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Discussion on Paper by M.G. White

In opening the discussion Basil Phillips (Guyana) suggested that the approach adopted by the consultants be examined against the criteria established by Waterston¹ who suggests:

- (a) that all the information available should be collected so as to lay a sound basis for improving the planning and management of agricultural and rural development;
- (b) that this information should then be compared with the experiences of other areas; and
- (c) that rural development programmes should be self-financing and this means that there must be significant increases in productivity to meet the demand for additional rural infrastructure.

It was noted that the consultants had applied the first two steps, although it was observed to be necessary to examine the relevance of the Melville Hall and Castle Bruce experiences with respect to the programme envisaged for the Geneva Estate. On the last point, the question that needed to be discussed was: has provision for added productivity been made in the consultants' report?

Waterston also suggests that development depends on:

- (i) labour-intensive agriculture. The project would, of necessity, fulfil this aspect since mechanisation cannot be practised on the steep slopes of the Estate;
- (ii) extra-agricultural employment to absorb the underemployed and seasonally unemployed in agriculture. The proposed project did provide for agro-based industry, but the problem remained of finding employment for the approximately 290 women in excess over men;
- (iii) self-help as the foundation. While the report did propose that part of the programme would be cooperative, it did not specify the form of self-help nor how to engender the feeling of self-help in the people;
- (iv) organisations. Technology and institutions must be involved, but in a symbiotic relationship. The consultants did not stress the organisational aspect of development enough;
- (v) involvement of the social agencies, such as for education. Some provisions had been made in the case study;
- (vi) development centres. These need not be provided because Roseau was only six to seven miles away.

The general discussion which followed concentrated on the importance of the political climate in a country and its effect on rural development programmes.

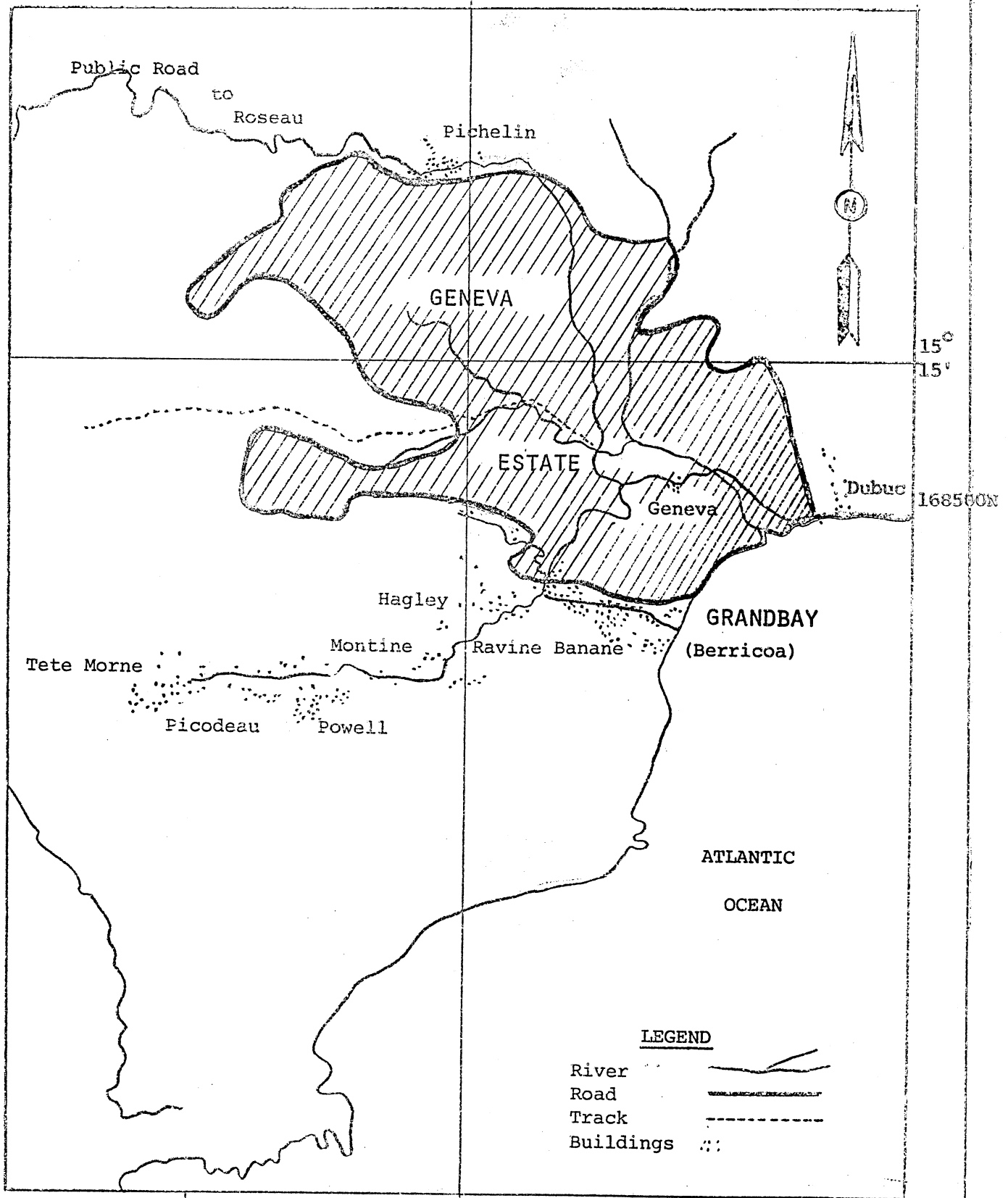
It was recognised that the consultants' report had not attempted to describe the political climate of the country, nor did anyone at the

¹Waterston, A. (1975). "A Viable Model for Rural Development," *Development Digest*. July.

Conference feel free to do this during the discussion.

The following recommendations were made in the course of the discussions:

- (1) there must be an accepted ideology in order to eliminate divisiveness and promote development;
- (2) there should be a strategy to translate ideology into practice;
- (3) it is necessary for any programme to be consistent with Government's overall development strategy. In the absence of this, however, programmes should be developed to solve specific problems;
- (4) it is also desirable, probably necessary, for people who are affected by development programmes to be consulted about and be involved fully in decision-making. It was noteworthy that representatives of the Grand Bay community were invited to and were present at the Conference; and
- (5) ideally, any plan should involve Government planners working within a broad policy framework together with the local community. Problems arise when Government is unwilling to allow the people to participate or to recognise their contribution. This is especially difficult when a locality has a tradition of being in opposition to the Government, and this is the case of Grand Bay.



MAP , MAP OF GRANDBAY AND ENVIRONS
 SHOWING GENEVA ESTATE

Scale: 1:25,000