



Seventeenth session

INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES: SUMMARIES
OF INFORMATION TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

CARIBBEAN AND WESTERN ATLANTIC TERRITORIES

Barbados

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

This information, which was received on 20 April 1962, is herewith submitted to the General Assembly at its seventeenth session.^{1/}

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

B A R B A D O S

POPULATION

In the census of 1960 the population of Barbados was a little over 232,000, representing a population density of nearly 1,400 persons per square mile. About three-quarters of the population are of African descent, 17 per cent of mixed descent and 5 per cent of European descent.

GENERAL

The Constitution of Barbados is among the oldest in the Commonwealth, having its origin in a Charter of 1652. A special feature of its historical tradition is that the Constitution, like that of the United Kingdom, is based largely on convention. The first step towards ministerial government was made in 1946 when the Governor invited the person best able to command a majority in the House of Assembly to suggest which members should sit in the Executive Committee. Universal adult suffrage was introduced in 1951, elected ministers in 1954, a cabinet system in 1958 and full internal self-government in October 1961.

CONSTITUTION

The present Governor is Sir John Montague Stow. Since the introduction of full internal self-government, he has become virtually a "constitutional monarch", who by convention must accept the advice of local ministers in the exercise of his powers. He is not a member of the Cabinet, and his right to refuse assent to laws is restricted to those about government stock, treaty obligations and the Royal Prerogative. He appoints as Premier that member of the House of Assembly best able to command a majority. In proroguing and dissolving the House of Assembly, he acts in accordance with the conventions which the Queen observes in similar circumstances in the United Kingdom.

EXECUTIVE

The main executive organ of the Territory is the Cabinet, which is collectively responsible to the Legislature of Barbados for the direction and

control of the Government. The Cabinet consists of the Premier and five Ministers drawn from the elected members of the House of Assembly plus one Minister (without Portfolio) drawn from the Legislative Council. Those at present holding office are:

Mr. E.W. Barrow (Premier and Minister of Finance)

Mr. W.A. Crawford (Deputy Premier and Minister of Development, Trade and Labour)

Mr. A. DaCosta Edwards (Minister of Social Services)

Mr. C.E. Talma (Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries)

Mr. J.C. Tudor (Minister of Education)

Capt. G.G. Ferguson (Minister of Communications, Works, Housing and Tourism)

Mr. H.A. Vaughan (Minister without Portfolio)

All members of the Cabinet are Barbadians.

The Constitution provides for two other executive organs. The Privy Council consists of the Attorney-General and other members appointed on the Governor's recommendation, who advise on the commutation of death sentences and appeals by civil servants against disciplinary proceedings. The present members of the Privy Council are Sir John Saint, Mr. E.W. Barrow (Premier), Mr. C.A. Burton (Attorney-General) and Mr. F.C. Hutson. The Executive Committee consists of the members of the Cabinet plus the Governor and the Attorney General. Since the establishment of cabinet government in 1958, the role of this Committee has been much reduced.

LEGISLATURE

The Legislature is bi-cameral. The Legislative Council (the Upper House) has powers to review legislation passed by the Lower House. Its members (usually about 15) are appointed normally for five-year terms by the Governor after consultation with the leaders of the political parties. The House of Assembly (the Lower House) has 24 members elected by universal adult suffrage from 12 constituencies. Elections are held at intervals of five years or less.

At the last general election, held in December 1961, the Democratic Labour Party won 14 seats, the Barbados Labour Party 5 seats, the Barbados National Party 4 seats and an independent one seat. The results were as follows:

Democratic Labour Party

Mr. E.W. Barrow
Mr. W.A. Crawford
Mr. A. DaCosta Edwards
Mr. C.E. Talma
Mr. J.C. Tudor
Capt. G.G. Ferguson
Mr. J.E.T. Brancker
Mr. R.W. Lowe
Mr. J.W. Corbin
Mr. G.V. Batson
Mr. N.W. Boxill
Mr. R.St.C. Weekes
Mr. E.L. Carmichael
Mr. J. Yearwood

Barbados Labour Party

Mr. K.N.R. Husbands
Mr. F.E. Miller
Mr. W.R. Coward
Mr. L.E. Smith
Mr. E.St.A. Holder

Barbados National Party

Mr. E.D. Mottley
Mr. L.A. Lynch
Mr. F.E. Sealy
Mr. F.C. Goddard

Independent

Mr. F.C. Walcott

JUDICIARY

The Chief Justice is appointed by the Governor after consultation with the Premier. Puisne judges are appointed by the Governor acting on the recommendation of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission. There are three judges in Barbados: the Chief Justice, Sir Kenneth Stoby, who is a British Guianian, and two puisne judges, both Barbadians. The Judicial and Legal Service Commission consists of the Chief Justice as chairman, the Attorney General (who is appointed by the Governor after consultation with the Premier), the chairman of the Public Service Commission or some other member of the Public Service Commission nominated by the chairman to represent him at any meeting of the Commission, and not more than two other members, appointed by the Governor, who are not members of the General Assembly and do not hold any public office, but who are or have been judges in a court having unlimited jurisdiction in civil and criminal matters in some part of Her Majesty's Dominions or a court having jurisdiction in appeals from any such court.

PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL INHABITANTS IN ADMINISTRATION

There were 4,988 officers employed in the Barbados Public Service at the end of 1960. From this figure only 37 were overseas recruited officers, of whom 15 were pensionable and 22 were non-pensionable. These 37 were employed at the higher level of the Public Service, but the great majority of posts at this level were filled by Barbadians or officers recruited from other islands in the West Indies. Together these two categories were responsible for filling 90 of the most senior posts.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Barbados is divided for local government purposes into three areas under three administrative authorities: a municipality centred on the City of Bridgetown and two rural district Councils. Councillors are elected every three years by adult suffrage. The Councils derive their revenues mainly from rates on land and buildings and a trade tax, levied annually. The principal services rendered by the Councils concern public assistance, public health, cemeteries, street lighting, parks and playing fields. The councils of the two rural districts are also responsible for the upkeep of certain highways in respect of which they collect and keep all vehicular and highway taxes and in addition receive grants-in-aid from the Central Government.