



Intelligence Information Report

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S E C R E T

REPORT NO. CS DB-312/00496-71

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COUNTRY West Indies

DOI October - December 1970

SUBJECT Black Power Activities in the
British Virgin Islands, Dominica,
Grenada, St. Kitts and St. Lucia

*J D Post
CF file*

ACQ England, London (11 January 1971)

FIELD NO. OEL-58,017

SOURCE An official British service.

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British Virgin Islands

1. Although information received in October 1970 alleged that a new Black Power group known as "New World" existed in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and that one chapter had been formed in the British Virgin Islands, there has been no confirmation of the existence of the group in either territory. Black Power sympathizers undoubtedly exist in the British Virgin Islands, but there is no reliable evidence so far that they have organized themselves into a cohesive group to challenge the present administration.

Dominica

2. The Black Power movement of Dominica published the second issue of its magazine "Flambeau" on 21 November. It stressed the importance of moving out of the social, economic and cultural norm to achieve Black identity. (British Service Comment: The popularity of "Flambeau" may be accounted for not so much by acceptance of its Black Power ideology, as by the fact that it offers a different approach to reporting

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from the other Dominica newspapers.) Black Power and Cuban literature was received during November. (Headquarters Comment: CSDB-312/00410-71 reported on the types of Black Power literature received in Dominica.)

Grenada

3. Twenty-two nurses at the General Hospital in St. George's staged a protest demonstration on 7 November against conditions and the shortage of medical supplies. The Premier and the government reacted strongly to the allegations and suspended those who had protested. The opposition Grenada National Party and the Black Power organization, National Action Front (NAF), held meetings in support of the nurses. The nurses' dispute continued to escalate during December. (British Service Comment: According to newspaper reports, on 15 December, the police used tear gas to eject a number of nurses and supporters who had occupied the Ministry of Health, and 24 persons, including Morris B i s h o p of the NAF, were arrested and charged with assembling to commit riot.) A number of nurses were charged on 16 December with assaulting the matron and assistant matron of the hospital by imprisoning them in the matron's office. (Headquarters Comment: Morris Bishop may be identical with Maurice B i s h o p, reported in CSDB-312/00419-71 and/or Michael B i s h o p, reported in CSDB-312/02061-70.)

4. George W e e k e s, president-general of the Trinidad Oilfield Workers' Trade Union and recently released detainee, visited Grenada from 29 November to 3 December, and had discussions with Ian F r a n c i s and Bishop of the NAF, with the nurses involved in the dispute, and with Michael S y l v e s t e r. (Headquarters Comment: Sylvester is probably identical with the Michael Sylvester, a lawyer who is opposed to the government, reported in CSDB-312/01656-70.) Patrick E m m a n u e l, Grenadian lecturer at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine campus, and detainee during the spring 1970 state of emergency in Trinidad, visited Grenada during November and had discussions with Francis and other Black Power advocates.

St. Kitts

5. Fitzroy B r y a n t, Minister of Education, Health, and Welfare, and Lee M o o r e, Public Relations Officer to the Premier, held an "Educational Forum" on "Youth and Its Aspirations" during October. Both are advocates of Black Power.

St. Lucia

6. The St. Lucia government introduced two unpopular bills into the House of Assembly during November; one was a proposed Retirement Allowance and Pensions Bill for government ministers and other legislators, and the other was a Teachers Service Commission Bill. The St. Lucia Forum vehemently attacked the provisions of the Retirement Allowance and Pensions Bill and organized two demonstrations against it. The bill was not given a second reading. The Teachers Service Commission Bill was the cause of strong protest by the Catholic Church authorities who staged a demonstration against it on 26 November. The opposition

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St. Lucia Labor Party jumped at the chance of criticizing the government and joined in the religious demonstration. On 27 November, 280 primary school teachers stated a counter-demonstration in favor of the bill. Forum managed to persuade both sides to have further discussions, and as a result, an amendment acceptable to both was made and the bill was passed on 27 November.

7. Field Dissem: None.

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