

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study on Trinidad and Tobago is twofold. The primary aim is to apply the theory of Historical Materialism to Caribbean society. This is done, not simply to show its usefulness as a theory applicable to this environment, but to point out that without it, a total grasp of Caribbean, as of any other history, is impossible. The second aim is to grasp the essence of the 1970 Revolution in Trinidad and Tobago.

In 1970, Trinidad and Tobago 'increased the pace', as it were, for the rest of the English-speaking Caribbean, when the Black Power demonstrations threatened, as no popular uprising had done since the 1930's, to upset the neo-colonial state there. The real meaning of the 1970 revolution and the lessons which can be drawn from its failure, will be important weapons in the hands of the Caribbean working masses in the new round of revolutionary class battles, which is already maturing in the region.

In carrying out these aims, certain trends and developments in the field of study of Caribbean society must be mentioned.

It is not by chance that since 1970, the new wave of social science writings in the English-speaking Caribbean, of which this is a modest contribution, has moved ever-increasingly towards Marxism as a tool to solve theoretical problems.

It is not by chance either that Black Power, in 1976, is no longer the force it was throughout the region as it was in the United States at the turn of the decade.

Revolutionary-minded Caribbean intellectuals as well as the advanced workers and semi-proletarian masses, have been searching for a way out of the neo-colonialist impasse which Black Power, Rastafari, Democratic and Cooperative Socialism and 'New Worldism' have been unable to solve. It is the sharpening clashes between economic classes in the region, the produce of, on one hand, the economic crisis of imperialism, and on the other, the growth of the socialist world and Cuba, the outpost of socialism in the Americas, which is directing revolutionary-minded people once again to Marxism. This thesis is in keeping with this new development and therefore reflects many of the strengths and weaknesses inherent in an ideology which, outside of Guyana, has remained virtually dormant in the English-speaking Caribbean for twenty years.

The first chapter will outline the essence of Historical Materialism as it will be used in the remainder of the paper and, from this perspective, will attempt a critique of three writers who reported on the 1970 struggle.

CHAPTER 2
The second chapter will deal with a most pressing theoretical area, that of the class structure of Trinidadian society. Before any meaningful analysis of the revolutionary process is possible, an understanding of the objective character of the classes and their relative strengths, must be arrived at.

The third chapter will attempt to briefly explore another problem area of Trinidadian society. As will be obvious from our introduction, the racial question has confused many people and has been used by others to obscure the root contradictions in the society. This chapter will suggest, from the point of view of Historical Materialism, some of the real bases for racial conflict in Trinidadian society

Chapter four will indicate some of the features of the class struggle before 1970, which contributed to the occurrence of a revolutionary upsurge in that year

Chapters five and six will examine respectively, the course of the revolution itself and the vanguard organization which led the struggle.

Chapter seven will outline briefly some of the developments which took place immediately after 1970 and make concluding remarks.