

Introduction

This work is intended to be a scholarly contribution in the area of Caribbean Political Economy. It is premised on the notion that the peculiar history of Jamaica, the slave plantation origin through to the colonial, neocolonial and post colonial forms of economic organization tend to the formation and reproduction of the *total institution* as a system of social organization.¹ RT Smith in the original application of the Goffman concept of the total institution to plantation society describes it as a bureaucratically organized system in which blocks of people are treated as units and are marched through a set of regimented activities under the close surveillance of a small supervisory staff.²

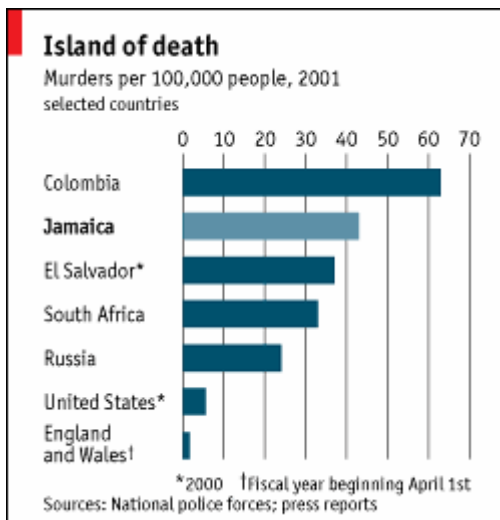
With regard to the social system and the corresponding social relations causality is assumed to flow from the political system and the political culture. In the post independence period (after 1962) patron-client relations between the state, its institutions and sections of the urban poor emerge as the defining social relationships of the social system as a whole. But these relationships are rooted in the history of the island with the relationship between the plantation owner (or his representative) and the slave exhibiting similar pronounced patron-client features. In my formulation the post independence emergence of the garrison constituency is construed as part of the historical imperative toward culturally familiar total institution forms of social management. Figueroa

¹ The idea of the total institutions comes from Goffman's 1960's work on Asylums. In it small socially recognizable groups drive a larger group in through the production process in a very regimented and differentiated manner. See, McKenzie, *Theoretical Approaches to Social and Economic Development in the English Speaking Caribbean. (Forthcoming)*, for a systematic and full elaboration of this concept.

² RT Smith, "Social Stratification, Cultural Pluralism, and Integration in West Indian Societies" in S Lewis and TG Mathews, (eds.), *Caribbean Integration*, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, 1967) p230

identifies eight fully fledged garrisons.³ My definition is more restrictive.⁴ I take the Electoral Office of Jamaica's (EOJ) *Summary of General Election Results 2002* and identify four constituencies where the 2002 general election produced votes equal to or greater than eighty percent [80%] in favour of any one party political candidate one political party.⁵ These are my garrisons.

The story I tell is one in which the high incidence of murder and the inordinate use of personal violence (both outgrowths of the garrison phenomena) as social management tools tend to choke off economic growth and development while promoting a culture of fear that stifles entrepreneurship and innovation in the wider society. It seems almost perfunctory and self evident to suggest that a country with one of the highest murder per capita statistics in the world would also be a country where social and economic performance would be constrained by a mass psychology of fear and insecurity.



³ See Section 2: “*Conceiving the Garrison*” page 17 of this work for a systematic and full elaboration of the “garrison” concept.

⁴ My definition is more restrictive because ultimately I am seeking to develop a typology of the garrison and the restrictive definition helps in that process.

⁵ Kingston Western (83.7%), Kingston East and Port Royal (80.7%), St Andrew South Western (92.7%), St Andrew Southern (91%).

Yet that is only half the story, in my view the real intellectual project lies in offering an interpretation which explains the emergence of the garrison alongside anti social behavior, stubbornly high rates of official unemployment and miserable social and economic performance as part of one and the same process.

This essay is organized along the following lines. The analysis is based on the assumption that party politics is the all pervasive influence on the local political economy, section one therefore traces the development of the party political process since Jamaica's first general election in 1944 to its last in 2002. I offer my own interpretation (largely a synthesis from Stone and Gray) with a statistical breakout of the votes cast per party in each of the 14 elections since 1944. I pay particular attention to the changes in arrangements for mobilizing votes at the ballot boxes and the arrangements for handling power in each of the two main parties.

Beneath the primary questions there are other important preoccupations which characterize scholarly work of this nature. Notable scholars like CLR James and Nobel Prize winner WA Lewis both acknowledged the specificity of the circumstances in different ways. According to James, *“Our West Indian middle classes are for the most part colored people of some education in a formerly slave society. That means for racial and historical reasons they are today excluded from those circles which are in control of big industry, commerce and finance. They are almost as much excluded from large scale agriculture, sugar for example...thus they as a class of people have no knowledge or experience of the productive forces of the country...Thus the class has been and is*

excluded from the centers of economic life, they have no actual political experience, they have no political tradition."⁶ In Lewis the absence of a political and business culture meant that some costs would have to be incurred as the politicians and emerging groups and classes traversed up the learning curve. As is the way with these matters the costs while being borne by all the social groups fall heaviest on the poor. My interpretation construes the garrison as a social cost, an unintended consequence of expedient social management arrangements by politicians without experience of political management.

The tentative conclusion some 50 years after Lewis and James is that a practice and culture born of half of a century's experience has now emerged. The political management of contemporary Jamaica proceeds through a system of Patron/Client relationships which at the extreme results in a new social formation – the garrison community. In my formulation the emergence of the garrison is a consequence of traversing the learning curve. But in that the garrison reaches beyond its physical space the social relations it generates fly right in the face of the socialized production techniques so necessary for the operation of the capitalist system. Thus, the garrison undermines any thrust towards improving social and economic performance. It is at one and the same time a significant obstacle to economic growth and to social development.

Section two also establishes clear connections between the emergence of the garrison and the party political process where politicians and political parties carve out selected power

⁶ CLR, James, p. 136, 1962
2 WA Lewis, 1949,

bases in the communities of the urban poor. Also in section two there are the first tentative beginnings of an “economics of the garrison” with special reference to labor which I see as a necessary first step in establishing an economic typology of the garrison phenomena. Section three serves as the conclusion.

Truth, Relative Truth and Interpretation

The Planning Institute of Jamaica in its 2002, *Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC)* introduced a special module on “criminal victimization” in order to “...*identify the presence of crime among households and to garner household views on the potential threat they feel as a result of the level of crime*’.⁷ Five questions on the crimes of murder, shooting, robbery, burglary, sexual assault/rape and threats with or without weapons were asked. The intent was to measure and record the extent to which households perceived of the threat coming from crime in general. The Report found that 49.6 percent of victims were in the wealthiest quintile. “*The majority of persons who felt that there was some chance of them or members of their households becoming a victim of crime were located in the urban area and as the level of fear increased the higher the consumption level*”.⁸ According to the 2004 JSLC Report reported crimes jumped by 14.4 per cent, (crime against the person increasing by 26.9 percent, murder by 52.9 per cent) with 50 per cent of those arrested for serious crimes coming from the age cohort 16-25 years.⁹

⁷ “Some 12.1 percent of respondent households reported that they had been victims of crime. The crime that occurred most frequently among households was theft of valuables (7.1 percent). The level of theft experienced by household heads and/or members of their house who lived in Rural Areas was three times that in the KMA...” JSLC, 2002

⁸ JSLC, 2002

⁹ JSLC, p13, 2004

A web of social and economic relationships emerge which make for criminal and underworld economic activity. Guns, drugs and politics are exchanged as communities and the whole process is supported by a ready reserve from the youth ranks of the unemployed labour force. (According to the 2004 JSLC: *“Youth (14-24 years) had an unemployment rate of 30.6 per cent and for adults (25 years and over) it was 6.9 per cent.”*¹⁰

In sum what results is a mean spirited agent, a harsher social context; a social-cultural economic nexus which makes it hard for business and entrepreneurship to flourish and where labour migration is the logical outcome.

SB: *The place looks meaner, everybody is going around with hard faces, they look like they going to jump on you if you say good morning. Didn't always use to be like this when I was boy you were rude if you never said good morning or good evening!*

The simple story is that there is a social process afoot in Jamaica which induces fear and insecurity where the middle and upper classes perceive of themselves as the *“targets”* of criminal intent coming from a substantial underclass of black men in the age range 14-25. Because the perpetrators come from the poor and the *“victims”* from the rich these developments have something of a *class* content in Gray's parasitic state.¹¹ Yet the poor too are targets. Stone knows this. He writes ... *“In addition, a great deal of crime committed by the less politically conscious elements of the ‘lumpen’ has been directed at the respectable poor and working class with the result that the ‘lumpen’ is seen as an*

¹⁰ “The average unemployment rate was 11.7 percent, an increase of 0.3 percentage points. The male unemployment rate was 7 percent and the female was 16.4 percent. (PIOJ, ESSJ 2004, 11)

¹¹ See Obika Gray, *Rethinking Power* for a full elaboration of the parasitic state.

*enemy of the working class which preys on the crumbs it earns from the total distribution of the social product.”*¹² So here in Stone there is a problem of lumpen opportunism. Not for the first time two social thinkers examining the same phenomenon arrive at two sharply divergent conclusions. For those of us who read and listen to these theorists there is a problem of choice. In particular how exactly does one choose between contending interpretations of the same social phenomena?¹³

1.0 The 1938 General Strike

The first general election in Jamaica under adult suffrage was held in 1944. The two main political parties, the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the Peoples National Party (PNP) were both born out of the struggles of the 1938 Kingston General Strike. The 1914-1918 World War had interrupted the established trade routes. The Caribbean Sea and its islands became commercially important in terms of uninterrupted trade routes. Moreover the general uncertainty associated with war combined to raise the price of sugar on the international commodity markets. By 1928 the expectations of the islands labor force had been sufficiently raised for most of that labor force to anticipate a rather rosy future. The Great Depression of the 1930s dashed those hopes. The commodities markets crashed. Sugar thus experienced declining prices on the world markets and the earnings of the local sugar worker stuttered then declined. In the face of the crisis the sugar industry was reorganized. By 1938, Tate and Lyle was the monopoly sugar enterprise. Its strategy at that time was to substitute labour saving technology for labor so as to reduce costs and

¹² Carl Stone, *Patterns of Conflict Behavior*, cited in Paul Buchanan “Community Development in the Ranking Economy, p34, CAST, 1992

¹³ I shall have a bit more to say on this in the conclusion.

increase returns. Inevitably the workers bore the brunt of the adjustment. Wage rates declined and many workers were laid off. In protest the cane cutters of the Frome Sugar Estate in Westmoreland set the cane fields on fire.

On the Kingston Wharves where the United Fruit Company formed a virtual monopoly over the islands second export (banana), the wharf workers joined the Frome protests. A general strike emerged, first the wharf workers, then the garbage collectors, the tram conductors and the night soil men¹⁴. In the spring of 1938 the City of Kingston's workers paralyzed the city and its corporate area with a genuine display of worker power.

The city's small middle class – teachers, barristers, civil servants and businessmen (the by and large brown middle classes in 1938) did not commit to the struggle of the black workers of Kingston and the black cane cutters of Frome. They watched and waited. Eventually this group found a leading voice in the Oxford educated tones of barrister Norman Manley. He it was that eventually formed and led the PNP and pledged his parties support for the strikers of Frome in the protest for a living wage. The PNP of the time sympathized with *Quashie* but as Gunst puts it ... “*were not yet ready to cross the line of caste and color and join Quashie's ranks.*”¹⁵

In 1938 the colored elite may have waited, but the working men and women of Jamaica were not waiting. They had been listening to Marcus Garvey and his Harlem based

¹⁴ The night soil men moved/hailed the excreta from the City to more rural less populated areas.

¹⁵ L Gunst, p66, 1995. “*Quashie*” in local language is the African name for the black and poor.

Universal Negro Improvement Association since the early 1920's.¹⁶ The JLP took up the cause of the poor and black working people of Jamaica. Yet it was then and still remains a curious alliance the poor and the dispossessed along with what Gunst calls a reactionary leadership derived from the workers struggle in the spring of 1938.¹⁷

Leadership of the party was first contested by Bustamante and St William Grant. Grant was essentially a Garveyite. Bustamante is more difficult to categorize. His rallying slogan perhaps speaks loudest... "*My people, you don't have to think, I will think for you* Followed by the "*The Chief! We will follow Bustamante till we die!*"¹⁸ Clearly it serves no useful purpose to speculate about the influence of a Garveyite philosophy on an embryonic JLP, it is iffy history. What we actually do know is that within weeks of the Kingston General Strike Bustamante (in something of a coup) replaced St William Grant as leader of the working class. Garveyite ideas on democracy, economic and political power were all subsumed to a leadership which relied on the persona of the maximum leader who sought to think for the mass of black Jamaicans.¹⁹ Bustamante leadership propelled the JLP towards the total institution elaborated in Beckford and first outlined by Goffman. Democracy was the ultimate loser.

1.1 Votes and General Elections

According to Carl Stone in the first general election of 1944 independent candidates and the minor political parties won 36 percent of the vote compared to 41 percent for the JLP

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ *ibid*

¹⁸ *ibid.* p69

¹⁹ Laurie Gunst, *Born Fi Dead*, p68

and 23 percent for the PNP.²⁰ In 1949 again three parties contested the general election the independents again managed to win over 20% of the votes cast. After 1949 the votes have been shared between the two major parties. The Independents disappeared and the political will in Jamaica in terms of votes cast is now expressed solely by votes for the JLP or the PNP. Not only has the range of political alternatives narrowed but the sheer number of candidates competing in an election has also diminished. In 1944 there were 130 candidates competing for 32 parliamentary seats (four candidates per constituency). In the 1989 election 124 candidates competed for 60 parliamentary seats (two candidates per constituency).²¹ What is regrettable about this development is that the official political discourse becomes distilled to a dialogue between two political parties who support the same policy paradigm.²²

*Table 1: General Elections Results: Seats Won out of Total Constituencies*²³

<u>Year</u>	<u>IND.</u>	<u>JLP</u>	<u>PNP</u>	<u>Tot.</u> <u>Cons.</u>
1944	5	22	5	32
1949	2	17	13	32
1955	0	13	19	32
1959	0	16	29	45
1962	0	26	19	45
1967	0	33	20	53
1972	0	21	32	53
1976	0	13	47	60
1980	0	51	9	60
1983	0	60	0	60
1989	0	15	45	60
1993	0	8	52	60
1997	0	10	50	60

²⁰ Carl Stone, *The Party System and Political Culture*, 1992

²¹ *ibid*

²² *Ibid* Stone reviews a range of legislation and finds that only in very few cases has there been a reversal of policy decisions from one Government to the other. Surprisingly there is a significant degree of continuity between JLP and PNP. Michael Manley's 1970's experiment with democratic socialism providing the major exception.

²³ Source; Results of General Elections 1944-2002, Table 111, *Electoral Office of Jamaica*, Kingston

2002 0 25 35 60

Table 1 reveals that up until 1997 the results have a term pattern in respect of winners and losers. Two terms for the PNP followed by two for the JLP. This relationship held good until 1989. Thereafter successive PNP governments 1992, 1997, and 2002 seem to have broken the pattern. Perhaps most illuminating closer inspection from 1949 onwards show that on average successive governments (JLP and PNP) have on average won seven out of every ten of the seats in elected House of Representatives.

Table 2: Parliamentary Majorities since 1944²⁴

<u>Year</u>	<u>IND.</u>	<u>JLP</u>	<u>PNP</u>
1944	16%	69%	16%
1949	6%	53%	41%
1955	0%	41%	59%
1959	0%	36%	64%
1962	0%	58%	42%
1967	0%	62%	38%
1972	0%	40%	60%
1976	0%	22%	78%
1980	0%	85%	15%
1983	0%	100%	0%
1989	0%	25%	75%
1993	0%	13%	87%
1997	0%	17%	83%
2002	0%	42%	58%

Successive governments in Jamaica over all of its 14 elections have controlled an average of 70% of the parliamentary seats available. The majorities become really sizeable from 1976 onwards with the only notable exception occurring in the 2002 election. It would be easy to assert that Jamaica needs a strong parliamentary opposition and that it would

²⁴ *ibid*

be good for the country but a review of the major policy directions reveals that considerable homogeneity and policy continuity from term to term from JLP to PNP and back again.²⁵

1.2 Party Power

In the early period, both parties were relatively decentralized with local political personalities being able to make decisions in their local areas and national party leaders being forced to respect their autonomy. According to Stone what existed then was a “strath-archic” rather than a rigidly hierarchic structure of centralized power and the local leaders enjoyed great autonomy. As the party leaders took over the management of public policy and came to control huge public sector expenditures, and as government expenditure grew from 13% of GDP in 1950 to 40% by 1980, a patronage or clientilistic system developed whereby party leaders catered to the needs of hard core party supporters through state patronage (jobs, contracts, benefits, favours, houses, etc). The effect was to consolidate party centralism in both the JLP and PNP this in turn meant that the top party leadership controlled the purse strings and thus were able to force local leadership into compliance. The party faithful increasingly looked to the political centre in Kingston for benefits.²⁶

The trends towards political centralization and concentration of power were given added impetus as unionized workers sought to unhinge from party politics in the 1960’s and 1970’s. During this period the parties lost the democratizing influence of the grass roots as the unions concentrated on collective bargaining on behalf of their members. The

²⁵ So here we would have both Government and Opposition advocating the same thinking/view.

²⁶ *ibid.*

parties in turn developed strong centralized political machinery that took over voter mobilization functions.²⁷

In the period since 1962 the two parties have gradually evolved into powerful centralized oligarchies with power concentrated in the hands of top party leaders. The oligarchy has grown in stature and in power and it has done so largely at the expense of party democracy which over the same period is now but a shadow of its former self. Here again it is appropriate to invoke the total institution as a framework for modeling these developments. In my view the development of the total institution is bolstered by smallness and Islandness. In small societies public issues are invariably appraised in terms of the group, the family or clan. Not only do the issues become privatized and personalized but so too do the leading figures. Ultimately the party leadership of Bustamante, Manley, and Seaga (strong and dominant personalities in the personalized context of a small island) lends itself to “maximum leader” characterization. The party and its leadership are inseparable the one is the personification of the other.²⁸

Independent and critical thinking has not been encouraged in the parties. Such developments are viewed as a challenge and threat to the party leadership. This is so for both parties but is particularly acute in the case of the JLP as the following example

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ In *State Power, Entrepreneurship and Social Change* I lay out my ideas with respect to smallness, *personalization of issues and conflict*. *„I take the opposite view and start off from the position that, any serious discussion of the social relations of the microstate must recognize that while small size may enhance social cohesion it often serves to intensify conflict. When there is conflict, the group, family or clan take a position and perceive of issues solely in terms of how they impact on group positions. There is also a tendency to privatize and personalize issues.. At the most extreme point, intense rivalry and conflict can paralyze institutions and policy initiatives. Thus at the very outset (according to this interpretation) by virtue of its small size, the existing social context is pregnant with conflict „ (p.10)*

shows. Errol Anderson, Edmund Bartlett, Karl Samuda, Douglas Vaz and Pearnel Charles were all JLP MPs who launched a bid to remove the then leader Edward Seaga from the leadership in the early 1990's. On July 18, 1992 Charles entered the National Arena in Kingston in an effort to attend the JLP's 49th annual conference. He was immediately assaulted by party thugs. Vaz who had arrived shortly after Charles comments: "*My delegates left the Arena early and told me not to enter, so I didn't come under any threat but I had to work really hard to get Pearnel to leave – It was obvious that it was organized and that by itself is a damning indictment on the Party's leadership.*"²⁹ The parties (both of them) demand compliance and compliance means faithfulness which in turn implies unyielding support for the party line and the party leadership. This type of leadership style is an asset in mobilizing political loyalties but it does so at the expense internal party democracy.

The important moment comes at Independence in 1962 when the adoption of the Westminster first past the post system enshrines in the constitution and the fledgling political culture a mighty pillar which lends itself to an easy "winner takes all" cultural modification. According to Ryan; "*Clientilism has served to transform the workings of the Westminster parliamentary system in the Anglophone Caribbean. Those who are under the clientilistic umbrella are either suborned to stay mute, at least in public, or do so in the hope of being incorporated under the political banyan tree*".³⁰ It is not the Westminster system in and of itself that causes the problem. It is the Westminster system

²⁹ Cited in The Gleaner, November 14, 2004

³⁰ S Ryan; Democratic Governance in the Anglophone Caribbean, p77, 1996

in combination with the local culture which has its origins in the slave plantation period that produces the malaise.

1.3 Politicians by Occupation

It is important to recall we are dealing with small societies. At the extreme everyone is connected in some way to everyone else. In such a context the politician comes to represent an anthropomorphic personification of the state.³¹ This is an important point, a key to a complex web of social relationships which I lay out in later sections. It is important enough for a study of this nature to ask, who are the politicians?

Table 3: Main Occupations of Party Candidates

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>1944</i>	<i>1989</i>	<i>2002</i> ³²
<i>Professionals</i>	33	40	60
<i>Small Medium Level Business People (farm and non farm)</i>	54	43	15
<i>White-Collar Employment</i>	6	7	12
<i>Working Class</i>	2	0	0
<i>Full Time Politicians</i>	5	10	13

Source: Stone (1944 to 1989).

A full economic profile of the Jamaican politician is beyond the scope of this paper. Instead I have focused the politician by occupation. Table 3 captures the information. The clearest trend over the period is the rise in the share of party political candidates coming

³¹ *ibid.*

³² All figures in this column represent my own estimates after imputation from newspaper articles. Figures will be replaced with actual which I expect to tell the same story.

from professional and white collar occupations. Another key trend is the fall in the numbers of candidates coming from the mid level ranks of the entrepreneurial classes.

According to the small business man in my interviews:

SB: Most politicians in general are not business people. They have never been business people, 95% are lawyers. I feel we should have a businessman as head of state. A man who knows how to operate a business, a man who knows profit and loss, you know a man who is looking for a profit. I don't see that a lawyer can be a successful leader.

RM: They've failed in the business of running the country?

SB: I have never seen a country with a lawyer as head of state and so many lawyers in parliament that has been successful. I have never seen it. You have to know business. How can you manage an economy if you don't know what an economy is all about? You have to have training. Its not that you like me and I like you, that's not the choice, the choice is that you put the best man that can run the country to run the country.

The School Teacher from my interviews has her own interpretation:

RM: My observation is that many of the politicians appear to be rich, are they rich business people? Do they come from a business background or do they get rich while they are in politics? Do you think that they are connected in any way with the informal sector of the underground economy?

ST: Some of them are involved in underground activity. Some had businesses before and use their politician's status to enhance it. Some started after they entered politics. Some go in for the gain, they not coming out as they went in. A lot of them are involved and that's why its so hard to stamp out because people know that they are involved and so

they can only speak to one set of people and cannot speak to the other set cause maybe the will be exposed too.

To this rather vivid depiction Carl Stone adds his own forthright observation: “*Our politicians are intellectually lazy, reflecting the tendencies from their middle class life styles...They do not read and keep up to date on what is going in the world of global politics...Easily read books written on party politics and voting such as my Politics Versus Economics (1989) ... are not being read by our politicians who remain in a state of ignorance on these matters, continuing to hold unto folk wisdom.*”³³

1.4 Violence

Violence has always been part and parcel of Jamaican party politics. In the early years there would be the odd mob killing, passionate stick and stone clashes with stone throwing a prominent part in the proceedings. Starting in 1967, armed political gangs entered the picture. Political gun violence abated in 1972 but returned on a huge and massive scale in 1976. From there it reached the highest point in 1980 when Stone estimates that 20,000 persons abandoned homes that were burnt down and some 500 Jamaicans killed in political warfare between the JLP and PNP gangs mainly in Kingston, St Andrew and Spanish Town. (Stone, 1992) Between 1980 and the present, political violence has become less of a feature of the general elections but violence itself has become more of a feature of daily every day life.

2.0 Conceiving the Garrison

Reporting on the 2002 General Election the Carter Center says; “*Jamaica is afflicted with "garrison" communities, a troubling and embarrassing political feature. Within these communities, a single political party controls all aspects of life, including the electoral*

³³ Stone cited in Patsy Lewis, Jamaica Preparing for the 21st Century, IRP, 1994

process, so that anyone expressing support for the other party is subject to intimidation and actual violence. They are impervious to penetration even by regular police forces. Both major parties have organized such communities, but more of them favor the present ruling party (PNP). Examples of this control are in constituencies where, in the past, the winner received 100 percent of the votes in 90 percent of the voting places.”

The first garrison was created in the early 1960's when Edward Seaga (JLP) using state funds developed a large housing scheme (Tivoli Gardens) and housed all of the people who were seen to be loyal to “him” and the JLP in it. At every election thereafter election results in the Tivoli constituency have varied between 80% and 100% of the total ballot in favour of Seaga and the JLP. The garrison was designed to distribute a scarce benefit (in the form of cheap housing) to the faithful.

The PNP did not standby idly while Seaga made himself the patron Saint of West Kingston.³⁴ Dudley Thompson ran against Seaga and the JLP, for the PNP and lost. According to Gunst, Thompson and Seaga fought a proxy war in the streets of West Kingston mustering small armies from the ranks of the neighborhoods lumpen.³⁵ The JLP won these wars but in the process the PNP established a countervailing power base in the West Kingston constituency. When the 1997, *Kerr Report*, identifies the tendency of the more zealous of the party faithful to force out those who somehow found themselves behind the garrison's walls and those who did not support the party, it speaks to the peculiar dynamic involved in the formation of the first genuine garrison. The

³⁴ L Gunst, p80, 1995

³⁵ *ibid*

tendency of those who were/are forced out to establish squatter communities in close proximity to the garrison, speaks to the same general phenomena. *The garrisons have come to represent states within a state. "The Jamaican state has no authority or power except in as far as its forces are able to invade in the form of police and military raids. In the core garrisons, disputes have been settled, matters tried, offenders sentenced and punished all without reference to the institutions of the Jamaican state".*³⁶ The key figure in the garrison is the "Don" and inasmuch as the Prime Minister is the personification of the State, the Don is the personification of the garrison.

Mark Figueroa is authoritative on the subject of the garrisons and the associated garrison process: *"...Encompassed in this process are all those activities associated with the establishment, the strengthening and the extension of the influence of garrisons and their associated psychology. In using the notion of a garrison process, I am linking the presence of the large scale garrison such as Jungle, Payne Land, Rema, Tivoli and other less well known strongholds to a political culture. This political culture extends well beyond the boundaries of the communities which have come under the tight control of the politicians, their thugs and/or local enforcers. It is the process (with its associated psychology) and not the garrison itself which constrains growth and development.*

The dominant aspect of the associated psychology is without a doubt fear. It is to be found everywhere and anywhere in contemporary Jamaica;

BM: As you know we Barmaids usually work till late at night and it wasn't so long ago that bars in this area use to open till past midnight. Nowadays, as soon as 8.30 come I'm

³⁶ 1997, Kerr Report, p1

looking to lock up. When I leave my bar at 9ish there's neither cat nor dog on the road, all I see is a few cars going up and down. I'm scared I'm scared all the time. Suppose one of the cars has gunmen? What's going to happen to me?

RM: Yeah, yeah, I understand.

BM: And you know Janet from Tavern right? Look what happened to her!

RM: What happened to her?

BM: Janet has a daughter, 15/16 years old, bright girl doing well in school. Anyway the big man over there, he sees the girl and likes her. He sends a message to Janet, saying that she must send the girl. Well the thing is the girl (I forget her name) is already a nervous wreck because of the excess amount of gunshots barking over there....anyway Janet don't send her. Instead she up's and runs with her daughter. But look where she run to?

RM: Where?

BM: August Town. Jump right out of the frying pan and right into the fire!

Figueroa identifies eight fully fledged garrisons with four other constituencies where voting for one party stands at approximately 50% of the total voters list. He writes; *“That is, in the most garrisoned constituencies vast areas are under garrison control but not by just one party, rather each party has its garrison areas with a number of contested areas in between.”*³⁷ *In many more constituencies the garrison communities constitute pockets of tight control surrounded by much broader zones that represent contested areas. Here we see the relevance of the concept of a process in two ways. First, there is an effort over*

³⁷ The August Town community (the case study in my third essay) graphically illustrates this point. Geographically August Town only spans a few square miles but within in this relatively small space, it is possible to move from a JLP zone to a PNP zone and vice versa all within a few hundred yards.

time to expand these pockets to the point where the constituency is transformed into a garrison and second, the presence of a garrison within a constituency fosters certain types of actions.”³⁸

In many ways this single quote signals the route forward for this work. Two immediate questions arise. In the first place what precisely are the certain types of actions fostered by garrison living? And in the second place what are the sources of the contestation?

Much of what follows is concerned with laying out the types of economic actions that co join the influence of the garrison phenomena to the political process and to the wider society. As an ideal type it is modeled on the original Tivoli Gardens JLP project. It's the ideal type because its workings are most clearly articulated in the existing body of knowledge and because the connections to the politicians, guns, drugs and gangs are well documented by Gunst and others. Here in this arena garrison activities involve guns and drugs, with extortion as the last point in a new trade taking place within the underground economy. In Figueroa's original paper the focus is on vote manipulation and efforts to rig the results.³⁹ He argues: *“that the garrison phenomenon has become central to the practice of electoral manipulation in Jamaica. Although the garrisons may in fact be relatively confined political strongholds their significance extends beyond their borders. This can be seen in terms of the connection between the garrisons and two other related aspects of the Jamaican political system. The first of these is turf politics. That is, the process by which political parties seek geographical or positional control over given*

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ In the context of my paper these activities tend towards guns, murder, drugs and collective insecurity. The garrison process is the core. (Use selected quotations from selected interviews to reinforce the notion of insecurity). According to the UN Report of 2002 Jamaica has the third highest murder rate after Colombia and South Africa.

*areas as an electoral strategy. Beyond this we have bogus voting or electoral rigging. In this paper I am treating the garrison process as the core. Hence I encompass the other related aspects in the discussion as part of a broad strategy based on the building of garrisons."*⁴⁰

The main point is that the garrison process is part and parcel of the political culture and the culture extends far beyond the physical space of the constituency. The process itself is one which pulls the country to predation, towards gun violence, murder, and a strong disposition towards the transshipment of marijuana and cocaine. The suggestion is that the process whereby political parties seek geographical and positional control is closely interconnected with the way criminal gangs contest geographic locations. *"It is from the garrisons that the paramilitary attacks are launched in the positional warfare associated with turf politics. In general these are carried out with impunity as the nexus between the corrupt police, the politicians and the gunmen protects the perpetrators between the corrupt police, the politicians and the gunmen protects the perpetrators from prosecution"*.⁴¹ (S. Ryan; 1996, 77)

2.1 Garrison Economics with Special Reference to Jobs and Labor

Perhaps the most obvious feature of the garrison phenomena in Jamaica is the waste associated with its own brand of economic logic. Figure 1 (in the appendix) tells the story for the South St Andrew constituency as of January 1981 (relatively early in the garrison story). All the shaded areas (the no mans land, abandoned property) represent a waste of

⁴⁰ Figueroa cited in the 1997 Kerr Report

⁴¹ S Ryan, 1996, p77

the physical resources available to the community. The story does not stop there Buchanan cites survey findings which show that “... 53% of unemployed workers in poor communities are simply not interested in working in an orthodox situation.”⁴² Again more waste, this time coming from the stock of human capital.

2.2 The Contract System

No where is the connection between the politician and the criminal underclass more clear and more stark than in the workings of the Government Contract System. In the modern world Governments are known to put to tender various projects (infrastructure and otherwise). The projects of necessity imply jobs for the community. By whatever rationale embodied in the rules of the tender the best candidate is selected and the project awarded to the group deemed to have the most appropriate technical, financial ability and experience associated with the execution (work) stage of the project. This is the pattern in most developed countries. In Jamaica Buchanan claims “*There are no tenders in the selection process. If however, this is done the tender is always skewed to a predetermined contractor. For the most part contracts are issued through the recommendation of a political official, e.g. a Minister of Government a member of Parliament or a Parish Councilor.*”

Jobs in a context of persistent unemployment are a powerful tool of control over the job seekers in the work force. The jobs are a scarce benefit allocated as a reward for adherence to the total institution thinking of the party and for being faithful to the party and its leader. This single act binds the garrison to the politics in a structural manner. In

⁴² Buchanan, 1995

so doing and in using the Don and his cohorts to distribute a scarce benefit the political directorate cedes considerable economic power to the underworld.

RM: There's a guy, I'm trying to remember his name. He got a lot of road work from this particular Government out by St Thomas....

ST: You mean Dani?

RM: Yeah Dani. Now it's widely said that he is a party stalwart and his businesses have benefited from his relationship with the party. Do you subscribe to that view?

ST: Of course, of course.

RM: Ok and its not just this side alone. The other side has their men as well.

ST: Listen, O Lord, its politics you know, that's how politics works.

2.3 The Don Man Cycle

The considerable importance of the Don and his cohort cannot be over emphasized in relation to the economics of the garrison. In the first place, the Don decides who lives and who dies. Then he decides who works and who does not. He makes the law and enforces it. Arbitrates in family and neighborhood disputes and again according to Buchanan exerts considerable influence on the supply and demand for goods and services.

There is a cycle surrounding Don-manship of the garrison. It is outlined in Buchanan. The Don derives his status from his early beginnings as one proficient in the use of guns. He is a drug dealer and organizes the local supply and international distribution of the drugs. Another source of enterprise is the local race track where his foot soldiers coerce nervous jockeys into Don desired results. In his prime the Don has a number of lieutenants under his control. In addition there are the "fryers" and "shottas" generally lesser aspirants who carry out the minor directives and low level killings.

As the Don forges a deeper personal relationship with the politician the generally street (rather than formally) educated Don develops new social aspirations. He now wants his own children to attend the best schools; he develops a rationale for saving and investment as he desires an “uptown” house of his own. He develops a clean Robin Hood image. Petty inter-community robberies and the degeneracy of rape are no longer tolerated. Offenders are evenly sentenced to a ghetto jail term usually in an abandoned low income house with severe beatings or worse depending on the gravity of the crime. In the end Dons are usually killed because they know too much and a new cycle begins with a new Don who has journeyed from the ranks of the *shottas*.

2.4 A Monopoly over the Supply of Labor

Again according to Buchanan, “*The political directorate and the ranking forces acting in concert or singularly, depending on their status and power monopolize the labour market by selecting 75% of the manual labourers working in the community.*”⁴³ The managers of the various government projects are coerced into hiring John Brown at \$X per hour. X is invariably some mark up over the established wage floor for a worker in Brown’s category. From a theoretical standpoint, what we would appear to have is a labour market in which there is only one genuine seller of labor. Agents here do not offer their labour power for sale independently, instead labor is offered as a by product of the monopoly the Don and his associates. If wages were to increase the marginal supply would only increase by some small amount. Supply here is inelastic because workers are selected a priori and told what wage to accept. This is the wage rate generally applied to construction sites (the largest employer of manual labour in poor communities). Further the lack of competition amongst buyers (government and a few private firms) makes no

⁴³ Buchanan, p45

difference to the outcome. Whether there were one (1) or one hundred (100) businesses the response of the politician and the Don would appear to be the same. All buyers of labour must pay the minimum wage demanded.⁴⁴

The position with skilled labour is somewhat different. In a skill/equipment survey of several garrison communities Buchanan found a relatively low percentage of tradesmen vis a vis the total population. In the market for skilled labour because of the general scarcity there is no need for a wage floor. Further the bargaining position of the skilled worker is so much greater than the unskilled, they at least can choose to leave the community and seek employment elsewhere. Many of them have done exactly that.

2.5 Capital Formation

There are a number of factors which limit capital formation in the garrison. Business people generally do not re-invest any surplus in these areas. The volatility of the neighborhoods does not encourage the prospective business man to establish operations in these areas. In addition business efficiency is constrained by distribution problems. Those who supply essential products will not enter these neighborhoods. At the very outset these general circumstances provide a ready incubation cauldron for black market activities.

A general shortage of machinery and equipment also serves as a disincentive to the potential investor. It is very much a vicious circle. The shortage is made worse by a generalized lack of spare parts. When trades people don't possess the basic tools they cannot earn. Unable to earn, they cannot consume so both at the supply end and the

⁴⁴ Buchanan, p47

demand end opportunities are walled off. Unemployment ensues. Interestingly in Buchanan there is much more than the suggestion that savings rates in these communities are rather high.

2.6 Easy Money Consumerism

Further along these lines Buchanan offers evidence of high group savings but very little internal re-investment in the communities themselves. He further observes that easy money expectations stemming from Governments fiscal policy combine to propel consumption towards high priced a snob value goods and services which can only be obtained outside of the community (jewellery, imported clothing, hard drugs, guns, motor cars and cycles etc). He argues that government contracts by themselves could not sustain the high level of consumption amidst the prevailing unemployment. The support he argued must come from the considerable amount of transfer payments operating both legally and illegally.⁴⁵ The trade in drugs and the high incidence of robberies also contribute to easy money consumerism. The problem with the savings is that it is not reinvested in the community. The type of savings described by Buchanan seem to be much more like money hoards with the consequent negative implications for the economy and the community.

⁴⁵ Housing is almost totally subsidized by income taxes, land taxes, National Housing Trust contributions and other sources of government paid by income earners outside the ghetto. This is important as House Tenure determines the division of income. In a situation where residents do not pay rent, their disposable income is greatly enhanced. Non payment of public utility fees constitutes another source of transfer payments which also drives the consumption. (ibid, p55)

2.7 Social Management: The Police, the Politician, Criminals, International Drugs and Murder

There is a general level of mistrust between the police and general public as evidenced by the numerous newspaper and media reports. The core of the mistrust is the knowledge that individual elements in the local constabulary put the resources of the police force to use for specific politicians and their parties (either JLP or PNP) at particular moments in time. According to the police corporal in one of my interviews a policeman's career could be aided by a close association with the politician and with the politician's drugs.

PC: There's the time when a certain politician's drugs washed up in Portland. And this constable recovered the drugs. Anyway that same constable get a call from Kingston from one of the higher ups saying; "Remember my own! Remember my own!"

RM: (Laughter).

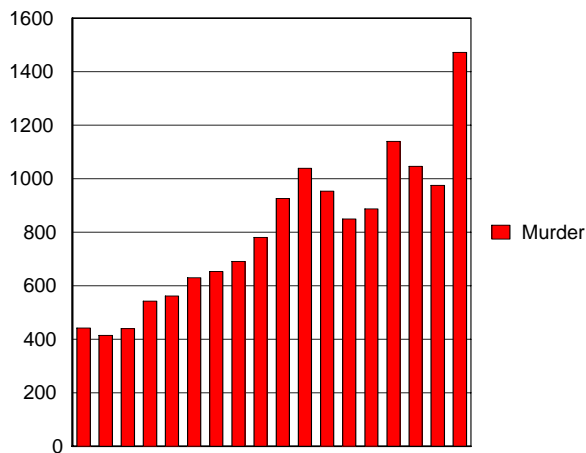
PC: Anyway the constable remembered him, made sure he got the coke. And that constable was promoted. Yeah. The thing is, it was well known in the force and around generally that the higher up worked for the real big man who was a politician.

In its editorial commenting on the task facing Jamaica's new Commissioner of Police, The Jamaica Observer, July 18, 2004 puts it appropriately;

"People believe that the police force, with justification, as Mr. Thomas made known, is woefully corrupt. Therefore, the force does not possess the moral authority to enforce the law, which is of critical importance in a democratic society where the citizenry must agree to be policed and accept the sanctions there from".

Much has been written about the rule of law and its positive statistical correlation with economic growth is now the substance of legions of academic papers.⁴⁶ The literature is replete with evidence showing that countries that have problems with the rule of law generally do not perform in terms of economic growth and development. Jamaica is no exception.

Diagram 1: Reported Murders 1987-2004



Jamaica may or may not to have a problem with the rule of law. However what is crystal clear is that the country has a problem with murder.

⁴⁶ According to the World Bank (2000) if Jamaica were to improve its rule of law to the level found in the Bahamas, St. Lucia or Trinidad and Tobago, there would be a 50% increase in foreign investment, two percentage points higher growth and an increase in the social indicators.

Table 4: Reported Murders 1987-2004

	Murder	Shooting	Robbery
1987	442	1135	4903
1988	414	993	4433
1989	439	1185	4500
1990	542	1370	5362
1991	561	1119	4987
1992	629	1080	4930
1993	653	1121	5416
1994	690	1251	5461
1995	780	1308	4424
1996	925	1727	4494
1997	1038	1419	3464
1998	953	1225	2985
1999	849	986	2392
2000	887	1012	2331
2001	1139	1183	2109
2002	1045	1270	2021
2003	975	1145	1710
2004	1471	1675	2103

Source: Planning Institute of Jamaica

Taking the three of the more serious crimes against the person (murder, robbery and shooting) there has been a substantial fall in the incidence of robbery and shooting has increased by a small marginal amount. In the same period (1987-2004), taking the first and the last year there has been an increase of 333% in the incidence of reported murders. The problem here is not the rule of law per se but with the widespread use of murder which places Jamaica among an elite group of countries in the murder leagues.

The fact that a disproportionate amount of the murders take place within the boundaries of the garrison constituency is partially explained by the police corporal in one of my interviews.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Use Wilson's Statistics to support.

RM: Ok but just a quick point. Only at election times, that to me means that the politicians can go for these guys at election times only so they must retain some kind of link?

PC: Yes man! Yeah man.

RM: And also when there is a big don's funeral you see certain politicians there. So what I was wondering is to what extent the politics and the crime are associated?

PC: No they are not associates. But because they are in charge of a particular area, and the don man is in his (the politician's) area. So its like the politician talks to the don and communicates when things are going badly in that area, then the politician will say to the don, look man see if you can get them to calm down.

RM: Ok, ok, that kind of relationship. Ok.

The Police Corporal's very specific depiction is supported by the School Teacher albeit in a more general manner;

RM: What do you think of a fella like Omar Davis going to the funerals of known gunmen?⁴⁸ Like this week end, he was at a funeral where there was a shooting....?

ST: I think they need to remove themselves from that sort of thing.

RM: But why are they there though? What is the connection?

ST: Because of their involvement with these people, it's like they have an obligation to them.

RM: What are they involved doing though?

⁴⁸ Omar Davis is The PNP Member of Parliament for St Andrew South. He has also served as the Minister of Finance since 1993. St Andrew South is a constituency in which 90.1% of the registered voters voted for the PNP at the last General Election in 2002. It is a fully fledged garrison.

ST: They use them politically. They use them for their own political mileage. When they have their elections they use these people. Elections are never usually fair you know. And regardless of how they go on the air. I remember I worked in the election at a particular station as I told you, and I was talking to someone from another station. And she said that at her station they stuffed the ballot boxes (without a doubt) and the other party agent that was there could not say anything about it. And these MP's pay them for it. Now when they do things like that they expect to be rewarded and even on a no work payroll. Do you understand what I am saying to you?

RM: Yes, yes I understand

ST: A no work payroll, because they have to be there and when they need them they call on them. And because I have done such for you, you gonna have to maintain me for a period. So they have to put in their funds. It's not just out of the goodness of his heart, someone in his constituency dies and he goes to the funeral. No. They are obligated to these people. And they need to move away from it because it's not looking good.

Such conversations and observations provide a platform for emphasizing the social management dimension of the relationship between politician and area leader. The politician cedes a community and geographic area to a don in return for votes at the ballot box. Murder in this conception is a social management technique.

The hypothesis posited here is that the key relationships are those between the politician, the police, the poor and the garrison process. Framing the context and contemporaneous with these events is the rather swift maturation of Jamaica into a major transshipment

point in the international drugs business. The Chairman of the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica, Oliver Clarke posits; *“30% in weight of cocaine going into North America may well now transit the Caribbean. The wealth that this creates leads to money laundering, bribing customs officers, bribing police and other security officers to say nothing of what that wealth can do to influence the political process .. which is the bedrock of our democratic system.”*⁴⁹

Fajnzylber et al. (2000) show that for Latin America drug related economic activity tends to be associated with higher rates of murder. Yet this same activity contributes to the official economy in that some proportion of earnings/income from the drug trade is spent on;

- a) new home construction
- b) legitimate business start ups
- c) the importation of goods for domestic distribution

In addition some part of such income is spent on other unspecified, miscellaneous services. In short drug related black market activity leads to higher levels of employment and income in the official economy. That is the upside. The downside is that is that social relations of such activity propel the country towards higher and higher rates of murder.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Speech to the Jamaica – British Business Association, Kingston, June 26, 2002

⁵⁰ See 2002 World Bank Report “The Economic Costs of Crime in Jamaica

According to the World Bank (2002) drug-related killings in Jamaica now account for more than 20 percent of murders annually. *“Some of the killings labeled as ‘reprisal’ are probably also rooted in the drug trade. As the importance of illegal activities in overall economic activity expands, there will likely be more conflicts as the large sums of money and the lack of formal contracts encourage defection from verbal agreements.”*

3.0 Conclusion: Social and Economic Costs

Notwithstanding the multiplier type effect of the international drug trade there can be little doubt that the social and political developments outlined in the preceding sections of this work are inimical to growth and employment. According to the World Bank (2002) high rates of violent crime in Jamaica have the following effects:

- *a negative impact on the investment climate and can deter or delay both domestic and foreign investment, and hence growth.*
- *it leads to higher cost of doing business, because of the need to employ different forms of security, and diverts investment away from business expansion and productivity improvement, and may lead to a less than optimal operating strategy.*
- *it leads to business losses, arising from looting, arson, theft, extortion and fraud*
- *it leads to loss of output because of reduced hours of operation (including avoiding night shifts) or loss of workdays arising from outbreaks of violence, and avoidance of some types of economic activity*
- *It also reduces output because of the temporary (from injury) or permanent (from murder) exit of individuals from the labor force. In the latter case, the loss is not*

just current output, but the output in the remaining years of the individual's working life

- *It can also cause a permanent shut-down of firms or relocation to less crime-prone countries.*
- *It erodes the development of human capital as well as social capital and thus constrains the potential for growth. The crime situation in Jamaica seems to be an important reason for migration, since the fear of crime significantly reduces the quality of life.⁵¹*

The World Bank here comes to the same general conclusion. Murder, physical violence and the garrison are inimical to economic growth. Indeed the World Bank has quantified and categorized the effects. Viewed with World Bank eyes there is a law and order problem and therefore the solution must lie primarily in better policing and increased technologies associated with crime fighting. My analysis points to Patron/Client Statism derived from the total institution legacy. Thus in my work the problem is at once a political one rooted in the history of the island.

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This is very much a work in progress, but even as such certain matters are more or less obvious by way of a conclusion. First there is urgent need for a typology of the garrison. It seems clear that the garrison which Stone writes about (opportunism and degeneracy) is different to the garrison resident who commits class biased crimes in Gray. Further the garrison of 1963 is in some way or another going to be different to that of 2005 and what precisely are the actions which Figueroa's garrison encourage in its agents? Moreover what do we make of the work of Fajnzylber and his claim that black market activity leads

⁵¹ *ibid*

to the creation of jobs and economic activity in the official economy? How does this claim stack up against the Buchanan observation on the absence of a reinvestment of savings? These are the issues and questions which are taken up in the final essay of this three essay series.

For now the best way to conclude is to return to the assumption made at the very outset of this work – causality flows from the political culture and system. What this essay has done is to establish a clear connections between the political party system, the politician, the police, the garrison with its inherent violence and the associated psychology of fear. Should there be any remaining doubts in the reader’s mind the following incident along with the preceding analysis and the excerpts from my interviews ought to be enough to lay them to rest.

In July 2004 Oliver “Buba” Smith was shot and killed by the police while driving or standing by a car registered in the name of Olivia “Babsie” Grange.⁵² Smith was wanted by the police for murder, for extortion and for a string of crimes perpetrated in the St Andrew Central Constituency. He was said to be the underworld leader of a criminal gang known as “One Order.” In addition Smith was a deportee from the United States. Grange was (indeed she remains) the incumbent JLP Member of Parliament for the constituency. Grange claimed that she did not know Smith, and that she had never met him but she had guaranteed a bank loan for one of her constituency workers Andrew Hope. Police sources identified Hope as one of Smith’s lieutenants and as a leading member of the One Order gang. Pressed further, Grange claimed that she was unaware

⁵² The details are sketchy. In some reports Smith was driving the car, in others he was standing by the car.

that the banking transaction had left her name on the ownership documents rather than merely on the loan papers. In addition helping Hope (who was arrested for illegal possession of a firearm and shooting with intent) was as much as she would do for other constituents. According to Grange; “*He is a constituency worker who I would stand up for and help at any time.*” Pressed again by the media for further explanation Grange insisted that she did not know Smith and that he (Smith) was a left over from the previous sitting MP for the constituency-Bruce Golding.⁵³

Today Golding is the leader of the JLP opposition and after 16 years of PNP government he is likely to be the next Prime Minister after the next General Election. Golding who previously represented St Catherine Central (74.3% of the total vote at the last General Election in 2002) now represents Western Kingston (83.7% in the 2002 election) the garrison community previously represented by Edward Seaga the ex leader of the JLP opposition.

And lest there be any further doubt about the matter on the other side, Prime Minister PJ Patterson of the PNP is slated to step down in April 2006 and the key figures in an unfolding contest for the leadership are Finance Minister Omar Davis (St Andrew Southern - 90.1% of the vote in 2002), Minister of Local Government & Community Development & Sports Portia Simpson-Miller (St Andrew South Western - 92.7% of the vote in 2002) and Peter Phillips, *Minister of National Security* (St Andrew East Central - 63.7% of the vote in 2002).⁵⁴

⁵³ Source: *Caribbean Times UK*, 7/23/04

⁵⁴ Source: *Summary of Election Results General Election 2002*, Electoral Office of Jamaica, Kingston

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