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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION  
WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING  
OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL  
COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS VISITING MISSION  
TO MONTSERRAT, 1982

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MAP OF MONTSERRAT

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Terms of reference

1. The General Assembly continues to emphasize the importance of visiting missions in ascertaining the situation in small Territories, whence information may in the best of circumstances be limited. Such missions enable the Special Committee to obtain first-hand information on conditions in the Territories and on the wishes and aspirations of the peoples of those Territories concerning their future political status.

2. At its thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly, by paragraph 12 (d) of resolution 36/68, requested the Special Committee, to continue to pay particular attention to the small Territories, including the sending of visiting missions thereto, as appropriate, and to recommend to the General Assembly the most suitable steps to be taken to enable the population of those Territories to exercise their right to self-determination, freedom and independence.

3. Subsequently, by a note verbale dated 28 July 1982 addressed to the Chairman of the Special Committee (A/AC.109/705), the Acting Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, on behalf of his Government, invited the Committee to send a visiting mission to Montserrat.

4. At its 1216th meeting, on 5 August 1982, the Special Committee, taking note with appreciation of the invitation, requested the Chairman to appoint the members of the Visiting Mission.

5. In accordance with the decision taken by the Special Committee at its 1216th meeting, and on the basis of related consultations, the Chairman of the Special Committee, on 11 August, informed the members of the Committee that the members of the Visiting Mission to Montserrat would be the Ivory Coast (Chairman), the United Republic of Tanzania and Venezuela.

### B. Composition of the Visiting Mission

6. The composition of the Mission was as follows:

Lobognon Pierre Yere (Ivory Coast), Chairman  
Shani Omari Lweno (United Republic of Tanzania)  
María Eugenia Trujillo (Venezuela)

7. The Mission was accompanied by the following staff members of the United Nations Secretariat: Ms. Joan Seymour, Principal Secretary; Mr. José da Silva Campino, Political Affairs Officer; Ms. Grace Jackman and Mr. Jesus Menjon, Interpreters; Ms. Esther Sloan, Administrative Officer; and Ms. Jennifer Lee-De Laurentis, Secretary.

### C. Itinerary

8. The Mission departed from New York on 23 August 1982 and arrived in Montserrat in the afternoon of the same day. It was met at the airport by the Governor, the Chief Minister and other members of the territorial Government. On the day of arrival and on 27 August, the day of departure, the Chairman of the Mission was interviewed by the local radio and press. During the course of its stay in the Territory, the Mission held a number of meetings with officials, community groups and members of the public. After its return to New York, the Mission visited London on 7 September for consultations with the United Kingdom Government.

### D. Acknowledgements

9. The Mission wishes to place on record its appreciation to the Government of the United Kingdom for the close co-operation, assistance and courtesy it extended to the Mission during the consultations in London. It also wishes to thank Mr. Michael W. Maclay, of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, who accompanied the Mission during its visit to the Territory and gave it valuable assistance.

10. The members of the Mission also wish to express their profound gratitude for the co-operation and warm hospitality extended to them by the Government and people of Montserrat.

11. The Mission wishes in particular to convey its thanks to Mr. David Kenneth Dale, the Governor of the Territory, and to Mr. John A. Osborne, the Chief Minister and Minister of Finance. It also wishes to place on record its appreciation for the courtesy extended to it by other officials in the Territory and by the other members of the Executive and Legislative Councils.

## I. INFORMATION ON THE TERRITORY

12. Basic information on Monserrat is contained in the working paper prepared by the Secretariat for the 1982 session of the Special Committee (A/AC.109/686). Supplementary information is set out below.

### A. General description

13. Montserrat lies 43 kilometres south-west of Antigua and some 64 kilometres north-west of Guadeloupe. It has a maximum length of 18 kilometres and a maximum width of 11 kilometres and covers a total area of 103 square kilometres. The capital of Montserrat is Plymouth.

14. At the census held in April 1970, the population numbered 11,498, mainly of African and mixed descent. The Montserrat Statistical Office noted that the population had declined by 669 between the 1960 census and that of 1970, mainly as a result of emigration. In the preliminary report of the census held in April 1980, the population was 11,606.

### B. Constitutional and political developments

15. It will be recalled that the present Constitution of the Territory, introduced in 1960, was amended in 1971 and 1975. Briefly, the Constitution of Montserrat provides for: (a) a Governor appointed by the Queen; (b) an Executive Council, consisting of the Governor as its President, the Chief Minister, three other ministers and two ex officio members (the Attorney General and the Financial Secretary); and (c) a Legislative Council, comprising a Speaker, two ex officio members (the Attorney General and the Financial Secretary), seven elected members returned from single-member constituencies on the basis of universal adult suffrage and two nominated members. Ministerial responsibilities cover all areas of government business, with the exception of the judiciary, the public service, internal security, the audit of public accounts and external affairs, all of which are reserved to the Governor (currently, Mr. Dale). During the Governor's absence, the Speaker of the Legislative Council, Mr. H. A. Fergus, acts as Governor.

16. In addition to the Governor, the members of the Executive Council are:

Mr. John A. Osborne, Chief Minister and Minister of Finance;

Mr. F. A. L. Margetson, Minister of Education, Health and Community Services;

Mr. J. B. Chalmers, Minister of Communications and Works;

Mr. N. Tuitt, Minister of Agriculture, Trade, Lands and Housing;

The ex officio members are Mr. J. F. Wilson, Attorney General, and Mr. W. A. Ferguson, Financial Secretary.

### Political parties and elections

17. Two political parties contested the last general elections which were held in the Territory on 23 November 1978, the People's Liberation Movement (PLM), led by Mr. Osborne, and the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) led by Mr. Austin Bramble. In the final results, PLM gained six of the seven seats in the Legislative Council, and the remaining seat, which had resulted in a tie-vote between the PLM and PDP candidates, was awarded to Mr. Joseph Taylor, the PLM candidate. Following Mr. Taylor's death in July 1979, a by-election was held for the vacant seat on 22 November 1979. Mrs. Annie Dyer, the PLM candidate, was declared the winner.

### Future status of the Territory

18. Full details on the question of the future status of Montserrat appear in the most recent working paper on the Territory (A/AC.109/686, paras. 5-7). It will be recalled that in his statement to the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly on 28 October 1981, 1/ the representative of the United Kingdom reiterated his Government's policy regarding the remaining dependent Territories, that the peoples concerned should make their own decisions about constitutional advance. He emphasized that the United Kingdom's dependent Territories would be encouraged to accede to independence if that were their wish and at the pace they preferred.

### Civil service

19. The civil service of the Territory is comprised of 750 established staff members (664 in 1979). A total of 14 posts are at present held by expatriates from the United Kingdom on contract appointments, compared with 6 in 1979. The policy regarding the civil service remains that nationals will replace expatriates as they become suitably trained or qualified. Specialists made available under United Kingdom, Caribbean or Commonwealth technical assistance programmes do not form part of the established civil service.

20. As previously reported, a complete review of the civil service, its organization and training requirements, is being carried out, with the objective of increasing efficiency and keeping costs down. It is hoped that the review will be completed within six to eight months. Emoluments to government employees amount to 52 per cent of the total budget.

### Regional co-operation

21. The Territory continued its membership in the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and its associated institutions, including the University of the West Indies (UWI), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the newly established Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Montserrat continued to co-operate with other Caribbean countries and to participate in regional conferences and projects established by Governments and international organizations and agencies for the Caribbean region, including the Caribbean Group for Co-operation in Economic Development (CGCED). The Chief Minister attended the most recent meeting of the Group, which was held in Washington, D.C., from 14 to 18 June 1982.

C. Economic conditions

22. The Territory's economy is based largely on tourism, construction, agricultural production and government expenditure. External aid is required to cover capital expenditures. Until 1980, the Territory depended on the United Kingdom grant-in-aid to cover recurrent budgetary deficits. The manufacturing sector, although small, continued to increase in economic importance, bringing in much needed foreign exchange. Since 1980, some 200 new jobs have been created in the Territory, and manufacturing now accounts for 14 per cent of employment. Fishing remains underdeveloped although the Government is taking steps to assist fishermen by forming a co-operative and through training.
23. It will be recalled that in his 1981 budget speech, the Chief Minister and Minister of Finance noted that the economy of the Territory had continued to grow in real terms. Key indicators for construction, tourism and manufacturing industries suggested that real growth in 1980 had reached the level of 5 per cent, as had been estimated by the World Bank for 1979. In 1981, real growth was 4.6 per cent as a result of: (a) continued activity in construction; (b) an increased number of visitors and the acquisition of a new aircraft; (c) an increase in manufacturing activity resulting from the new enterprises set up in 1980 and 1981; and (d) increased agricultural production.
24. In 1981, the gross domestic product was \$EC 55 million, 2/ compared with \$EC 26 million in 1977. The per capita gross national product, as measured by the World Bank, rose from \$US 920 in 1978 to \$US 1,400 in 1980. Between 1979 and 1981, the rate of inflation declined from 26 to 7 per cent per annum.
25. Exports in 1981 amounted to \$EC 6 million, of which domestic exports accounted for \$EC 3.5 million. Imports, while increasing at a slower rate than in 1980 when a 15 per cent increase was recorded, reached \$EC 51 million (\$EC 44 million in 1980). Owing to inputs of capital from overseas, earnings from tourism and remittances from Montserratians living abroad, total foreign earnings balanced foreign spending.
26. Tourism, together with construction, plays a vital role in the development of the Territory. In a speech to the Legislative Council, the Chief Minister reported that in 1980 there had been a modest increase in the number of stay-over visitors and that that growth was expected to continue. In 1981, the number of such visitors totalled 16,268, compared with 15,530 in 1980. The countries of origin of visitors, including cruise ship visitors, were: United States of America, 11,200; English-speaking Caribbean, 4,600; United Kingdom, 1,877; and Canada, 1,826. Tourism now supplies 30 per cent of foreign exchange. Total receipts from tourism in 1981 increased by 25 per cent over 1980, amounting to \$EC 14.6 million (\$EC 11.6 million in 1980).
27. As mentioned previously (see A/AC.109/686, para. 38), the Government hopes to create employment and to increase the number of hotel beds in the Territory by the development of a hotel/marina complex at Little Bay, on the north of the island. The recent acquisition of a Twin-otter aircraft has improved air service to the Territory, and is expected to aid in the expansion of tourism.

#### D. Social conditions

##### Labour

28. The territorial Government has continued its efforts to create employment by stimulating economic development through a process of linkage between agriculture, industry, tourism and construction. As a result of measures taken, the economy continued to show real growth in 1981 and employment increased by almost 100 persons, giving a total of 4,669 persons employed, compared with 4,574 in 1980. Unemployment declined from 6.1 per cent in 1980 to 5.4 per cent in 1981.

##### Public health

29. The overall administration of public health in the Territory remains the responsibility of the Chief Medical Officer and his staff, including three district medical officers and a surgeon. There are also district nurses who have been trained as midwives. Medical services are provided by the Glendon General Hospital (A 64-bed facility completed in 1977 with United Kingdom aid funds) and 12 district clinics. Construction has begun on a home for the elderly on a site adjacent to the hospital, at an estimated cost of \$EC 750,000. Funds for the home have been made available from the United Kingdom aid programme.

30. A small nurses' school and residence for nurses is attached to the hospital.

##### Education

31. Education in the Territory is provided free of charge for all children between 3 and 19 years of age. There are 9 schools providing nursery education; 16 primary schools; 2 junior secondary schools; 1 secondary school; and 1 technical college. Secondary education is divided into two levels: a higher level leading to university entrance, and a lower level for the less academically inclined, leading to a general certificate of education. Students have to go overseas for university education, usually to the University of the West Indies, which has campuses in Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago.

32. In addition to those provided by the United Kingdom, the Territory receives approximately 16 scholarships per year from other aid donors.



## II. ACTIVITIES OF THE VISITING MISSION

### A. Meeting with the Governor and the Chief Minister

33. The Mission met with the Governor and the Chief Minister shortly after its arrival on 23 August 1982. The Governor welcomed the Mission and the members of the Secretariat and expressed the hope that the visit would be fruitful and useful.
34. The Chief Minister also extended a welcome to the Mission, expressing the hope that the visit would be successful and also provide a glimpse of the social and cultural life of Montserrat.
35. The Chairman of the Mission expressed his gratitude to the Governor, the Chief Minister and also to Her Majesty's Government for the invitation to visit Montserrat. He accepted the Chief Minister's invitation to see more of the social and cultural life of the Territory if time permitted.
36. The Governor explained that although a programme had been arranged to allow the Mission to carry out its tasks, it was flexible enough to permit changes to be made as requested by the Mission.
37. The Chief Minister referred to the 1975 Visiting Mission, 3/ which he remembered although he had not been Chief Minister then. He wondered whether there had been any changes at the level of the Special Committee and its operation since that time on which he should be briefed. The Chairman noted that there were none.
38. Referring to the 1978 general elections, the Chairman asked the Chief Minister how the seventh seat in the Legislative Council had been awarded, after there had been a tie-vote.
39. The Chief Minister stated that under the Constitution, the decision had been left to the Chief Minister to make and he had awarded the seat to the candidate whom he felt had won by three votes. Responding to a question as to the reaction of the population at all seats going to one party, the Chief Minister said that the people had accepted it. That had not been the first time that such a situation had arisen, it had also happened in 1970. There was a small voting population in the Territory and people tended to vote for personalities, not for the party. When things were not going well, the people tended to vote the party out of office, as in the last election when the Chief Minister had been the only member returned to office. The electorate generally decided on the leader of the party and the contests tended to be one of leadership rather than of individual candidates.
40. Asked whether the Mission could expect to find a different point of view from that encountered by the 1975 Mission, the Chief Minister said that he did not think so. Priority was not being given to independence now, but to the improvement of living standards. He and his colleagues agreed that before they moved to independence there was a need for more organization, guidance, technical assistance, development funds and political education. In his view, many former dependent Territories had not been properly prepared for independence. Montserrat needed industrial, agricultural and educational development. Although emphasis was

being placed on economic development, that did not imply that there would not be a move to political independence in the near future.

41. As to whether independence would be an issue at the 1983 elections, the Chief Minister said that he did not think that that was the general view. Some individuals might feel the need for early independence, but the more informed Montserratians did not share that view.

42. In reply to a question concerning the type of economic and agricultural development envisaged, the Chief Minister said that with no natural resources Montserrat would need assistance from the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada in order to provide a viable economy. There was a need for more development before independence; he did not want to be in the position of seeking aid from all sources after independence. He understood the concept of interdependence and that it was an important factor in international relations; nevertheless, he could not consider political independence until the economic goals had been achieved. The timetable for independence would depend on the type of assistance received from the United Kingdom. That was the priority. In the view of the Chief Minister, although the United Kingdom was not putting obstacles in the way of independence it was not providing the necessary amount of aid for development in a reasonable time. Although other aid donors had contributed they were not really concerned with the factor of aid for economic independence in order to bring about political independence. He did not want Montserrat to become independent under the same circumstances as other Caribbean Territories which had subsequently suffered from economic problems.

43. It was true that Montserrat had dispensed with the grant-in-aid two years earlier, but what was now required was aid for development. The United Kingdom had to do better than it was doing at present.

44. Asked whether he would go for independence during the next term of office if his party won the next general elections, the Chief Minister said that he had already indicated to the United Kingdom Government his priority for economic development rather than political independence. A minister from the United Kingdom Office of Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs had visited the Territory in May and the Chief Minister had not been very pleased with the outcome of their discussions on aid. He would therefore visit London in mid-September with the Governor to discuss the situation.

45. The Mission asked about the importance of the human factor in assessing Montserrat's natural resources, and the Chief Minister acknowledged that the people were indeed the main natural resource of the Territory. They need training, however, and that was expensive. In the cotton industry, for example, the local people could handle growing, spinning, weaving, etc., but assistance was needed for marketing and sales. There was also a need for suitable jobs in order to keep trained people in the Territory. It all amounted to a type of package deal. Not much aid could be obtained from CARICOM, as all the other members, with the exception of Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, were seeking assistance.

46. Asked whether consultations were held with the opposition party, since PLM had obtained all the seats in the 1978 elections, or whether the party governed without consultations, the Chief Minister replied that his party considered that there was no real opposition party. There were consultations with other people, the Christian Council of Churches and the Chamber of Commerce. The law and Constitution were respected, criticism was answered and public reaction was sought through publication of any controversial bills. His party did not behave in a dictatorial fashion. The Governor was allowed to appoint, at his discretion, a member who could speak as the opposition, and the Chief Minister could also nominate one member to do the same. That had been done, and those members were independent in every sense; they did not depend on the Government for their livelihood and so could speak out freely. That procedure had been used because there was no opposition in the Legislative Council.

47. In response to a question concerning the prevalence of drug use in the Territory, the Chief Minister stated that although there was use of mild drugs, such as marijuana, which grew wild in the Territory, it was not a problem and any illicit drug sales were generally to visitors.

48. There was a question raised about the American University Centre. The Governor replied that it was a pre-medical school which trained students for United States medical colleges, all the students were foreigners and they brought revenue into the Territory. The Chief Minister confirmed that the Centre was not for Montserratian students, who went to the University of the West Indies, the United Kingdom or Canada for higher education.

#### B. Meeting with the Executive Council

49. The Mission met with the Executive Council of the Territory on 24 August 1982. The Governor officially welcomed the Mission to the Territory and explained that the first working meeting would be with the Executive Council since it was the decision-making body. Its members comprise Governor Dale; Mr. Osborne, Chief Minister and Minister of Finance; Mr. Margetson, Minister of Education, Health and Community Services; Mr. Chalmers, Minister of Communications and Works; Mr. Tuitt, Minister of Agriculture, Trade, Lands and Housing; and the two ex officio members, Mr. Wilson, the Attorney General, and Mr. Ferguson, the Financial Secretary.

50. The Chief Minister opened the discussions by welcoming the Mission and pointing out that he had not met with the previous Visiting Mission as he had not held office in 1975.

51. The Chairman of the Mission described briefly the role of the Special Committee, stressing that the purpose of a visiting mission was to listen to opinions at all levels of the society so as to enable it to fulfil its purpose as a fact-finding body.

52. Responding to a comment on the Territory's move from grant-aided status two years earlier than expected, its development of an agricultural programme and its advanced infrastructure, the Chief Minister said that the economy was still not as

advanced as he would wish. Although efforts were under way to correct and improve deficiencies in agriculture, aid and technical inputs continued to be needed. In that respect, the United Kingdom had been helpful only in the recent past. Much more education would be required to correct the erroneous feeling that agriculture was a degrading activity.

53. The Chief Minister realized that many countries had to seek aid after independence, and said that Montserrat would be no different in that respect. At present, he felt that in order to take agriculture beyond the present stage of a seasonal occupation, assistance was needed for the development of agro-industries, including the canning and freezing of products.

54. Responding to a question concerning his roles as a member of both the Executive and Legislative Councils of Montserrat, the Attorney General said that he had found no conflict since the roles were complementary in the presentation and preparation of legislation. Where he saw a possible difficulty was in his function as Director of Public Prosecutions, where he was not subject to any control or authority. He saw that role as a delicate one.

55. Regarding the role of the Opposition in the political process, the Attorney General said there was no official Opposition in parliament since PLM had won all seven seats in the Legislative Council. However, there were two nominated members, one nominated on the advice of the Governor and the other on the advice of the Chief Minister. One was a supporter of PLM but the other was more independent in his views and he could speak for the Opposition. That did not mean that whatever was decided in the Executive and Legislative Councils went unopposed. Usually what took place was that when a bill was proposed, the views of the Opposition became apparent through the back-benchers, nominated members, letters to the Chief Minister, the press or petitions. So far, unpopular bills had not gone through, and since the Executive Council preferred to work by consensus it would not force any bill through.

56. The Mission asked how, in the absence of an effective opposition, the Government could be sure that it reflected the views of the people when it said that economic independence had priority over political independence. The Chief Minister replied that in the 1978 campaign, the other party had appeared to want to push towards independence in order to gain political power. As a result, his party, PLM, had won all the seats. Until there was economic, social and political development, he was not ready to risk going ahead to independence and he had detected no such desire on the part of the people.

57. The Chief Minister commented that he did not feel that the desire for economic development was being used as a pretext for delaying independence; there was a need for preparation and eventually the people would decide, not the political parties. That time would not be too far into the future.

58. Asked whether the population was properly informed about the advantages of independence, the Chief Minister said that a beginning was being made in the schools. Given the inevitability of independence, there was a need for gradual preparation, so that the people could understand the implications. He approved of

the idea of a referendum, because the leaders had to be guided by the voice of the people and once they asked to go ahead to independence it would be done.

C. Meeting with the Legislative Council

59. Opening the discussions, Mr. Fergus, the Speaker, said that his views on independence were well known in the community. As a representative of the University of the West Indies, he had conducted seminars to educate the people on that subject and had found that there was little interest in independence. Over the years his own views had changed. At the time of the last Visiting Mission and subsequently he had felt that there was no substitute for independence and that economic independence should precede political independence, which was inevitable. In any case, prior to any such decision, there had to be conscious deliberate preparation by the local government, the administering Power and the local people, which had not taken place. Although the economic situation had changed since 1975, the people's views had not. A major factor was the civil service, which ought to be active and vibrant; it was an essential part of the whole. Mr. Fergus added that the younger people, especially those recently enfranchised, might have different views to those he had expressed.
60. Mrs. Dyer shared the views of the party and the Speaker that the people were not politically aware or educated for independence. The administrative situation would have to be improved and all available resources utilized to face that situation. Education and agriculture also required improvement.
61. Mr. John Dublin said that in his view the concern of the United Kingdom for decolonization was hypocritical since there was an absence of programmes to train people for top civil service posts, all of which were held by expatriates from the United Kingdom or other countries. Many statements concerning preparation for independence had been made, but despite efforts such as those made by Mr. Fergus, it could be said that Montserrat had regressed 40 years; economic improvements had occurred but administrative practices had declined. He felt that a local decolonization committee should be set up to make positive recommendations for independence.
62. Mr. T. E. Meade said that great efforts would have to be made in the development of the agricultural sector. He particularly stressed that young people should be encouraged to engage in agricultural activities. There was also a need for the development of shipping services in order to increase trade and to promote the embryonic tourist sector. With regard to independence, Mr. Meade felt that a political education programme was needed to prepare the people of Montserrat for all the options open to them.
63. Mr. D. R. V. Edwards, first nominated member of the Legislature, said that at present, Montserrat was not prepared to become independent. In his opinion, a much greater degree of economic development was needed before steps towards independence could seriously be envisaged. He agreed with Mr. Dublin that too many senior positions continued to be filled by expatriates and that the situation had worsened over the past few years. He pointed out, as an example, that a national of

Montserrat had never held the post of Financial Secretary. In his view, as preparation for independence, even the post of Governor should be filled by a Montserratian or a West Indian. He wondered whether there was not an interim constitutional step between the present status and independence to which the Territory could move.

64. Mr. Fergus, commenting on Mr. Edward's remarks, said that some senior positions, such as that of the Chief Medical Officer and the Attorney General, had not been filled by local citizens because no suitable candidates could be found. He mentioned that often well-qualified candidates for senior positions turned them down because the salaries offered were too low compared with those outside government service. Referring again to the independence issue, Mr. Fergus stressed that along with the programmes to prepare the population for independence, it would be important to foster a feeling of national consciousness and self-confidence among the people of Montserrat.

65. Mr. J. C. Kelsick, second nominated member of the Legislative Council, felt that there should be a conscious, deliberate effort to fill the top civil service posts with West Indians. He felt that one of the previous speakers had not been entirely fair - the United Kingdom would give Montserrat independence now, if Montserrat asked for it. He felt that it would be difficult to fill the aid gap if the United Kingdom left, apart from the fact that Montserrat's status gave foreign investors a sense of stability. Montserrat was very stable and democratic, there was complete freedom of speech and an active opposition outside Parliament. The "man in the street" would not be willing to seek independence until his economic condition was secure.

66. Asked whether a request for aid to advance the cause of economic independence had been made, Mr. Kelsick replied that the United Kingdom had increased capital expenditure and there was a possibility of support for a large tourist development. Aid was received from Canada, the European Economic Community (EEC) and the United States, but in his view the question was not only one of aid for development but of a political climate which would attract investors and provide a stable economy for moving to independence.

67. Mr. Fergus did not accept the view that independence should be delayed to provide the stable climate needed to attract investors. Nor did he fully accept that economic independence should take precedence over political independence.

68. Asked how the Government took into account the views of the active Opposition, Mr. Kelsick said that the Government modified or changed its policy to take account of the views of the people when it felt that to be beneficial. He and Mr. Edwards, as nominated members of the House, were independent and able to speak out and disagree with the Government. If the people wished independence and their wishes were not heeded they would elect another party to power.

69. Mr. Dublin felt that the Mission should not leave with the impression that the people were 100 per cent against independence - many young people were in favour of it and the population might be more prepared than the Government felt.



70. Asked whether there would be a referendum in the near future to consult the people on independence, Mr. Kelsick felt that it would be unwise and unnecessary. General elections would be held in 1983 and would serve as a referendum. At the moment, there was no talk of independence and no preparation for it.

D. Meeting with the Christian Council of Churches

71. The Mission met with a delegation of the Christian Council of Churches on 24 August 1982. The delegation comprised the Reverend Eric Joseph, parish priest of the Anglican Church of St. George; Miss Vereen Thomas (also General Secretary of the Montserrat Allied Workers Union (MAWU)); and Mr. Richard Lee, a businessman.

72. Replying to a question concerning the role of the Church, the Reverend Joseph explained that the Council met regularly to discuss the various aspects of life of their congregation and how to make the community more aware of life in the wider society, drawing attention to its ills and progress. Since the Council had received short notice of the arrival of the Visiting Mission it had not had a chance to gather the views of all its members in order to present an authoritative report. What the delegation could report was gathered from a radio programme seeking the views of the people on progress made or lack of it.

73. The radio programme had discussed decolonization and preparation for independence. What had become clear was that time was needed to prepare for independence and that the preparation should be based on education, economic development and the development of resources, especially human resources. In that connection, local people needed to be trained to take over key positions at the time of independence.

74. Mr. Lee said that there was insufficient public mention of what independence entailed, the need for harder work and greater self reliance and having trained individuals in executive positions. Currently, there were more expatriates in senior positions than five years previously. In some areas, such as "localization", there had been regression.

75. The Reverend Joseph agreed that there were no local people under-studying the expatriates. Conditions were not as attractive for the local people as for the expatriates and so there was no incentive for them to take on the responsibilities. Decolonization had to proceed in stages; the Territory should perhaps become a State in association, with the United Kingdom, or with a Caribbean State. Personally, he felt that association should be with the United Kingdom, so that there could be a gradual weaning process and training for individuals to take on responsibility.

76. Miss Thomas felt that certain steps should be taken towards independence, whether it came in 5 or 20 years. Since 1975, when the grant-in-aid was still being received, the economy had improved, although agriculture had declined. Construction was booming. Despite the remaining economic constraints, human resources had to be developed. It was important to see Montserratians or West Indians in key positions. Local people could carry out the tasks and make the

decisions if given the correct opportunity. People believed that a change in constitutional status would have to occur and they were ready to start the process of nation-building but needed help and guidance to do so.

77. The question was asked whether, given the inevitability of independence and once the economic indicators showed that the Territory was strong enough to think of independence, the Council would consider it its duty to explain to its membership that the time for change had come and urge them to move ahead willingly. Mr. Lee saw that as the duty of the Council. He added that within the society there was freedom of speech.

78. Miss Thomas said that, as members of the Church, their role was perhaps more important than that of the Government - they spoke for and with the masses, reaching 9,000 people every week. The Church was of the opinion that there were guidelines to be followed. There were many problems affecting the progress to sovereignty, and the church leaders and members had to be educated about such problems. For example, preparations for defence, foreign representation, constraints on the economy should have been started.

79. The Reverend Joseph said that it was the moral duty of the Church to encourage the people to accept independence and to teach them about self-reliance.

80. When asked about the Council's relationship with the Government, all speakers stated that that was essentially personal. On social issues affecting the country, however, the Council had made a major contribution through co-operation with the Executive and Legislative Councils.

#### E. Discussions with the Chief Minister

81. The Mission met with the Chief Minister, who is also the Minister responsible for Finance, on 24 August 1982. Accompanying him were Mr. Ferguson, Financial Secretary, and Mr. J. Cashin, Economic Adviser.

82. The first question concerned ownership of the land and its exploitation. The Chief Minister said that many families owned land, although the Government was, at present, the largest landowner. Encouragement was being given to the large landowners, both local and absentee, to sell their land to the Government so that it might be put to use. The land purchased would be leased on an annual basis and eventually granted freehold to those who used it properly. The United Kingdom had given aid not only for the purchase of the land but also for roads, electricity, etc. to be put in.

83. The Chief Minister was then asked about the outcome of the expected increase in revenue for 1982, in particular from agriculture, which he had mentioned in his budget speech of 1981. He replied that on the whole it had been satisfactory although other inputs had been required to make a success of agriculture. One that he had considered necessary was a processing and canning project to use the seasonal agricultural output which could not be consumed locally. For some years agricultural credits had been made available and thought was now being given to the



creation of a national bank to finance agricultural projects, since in a viable economy agriculture would have to play a major role.

84. Concerning the rate of inflation in the Territory, the Chief Minister said that although it had registered a decline from 24.7 per cent in 1979 to 18.8 per cent in 1980 and 8 per cent in 1981, he could give no guarantees that it would remain low. In his opinion, the decline in the inflation rate had a lot to do with the political philosophy followed. Since his Government had come to power there had been greater private investment in the economy.

85. Asked about the state of development of the tourist complex at Little Bay, the Chief Minister said that because the project had become a matter of controversy, nothing was going ahead. The United Kingdom Government had provided the finances to purchase the land and a United Kingdom minister had promised money for infrastructure if a suitable partner could be found. A change of ministers had occurred and the present minister was not in favour of the Little Bay project. The Chief Minister hoped to discuss the matter in London in September.

86. On the unemployment rate, the Chief Minister said that it was virtually nil, amounting to 266 persons (or 5.4 per cent) out of an active population of 4,935. If those who were unemployed were to engage in agriculture, that 5.4 per cent would almost disappear. There was no importation of unskilled labour, although a small percentage of skilled labour came from the Caribbean.

87. With regard to concessions offered to foreign investors and the guidelines for their operation, the Chief Minister stated that the incentives were usually tax holidays and duty-free concessions for machinery, raw materials, etc. over a period of years. Mr. Cashin confirmed that in order to avoid competition among the islands, CARICOM had drawn up a Fiscal Incentives Ordinance under which industries were offered the same conditions in all CARICOM countries; limits were set and all countries kept within those limits; and local enterprise could also qualify for the concessions.

88. On the question of foreign aid, the Chief Minister said that it was providing a glimmer of hope and was necessary in order to maintain a decent standard of living.

89. On the infrastructure in the Territory, a new 64-bed hospital had been completed four years earlier. It was suitable for present needs although there was a lack of certain advanced equipment. The hospital provided good training for the nurses. The Canadian Government supplied assistance to the dental service. The population enjoyed a level of health which did not burden the economy. The other installations - port, airport, agricultural facilities and the water supply system - all needed improvements, at substantial costs. The airport was a priority for which assistance from Venezuela was being sought. The recent purchase of an aircraft for Montserrat Aviation Services (MAS) had allowed for better services than those given by Leeward Islands Air Transport (LIAT), but it was merely breaking even and the Government was not yet in a position to begin repayment of the entire loan.

90. A question was asked concerning the progress made to date on the reform of the civil service. Mr. Ferguson replied that an organization and methods survey had been started two months previously and would be approaching completion in six or seven months. In the survey, the size of the civil service, staffing levels, job descriptions and measuring of work were being examined. A regrading exercise had been completed recently.

91. Asked about the use of non-traditional sources of energy, the Chief Minister said that a study of geo-thermal power had not yet been completed. Wind and solar power were also under study and solar power was being used on a small scale for domestic water heating.

92. Responding to a comment by the Mission on statements made by many people with regard to localization of the senior civil service posts, the Chief Minister and his adviser pointed out that under the Constitution, approval had to be given by her Majesty's Government for the posts of Governor, Attorney General, Financial Secretary and the Commissioner of Police. A Montserratian was now Commissioner of Police, but the search for a local or West Indian candidate for the post of Attorney General was fruitless because of the salary offered and the experience required. Nonetheless, the Chief Minister expressed confidence that such posts would be held by indigenous persons in the not to distant future.

#### F. Meeting with civil servants' associations

93. The Mission met on 24 August 1982 with representatives from the Civil Servants' Association, the Nurses' Association, the Police Welfare Association and the Teachers' Union. The delegation of the Civil Servants' Association was composed of Mr. R. Riley, its President, and Mr. F. Perkins and Mr. J. Dyett; the Nurses' Association was represented by its President, Sister B. Dewar; the Police Welfare Association delegation comprised its President, Station Sergeant Douglas, and Corporal Greer; and the Teachers' Union was represented by its President, Mr. J. Meade, and Mr. P. White and Mr. Leslie Thomas.

94. The Chairman asked about the problems they had encountered as civil servants, and how they judged the role of the United Kingdom as the administering Power.

95. The representative of the Teachers' Union stated that in comparison with its accomplishments elsewhere in the Caribbean, the United Kingdom's record as the administering Power in Montserrat had been satisfactory. However, much more remained to be done before independence could come about. Political education programmes were needed as well as substantial improvements in the social and economic sectors.

96. The President of the Nurses' Association agreed with her colleague from the Teachers' Union. Montserrat would have to become independent one day but, until then, much more preparation and development was needed in many different fields, including health care, housing and public finance.

97. The representative of the Civil Servants' Association also supported the same views. In addition, he outlined some positive and negative aspects which in his opinion were associated with the attainment of independence. As to advantages, he pointed out that with independence, the population would develop a national identity and a spirit of national consciousness. Independence would also bring about an improvement in the management of national affairs and attract more direct aid in some specific areas. By way of disadvantages, he feared that once the Territory became independent, it would be more vulnerable to the arbitrary use and abuse of political power. He added that at present, the people of Montserrat lacked the political will and motivation to become independent. For such a step to be taken, the economic performance of the Territory would have to improve considerably and widespread programmes of political education and training would have to be launched.

98. Responding to a question as to whether civil servants were required to be members of the ruling party in order to reach senior positions in the service, the representatives of the different associations all agreed that that was not the case. Although there were some restrictions with regard to their active participation in politics, civil servants were free to join any political party. Similarly, when asked whether spokesmen of a civil servants' association were in a position to influence the voting behaviour of the members, the unanimous answer was negative.

99. As to where the responsibility lay when essential services broke down or when needed machinery fell into disrepair, the representative of the Teachers' Union felt that territorial Government should shoulder most of the blame. However, since the United Kingdom Government had failed to provide the basic infrastructure in the past which had led to the present state of underdevelopment in some sectors, it too should share some blame.

100. The President of the Nurses' Association stated that the territorial Government and the United Kingdom Government should share the responsibility equally for the difficulties encountered.

101. Asked which were the main problems facing the police in the Territory, the representatives of the Police Welfare Association responded that they were mainly of an administrative and bureaucratic nature, as well as a paucity of equipment and transportation.

102. The representative of the Teachers' Union commented that there had been some progress since the 1975 Mission although a great deal more needed to be done before independence. As an example of the progress already achieved, he mentioned the balancing of the budget. He reiterated that most people in the Territory were not prepared for independence.

103. A member of the Civil Servants' Association agreed with his colleague from the Teachers' Union that the Territory had witnessed considerable economic progress in the previous seven years but that the population at large lacked the political will to become independent. He explained that civil servants were ruled by regulations which prevented them from taking an active part in politics.

104. The Mission was also told that those who became actively involved in politics tended to be financially independent or in the private sector. Few civil servants become active in politics since they would have to abandon the relative security of their jobs and risk unemployment were they to lose an election for public office.

G. Meeting with the Minister of Education, Health and Community Services

105. On the morning of 25 August 1982, the Mission met with Mr. Margetson, the Minister of Education, Health and Community Services, who was accompanied by Mrs. White-Samuels, the Permanent Secretary for Education, and Mr. Cassell, the Permanent Secretary for Health and Community Services.

106. Mr. Margetson noted that he had only been appointed to his position in December 1981, and stated that the Government was well aware of the importance of education in promoting long-term and sustained progress in the Territory. Although the Minister recognized that during the present term of office the Government's chief priority was economic development, he asserted that during a second term particular emphasis would be given to the social sector.

107. Asked about the percentage of the budget going to his Ministry, he said that it received 32 per cent of the entire budget, about half of which went solely to education.

108. There were at present no formal adult literacy programmes in the Territory. The Minister estimated the illiteracy rate to be about 7 or 8 per cent of the total population, thus involving approximately 1,500 persons.

109. When asked whether agricultural development programmes had been implemented at the primary and secondary school levels, Mr. Margetson said that basic programmes had been introduced in primary schools and that efforts were currently being made to initiate agricultural development programmes at the secondary level which would be particularly designed for the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) examinations.

110. The Minister then explained that CXC was gradually replacing the British examination system in the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean region. CXC was widely accepted in the area and the University of the West Indies was currently promoting its acceptance at the international level.

111. Asked about the existence of scholarships and educational grants, the Minister said that primary and secondary education in the Territory was completely free. Brighter students were given scholarships to study abroad, particularly at the University of the West Indies. Although students were free to choose the course of study they wanted, the Government often advised them on courses deemed particularly useful to the Territory's development needs. The students from Montserrat attending courses of higher education in the United Kingdom were there under the Commonwealth Scholarship Programme. At present, the Ministry had no funds of its own to finance scholarships in the United Kingdom.

112. Mr. Margetson said that it was often difficult to retain qualified young people in the Territory since the salaries they could receive elsewhere were usually much more attractive than those which the Government could offer. The Minister considered that to be a serious problem which would be partially solved if qualified personnel could be persuaded to remain in the Territory beyond the three to five year period in which they were compelled to serve in Montserrat if they had received a government scholarship.

113. As part of the educational development programme, a small teachers' training centre was being planned with Canadian assistance. At present, most of the teachers of the Territory went to other countries of the region for training. Only a small proportion of the teachers came from overseas since, with the exception of a few technical courses, Montserratians were qualified to teach most of the subjects being offered in the schools of the Territory.

114. Relations between the Ministry and the Teachers' Union were good. The Union had formal representation on all educational advisory boards and tended to work in close co-operation with the Ministry.

115. Asked whether the present health services were adequate, Mr. Cassell, the Permanent Secretary for Health and Community Services, said that most of the services were satisfactory. The majority of cases could be treated locally with only a few requiring treatment abroad. The Minister added, however, that further improvements would be needed and that he would continue to press the Government for more funds.

116. There were three district medical officers, one surgeon and one Chief Medical Officer in the Territory. With the exception of the Chief Medical Officer, who was not permitted to engage in private practice, the doctors were allowed to run their own practices after they had completed their official duties. It was expected that by 1984 the present surgeon, an expatriate, would be replaced by a Montserratian.

117. Mr. Cassell informed the Mission that the most common diseases were hypertension and diabetes. Malaria and other tropical diseases, including dengue fever, were fully under control.

118. Mr. Cassell also said that as elsewhere in the world, the Government of the Territory gave priority to preventive rather than curative medicine. That proved to be more effective, less expensive and obviously tended to reduce the social costs associated with chronic diseases.

119. The Mission was told that the population growth was quite stable. Although the birth rate was falling, there were many elderly people returning to Montserrat after having worked abroad for many years. Montserrat thus had an aging population.

120. Each district nurse had been trained as a midwife. District clinics often performed an educative role in teaching the population elementary notions of health care.

121. Asked whether health care was free, Mr. Cassell said that it was in the district clinics. In the hospital, certain patients were charged a small fee; the exceptions being people under 16 and above 65 years of age, pregnant women, indigent persons and those with certain diseases, such as diabetes, sexually-transmitted disorders and hypertension.
122. When there were epidemics in the region, advance warning was given and immunization campaigns carried out. Music festivals, sports events and other activities which involved extensive travelling within the region might be postponed or cancelled altogether during an epidemic.
123. Mr. Cassell noted that there were immunization programmes for five common contagious diseases. At the beginning of each school year, each child must present a certificate of vaccination, thus ensuring that up to 98 per cent of the school population of the Territory had been covered by the immunization programme.
124. The hospital had 64 beds and its present capacity had been deemed adequate by the Minister. However, facilities in the hospital and in the district clinics needed to be upgraded, more medical equipment was necessary and certain services, such as family planning, should be extended.
125. Responding to a question concerning relations between the territorial Government and the World Health Organization (WHO), Mr. Cassell said that the health authorities in the Territory kept in close touch with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the regional office of WHO, and that a good working relationship existed between the two.
126. Before the meeting ended, Mr. Margetson said that a proper survey of the levels of literacy in the Territory would soon be conducted. He hoped that with the assistance of the United Kingdom Government a programme of political education could shortly be introduced although not at the expense of regular education programmes. He also hoped that members of Government themselves would actively promote and participate in the programme.
127. The Mission then visited the hospital, a modern structure completed with United Kingdom aid funds in 1977. A tour of the facilities was made during which Dr. Harris, the Chief Medical Officer, and Miss Daley, the Principal Nursing Officer, provided information about the different services available at the hospital. A home for the aged, under construction on an adjacent site, was also visited.
128. After the visit to the hospital, the Mission went to the Montserrat Secondary School and the Technical College. Following a tour of the installations, the Chairman of the Mission inquired whether the secondary school teachers felt that there were any deficiencies in the quality of education or in the equipment used. The representative of the Teachers' Union said that there were several inadequacies that both the local Government and the United Kingdom should be held responsible for. He stressed that the Government should give greater priority to education and that the school curriculum should be adapted to the Caribbean reality.



129. A member of the Mission commented that school teachers had a very important role to play in the development of the Territory. He stressed that educators should instill a sense of national identity, pride and self-reliance in the school population. In addition, he said that a spirit of self-confidence should also be fostered, since many of the inadequacies at present encountered could be redressed without resorting to outside assistance, provided that the will to do so existed at the local level.

130. During a brief visit to the Montserrat Technical College, the Mission was informed of the main aims of the school by Mr. Weekes, the Principal. He said that the College was government-owned and run, and that there were about 60 students enrolled. The College offered both day and evening classes.

#### H. Meetings with the Minister of Communications and Works

131. The Mission held discussions with Mr. Chalmers, the Minister of Communications and Works, on 25 August 1982. The Minister was accompanied by Mr. J. Bass, the Permanent Secretary; Mr. J. White, the Acting Director of Public Works; Mr. St. Clair Jeffers, the Project Engineer; and Mrs. L. Cassell, the Senior Assistant Secretary.

132. Asked whether the budget of the Ministry made adequate provision for maintenance, Mr. Chalmers said that the recurrent budget never included enough to cover the work required, in particular for the maintenance of roads and buildings. Maintenance could not be maintained at a satisfactory level, particularly when the building stock only received 2 per cent of the maintenance budget. He feared the collapse of the Territory's infrastructure due to inadequate allocations.

133. Concerning the construction of the tourist complex at Little Bay, Mr. Chalmers said that a feasibility study had been done and the main problem was funding. Work was continuing on the over-all projects to determine the number of visiting yachts required to make the marina viable.

134. A member of the Mission asked about the airport, and what arguments could be advanced to counter statements that such a small Territory did not require a larger landing strip and airport. The Minister said that the United Kingdom thought that Montserrat could continue to operate as it did via Antigua. In his view, the existing facility should be upgraded to allow for cargo movement. What was sought was a larger facility to accommodate at least a 50-passenger plane and include a freighter-length airstrip. An airstrip 2,100 metres long was envisaged, compared with the existing one which was 900 metres long with a 60 metre over-run at each end. The longer airstrip would take a DC-9 aircraft.

135. Asked whether any other major work would have to be done in connection with the runway extension, Mr. Chalmers explained that the following would be involved: the realignment of the strip; the bridging of a water course; and the need for armouring against water erosion, as there was always the danger that the present strip might be lost during hurricanes or with high seas. In addition, there would be buildings for warehousing and fuel storage. According to a study undertaken by

the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in June 1981, the total cost would be \$EC 132.5 million, including \$EC 60.0 million for the runway project; \$EC 12.1 million for buildings; and \$EC 60.0 million for support services, such as air-traffic control, lighting and navigation aids.

136. The Minister was asked whether trained personnel would be available to service the facility once financing was obtained and the airport constructed. He replied that the training of such personnel would have to be part of the over-all implementation of the project. In related remarks, Mr. Chalmers said that a new road was being constructed from the airport to the north of the island, which would reduce the distance from 38 to 12 kilometres.

137. A discussion then took place on the question of maritime transportation and its role in interisland communications, particularly with regard to export products. Mr. Chalmers said that there was a need for better interisland transport, especially to islands north of Montserrat. At present there were only two boats per month going to St. Martin, St. Croix or Puerto Rico. Mr. Chalmers said that because there was usually a long wait to enter the harbours of Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, produce would spoil by the time it was unloaded. The shipping problem in the Caribbean was an old one. CARICOM had attempted to deal with it, as had UNDP, but a solution had not been found. In addition to the need for trained crews and better navigation standards, the problem of the similarity of trading goods remained.

138. With regard to the port, the Minister stated that it was an open harbour and could not handle deep-draught ships beyond 7 metres because of turbulent waters. Often in bad weather, ships with cargo for Montserrat could not dock there and had to go on to other islands. Yet, he felt that priority should be given to the airport project over the port, because it was hoped to attract air travellers who would use local hotels, rather than cruise-ship passengers. The airport would also be used for faster movement of perishable goods.



I. Meeting with the trade union delegations

139. The Mission met with representatives of the trade unions in the Territory on 25 August 1982. The Montserrat Allied Workers Union (MAWU) was represented by its leader, Mr. Milton Bramble; Mr. N. Ryan; Miss Vereen Thomas, the General Secretary; and Mr. E. Duberry. The delegation of the Waterfront Workers and Seamen's Union comprised its leader Mr. T. Meade, Member of the Legislative Council; Mr. K. Allen; and Mr. G. Dyer, the General Secretary.

140. The Chairman asked Mr. Meade how he reconciled his position as a Member of Legislative Council with that as a union leader. Mr. Meade stated that as he held Christian beliefs he did not take sides and could recognize the truth wherever it was to be found. Mr. Allen added that conflict because of the two positions would only arise if Mr. Meade were a Cabinet Minister. There was, according to Mr. Meade, a smooth relationship between the Government and the union since union rights were recognized. Miss Thomas, touching on the question of her union and church activities, said that her situation was different from Mr. Meade since she was a lay person and hence a representative of the church-going population.

141. A question was asked concerning the views of the trade unions on the constitutional development of Montserrat. Miss Thomas explained that when MAWU was founded in 1973, it had 300 members and at that time many people had felt that trade unions were not necessary; today, MAWU had 1,500 members and the work of the union affected all its members' families. MAWU believed in growth and that by focussing on achievements, goals could be attained. Colonial ties could not last forever. The economy of Montserrat was improving although agricultural and human resources had declined. The union was involved in the process of educating the people and believed that independence could be handled whenever it occurred. Mr. Meade commented also on that point to the effect that conditions in Montserrat had changed and there were just returns for work done. Progress had been made.

142. Mr. Allen said that the idea of independence in the future was accepted; if Montserrat were to become independent overnight, it would not do too badly, but the people of Montserrat had to be aware of the mistakes around them. He would like the Mission to ask the United Kingdom to make Montserrat a model of what an economically viable State should be, and to encourage the world financial institutions to spend money on Montserrat's development, which was a slow process. Montserrat had to educate its people to work hard and to use its resources well but it needed help from the outside. Questioned further, Mr. Allen said that the workers of Montserrat were better off than some in other places and that they would be willing to take the risks of independence, despite the mistakes they saw around them, only if pushed to do so. They would prefer to wait much longer.

143. One of the members of the Mission commented that one could wait forever, if waiting for the economic conditions to be exactly right before independence. Mr. Allen agreed that that was so, while Mr. Meade pointed out that the people had to understand the risks they were taking and to be prepared for hard work.

144. The speakers all felt that Montserrat could be a model independent State and could face up to any situation, although there was a great need for political

education. The population should be taught self-reliance and the advanced nations should give help.

J. Meeting with the Public Service Commission

145. A meeting was held with the Public Service Commission on 25 August 1982 at the University Centre. Present were Mr. T. Ryan, O.B.E., Chairman; Mr. T. E. A. Perkins, O.B.E. and Mr. C. Osborne, Members; Mr. C. Cabey, Chief Establishment Officer; Miss A. Meade, Chief Training Officer; and Miss N. Arthurton, Secretary to the Commission.

146. Mr. Ryan opened the discussions by outlining the functions of the Public Service Commission, which were to advise the Governor on appointments, promotions, the termination of appointments, training and discipline. It also advised the Governor on public service matters generally. The Commission worked for the good of Montserrat.

147. The Chairman of the Mission recalled that, in 1975, the Visiting Mission had been told that Montserrat was not ready for independence and asked what the reply would be if that question were put now.

148. Mr. Ryan responded that they were all interested in the future development of Montserrat, and aware that self-determination was the current trend; there was a recognition that independence would come, the only question was when. Meaningful, purposeful preparations ought to be made for the advancement of the people. Certain steps were necessary to achieve that goal: the first was education, at all levels, formal and informal; then political education, and the exposure of potential leaders to administrative practices. In his view, Montserrat had a population of ability and intelligence, but there was a need for experience, through attachments in administration and management and international affairs. Mr. Cabey concurred with that, stating that accelerated training could be provided by the administering Power.

149. Mr. Perkins felt that the economy had to be developed further to help counter the "brain drain"; until the economy had improved, it would be difficult to retain senior personnel who could earn better salaries elsewhere.

150. Mr. Osborne agreed that the economy should be improved, but wondered when was the optimum time to move to independence. People were looking at the situation in the countries around them, and were apprehensive.

151. Miss Arthurton agreed that preparation was important - they knew in what direction they were going. Mr. Ryan added that preparation was always useful if done intelligently and if it gave on-the-job practice.

152. Asked what programmes of preparation and training existed, and who carried them out, Mr. Cabey said that while the Commission set the priorities, it had no funds and so sought funds and scholarships from donors. He stressed again the role of the administering Power in that respect.

153. On the subject of political education and who should carry it out, Mr. Perkins thought that both the United Kingdom and the local Government, acting through the political parties, had a role to play. There was no such programme at the present time and, since it dealt only with the civil service, the Commission could not bring pressure to bear on the political leaders to ensure that political education was carried out. He and Mr. Ryan agreed that they could make efforts in that area as private citizens.

154. The Chairman of the Mission made a comment on the distinction between political education and the education of children; he had found the people to be quite aware, so perhaps it was a type of psychological preparation required, an infusion of confidence rather than systematic lecturing.

155. Miss Meade agreed that people should have more confidence in their leaders and a national identity should be fostered. There were many more trained Montserratians outside the Territory than in, who would perhaps be willing to return after independence to help build the nation. However, she felt that the Special Committee should help to allay the fears of the people about what they saw around them.

156. There followed a discussion on posts and salaries in the civil service. Women made up between 70 and 75 per cent of the civil service, but there was only one woman holding the post of Permanent Secretary; the highest salary was approximately \$EC 26,000 per annum and the lowest \$EC 4,800. Many people were at the middle levels, without much possibility of moving up rapidly, the cost of living was very high and salary increases never kept pace, all of which accounted for much of the "brain drain".

157. There were expatriates in the nursing profession, the police force and the civil service. Because of the small population of Montserrat, not much improvement could be expected.

#### K. Meeting with the Chamber of Commerce

158. On 25 August 1982 the Mission met with a large delegation from the Chamber of Commerce, led by Mr. Michael L. King, President. The Chairman of the Mission commented that as the representative of the private sector and an appreciable support to the economy of Montserrat, the Chamber's attitude would be an important determining factor if the Territory were to move to independence.

159. Mr. King pointed out that the Mission would be able to see that the economy had grown since 1975. The Chamber was satisfied with that, but being businessmen the members would confine their remarks to administrative matters; in that regard, Montserrat had a long way to go.

160. Mr. B. Osborne, Managing Director of M. S. Osborne and Son, said that owing to its size, small population and limited natural resources, Montserrat would remain dependent in many areas for some time to come. The private sector did not see independence as an asset to the economic and social development of the Territory.

The Chamber wished to see maintenance of standards, growth of the economy and the continuation of a stable image, connected with its way of life, which would attract investors. It was happy with the opportunities for progress offered by the United Kingdom and felt that the free enterprise policies of the Government were correct and would not be changed by subsequent Governments. Outsiders would prefer to see Montserrat aligned with the United Kingdom and the free enterprise system.

Mr. Osborne also felt that it was by force of circumstances that the senior positions were filled by non-Montserradians; the local people should aspire to administer their own departments and should ask the United Kingdom to assist not only through training but by the provision of a fund or incentive allowances or bonuses to enable Montserradians to return home to these posts. Then the country would be further along the road to internal self-government. In his view, independence was neither necessary nor beneficial for a country the size of Montserrat; it would not give the confidence needed to attract investors.

161. Mr. Michael King supported Mr. Osborne's suggestion for subsidies to enable local people to return to Montserrat. He mentioned an aluminium project to be undertaken in co-operation with Venezuela, which would provide an industrial base and jobs for some 150 persons and it would be a step towards creating a sound economic base.

162. There followed a discussion on the problems of attracting suitably qualified persons to the Territory. In Mr. King's view, some candidates were too highly qualified, or their qualifications were not relevant to Montserrat's economic situation. In some areas, such as computer science, no jobs were available, while in others, the benefits were not sufficiently attractive. Mr. Ryan, Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, disagreed with the view that some candidates were overqualified, it was simply that they could not be paid adequate salaries.

163. Mr. D. King, a businessman, pointed to the recent return to the Territory of three doctors and two technically qualified people to the Electricity Corporation and Cable and Wireless; he saw no reason for that trend not to continue. He was personally encouraged by the number of Montserradians who had returned since his arrival 12 years before.

164. The Mission asked whether there was enough power available in the Territory for the aluminium project with Venezuela. It was told that on the whole there was not enough power in the Territory to permit large-scale industrial development to take place; that would require the development of other sources. However, Mr. M. King said that the aluminium project involved not smelting, but stamping, cleaning and polishing, and the Chamber was awaiting a reply as to the amount of power required.

165. The Chairman commented on Mr. Osborne's remarks, referring to the Special Committee's position that factors of size, location and natural resources should not affect the right to self-determination. He did not see that it was necessary to be dependent in order to attract foreign investors; one should wish to be master in one's own home.

166. Mr. M. King said that Montserrat was as near independence as it could possibly be; if it moved on it would lose the guiding hand of the United Kingdom and lack

manpower and experience. With independence would come a demand for more money; even now, Ministers were always travelling and that was costly.

167. Mr. D. King said that if Montserrat wanted independence, the United Kingdom would grant it. Looking at two neighbours, one independent and one an Associated State, he felt that Montserrat was better off than either of them.

168. Agreeing with a comment that the opinion of the man in the street was generally formed by his leaders, Mr. M. King said that in Montserrat the man in the street was very independent minded. What was required was mutual trust and confidence.

169. Mrs. G. Margetson, a travel agent, commented that people were aware of the advantages of dependency, but not of its disadvantages. She agreed that to be in a situation of dependency was not an enviable one.

170. On the question of foreign assistance after independence, the Chairman pointed out that it did not mean that one "went begging". Rather, there was the freedom and dignity to go as equals to other countries and investors to invite them to help in the development of the country.

#### L. Meeting with members of the Progressive Democratic Party

171. The Mission met with a three-man delegation of PDP on the afternoon of 25 August 1982. The delegation was composed of Mr. Austin Bramble, the leader of the party and former Chief Minister, Mr. Eustace Dyer, former Minister of Finance, and Mr. Johnny Harris, a party member engaged in the construction business.

172. The Chairman of the Mission stated that he was very happy to meet with the Opposition party and that he attached great importance to the meeting since it was PDP which had been in power when the previous Mission of the Special Committee had visited the Territory in May 1975. He then asked what were the chief ideological differences between PDP and PLM.

173. Mr. Bramble answered that there were no real ideological differences between the two parties, it was more a difference of presentation. PDP had lost the 1978 elections because the community had felt that the time had come for a change in the political leadership of the Territory. He thought that the fact that the party had been in power for a long time, indeed he had taken over the leadership from his father, had contributed to persuading the population that a change would be beneficial. He added that in the long run, changes in Government play a useful and healthy role in the political life of a democratic society.

174. Asked what the position of his party was on the issue of independence, Mr. Bramble stated that independence should be seen as a means of achieving a better quality of life for the people rather than as an end in itself. He noted that there was a tendency to overlook the fact that in practice the territorial Government enjoyed considerable control over its internal affairs. It also had the option of moving to independence and that opinion therefore gave Montserrat a



considerable measure of self-determination. Since independence once achieved was irreversible, careful consideration should be given before such a step was taken to the repercussions on the social, economic and political life of the Territory.

175. Mr. Bramble then made reference to the concept of sovereignty and its significance in the contemporary world. He said that unfortunately experience and history had shown that constitutional instruments of independence could in and of themselves guarantee their own provisions, since shortly after independence some countries had abandoned their democratic institutions and abrogated their constitutions. In many third world countries independence might be said to have opened the door or provided the opportunity for the emergence of non-democratic régimes whose leaders had simply taken the place of the colonial masters to the detriment of the helpless majority of the population. For small countries like Montserrat, it would be folly to ignore those harsh realities. He therefore proposed that, if independence were to be worthwhile, a set of given conditions should be guaranteed, namely:

- (a) Basic human rights and freedoms;
- (b) The rule of law and an independent judiciary;
- (c) Free and fair elections, with the electoral machinery in independent hands, not in the hands of the political party in power;
- (d) Protection for duly elected Governments from internal or external military attack.

176. Continuing with his proposals, Mr. Bramble suggested that the international community should devise a new arrangement to safeguard newly-independent small States from the upheavals which had often marred the advantages brought about by independence. In his opinion, since the Government of the United Kingdom was prepared to grant independence to Montserrat if the people so decided, the United Nations should concentrate on identifying and devising some practical and effective alternative international arrangements which would guarantee that the conditions outlined above would be safeguarded once independence was achieved. Such an arrangement would have to be first accepted by the people of Montserrat and the international community would have to agree to its enforcement.

177. Asked whether there was an effective Opposition in the Territory, Mr. Bramble said that his party had no seats in the Legislative Council. However, as PDP had won more than one third of the votes in the November 1978 elections, he had requested that one of the nominated members in the House be a PDP representative. Since that had been denied, Mr. Bramble felt that justice had not been done because his party had much more support throughout the Territory than the absence of seats in the Legislative Council would indicate. However, PDP managed to make its views known to the general public by public meetings, letters to the press and the Governor and in the party newspaper. On a related matter, Mr. Bramble said that his party had contested the 1979 by-election but had not been successful.

178. Answering a question as to the type of economic system favoured by PDP, Mr. Bramble said that it should be one based on free enterprise.

179. On the question of independence, Mr. Bramble strongly denied allegations that his party had lost the 1978 elections because it had taken a firm stand on that issue. Further, Mr. Bramble said that he did not think that independence was going to be an issue at the next general elections. He felt sure that elections would take place in 1982, rather than as scheduled in 1983. He then reiterated his proposals that the United Nations should endeavour to devise a system whereby the security and the basic human rights of the people of the Territory would be protected, while the Government of Montserrat would have control of foreign affairs, internal security and defence.

180. Mr. Bramble added that his party preferred that the issue of independence be dealt with by a referendum rather than by an electoral campaign. Such a referendum should be held only after the outline of an independence arrangement had been discussed and circulated for study for a period of six months.

181. A member of the Mission commented that constitutional advancement was a matter for negotiation between the territorial Government and the administering Power. Mr. Bramble conceded that that was indeed so; however, he felt that an organization such as the United Nations should be involved, so as to avoid any hint of colonialism.

182. The Chairman of the Mission said that the ideas put forward by Mr. Bramble were interesting. He none the less felt that the process of decolonization under the United Nations offered Non-Self-Governing Territories a number of options, which could be used to obtain the results desired. He pointed out also that once independent, States could enter into agreement with others for the defence of their national sovereignty.

183. Mr. Bramble replied that he was not stating his party's final position on constitutional advancement for the Territory. He wished to advance new ideas for discussion and to stress the risks faced by small States on attaining independence. His ideas, in the long run, might be seen to be relevant.

#### M. Visit to the Port Authority

184. In the morning of 26 August 1982, the Mission met with Mr. Chalmers, the Minister of Communications and Works, Mr. J. W. Bass, the Permanent Secretary for Communications and Works, Mr. J. Allen, Acting Port Manager, and Mr. Cabey, Acting Comptroller of Customs. After an exchange of views on the situation and problems facing the port, the Mission visited the facilities.

185. Asked how much tonnage was annually imported and exported, the Acting Port Manager said that 20,000 metric tons of general cargo and 6,000 metric tons of fuel were imported every year. In contrast, the Territory only exported 2,000 metric tons of cargo annually. There was thus a huge discrepancy between imports and exports.

186. The imports were mainly from the United Kingdom and the United States. From the region, Montserrat imported some goods from Barbados, Puerto Rico and Trinidad

and Tobago. Exports usually went to the neighbouring Territories, namely, Barbados, Saint Lucia and St. Kitts-Nevis. During the season, some fruits were exported to the United States Virgin Islands. In exchange for flour imported from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Montserrat exported flour bags to that country.

187. Asked whether the port facilities were adequate, Mr. Allen stated that there were a number of problems, chief among them the lack of space for storage and the absence of a chilling and refrigeration system. The port had only 2,300 square metres of storage space. Since there were no facilities to preserve fresh fruit, those products often rotted while waiting to be shipped out.

188. Regarding the number of people employed by the Port Authority, Mr. Allen said that 26 persons were employed as clerical workers and about 60 as stevedores.

189. Answering a question regarding the annual amount of port traffic, Mr. Allen said that every year up to 300 small vessels visited the port, including a small number of cruise ships which were obliged to stand off. Small boats usually came up to the pier. In addition, a small number of fishing boats visited the port. The Government had recently introduced a policy of granting licences to foreign vessels for deep-sea fishing in Montserrat's territorial waters.

190. When asked how the Government could prevent unauthorized persons from fishing in Montserrat's territorial waters, Mr. Chalmers said it was often difficult for the authorities to detect illegal fishing. Mr. Cabey added that the Customs Department had a launch which made occasional checks around the coast. Spot-checks were also made on tourist yachts to prevent drug smuggling and other types of contraband.

191. After the meeting, the Mission toured the port installations, and inspected the storage facilities, the transit shed, the reclamation area and the jetty.

N. Meeting with the Minister of Agriculture,  
Trade, Lands and Housing

192. A meeting was held between the Mission and Mr. Tuitt, the Minister of Agriculture, Trade, Lands and Housing, on 26 August 1982. The Minister was accompanied by Mrs. Ryan, the Acting Permanent Secretary, Mr. F. Michael, the Acting Director of Agriculture, Mr. S. Meade, the Chairman of the Land Development Authority, and Mr. J. Osborne, the Manager, Land Development Authority.

193. The Chairman of the Mission asked a question concerning land ownership in the Territory. Mr. Osborne said that there were many large estates, both private and Government owned. The Government estates were run by the Land Development Authority, a statutory body, which had bought them from absentee owners, and the land was leased to users who would eventually obtain ownership on completion of a certain period of leasehold.

194. On the export of agricultural produce, Mr. Osborne said that the main problem was lack of proper transport. Mr. Tuitt confirmed that shipping and marketing



posed problems; there were no facilities for refrigerated and containerized shipping.

195. Asked what methods of marketing were used, Mr. Michael said that farmers sold directly to individuals, the Government Marketing Agency or overseas through individuals who bought and shipped by air or sea. Farmers did not produce on contract. A member of the Mission commented that the system would give no guarantees of sales, but Mr. Michaels said that minimum prices could be obtained at the Government Marketing Agency, which tended to be used in times of glut, and that in times of shortage, farmers sold directly to the public.

196. Mr. Michael pointed out that the Territory was almost self-sufficient in beef, mutton and goat meat, although it was difficult to obtain choice cuts. It was hoped that once the new abattoir was put into use there would be improvement in the methods of slaughtering. As in other Caribbean Territories, self-sufficiency in poultry rearing had not been attained, since poultry feed must be imported, thus leading to supply problems. However, the Territory was approaching self-sufficiency in vegetable production. There was the need to develop viable cash crops to aid the farmers.

197. Asked about fishing, Mr. Michael said that it was carried out on a small scale. The nature of the islands made deep-sea fishing a necessity although it had not yet begun. Mrs. Ryan added that the fishermen were grouping together to purchase a large boat so as to go farther afield. There was a section of the Ministry which provided assistance to fishermen, and some experts provided assistance with long-line fishing.

198. Regarding cotton production, Mr. Michael stated that farmers usually had small holdings and were not used to large-scale production. The area under cotton production had declined from 1,600 to 800 hectares, and production was carried out under the auspices of the Sea Island Cotton Company, an integrated industry. Although some farmers might have up to 20 hectares under production, so much labour was required and the cost was so high that it was not easy to make much of a profit. Turning to peppers as a cash crop, Mr. Michael added that marketing was not very good, although a hot pepper paste had now been developed for export to Barbados and the United Kingdom.

199. Asked about the fumigation of crops, Mr. Michael replied that the system was not widely used, although it was needed for mangoes.

200. Mr. Michael said that it was difficult to determine the proportion of the population living exclusively off agriculture. Some two years earlier there had been 800 active farmers, but for the most part, farming was carried out on a part-time basis, in the early morning and the evening. Problems of erosion, due to the steepness of the land, its stony nature and the washing away of the top soil, made mechanization difficult.

201. A question was put regarding the types of irrigation used. According to Mr. Michael, it was hoped to set up a year-round system for the six main crops, using dams and the trickle system. The difficulty with dams arose because of the

porous nature of the soil, caused by an insufficiency of clay, and high costs involved in lining the dams. Spring water was under the control of the Water Authority and rates were high although there was the hope that they could be reduced for agricultural use.

202. Asked whether all arable land was under cultivation, the reply was that of the total of 10,000 hectares, 3,250 hectares were suitable for cultivation although only 800 hectares were in use. More could be cultivated with marketing possibilities in view. Another 3,250 hectares on hillsides could be used for tree crops, particularly mangoes and sour-sops, which were among a wide range of fruits sent to the United Kingdom.

203. On livestock, Mr. Michael said that there was a stock of 3,000 animals of which the Government kept a nucleus herd of 100 animals for genetic purposes. There were a few hundred animals on sedentary holdings and tether fees were low. Among the local population, the quantity of the herd was still more important than the quality. Veterinary services were provided free by a veterinary officer and two assistants. Mostly preventive work was done.

204. Noting the difficulty of attracting people into agriculture, one of the members of the Mission asked what programmes or incentives were given in that respect. According to Mr. Michael, various means of encouragement were offered including: (a) giving leasehold or free hold land to those using it; (b) a subsidized tractor service under which farmers paid \$EC 140 for ploughing, raking and harrowing 40 square metres instead of the true cost of \$EC 250; (c) a subsidized seedling service; (d) a subsidized crop-spraying service; and (e) the use of radio programmes to encourage young people to take up agriculture. The programme was now showing signs of success and many people under 25 years of age had applied recently.

205. On the question of housing and whether the housing needs of the Territory were covered, Mr. Osborne said that there was a greater need among the low-income group and that aided self-help housing was being considered. Only a limited group could apply for the three systems currently in use under which: (a) the Government provided the materials and the individual provided the labour; (b) the Government built the shell of the house, including a bathroom, and sold it to the individual who completed it; and (c) the Government built the complete house and sold it to the individual. The escalation of building costs was faster than the usual salary increases. Land provided by the Government was cheaper and when used in larger-scale developments could result in lower overall costs, since the Government could benefit from bulk purchasing and sometimes from the duty-free importation of materials. There was some housing development on private lands.

206. In response to a question on the rates of inflation and the control of prices, Mr. Tuitt said that that functioned in terms of a percentage profit on landed costs and that regular inspection was important. He added that the price of fish and meat was not controlled and that retail prices were still reasonable. There were no subsidies on basic items.

207. The Chairman asked what could be done to change the imbalance in terms of trade. Imports amounted to about 30,000 metric tons and exports to 2,000 metric

tons. Mr. Osborne replied that imports comprised mainly building materials, household equipment, fuel and a small amount of food. Exports were mainly light woven goods and plastic and polyethylene bags. There was some production of souvenir items from wood and leather.

208. Following the discussions with the Minister and other officials, the Mission was taken on a visit to Riley's Estate. This estate is an example of action by the Government to resurrect and revitalize agriculture in the Territory. It is one of the six estates acquired by the Government whose management and development as agricultural and housing units is vested in the Land Development Authority. The land is divided into small but economic holdings of 2 to 3 hectares, and leased to farmers for a period of 20 years. At the end of that time, provided that the land is being utilized efficiently, the farmer obtains title to it on payment of a small sum, as his annual lease fee is structured like a mortgage over the 20 years.

209. The Mission had an opportunity to meet informally with one of the farmers whose holdings had been affected by the reorganization of the units, and also with members of the committee which deals with the allocation of the units.

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O. Public meeting

210. A public meeting was held at Plymouth on the evening of 26 August, sponsored by the Montserrat Guild of Graduates and the Extra Mural Department of the University of the West Indies. It was attended by 159 persons. Mr. J. Bass, the moderator, introduced the Mission to the audience, explaining its mandate. He stated that the discussion would be on the pros and cons of independence and he asked for clarity and openness of presentation. Each speaker would have three minutes, and at the end of the debate the Governor would give the United Kingdom's position.

211. The first speaker said that in view of the cost, he did not see Montserrat going independent alone, but possibly in association with another Territory. The United Kingdom had the duty to train the people to take over, especially in the civil service, but not enough was being done.

212. The second speaker asked whether the Special Committee, having brought many Territories to independence in the past 20 years, had followed the progress of newly independent States. The Chairman of the Mission explained that after a Territory became independent it no longer came under the examination of the Special Committee.

213. The next speaker referred to instability in the newly independent States of the Caribbean, particularly economic instability, and asked what were the prerequisites or suitable ingredients for independence. The Chairman replied that what occurred in an independent State was the responsibility of the people of that country; they had to take the consequences of their actions. It was not the change of status that brought about the instability but the manner in which the change of status was utilized.

214. The next speaker raised the question of human rights, saying that human resources, which were the only natural resources of Montserrat, were being destroyed in many independent countries. He said that the elected members of the Legislative Council of Montserrat did not care about human rights and would continue to abuse those rights after independence, especially of the people who did not support them.

215. The following speaker agreed that human resources were the only natural resources of Montserrat. It was for the people to decide on political independence taking into account the current economic condition of Montserrat, specifically its lack of resources, although there existed the possibility of off-shore oil, geothermal energy, etc. Statehood was an advance to maturity and it was in Montserrat's interest to move ahead.

216. Miss Vereen Thomas, the General Secretary of MAWU asked the Mission what its findings were based on the discussions it had held. She asked if the people wanted economic independence prior to political independence, or both at the same time. The Chairman said that all points of view had been encountered. He would not want to discuss these views and so influence the public.

217. The next speaker, Mr. Romeo, said there seemed to be a "political fever" in the air, everyone was after independence but did not know what it was until they found themselves in it. Montserrat had no resources and not enough people. Agriculture, which ought to be the mainstay of the economy, was below par; there was no market for Montserrat's agricultural produce because all the countries in the region produced the same things. Even tourism was in a poor situation because there was no international connection. It would be suicide for Montserrat to go independent now. Perhaps later.

218. The next speaker questioned how the people could work towards independence when they did not know its meaning. Independence meant different things to different people.

219. Another speaker said that the Mission had been invited by the United Kingdom to visit Montserrat in order to ascertain the situation, and that the reports on Montserrat were probably written locally. He wanted to know what reports had been sent by the Governor and the Chief Minister, and why the Mission had been sent to Montserrat. The Chairman offered to send to the speaker copies of the annual working paper on Montserrat prepared by the United Nations Secretariat.

220. At that point the Chief Minister asked for the floor. He stressed that his Government had not asked the Mission to come to Montserrat to discuss independence. The Mission was a result of the agreement between the United Nations and the United Kingdom on Non-Self-Governing Territories. He wished to make clear that there were two types of independence - political and economic. While it was prestigious for a country to be independent, for him it must be truly so. Further economic development was needed so that when political independence came Montserrat would not have to suffer as other countries had done.

221. On the issue raised by one of the speakers concerning human rights, the Chief Minister said that he had never known any Government in Montserrat to interfere with

human rights. The rule of law was supreme and no one was beyond the courts. In any event, Montserratians would not allow for any trampling on their human rights.

222. The Chairman confirmed that the Mission indeed had been invited by Her Majesty's Government to visit the Territory but none the less had been given all facilities by the local Government.

223. A United Kingdom citizen said that the United Kingdom should give more aid to Montserrat.

224. The following speaker was a Montserratian living in the United Kingdom. He wondered what body in the United Nations followed the social and economic situation in newly independent countries. The Chairman replied that various aspects could be followed by various committees, for example, the Human Rights Commission, and that countries in serious economic difficulties could approach the United Nations system for assistance.

225. The next speaker said that the Mission should seek the views of the young people of Montserrat; the older people had had their views fixed through their experience.

226. The following speaker had lived in Montserrat for 20 years and was a citizen of both the United Kingdom and Montserrat. He would be sorry if the people of Montserrat could no longer look up to the Queen.

227. The next speaker expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that although Montserratians could travel to Canada without a visa, in order to go to the United Kingdom as British subjects, they had to obtain a visa, and prove sufficient funds for their stay. Despite improvements in education, Montserratians had to leave home to find jobs, so as to allow United Kingdom citizens to work in Montserrat. In his view, that was a violation of human rights.

228. Another speaker supported the views expressed earlier on the need for political education and the development of national pride. In his view, the politicians were to blame for that lack; Mr. Fergus, the Speaker of the Legislative Council, had made laudable attempts to educate the population on independence and those efforts should be continued by the Government. Montserrat should move to a more advanced constitution; it was dependent now on the United Kingdom to decide its best interests.

229. Mr. John Dublin, a member of the Legislative Council, took the floor. He felt a sense of regret that the youth had not expressed its views at the meeting; he believed that the young people had different views to those so far expressed. He also thought that some civil servants were not admitting their true beliefs. He considered that a positive move to independence should be made in three years. There was a need for confidence; Montserratians could fill all positions from that of Governor down; he had respect for everything the Governor had done but the Government had allowed the situation to evolve to the point where it was not really in control.

230. The next two speakers said that Montserrat could be independent, but questioned where, without industry, the financing for overseas representation would come from. They needed preparation and assets.

231. A young woman said that given the state of Montserrat's economy - imports being greater than exports, low tourism, and an underdeveloped agricultural sector - she did not see how they could face the challenges.

232. The Chief Minister again addressed the meeting. He felt that some who knew better were not being honest on the question of the senior positions which were held by expatriates. His Government was committed to employing its nationals, but the salaries were not attractive enough.

233. Another speaker, a Rastafarian, said that there could be no independence without love and trust.

234. The next two speakers said that there was confusion in the minds of the people as to what independence was. One felt that goals should be set, so that if forced, the Territory would be prepared for independence. The other speaker asked why the United Nations was letting Montserrat know that it had to be independent.

235. There were two speakers from independent States of the Caribbean. They urged the people to have confidence; every State had problems and the solution was hard work.

236. The next three speakers put emphasis on the development of the economy. Montserrat had full internal self-government and the trappings of independence would not bring about economic stability. The association with the United Kingdom did not mean that they were not self-governing.

237. Mr. Bass asked the Governor to state the position of the administering Power. The Governor said that independence was the choice of the people. The United Kingdom supported the right to self-determination for everyone in the Commonwealth. The United Kingdom would assist in the development of the economy of Montserrat, so that it could make its choice. He said that if the people felt dissatisfied with that state of affairs, they could always make representations to Her Majesty's Government.



### III. DISCUSSIONS HELD IN LONDON

#### A. Meeting with Mr. Cranley Onslow, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and other officials

238. At 10.30 a.m. on 7 September, the Mission met with Mr. Onslow and other officials. Mr. Onslow welcomed the Mission and said that he would like to hear the general impressions formed by the Mission after its visit to Montserrat. The substantive discussions would take place at a later meeting.

239. The Chairman thanked the Minister of State for his welcome and expressed appreciation on behalf of the Special Committee and the Mission for the invitation extended by Her Majesty's Government to visit Montserrat. He went on to say that relations between the Special Committee and the United Kingdom were good as evidenced by the co-operation given, an example of which was the present Visiting Mission. Montserrat was not a difficult case of decolonization. It was similar to the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands with regard to size, location, small population and natural resources. The people of Montserrat saw the need for the development of other economic resources in order to allow them to pursue their path in the post-independence period without falling into difficulties like some of their neighbours.

240. Mr. Onslow agreed that the relations between the United Kingdom and the Special Committee were good. He then turned to his colleagues for a comment on the other dependent Territories of the United Kingdom in the Caribbean.

241. Mr. John Edwards, Head of the West Indies and Atlantic Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, said that the United Kingdom wished to take account of the wishes of the people of the Territories. The people of the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands had told United Nations visiting missions that they were not ready to move to independence, even though economically the Cayman Islands had a higher per capita income than the United Kingdom.

242. With respect to the Turks and Caicos Islands, some progress in economic development was being achieved, additional funds for the development of the airfield at Providenciales had been granted and considerable investment in tourism had been made, all of which was the beginning of an economic base from which the people could decide their future.

243. Mr. Onslow, referring again to Montserrat, said that he was happy that the Mission had been successful and useful. Montserrat had reached a high level of internal self-government and the next stage would be the launching to independence when the people expressed a desire for it. He understood that the people had not yet expressed such a wish and perhaps that was linked to economic attainment, as in the case of the Cayman Islands, and to external security.

244. In terms of economic assistance, Mr. Onslow said that the amounts going to Montserrat had continued to increase although foreign aid generally had declined. It would not be easy for Montserrat to absorb more money for regular projects. On

the question of the Little Bay project, there was talk of the need for large-scale financing, but the United Kingdom would have to assess the viability of the project in terms of the international economic scene. Compared with the resources being diverted to it, tourism was not bringing adequate returns at the current time. The United Kingdom would need to ensure that taxpayers' funds were being properly channelled and it would be influenced by private funds matching its investments. It would not be wise to invest heavily in a project which would not ensure economic viability to the Territory.

245. The Chairman of the Mission said that the Government of Montserrat had accorded great importance to the Little Bay project, as well as the realignment of the runway and improvements to the port. These were legitimate when viewed from the perspective of a country seeking to attain independence with a sound economic base. Montserrat's agriculture was not solid enough to provide that base. Those projects would, therefore, provide the basis for tourist development which could make Montserrat very competitive in the region.

246. Mr. Onslow stated that the absence of progress on Little Bay must not be viewed as an impediment to independence. If the project was economically sound and could attract other investors, then the United Kingdom would consider it very carefully. There was no objection to Little Bay on a political basis; his major concern was its economic viability.

247. Mr. Edwards added that most of Montserrat's beaches were black sand and not very attractive; Little Bay was the only accessible white sand beach and, therefore, care must be taken to develop the property in the most advantageous way. Emphasis would have to be put on attracting more affluent tourists at the current time of international recession, and the more private investment that could be obtained, the better.

248. Mr. Onslow then asked what the Mission had found with regard to the political situation, and to independence. When the people of Montserrat wished to, the British Government would move them forward constitutionally.

249. The Chairman replied that the people felt the need for an interim constitutional stage between the present status and independence. In its recommendations, the Mission had said that that should be left to the administering Power and the local Government to negotiate. It had also found apprehension about security and wondered what arrangements could be made in that respect.

250. Mr. Onslow said that threats to territorial integrity after independence were a cause for concern to the British Government. It saw the need for taking some action to develop a collective security system in the Caribbean, and was looking into the matter with the Commonwealth, the Canadian and Caribbean Governments. Further discussions would take place after his own visit to the area later in 1982.



B. Meeting with officials at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

251. At 11 a.m. on the same day, the Mission held a working meeting with the following officials: Mr. C. S. R. Giffard, Under-Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; Mr. John Edwards, Head of the West Indies and Atlantic Department; Mr. Walter Wallace, Head of the Dependent Territories Section, West Indies and Atlantic Department; Mr. Richard Phillips; Mr. John Robbins; and Mr. Michael Maclay of the United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations.

252. At Mr. Giffard's request, Mr. Edwards gave a summary of the discussions held with the Minister of State (see paras. 238-250 above).

253. The Chairman of the Mission then stated that he felt at ease discussing the situation in Montserrat; although small in size and population, and with few natural resources, the enthusiasm, ambition and sense of realism of the people had impressed the Mission. The people had a clear sense of what their possibilities were, the economy being their main concern. In the view of the Mission, the constitutional and political stage to be reached before complete independence was a matter for discussion between the United Kingdom and the Government of Montserrat. There was an awareness on the part of the population that independence was inevitable, but that before attaining it, a stable economic base was required. For that, the Little Bay project, the extension and realignment of the runway and the improvements to the harbour and port were seen as indispensable. The Mission felt that those developments were legitimate and gave its moral support to the Chief Minister in his discussions with the administering Power concerning them. The Mission hoped that the United Kingdom would give special consideration to the Little Bay project; the people of Montserrat deserved that consideration as they were hard-working and purposeful and their capacity for work had been demonstrated by their success in dispensing with the grant-in-aid two years ahead of schedule and by their control of inflation.

254. Concerning Little Bay, the representative of the administering Power said the official view was that the primary investor should be private, with United Kingdom assistance going towards infrastructure. There was agreement with the Chairman that Montserrat had made considerable economic progress with regard to grant-in-aid and in curbing its inflation. The United Kingdom had also been providing adequate amounts of development aid, which would be increased in the 1983/84 financial year by 20 per cent over that provided for 1982/83 at a time when the United Kingdom aid programme was declining sharply. At a time of world-wide recession, particularly with regard to the tourist industry, a private developer was needed for the Little Bay project. The most desirable objective would be to have a private investor demonstrate his commitment to the project by investing as much as possible in it. The United Kingdom would contribute for the infrastructure of the project, but mainly in terms of bridging the gap when the investor and the territorial Government were reaching agreement. The United Kingdom would perhaps provide the water supply, a road or power to the site. As an example, the representative cited the case of the Turks and Caicos Islands where the requirement for the Club Méditerranée project had been airport development at Providenciales. Since Little Bay was the key to all tourist investment in Montserrat, it was important to get it right.

255. The Chairman asked whether it was up to the Montserrat Government to find an investor. The reply was that it was primarily up to the Montserrat Government but that the United Kingdom Government was willing to assist. There was also the possibility that an investor could be found through the West India Committee or the merchant banks in London. The feasibility study was almost complete and it had been provided to the Chief Minister for discussion with a potential investor. In the negotiations, the United Kingdom could not allow the Chief Minister to go to the developer and say that the United Kingdom would back whatever was negotiated; instead, it had to strengthen the Chief Minister's bargaining position with the investor. By taking that stance, the United Kingdom was in a sense giving a bit more power to the Chief Minister. The United Kingdom's willingness to go ahead on that basis was not at all in doubt.

256. Asked whether it was possible to estimate the United Kingdom's contribution as a percentage of the total funds required, the representative said that it could not be defined; the contribution would only be for infrastructure; in principle the United Kingdom would be willing to consider a road or water or power, but that would depend on the actual project chosen. Mr. Neil Martin, Minister of Overseas Development, had very clear views on that project, and believed that the private developer should put in as much as possible.

257. In response to a request for examples of similar projects, the representatives mentioned projects in the Turks and Caicos Islands, Anguilla (where there were several projects) and Antigua. That was the record of the United Kingdom in other islands and showed its willingness to assist.

258. The Mission asked what was the priority given by the United Kingdom to the airport in Montserrat, as infrastructure for development. A representative of the administering Power replied that that problem had been under discussion for many years. There was no easy solution because of the problem of the hilly land; no other site was available and in order to lengthen the runway it would have to be realigned. Construction of an international airport was costly and its existence would not guarantee regular service and a large number of passengers, as had happened in St. Kitts-Nevis. What Montserrat required was good connecting service from Antigua which the present airstrip could support. It could take the HS-745 turbo-propeller with 48 passengers.

259. Asked whether a longer airstrip would facilitate economic development by making it easier to export goods, given the present imbalance of imports and exports, the representative of the administering Power said that it was not a problem of transportation but one of production. Inadequate shipping services were a regional problem. With respect to Montserrat, it was not a problem of either port or airport facilities putting constraints on development. The doubling of the airstrip to take DC-9 jets would mean competition for funds among the various projects, and possibly take away from others which could provide more immediate economic returns. It was a question of priorities and there had been no firm decision on the airstrip.

260. Another official added that the limited airstrip did not preclude the development of a tourist industry; in the case of the British Virgin Islands, some tourists were attracted simply because the islands were so difficult to reach.

261. Concerning the constitutional and political aspects, the representative of the administering Power said that Montserrat was at a very advanced constitutional stage; no further progress was possible until a decision to move to independence had been made. The United Kingdom Secretary of State, who had final responsibility for the Territory's foreign affairs and external and internal security, had to ensure that those responsibilities were fulfilled.

262. Montserrat's next move would have to be to independence. It was already a step ahead of other Territories in the Caribbean as the Governor was bound to accept the advice of the Executive Council, which was not the case in the other dependent Territories. The question of political education was one for the local Government and the political parties. In that respect the Mission's visit had helped to stimulate discussion of all the issues. Two years earlier Montserrat had held a seminar on independence and its implications, which had been the first time that a dependent Territory had done so on its own initiative.

263. On agricultural development, the Chairman of the Mission said that the level of imports was very high. In the past, Montserrat had placed little emphasis on agricultural exports, and unless it planned to do so in the future, production would remain at a low level. The Mission felt that cash crops should be developed, although careful consideration should be given to the type of crops so as to avoid competition with Montserrat's neighbours.

264. The representative of the administering Power pointed out that although the United Kingdom had always given priority to agriculture, the problem was more one of motivation than of land. Education as to the importance and value of agriculture in the economy was required.

265. As for the development of a fishing industry, it was pointed out that there was no tradition of fishing in Montserrat, in addition to which there were problems of poisoned fish and unsheltered waters. The Mission noted that licences for foreign deep-sea fishing vessels had recently been granted and felt that some intermediate measures should be found to help the local fisherman.

#### IV. OBSERVATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### A. Political and constitutional evolution

266. From the meetings held in the Territory, the Mission has gained the impression that the population as a whole regarded independence as inevitable; however, in the present circumstances, the people did not feel that the Territory was ready to accede to independence.

267. All sectors of the population stressed the need for preparation and development in all areas.

268. There exists an awareness of the lack of political education and that efforts should be made to remedy the situation. Various opinions were expressed as to who was responsible for political education: the administering Power, the local Government or the political parties.

269. The Mission was told by certain sectors of the community that Montserrat enjoyed an image of stability owing to its status as a Non-Self-Governing Territory which would be jeopardized by an ill-prepared move to independence.

270. The view was also expressed that some interim constitutional advance to a stage between the present constitutional status and full independence should be negotiated with the administering Power. In such an interim stage it was hoped that the post of Governor could be filled by a local or West Indian national.

271. Many speakers expressed concern at the inability of small nation-States to provide for their own defence in case of an external threat during the post-independence period.

272. The Mission noted that the Opposition is not formally represented in the parliament. The Mission was told that a practice had been established to ascertain the views of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition Party was of the opinion that the system as used had not served the purpose of bringing the Opposition into the Legislative Council.

273. The Mission was told by the two political parties that it was not likely that the question of independence would be an issue at the forthcoming general elections, although the parties agreed that the people must ultimately decide the issue of independence.

274. The Mission accordingly wishes to recommend the following:

(a) Political education in Montserrat should be intensified so that the people may be made fully aware of the implications of their choice in the exercise of their right to self-determination and independence;

(b) The question of an interim constitutional advance should be left to the discretion of the administering Power, in consultation with the local Government;

(c) With regard to localization and without prejudice to constitutional status and arrangements, efforts should be made to ensure that the remaining senior posts in the public service are gradually filled by Montserratians;

(d) The administering Power should draw the attention of the political leadership to its duty to instill in the population a feeling of national pride and identity and self-confidence.

#### B. Economic and social situation

275. The Mission noted a widespread fear of independence before prevailing problems had been overcome. The fear derives basically from a lack of natural resources, trained manpower and appropriate infrastructure. Visible import levels far exceed exports, so that there is constantly a greater dependence on external sources.

276. The local officials stressed to the Mission the need for economic development. In this regard, a number of specific projects appeared to them essential to ensure for the Territory, in the near future, a large measure of economic viability.
277. As for agricultural development, the Mission visited the project sponsored by the Caribbean Agricultural and Rural Development Advisory Training Services (CARDATS), at Riley's Estate. This was presented to the Mission as a first step by the local Government to rationalize land use and to encourage the young people to engage in agriculture.
278. The Mission observed that very little stress was put on cash crops. The Mission feels that any intensive agricultural development programme which excludes cash crops would be bound to fail.
279. Fishing continues at a very low level of development. The Mission was told that because the waters around the Territory were overfished and the Territory had no continental shelf, only deep-sea fishing was possible. The Government has recently begun to grant licences to foreign vessels for deep-sea fishing.
280. The industrial sector, although small, has increased its share of the overall economy. The Mission had the opportunity to visit an industrial estate, which comprises, inter alia, a cotton spinning and weaving factory, an electronic assembly line plant and a plastic bag factory. The Mission noted, however, the absence of a food-related industry.
281. The Mission also noted the fear that if the present political status were to be abandoned, foreign investors would have no guarantees and foreign capital would become more difficult to attract.
282. The Mission was told that the current unemployment rate was 5.4 per cent for an active population of 4,935 inhabitants, and that that number could disappear if employment in agriculture were sought.
283. The Mission was told that health services for the routine care of the population were, generally, satisfactory. There is a modern well-equipped hospital in the capital and 12 health-care centres throughout the Territory.
284. The government health service includes the Chief Medical Officer, a surgeon and three district medical officers, all of whom are expatriates. During its visit to the hospital, the Mission was informed of the difficulty of recruiting qualified local medical staff because salaries were not competitive; none the less, the hope was expressed that that situation would be remedied in the near future.
285. The Mission was told that preventive medical services covered an overwhelming majority of the population, although the hospital lacked facilities for the treatment of certain cases.
286. The Mission was informed that the education sector enjoyed high priority within the regular budget. The Ministry of Education, Health and Community

Services receives 32 per cent of the total budget, of which about half is allocated to education.

287. The Territory has 16 primary schools, 2 junior secondary schools, 1 secondary school and 1 technical college. The literacy rate is about 92 per cent. The Government has no official literacy programmes although some programmes are offered by private groups.

288. Primary and secondary education in the Territory are free and the Government offers scholarships for higher education abroad. The Mission noted that there were no local teacher-training programmes.

289. In the housing sector, the Mission was informed that the population's needs were not yet adequately covered. In this regard, the Government has taken certain specific measures, such as:

(a) Providing the necessary materials to individuals who provide the land and the labour;

(b) Building the foundations, shell of the house and bathroom for purchasers who supply the labour;

(c) Building complete houses on lots and selling them at competitive prices.

290. The Mission wishes to recommend the following:

(a) Greater efforts should be made to diversify the economy;

(b) Greater emphasis should be placed on developing the infrastructure and on attracting and encouraging investment capital;

(c) Greater encouragement should be given to young people to engage in agriculture, through education and the provision of incentives;

(d) The administering Power should give favourable consideration to the development of the tourist complex at Little Bay and the extension of the airport runway, as well as the upgrading of existing harbour facilities at the port, in view of the need to protect them from storm damage, by including a deep-water harbour and a wharf for cruise ships;

(e) The incipient fishing co-operative should be aided to acquire the necessary means and facilities to engage in deep-sea fishing;

(f) More plant and equipment should be acquired, as well as chilling and refrigeration systems and facilities, so that other kinds of small industries can be developed such as processing and canning of tropical fruits and vegetables;

(g) The training of local medical staff and the provision of specialized equipment should be kept in mind.



291. The Mission felt a sense of overdependency and reliance by the local Government and the general public on the administering Power. While the Mission appreciates the meaning of this situation in view of the present status of the Territory, it nevertheless strongly recommends that the administering Power, in co-operation with the local political leadership and without prejudice to ongoing projects, should attempt to instil among the people of Montserrat a spirit of sacrifice and self-reliance in preparation for any future constitutional change.

#### Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Fourth Committee, 15th meeting, paras. 28-31.

2/ The local currency is the East Caribbean dollar (\$EC). One United States dollar (\$US 1.00) is equivalent to \$EC 2.70.

3/ For the report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Montserrat, 1975, see Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/10023/Rev.1), vol. IV, chap. XXVIII, annex.

