation of the mass of black people in the interest of the whites. No significant change could take place in the society while these "black whites" continued to hold local power (Nicholls, 1971:451). In other words, the radicals in the movement rejected the political system which they believed to be a mere reflection of the economic situation.

In 1970, as economic conditions continued at a low point, the Afro urban lower-class, headed by black radical intellectuals, organized mass protests against the PNM government which were accompanied by rioting and by a mutiny in the mostly Afro dominated army. The stated goal of mass mobilization was the overthrow of the PNM government which Afro-Trinidadians had supported and elected since 1956. In the aftermath of the political disturbances, the PNM regime was forced to introduce a massive Jobs and Urban Rehabilitation Programme (the Special Works Programme) - aimed at alleviating the harsh economic conditions of the urban poor. Financed by a five per cent levy on incomes, the programme was no more than an expansion and formalization of racial patronage (Hentzen, 1985:128).
The Indo-Trinidadian negative reaction to the Black Power Movement, as might be expected, had to do with the rhetoric and symbolism of the movement. The movement's rhetoric was essentially pan-African with an emphasis on "Negritude" which only acted to discourage Indo-Trinidadian participation, especially the lower-class Indo-Trinidadian population. Unfortunately, the Black Power radical's pan-Africanist orientation alienated the bulk of the lower class Indo Trinidadians who saw themselves as "Browns" and not black. This was largely responsible for the failure of an Afro Indo ethnic/class mobilization attempt.

Thus, the use of ethnic symbols and ethnic ideologies, as van de Berghe (1967) and Bernard (1971) argued, were responsible for the lack of Indo-Trinidadian participation in the movement. Notwithstanding the anti-Black Power Movement sentiments that was espoused by the PNM government, it was also the use of such ethnic rhetoric and ideology which contributed to the fiasco of the radical movement.

On the other hand, almost all the middle class Indo-Trinidadians, in the professions and in business, were totally opposed to the Black Power Movement. Not only was it seen to be a movement composed predominantly of Afro-Trinidadians, but, more importantly, it was clearly advocating sweeping changes in the social and economic structure of the country, and thus challenging the privileged position which they held (Nicholls, 1971:455).
The Indo-Trinidadian middle class reaction to the movement then was very much the same as that of other bourgeois racial/ethnic groups. The Indo-Trinidadian apprehensions about the long-term aims of the movement was summed up by an Indo-Trinidadian university student:

Let the Black Power advocates take control ... Then what are we going to have?... White capitalists kicked out, Chinese kicked out, Syrian capitalist kicked out! Who is going to follow next? The Indians of course. (Ali,1970:4).

In February, 1975, trade union and radical intellectuals mounted a campaign of anti-regime mobilization to back calls for the outlaw of foreign firms. Together, they formed the United Labour Front (ULF) which later became a political party, which brought the most powerful of the Afro and Indo working-class trade unions together in a united political effort (Miami Herald, 20 February 1975). As Hentzen put it: "It was an unabashed attempt to redefine the terms of lower-class political mobilization from the politics of race to the politics of class" (Hentzen,1989:86).

Thus, the reactive ethnicity approach to ethnic/racial mobilization is critical to an understanding of lower-class ethnic/racial mobilization in Trinidad. Afro and Indo lower-classes awareness of their lower socio-economic positions in the society vis-a-vis their upper and middle class counterparts were temporarily unified in their attempt
to mobilise their resources in order to gain greater access to societal resources.

However, the post-1973 economic turnaround destroyed Afro Indo lower class mobilisation attempts. It provided the resources necessary for the success of the PNM's renewed effort to reestablish racial mobilization. This was necessary for regaining the support of the Afro-Trinidadian lower-class. Between 1973 and 1980 the country was experiencing an economic boom which placed enormous amounts of resources at the disposal of the ruling party through its control on the state. A significant proportion of these resources was targeted at the Afro-Trinidadian population and this mitigated Afro-Trinidadian hostility to the PNM party (Hentzen, 1981:144-53).

In 1976, one year after the United Labour Front (ULF) political party's attempt at lower-class mobilization, the PNM party secured a massive electoral victory, winning 24 out of 36 parliamentary seats. In its shift from confrontation to electoral politics, the ULF was unable to translate its lower-class mobilization effort into victory at the polls (Hentzen, 1989:88). Therefore, the rise of economic prosperity, the PNM's capacity to effect lower-class racial (Afro) mobilization together with an expanded system of generalized patronage ideologically rooted in middle and upper-class support were all responsible for the PNM's long rule.
The failure of the Indo-Trinidadian community then, to act collectively for the purposes of political as well as economic ascendency is attributed to: (a) primordial differences essentially religious in nature (i.e. Hindu/Muslim/Christian divisions within the Indo community) and (b) the variations in economic and class interests. That is, the middle and upper Indo-Trinidadian classes supported the PNM government because employment and business opportunities were available to the upwardly mobile Indo-Trinidadians in the private sector. As a result, private sector growth acted to minimize competition between Afro and Indo-Trinidadians for state jobs by providing opportunities for employment that are alternatives to the state. State employers have remained relatively free from criticisms of racial bias in recruiting.

The widespread urbanization of the Indo-Trinidadians and the relative absence of inter-communal competition with Afro-Trinidadians for jobs have caused some erosion of barriers in inter-group interaction, since many Afro and Indo Trinidadians now work side by side in certain public sector occupations such as in government and clerical offices. At the same time, the creolizing experience of an urban existence has lessened culturally derived commitments to collective identities. The results of a survey of national leaders that Dr. Percy Hentzen conducted in Trinidad and Guyana in 1977 for his PhD dissertation
confirmed the above assertion: that there was an erosion of culturally derived collective identities as the basis of interaction, at least among the influential leaders (Hentzen, 1985:157).

In Trinidad, mobilization of the black (Afro) population, ideologically rooted multi-racial middle-and upper-class support, and an extensive system of patronage acted together until 1986 to ensure the PNM of electoral majorities. Until then, Indo-Trinidadian political opposition posed little threat to the PNM government. The Indo-Trinidadian masses continue to support their more moderate leaders over the radical ones. Evidence for the continued strong support for Indo-Trinidadian moderate politicians was demonstrated when an ideological split developed within the United Labour Front (ULF), the then Indo-Trinidadian communalist party during 1977. The more moderate leaders were able to point successfully to the revolutionary rhetoric of the radicals as a reason why the latter should not be supported. The moderates continue to enjoy overwhelming support of the Indo-Trinidadian lower class while reaction to the radicals has been quite hostile (Hentzen, 1985:156-57).

In 1978, when an ideological rift in the Indo-Trinidadian political leadership erupted into factionalization, appeals for support from the radicals were met with hostile responses from the Indo-Trinidadian lower
class. This had to do, partly with the alienation of powerful Indo-Trinidadian leaders from their attempts at mass political mobilization. As such, the Indo-Trinidadian political opposition to the PNM as well as the other political parties, failed in their attempts to present any coherent organisational or programmatic alternatives to the PNM. The fact that for most of the period the economy was bullish (with the exception of 1969-1972 period) also enabled the PNM government to mobilise and maintain the allegiance of the elites and voters alike thereby neutralising the dissent of others. As Ryan (1988) aptly put it: The economic whip and the carrot kept many potential dissidents in line" (Ryan, 1988:134). Their consequent support for the ruling PNM regimes effectively weakened the Indo-Trinidadian communal opposition.

Finally, the role played by international capital in the changing dynamics of ethnic/racial relations in Trinidad enables one to understand the forces which go into the emerging political consensus among the Trinidadian middle and upper-classes. It also provides an understanding of the conditions that might explain the erosion of ethnic/racial orientations around which middle class social and political behaviour become organized (Hentzen, 1985:154). In other words, international capital weakened both the Afro and Indo Trinidadian groups ethnic collective identity (political and
social) by creating conditions for the social mobility of some of its members into higher strata.

The emergence of "Afro-Saxons" and "Indo-Saxons" (i.e. the Afro and Indo upper and middle classes) is evidence of this. Both these groups have adopted the lifestyles of higher status groups and therefore, enter into political and social alliances with them. Equally important too, is the fact that the failure of "radicalism" per se, among the Indo-Trinidadian lower classes, has to do with the opportunities for upward mobility offered to them by the nature of capitalist development in Trinidad. Therefore, situational factors (primarily economic in nature) played an important role in discouraging economic and political mobilization among the Afro and Indo lower classes.

THE POST-1986 PERIOD

While this thesis concentrates on the period up to 1986, events that occurred from 1986 onwards are significant enough to deserve mention as they pertain to the implications of "new" political change and the impact it has on the structure of race/ethnic relations in Trinidad.

The New Era of "Perceived" Political and Economic Reconstruction:

On December 15, 1986, 67.3 per cent of the electorate of Trinidad and Tobago voted to replace the People's
National Movement (PNM) which had been in power for 30 years. The National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) won 33 seats and the PNM a mere three seats (Trinidad Guardian, December 16th, 1986:1). The outcome of the election was, to a considerable extent, determined by the fact that the country's economy had experienced a dramatic deterioration in its fortunes in 1985 and 1986. The economy had grown significantly between the years 1973 and 1980 as a result of a five-fold increase in the price of petroleum and petroleum products. Whereas in 1973, foreign exchange reserves were the equivalent of less than two weeks of the country's export, by 1980, the net foreign exchange reserves had risen to $4,782 million, the equivalent of 14 months' import. The balance of payments position had also moved from a deficit of $32 million in 1973 to a surplus of $695 million in 1973 (Ryan, 1988:126 and Review of the Economy, 1982). The PNM government had anticipated a possible fall in petroleum prices and had sought to diversify the economy by investing heavily in industries such as steel, fertilisers and petrochemicals.

These industries failed to provide the solutions which they were designed to achieve. Not only were markets for their product difficult to find, but prices fetched for them were also low (Trinidad Express, February 1985:1 and 6). The failure of ISCOTT (The Iron and Steel Company of Trinidad and Tobago), one of the biggest capital venture
undertaken by the PNM government in the wake of the country's economic crisis, is a case in point of one of the above projects that failed mainly because of its inability to attract financing from private foreign investors. Overall, there was a contraction in the economy and this inevitably led to an increase in unemployment. Whereas in 1981 unemployment was a mere seven per cent, by the end of 1986 it had increased to 17 per cent. And as the economy felt the impact of declining petroleum prices, there was considerable retrenchment in the public and private sectors, especially in assembly type industries, construction and distribution (Ryan, 1988:129).

The collapse of the petrodollar economy had a direct impact on the political fortunes of the then ruling PNM government since there was little money available as there had been in 1976 and 1981 to bribe (through patronage and racial appeal) the lower-class Afro electorate in the urbanized East-West Corridor (i.e., in the Port of Spain, Laventille and Morvant areas where the majority of the Afro lower classes are concentrated). Furthermore, the uncertainty of the business climate led many key business organisations - especially the larger conglomerates - to come out openly in support of the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) party. The NAR party was the first ever multi-ethnic/racial coalition political party to take
power in Trinidad. Their support was both financial as well as organisational.

There were, however, many non-economic reasons for the dramatic reversal in the political preferences of the electorate. Some were structural in that they were caused by fundamental changes in the social fabric of the society. One of the structural factors which gave rise to and helped to perpetuate the dominance of the PNM over the past thirty years was the electorate. Even though the numerical balance between the peoples of African and Indian descent was roughly 42 per cent each the mixed elements, which accounted for approximately fourteen per cent of the population, held the political balance in many constituencies. Most of the latter normally voted with the African element in favour of the PNM. Of importance too, was the fact that the racial groups in the society were really concentrated. The Afro and mixed elements were to be found principally along the heavily urbanised East-West Corridor (only 25 per cent of the Corridor population was Indian). There were sixteen constituencies along the Corridor in which the Afro and mixed elements were in the majority and eight in other areas (Ryan, 1988:133). Thus, once race persisted as the dominant political variable, the PNM could more or less be assured of a predictable victory in these 24 constituencies no matter what proportion of the popular vote was won by the opposition. However, the election results of the 1986
election indicate that the race variable per se was not as salient as it used to be in former times.

The PNM seemed incapable of reproducing itself, and in a real sense to quote Ryan verbatim: "the elections of 1986 merely churched and buried what had long been dead organisationally" (Ryan, 1988:134). For example, the changing age structure of the population compounded the problem. The PNM had over the years become increasingly geriatricised and unattractive to the youths which its policies had helped to educate. The fact that the youths were effectively won over by the NAR adversely affected the prospect of a PNM victory (Ryan, 1988:135).

Polls conducted by Dr. Selwyn Ryan two weeks before the 1986 elections indicated that young Afro-Trinidadians had swung decisively to the NAR. The reason for this can be attributed to the high levels of unemployment among the youths in the country at that time. Only 24 and 19 per cent of the 18-21 and 22-30 age groups indicated a preference for the PNM. Ryan also found that the gap between the Afro-Trinidadian youths and their parents had also narrowed considerably. The percentage of the 51 and over group planning to vote PNM had dropped to 41 per cent on the eve of polling day. Equally important too, was the fact that the NAR had majority support among all social classes (with the exception of the Afro-underclass in the East-West
corridor) with such support increasing as one went upscale. The reverse was true for the PNM (Ryan, 1988:135-37).

In his survey, Ryan also found that the NAR had majority support among all the major denominational groups. Fifty-three per cent of the Catholics supported it, (the majority of whom would be Afro-Trinidadian) 40 per cent of the Protestants, (again the majority of whom would be of African descent), 73 per cent of the Hindus and 69 per cent of the Muslims (both comprising the majority of the Indo-Trinidadian population). It is well worth noting here that in the past, Muslims tended to support the PNM.

In terms of race, the NAR support was equally broadbased. The NAR had the support of 41 per cent of the Afro-Trinidadian population and 82 per cent of the Indo-Trinidadian population (Ryan, 1988:135-137). This ethnic/racial support base was very different from the former primordial type of voting patterns exercised by the both Indo and Afro populations. (See Table 10 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTY PREFERRED</th>
<th>INDIAN</th>
<th>AFRICAN</th>
<th>MIXED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAR</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNM</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJAC</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCERTAIN</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFUSE TO SAY/OTHER</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Taken from Ryan's Political Change and Economic Reconstruction in Trinidad and Tobago 1988 p.136
While it is true that the Indo-Trinidadians, mixed and other minority elements voted in substantially larger numbers for the NAR and against the PNM, the Afro-Trinidadian population, however, split its vote 45-55 per cent in favour of the NAR with larger proportions voting NAR as one went up the social class scale. The middle and upper classes, mixed and Afro elements supported the NAR, (classes that historically supported the PNM) while the bulk of the Afro lower class, situated in the East-West Corridor, not surprisingly, voted overwhelmingly for the PNM (Ryan, 1988:140). Hence, the persistence of political patronage among the Afro-lower classes.

SELECTED INTERVIEWS
Lower Class Afro and Indo Responses

Informal interviews were conducted by this author during the summer of 1989 approximately three years after the NAR's victory, to ascertain whether or not the race/ethnic variable played a pivotal role in shaping the Afro and Indo groups political decisions to vote for the NAR government. Problems of limited time and accessibility to the appropriate interviewees were in part responsible for the small scale nature of this project. This was also why elite responses were unavailable. Nonetheless, these interviews helped to illustrate the author's contention that for the lower class Afro and Indo groups, race was still the
critical factor which influenced voting behaviour. For the middle and upper class Afro and Indo groups, however, one found there was a de-emphasis on racial politics and that the racial variable was not as salient since race itself in no great way influenced voting behaviour for these groups. That is, race became less politically significant among the middle and upper classes.

Certain categories of responses emerged during the interviews with regards to the persistence of race in voting behaviour. When asked to comment on the NAR party since its inception in 1986, respondent #1, a lower class Afro-Trinidadian from a predominantly Afro area (i.e. Laventille) responded in the following manner:

R: From day one I never wanted to have nothing to do wit dat [sic] party. I is a PNM man and will always be a PNM man. What PNM give me NAR will never give me, I know dat for sure.

I: What do you mean by "dat" party?

R: What I say is what I mean man. PNM give we black people in Laventille here plenty. Now dis [sic] NAR come from noway [sic] to take way what de PNM give we.

A similar response to the same question by respondent #2, a lower class Indo-Trinidadian from a predominantly Indo area (Aranjuez) responded in the following manner:

R: Yuh [sic] know somethin' boy. When de NAR govament [sic] win de election in 1986 Indians in dis country was happy because wit Panday an [sic] all de odder [sic] Indian politicians in de NAR party we was sure to be better off. But wit [sic] Robinson kickin out de Indian politicians we stand no chance again.
I: What do you mean by "better off"? You mean politically better off?

R: Yes! now we back to de ol [sic] PNM govament.

The above responses from both the Afro and Indo lower class respondents indicated that race was still an important indicator of political behaviour. Note the phrase used by the Afro-Trinidadian respondent: "we black people". This suggests that for the Afro lower class respondent, it was as if the PNM party was his "Negro" party, as it was commonly referred to as during its era. One also gets the impression that the lower class Afro respondent felt as if he was dislodged from the citadels of social and political power when the NAR came into power. This is evident by the respondent's remembrance of the generosity which his class (i.e. the Afro-lower class community) had received from the PNM government in the halcyon days of the petro-dollar boom and which he now blames the NAR for taking away.

Similarly, with the Indo-Trinidadian respondent the race variable was also prominent. For the lower class Indo-Trinidadian respondent, the fact that the NAR party was more ethnically/racially balanced gave him the feeling that the Indo-Trinidadian community would now be given a fairer share of the society's resources. In other words, the lower class Indo-Trinidadian respondent felt that the balance of political power was now much better than it was under the PNM government. However, with the firing of three prominent Indo-Trinidadian politicians from the NAR party, the Indo-
Trinidadian respondent's optimistic hopes for more political representation at the national level were shattered.

The only difference between both responses was that the Afro-Trinidadian felt that he had lost what he thought was rightfully his (i.e. the PNM) whereas the Indo-Trinidadian felt that he had found what he had never been entitled to (i.e. strong political representation at the national level). The implication of this being that the Indo-Trinidadian politicians would now be able to carry out and influence policy within the decision making process.

**Middle Class Afro and Indo Responses**

Responses from both the Afro and Indo middle class interviewees were somewhat different from that of their lower class counterparts. When asked to comment on the reason for voting the NAR party respondent #3, an Afro-Trinidadian middle class responded in the following manner:

**R:** The initial reaction prior to the 1986 election was one of hostility towards the PNM and acceptance of NAR. The people in this country were totally fed-up with the PNM's insensitivity to the growing economic problems in this country. We wanted change and this is what we have to put up with now. So far the government has not done anything for us, I personally think that the NAR is no different from the PNM.

**I:** Did A.N.R. Robinson, being an Afro-Trinidadian himself, in any way affected or influenced your decision to vote for the NAR?

**R:** What do you mean? Because he was a Negro?

**I:** Yes.
R: Not at all. Look, the PNM government was called the Negro people's government and tell me, how much did the PNM really did for us? I voted for the NAR because I thought that it would find a solution to the problems in this place. I mean look how much retrenchment was going on when the PNM was in power. I am a public servant and I could lose my job any day now. I just wanted to have a secure job. But now, even with the NAR around I still stand the chance of losing my job.

Respondent #4, a middle-class Indo-Trinidadian, when asked the very same question responded in the following manner:

R: I voted for the NAR party because I was fed-up with everything that was going on in this country. All the corruption, mismanagement and unemployment that was going on when the PNM government was in power made me vote for the NAR.

I: Did the NAR's emphasis on the multi-racial "One Love" slogan had anything to do with your voting for it?

R: Yes and no. You see, Indians in this country, at least the ones from the private business sector, were never really dissatisfied with the PNM party although they knew that it favoured the Negro majority. But to many of them that did not really matter much because PNM favouritism did not affect the success of their businesses and other economic undertakings. When the NAR came into power though the Indians, for the first time, felt that they were now being given adequate political representation because of Indian politicians in the party like Panday, Dookeran, Ramnath etc. You have to remember that under the PNM government there were only two token Indian minister, Kamaluddin Mohammed and Errol Mahabir. But I personally believe that the NAR won the elections because people, regardless of their race, was just fed-up with the PNM.

Unlike the lower class Afro and Indo Trinidadian respondents' emphasis on the racial factor in determining voting behaviour, the middle class Afro and Indo respondents, on the other hand, by their responses,
indicated that, although the racial variable did play a role in determining political behaviour, it was, nonetheless, of secondary importance. They attributed their voting behaviour directly to the economic problems in the country which they feared would eventually affect their own economic well-being such as the loss of jobs due to the prevalence of widespread retrenchment. That the lower class income respondents voted regularly for "the party of their race" is quite consistent with the voting patterns of lower income persons with regards to other variables in western countries. Low income correlates with extremism and discontent, and since it is a well known fact that both the PNM and DLP parties appealed on the basis of race, the lower income groups took the extreme position of voting on that basis. The responses also indicated that the lesser educated such as the two lower class respondents thought more in terms of content rather than structure, thus maintaining a type of "we" versus "they" separation.

FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS

The main reason for incorporating these interviews in this study was to help illustrate the thesis that politics in multi-racial, post-colonial societies are not invariably communally based. It also helped to illustrate the point that there is an overlap between ethnicity and voting behaviour. While it is true that from the 1956 period
onwards Afro and Indo competition have been a characteristic feature of Trinidad electoral politics, (i.e., political candidates have always been selected almost exclusively on the basis of their ethnic/racial background), one can also argue that divisions within each racial/ethnic category are sometimes more significant in the composition of the total society than the broader racial categories.

Thus, Morris's findings (see Theory Chapter) also find empirical support in the case of Trinidad. As was mentioned earlier on, class divisions within the Indo-Trinidadian community coupled with the differences in political loyalties (the middle and upper classes de-emphasis on racial/communal politics and the lower class emphasis on communal/racial politics) have acted to weaken any attempt at the formation of a broadly based Indo-Trinidadian political party. In other words, racial cleavages in Trinidad have cut across ethnic lines thereby encouraging the joint pursuit (mainly in terms of class) of some common multi-racial/ethnic objectives. Hence, the presence of such cross-cutting cleavages in Trinidadian society have not only lessened the potential for social instability, but more importantly, for the potential occurrences of Afro-Indo inter-group instability. At the same time, however, cross-cutting cleavages do not altogether eliminate ethnic/racial distinctions.
Also, Smith's (1965) contention that cross-cutting cleavages of class and ideology in the "plural" societies of the Caribbean, do not altogether eradicate ethnic/racial distinctions (Smith, 1965:12-13) finds empirical support in Trinidad. Although the middle and upper Indo-Trinidadian classes have tended to identify politically with the PNM government, culturally, however, they take pride in their "Indianess". Cross (1974) summed up this form of "cultural expression" by saying:

The Indo-Trinidadian doctor would be a proud and vigilant defender of Hinduism and yet send his child to a Catholic school (Cross, 1974:101).

December, 1986 witnessed a dramatic shift in traditional voting patterns with the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) emerging as the party which had finally won support of a majority of every ethnic/racial group in the society. Ryan (1988) sums up this dramatic shift with these words:

So dramatic was the shift that the movement could, with a measure of credibility, adopt the slogan "One Love" to symbolise its achievement and its hopes for the further consolidation of the spirit of ethnic ecumenism (Ryan, 1988:68).

It was not long before, however, that the mirage began to fade. On February 8, 1987 three prominent Indo-Trinidadian politicians were dismissed from the NAR government as a result of intra-party fighting. The Prime Minister as well as other ministers felt that certain members in the NAR government were not only undermining the
unity of the party and the government but were also making the task of national reconstruction more difficult. The Prime Minister himself urged party members to "maintain a constant alert because there were elements who were actively at work in the society with the clear objective of bringing about a collapse of the government and creating conditions of instability" (Bomb, March 6th, 1987).

Many of the Indo-Trinidadian politicians in the NAR government were of the view that, despite the outcome of the election in 1986, the PNM was still effectively in power. What had taken place, according to Panday (Chief Indo-Trinidadian Political politician and Deputy Political Leader of the NAR government), was mere "exchange" and not real change (Taken from the Address of the 35th Anniversary Celebration of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee, November 22nd, 1987). In this address, Panday told the country that many people (a euphemism for Indo-Trinidadians, of course) were frustrated and disappointed with what they saw i.e., that nothing had really changed after the election. Panday argued that while the government had indeed changed, "the power structure of the last thirty years (meaning the PNM) remained virtually intact" (Ibid). Thus, the issues which concerned the Indo-Trinidadian politicians were the nature of the power structure in the society, the distribution of power and state resources, and
the question of corruption and the extent to which it persisted.

As was mentioned earlier on, the past political experience of the Indo-Trinidadian group was one that was characteristic of the lack of control of state power. This gave the former PNM government both the economic and political leverage to secure and maintain the support of the Afro-Trinidadian lower class and which consequently led to the economic disenfranchisement of the Indo-Trinidadian lower-class. This was primarily due to the fact that decision-making policies rested in the hands of the PNM "technocrats" who, as it were, consisted predominantly of Afro-Trinidadian advisors.

Thus, the conflict that occurred within the NAR government between the feuding factions (i.e. between the Indo and Afro politicians) also had to do with the structure of decision making. Kelvin Ramnath, (an Indo-Trinidadian politician himself), former General Secretary of the ULF, Elections Officer of the NAR, and Minister of Energy, identified the problem facing the NAR government and the country as having to do with the manner in which decisions were being made. His complaint was that a prime ministerial dictatorship was emerging which was at variance with ministerial and cabinet responsibility as understood in the West-minister system. What, he asked, were the
responsibilities of ministers? What was the role of technocrats and advisors?

Rannath complained that ministers (referring, of course, to the Indo-Trinidadian politicians like himself and others in the NAR government) felt a sense of "powerlessness"; they (a euphemism for the Indo-Trinidadian politicians) felt that their role was being usurped by advisors and that the pace at which the bureaucracy moved was much too slow. To quote him:

..."the ministers feel that the Cabinet system of government does not allow for the kind of participation and the kind of power that they would want to have if their programmes are to be implemented. After all, the Cabinet system of government, the Westminster system, requires that Cabinet must collectively make decisions (Taken from Ryan, 1988:78).

Rannath finally noted that if the NAR had told the country that they were going to use PNM technocrats to run the country after the election, the party would have not have won 12 seats let alone 33 - the implication of this being that the 12 seats that were won by the NAR came from those constituencies where the voters were overwhelmingly Indo-Trinidadians. The fact that PNM technocrats were still fully "entrenched" in the NAR government led Panday to conclude that "It is the same "PNM style" government. The NAR was now a "second hand PNM" (Sunday Guardian May, 1987).

According to Oberschall (1973), dissatisfaction with inefficient and insufficient authority occurs when the government and ruling groups are incapable of solving
pressing societal problems and fulfilling the usual functions of government (Oberschall, 1973:48). Certain members (including the Prime Minister) in the NAR government has been repeatedly accused of this. For example, Panday rebuked the Prime Minister for violating the doctrine of collective responsibility a la Westminster by leaking Cabinet secrets to private meetings which he allegedly called to discredit the ULF elements which included Panday and other Indo-Trinidadian politicians (Ryan, 1988:87).

Oberschall goes on to argue that such practices as corruption, maladministration (which the NAR is being accused of), nepotism and officials' remoteness and unresponsiveness to the people (e.g. the lack of open accountability to the people by the NAR which is another violation of the "open accountability" doctrine as stated in the NAR's political Manifesto), may not immediately give rise to major political upheavals, but accumulated frustrations and discontent (as is already evidenced by the Indo-Trinidadian politicians in the NAR government) in time will undermine the regime's legitimacy (Oberschall, 1973:48). The recent coup attempt which occurred last month (July 28th, 1990) by a radical Muslim organisation to oust the NAR government from power further accentuates the people's discontent and dissatisfaction with the NAR government. And since the racial/ethnic element was conspicuously absent from the failed coup attempt (i.e. Afro Indo fighting) and
that as a consequence, the coup did not initiate any "race wars" so to speak, it lends credence to the already known fact that both groups (Afro and Indo) are discontented and dissatisfied with the NAR government, thereby adding to the NAR's declining legitimacy as a strong political entity capable of governing effectively.

The recent upsurge in immigration patterns to the United States and Canada by many Trinidadians (many of whom have claimed "refugee" status in a situation where refugee status does not apply) is undoubtedly attributed to the escalating economic crisis that is facing the island. This influx of immigrants into North America is unique to Trinidad in one sense, in that in relation to other West Indian countries, it has never experienced such large scale migration. However, from a general point of view, countries all over the world, ranging from underdeveloped to developing, even western developed countries, all experience some form of noticeable migration in times of economic as well as political crises.

Similarly, technocrats (mainly Afro-Trinidadian politicians in the NAR) were also on the attack against the Indo-Trinidadian politicians. The "technocrats" observed that while the Indo-Trinidadian or the ULF elements in the NAR were preoccupied with the Afro-Trinidadian dominance in the public sector, they nevertheless showed no interest in addressing the Afro-Trinidadian's disadvantage in such areas
as business, agriculture, medicine and law - areas that have been the domain of many Indo-Trinidadians (Ryan, 1988:95). Furthermore, the Indo-Trinidadian politicians in the NAR were accused of having a "hidden agenda" and a "game plan" for seizing power (as the PNM had earlier alleged) (Ryan, 1988:94). Here again, one finds discontent and conflict present.

Similarly, Oberschall argues that discontent and political conflict are also caused by contests for greater power (which the Indo-Trinidadian section of the NAR party has been fighting for - my own words) or for maintaining one's share of power by already favourably situated groups and organisations (Oberschall, 1973:48-9), which the NAR technocrats want to maintain. The point made by Habermas (1976) aptly summarizes the situation occurring within the NAR party: that it is precisely when social relations which have been sustained through inequality of power breaks down that the possibility of discursive justification of the moral basis of social interaction arises (Habermas, 1976:927-8).

The aforementioned quote by Habermas is applicable to the current political problems occurring in the NAR between the Afro and Indo segments. The Indo-Trinidadian segment of the NAR party now have the capacity to rebuke the NAR party for its PNM style type of politics. That is, under the PNM rule, the lower-class, rural-based Indo-Trinidadians did not
benefit from the patronage that was given to the Afro lower-class. Furthermore, the firing of three prominent Indo-Trinidadian politicians from the NAR party gave the Indo-Trinidadian group the legitimate rights to expose the dishonest and contradictory stance of the NAR.

The NAR's party political rhetoric of "One Love" which implied the espousal of inter-racialism and ethnic solidarity between Afro and Indo Trinidadians was nothing more than empty ethnic rhetoric. This led many Trinidadians including the chief Indo-Trinidadian politician, Basdeo Panday to say that "the NAR is the same PNM in wolf clothing" (Television Interview, 20th September, 1988). The Indo-Trinidadian politicians then, in order to assert their dissatisfaction with the NAR's government have, and continue to vociferously denounce the NAR's government for its inconsistencies. By doing this, they contribute to the undermining of the NAR's legitimacy.

Prior to the appointment of the new Cabinet that arose as a result of the dismissing of three prominent Indo-Trinidadian politicians from the NAR government, the National Executive and the National Council had sought to find a compromise formula to resolve the conflict between the feuding factions. The problem was to find a workable arrangement that would satisfy those who wanted more openness and those who felt that party discipline and cohesion were equally important imperatives (Ryan, 1988:85).
To date, however, very little by way of compromises and bargaining between the feuding factions have emerged. This has some ramifications for the political reintegration of the NAR government as well as for Afro Indo relations. That is to say, the racial/ethnic disintegration within the NAR government has re-encouraged the "we versus they" type of attitude that was perpetuated during the PNM era and which, unfortunately, is counterproductive to national identity and national development.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Weber (1947) argued that increasing rationalization depends upon people knowing or believing that if they wish, they can understand the conditions that govern their lives:

It means that principally there are no mysterious incalculable forces that come into play, but rather that one, in principle, master all things by calculation (Weber, 1947:139).

Weber went on to argue that no one can live according to an ethic of responsibility unless he or she can "rationally" weigh not only means against ends but ends against secondary consequences and finally also the various possible ends against one another. Weber argued that this type of logic is necessary when describing how social action may be rational in the sense of employing appropriate means to a given end (Weber, 1978:26).

The whole course of history, starting from the placements of different racial/ethnic groups in different periods of times and the subsequent social, economic and political conjunctures that they may occupy, will impact strongly on the thoughts-decisions making processes of the groups or individuals involved. It is within this context that Indo-Trinidadian peoples in Caribbean historiography must be viewed. This will enable us to gain a more
realistic picture of their subsequent social, economic and political positions in contemporary West Indian societies.

Caribbean history is characterized by the relations between different groups, all of whom were primarily determined by the political and economic structure within which, and as part of a historical process, they were brought into inter-relation. European expansion into the Americas, Africa and Asia has been one of the largest population transplantations that have led to the appearance of what whites have called race relations.

For example, it can be argued that the East Indian expansion occurred in a framework of political weakness, since they were recruited as indentured labourers for agricultural work in many parts of the world including Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Mauritius, South Africa, Guyana, Trinidad, Fiji and elsewhere. The entry of Indian indentured workers in these receiving countries impacted strongly on their subsequent economic and social positions. That is, as immigrant groups, they were less powerful, socially, economically and politically, when compared to the already established white and, to a lesser extent, black groups.

In Trinidad, as we saw earlier on, the Indians were
relegated to the bottom of the social ladder during the colonial period. In time, however, major changes occurring in the society were to significantly affect their positions. On such change which helped to propel the Indians from their relatively disadvantaged position, was the opening of Crown Lands, which provided the bulk of the Indian population with the necessary paraphernalia to establish an economically independent agricultural base. Other alternatives were made available to the Indo-Trinidadians such as the opportunities for the development of small-scale business enterprises, which consequently resulted in a significant expansion and monopolization of private sector jobs and occupations. The emergence of a more "open" social system as a result of the decline in the colour-class system, allowed Indo-Trinidadians to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. The Indo-Trinidadians' predominance in the independent professions of law and medicine is evidence in support of the opportunities which the more "open" social system provided.

Banton (1983) argued that race and ethnic relations (R&ER) are best understood as outcomes of the rational choices of individuals or groups. That is, people's rational thinking is frequently being used by them in order
to fulfil objectives that have prior determinants in previous experiences. The amount of autonomy of rational beings is distinctly limited, though the power of that limited degree can at times be impressive. For substantial periods and fluctuating moments in their lives, people's behaviour may be determined by conditions that leave little room for even a limited degree of autonomy. In giving regard to rational characteristics of being-in-the world, this is not to suggest that all people's thoughts and actions are rational. Much is irrational. Some involves little conscious awareness and assessment of the consequences of actions and the outcomes of choices.

But in situations where the relative distribution of power is unequal, as in the case of immigrant groups that enter a host society that is relatively more powerful than the immigrant group, social action may or may not take a rational form. In this type of situation then, the immigrant group/s is/are expected to seek individual ends. The aforementioned Weberian tradition of interpretive understanding that is concerned with the effects of inter-group contact based on the principle of rationalization has buttressed this view.

Since the Rational Choice Theory of (R&ER) views
competition as the critical process shaping patterns of ethnic relations and since it is concerned with the consequences of action and the outcome of choices, the research hypothesis proposed in this thesis can now be tested for its validity. It was hypothesized that the more intense or "unregulated" (i.e. unadjusted) group competition is, the more likely it is that overt conflict between groups will occur. The less intense or the more "regulated (i.e. adjusted) group competition is, the more likely it is that peaceful group relation will occur. The latter hypothesis can now be validated based on the data that were presented in this thesis.

Under the existing power structure of the island based on racial exclusion, discriminatory practices and other such constraints, the Indo-Trinidadian group was confronted with a situation where it had to make rational choices and develop alternatives that discouraged the possibility of high intensity competition for scarce resources with the Afro-Trinidadian group. Thus, in assessing the situation, Indo-Trinidadians "regulated" or economically adjusted themselves to occupations that did not threaten or aggravate the Afro-Trinidadians economic domains and vice versa. In other words, the regulation of economic competition between
the two groups and the racial division of labour that emerged from it, resulted in the conspicuous absence of intense inter-ethnic economic competition between the groups. Therefore, it can be argued that since the form and intensity of competition between groups will determine the level of stability or instability which a particular social order will experience, the following hypothesis becomes a testable prediction: the less intense or the more "regulated" (i.e. adjusted) group competition is, the more likely it is that peaceful intergroup relations will occur.

Rabushka and Shepsle (1972) argue that the racial/ethnic conflicts which occur in many multi-racial/ethnic societies are usually attributed to primordial elements such as racial, cultural or religious factors. They argue that this emphasis on communal politics reinforces racial/ethnic political divisions, which of course, may have some serious ramifications. The PNM and DLP parties were instrumental in discouraging national unification between the Af-o and Indo groups by "communalizing" their politics. In other words, party and racial politics were largely responsible for the perpetuation of ethnic chauvinism by politicians who seek to generate communal issues. This type of politics, according
to Rabushka and Shepsle, contributes to the maintenance of democratic instability in post colonial multi-racial societies.

Although the Rational Choice Theory of Race and Ethnic Relations does not examine interethnic group competition at the political level, its emphasis on "circumstantial" or economic factors may account for the lack of overt political conflict between the Afro and Indo groups. The lack of political rivalry, as was shown earlier on, was related to cross-cutting class alliances which resulted from the particular pattern of economic development. It was also demonstrated earlier on that international capital created interethnic alignments between the Afro, Indo and Coloured middle classes as all these groups benefitted from its mode of penetration. At the same time, however, international capital weakened the potential for political mobilization by both the lower class Afro and Indo groups as these groups also benefitted from its mode of penetration.

It can be argued, then, that economic forces were, in the main, responsible for containing the potential occurrence of economic as well as political conflict between the Afro and Indo groups. In other words, economic factors, as in the case of Trinidad, have, to an extent, weakened
primordial attachments. Class divisions within the Indo-
Trinidadian community coupled with the differences in
political loyalties (the middle and upper classes de-
emphasis on racial/communal politics and the lower class
emphasis on communal/racial politics) have acted to weaken
any attempt at the formation of a broadly based Indo-
Trinidadian political party. Thus, racial cleavages in
Trinidad have cut across racial lines thereby encouraging
the joint pursuit (mainly in terms of class) of some common
multi-racial/ethnic objectives. Hence, the presence of
cross-cutting cleavages in Trinidadian society have not only
lessened the potential for social instability, but more
importantly, for the potential occurrences of Afro-Indo
intergroup instability.

The above assertions find support in Hechter's argument
that economic conditions may indeed lessen the occurrence of
class and ethnic mobilization. Thus, his theory of ethnic
political mobilization strengthens the Rational Choice
Theory since both these theoretical perspectives emphasize
the importance of "circumstantial" or "situational" factors
and the ramifications which such factors may have on
intergroup relations. For Hechter, situational factors
(primarily economic in nature) may discourage economic and
political mobilization among lower class groups. Hechter's argument then supports Morris's (1956) contention that factionalism within racial/ethnic groups forestalled perfect racial/ethnic cohesion, which he argues, may lead, on occasion, to alliances of expediency across racial lines. Both Hechter and Morris's contentions can be empirically supported by the particular pattern of inter-ethnic relations that characterizes Trinidadian society.

The failure of radicalism *per se* among the Indo-Trinidadian lower classes had to do with the opportunities for upward mobility offered to them by the nature of capitalist development in Trinidad. This type of behaviour finds empirical support in Yancey's (1976) argument that the "exigencies of survival and the structure of opportunity" act to weaken primordial elements (Yancey et al, 1976:400). In other words, ethnic phenomena are not always the result of primal need, but rational, calculated responses to certain contingencies.

Certain factors/alternatives in Trinidad helped in large measure to mitigate some of the divisive forces at work in the society. For example, the decrease in the ascriptive criterion as a factor contributing to the pronounced division of labour along racial and class lines,
was to some extent, reduced thereby enabling the achievement criterion based primarily on educational qualification to emerge. Secondly, the withdrawal of the colonial power in 1962, thrust both the Afro and Indo groups to high political office. Thirdly, the emergence of a bullish economy based on the production of crude oil and other petro-chemical products was responsible for the transformations that occurred in the island's economy.

Prior to the discovery of substantial natural gas deposits in the early 1970s, the economic structure of Trinidadian society was based on the plantation economy system that was inherited and constructed by the colonial powers for the purpose of enriching the "mother country". The discovery of oil led to a major transformation of the economy as Trinidad and Tobago became a major exporter of crude oil and other petro-chemical products. This in turn led to the creation of a significant Afro and Indo middle class. Furthermore, this rapid expansion of the economy produced high rates of urbanization and sub-urbanization. This not only outmoded the traditional pattern of racial/ethnic residential segregation, but it also brought the Afro and Indo groups, as well as the other racial/ethnic groups into closer contact. As a result, economic and
ecological (i.e. rural and urban) differences which the
colonial power encouraged, was to an extent eroded.

This thesis also utilized a number of auxiliary
sociological theories in its attempt to analyze the complex
and dynamic patterns of inter-groups relations in Trinidad.
The application of these theories to the data used in this
thesis warrants attention. In studying colonial and post-
colonial societies an application of the "plural" model is
most essential. Kuper (1974), in his analysis of "plural"
societies, uses a conflict perspective in order to highlight
the economic, social and political disparities which
"plural" social structures created between the different
racial/ethnic groups in these societies.

His principal concept referred to as "differential
incorporation" empirically supports the view, that in most
"plural" or post-colonial societies, the white colonialist
class had occupied a different, albeit more advantageous
position in the economic orders of these societies. As has
already been seen, both the Afro and Indo groups in
Trinidadian society were "differentially incorporated" into
the lowest social, economic and political positions in the
society. In comparison, the economically and politically
exclusive white capitalists class was overrepresented in the
highest echelons in the society. This was why Hall (1977) argued that the hegemonic domination of one sector over all other sectors was a characteristic feature of the "plural" society (Hall, 1977:159).

Kinloch (1974) accentuates Hall's argument by hypothesizing that the more social and economic inequality in the social structure, the more race/ethnicity will be utilized in role assignment and societal definition of behaviour (Kinloch, 1974:206). The particularistic/ascriptive criterion that was evidenced in colonial Trinidadian society empirically supports Kinloch's hypothesis.

Barth's (1969) ecological approach to the study of ethnic processes supports Furnivall's (1940) contention that in poly-ethnic societies, members of different groups are integrated in the market place, under the control of a state system dominated by one group, but leaving large areas of cultural diversity in the religious and domestic sectors of activity. This, in turn, allows ethnic/racial groups to maintain dichotomies and differences.

The "regulated" type of group competition that characterizes Afro and Indo economic competition in Trinidad, based on the racial/ethnic monopolization of
certain economic niches, may in fact, as Barth correctly predicted, lead to minimal competition for resources. However, where Barth's theory finds its most important empirical support, in the case of Trinidad, is in his use of the principle of interdependence among the various ethnic/racial group. It has already been shown that the various racial/ethnic groups in Trinidadian society depend, to an extent, on each other for certain vital social, economic and political services.

The political conflicts that are currently occurring within the National Alliance For Reconstruction (NAR) party between the Afro and Indo Trinidadian politicians stem essentially from the unequal allocation and distribution of resources. The past and present political negotiations between the Afro and Indo political parties have not yet, if ever, resulted in a compromise. The bargaining, in its attempts to rectify political differences, continues to be characterized by a "confrontational" type of ethnic/racial bargaining. Thus, Rex's and Oberschall's argument that political conflicts of this type are rarely settled in practice is ample justification of the political conflicts that pervade present day Trinidadian society. This is also why Panday and other Indo-Trinidadian politicians continue
to voice their political dissatisfaction with the NAR
government.

For example, we may have recalled earlier on that the
Indo-Trinidadian politicians in the NAR government accused
the Minister responsible for the allocation of project work
such (DEWD) for maintaining the old allocation system. That
is, the Indo-Trinidadian politicians are accusing the
present NAR government for allocating project work for the
Afro lower class which the PNM government had started. The
Indo-Trinidadian politicians, therefore, expressed concern
about the needs of the lower class Indo Trinidadians - a
group which did not benefit from the PNM racial allocation
system. This is why one can argue that the rural lower
class Indo Trinidadian group was economically
disenfranchised during the PNM era.

AN AREA FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

What is outstanding about the research literature on
race relations in Trinidad and the Caribbean generally, is
the overwhelming attention paid to the political relations
between the Afro and Indo groups. During the early 1950s
literature on race relations in Trinidad and Guyana were
confined solely to issues such as the salience of race and
politics in "plural" and post-colonial states, and the impact this may have on these societies. While not denying that an examination of political intergroup relations between different ethnic collectivities is of utmost importance in the understanding of human competition in the social world, it is equally important to argue that, in order to fully appreciate the dynamics of inter-ethnic relations, more emphasis should be placed on the economic/competitive relations between the different competing groups in multi-ethnic and poly-ethnic societies.

This thesis has attempted to depart from the tradition of confining race relations analysis to strictly political relations. It has incorporated both the economic as well as the political dimensions that characterize inter-ethnic relations in Trinidad and Tobago.
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