



REFLECTION

The Unimportance of the English-Speaking Caribbean in US Foreign Policy as told by Presidents and Secretaries of State

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Abstract: *An examination of the writings of Presidents and Secretaries of State reveals very little mention of the English Speaking Caribbean, thus lending support to the view that the region is relatively unimportant in US foreign policy.*

Keywords: United States, English-Speaking Caribbean, foreign policy

INTRODUCTION

The English-Speaking Caribbean has for a long time felt that the region was unimportant in U.S. foreign policy despite statements to the contrary by representatives of the United States. One way in which to evaluate the veracity of that perception is to examine what Presidents and Secretaries of State have written about foreign policy towards the English speaking Caribbean.

CONTRASTING VIEWS

The United States of America, since the middle of the 20th Century, was one of two superpowers; after the implosion of the Soviet Union it has been the single superpower. The scope of U.S. foreign policy has of necessity been global, and in the exercise of a policy of this ambit has naturally required the establishment of priorities.

On the resulting scale of U.S. interests, some countries, issues, and indeed whole regions were relegated to secondary importance. The English-Speaking Caribbean¹ (ESC) has been of limited importance to the United States, although official spokespersons have publicly denied that this is the case. For example, President Ronald Reagan on his 1982 visit to Jamaica declared that the Caribbean “is so vital to US.” However, the widespread feeling in the ESC is that the United States has overlooked this part of the region perhaps because it is “too democratic and not poor enough.” At times the feeling in the ESC has been not only a sense of neglect but a sense of being aggrieved by U.S. policy which was regarded as inimical to the ESC. Dr. Denzil Douglas, prime minister of St. Kitts and Nevis, speaking about the U.S. position on the EU preferential banana regime, said that Washington must not “see everything within the crucible of narcotics. There are other social problems that exist in the Caribbean, and a lot of these social problems, to some extent, the United States can help and has not helped” (Bohning 1998).

Reagan’s visit to Jamaica and Barbados in April 1982 was the first by a U.S. president since December 5–13, 1940, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt inspected British bases in Antigua, the Bahamas, St. Lucia, and Jamaica for possible American use. Reagan assured the region that “Our ties to the Caribbean are many and strong, and we mustn’t let them be weakened by neglect... after all the Caribbean is our third border”.² President Bill Clinton held the first-ever meeting between the United States and all the countries of the Caribbean (except Cuba) in May, 1997. On the eve of signing the Partnership for Prosperity and Security, he told the Caribbean leaders that: “This is not a meeting between Caribbean nations and the United States; it is a meeting among Caribbean nations, including the United States.”³ During the presidency of George W. Bush the Caribbean was designated the “Third Border” as a template for development assistance to areas the U S regarded as important (Fact Sheet, 2001).

EXPECTATION AND REALISM

In contrast to these sentiments, Prime Minister Patrick Manning of Trinidad and Tobago criticized the US for “studiously ignoring” the Caribbean region in general and its security, counter narcotics and trade needs in particular (Trinidad Guardian 2006, 1). He referred specifically to the Third Border Initiative which, he said was eloquently articulated but had “not gotten off the mark in any

significant way” (Cable 2011). Others in the region opine that particularly since the end of the Cold War the Caribbean has declined in importance in U.S. foreign policy, and worry that “the region will continue to be ignored, and, sadly, it will take chaos or grave upheaval before it is paid attention.” (Sanders 2009).

No one seriously expects the ESC to be a priority for U.S. foreign policy because it is a group of very small states scattered across a wide swath of the Caribbean Sea. They have posed no serious threat to the national security of the United States, and nothing that happens there is likely to have a global impact. Ironically, however, the Cuban Missile Crisis highlighted the physical proximity of the region. The tiny developing economies of the ESC are not major export markets, purvey no indispensable raw materials, and proffer no substantial investment opportunities. The flows of migrants and narcotics have never assumed the alarming proportions of those from Mexico and Colombia, respectively (Bernal 2001). However, a small country can have some importance in special circumstances, such as when the United States felt that circumstances made it necessary to invade Grenada in 1983. Good relations with small states can be important at times; for example, the Caribbean countries (the ESC countries, the Dominican Republic, Suriname, and Haiti), with the help of two other member states can block any resolution in the Organization of American States. Jamaica and Guyana have been members of the UN Security Council on more than one occasion, and it was Hugh Shearer, the Foreign Minister of Jamaica who in 1962 proposed that the UN have an International Year of Human Rights (Neita 2005, 191). Prime Minister A. N. R. Robinson of Trinidad and Tobago suggested the establishment of the International Criminal Court whose operation the United States has refused to recognize.

A small state can sometimes take actions which the United States regards as harmful to its national interests, such as when the United States relinquished its naval base at Chaguaramas in Trinidad (Palmer 2006); when the World Trade Organization ruled in favour of Antigua and Barbuda in its dispute with the United States over internet gaming, and when the offshore financial operations of several ESC countries were viewed as facilitating corporations in the avoidance of U.S. taxation. Greater involvement by the United States could have made a difference to the capacity of ESC states to control or ameliorate narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and illegal migration. U.S. assistance to the region was described by a former Prime Minister of St. Lucia as “ad hoc gifts”

(Lewis 2000, 333). Ironically, while the United States has shown relatively little concern for the ESC there has been an increased presence of China and Venezuela.

In the post-World War II era, U.S. foreign policy has been episodic; that is, it has devoted attention to countries or regions only if they are viewed as undergoing crises that may pose a direct threat to U.S. interests. The ESC has traditionally been regarded by the United States as a safe area, which only rarely experienced low-intensity conflicts. Indeed, U.S. foreign policy toward the ESC has been episodic, and even then, the policy pursued has, in most instances, been a subset of a wider regional policy, for example, the isolation of Cuba. The periods in which the United States has focused on the ESC have not been accompanied by policy specifically designed for the sub-region. This is clearly demonstrated by the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), which was motivated by interest in the elimination of the armed, radical political movements in Central America as a component of a global anticommunist strategy, rather than by an interest in the economic development of the ESC. However, the CBI served to bolster market-oriented, pro-US regimes such as the Seaga Government in Jamaica, 1980–1989. In the absence of a comprehensive, consistently applied policy, the United States has resorted to short-term intervention. These episodes include the interference in the Guyanese electoral process to ensure the ouster of Cheddi Jagan's avowedly Marxist Party, the destabilization of the democratic socialist government of Michael Manley in Jamaica, and the invasion of Grenada to complete the demise of the Maurice Bishop-led New Jewel Coalition. These episodes occurred in the early 1960s, late 1970s, and early 1980s, respectively, and the duration of each intervention was very short.

During the last 50 years, the ESC has not been a priority for U.S. foreign policy and attention has been intermittent (Pastor 1992). The Caribbean Basin Initiative of the Reagan administration was the halcyon period of purposeful engagement. Erisman explains that "the prevailing attitude seems to be that these small countries, known collectively as CARICOM states, are not politically important because they are so small and thus not worth the time of U.S. officials or political analysts" (Erisman 1989, 141). Indeed, if the ESC has been invisible, this may reflect the need for the ESC to be more effective in influencing U.S. foreign policy toward the region (Bryan 1995, 209-229).

GAUGING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ESC

The lack of visibility of the ESC is evident in the paucity of studies and commentary on this issue in the literature on U.S. foreign policy in the post-World War II period. One way to test the validity of this contention is to observe whether the ESC was the focus of attention of the principal architects of U.S. foreign policy. For the purpose of this exercise these are assumed to be the President and the Secretaries of State. Assessing the place and importance of the ESC in their thinking, this paper conducts a survey of books written by them subsequent to demitting office. The survey starts after 1962, when Jamaica became the first British colony to attain political independence. It encompasses a review of the books published by Presidents and Secretaries of State and includes memoirs, autobiographies, and foreign policy analyses. Such a survey cannot be definitive proof of the assertion that the ESC has been an overlooked region in U.S. foreign policy but it does constitute preliminary substantiation.

The secondary importance of the ESC is reflected in the well-established practice in the State Department of assigning the smaller countries to less experienced officers. Whereas the Foreign Minister of a major country would expect to meet his or her counterpart the Secretary of State—and if the Secretary of State is physically not available then no lower than the Deputy Secretary—Ministers, and indeed Prime Ministers from the ESC have had to be content with the head of the Western Hemisphere Department. This practice is employed across the structure of the U.S. government and is most pronounced in the U.S. Treasury. Conversely, a U.S. ambassador is dumbfounded when the Prime Minister of an ESC refers his or her request for a meeting to the Foreign Minister and heads of department. When a U.S. ambassador visits the ESC he or she expects to see Prime Ministers. The pragmatic approach that facilitates meetings at the appropriate level occurs when the Secretary of State meets with Ministers of the ESC as a group. Such is the tradition during the annual United Nations General Assembly when these officials meet over an hour-long breakfast.

THE COLD WAR AND THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

The major events for U.S. foreign policy in the Caribbean were the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Bay of Pigs fiasco. There is no written

legacy of the assassinated John F. Kennedy but his brother and confidant Robert Kennedy recorded his experience and issues (Kennedy 1999). These events involved the two great protagonists of the Cold War and could have had catastrophic worldwide consequences; understandably, they overshadow any other events in the Caribbean. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. in *A Thousand Days* records that Cheddi Jagan of British Guiana met with President Kennedy in Washington DC. Jagan is described as leading a party inspired by “the clichés of an impassioned, quasi-Marxist, anti-colonialist socialism” (Schlesinger 1965, 774). Although concerned about the political direction he might take and the alternative of Forbes Burnham, “British Guiana, however, was a marginal problem” (ibid 1965, 779).

President Lyndon Johnson did not write his memoirs but it is fortunate that he decided, for reasons never entirely explained, to tape his telephone conversations. His invaluable archive has been mined and preserved with careful annotations by Michael Beschloss (1998; 2002). These volumes are consumed by the Vietnam War and, to a lesser extent, the Civil Rights Movement. There is no mention of the ESC, not even of Jamaica whose independence celebrations Johnson, then Vice-President, attended on behalf of the United States.

Dean Rusk, Secretary of State in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, chronicled his tenure in 617 pages, including discussions on the Cuban missile crisis and Bay of Pigs and the intervention in the Dominican Republic (Rusk 1995). There is however no discussion of the ESC. The significance of the political independence of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in the early 1960s seems have escaped his attention. It is curious that this political transformation, which meant that Britain had relinquished formal political control over security and foreign policy, did not elicit even passing comment. It is possible to speculate that Rusk felt that British decolonization posed no threat to the United States or that the British would maintain some residual security responsibilities. This comfort level may have been reinforced by the declaration of Prime Minister Alexander Bustamante that with regard to Jamaica its foreign policy was: “We are with the West.”

POST-COLD WAR

In the rethink of U.S. foreign policy that was stimulated by the end of the Cold War, the Caribbean received virtually no consideration.

Typical of this tendency is former President Richard Nixon, who called on the United States to “seize the moment,” mentioning Cuba but relegating the ESC to a fleeting remark on the need to abolish sugar quotas (Nixon 1992). In a book he wrote subsequent to resigning from the presidency he worried about Cuba and Central America, but does not express any concern about the ESC (Nixon 1984). His later book, *Beyond Peace* (1994) has no mention of the Caribbean or the ESC. Gerald Ford, who had the Presidency thrust upon him, appositely titled his autobiography *A Time to Heal* (1979). The book is replete with candid comments but none on the ESC.

Of the “flashpoints” of the post-Cold War era, e.g., terrorism and migration, the Caribbean, in its widest geographic connotation, i.e., including Colombia, prompted concern because of the escalation of drug trafficking (Wright and Mcmanus 1991). Together with the emergence in the United States of “ethnic crime organizations” in the 1980s, the Jamaican drug “posses” (see Gunst 1995) introduced a new security issue in U.S. foreign policy toward Jamaica. However, the National Security Advisor at the time, Zbigniew Brzezinski, exhibited myopia in articulating his grand design, which seemed oddly preoccupied with traditional global issues (Brzezinski 1993). He sets out his vision of the role of the United States in world affairs as guarantor of global security as part of promoting the common good on a global scale (Brzezinski 2004).

The ESC is mentioned once in a tangential manner in President Jimmy Carter’s memoirs, as his focus is on telling the stories of the Camp David Accords, the Iranian hostage crisis and the Panama Canal Treaty negotiations. He records that the Bahamas’ offer to allow the Shah of Iran to reside there was accepted, but that the Shah chose instead to go to Mexico (Carter 1982). Cyrus Vance (1983) recalls that his own tenure as Secretary of State was dominated by the Camp David negotiations, the Israel–Egypt peace agreement, the Panama Canal Treaty and the Iranian hostage crisis. These recollections do not include the ESC. It is rather peculiar that neither Carter nor Vance make any reference to the turbulence in U.S. relations with Jamaica during the late 1970s, when the Michael Manley–led government was viewed as having moved decisively to the left. Moreover, at this point in Jamaica’s history, it was believed that Fidel Castro was an undesirable influence on Manley. There was even a clandestine visit to Jamaica from Kissinger, masquerading as a tourist, to dissuade Manley from foreign policy positions that the United States considered undesirable. This

episode and the issues of concern were never elevated to inclusion in Kissinger's subsequent writings.

Kissinger's enormous (1521 pages) memoir of his years in the White House predictably mentions Cuba but there is little on the Caribbean except when it is mentioned as Latin America and the Caribbean (Kissinger 1979). He does recall with displeasure in a follow-up volume that a certain resolution at the United Nations was approved 19-1 with Jamaica being the only country to vote against it (Kissinger 2000). In discussing U.S. diplomacy in the 21st Century he recalls the Cuban Missile Crisis and what he regards as the lack of democracy in Cuba, but is silent on the ESC (Kissinger 2001). He can be forgiven for not mentioning the ESC in the grand sweep of the history of diplomacy of the Western countries as presented in the exhaustive *Diplomacy* (Kissinger 1995). However, a less Eurocentric historical perspective would not overlook the enormous economic contribution of the West Indies to economic development of Western Europe, so well explained by Eric Williams (1994) and the centrality of the Caribbean in the interstate rivalry and conflict among European powers throughout the 17th and 18th centuries.

The exception is Secretary of State George Schultz, who in his memoirs discusses U.S. intervention in Central America and the invasion of Grenada (Schultz 1993, 323-45). However, despite the attention to the events of 1983 in Grenada, it is not clear that a coherent long-term policy, specifically developed and implemented for the ESC, was in place before or after this episode. The action of the Reagan administration in Grenada really derives from and must be understood as part of a hemisphere-wide anticommunism policy, which dates back to the beginning of the Cold War. Initially, the ESC was exempt from military intervention because up until the 1960s, the states of the ESC were under British colonial rule and therefore, while physically in the "backyard" of the United States, they were in the British sphere of influence. Grenada also must be seen as a continuation of a policy of military intervention which the United States has employed since the early part of the 20th century, the motivations for which do not derive from an overarching anti-communist strategy but reflect an arrogant use of overwhelming military superiority to ensure government compliance with U.S. interests and policies. These two tenets of U.S. foreign policy in Latin America and the Caribbean were fused in a political conjuncture in which President Reagan wanted to send a decisive signal (at minimal cost) of his resolve to fight

communism or the threat of communism. Indeed, Schultz describes the Grenada invasion as “a shot heard around the world (ibid, 323).

President Carter’s National Security Advisor was the Polish-American, Zbigniew Brzezinski, who has authored several books on geo-strategy (Brzezinski 1993; 1998). The ESC found no place in such broad themes. Additionally, the region did not figure prominently in his memoir (1985) of his time in office, although it was a period of turbulence in U.S.–Jamaica and U.S.–Cuba relations. His inclusion here although not a Secretary of State is because as National Security Advisor he was responsible for the president’s daily briefing on foreign policy issues, and because of his prominence and influence in foreign policy “circles” even outside of formal posts in government.

The foreign policy of the Carter administration toward Latin America and the Caribbean was deeply divided between the traditional Cold War stance and an attempt to introduce a more enlightened approach. The latter sought to inculcate a Wilsonian moral leitmotif by introducing human rights concerns. Carter sought to permanently change U.S. policy from “paternalism or punishment or retribution when some of the South Americans don’t yield to our persuasion” (Smith 1986, 109). This was exemplified by a less combative approach to Cuba and to the response to the emergence of the Bishop regime in Grenada. However, Cold War considerations reasserted prominence in the handling of the Somoza–Sandinista imbroglio in Nicaragua and in the resort to the attempted military rescue of hostages in Iran. Cyrus Vance’s memoirs of his tenure as Secretary of State cover a turbulent period in U.S. relations with the ESC, between 1977 and 1980 (Vance 1983). There no substantive commentary on the ESC although there were governments which the United States regarded as leftist, such as Manley in Jamaica, Burnham in Guyana and Bishop in Grenada. Among his major preoccupations are U.S. relations with Iran, the Camp David talks on the Arab–Israeli conflict, and the Panama Canal.

The embarrassing failure to rescue the American hostages in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 prompted a return to prominence of traditional “hardliners.” The call to restore the United States to a more assertive foreign policy was reflected in the rhetoric of Ronald Reagan during the presidential election campaign. In this milieu, there was not a clear policy toward the ESC because of the divergence of foreign policy perspectives within

the U.S. government: there were instances of old-style tactics, such as those employed towards Jamaica, and new approaches as exemplified by the renegotiation of the Panama Canal Treaty (Smith 1986). Once Reagan assumed the Presidency, this ambiguity in perspective was replaced by a clear commitment to traditional U.S. policy in the Caribbean Basin.

REAGAN'S ASSERTIVE APPROACH

From the late 1970s, the Central American region had been experiencing an extremely severe economic and political crisis. There was civil war in Nicaragua and El Salvador, and violence and instability in Guatemala and Honduras (Washington Institute 1983). The U.S. government was convinced that there were radical, anti-U.S. groups that were infiltrated and aided by communists (U.S. Department of State 1981, 1-8). The foreign policy of President Reagan was dominated by a virulent, "no-holds-barred" strain of anti-communism⁴ involving covert CIA actions such as mining harbors and supplying arms to the Contras in Nicaragua, military involvement in El Salvador, and the military invasion of the tiny island of Grenada. The use of force as necessary in itself and as a way of maintaining the credibility of the U.S. deterrent was a strongly held view of many influential senior foreign policy officials, such as Jeanne Kirkpatrick (Gerson 1991) and Henry Kissinger (Landau 1972).

In his autobiography (Reagan 1999) and diaries, President Reagan made several comments on the invasion of Grenada.⁵ He recorded on October 21, 1983:

I've OK'd an outright invasion in response to a request by 6 Caribbean countries including Jamaica & Barbados. They will all supply some troops so that it will be a multi-national invasion (Reagan 2007, 189).

He felt vindicated in this action because, "[W]e have captured 700 Cubans, most of the Grenada military have faded back into the population" (ibid, 192) and "[T]hey (the Cubans) were really going to move in & take over" (ibid 191). The connection as he saw it between events in Lebanon and Grenada is presented among a selected group of speeches published as a book (Reagan 2004, 184-195).

In contrast, Alexander Haig, former U.S. army general and Secretary of State for Ronald Reagan in his first term did commit his recollections and views to paper, revealing his preoccupation

with the Middle East, the Falkland Islands, and Lebanon. Regarding the Western Hemisphere he worried about Cuba and Central America; tangentially this concern encouraged the support for Seaga in Jamaica as a model to counter Castro and the Sandinistas. He recalled vividly the programme of trade opportunities, tax incentives and aid put together to demonstrate that the United States would support friends like the Seaga regime in Jamaica. He claimed that this programme “provided the model for the region wide program prepared by the State’s Bureau of Inter-American Affairs that was afterward called the Caribbean Basin Initiative” (Haig 1984, 91).

Reagan had taken note of developments in Jamaica when Michael Manley was prime minister, as can be gleaned from a brief note he wrote on July 6, 1977 (Schultz *et al* 2001, 196-197). Jamaica and Seaga receive several notations in the diaries, starting with the fourth recording of events on January 28, 1981 when he recorded that Prime Minister Seaga of Jamaica was his guest for his first state luncheon. Reagan wrote:

[H]e (Seaga) won a terrific election victory over a Cuban backed pro-communist. I think we can help him & gradually take back the Caribbean which was becoming a Red lake (Brinkley 2007, 1).

Reagan maintained his interest in Jamaica throughout his eight years in office and visited Jamaica (and Barbados) in April, 1982. He kept faith with Seaga and had regular contact with him and there were face-to-face meetings in February, 1983 and October, 1988 (Brinkley 2007, 133, 654). The states of the ESC were beneficiaries of the CBI, which provided non-reciprocal preferential access to the U.S. market for goods from the designated countries in Central America and the Caribbean (1bid, 71, 90). While the ESC came to the attention of Reagan he conflated the sub-region with Central America and designated the whole the “Caribbean Basin.” This approach betrays a lack of understanding because as Maingot (1990, 65) points out these sub-regions “have always been and continue to be two quite distinct realities”.

Former President George H.W. Bush has not penned an autobiography but there are two collections of speeches and other writings in which no reference is made to the ESC (Bush 2000; 2009). The former president and his national security advisor, Brent Scowcroft, in their book, *A World Transformed* (Bush and Scowcroft 1998), focus their attentions on the end of the Cold War. However, in the 566 pages, they make no reference to the ESC.

There are a few brief references to Nicaragua and Cuba in the context of the Cold War. The book does not claim to be an all-encompassing overview of the foreign policy and therefore cannot be faulted for not mentioning every region. However, the fact that the Caribbean does not figure in the issues and events regarded as influencing the so-called transformation of the world is indicative of the region's low priority in U.S. foreign policy.

James Baker (1995, 334-335) makes mention of U.S. action in relation to Grenada, in his memoirs of his tenure as Secretary of State from 1989 to 1993. The usual big themes of U.S. foreign policy, such as the Middle East, pervade the book but these four years were an important time for Jamaica as Manley repaired his image as a pro-Cuban socialist and repositioned Jamaica for a resumption of foreign aid and debt relief. Baker's non-reference may be due to the fact that Manley's newly rebuilt relationship with the United States was centered on Vice-President Dan Quayle and President Bush.

CLINTON'S POLICY

Bill Clinton has penned two volumes, the second of which deals with his presidential years (Clinton 2005). He expresses a strong concern for Haiti, and the conviction that the United States would have to play a major role in that country's future economic development. However, there is little to be gleaned here on the ESC—not surprisingly, as there were no contentious issues for the United States in the ESC. The absence of comments on the ESC makes it difficult to surmise what he thought about the region, although the ECS and the United States signed an accord in Barbados in 1996. This document covered economic and security issues and involved a meeting between President Clinton and the heads of governments of the ESC in Bridgetown.⁶

President Bill Clinton spent countless hours speaking with historian Taylor Branch, during which he expressed regret that he did not make more of an effort to include the CARICOM countries in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) (Branch 2009, 445); however, he does not elaborate on why he felt that way in hindsight. At the time of the passage of NAFTA there was concern that it would have a harmful impact on exports from the countries that benefited from the CBI. This is because it would give Mexico better market access to the U.S. market than the CBI countries had. Of particular concern was the adverse effect that production from

the *maquiladoras* would have on apparel and other manufacturing. The inclusion of the CBI countries in NAFTA would have complicated and even jeopardized its passage through Congress, particularly in the House of Representatives. An alternative to inclusion was to provide parity in access to the U.S. market to the CBI countries of Central America and the Caribbean (Bernal 1998, 261-263). Clinton's only other reference to the ESC was a tangential comment on getting the "small wary" Caribbean countries to agree to intervention in Haiti (Branch 2009, 186). No mention is made of the dispute in the World Trade Organization over the European Union's banana import regime in which the U.S. position was to cause considerable damage to the banana-exporting countries of the ESC (Mlachila *et al* 2010).

Former Secretary of State Warren Christopher in his 1998 collection of his most important speeches has nothing to say about the ESC. In many instances, the Caribbean is simply subsumed in the phrase "Latin America and the Caribbean" while the discussion deals entirely with the large Latin American states, as emerging markets for the United States. The chairman of the Republican Party, Haley Barbour, while criticizing the Clinton administration for treating Latin America and the Caribbean as a "secondary interest" in overall foreign policy, is guilty of the same oversight. In his discourse on country-specific policy priorities, he mentions Cuba and Haiti and Central America's need to be included in NAFTA, to encourage and stabilize democracy (Barbour 1996, 263-268).

Christopher, who served as Secretary of State during the first Clinton administration, included only two speeches on Latin America and the Caribbean in a volume of his speeches dominated by the Middle East, Iraq, Bosnia, China, and Russia (Christopher 1998). The tract on Latin America mentions Cuba. However, on the Caribbean, the restoration of democracy in Haiti is the theme of one address. Christopher's autobiography (2001) does not make mention of the Caribbean, not surprisingly because during his tenure he gave scant attention to the region. From the traditional school of foreign policy he provided the experienced "hand" that a president new to Washington politics was supposed to need to navigate the intricacies of foreign policy. The ESC was delegated to the Deputy Secretary of State and Christopher was not in attendance when President Clinton met the heads of the CARICOM governments in Barbados. He did visit Trinidad and Tobago in his

1996 swing through Latin America (Basdeo and Mount 2001, 220-221).

Strobe Talbot, who for a time served as Deputy Secretary of State, was a well-published author before acceding to the position: both before and after his service he was absorbed in the study of the Soviet Union and the Cold War. He translated into English Nikita Khrushchev's book, *Khrushchev Remembers* which appeared in 1971. He continued this focus on US–Soviet relations and nuclear disarmament in particular, chronicling the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) talks and the Reagan–Gorbachev encounters. His writing since then has tackled gigantic themes of ancient empires. Nothing in this corpus of literature relates to U.S. policy towards the ESC. This observation does intimate that the ESC does not warrant a place on his list of priorities for U.S. policy.

Madeleine Albright wrote a memoir, a reflection, and an extended memo of advice for the then incoming president Barack Obama. The memoir of her term as Secretary of State (Albright 2005) has no mention of the ESC although she met with the foreign ministers of the ESC on more than one occasion, including formal meetings in New Orleans and Port-of-Spain. Her reflections shed no more light on the problems and policy of the ECS, but this is understandable because she is focused on grappling with the complex issue of religion and international relations (Albright 2007). Albright's memo to the new president is focused on restoring America's waning and challenged global leadership—in which the Caribbean is of no consequence (Albright 2008). This mindset is illustrated by Sandy Berger of the National Security Council whose spirited defense of Clinton's foreign policy and recommendations to the incoming George W. Bush administration were that the "cornerstone" of national security "remain" alliances with Europe, Asia, and "former great-power adversaries" (Berger 2000, 22-39).

The only Caribbean issue that got on the foreign policy agenda of the Bush administration was democracy in Haiti. The ESC was not one of the "decision points" of President George W. Bush whose preoccupation with the war on terrorism obscured large parts of the world (Bush 2010). His administration has not yielded memoirs by either of his two former Secretaries of State, both of whom were born in the US of Jamaican parents. Colin Powell's autobiography (1995) predates his tenure at the State Department. He was disposed to be empathetic towards the ESC and was viewed as a "friend in court". The governments of the region did not

capitalize on his presence by articulating an agenda that engaged the United States at a time when the administration was preoccupied with the so-called War on Terrorism and with military engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq. Eagerly awaited memoirs of former Secretary Powell are yet to appear and so are the reflections of Condoleezza Rice on her service in two Bush administrations. Her 2010 autobiography is a chronicle of coming of age and family. It can be reasonably surmised that her background in Cold War security studies (1984), oriented her attention to the so called war on terror, the Middle East, China and the former Soviet Union, leaving little time for anything but a cursory purview of issues of direct relevance to the ESC.

CONCLUSION

A review of the memoirs and policy thinking of Presidents and Secretaries of State of the United States published as books for the period encompassing the Kennedy administration through to the administration of George W. Bush reveals that the English-Speaking Caribbean received almost no comments. The fact that little or no reference is made to the ESC in this voluminous literature the exception being a few brief references to Jamaica by president Reagan give credence to the view that the English-Speaking Caribbean was unimportant in U.S. foreign policy.

NOTES

1. The English-Speaking Caribbean includes Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.
2. Remarks Following a Meeting With Barbadian Prime Minister J.M.G. Adams in Barbados, April 8, 1982.
3. Remarks by the President During the Welcoming Ceremony with Caribbean Leaders, Bridgetown, Barbados, May 10, 1997.
4. "For Reagan, anticommunism was an article of faith." Indeed, "there was no doubt that he (Reagan) came to office holding sincere and strong convictions about the dangers of communism-and of the Use of force to combat it." See *Haynes Johnson, Sleepwalking Through History: America in the Reagan Years* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1997: 254).
5. For an overview of the U.S. U.S. invasion of Grenada see Anthony Payne, Paul Sutton and Tony Thorndike, *Grenada: Revolution and Invasion* (London: Croom Helm, 1984).
6. The author was one of two lead negotiators for the ESC with responsibility for the economic component.

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