

## ABSTRACT

In focussing on Jamaican capitalist orientations toward foreign relations, explanation of their underlying determinants is sought in terms of <sup>the</sup> society's class dynamics. The analysis is appreciative too of the over-arching global systemic dynamic as revolves around inter-related North-South and East-West global cleavages.

Consolidated as a result of massive inflows of foreign capital, Jamaican capitalism developed in a subordinate role vis-à-vis more powerful foreign counterparts. Under colonialism, while locally based capitalists enjoyed a pre-eminent class position in the island's political system, they remained ultimately subordinate to the colonial power. Ironically, the transformation to localised patterns of political authority ultimately led to the aggrandisement politically of local capitalists though they had formed the butt of popular opprobrium during the nationalist struggles.

The consequence of this pattern of economic development was to enmesh the country in an international system centered on the capitalist economies of Europe and America. These conditions received local official sanction after Independence, as Jamaica opted firmly for integration into the Western alliance system. Broadly speaking, pro-Western

dispositions were subject to a wide-ranging inter-elite consensus despite periodic adjustments consequent on the impact of political party competition.

Following the experience of slowed development which became marked in the middle sixties, Jamaica, re-evaluating its pro-Western commitment, sought new mechanisms for preserving and enhancing national viability. Current activist foreign policies must be viewed in this context.

The data demonstrate that though pro-Western anti-Communist positions favouring increased integration between local and metropolitan economies remain the dominant capitalist attitudinal position, there is a decided yet minority tendency towards more nationalist positions. These burgeoning antagonisms are mitigated, however, by the overall anti-socialist and pro-capitalist commitments which are maintained by these elements. Consequently, while favouring Third-World relations on account of the increased leverage which they offer vis-a-vis relations with international capitalism, these elites are fearful of the more radical socialist implications inherent in non-alignment.