

## ABSTRACT

The thesis shows how the structure of BVI society has been changed by free-enterprise development schemes, and the resulting immigration of whites mainly from England and blacks mainly from the Eastern Caribbean to work on these projects, from a classless society as it was in 1960, towards the direction of a plural society with whites at the top, BV-islanders in the middle and down-island workers at the bottom, in 1969.

It also looks at the political culture of the BVI over this ten year period and at the social movement, Positive Action, which arose mainly in protest at the social effects being produced by the development schemes and the large influx of migrants, especially white migrants.

The conclusion is reached that West Indian governments need to take into account the social costs of economic development if they want to avoid the possibility of disruptive social movements.

The conclusion is also reached that racism manifests itself when the number of migrants into a country reaches a certain indeterminate level, at which point the locals feel their jobs, their status, their security, their whole way of life, are being threatened by the outsiders.

Many structural conditions, such as low education, little reading, authoritarian family patterns, predispose the BVI polity towards authoritarian leadership. Since many of these features also are present in other West Indian islands, and since the conclusion is reached that leadership style reflects the values of the led, these authoritarian values would seem to pose a problem vis-a-vis the democratic values professed by the political leaders in the area.