

III.

RESPONSES OF THE CARIBBEAN STATES

The responses of the Caribbean states to the problems posed by their external and national environments were examined under the headings, security arrangements and diplomacy.

Security Arrangements

Perceptions of security needs vary among the small states of the region. Guyana, confronted by Venezuela's claim, aims at achieving security through obtaining diplomatic support especially from developing states, while Belize seeks safety in military arrangements with the United Kingdom; Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago maintain small standing armies. The Bahamas, as an archipelago, has concentrated on a coast guard and similar instruments and, in view of its nearness to the United States, has accepted an American strategic presence in its territory.

On the other hand, the security problems of the eastern Caribbean states which, in many respects, form a homogeneous group, include the protection of numerous bays and inlets. Their view of the problem is also shaped by such occurrences as the secession of Anguilla, the coup in Grenada which brought to power the New Jewel Movement in March 1979, and the uprising in Union Island (a dependency of St. Vincent and the Grenadines) in late 1979. These shared perceptions led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, in October 1982 calling for co-operation in assisting each other in national emergencies, an arrangement in which Barbados, which takes a similar view, also participates. The basic legitimacy of the Regional Security System (RSS) reflects the peculiar security needs of this particular grouping of small island states.

If militarism is interpreted as involving the subversion of civilian values or the military penetration of institutions, there is no sign or semblance of this in the OECS. While there was controversy about the nature of the intervention in Grenada, most CARICOM countries agreed that there was a responsibility to intervene, whether diplomatically or militarily, to secure a resolution of the crisis. If a crisis is not capable of regional resolution, it is not inappropriate to seek assistance from outside the region, as long as it is resolved in a way which does not conflict with the objectives of regional countries. But the question still remains as to whether in the medium to long term more substantial and continuing arrangements can be organized to provide both the institutional and technical bases for self-defence, as well as the