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THE CENTRAL PLANNING UNIT

The Central Planning Unit continued to fulfil its role of a central economic advisory service for all Ministries. The services of the Unit, which is responsible directly to the Minister of Development and Welfare, are available to all Ministries on request.

The main spheres of the Unit's activities during 1966 were as follows :-

I. Development Planning

A seminar on Development Planning was held from 29th August to 3rd September, 1966 under the joint sponsorship of the Central Planning Unit and the Ford Foundation. It was designed to involve the personnel of the Unit, the Ministries and agencies of economic planning and research who will be responsible for formulating Jamaica's Second Five Year Plan 1968-73, in intensive discussions on modern techniques of development planning and to examine the basic assumptions and broad outlines of a development plan suitable to Jamaica's needs. The seminar was attended by representatives of international as well as private organizations such as the World Bank, the United Nations, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation, in addition to other governmental and educational institutions, including the University of the West Indies.

The Unit is now commencing work on the preparation of the Second Five Year Plan and towards this, is carrying out a number of fundamental studies. A number of manpower planning studies are also under consideration, particularly a manpower requirements survey. The Unit is also working closely with the Department of Statistics on :-

- (i) a Labour Force Survey;
- (ii) a Survey of Costs, Output and Investment; and
- (iii) the formulation of a Continuous Social and Demographic Survey.

During 1966 the Central Planning Unit also worked closely with the University of the West Indies on a Survey of Household Expenditure in Jamaica.

The Manpower Research Unit was recently transferred from the Ministry of Labour and National Insurance to the Central Planning Unit to undertake studies for the provision of manpower data and forecasts which will be used in the preparation of the next Five Year Plan.

II. Co-ordination of Technical Assistance

The Central Planning Unit co-ordinates all technical assistance received by the Jamaica Government from international and bilateral sources (principally the United Nations Development Programme, the United Kingdom Ministry of Overseas Development, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Government of Canada) in the form of technical experts and advisers, and grants of equipment.

The co-ordination of technical assistance requires a careful analysis of the needs of the various Ministries, ensuring that these needs are precisely expressed and submitted to the appropriate agency under the particular regulations and requirements of that agency. The Unit also tries to ensure that the priority developmental needs of the country are met within the limited areas of technical assistance available.

A quarterly Technical Assistance Summary, and a monthly Technical Assistance Newsletter, are prepared and distributed by the Central Planning Unit. Press Releases are also issued monthly on arrivals and departures of experts.

Under these programmes, which are co-ordinated by the Central Planning Unit, 162 experts and advisers were assigned to Jamaica in 1966, and 122 fellowships and scholarships were awarded to Jamaicans during the year.

The Central Planning Unit has a specific responsibility for preparation of projects for submission to the United Nations Special Fund (now part of the United Nations Development Programme). Four major Special Fund projects are already in operation in Jamaica :-

- (a) a Groundwater Resources Survey project (Ministry of Development and Welfare) towards which the United Nations will contribute £270,000 over a 3-year period;
- (b) the establishment of a new Map Production Unit within the Survey Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, towards which the United Nations will contribute £117,000 over a 4-year period;
- (c) the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Exploration Project towards which the United Nations will contribute £557,000 over a 4-year period; and
- (d) a Productivity Centre (together with assistance to the Institute of Craft) towards which the United Nations will contribute £306,000 over a 5-year period.

Requests have also been submitted to the Special Fund for other projects, of which the Forestry and Watershed Management Project, the Physical Planning Project and the Caribbean Meteorological Institute (a regional project) have been approved but are not yet operational. Another request, for the establishment of a Food Crops Improvement Centre, is still under study.

In addition, the Central Planning Unit has been handling the co-ordination of the three Volunteer Programmes - the Voluntary Service Overseas (United Kingdom) (28 volunteers); Canadian University Service Overseas (28 volunteers); and the United States Peace Corps (102 volunteers) which have been providing trained and qualified young people to serve between one and two years in the fields of Education, Social Welfare and Health Services.

Food Aid: The Central Planning Unit also co-ordinates food aid programmes in Jamaica, primarily -

- (a) the Food for Peace Programme, which formerly provided food supplies for individual Ministries but which now grants food on a Government-to-Government basis. Food aid for the indigent and for poor relief is still administered through the Church World Service, but this arrangement is due to terminate on 30th June 1968;
- (b) the UN/FAO World Food Programme, which has two projects currently operating in Jamaica - the Watershed Management Project in the Upper Rio Minho and Cane River areas, and food aid for the Hayes Cornpiece Resettlement Project in Clarendon (both projects operated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands), and food aid for the Cobbla and Chestervale Youth Camps, and for a new Youth Camp at Kenilworth in Hanover.

Consideration is being given to securing food aid from the World Food Programme for community development and training projects and to the establishment of a Central Food Administration.

The Central Planning Unit also made the arrangements for the World Food Programme Exploratory Mission which carried out a case-study in Jamaica in November, 1965 concerning the practicability of a "programme approach" in food aid to assist the development plans of developing

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countries. The Mission's report has been submitted and is being studied by United Nations officials.

### III. National Commission on Unemployment

The National Commission on Unemployment was formed in August and held its first meeting in September 1966, with the Director of the Central Planning Unit as Member/Secretary. The Commission is charged with making recommendations and suggesting projects by means of which unemployment could be eliminated or substantially reduced. The Government, private agencies, the industrial and commercial community as well as the University of the West Indies are represented on the Commission.

To carry out its functions the Commission established small working groups which, along with co-opted members, examine various aspects of the problem. The Central Planning Unit is represented on four (4) of the nine Working Groups. In addition the Central Planning Unit is responsible for preparation of papers for the Commission's discussion, dissemination of reports, co-ordination of the work of the Groups and ensuring the smooth operation of the Commission.

### IV. Analysis of Economic Trends

The Unit prepares the annual Economic Survey Jamaica, which is laid on the Table of Parliament at the commencement of the Budget Speech of the Minister of Finance.

The Economic Survey is the most comprehensive official document recording and analysing the main trends of economic activity which is readily available to the public, and the circulation of the Survey is now in the region of 6,000 copies.

The Unit also prepares half-yearly reports on economic trends for the information of Ministries.

### V. Liaison with Ministries

Representatives of the Central Planning Unit have assisted a number of Ministries on economic problems and the preparation of projects. The Unit has co-ordinated the preparation of replies to United Nations Questionnaires on Economic and Social Development, particularly on the World Economic Survey, and the World Social Situation. The Unit has also assisted in the preparation of papers for the Canada/Caribbean discussions, for the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development, Conferences on the GATT and the Kennedy Round, as well as other important meetings.

EDWARD SEAGA  
Minister of Development and Welfare  
7th June, 1967