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Burra¹ proposed 70,000 acres as the optimum size for a Forest Reserve in Dominica. However, in 1962, a team of experts from Canada under the supervision of W. G. E. Brown² carried out a survey of the Forest Resources of Dominica. They found that Dominica had 72,544 acres of productive forests, one-third of which was on private land. Among his recommendations, Brown pointed out that the only (saw-mill) operation which can succeed in Dominica is one based on an annual cut suitable to operate a veneer mill. He recommended a combined veneer and saw-mill with an out-put of 13 million board feet per annum. By signing an agreement which stipulated that the Forest Industry must produce at least 12,000,000 board feet per annum from this, its third year and onwards, Government has virtually accepted the responsibility of providing the Company with forested areas large enough to supply this volume. It is, therefore, unlikely that the area proposed by Burra will be available for Reservation, but the situation merits a very serious study. It might partly be achieved if Dominica adopts methods to force idle lands to be used, release only lands absolutely necessary for development and reserve adequate lands for forestry and posterity. If the State allows good productive agricultural lands to continue to remain idle and sell all her good crown lands, it cannot be long before this will be regretted.

The benefits derived from a properly administered Forest Policy can be summarised as follows:

Direct Benefits:

- (a) provision of the needs of the people for timber, shingles, cordwood, charcoal

¹J.A.N. Burra *Op. cit.*

²A Report on the Forest Inventory of Dominica by W.G.E. Brown.

and lesser forest products for all time - (particularly in cases of major world crises);

- (b) development of the territory, including the creation of an export trade in forest products
- (c) provision of employment
- (d) preservation of scenic beauty and the resultant encouragement of tourist traffic.

Indirect Benefits

The following benefits are more difficult to evaluate but their importance is clear:

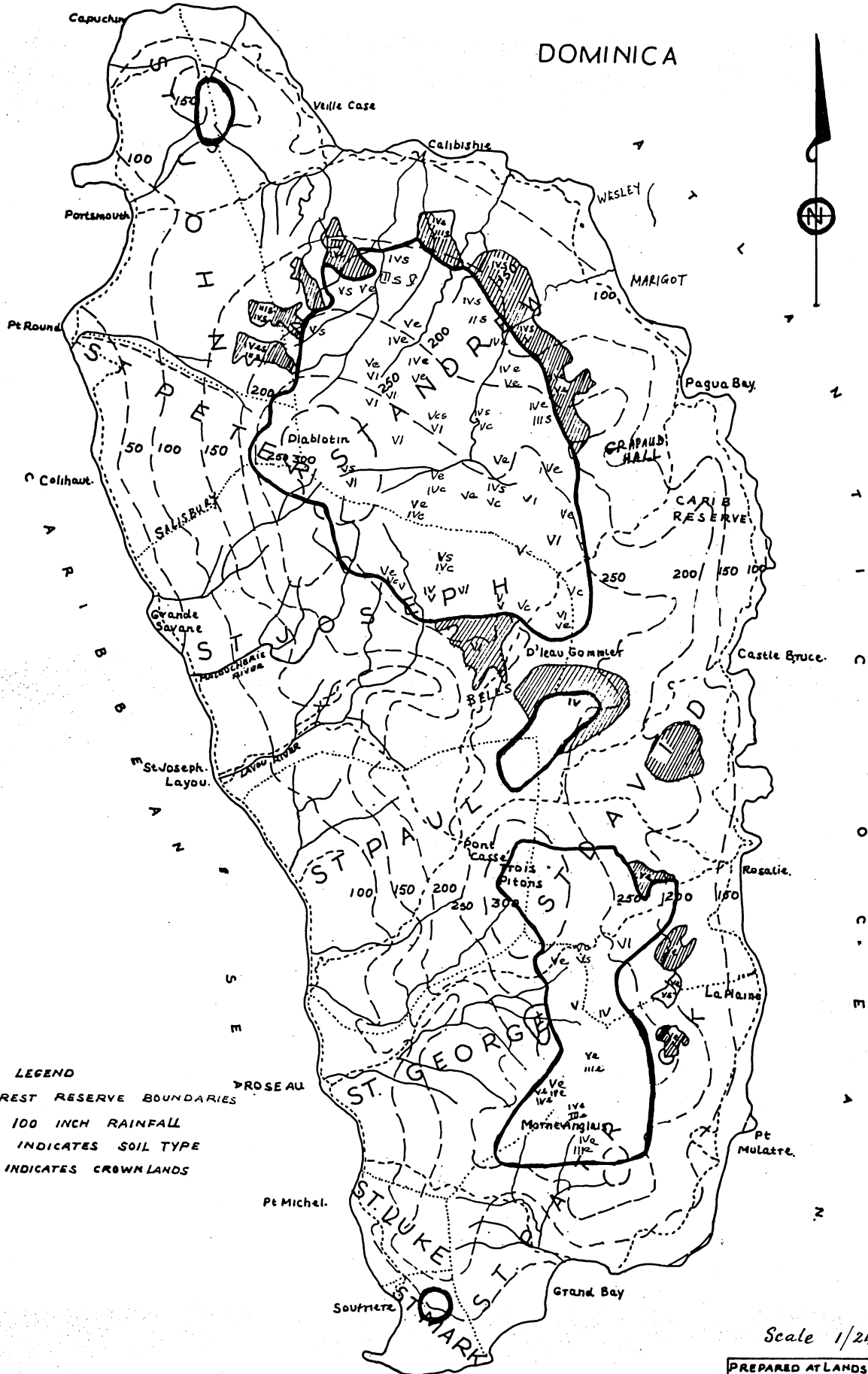
- (a) preservation of adequate water supplies;
- (b) prevention of flooding owing to denudation leading to excessive surface flow;
- (c) preservation of lands, especially those in valley bottoms because flood waters deposit boulders and gravel upon rich valley lands;
- (d) prevention of soil-loss because excessive clearing of slopes leads to quick surface - water flow and removal of rich topsoil;
- (e) changing climatic factors. The presence of Forest leads to soil and air conditions which encourage certain agricultural crops. Removing the forest will change the climate and result in the need for crop changes;
- (f) preservation of flora and fauna to retain the balance of nature.

Discussion Report

In assessing the performance of the Crown Lands projects and in planning for conversion of forest lands to agriculture consideration would

have to be given to the effects of changes in the allocation of available labour brought about by the operation of the Crown Land Schemes.

DOMINICA



LEGEND

— FOREST RESERVE BOUNDARIES

- - - 100 INCH RAINFALL

IV V INDICATES SOIL TYPE

▨ INDICATES CROWN LANDS

Scale 1/244000

PREPARED AT LANDS & SURVEYS
DEPARTMENT
MARCH 1970