PREFACE

The decade of the 1980s for most of the developing countries, especially those in Africa, Latin America and Caribbean region, have been one of severe economic crisis. Faced with large debts, these countries found debt service obligations devouring much of their export earnings. The solution offered by the international lending agencies have been in the form of neo-liberal or orthodox economic adjustment policies. Such attempts at economic restructuring leading to increasing liberalization and privatization have been a feature of the political economy of the Commonwealth Caribbean. The orthodox nature of the adjustment policies -- stabilization and structural adjustment programmes -- of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank along with other lending institutions based on monetarism, however, has had a debilitating impact on the economies. Policy prescriptions have even led to destabilization of the fragile economies.

It is against this background that an attempt is made to analyse the impact of the policy prescriptions of the international lending agencies on the island economy of Jamaica. Having received more IMF stabilization packages (i)
since 1977 than any other Caribbean country, besides structural and sectoral adjustment loans from the World Bank and significant amounts of bilateral assistance, the Jamaican economy offers scope for an indepth analysis. Given the economic bind in which the country is placed, the study will focus on the impact of the process of restructuring on the economic development of Jamaica.

For this purpose, the study has been divided into six chapters. The First Chapter deals with the theoretical aspects of structural adjustment, and a critique of the programme. The Second Chapter gives an economic survey of Jamaica, bringing out the economic policies of the 1950s and 1960s. It also provides an account of the class-colour configuration which is an important aspect of Jamaican polity. The Third Chapter describes the development strategy of the 1970s in the form of democratic socialism. The Fourth Chapter, while dealing with the structural adjustment programme in Jamaica, highlights the strategy of development which was in consonance with the orthodox policies. The Fifth Chapter discusses the impact of structural adjustment on the different sectors of the economy. Finally, Chapter Six concludes the study.

(ii)