

## ABSTRACT

The study attempts to examine the effects which the policies of the Commonwealth Caribbean "socialist" states had on the CARICOM integration scheme, between 1973 and 1983. The emergence of "socialist" governments in Guyana, Jamaica and Grenada, deviated from traditional political practices in the sub-region, and there is evidence that policy coordination was affected within the scheme.

The "socialist" experiments were basically aimed at eliminating the structural biases of liberal democracy, to better provide for their peoples' social welfare. However, failure to resolve the tension in liberal democracy and operating within the constraints of an unfavourable world economy, meant that the CARICOM movement had little to gain from these "socialist" policies.

The basic differences between the "socialist" and non-socialist policies were related to factors inherent in Caribbean politics, particularly that of indecisiveness, and so even without the "socialist" states, the non-decisions would have remained thereby leaving unsolved the problem of policy coordination. CARICOM states' foreign policy initiatives therefore could not

reflect the background of their countries' internal social structures and the configuration of power within them. Their overall policies had no firm roots in national material basics nor in deep and lasting institutional changes in the state systems and bureaucratic structures.

The study concludes that while other factors impacted on the CARICOM mechanism, the presence of "socialist" governments in the scheme provided an important perspective from which some of CARICOM's problems can be viewed, in that time period. The attempt to "ideologize" the strategy of change made areas of conflict within the integration movement almost inevitable.