



Eighteenth session

INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

POLITICAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION ON
CARIBBEAN AND WESTERN ATLANTIC TERRITORIES
UNDER UNITED KINGDOM ADMINISTRATIONNote by the Secretary-General

CAYMAN ISLANDS

In accordance with the statement of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 27 September 1961, the Government of the United Kingdom has transmitted to the Secretary-General the following political and constitutional information on the Territory of the Cayman Islands.

This information, which was received on 1 March 1963, is herewith submitted to the General Assembly at its eighteenth session.^{1/}

^{1/} In accordance with General Assembly resolution 1700 (XVI) of 19 December 1961, this information is also submitted to the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories.

CAYMAN ISLANDS

POPULATION

1. The Territory consists of three islands. At the 1960 census, there was a population of 8,803. The racial breakdown is not known accurately, but is estimated at 17 per cent of African descent, 31 per cent of European descent and 52 per cent of mixed descent.

GENERAL

2. The Cayman Islands were a dependency of Jamaica until 1959. The Legislature of Jamaica legislated for the Cayman Islands and could amend or repeal any laws passed by the Islands' Legislative Assembly. In 1959 a new Constitution was introduced and the first elections were held under universal adult suffrage. Most of the constitutional links with Jamaica were severed, but the Governor of Jamaica remained Governor of the Caymans. The Jamaican Legislature could make laws for the Cayman Islands, but only by express proclamation by the Governor. The day-to-day administration was in the hands of an Administrator.

3. When Jamaica became independent on 6 August 1962, the Cayman Islands, by their own request, severed the final constitutional link with Jamaica, and continued as a colony of the United Kingdom. The Cayman Islands, however, continue to receive, on a repayment basis, a number of services and personnel from Jamaica.

CONSTITUTION

4. A new Constitution brought into effect on 6 August 1962 gave to the Administrator (at present Mr. J. Rose) most of the powers previously held by the Governor but also gave departmental responsibilities to the elected members of Executive Council. The Administrator, appointed by Her Majesty by Royal Commission, is empowered to make laws, subject however to Her Majesty's disallowance, with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly. In the exercise of his functions the Administrator is obliged to consult the Executive Council on all important matters, but may act contrary to its advice, subject to a report to Her Majesty through the Secretary of State.

Executive Council

5. The Executive Council is the main executive authority in the islands. It consists of two elected members, chosen by the Legislative Assembly from among the Assembly's own elected members, two official members and one nominated member

appointed by the Administrator, and is presided over by the Administrator. The present six members of the Executive Council are:

President: J. Rose (Administrator)

Elected members: T.W. Farrington
W.A. McLaughlin

Official members: E.O. Panton
R.C. Laming

Nominated member: A.B. Bushe

6. As a first step towards ministerial government, the two elected members and the nominated member of the Executive Council have been appointed as members to deal respectively with finance and development, social services, and works and communications.

Legislative Assembly

7. The Legislative Assembly consists of twelve elected members, two or three official members and two or three nominated members appointed by the Administrator. The Administrator presides. Elections, at which all British residents over twenty-one years may vote, are held every three years. The Legislative Assembly can legislate on all aspects of the islands' affairs, subject to the assent of the Administrator and to Her Majesty's power of disallowance. At the last general election (held on 22 November 1962) the Cayman National Democratic Party gained seven seats and the Christian Democratic Party five seats. The present membership of the Legislative Assembly is as follows:

Elected members

Cayman National Democratic Party

Dr. R.E. McTaggart

A. Colin Panton

Ormond L. Panton

Eldon E. Kirkconnell

Anton B. Bodden

Miss Evelyn Wood

W. Warren Conolly

Christian Democratic Party

Spurgeon A. Ebanks

Dalmain D. Ebanks

T.W. Farrington

G. Burns Ruddy

Craddock Ebanks

Appointed Members

Official members: E.O. Panton
R.C. Laming
D.V. Watler

Nominated members: B.A. Ryan
Miss A.H. Bodden
A.B. Bushe

JUDICIARY

8. There are three courts in the islands: the Grand Court, the Quarterly Petty Court and the Petty Sessions Court. In the absence of appointment of a judge on the islands, the Stipendiary Magistrate, appointed in 1957, has jurisdiction as Judge of the Grand Court, except in cases of capital offences. Appeal from the Grand Court lies to the Court of Appeal for Jamaica, and provision is made for appeal from the Court of Appeal for Jamaica to the Privy Council, in London.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

9. The administration of local government is in the hands of the justices of the peace and vestrymen, who have from the beginning of administration in the Islands played an important part. Owing to the small population and its dispersion over at least three islands there is no demand for an elected system of local government. Nevertheless, the administration is seeking to encourage such a development.