

JAMAICA HAS NO FOREIGN POLICY

DEPORTATION

One of the most serious problems affecting Jamaica is the social absorption of criminal deportees who are thrust into Jamaica involuntarily by the efficiency of the IMMIGRATION and NATIONALITY ACT of the United States of America. Jamaica has no meaningful plan or program to welcome these deportees into the society or to monitor their criminal conduct after they enter the island. These deportees become soldiers for Jamaican area leader hoodlums or engage in free-lance barbarianism.

This is a foreign- policy failure. Jamaica should not accept deportees who have no connection to Jamaica .Our well funded Consulates and Embassy in the United States ought to be tackling the deportee problem using efficient lobbyists and properly prepared and educated diplomats.

Too many of our consular appointments in the United States are sinecures rather than serious foreign policy decisions. A significant part of Jamaica's foreign policy should be the prevention of inappropriate deportation to Jamaica of individuals who are not Jamaicans although they were born in Jamaica.

The American foreign policy is clearly to rid themselves of these criminal non-natives. The United States has a specific, direct and easily understood policy. The Jamaican response is fuzzy, negative and harmful to the Jamaican society.

INVESTMENT

Jamaica's future lies almost exclusively with close economic co-operative relations with the United States. Jamaica still substantially benefits from the fact the Reagan Administration made Jamaica the pivot of its Caribbean Basin Initiative. President Reagan became the first US President to visit Jamaica. This visit catapulted Jamaica into significance in the international capital markets. During the Reagan era, it was clear that Jamaica was a good place to do business.

The JNIP and the JNEC, well-organized and properly run agencies, advised Americans about investment incentives which abounded in Jamaica. The US-Jamaica Double-Taxation treaty was discussed and commented on at a high level in American academia and press. The Brookings Institution and Forbes Magazine were interested in Jamaica's development.

Currently there is little or no private direct US investment in Jamaica. American academia is more interested in our murder rate than in our taxation legislation, or our treaty provisions. Is Jamaica as a nation interested in foreign direct investment? Why is there no JAMPRO (successor to the JNIP?) office in Florida? Why is there income-tax levied on overseas holders of Jamaican bank accounts? To encourage them to invest in Jamaica?

OVERSEAS JAMAICANS

There is now a Diaspora Foundation. One or two political regulars dominate it. Let us follow its development.

Most overseas Jamaicans feel disenfranchised and irrelevant to the Jamaican political process. British Jamaicans fear that returning home will cut their life expectancy. American Jamaicans wonder why known criminals with fancy names like 'Bulbie' and 'Zeeks' remain free for years, and why peace-loving Roman Catholic monks are shot down in cold blood in the heavily policed city of Kingston.

Many Cabinet Ministers visit the United States. They assure American diplomats and the Jamaican-American community of the great effort that Jamaica is making with internal security. Yet their assurances seem deceptive as the murder rate in Jamaica continues to rise. Rudyard Kipling warned us of the danger of venal politicians; we must remain vigilant "Even while they soothe us, while they promise large amends."

Some retired police officers are adamant that the murder rate is even worse than what is published.

Jamaican-Americans celebrated Thanksgiving this week, giving thanks that they no longer live in Jamaica.

Jamaica's foreign policy does not go far beyond the formal greeting of battalions of Cabinet Ministers at the airport when they visit and making sure they know the way to Macys and Harrods.

Positive outreach to Jamaicans everywhere is a worthy foreign policy objective.

Dr. David P. Rowe, LLB, J.D., Adjunct Professor of Law, University of Miami School of Law, Coral Gables, Florida, U.S.A. He is a member of the Florida Bar and the Jamaica Bar.

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