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TITLE:

The Jamaica-US Relations: Impact of the Cold War on Jamaica 1960-1984

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Executive Summary

Title: The Jamaica-US Relations: Impact of the Cold War on Jamaica 1960-1984.

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Thesis: The politics of the Cold War impacted Jamaica in its early development as an independent nation state and accounted for the strained relations with the US in the 1970s.

Discussion: The period 1960 – 1984 is significant in Jamaica’s history as it represents an era of transformation of the nation. Having gained independence from colonial rule in 1962, the young nation state sought to establish itself as a democracy and to engage in the international system. In the 1960s Jamaica’s foreign policies reflected a pro-United States (US) outlook. In the 1970s, however, Michael Manley’s government adopted a democratic socialist agenda with policies that resulted in strained relations with the US. The Manley government also established diplomatic relations with communist Cuba, which was not only aligned to the Soviet Union but also an adversary of the US in the midst of the Cold War. This move was perceived by Washington as a threatening shift in Jamaica’s foreign policy. The paper will examine the Jamaica-US relations and their foreign policies in the context of the Cold War politics and the resulting ‘fallout’ which led to instability in Jamaica in the 1970s.

Conclusion: Jamaica’s foreign policy evolution through its early years of independence was impacted by the broader dynamics of the Cold War politics. Michael Manley’s policies of democratic socialism and his practice of a “principled foreign policy” in the 1970s were rejected by the US. As a small player in the international system in midst of the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union, Jamaica’s political and economic stability was significantly affected by the foreign policy that was adopted. It is therefore important to appreciate the impact of the external environment on a nation’s participation in the international system.

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Preface

After World War II the ideological struggle between the East and the West dominated international relations for nearly fifty years, a period of conflict and tension known as the Cold War era. The clash of ideologies – communism on one side and democracy on the other – created major fault lines across the globe, and resulted in many proxy wars. The impact of the Cold War on small nation states like Jamaica is often not widely understood. Jamaica in the western Caribbean was far removed from the frontlines of the Cold War, but its impact on the nation in the early stages of its democratic history was significant. Seen through the revisionist lens, the nation's foreign policy retarded its development. Jamaica's failure to fully appreciate the Cold War's effect on all players within the international system was a misstep in its early years of independence.

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Introduction

Throughout the 1960s, Jamaica's foreign policies favored the United States (US), but in the 1970s Jamaica strengthened relations with Cuba, signaling the perception of a shift in the nation's foreign policies. This occurred at the height of the Cold War when Cuba was already aligned with the communist Soviet Union and was viewed by the US as an adversary after the failure of the invasion in April 1961 (The Bay of Pigs) and the Cuban missile crisis of October, 1962. Concerns were raised in Washington about Jamaica-Cuba relations and the budding friendship between the Cuban Communist leader Fidel Castro and the Jamaican Prime Minister, Michael Manley, who had a socialist agenda. Jamaica's support for the US was evident in the 1960s when both nations' interests were aligned, demonstrated by Jamaica's regular vote on the side of the US at the UN on Cold War issues. However, in 1971 Jamaica abstained on a vote to admit China into the United Nations (UN), which was viewed as an unfavorable move by its US partner.

Relations between Jamaica and the US were further strained when in 1973 Michael Manley declared the US Ambassador to Jamaica persona non grata and in 1975 when his government supported Cuba's deployment of troops to Africa. Cuba's deployment to Africa was supported by Manley despite requests by Henry Kissinger to support the US at the UN to denounce Cuba's action. Instability in the late 1970s, leading to the 'bloody' election in 1980, was reportedly encouraged by anti-Manley elements due to his alignment with Cuba and fear that the nation was on a path to communism.¹ In 1980 Manley's government was defeated at the polls and was replaced by a pro-US government. Georges Fauriol's statement that "small states do not have a foreign policy, they merely have a policy of existence" did not hold true during the

Manley's rule.² During the Manley administration of 1972-1980, Jamaica was an active player in the international system and made foreign policy decisions that influenced the international realm. However, the politics of the Cold War impacted Jamaica in its early development as an independent nation state and accounted for the strained relations with the US in the 1970s.

Brief History

Jamaica, a small island nation in the West Indies, gained independence from British colonial rule on August 6, 1962. In the fifteenth century, the island was known as Xaymaca, a name given to it by the original inhabitants – the Tainos or the Arawak Indians. Xaymaca, meaning “land of wood and water”, was occupied by the Tainos until 1494 when the Spanish explorer Christopher Columbus sailed to the Island and seized it from the Indians. Jamaica remained occupied by the Spanish until a successful British attack in 1655 drove the Spaniards off the territory.

Enslaved Africans were transported to the island by the colonizers to be used as a source of labour for sugarcane and other crops. Slaves in Jamaica led several revolts against the British colonizers until the abolition of slavery in 1834.³ Some slaves escaped into the hilly interior of the island and established “Maroon” settlements. The Maroons fought numerous wars against the British, and after two major conflicts, the Maroon Wars of 1739 and 1740, the British signed treaties giving the Maroons land and freeing them from slavery.⁴ The British abolition of slavery in 1834 did not, however, mean the end to an oppressive British regime. Jamaicans continued to struggle to gain economic and political freedom; fair pay for fair work performed; education; and political rights. The violent Morant Bay Rebellion of 1865 led by Paul Bogle characterised Jamaican resolve to secure rights as free men. The late 1800s through to mid-1900s saw a rise in a number of “Afro-Jamaican” movements. In 1914 Marcus Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association, a Pan-African movement, in Kingston, Jamaica. Marcus Garvey’s movement (or Garveyism) promoted black consciousness and racial pride, and it became a worldwide inspiration. The movement spread far beyond the shores of Jamaica.⁵

The early- to mid-1900s witnessed the rise of labour movements, with numerous labour strikes, particularly in the post World War I era. Jamaican soldiers who were members of the West Indian Regiment of the British Army who had deployed overseas returned to the island at the end of the war. Garveyism found favour with World War I veterans as it did with the wider black middle-strata populace.⁶ The post World War I period also saw the establishment of political parties and trade unions, the two main parties being the People's National Party (PNP), formed in 1938, and the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) formed in 1943.⁷ Labour and political unrest in 1938 led by the trade unions in Jamaica spread throughout the West Indies, prompting Britain to establish a Royal Commission to examine the conditions that that led to the widespread riots and to make recommendations to improve conditions.⁸ Universal adult suffrage, the right to vote regardless of sex, race or class, was granted in 1944, and the JLP led by Alexander Bustamante won the first general elections under the new constitution in that same year.

As a British colony, Jamaica fielded soldiers as part of the Caribbean Regiment and deployed overseas in support of the British effort in World War II.⁹ Jamaica's contribution to the Allies, however, went far beyond providing boots on the ground. There was fear that the German U-boat fleet might extend its operations into the Caribbean. The US received the rights to establish bases at a few locations in Jamaica under President Roosevelt's 1940 "Destroyers for Bases" agreement with Britain. The US built two outposts in Jamaica, Vernamfield Air Base and Goat Island Naval Base. These bases were used both for training and to stage deployments. For instance, the US conducted numerous successful submarine training manoeuvres from the Goat Island Naval Base before deploying some of those assets to the Pacific. Jamaican servicemen not only deployed to Britain, but also deployed to the US for training. The World War II era marked

the first major military to military interaction between Jamaica and the US. The US also admitted tens of thousands of Jamaican agricultural workers during the war to make up for labor shortages.

After World War II there was a renewed global push for decolonization. In the Caribbean, Britain's colonies pressed for independence, the right to rule one's nation. Britain was, however, reluctant to give up territories it had seized centuries earlier and instead developed a plan to keep the territories together while allowing greater self-rule. The Federation of the West Indies, formed in 1958 and consisting of ten Caribbean islands, including Jamaica, became the polity to hold those colonies together.¹⁰ Jamaica, however, pressed for independence, and in 1961 the Federation of the West Indies political union collapsed. On August 6, 1962 Jamaica gained independence from Britain, the first of the ten states that constituted the Federation. However, the new nation had many challenges ahead.

The island of Jamaican covers an area of 10,991 square kilometres (4,244 square miles). Today the island's population stands at 2.8 million, just under a million more than the mid-1970s population of approximately 2 million people.¹¹ Jamaica had a GDP of US \$1.4 billion in 1970, and it grew steadily throughout the 70s. In 1970, trade as a ratio of GDP stood at fifty percent, with the US being one of the country's major trading partners.¹² The major economic commodities in the 1970s were bauxite and alumina, agriculture, tourism and manufacturing. The people of Jamaica and the US have maintained strong ties since the early 1960s. When Britain restricted emigration in 1967, the major flow of Jamaican citizens for employment and economic opportunities switched to the US and Canada.¹³ An estimated 20,000 Jamaicans emigrated to the US each year, with another 200,000 visiting several major cities.¹⁴ In this

regard, remittances from expatriate communities in the US also became a significant factor in Jamaica's economy.¹⁵

Independent Jamaica

With the birth of the new nation came many challenges. There was the need to establish unity among a people who were divided along racial, economic, political, social and class lines. This new government must meet the hopes of people who had struggled for freedom and rights for centuries, people who had been victims of violence and had thus grown accustomed to using violent means to get justice. The nation had to not only develop a domestic policy but also determine a foreign policy as a new player in the international system.

The JLP government of the 1960s placed emphasis on foreign investment. The nation “moved into manufacturing and services through bauxite and tourism [as] the two engines of growth.”¹⁶ There was a clear diversification of the nation's industry that once relied heavily on sugarcane and bananas. A comparison of Jamaica's domestic and foreign policies over the periods 1962-1972 and 1972-1980, shows that Jamaica took steps to move towards greater independence and away from dependency. The same period shows a major ideological shift. The argument presented by Thorburn and Morris seems quite apt – that “regardless of one's position on the ideology spectrum, that small states, including and in particular Jamaica, must heavily consider the external environment, both economically and politically, in planning for their development”¹⁷. It can be argued that Jamaica leaned more towards the ideological spectrum in its early development.

Jamaica's practice of international relations in its early stages of development displayed both a level of realism and liberalism. The nation, like most nations, focused on foreign policies

that stood to secure its interests; at the same time, however, Jamaica strongly advocated that the rights and autonomy of sovereign states be respected.

US Caribbean Relations

The US has always maintained interest in its close neighbours in the Caribbean. The relationship between the United States and Jamaica has, of course, been framed by the US policy toward the Caribbean. From a national security standpoint, the US projects its interest out to the Caribbean to extend its borders of defence. The Caribbean basin holds vital shipping lanes for the US including a gateway to the Panama Canal. The Caribbean can also be regarded as one of the bridges between South and North America through which trafficking occurs. US interest, moreover, stems not only from national security and economic standpoints, but also from the geo-political sphere.

In the 1960s the US witnessed the shift from colonial rule to the formation of several independent island states within the English-speaking Caribbean. From a historical perspective, Fred Halliday noted that before World War I “...the essence of the US position, expressed in the Monroe Doctrine, was that the Caribbean was an area which fell under US control.”¹⁸ Holliday noted that “until 1861, Washington refused to recognize independent Haiti...[and] such was this policy that years from 1898 onwards saw a series of US interventions and occupations of the Caribbean and Central American states: of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Honduras, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, as well as the acquisition of the Panama Canal Zone.”¹⁹ It can be argued that the US was simply securing its strategic interest in the region.²⁰ In the post World War II era, Castro’s revolutionary triumph and the shift to communism in 1959 created a “sense of strategic vulnerability”²¹ for the US in its own hemisphere during the Cold War era. The failed “Bay of Pigs” invasion of Cuba by Cuban exiles supported by the US commenced open

hostilities between the US and Cuba. The Soviet Union later established a military facility in Cuba and had missiles installed. The US-Soviet confrontation over Cuba came to a head in October 1962 during the Cuban Missiles Crisis.²² This crisis almost resulted in a nuclear war

Cuba was not the only regional concern for the US. Holliday noted that, “in 1965, when a nationalist regime came to power in the Dominican Republic, the US Marines intervened to oust the government and installed the conservative regime of Joaquin Balaguer that was to rule till 1978.”²³ US President Lyndon Johnson would not allow the reformist government of Juan Bosch in the Dominican Republic to stand.²⁴ The CIA also reportedly intervened in Guyana in 1964 to shift power away from the People's Progressive Party (PPP) due to their left-wing leanings.²⁵

Having lost Cuba to communism, the US would not stand by and allow any other Caribbean nation to align itself with the Soviet Union. In fact, the Monroe Doctrine – “the nineteenth-century principle that the US would not tolerate foreign intervention in the Western Hemisphere,”²⁶ – became the central policy governing US-Caribbean relations. David W. Dent also wrote that, “the involvement of the US in Latin America and the Caribbean is ...related to the creation and preservation of ‘friendly dictators,’ some of whom were servile in their support of the US if they were allowed to maintain themselves in power, regardless of how this was accomplished or how humanely they treated their opposition.”²⁷ The US was prepared to take any steps necessary to ensure that there was no further spread of communism within the Caribbean.

Jamaica-US Relations 1962 -1972

The JLP, which won the elections in April 1962 under the leadership of Alexander Bustamante, led the government of the new independent state in August 1962. According to

Diana Thornburn and Dana Marie Morris, “with the cutting of colonial ties and the realization of independence came the responsibility of managing one’s own international affairs.”²⁸ At its infancy as an independent nation, Jamaica foreign policy was oriented towards strengthening relations with North America. David W Dent noted that “...Alexander Bustamante described Jamaica as pro-Western, anti-communist, and Christian, ready to align itself with the United States in the Cold War.”²⁹ Dent also noted that Bustamante had inherited “an economy that was structurally weak and dependent on the US, Europe, and the international financial institutions.”³⁰ In an effort to diversify its industry and to encourage foreign direct investments, Jamaica offered incentives to firms such as tax breaks and the ability to repatriate profits. Both financial and manufacturing industries were welcomed. To gain investments from the US, the JLP government also created favourable conditions to attract US industries.

During this early period Jamaica thus established and maintained very cordial relations with the US. Thornburn and Morris noted that “in the UN Jamaica consistently voted with the West, especially on contentious issues in the context of the Cold War, the only departure being on issues of African liberation.”³¹ In the 1960s Jamaica supported the US position on the embargo on Cuba. The embargo was upheld by Jamaica, and there was no attempt to establish diplomatic relations with its neighbour.

With the diversification of industries and foreign investments came industrial relations issues. The discontent between the predominantly black auxiliary labour force and the white foreign managers and supervisors in the newly established industries was compounded by the nation’s colonial history. The 1960s also witnessed the rise of the “Black Power” movement in Jamaica given the level of discontent among the black population. High levels of unemployment existed amongst the black majority, and opportunities were limited. This was compounded by the

long history of exploitation in earlier years – which remained in the collective psyche of the people.

The JLP, which retained power in the 1967 general elections, placed a ban on “Black Power” literature. Among the writings that were banned were the *Autobiography of Malcolm X* and the works of Stockley Carmichael and Eldridge Cleaver. To further quash the Black Power movement, Jamaica also placed a ban on Walter Rodney, a Guyanese lecturer at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, one of the main proponents of Black Power at the time. In 1968, when the Jamaican government banned Rodney from re-entering the country, riots broke out. These protests were subsequently called the Rodney Riots. The ban failed to achieve the government’s intent but instead achieved quite the opposite; more Jamaicans became supportive of Black Power and rallied around the “cause”.

In September 1971, the US Ambassador to Jamaica, Vincent de Roulet, sent a confidential cable to the State Department outlining his views of the PNP if elected to power.³² According to Godfrey Smith, Ambassador de Roulet saw the PNP as forward thinking.³³ It had deeper ideological convictions compared to the JLP, but no political philosophy.³⁴ De Roulet did not anticipate issues for the US under a PNP government, “he expected more honesty in government... [and he] characterized the tone of the PNP leaders as [being] more akin to Rooseveltian liberals than to Fabian socialists.”³⁵

The Cold War's Impact - Jamaica's Foreign Policy and Jamaica-US Relations 1972-1980

The 1970s heralded a new era in the life of the young independent nation. The proverbial wave of change was set into motion beginning with the results of the 1972 general elections. Michael Manley, son of former PNP leader Norman Manley, was elected leader of the party in 1969. Manley led his party to victory at the polls in February 1972. Ambassador de Roulet's 1971 assessment of the leader of the PNP was indeed correct; in 1971 Michael Manley did not appear to have any particular ideological leaning.

Any examination of the period from 1972 to 1980 in Jamaica's history, that omits the contextual understanding of the dynamics of the Cold War Politics will create flawed conclusions. Malik Sekou noted that:

“During the Cold War era, in pursuit of containment policies, US leaders crushed Caribbean nationalists who appeared “communistic” or left leaning. The region paid dearly for the US misunderstanding of regional tendencies and trends. Furthermore, nationalist leaders rarely remained in power long enough to implement their agendas. Fidel Castro (1959 -), Juan Bosch (1962-1965), Michael Manley (1972-1980), Maurice Bishop (1979-1983), and Jean-Bertrand Aristide (1990 -1991) were dismissed as “Soviet-inspired” or Marxist-Leninist by mainstream academia and the Caribbean Scholars. Except for Castro, none of these leaders lasted long. The Caribbean suffered as a result.”³⁶

Manley had ambitions to transform Jamaica, and he “envisioned an alternative path of development emphasizing the need for greater economic independence.”³⁷ Manley's character was shaped by a number factors including the influence of his father who had served for many years in politics. Manley also had military experience in the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II. However, his greatest influence was likely the university education he received at London School of Economics after the war, under the tutelage of Harold Laski. Laski “was

considered to be the most influential intellectual within the British Labour Party at that time”.³⁸

Laski had taught at many prestigious universities such as Harvard and Yale in the US, and McGill in Canada. Laski, who was active in the left wing of the British Labour Party and in trade unionism, was also an advocate for “democratic socialism”. Godfrey Smith noted that “Michael saw Laski’s genius as the achievement of intellectual synthesis between socialism and the principles of democracy as they related to political organization.”³⁹

After rising to power in 1972, Manley’s government adopted a “democratic socialism” agenda that would shape not only domestic politics but also the nation’s foreign policy. In his election victory speech in 1972, Manley said:

“I totally distrust these cliché words like socialism, capitalism and this, that and the other. I don’t know any socialist country in the world that is not in fact employing a kind of capitalism as part of its total fabric. I don’t know any capitalist country that isn’t employing socialism. I think the labels have become totally irrelevant to the contemporary situation.”⁴⁰

Is it a coincidence that in the same year that Michael Manley became prime minister the regional diplomatic isolation of Cuba in the Caribbean came to an end? In the midst of the Cold War, four English-speaking Caribbean nations, Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana joined to established diplomatic relations with Havana. In December 1972, the four nations simultaneously announced that they had opened diplomatic relations with Cuba, a move described as “a sovereign collective active act of principle”. Godfrey Smith, in his biography of Michael Manley, noted that Manley “admired Castro’s ability to mobilize a country, his ability to give a country pride, his ability to give young people a sense of place.”⁴¹

The principles underpinning the ideology adopted by Michael Manley would have significant impact on the nation in both the domestic and international spheres.⁴² According to Godfrey Smith, Manley held the view that,

“a post-colonial society must tackle the development of a strategy, designed to replace the psychology of dependence with the spirit of individual and collective self-reliance...he restored civil liberties, lifted bans on leftist publications, issued passports to people who had been marked and repressed [by the previous administration]... welcomed Black Muslims from the USA and often used a Rastafarian musical group ...to represent Jamaica internationally.”⁴³

It can be construed that elements of Marxist ideology were also at play since the Prime Minister held the view that the means of production was in the hands of the few. This moved him to find ways to more equally distribute resources. The Prime Minister thus decided to examine the foreign business ownership and the repatriation of profits by the multinational firms. Jamaica's new foreign policy was taking shape, starkly different from what it had been in the preceding ten years. In his first budget speech Michael Manley “identified equality, social injustice, self-reliance and discipline as the four principles on which his government's policies were founded”⁴⁴

Michael Manley was keenly interested in the bauxite companies. They were almost exclusively foreign owned, and they had enjoyed Jamaican tax breaks for over twenty years in some cases.⁴⁵ In the 1970s Jamaica was the world's second largest producer of bauxite and the second largest exporter of alumina.⁴⁶ Indeed the country also supplied 60% of US bauxite demand.⁴⁷ Multinational corporations such as Aluminum Corporation of America (ALCOA), Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation, Reynolds Metal Company, Aluminum Company of Canada (ALCAN) and Revere Alumina were conducting mining operations in Jamaica.

In his first year in office, Manley reshaped Jamaica's foreign policies and its relations with the US. As early as October 1972, Manley addressed the UN General Assembly in New York, and articulated his vision for a 'New International Economic Order' (NIEO).⁴⁸ He used the platform to speak out against racist regimes, particularly in Africa, and he articulated Jamaica's position regarding equality. He urged members to stop turning a blind eye to injustices around the world. At that same forum, Manley articulated his vision for a redesign of the international system of trade. Although Godfrey Smith argued that "...from the beginning of his term, he [Manley] had a clear and masterful understanding of the workings of the global economic system,"⁴⁹ Ronald T Libby summary of the views of a number of scholars presented a different picture. They judged that there was a failure at implementing democratic socialism in Jamaica. Libby also presented Kari Levitt's argument that "...the primary responsibility for the failure of the PNP government lies with the leader of the party – Manley"⁵⁰

For the domestic economic agenda, the new government took stock of foreign exchange problems by developing policies geared towards reducing imports and increasing exports. The government articulated a desire to achieve food self-sufficiency in providing food for the nation. The government also took steps to ban fifty-six luxury items that could be produced locally.⁵¹ For imports, Godfrey Smith noted that "priority was given to raw materials and capital goods needed for economic expansion, especially agricultural development."⁵² Manley's ideology of a democratic socialism was centred on nationalizing economic resources, increased self-reliance, and a non-aligned foreign policy.⁵³

Jamaica's fragile economy took a major hit when prices for staples such as corn, soy and wheat soared on the world market over the period 1971-1974.⁵⁴ This significantly affected Jamaica especially since the government had placed a major emphasis on farming. These items

became increasingly costly imports. To fill the gap in the budget, the government increased taxation on property; this was a means to force the wealthy to pay more and to create greater wealth distribution. The government also instituted land reform, dubbed 'Project Land Lease', to provide thousands of small farmers with land, technical advice, inputs such as fertilizers, and access to credit.⁵⁵ The imposition of the property tax was met with much opposition from the wealthy and the opposition political party. The sentiments from the JLP were that property tax was just a start of what was to come – the government's path to communism. The government policies that were being implemented were, however, geared towards improving the lives of the poor in the society. There was the introduction of free education up to tertiary level, costly for the government, but deemed necessary to ensure equal access for all.

On the international front, during the first year in office, the new government strengthened relations with Venezuela. On a visit to Caracas, the Prime Minister explored opportunities for Venezuela to supply crude oil to Jamaica for a proposed oil refinery and for trade between the two nations – with Jamaica prepared to provide transshipment facilities. This was the beginning of the nation's growing ties to Venezuela.

Manley's foreign policies also focussed heavily on 'Third World' partnership. His government sought to strengthen economic ties with its Caribbean neighbours – Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago – by inaugurating the first meeting of the Council of Ministers in Kingston, Jamaica in 1973. To replace the failed Federation of 1962, an attempt was made to establish an economic/trade bloc in 1968 with the launching of the Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA). In 1973, steps were taken to further integrate and expand the trading bloc to other states within the region, resulting in the formation of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Jamaica also developed relations with Mexico and Belize.

Manley's first major diplomatic "row" with the US occurred in 1973 when he declared the American Ambassador to Jamaica, Vincent de Roulet, persona non-grata. In a testimony before a Senate foreign relations subcommittee in 1973, de Roulet reported that a deal had been struck with Michael Manley before the 1972 general elections in Jamaica, not to nationalize US-Owned companies in Jamaica in exchange for his (de Roulet's) non intervention in the elections; a claim that Manley denied and was offended by.⁵⁶ The Prime Minister dissatisfaction with the claims made by the US Ambassador, along with the US Embassy's assessment of Manley and his government was the subject of several cables (telegrams) between the US Embassy in Jamaica and Washington.⁵⁷

The world oil crisis of 1974 sent shock waves through the Jamaica's fragile economy. This second major world crisis forced the government to implement even more economic measures that did not find favour with certain sectors in the society. Among these measures were increased taxes on cars, raised duties on certain luxury items, and importation bans on a number of items. The government essentially increased tariffs and import restrictions. This situation had a trickledown effect; the economic hardship was being felt by the middle and lower classes as well. To compound the situation, there was a scarcity of food items that led to hoarding of goods.

In 1974, the government sought to impose a levy on bauxite companies operating in Jamaica. The Manley government engaged the bauxite companies in negotiations, but no amicable settlement was arrived at. Before any final decision was taken, Michael Manley flew to Canada and held discussions with Prime Minister Trudeau. Following that meeting, Manley proceeded to Washington. He met with Henry Kissinger and outlined Jamaica's economic situation and the country's need to extract more profit from the activities of the bauxite companies. In the meeting with Henry Kissinger on March 13, 1974, "he [Manley] stressed that

economic initiatives [that he was proposing to undertake] should not be confused with political hostility.”⁵⁸ This, however, did not help to bring about any resolution. When Manley and his negotiating teams met the CEOs of the bauxite companies the result was a stalemate. The government proceeded and imposed a levy on the bauxite companies.

In 1975 Henry Kissinger met with Michael Manley in Kingston, requesting that Jamaica vote on the side of the US in an upcoming UN vote regarding Cuba’s deployment of troops in Angola. Cuba was supporting Angola in its defence against South African troops. Kissinger took the opportunity to inform Manley that he was aware of a request Jamaica had made to Washington for a US \$100 million loan, funds the nation badly needed to shore up its economy.⁵⁹ Manley, however, reiterated Jamaica’s position in relation to apartheid and the African struggle. Kissinger was assured that Jamaica would thoroughly explore the matter before making any decision. After further research of the issue in Angola, Manley voted to support Cuba’s deployment of troops to Angola. Jamaica’s support of Cuba was deemed another ‘anti-USA’ action.

Later that year (1975) Manley accepted an invitation from Fidel Castro to fly with him on a Cuban Government airplane to a meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in Algeria.⁶⁰ The invitation was also extended to Prime Minister Forbes Burnham of Guyana and Eric Williams of Trinidad and Tobago. This was a show of appreciation by Castro for the Caribbean leaders who broke the US-led embargo against Cuba (Prime Minister Errol Barrow of Barbados was not included because his country was not a member of the NAM).

The relations between the US and Jamaica continued to deteriorate, and the \$100 million loan was taken off the table. At the same time ties between Jamaica and Cuba strengthened. Godfrey Smith noted that “Cuban technicians had started to arrive in Jamaica to build schools,

small dams and assist in training Jamaica's police force under cooperation agreements that had been signed in Cuba."⁶¹ The fear of Jamaica leaning further towards communism was at an all-time high, prompting the Prime Minister to call a meeting with all the foreign missions in Jamaica to provide reassurance that Jamaica was on no such path.

Political violence erupted in Jamaica in 1976 with clashes between PNP and JLP rivals. Fingers pointed in many directions. Was it just armed political gangs? Was it an orchestrated plan by foreign interests? Was the US manipulating Jamaica's internal politics? There was however a real fear by Michael Manley that he could be assassinated, while the US felt that they were getting bad press for a situation that they had no hand in.⁶² Cables from US Embassy in Kingston to Washington reflected the acrimony between the two nations. In fact, telegram number 4914 from Kingston on November 10, 1976, revealed that the Embassy predicated that the opposition JLP would defeat the Manley government at the polls.⁶³ The violence escalated in the runup to the general elections in 1976, and a State of Emergency was declared. The JLP campaigned as the pro-US party that would restore the economy, while the PNP accused the JLP of destroying the economy between 1962 and 1972 with their pro-capitalist approach.

The pollsters were correct that there remained popular support for the PNP. The PNP won with 47 seats and 78.3% of the votes to the JLP's 13 seats with 21.7% of the votes. A total of 84.50% of the electorate voted, thus giving the PNP a clear mandate from the people. The election results signaled majority support for Manley's policy of democratic socialism.

As the economic situation worsened in 1977, the PNP was hopeful that US- Jamaica relations would improve when Jimmy Carter defeated Gerald Ford at the polls and became the 39th President of the US. The PNP was also debating whether to seek assistance from the

International Monetary Fund (IMF). This was, however, considered to be a last resort based on the implications of IMF policies. The assistance of the IMF was eventually sought, but not without much division in the PNP over such a decision. The political violence, combined with the overall socioeconomic climate, resulted in a flight of capital, social elites, and entrepreneurs from Jamaica, worsening the situation.

In 1978 Michael Manley took steps to mend relations with Washington, even though he continued to hold fast to his position that the nation retained the right to be friends with other nations and that Jamaica would remain non-aligned. Although relations with the US improved somewhat, Manley's consistent anti-imperialist rhetoric and his move to forge new trade partnership with the USSR did not help the cause. Prime Minister Manley led a visit to Moscow in 1979, where he negotiated a deal to sell bauxite and alumina to the USSR, and he made plans to construct a nationally owned alumina plant.⁶⁴ A number of other joint ventures were also negotiated including "...a long-term loan to finance the purchase of Soviet goods."⁶⁵

Jamaica returned to the polls in 1980. It was one of the bloodiest elections in Jamaica's history with over 800 people being killed in the violence. The JLP won a landslide victory, taking 51 seats to the PNP's 9 seats. Once again there were recriminations, just as in 1976. Who was to be blamed for the violence?

Post 1980 – "The New Change"

Immediately following the JLP's success at the polls in 1980, the Edward Seaga-led government brought about sweeping changes in the nation's foreign policy. Manley may not have intended it, but, the developments in the 1970s were viewed by some as an anti-US

direction. The JLP entered office on a pro-US campaign and as a government that fully subscribed to capitalist ideals. Ronald T Libby noted that “Seaga defended America’s Caribbean policy, and ... he [Seaga] portrayed Jamaica as the preferred US development role model for Third World countries..[thereby]..securing political concessions from the Reagan administration.”⁶⁶ In his first public news conference in 1981, President Reagan lauded the people of Jamaica for electing a JLP government.⁶⁷

The JLP government proceeded to sever diplomatic ties with Cuba in 1982 and expelled the Cuban Ambassador, Ulises Estrada, from Jamaica.⁶⁸ The new government of Jamaica had sent a clear signal to the Ronald Reagan administration that Jamaica was fully supportive of US policies and that the Jamaica-Cuban axis was no longer in existence. The US received the support of Jamaica in the invasion of Grenada in 1983, a move which was aimed at containing any further communist influence in the Caribbean.⁶⁹

The JLP government reaped the benefit of this foreign policy shift from as early as its first year in office. Assistance that the Manley government needed but had been refused was forthcoming to Edward Seaga’s administration. Jamaica was provided with US \$40 million in loans through a special appropriation from Congress in 1981.⁷⁰ A further US \$60 million in aid was provided, along with a slew of other financial assistance.⁷¹ To top this off, the IMF also approved a three-year loan package totalling \$697 million under terms that would not have been made available under the Manley-led government.⁷² Jamaica’s relations with the US had changed, its foreign policy was now aligned to the US’s, and the nation could see tangibly benefits to its economy.

Conclusion

A newly independent Jamaica enjoyed a cordial relationship with the US from 1960 to 1972, however the policies of the 1972 government of Michael Manley changed that dynamic. Michael Manley's experiment with democratic socialism could not be successful under the weight of the Cold War. As Dr Matthew Slater aptly describes the situation, "if you stand in the middle of the road you may get run over."⁷³ The nation's practice of what has been termed a "principled foreign policy" was not aligned with US interests and policies. The real fear that the nation was leaning towards the left drew great concern from the US, Jamaica's close neighbour and a super power in a bipolar world. Following the change of administration in 1980, the Edward Seaga government repudiated the PNP's policies and developed its own policies that were more aligned with the US.

This paper did not explore the whole range of the successes or failures of the periods examined. Rather, it provided an understanding of Jamaica's foreign policy and the relations with the US in the context of the Cold War dynamics. The history of Jamaica, explored briefly, provided some insight on the mindset of the people of the nation which influenced their response to conditions as they evolved. A large percentage of the Jamaican adult population can describe the occurrences of the 1960s, 70s and 80s, but they would lack the understanding of the impact of Cold War dynamics on the success or failure of the policies during those periods. In fact, the idea of Jamaica being caught up in the Cold War politics would seem rather remote. What is well known, however, is that there was fear, be it real or artificially created, that the nation was leaning too far to the left. It is indeed reasonable to argue that the policies of the 1970s, both foreign and domestic, might have had very different social and economic outcomes for Jamaica in the absence of Cold War politics.

The politics of the Cold War impacted Jamaica in its early development as an independent nation state and accounted for the strained relations with the US in the 1970s. Understanding the Cold War era then, should provide valuable insight for aspiring politicians in Jamaica and other small nation states to consider regarding relations with major powers in the international system. A nation's foreign policy should be geared towards securing its interests. A nation's interests and its foreign policies will also change over time and from one administration to another. However, it is important to appreciate the impact of the external factors on the nation's participation in the international system, which is inevitable given today's globalized environment.

End Notes

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- ⁴ Ibid, 51.
- ⁵ See also Malik Sekou's analysis of the Garveyism and the rise of political movements in the Caribbean in Chapter 5 of "Nation-State Formation in The Insular Caribbean, Before, During, And After The Cold War" <http://www.proquest.com/>.
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