1988

Migration for Secondary Education in the Netherlands Antilles

Elva Lee Smith
College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences

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MIGRATION FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION
IN THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Anthropology
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Elva Lee Smith
1988
APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Author

Approved, May 1988

Virginia Kerns
Norman Barka
Vinson Sutlive
Julia Crane

The University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill
DEDICATION

The writer wishes to dedicate this work to the students of the Netherlands Antilles. Particularly those students who took part in this investigation. They have been the most cooperative young people that any anthropologist may wish to work with. It is through their strength and insight that I have been able to complete this study.
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Also, during the nearly two years that this research encompassed, I found it necessary to enlist the involvement of many people on Curaçao and throughout the Netherlands Antilles, whose participation helped to make this study a reality. I am equally indebted to government officials, school administrators, school directors, teachers, students, guardians, parents and commission members. Their generous participation enriched and strengthened me and my research.
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The purpose of this study is to look at the effect that migration and fosterage have on educational progress and personal well-being. The subjects of this study are students from the Netherlands Windward Islands and Bonaire who leave their home islands for their secondary education and then must live with strangers or relatives of whom they have little knowledge.

As the Netherlands Windward Islands and Bonaire lack total school facilities, due to the nature of the adopted Dutch educational system throughout the Netherlands Antilles, it has been necessary over the years for numbers of young people to migrate to the larger and more populated island of Curaçao for their secondary education. Adolescent migration places these young people in an educational and fosterage environment that is foreign and hostile to them, thus creating pressures and situations that are not conducive to their personal growth or educational progress.

Anthropological methods of participant observation, interviews, open-ended questionnaires, statistics and the gathering of historical information were employed in order to acquire information concerning this unique tradition of migration and fosterage for educational purposes. This study also includes a comparison group of secondary students from Curaçao who live and attend school on their home island.

It is hoped that the results, suggestions and conclusions of this study will encourage alternative solutions to the educational and housing needs of the students from the Netherlands Windward Islands and Bonaire who must migrate for their secondary education.
MIGRATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

IN THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES
INTRODUCTION

The territory of the Netherlands Antilles, as depicted in Figure 1, consists of the Netherlands Leeward Islands of Curaçao and Bonaire and the Netherlands Windward Islands of St. Maarten (Dutch part), St. Eustatius ("Statia") and Saba. When discussing the Netherlands Antilles it is often not realized that they are composed of two groups at a considerable distance from each other. The terms "windward" and "leeward" relates to the northeastern trade winds prevailing in the Caribbean Sea (Ochse 1958: 73). The Netherlands Leeward Islands group lies about 20 miles north of Venezuela and the Netherlands Windward Islands group is situated about 500 miles north of Curaçao and Bonaire (UNESCO 1976: v). The total area is 321 square miles.

The Netherlands Leeward Islands are situated in a region of extreme drought extending from the Orinoco to the mouth of the Magdalena in Columbia. They have a so-called tropical steppe climate. The Netherlands Windwards are less arid (Ochse 1958: 74). Table 1 shows the area, population and density of each of the islands in the Netherlands Antilles as of 1988.

Migration is nothing new in the West Indies (Davison 1962: 1) and the Netherlands Antilles are no exception where the need to migrate has made the people incessant travelers. Throughout the Caribbean, large networks of relationships link the island populations, and for centuries men and women have chosen migration as their best and sometimes only option for survival. The need to migrate has created a number of common problems for the people of the Caribbean when they must leave their is-
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lands and go to other islands or the mainland in search of a livelihood. For example, as many migrants are parents with dependent children, they must seek help with child care and frequently place their children with grandparents, relatives or friends (Richardson 1983: 50; Kerns 1983: 51). Also, in many instances, if young people migrate, they are expected to provide financial support for the family and friends that they leave behind (Richardson 1983: 47). On islands where the jobs are limited primarily to civil service, teaching, banking or technical fields; migration may be necessary when no positions are available (Philpott 1973: 68).

In the Netherlands Antilles, economics forced laborers to use the islands like stepping stones at the beginning of the twentieth century, when in 1918 the big refinery of the Royal Dutch Shell was put into action in Curacao to refine crude oil from Venezuela. Thousands of immigrants came to the island and great changes took place in the field of public works, education and government (Karner 1969: 39; Ochse 1958: 76).

During World War II the conflict severed all connections with the Netherlands. The need for a secondary educational system made itself strongly felt (Goslinga 1948: 68) as it became increasingly difficult and hazardous to send children, especially children of the oil refinery employees who had been used to going to Holland, away for their secondary education. A major step was taken on September 17, 1941, when the first three-year high school opened its doors in Curacao (Karner 1969: 56-57). In 1945, with the end of the war, the Netherlands Windward Islands sponsored the first group of secondary students to Curacao, thus inaugurating a new aspect of migration.

This study looks at migration for secondary education in the
Netherlands Antilles and the part that it continues to play in the lives of young people from the smaller and less populated islands. Secondary students must leave their parents, family and friends in order to fulfill their specific educational needs. Although each of the islands in the Netherlands Antilles provide some level of secondary education (this has been the case for only a short time), only Curaçao boasts a complete program. Therefore, today the largest number of migrating students are based in Curaçao.

The problems related to their living arrangements, education and language difficulties occur most dramatically in that setting. Language is a serious problem for the students from the Netherlands Antilles (UNESCO 1976: 11), especially those of St. Maarten, Saba and Statia who go to Curaçao for their secondary education.

The mother tongue of the migrating students from the Netherlands Windward Islands is English, and classroom instruction on their respective islands has (most recently) been primarily in English (Crane 1987: 441; Saba Herald Aug. 1986: 1). When the students arrive in Curaçao they discover that their classes are conducted in either Dutch, Papiamentu (the mother tongue of Curaçao, Bonaire and Aruba) or a combination of both. These students must make an extraordinary effort to adjust to the language differences in a very short space of time or they end up failing, repeating grades or dropping out of school. Migrating students from Bonaire do not have these language problems since their mother tongue is Papiamentu.

Living arrangements are a serious problem, and one that both the students and their parents must deal with. Since there are now no dormitories to house the migrating students when they come to Curaçao, it is necessary to seek shelter in foster homes. This is usually arranged by the students' parents with the help of relatives or close friends. In
many instances these accommodations do not work and the students seek new living arrangements, usually with strangers.

One aspect of this research is the emotional and educational development of children in the Netherlands Antilles who must leave home for their secondary education. The following pages will explore the effects of the educational system of the Netherlands Antilles on the young people who leave their parents, families, friends, and islands in order to be educated in a language and environment that is alien to them. When migrating, these young people live in foster homes with people that are, in many cases, strangers and hostile to them. How does an educational system that results in migration and fosterage affect the emotional and educational development of the students?

The students are the central focus of this study. They are the ones who must deal with the consequences of migration and fosterage, and the life, language and education thrust upon them by their colonial past and a government that wishes to (or, in any case does) follow the Dutch system of education (Hawkins 1976: 76; Bor 1981: 146).

Research Background and Methods

During the summer of 1985 I visited the island of St. Eustatius in the Netherlands Windward Islands for six weeks. As a graduate student of anthropology at the College of William and Mary, I was attending the university's field school in historical archaeology. During my stay on Statia, I did an independent study and wrote a research paper on the school system of St. Eustatius, which I titled, "Statia's Most Valuable Export: Her Children". At that time there were only primary schools on St. Eustatius. In order to complete a secondary education, students migrated to St. Maarten, Aruba or Curaçao, the larger and more commercially developed islands within the Netherlands Antilles. In 1986 Aruba
became a territory with "Status Aparte" within the Kingdom of the Netherlands and is now separate from the Netherlands Antilles; therefore, students are no longer being sent to Aruba in the numbers that they once were (UNESCO, 1985).

This study gave me an introduction to the educational system of the Netherlands Antilles, which is based on the Dutch system of education (Prins-Winkel 1983: 9-10). This system requires that, on the secondary level each child go to the school that provides the level and type of education best suited to his or her ability. The decision about the type of secondary school a pupil is allowed to attend after finishing primary school is determined by the pupil's test scores and on the basis of the headmaster's advice about a particular pupil (Vedder 1986: 24).

As a result of this initial study, I decided to do research for my master's thesis on secondary students from the Netherlands Windward Islands and Bonaire who migrate for their education. I chose the island of Curaçao as the main base of my research. Curaçao incorporates all aspects of the educational system because it is the center of the government for the islands of the Netherlands Antilles and it also has an insular government, both of which must deal with the educational issue and all problems related to it. The island in the Netherlands Antilles that has the majority of secondary schools, Curaçao attracts the largest number of students from the constellation of the four smaller islands. As mentioned previously, Aruba presently enjoys "Status Aparte" from the other islands although still maintaining a bond with Holland. Therefore, Aruba was not my choice as the best suited for this study since very few migrating students are being sent there, at this time.

The research was conducted over a 20-month period, beginning on
June 16, 1986, and concluding on February 16, 1988. During this period, brief investigations were made on the islands of Aruba, St. Maarten and Bonaire. However, I spent the majority of time in Curacao, where I regularly conducted interviews with 100 migrating secondary students and 100 Curacao students in the course of the 1986/87 school year. I also talked with parents, guardians, educational officials, school directors, teachers, members of the teachers union, school board officials, government officials, and local parents. In other words, I interviewed people in the Netherlands Antilles whom I thought could contribute to my knowledge of the educational system, the students and their educational and migrating experience.

While conducting this research I employed the anthropological methods of participant observation, interviewing, questionnaires (see Appendix A), open-ended questionnaires, gathering statistics and historical information in order to understand this unique tradition of migration and fosterage for educational purposes in the Netherlands Antilles.
CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MIGRATION IN THE CARIBBEAN

The Caribbean islands are known for their long history of population movements (Crane 1971: 214). The peoples of the region have been consistently restless, employing migration as one of the most important themes of this centuries-old tripartite link between Africa, Europe and the New World (Crahan and Knight 1979: 1).

When immigrants from the eastern side of the Atlantic arrived in the Caribbean during the last part of the fifteenth century, they did not encounter a cultural or social tabula rasa (Knight and Crahan 1979: 6). For history maintains that the region has been in a state of flux since the earliest times. Archaeological evidence indicates that pre-historic aboriginal inhabitants were regularly migrating throughout the islands. The Arawak Indians dominated the Guanahuateby and the Caribs were known to contest and in some cases expel the Arawaks (Knight 1985: 94).

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, an early consequence of European colonization in the Caribbean was the almost total annihilation of these aborigines of pure Indian stock. The Taino-Arawak and Carib were reduced to near destruction by the exploitative practices of the Europeans. The features of the people of Aruba show the last traces of their Indian ancestry, one of the last examples of the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean islands (Ochse 1958: 75; Lewis 1983: 3; Horowitz 1967: 1). Consequently, the people of the West Indies are not
native to the area, but products of the most sustained and intense European colonial domination undergone by any present-day population (Midgett 1977: 209).

Barely had the Spanish explorers and colonists destroyed the Indian population when they confronted the relentless thrust of the westward expansion of Europe. This expansion led to the transatlantic slave trade, making Africans the largest group of migrants in the Caribbean (Knight 1985: 94). Therefore, Caribbean societies, as we know them, were born in the voluntary migration of Europeans to the Caribbean region and the forced migration of the Africans they enslaved (Sunshine 1985: 68).

Slavery was, for nearly four hundred years, the most visible aspect of the connection between Africa, Europe and the New World. This forced migration of millions of black people was nothing more than a commerce in human beings (Craig and Knight 1979: 1). But, as Cudjoe put it, "Slavery's horror does not begin only where the slaves are bought, for the horror and brutality of the Middle Passage must be reckoned with" (Cudjoe 1980: 94).

Africans were captured and transported to the Caribbean. If they survived the journey, and an incredible number didn't, they were sold and enslaved. This process formed, primarily a servile labor force for an internally varied regional plantation system. Mainly, this system specialized in the mass production of either agrarian luxury products—sugar, tobacco, cacao and coffee—or raw materials—cotton and indigo—for export to the metropolitan textile industry (Hoetink 1979: 20; Horowitz 1967: 1).

In his book, Slavery In A Nutshell, Paula states that:

they (the slaves) were soon made to perform a variety of
labours some of which had nothing to do with plantation work. They were put to work on the fields, in the plantation houses, in the sugar factories, in the town houses and workshops, in the streets and in the harbour of the islands. In short, they soon became the pivot on which everything hinged....In other words, slave labour became all-embracing within the society as did the slaves themselves. It is understandable then that their seal was set indelibly upon the society (Paula 1987: 20).

Unquestionably slave-based, the plantation system in the Caribbean served to block further substantial migration by Europeans. It became more and more difficult for European migrants to afford and sustain the capital expenses necessary to acquire land, labor and machinery (Horowitz 1967: 1). It is not surprising, therefore, that societies evolving from the settlement, growth and consolidation of European colonies in the Caribbean, and manned by enslaved and transported Africans, were deeply divided along lines of culture, perceived physical type and power status (Mintz and Price 1976: 2). For, though Africans greatly outnumbered Europeans, the political and economic power of the Europeans was great and their feelings of superiority reinforced the gulf between the two cultures.

In light of this portrait of oppression and prejudice, Crahan and Knight observe that, "Afro-Caribbean societies would never escape the indelible impressions of European imperialism and colonialism (Crahan and Knight 1979: 16). Not only were the West Indies the first European possessions to experience the full impact of African migration, they were also the most enduringly colonized territories in the history of the
the Western Hemisphere (Comitas and Lowenthal 1973: vii).

The forced migration of slaves, viewed in terms of transoceanic travel during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, surely eclipses any comparable event that preceded it. The oft-mentioned horrors of European immigration to the Americas can hardly compare in scale or intensity with those inflicted on Africans and typified by the Middle Passage for more than 350 years (Mintz 1974: 60-61).

During the nineteenth century (1835-1880) slavery was abolished throughout the colonies. Emancipation was opposed by some Europeans, but it had run its course and the slaves were granted their freedom (Paula 1987: 36). The end of slavery created a place for new immigrants who came to the Caribbean to fill the vacancies created by emancipation. These immigrants were not slaves but indentured workers from India, Africa, China and various other countries (Horowitz 1967: 1).

Between the years 1835 until 1880, the newly freed slaves migrated from the plantations to the towns to seek work and to the hills to farm. If vacant land was not available, as was the case in Barbados, the slaves emigrated primarily to Trinidad and Guyana where they could earn higher wages on the plantations (Sunshine 1985: 68). During this period and for the preceding century emigration and intra-regional migration in the Caribbean region was readjusting to the transition from slave labor to free wage labor, as well as readjusting to an altered economic relationship with external interests (Knight 1985: 95; Crane 1971: 21).

After 1880, the flood of United States investment into the Caribbean created a search for the "Yankee dollar". West Indians joined the plantation and railroad work force for the United Fruit Company's banana operations. United States investment in Cuba and the Dominican Republic caused a sugar boom just as the sugar industry was dying out in the
British West Indies. Migrating workers, primarily from Jamaica, went to the Spanish-speaking islands to cut cane. Haitian workers also provided the labor necessary to cut sugar cane and coffee beans in the Dominican Republic (Sunshine 1985: 68; Bazile 1975: 9). This was a time of movement among the islands of the Caribbean for economic purposes.

In the early 1900's at least 100,000 West Indians migrated to Central America to help build the gigantic Panama Canal (Lowenthal 1972: 218). Although these West Indian laborers lived in disease-ridden slums and did hazardous work for discriminatory wages, Panama was considered a mecca for the unemployed and underemployed all over the Caribbean. Panama represented a source of wealth as well as hardship and discrimination for the West Indian migrants. Memories of this experience endure even today in the region. This particular boom migration period ended in 1914 when the Canal was completed (Sunshine 1985: 68).

However, as so often happens in the Caribbean when one door closes another opens (Marshall 1979: 49). It was about this time that oil was discovered in Venezuela and in 1916 the Royal Dutch Shell oil company established a subsidiary in Curacao. In 1917 they initiated a shipping company, the Curacaose Scheepvaart Maatschappij (C.S.M.), which imported crude oil in tanker ships from the oil fields of Venezuela. In 1924, following Shell's example, Standard Oil of New Jersey opened a refinery in Aruba which eventually grew to be the world's largest (Hermans 1958: 60; Ocher 1958: 76).

These industries acted as magnets attracting workers from the surrounding area. People from Bonaire and from the Windward Islands migrated to Curacao, as well as Europeans, North and South Americans, Puerto Ricans, people from the Guianas, the British West Indies and even Madeira. As the oil company prospered it also drew people from as far away
as Bombay and, later, yet another Jewish migration, this time from eastern Europe (Jews have been in Curacao since they came with the first Dutch sent out of Brazil in the early 1600's). These migrants, along with people of African descent, Netherlanders, Scotsmen and Irishmen added to the increasingly diverse population that was manifesting itself in Curacao (Ochse 1958: 75-76). Today the population, according to tourist information, is made up of at least 51 different nationalities.

Many of the people who migrated to Curacao and Aruba for temporary work ended up staying. These migrants were not limited to men, for many women also left their home islands, seeking employment in Curacao and Aruba. These women were generally employed as maids for oil company employees or executives and their families or in the shops.

Lowenthal notes that, "The 50,000 Barbadians and Windward and Leeward islanders who manned the Curacao and Aruba oil refineries after 1928 have mostly died or returned home, but 15 percent of Curacao's population in 1968 was still foreign-born" (Lowenthal 1972: 217). It is this population, generally, that parents draw from when they need a relative or friend to care for their migrating secondary student (particularly if the perspective foster parent also migrated from St. Maarten, Saba, Statia or Bonaire).

Before World War II the Great Depression did not provide many outlets for the growing work force in the Caribbean. However, when World War II and the Depression was over, job opportunities opened up for West Indians in the United States and England. Not long after the war, due to the flood of immigrants, the United States set limiting quotas for immigration and the West Indian work force turned to their colonial "mother countries" for job opportunities. France and Britain gave citizenship to their colonial subjects in 1946 and 1948 respectively, allow-
ing free and unselected migration. Thus high unemployment, low wages and an inadequate welfare program led to a steady flow of British West Indians and French Antilles immigrants to England and France after World War II. Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles produced a number of migrants to Holland during this period and Puerto Ricans, who are nominally United States citizens, migrated to the United States (Sunshine 1985: 68; Alvarez 1967: 91; Senior 1961: 40).

The number of migrants seeking to leave the Caribbean and settle in Europe has been increasing from the late 1960's onward. The total is reported to have reached nearly 150,000 by 1975 (Payne 1984: 105). However, Lowenthal estimates that 100,000 West Indians alone settled in the United States between World War I and the Depression. He goes on to state that, "by 1968, 32,000 West Indians were in Britain, 150,000 in France and 20,000 in The Netherlands" (Lowenthal 1972: 218).

This explosion of migration out of the Caribbean and into Europe and the United States created fear and tension in the host countries. Migrants were treated with less and less enthusiasm, partly because they put pressure on the local job market but, more generally, because of the threat they posed to the traditional fabric of the country's social structure (Payne 1984: 105). In recent years, the growing presence of West Indian migrants in Britain, France, The Netherlands and the United States has fostered racial discrimination in the job and housing markets, as well as social isolation (Sunshine 1985: 73).

Although the developed world still needs migrant labor, restrictions are now being imposed on the movement of Caribbean people by the metropolitan countries. Restrictions on migration from the West Indies will force Caribbean governments to consider emigration and its role in their regions developmental process. Even though emigration as a survival
strategy may have to continue to be regarded as a safety valve in the Caribbean, political and economic migration may have to be viewed differently, in light of a growing nationalistic climate. After all, migration from the small island states of the eastern Caribbean represents the loss of human capital to that area. Finding a way to develop sufficiently and generate opportunities that will stem the tide of skilled and professional manpower from their shores is essential to the integrity and hopes for independence shared by most West Indian countries (Marshall 1979: 43; Pastor 1985: 106).

Technology, scale and population growth are factors that cannot be overlooked when considering the needs of the Caribbean region. Agricultural and industrial development require more skilled and fewer unskilled laborers. Small territories find production, processing and marketing very costly. Goods and public services are equally out of their reach (without government support) since an island of 10,000 cannot independently support a hospital, nor one of 100,000, a university. This means that students and patients must leave home for education and care, a solution that can prove to be expensive and socially disruptive (Lowenthal 1972: 214).

The tradition of migration has sustained West Indians and their islands for almost five hundred years. This study on the migration of secondary school children in the Netherlands Antilles looks at yet another example of the movement of people within the Caribbean. The following chapter will discuss the history and current structure of the educational system of the Netherlands Antilles and how it relates to this unique migration.
CHAPTER II
HISTORY AND CURRENT STRUCTURE OF THE
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

Just as the population of the Caribbean is a product of migration, so then is that of the Netherlands Antilles and its educational system. Based on the Dutch model, this educational system has its roots in Europe. Rather than adapt and fashion a curriculum of their own, the people of the Netherlands Antilles relied on the "fatherland" for a blueprint. Consequently, the direction that the school system of the Netherlands Antilles follows reflects the culture of The Netherlands rather than their own. Lowenthal refers to this contradiction when he says, "Today most Caribbean territories are striving toward universal education and equal opportunity. But the persistence of colonial patterns of reward and prestige, together with shortage of funds and personnel, keeps school systems elitist and unsuited to local needs" (Lowenthal 1972: 118).

Table 2 illustrates the structure of the educational system in the Netherlands Antilles with its various levels and branches. A brief history of this educational system follows, including a closer and more detailed look at its structure.

The majority of the following historical data is confined to education on the island of Curaçao, especially before 1945. This does not mean that some sort of education was not available on the other islands of the Netherlands Antilles. There were definite attempts to provide at least a primary education on the smaller islands. However, like Curaçao,
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<td>6</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2**

**NETHERLANDS ANTILLES—LEVELS AND BRANCHES OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

TABLE 2 (cont.)

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES. A GENERAL DESCRIPTION
OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM ON THE SECONDARY LEVEL

SECONDARY LEVEL: Selection at 12+ years, competitive General secondary education.

1. V.W.O.: (Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs or Preparatory Higher Education). Course duration: 6 years, academically oriented, preparatory to higher education at universities.

2. H.A.V.O.: (Hogere Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs or Higher General Secondary Education). Course duration: 5 years, academically oriented, preparatory to higher education, non-university professional.


Vocationally oriented secondary education:

4. E.T.A.O.: (Economische Toeristische Administratief Onderwijs or Education For Commerce, Tourist Trades And Office Work). Commerce, tourist trade and clerical work. Structure: basic program of 3 years with optional one year specialized training courses.

5. L.T.S.: (Lagere Technische School or Lower Technical School). Technical education, structure: preparatory year (new), common first year, three streams: T-stream (4 years), A-stream (3 years) and P-stream (3 years), T-stream graduates can go to the M.T.S..

6. H.H.S.: (Huishoudschool or Household School). There are two streams: normal (LHO) Larger Huishoud Onderwijs or lower household education and practical (EHO) Eenvoudig Huishoud Onderwijs or simplified household education. The practical stream prepares directly for employment, whereas the students who have completed the normal stream enroll in specialized courses (medical assistant, office administration, child care, etc.).
TABLE 2 (cont.)

Upper Secondary Level Professional Education:

7. M.T.S.: (Middelbare Technische School or Middle-level Technical School). Technical education, admissions requirements: M.A.V.O. or L.T.S., T-stream or H.A.V.O.-3, course duration: 4 years (3rd year: practical work, may be skipped), two streams, preparatory and terminal.

8. M.A.O.: (Middelbaar Administratief Onderwijs or Middle-level Administrative School). Administrative and secretarial, admissions requirements (adm.): M.A.V.O. with passes in business principles or mathematics and two languages (incl. English), admissions requirements (secr.): M.A.V.O. with passes in two languages, two streams: administrative (3 years), secretarial (2 years with optional one year specialized training course for executive secretary).

9. I.F.E.: (Instituto Pa Formashon Den Enfermeria or Institute For The Training Of Nurses). Admissions requirements: M.A.V.O. or H.A.V.O., course duration: 3 years.

10. A.P.K.: (Akademia Pedagogiko Kòrsou or The Training School For Pre-primary teacher training: teacher training, admissions requirements: H.A.V.O./V.W.O. or M.A.V.O., course duration: 3 years (full time), fourth year (part time) is compulsory but includes practical performance in primary schools.

Note: Schools for special education.

P.B.O.: Practische Beroep Onderwijs: practical vocational education (only boys).


Silvio Jonis, Director of the Maria Immaculata Lyceum, Curacao.
secondary education on the smaller islands of the Netherlands Antilles was confined to the children of wealthier families. This was the case until 1945 when the government of Statia paid for the first secondary students to migrate to Curaçao for their education.

Early History of the Educational System in the Netherlands Antilles

During the late fifteenth century, Europeans landed on various islands that now comprise the Netherlands Antilles. Since they did not bring their families, but came for the purpose of exploration and exploitation, education was not a consideration. It was not until European families began to migrate to the Caribbean that education became an issue (Prins-Winkel 1981: 9). Wives and children from Holland and Jewish families from Spain, Portugal and Brazil came to the islands of the Netherlands Antilles and their safety, comfort and future development became a consideration. Religion played a major role in education in Curaçao.

Education in Curaçao—Beginning of the Eighteenth Century to 1816

Before 1816 the government sponsored less expensive schools for the lower civil servants. For example, there were schools for the children of civil servants, slave-masters and merchants. These schools had teachers who were soldiers or criminals and the schools were not held in high esteem (Goslinga 1948: 105; Henriques 1986: Video). At this time, white men were always able to read and write even if their teachers did not always have the best qualifications. Thinking that education was a concern for the clerical authorities, the Dutch West India Company did not promote it. However, the Company did appoint a precentor to act as a teacher (Hartog 1968: 155-156).

The wealthy people who could afford to hired private tutors for
their children. These tutors occasionally acted as resident teachers in
country-houses. There, the tutors would hold classes for several fami-
lies at a time. Since only boys went into the classroom at this time,
home oriented lessons gave girls a chance to be educated. Of course, if
a girl, even in the home, took classes then her mother was present as a
chaperon during class. In any case, the girls received an absolute min-
imum of teaching. This applied to all girls whether Jewish, Protestant
(in this case Protestant refers to the Dutch Reformed Church) or Catho-

It was the custom in The Netherlands for parents to pay teachers
school-fees. As the people of the Netherlands Antilles were inclined
then, as now, to follow standards set by The Netherlands in most mat-
ters, including education, parents in Curacao paid teachers school-fees.
Private schools were conducted, as much as possible, in accordance with
the religious convictions of the islanders. As a result, the private
schools were divided into three groups: Jewish, Catholic and Protestant
(Hartog 1968: 156). With the exception of the Jewish schools this is
the situation in the present educational system of the Netherlands An-
tilles. The students from the country's Jewish population now attend
the Catholic, Protestant and government schools.

At Curacao's Fort Amsterdam there was, according to Hartog, "some-
thing that by a stretch of the imagination might be termed undenomina-
tional education: the Company schoolmaster's school". In fact, it was a
Protestant school. The teacher was also precentor at The Fort Amsterdam
Protestant Church (Hartog 1968: 156).

Jewish Education in Curacao--Beginning of the Eighteenth Century to 1816

Jewish religious schools could be found on the island of Curacao as
early as the beginning of the eighteenth century. Jewish people had
their own schools or Midrash, for the religious instruction of the young
(Hartog 1968: 150; Karner 1969: 26). These Jewish schools were private
and accepted only a few non-Jewish students.

A Yeshiba—college or academy—prepared students for the functions
of rabi (a teacher of religion) and hazzan or precentor (one who leads a
church choir or congregation in singing). It was never possible, on
Curaçao, to be trained for the office of rabbi. Therefore, some of the
yeshiba students left Curaçao and accepted appointments in North America,
where their opportunities were greater (Hartog 1968: 150).

**Government Schools in Curaçao—1816 to 1860**

In 1816 the Dutch government took over education throughout the
Netherlands Antilles (Henriquez 1986: Video). It was that year that the
"government teacher" Gijsbert C. van Paddenberg arrived in Curaçao. He
was followed the next year by a private teacher, Philip Phoel. Hartog
relates that Phoel, "changed his name into Poel because, as a result of
the British occupation, English was in frequent use here (Curaçao) and
he could not appreciate the pronunciation "fool" (Hartog 1968: 297-298).

On Curaçao there were four government schools. Two were for the
middle-class children and two were for the very wealthy. In the school
provided for the middle-class children they learned reading, writing and
math, while the school provided for the wealthy children also taught lan-
guages, geography and history (Henriquez 1986: Video). Existing private
schools were allowed to continue but they were required to have a govern-
ment permit.

In 1823, Governor Cantz'laar made a tour of inspection of the four
government schools and the Protestant parish school. After this inspec-
Cantz'laar's report indicated that the use of Papiamentu (the native language of Bonaire, Aruba and Curaçao) by the children impeded a correct pronunciation of the Dutch language. This comment illustrates a colonialist attitude: an attitude that paved the way for the adoption of the present school system and a language of instruction that is foreign to the people of the Netherlands Antilles.

The Catholic priest, M. J. Niewindt arrived in Curaçao in 1824. Niewindt reported that the Catholic school in which he was to teach was, "in as wretched a condition as is possible to imagine" (Hartog 1968: 298).

Slave children were not allowed to attend school until the government passed a law in 1857 that permitted them to receive two hours of schooling a day. The law was intended to prepare them (the slaves) for emancipation, but was not realistic since slaves were from very poor families and lacked transportation and supplies. Also, the slave master would not allow many of these children to leave the fields in order to attend school (Henriquez 1986: Video).

**Emancipation and the Expanding Educational System--1860 to 1916**

An increasing number of children began to attend school in Curaçao at this time, though the additional attendance resulting from the emancipation of the slaves was not apparent for some years. Concerning school attendance in Curaçao, Hartog reports that the figures for school-going children during the years 1863, 1878 and 1880 were: 1863, 1,850 students; 1878, 2,178 students; 1880, 2,500 students, showing a modest but steady increase of students during the emancipation years.

From its beginning, the Catholic mission tried to improve education. In order to have government support, the missionaries had to
accept the neutrality demand, i.e. they had to promise to keep religion and education apart. At the same time that this government requirement was causing a controversy in Curaçao, a similar struggle was going on in The Netherlands. This discussion resulted in non-government education, as a rule, in The Netherlands and the Netherlands Antilles. The State retained only a supplementary educational function. Ultimately, in 1884, a school ordinance passed in that year resulted in the founding of both government and Catholic higher-grade schools (Hartog 1968: 299). The government agreed to pay for both religious and State education and parents were free to send their children to the school of their choice. This was quite a heated issue and the neutrality demand was not waived until 1907, in Curaçao (Hartog 1968: 298).

Catholic sisters brought education to the Curaçao countryside. Each time a church was built a tiny school appeared beside it. In town there were private elementary schools called "college" or the Spanish "colegio", which meant that it was generally a residential-elementary school. These schools were largely run by South Americans and the language of instruction was usually Spanish. In 1887 the Fraters established St. Thomas College in Curaçao (Hartog 1968: 299). St. Thomas College was a boys' boarding school for migrating secondary students from the other islands, but it also allowed some local children to attend. The families of these migrating students had to be wealthy enough to pay for their schooling and living expenses while they attended St. Thomas College (Henriquez 1986: Video).

The Development of Trade School in Curaçao—1916 to 1954

Events leading up to 1916 established a precedent; Curaçao's educational development invariably followed the trend of educational legisla-
tion in The Netherlands (Hartog 1968: 393).

In 1917, when the oil refinery came to Curacao, education changed to meet the oil company's needs. Various trade schools opened, and in 1930 a system of education--referred to as M.U.L.O.--was adopted from the Dutch. The M.U.L.O. system or primary extension schools, have since been converted into what is now referred to as the M.A.V.O. level of education (UNESCO 1976: 24).

Education in the Netherlands Antilles--From 1954 Until Today

Beginning in 1954, scholarships were awarded by Holland to students from the Netherlands Antilles so that they could study in The Netherlands to become teachers (Prins-Winkel 1981: 12-13). These scholarships continue to be awarded on an annual basis today (Henriquez 1986: Video). This has led to an infusion of more and more Antilleans in the school system of the Netherlands Antilles. This situation has created an atmosphere of unrest among certain people and groups who advocate the need for a more culturally oriented educational system: one that they believe will benefit the cause of cultural identity and nation-building.

Although education in Curacao and throughout the Netherlands Antilles has expanded over the centuries to include all segments of its population it still maintains a colonialist attitude (Prins-Winkel 1981: 16-17; UNESCO 1976: 4; Government of the Netherlands Antilles 1982: 2). Today's educational system still does not meet the cultural, linguistic or technical needs of the people. No Antillean feels the disorienting effect of this educational system more than the students who must migrate for secondary education in the Netherlands Antilles.
CHAPTER III
MIGRATION FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

Records have not been carefully maintained over the years concerning the number of migrating students from St. Maarten, Saba, St. Eustatius and Bonaire or the dates when this migration began. In some cases records simply do not exist or the information has not been centralized. The records are scattered in file cabinets or desks in various offices or, in other instances, officials have taken records with them, according to the insular department of education in Bonaire.

The Central Department of Education in St. Maarten has the problem of incomplete records due to an inability to cope with all of their statistical work. This department states that the records are on file and can be compiled readily if the office personnel that they requested—solely for statistical work—are allocated. Until such time, it will be impossible for them to produce complete and accurate information on request.

In spite of the vague statistics concerning the dates that each island in the Netherlands Antilles began sending students to Curaçao and Aruba to study, there is information that indicates a general time-frame. According to sources on St. Eustatius, the migration of secondary students from the Netherlands Windward Islands began back in 1945, immediately after World War II, when Statia sent students to Curaçao and Aruba (Smith 1985: 1). These students had their education and living costs paid for by the island government. Secondary students from Bonaire be-
gan to migrate to Curaçao and Aruba for their education with government support by 1957, according to their Department of Education. In 1961, with the enactment of the Law of Scholarships for Federal Scholarships, secondary students from St. Maarten began to migrate to Curaçao and Aruba per St. Maarten's records. The Central Department of Education in St. Maarten also provided information that shows the number of students who migrated for study off the islands of St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius from 1980 to 1988 as depicted in Table 3. The information contained in Table 4 concerns students attending secondary school on their home islands of St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius between 1985 and 1988.

Although Bonaire's records indicate that students were leaving that island for secondary education by 1967, I was assured by an official with the insular department of education that that date was probably not the first time that student migration took place. I was provided with a survey of students from Bonaire who studied in Curaçao and Aruba during the years 1980 to 1988 (See Tables 5 and 6).

The lack of accurate record keeping about migrating secondary students makes it difficult to get a complete picture of the students' progress; but I do not think that this indicates disinterest on the part of the school officials on St. Maarten and Bonaire. These people appear to be truly interested in these students and were apparently well informed as to the students' whereabouts and educational development.

The Selection Process and Migration for Secondary Education

Although education in the Netherlands Antilles is not compulsory, only a small number of children do not attend school (Vedder 1986: 8). However, a large number of schoolchildren have to repeat grades. Ac-
### Table 3

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<th>80/81</th>
<th>81/82</th>
<th>82/83</th>
<th>83/84</th>
<th>84/85</th>
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<td>23</td>
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<td>46</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Education, St. Maarten, Netherlands Antilles.

According to these statistics, an average of 52 students have left the Netherlands Windward Islands each year since 1980, for a secondary education.

* Counted together this year.

** Elsewhere: U.S.A., Netherlands, St. Thomas, Canada, and Other (Secondary & University level).
**TABLE 4**

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<th>School Year</th>
<th>85/86</th>
<th>86/87</th>
<th>87/88</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>St. Maarten</td>
<td>2716</td>
<td>2878</td>
<td>2944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saba</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statia</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>2902</td>
<td>3112</td>
<td>3302</td>
</tr>
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### Table 5

**Survey of Students from Bonaire Studying in Curacao or Aruba (1980-1988)**

<table>
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<th>Island &amp; Date</th>
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<th>VMO</th>
<th>IPE</th>
<th>KTS</th>
<th>HSO</th>
<th>MAVO</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>MAO</th>
<th>LTS</th>
<th>ETAO</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>C/A TOTAL</th>
<th>YEAR TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
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</tr>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
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</tr>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>73</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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* Navigation School (basic). No longer in operation.
## TABLE 6

**BONAIRE**  

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<th>Destination</th>
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<th>81/82</th>
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<th>83/84</th>
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<td>86</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>567</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Education. Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles

* According to these statistics, an average of 71 students have left the island of Bonaire each year since 1980, for a secondary education.
According to a report by Raymond Jessurun of the Central Department of Education, statistics indicate that in 1981 for every 10 students in the sixth grade 7 have repeated and an undetermined number drop out before reaching the sixth grade. As a result, a large number of students do not finish primary school at the appointed age, which ideally is twelve (Jessurun (n.d.): 6).

Upon completion of the sixth grade, a selection process takes place at too early a stage in the child's development and forces the student to make an educational choice that cannot easily be changed (UNESCO 1976: vi). In addition, the selection process conducted with sixth-graders from the Netherlands Windward Islands and Bonaire creates the necessity for the students' migration. For example, if a young person, age 11 or 12, qualifies through testing and recommendation for a secondary school that their home island does not provide, then migration is the only alternative. This means that students from Saba or Statia who qualify to attend H.A.V.O. or V.W.O. must go to St. Maarten or Curaçao. In the case of students who are 14 or 15 years old, the chance's that they will have to migrate for secondary education is even greater. This is due to the lack of most higher secondary education throughout the islands with the exception of Curaçao.

The Financing of Student Migration and Education in the Netherlands Antilles

Beginning with the government of Statia, in 1945, the financing for migrating secondary students has been provided, every year, by the individual island government and/or the central government of the Netherlands Antilles. Who allocates scholarship money and how decisions are made as to which students are awarded the money generally hinges on the
level of school that a student will be attending. In some cases, scholar-
ships are awarded as a special favor and, by the same token, educa-
tional allotments can be withheld as a punishment, but generally a cer-
tain fairness prevails.

The majority of information that I received or was able to obtain
concerning the criteria for awarding scholarships, as well as the amount
involved, was given to me by the students themselves. Lower secondary
school students who migrate have their air transportation, living ex-
penses and education paid for by their respective islands on an ongoing
basis, with monthly allotments ranging from 350 to 400 guilders (\$195 to
\$225) a month. Out of this amount the guardian gets approximately 290
to 325 guilders (\$161 to \$180) a month, with the remaining 60 to 75
guilders (\$34 to \$42) going to the student for pocket money. This pock-
et money is to be used for miscellaneous expenses such as bus fare,
toothpaste, toilet articles and other necessities not provided by the
guardian. Additional money may be forthcoming from the students' pa-
rents in order to supplement their rather limited allowance.

If a student is eligible for a central government scholarship, it
is paid in one lump sum. The central government deposits the money in a
bank in Curacao where the student can go and recover the funds which are
to be used for housing, food, supplies, transportation and miscellaneous
expenses. These scholarships are usually awarded to students who are
attending the higher secondary schools such as M.T.S., M.A.O., I.F.E. or
A.P.K. and who generally are anywhere from 18 to 25 years of age.

Funds disbursed from the various islands to Curacao, on a monthly
basis and to be used as a payment to the guardians and students, are
sent to the Commission That Oversees the Students of the Windward Islands
and Bonaire (Commissie Begeleiding Studenten Bovenwinden en Bonaire).
The secretary of this Commission then writes checks and mails them to
the various guardians who are on the Commission's list.

This method of financing secondary school migration usually proves
to be sufficient, if only just barely. For example, if the money is not
sent on time, from the islands or deposited late by the central govern-
ment (as occurred several times during the 1986/87 school year) it can
cause a great deal of hardship for the student and, in some cases, the
guardian. In the rare case when a student may come to Curacao on his or
her own in order to attend secondary school, the funding is paid for by
the student's family.

When I began my interviews with students at the beginning of the
1986/87 school year, one of the complaints most often voiced by them was
the fact that the money had not been sent from their island and there-
fore the guardians had not received their checks. On contacting the
Commission, I was told that this was not an unusual occurrence. In fact,
St. Maarten had been known to be two and three months in arrears with
their students' monthly money and Statia was occasionally late. In
these cases, if the Commission cannot find the funds to make up the dif-
ference until the money comes, then the student is placed in a vulner-
able position and must cope emotionally and educationally, or fail. Stu-
dents have little recourse but to endure. If they are fortunate, they
live with a person who is able to house and feed them on credit until
the necessary funds arrive. If they are not that fortunate, there may
be an unpleasant upheaval, resulting in the student's displacement, and
the necessity for a new place to live.

Financing is a necessary part of student migration, and it is this
fact alone that makes it so important. Therefore, the funds must be ad-
ministered in a proper and most efficient manner by people and depart-
ments that understand the need for promptness. The island governments, the central government, the Minister of Education, the Commission, the guardians and parents of migrating students are all important factors in order to accomplish this very costly practice of sending, maintaining and educating secondary students that migrate within the Netherlands Antilles.

Financing of migrating students is costly, and the students who participate in this process have many more guilders spent on their education than do the students who stay on their own island. Hardships that migrating students must endure when their money is late or not sufficient to meet their daily needs tend to diminish their educational experience and have a profound effect on the way the migrating student is perceived by the host community of Curaçao. Funds and their allocation have a great deal to do with how the migrating students are received and treated by their peers in Curaçao. Unfortunately, this has long been one of the factors that have cast a negative pall over the migrating secondary students and their acceptance and well-being.
CHAPTER IV
CARETAKERS OF THE MIGRATING STUDENTS

The Parents

Why do parents think that it is necessary to send their children away for their education? And do they believe that the experience gained is worth the separation? Do most parents expect or hope that their children will return to their home island after completing their education? What is the relationship between parents and migrating students when the latter come home for holidays, vacations and ultimately to stay?

The parents of migrating students generally first state that they did not want their children to leave home at such a young age. They say that they would have preferred for their son and especially their daughter to receive their secondary education on their home island. In a recent issue of The Saba Herald, May 24, 1986, one mother put into words the feelings of most parents of the migrating students:

When a child has to go away at the early age of 13 or 14, sometimes even younger, the parents as well as the child loses so much. One wonders 'is this worth it'. There are times that the price of an education is too high. As a child can be lost in the process.

Most of these parents are also quick to admit that there are certain benefits to be gained by their children when they go to one of the
larger islands for secondary education (Lowenthal 1972: 120). But one simple fact that influences the parents' decision to allow their child to migrate for a secondary education is the lack of availability of specific schools on their own island. Aside from this deficiency, the parents also have certain ambitions for their children. They wish to see their children do well, excel and be competitive with their neighbors' children as well as children on other islands. Parents want wider opportunities for their children, which the limited economic and educational possibilities available to them at home will not allow (Lowenthal 1972: 120). On the negative side, some parents wish to be relieved of the economic and parental responsibilities that their teenage child places on them. Therefore, the prospect of sending that young person away for secondary education, and at the government's expense, is a welcomed relief to the parents' pocketbook.

During this study, I came upon cases where students had been sent away from their own island, to Curaçao, in order to eliminate the social problem that they had become. This is to say, the student was not selected to migrate because he or she needed to attend a particular school that was available only in Curaçao. Instead such students had social problems that had become a negative force to their personal and educational development in the smaller island community. It was hoped: 1) to get the student, i.e., the problem, off the island and 2) to offer the student a second chance or the opportunity for rehabilitation in the wider and more complex society of Curaçao. This practice does not seem to be a solution as the social and educational pressures that the migrating student encounters in Curaçao, makes the prospect of rehabilitation dubious. Migrating students find it difficult to enlist aid from Curaçao's established support organizations. This reluctance, on the
students' part, is due to the desire and need for privacy in an area where many roles are played by relatively few individuals and problems become readily known throughout the island community (Benedict 1967: 47).

I am convinced that most parents realize that migration to Curacao is not an ideal solution to their children's well-being and education, but they have little control over the alternatives. Some parents find consolation in the belief that migration at this young age will make the student more self-reliant. However, this attitude contributes to a lack of parental guidance and a refusal on the parent's part that they have anything to contribute to their own child's development and self-image.

The Government

A brief synopsis of the administration and organization of the educational system of the Netherlands Antilles follows:

1. Some 80 percent of all schools at the primary and secondary level are private schools administered by school boards. These schools are "private" in the sense that they are not administered by public authorities. All expenditure is reimbursed from public funds, provided by the government of the island where they are located.

2. The island governments administer the other 20 percent or so of primary and secondary schools in their respective territories. They delegate responsibility to a Commissioner for Education. In the larger islands (Curacao) the Commissioner is assisted in this task by a Department of Education.
3. The Central Government administers and finances institutions, courses and study grants at the post-secondary level of education. The Minister of Education is responsible for the formulation and application of general policy and legislation concerning all education in all the islands. The Minister is head of the Central Government Department of Education, with offices in Curaçao. Thus, in Curaçao there is an Island Department and a Central Government Department of Education.

4. The influence of the Central Government Department of Education rests primarily on legislative action. The methods of selecting children for admission to second-level education and the organization of final examinations are all determined in great detail by decisions of the Central Government.

5. The administration of the system is thus characterized by two somewhat contradictory conceptions. On the one hand, there exists great freedom and a high degree of decentralization, but on the other hand, the system is highly centralized because through its legislative action the Central Government alone can decide what is to be taught, and how students are allowed to move through the system (UNESCO 1976: A/1).

The central government of the Netherlands Antilles takes an interest in the migrating students primarily on the level of the administering of scholarships. There is little contact otherwise. When I spoke
with representatives of the Central Department of Education in Curaçao, several members seemed only vaguely knowledgeable concerning the migrating students from the Netherlands Windward Islands and Bonaire.

The Minister of Education has the potential for exercising perhaps the most influence on education. During my study two people served as Minister of Education—the former Minister Linda Badejo-Richardson and the present Minister Ellis Woodley—both from the Netherlands Windward Islands. Since the islands are small communities, both Ministers probably knew many of the students and parents. In that respect, migrating students should have a particular advantage, at least as far as island politics allow.

The Commission

The Commission that Oversees the Students of the Netherlands Windward Islands and Bonaire (Commissie Begeleiding Studenten Bovenwinden en Bonaire) is appointed by the Minister of Education. It usually consists of nine or ten members.

The principal function of this commission is to administer the distribution of money to the guardians and students when it is disbursed from the various islands to Curaçao. The Commission is based on Curaçao. Its members are, for the most part, people who have relatives in the Netherlands Windward Islands or Bonaire, or who themselves, originally came from those islands.

During my research I had the opportunity to talk with members of the Commission and on several occasions I was invited to attend functions that the Commission sponsored for the migrating students. There was a welcoming party for the students at the beginning of the school year in 1986 and a Christmas party that same year. The Commission also had a meeting for the guardians, which I attended. I discussed the
parties with the migrating students in my study. The ones who came to
the parties seemed to enjoy themselves. The most serious complaints
were, "We didn't like the D.J.. He didn't play our kind of music" or
"The party ended too early". Generally, the majority of students enjoyed
the opportunity to get together with friends from their home islands.
The guardians' meeting, which took place once during the 1986/87 school
year, was conducted as a panel discussion. The Commission members were
seated at a table in the front of the room and the guardians were seated
in the audience. The guardians were allowed to bring up problems that
they had experienced during the year. Two issues that were raised at
the meeting that I attended were; the late arrival of checks and the
difficulty that the guardian had when attempting to make airline reser-
vations for their student to return home during the busy Christmas and
summer vacation.

Although the parties were pleasant and the guardians meeting was
certainly constructive in the sense that it gave an opportunity to air
problems and complaints, these events were structured and limiting.
Limiting in the sense that they usually do not provide the time nor the
opportunity for constructive dialogue on an ongoing basis between Com-
m ission members, students and guardians. The parties and meetings are
worthwhile and should be continued; however, there needs to be a more
day to day contact between the Commission, the guardians and the stu-
dents.

When interviewing Commission members, guardians, migrating students
and parents, I frequently asked for their observations and opinions con-
cerning the Commission's duties and responsibilities. Below, is a com-
posite list which was gleaned from the response to these inquiries;
reflecting things that the Commission does on a regular basis, should do,
or rarely—if ever—does.

1. Oversee money that is sent from the Windward Islands and Bonaire and to write checks to the guardians. As previously indicated, the Commission routinely performs this function.

2. Provide an orientation program for the migrating students when they arrive in Curaçao. This should be designed to acclimate them to the island, the schools and the transportation system. One student mentioned that it had been done before, but rarely.

3. The Commission is expected to make regular reports to the President of the Commission and the Minister of Education about the welfare and educational progress of the students. Two Commission members mentioned that although these reports were required, they were not always forthcoming.

4. Organize and officiate at social and/or educational functions for the migrating students. This is done occasionally.

5. Find foster homes for the migrating students if requested to do so. One member of the Commission said that the Commission has a list of perspective guardians with which they can place migrating students. However, Commission members told me that parents usually want to find housing for their child.

6. Intervene, if necessary, on the students' behalf if problems arise concerning the community, living ar-
rangements or educational needs. This does not happen generally because of the lack of communication between the Commission, the guardians, the students and the schools. The students don't want the Commission to know about their problems and the Commission takes the attitude, in most cases that, "what they (the Commission) don't know won't hurt them". The parents do, however, expect the Commission members to assume this responsibility.

7. Keep in contact with the student, school, guardian and parent on a regular basis in order to provide a definite support service. As stated above, I did not observe this happening.

8. Assume a parental or protective position in the parents' absence. This would require that Commission members work full-time. They should also be prepared to help the students identify, confront and solve problems rather than ignore them. Assuming a parental position in relation to the migrating students' would require a stronger bond between these two groups.

It must be stressed that this constitutes an ideal list. None of these points are clearly defined as rules or regulations that are strictly adhered to on a regular or structured basis by the members of the Commission. Neither are these points listed in any order of importance, for they all are equally important, in my estimation, in order to ensure the individual success of each migrating student.
Most of the contact that I observed between the Commission and the students, parents or guardians bordered on the negative and obviously took place only when there was a problem. There was little constructive or preventative counseling done by the Commission, because most of the members are not free to give the amount of time and effort that this position requires. It is a full-time job and one that demands the utmost dedication and insight. The job is too much for the Commission members, all of whom have full-time responsibilities outside of their duties on the Commission.

According to guardians and Commission members the Commission is currently in its thirteenth year of existence and several of its present members have been on the Commission since its inception. During that time, the Commission has not always functioned to its fullest potential.

Since the Commission is appointed by the Minister of Education, it is by nature a political body. Some of the guardians whom I interviewed said that Commission members placed students in their care because the guardians were friends of the Commission member, or the Commission member owed a favor to the guardian and could expect a favor in return. This implies that some Commission members and guardians use their unique position for economic gain, political purposes, or both.

The Guardians

Guardians are, in this case, individuals or families in Curacao who take care of a student or students from one of the other islands. In some cases the guardian is related to the student or is a friend of the student's family. In many cases, the guardian is a stranger to the student and is willing to care for the student only as a favor to a member of the Commission. In all cases, the guardians receive money for pro-
The guardians generally don't have a great deal of contact with the Commission if they have been selected by the parents of the students. However, there are a number of guardians who are well known by Commission members, as they are old friends, members of their own families, or the guardians are the Commission members themselves. Guardians are almost always from the Netherlands Windward Islands or Bonaire, as previously stated, thus reinforcing the idea that the people from each island stick together in a clannish way (Benedict 1967: 53; St. Eustatius 1969: 106-107). The argument can be made for having guardians who are from the same cultural background as the student. Primarily, it seems that they would understand each other more readily. But the practice of isolation prevents any possibility of integration.

Vera Green (1973: 107-108) cites Spicer who states that, "Every contact involves some degree of social and cultural integration, but there is a wide range in what become more or less stabilized situations with ranging degrees of integration" (Spicer 1961: 519). Green also cites Hoetink who goes on to mention, in terms of Curacao immigrants, "none of them has as yet been fully integrated in traditional Curacao society" (Hoetink 1967: 117). Of course, this applies to guardians, students and Commission members, as the majority of them migrated to Curacao from the Netherlands Windward Islands or Bonaire.

Guardians provide foster homes for any number of students. There isn't any limit in force. Seven of the twenty foster homes that I visited had one student each. One of these students lived with a Commission member. Two guardians each cared for seven or more students and in one instance, seven of these students were sleeping in one rather small bedroom. This reinforces the statement that the availability of
living space is not necessarily a criterion for placing a student with someone. If a guardian is willing to take a migrating student, and a Commission member or parent needs foster care for that student, then the contract is struck. The students' comfort and well-being is not necessarily considered. Some Commission members pointed out to me that the migrating students generally have better living conditions in Curacao; the implication was that this excused overcrowding or other problems in living conditions.

In Educated To Emigrate, Julia Crane observes that, "The other major factor which makes it impossible for many children to go away to school is the lack of suitable living quarters....(C)hildren are placed in the homes of people who look upon the young people as servants and assign them so many domestic duties that homework assignments and rest are interfered with and social activities are almost completely barred" (Crane 1971: 173).

One guardian who has been keeping children for the Commission since the beginning of the program, some 13 years ago, traditionally has seven or eight students at a time. These students must sleep in the kitchen and on cots when the bedrooms are full. Since this guardian keeps both boys and girls, at times one of the girls may be sleeping in the kitchen with little or no privacy—not an ideal situation. Also, when space demands it, some of this guardian's students sleep in an adjoining bungalow. This bungalow was considered inadequate and unsafe because the windows could not be closed, thus providing easy access for intruders. One of the Commission members took the students away from this guardian during part of the 1986/87 school year. However, the students were back before the year was out, with little or no explanation.

Guardians have no stated restrictions or rules that they are re-
quired to adhere to when dealing with the students. They do not have to require a curfew or provide a study area. Nor, for that matter, do they have to provide a private bedroom. No one checks to see that the students are fed regularly or properly, and if the student complains he or she will probably be sanctioned by the guardian and the Commission for being a troublemaker. Things are left up to the guardian unless there is a serious complaint, at which time a Commission member may drop by or a parent may intervene.

The only relationship that a guardian has with the government exists through the Commission. The only real concern that a guardian has is the threat of being prevented from having students and therefore losing income. Guardians are concerned with the money that they receive for taking care of foster children and they do not want to lose this opportunity.

Guardians are in a very vulnerable position. They walk a fine line between responsibility and self-interest, and most of them play the game of politics very well.

The Teachers

Migrating students are treated differently then Curaçao students, except in the classrooms of Curaçao. Teachers and school directors that I interviewed, knew of students from Saba, Statia, St. Maarten and Bonaire. But, as a rule, they made no concessions for the migrating students. These students come into Curaçao's educational system and they are expected to adapt and keep up with the class. This can be a positive and negative situation. On one hand, it is good that school directors and teachers don't single out students according to their specific island of origin. However, migrating students do have educational and
psychological needs that are unique. The school director, counselor (if there is one) and teacher can be an asset to these students, providing a bridge of communication between the school and the migrating student.

Teachers and school directors whom I had the opportunity to observe seemed to have little contact with their students outside of the classroom. This is due, in part, to the migrating students' reluctance to ask for help, which comes from fear of rejection. It is not restricted to migrating students but seems to apply to Curacao students as well. In this small society, in general, fear of personal failure and the resulting disgrace, anxiety about real and imagined inadequacies, uncertainties about personal worth and ability, feelings of helplessness, aggravated by doubts about loyal support from the right sources when needed—all of these prevent objectivity and the courage to take a firm stand (Prins-Winkel 1983: 29). Therefore, at the end of the school day both students and teachers go their own way, and any questions or problems remain. The student is isolated from the teachers in Curacao, and the teachers seem to have little or no time to devote to correcting the situation. There are no accommodations for counseling on a regular basis within the school system, except on the H.A.V.O./V.W.O. level. This means that migrating students in other levels of lower secondary education must seek guidance on their own.

Very few migrating students approach a teacher—or any one else—for help or advice. They are afraid of ridicule and or reprisal on the part of the teacher or others in authority. Most remain silent, and, in many cases, pay for their silence by failing. This tendency to withdraw also creates an obstacle for the teacher, and makes it more convenient for some of them to overlook the students' needs.
CHAPTER V
SECONDARY STUDENTS WHO MIGRATE FOR EDUCATION

Still in the midst of their unresolved problems and confusions, they have been able to convey enough of themselves to give us insight into their lives and to make us aware of their potentialities and wasted talents.

(Oscar Lewis 1963: xii)

Problems that migrating students encounter in Curaçao include the following:

1. **Overcrowded living conditions**: I could not establish the existence of any regulations that govern the housing of migrating students: e.g., how many students may be housed in a foster home or in a given bedroom. Any number of students may be found living in the same foster homes.

2. **Inadequate supervision—educational or personal**: The migrating student is, too often, on his or her own in Curaçao, with little experience and too much responsibility. When students are separated from their home island and parental guidance, they are placed in an environment that is in comparison to the smaller islands, fast-paced and hostile. Under these circumstances, students need the benefit of capable and well thought out supervision in safe surroundings.

During my research I observed examples of living arrangements that provided only the basic necessities—food and shelter—for migrating students. The student remained a visitor in the guardians home and on the
island. Consequently, students might look outside the foster home for companionship and acceptance. Therefore, the supervision of migrating students should be a full-time undertaking, not to police their activities, but to provide them with the support system that they desperately need during this period of separation, loneliness and adjustment. They also need resources made available to them for academic counseling and tutoring when they are having difficulty with language or other adjustment problems in the classroom.

Unless a guardian or a teacher takes an interest in a migrating student, it is difficult for the student to feel at home in Curaçao.

3. **Homesickness and loneliness:** Throughout the Netherlands Antilles people have very strong feelings of identification with their own island regardless of how long they may have lived elsewhere. The students that I worked with were no exception to that rule. They are more than willing to talk at length about their islands, and they all seem to look forward to the prospect of going home for summer vacation. When I visited Statia in 1985 and talked to secondary students who were home for their summer break, they told me how difficult it had been for them to leave their island the first time they went away to school. Homesickness was a major problem for most of the students.

Homesickness and the experience of migration is much more dramatic for the students from St. Maarten, Saba and Statia than it is for the Bonaire student. This is because the Netherlands Windward Islands are 500 miles away, while Bonaire is only about 35 miles from Curaçao. The Bonaire students can visit home more often, and maintain closer ties with their island.

4. **Differences in language and customs:** English is the mother tongue of the students from the Netherlands Windward Islands, and they
experience severe prejudice as English-speakers. Bonaire students speak Papiamentu as their first language, and therefore feel more at home in Curasao from the beginning. The students from St. Maarten, Saba and Statia are also associated by some people in Curacao with the men and women who came from the Windward Islands during this century to take menial jobs. Therefore, those students who hope to avoid being called names, learn Papiamentu as soon as possible after arriving in Curacao.

5. Political pressures: Migrating students are often caught in the middle, between local and home based authority and, in many instances, end up being hurt in the process. An example of this occurs during the selection process that determines which level the student will move to when leaving the sixth-grade. This determination is made by testing and by recommendation from the headmaster. I had interviews with two families of students who are attending school in Curacao. Because of political rivalries on their home island, each of these students has been required to enter their secondary education on the lowest level, either H.H.S. or E.T.A.O.. Presently, they are working their way through the system; some attending M.A.V.O. and some in H.A.V.O./V.W.O.. One of these students, through perseverance, is currently studying to become a surgeon, in Holland. It takes a long time to work through three or four levels of the educational system and those families who are forced to so so suffer a set-back.

6. Exclusion from community, social and institutional benefits: Community and social services and events are generally open to all of the children, whether from Curacao or from one of the other islands in the Netherlands Antilles. However, peer pressure on the part of Curacao students and the reluctance of the migrating students to assert themselves forms a definite barrier. Institutional services are not as
readily available, and the migrating student must apply for them. For example, students from the Netherlands Windward Islands must apply for a doctor's card when they arrive in Curaçao. If they fail to do so, they will not be eligible for free medical care in Curaçao if they become sick or have an accident. Doctor's cards are made available to Curaçao students automatically, and Bonaire has made provision for their students' medical coverage. (This problem was mentioned to me by a member of the Commission for students in Aruba when I visited that island, and it was reiterated by several Commission members and students in Curaçao.)

7. Isolation: Migrating students, in many cases, prefer to stay by themselves or with students from their own islands. The students are singled out by the Curaçao community as different and they face rejection and ridicule because they are English-speaking. At other times the migrating students are ignored by the community in Curaçao but they are never really accepted. It is as if the migrating student is expected to throw off his or her Windward Island ways and become a native Curaçao person immediately upon arrival (which of course is not possible), or they will be totally shut out. It is hard to imagine the isolation that these young people must experience; leaving their home and family and coming into a hostile environment.

8. Lack of family involvement or moral support: Many migrating students have little or no contact with their parents or other family members while they are away from their home island. This undermines the students' best source for moral support, and takes a heavy toll on the relationship between the student and parent. Of course, the teen-age years are traditionally a period of growth and tension in the parent/child relationship as the child becomes more self-reliant and indepen-
dent. However, in the case of migration, the gulf is wider and the
estrangement more dramatic due to the fact that these young people are
left to make it on their own.

9. Resentment on the part of Curacao people: Migrating students
are resented by the Curacao community and the government. The students
require special thought and planning on the part of their own island,
the island of Curacao, the Central Department of Education and the cen-
tral government. Their education costs more than that of non-migrating
students.

Comparison of Islands in Terms of Students' Adjustment to Migration

Each island in the Netherlands Antilles has its own "personality"
or subtle differences which are magnified by student migration. I began
to recognize differences between the students as I interviewed them on a
weekly basis, and comments from others in the community confirmed what I
saw. Guardians make observations concerning students, especially if
they have provided foster care for them. Statia students seem to re-
ceive the most negative appraisal from the guardians, as well as others
who come into contact with these students. I would like to stress, at
this point, that these young people are functioning under a great deal
of pressure and stress and are expected to accept responsibility far
beyond their years or their experience. Therefore, a hostile and/or
quarrelsome attitude, on their part, is not surprising.

In the 1969 report "De kinderen van St. Eustatius: en studie van
de opvoedings situatie op dit eiland", the author states:

The many children on St. Eustatius suffer most from a
lack of family education to help the formation of their
personalities. The teaching that they receive is not
directed at all to that great need. The children are seriously hindered and harmed in the development of their personality and character. Their social opportunities are minimal. Only a few are able to escape the closed nature of the community (St. Eustatius 1969: 106-107).

Statia's students have the hardest time adjusting to Curacao. In many instances they spend years on Curacao without really coming to terms with it, socially or educationally. St. Maarten students seem to make the adjustment more easily.

As a more economically developed island, one that plays host to a large number of tourists annually from all over the world, St. Maarten provides a background that its young people can draw from when they travel to Curacao. They generally are self-confident and easily adapt to the demands of Curacao, even when their money is late arriving from St. Maarten. Kruythoff writes, "The St. Maarteners are a serious and 'Mind-your'own-business' set—the majority at least. The people are also of an independent nature and consequently carry along with them a cheerful and independent spirit" (Kruijer 1953: 235).

Saba's migrating students are well taken care of by the people back home, and they do not appear to feel out of place or psychologically very far away from their home base. According to the Keurs in their book, Windward Children, "On Saba, in contrast to the other two islands (St. Maarten and St. Eustatius) family solidarity is much stronger" (Keur and Keur 1960: 232). The people of Saba seem well aware of their own identity, and this self-assuredness is evident in their students' attitude. Even though Saba students are discriminated against for lin-
guistic reasons (they do not use Papiamentu and prefer English, which is not only their native tongue but according to The Saba Herald, May 24, 1986 issue, is now being implemented as the language of instruction on Saba), they make the effort to stand up to the pressures. Many Saba parents keep their young people on the island rather than send them abroad for education; students who do migrate to Curaçao have a genuine desire to return home at the completion of their education, if economically possible.

Bonaire is, of course, the island that provides the cultural and geographical advantage in that the people are linguistically prepared for Curaçao, and the students may return home on a more regular basis. This close proximity gives the Bonaire students an advantage that enhances their chance for success in school.

In contrast, Statia's students leave home at the earliest average age (12) of all the islands, and have the highest percentage of failures compared with the other migrating students in this study. Statia's students are known by the guardians I talked with as being the hardest to handle, and they appear from observation and interviews to get into the most trouble. Statistics show that they have the largest number of drop-outs. Oddly enough, Statia is the only island in the Netherlands Antilles that has chosen to stay with Dutch as the language of instruction, even though their students have the greatest difficulty with the language. There does not appear to be a great deal of trust between Statia's students and the people on the other islands, as evidenced when observing Statia's migrating students in Curaçao. All of these factors add up to a decidedly negative situation for the migrating students from Statia. This is reflected in their educational results, their attitude, and their island's place in the community of the Netherlands Antilles.
The Statia students that I had the pleasure of working with were kind and polite young people. These students, like all the students I worked with, have my sincere admiration for coping with a difficult educational situation. I believe that many of their problems and experiences are reactions to the educational system and must be considered in that context.

The Migrating Students' View of Migration for Education

As mentioned earlier, the smaller islands do not have the student population to accommodate a complete educational system (Lowenthal 1972: 118). Of the five islands that comprise the Netherlands Antilles, only Curaçao has a full complement of secondary level educational facilities. Other reasons migrating students and some parents cite to explain secondary school migration to Curaçao are the following:

1. Students from Statia and Saba will receive a better education in Curaçao than in St. Maarten. The only foundation that I can see for this statement is that the Dutch educational system requires tests on the secondary level that are generated in Holland. Students must have a high comprehension of the Dutch language in order to pass these tests, and parents and students may think that there is a better possibility for this in Curaçao. The figures that I collected during my study, show that the Curaçao students in my study did not earn significantly higher grades in Dutch than migrating students. However, Dutch is taught more intensely in the primary schools in Curaçao then it is in the Netherlands Windward Islands.
2. If students from Saba and Statia are in St. Maarten, they will want to return home too often. Parents don't think that they can afford this.

3. Parents that I spoke with in Statia think that if the neighbors' children went to Curacao for secondary education, then their children must have the same opportunity.

4. Parents say that it costs too much to house a student in St. Maarten. They believe that Curacao is less expensive (Crane 1985: 441).

5. The parents don't have relatives or friends to provide foster care for their child in St. Maarten, and they believe that foster care is more readily available in Curacao. It doesn't seem to matter as much that it may be with distant relatives or strangers.

The reasons given by many parents from Statia to explain the continuation of secondary school migration indicate why young people continue to be sent away for their secondary education. The education that these students receive in Curacao may not necessarily be better than one obtained closer to home, but the quality of education does not seem to be the only factor that is being considered by those involved. The need to house the student comes into play, and many students whom I spoke with said that their parents thought that they could get someone in the family or a close friend to take care of the student in Curacao but they had no one in St. Maarten. Others believed that since Curacao is the capital of the Netherlands Antilles, their children would have a better opportunity for success in that area. Still others wanted to rid them-
selves of the financial burden that their children represent.

The central issues that surround student migration have to do with education, language, housing, guidance and politics. Not all students agree about these issues, but there does appear to be consensus on some points. The students have similar attitudes about leaving their homes and islands for education. It is a rare instance when one says that he or she was not homesick to begin with. Some students have been away from home since the age of 11, and still admit to being homesick at the age of 18. Therefore, migration isn't always viewed in a positive light. However, most students see migration as an opportunity to broaden their knowledge as they move from a relatively isolated community to one that is more urban and complex. In this respect, student migration allows the young person to become—according to them—more independent. Migration for education does not only mean education in the classroom but the total education of the young person. It is a "rite of passage" in the Netherlands Antilles that initiates the young person to life in their culture.

However, migration for education creates a definite stumbling block for the students in the classroom. This is partly because of the independent approach that each of the five islands takes to education. They have different outlooks on language and on each island's place in the future of the Netherlands Antilles. Language is a serious problem for students in the Netherlands Antilles, and a complex topic. I will discuss this topic briefly, only as it relates to the educational system.

The language barrier is a key problem in a regional educational system (Hawkins 1976: 81). This is especially true in the Netherlands Antilles where the people of St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius speak English as their mother tongue. Papiamentu is the native language of
Curaçao and Bonaire. All five islands officially use Dutch as the language of instruction—however Saba has recently begun the use of English in the primary school—and students are required to study, as subjects Spanish, English, Dutch and in some technical schools, Papiamentu.

Although this multilingualism may appear to be an educational plus to some people, it has its drawbacks. De Palm pointed to this problem as early as 1969, stressing that, "the child experiences difficulties in self-expression, that may lead to psychological tension" (cited in Bor 1981: 148). My research suggests that the problems of linguistic dualism are a source of confusion, tension and educational problems. Some migrating students are unable to cope with the potentially overwhelming task of mastering a new language—Papiamentu—and playing catch-up with Dutch, which seems to be taught on a different level in Curaçao compared with the other islands.

For the present time, Dutch is very important, not only for the migrating students but for the Curaçao student. As the language of instruction, it is also the language in which many of their tests are administered. Although the students may possess the ability to learn words, they frequently do not attach the proper meanings to them (Gruber 1961: 99). Therefore, if the migrating student has the ability to speak and read some Dutch, that will not ensure the student's comprehension skill in the language, and this deficiency may lead to failure. Carnoy states that, the "Possession of two or more languages (in this case English, Dutch and Papiamentu) is not merely a matter of having these tools at hand, but requires that each student must participate in two or more physical and cultural realms, symbolized and conveyed by tongues that are in conflict: those of the colonizer and the colonized" (Carnoy 1974: 70).
Dutch, as the language of instruction, no longer offers economic advantage to Antilleans. Dutch industry has dramatically withdrawn over the past five years, and educational opportunities are opening for Antillean students in the Caribbean, the United States and South America. Teachers are now trained in Curaçao, and therefore, Dutch does not receive the same attention that it did when teachers were trained in Holland.

The educational and economic needs of the people of the Netherlands Antilles are becoming more nationalist, and nation building requires that symbols of the colonizer recede. Dutch as the language of instruction has been beneficial for children whose native language is Dutch but a definite problem for children whose native language is Papaimantú or English. Children who enter school with a background of Papaiamentu and must learn their subjects in Dutch experience a high incidence of failure; according to a UNESCO report, which may result in many children repeating grades, and the system results in a relatively high percentage of drop-outs (Vedder 1986: 6).

Hence, multilingualism is a need and a burden to the migrating student. It is all the more heavy a burden because more advanced instruction is required—even in the early secondary school—in order to master the languages. The migrating students' education requires instruction in at least two or more foreign languages. These languages absorb a great deal of the students' time and effort when they arrive in Curaçao, assuming they wish to achieve or go beyond the minimum local standards (Lichtveld 1949: 130). When confronted by this linguistic dilemma the student must make a super-human effort and repeat at least their first year of secondary school.

The majority of the migrating students see language as their most
serious obstacle when moving from one island to another for their education. Dutch is no longer the binding medium for the migrating students and they experience, along with other Antillean students, a language gap. The language of instruction in the Netherlands Antilles is no longer the accepted language of the people.

Migrating students and their parents also consider housing a serious problem. Since Curaçao has, for most of the twentieth century, been an industrialized island, it has traditionally been able to provide work for many people from the other islands. A large number of migrants and their families have settled in Curaçao and now provide the base for foster care for migrating students. The parents of a large number of migrating students seek to place their child at the home of one of these people, as they do not want their child to live with strangers. Unfortunately, too often the parents have not seen these relatives for many years and, in most cases, the student doesn't know them at all. In some rare instance students will choose to move out on their own if they are able to locate housing.

Students see housing as a problem because it is tied to their relationship with guardians, a situation that can make their life very uncomfortable if there is any conflict. If the guardian and the student do not get along, the student must seek a new place to live. That can not only interrupt the student's study time but it can cast a shadow on the student's reputation. The student may be classified as a "trouble-maker" or someone who cannot get along with others. Migrating students often submit to injustices—such as less than adequate living conditions, inadequate food, an unacceptable study area or simply harassment by the guardian—in order to avoid conflict. One student, for example, studied by flashlight because the guardian complained about the light being left
on after 10 p.m. This made study impossible during exam periods when
the student required extended time to review material.

There are also examples of students pooling their resources and
renting a house on their own. In some few instances this arrangement
may work out, but it does not allow for supervision or foster care and
leaves the students on their own in a potentially dangerous position.
In one such case, four or five students rented an apartment during the
1986/87 school year. It happened that one of them had an excessive num-
ber of school absences during the school year, compounded by a number of
personal injuries (some were accidental and some inflicted by others)
and extremely low grades. The student enlisted the roommates to write
excuses to cover the absences, but complaints were made by the students' 
teachers. However, the Commission decided to do nothing about the situ-
ation at the time, and the student failed. As a matter of fact, all of
the students at this address either failed or dropped out of school dur-
ing the 1986/87 school year.

The lack of formal guidance is another problem for migrating stu-
dents in Curacao. This situation is due, for the most part, to the fact
that the students do not seek help or guidance, preferring to keep their
problems—whether related to education or other issues—to themselves.
The migrating student will call upon a Commission member only in an emer-
gency. Guardians offer the greatest potential possibility for a struc-
tured guidance program. However, the relationship between the migrating
students and guardians often offers very little warmth or sincerity.
Some guardians regard students mainly as mealtickets. They are mainly
interested in the monthly income that students provide, and this creates
resentment on the students' part. Thus, the migrating students usual-
ly seek guidance and support from their peers, generally students from
their own island. This tends to reinforce the students' identification with the home island, and to isolate the migrating students in the Curacao community.

Many migrating students in my study suggested that it would be helpful for them if there was a program to orient them to Curaçao upon their arrival. They thought that perhaps the Commission could provide a tour designed to acquaint them with the island and the schools that they were assigned to attend.

Politically, the migrating students play a very large and important part in the Netherlands Antilles community. These students are a vital component in the political process as they are a link between their island and the rest of the Netherlands Antilles. In a sense, they are ambassadors who carry their islands' cultural and political identity beyond their shores and maintain a bond that might otherwise be lost over time. Since they receive scholarships that make this migration possible, these scholarships may become a political favor that a particular person or party can draw upon when necessary. Hence, in some areas the student, the student's parents and relatives are potential votes. They may find themselves caught in the middle, having to give thanks for past favors with an eye to future favors.

All of these aspects of migration for education in the Netherlands Antilles broaden, but in some instances disrupt, the students' education and view of life. They create negative pressures on students who could, and should, represent a positive force as they migrate throughout the islands for a suitable secondary education.

Social Pressures Confronting Migrating Students

When migrating students arrive in Curaçao they are marked by their
language, which is English. Traditionally, especially during the twentieth century, people from the English-speaking islands have migrated to Curaçao to take jobs that are considered menial labor, such as maids and laborers. The migrating students, likewise are looked down upon by many of the people in Curaçao. This prejudice manifests itself in the school yard and the classroom, where the migrating students must strive to pick up Papiamentu as soon as possible. Otherwise, they raise sanctions such as name calling and isolation.

Drugs are as much a problem for the local population as they are for the migrating students, and present a real dilemma. In some cases, migrating students have already been exposed to drugs on their home island; but they have virtually no support mechanism in Curaçao, on either the personal or institutional level, to which they may turn. Perhaps help would be available if the students asked for it, but due to their own shyness, few do. Drugs, their availability, and the problems they create for migrating students in Curaçao, are a complex subject, and beyond the scope of this study.

Boy/girl relationships follow the local mores of Curaçao and can be predicted to cause a problem for the migrating student only if someone is indiscreet. On occasion, guardians become involved in these relationships because they fear that the girl will become pregnant; the guardians do not want to be held accountable, as they most likely would be, by the Commission, the parents of the student and perhaps the surrounding community. Pregnancy does occur among the migrating students. The girl is usually allowed to return home or is sent to live with a relative on another island until the baby is born. According to one of the headmasters in my study, pregnant girls generally do not attend classes before the baby is born. They drop out of school to await the birth.
If, after the baby is born, the girl wishes to return to school she must find someone to care for her baby while she attends class. She must also have the approval of the headmaster who meets with the girl and her parent(s) in order to determine if the girl is serious about her studies. However, if the student must go to work to support herself and her child, she will not be able to continue with school. I could find no statistics concerning student pregnancy or drop-outs due to pregnancy in Curacao. This would be a worthwhile study as it is but another aspect to the drop-out problems that the school system is experiencing at the present time.

The migrating students simply do not have any organized support system in Curacao to help them with the problems they face. Actually, an impressive array of social agencies exists in Curacao, and they all vow that they would be more than pleased to help any student, migrating or otherwise, who sought their services. However, to reiterate, if a migrating student has a problem with drugs, pregnancy, peers, the community, or school, the caretakers generally believe that it should be concealed and handled privately (if at all), at all costs.

In order to determine if personal and educational problems that are experienced by the migrating students are unique to them, or also experienced by Curacao students, I included 100 Curacao students in my study. A review of the findings from my work with Curacao students follows in the next chapter.
CHAPTER VI
THE STUDENTS OF CURAÇAO

Historically, Curacao's students have had an advantage, economically and educationally, over the students from the other islands in the Netherlands Antilles. More schools and a wider variety of education and industry have always been available to Curacao's students. The schools have had a larger number of teachers, fraters and nuns who hold higher academic credentials. This is due to the island's social and economic advantages which naturally attracted educators of higher quality. Culturally, Curacao has more to offer in the form of libraries, museums and a university; however, Aruba and St. Maarten are doing quite well with their tourist industry and Bonaire has a national park and a developing water sport and tourist industry.

Curacao's students are well aware of the social ills that beset the island. If they choose to be involved with drugs or prostitution, it is not due to ignorance. Also, there are various agencies and government offices such as Sociale Zaken (Social Services), which offer information and help to Curacao's population, including its young people.

Curacao's young people generally have a better quality of life than the migrating students simply because they live at home. They have at least one parent and/or other family members who can provide a support network of concerned individuals and whom they can rely on in time of trouble.

The student in Curacao has a greater opportunity to enjoy sports or community activities than the migrating students. Of the Curacao stu-
ents who filled in my questionnaire, 95 out of 100 were involved in some outside activity. However, the migrating students that I inter-
viewed had a lower number of students participating in activities out-
side of school. Of 100 migrating students, 68 said that they did some
sort of activity, while 32 students said that they had no outside acti-

Living arrangements are less problematic for the Curacao student.
Of the students that I worked with, 81 students out of 100 lived with
their mother, father or both father and mother. For help or advice, 70
Curacao students out of 85 said that they would go to a member of their
family, rather than going to someone outside of their family as migrat-
ing students so often must do.

One Curacao student said that the Windward Island students have
"their own system of living", implying that it is not easy to get to
know them. As a matter of fact, when asked, only two Curacao students
said that they had friends from the Netherlands Windward Islands or Bon-

Generally, students who do not migrate for their education have a
better life than migrating students; however, the problem of staying
back in school appears to be a universal problem. Of the Curacao stu-
dents that I spoke with, 77 out of 100 had stayed back at one time or
another during their school career. The language of instruction, Dutch,
seems to be giving all of the students a problem, which is reflected in
their educational results. Although the migrating students and Curacao
students have problems with the educational system, the Curacao stu-
dents have the support of their family and friends; and they do not have
the problems of uncertain living arrangements, language differences, and
prejudice. The Curacao students who succeed have the better opportuni-
ties; however, like the migrating students, if the Curaçao student fails it is in full view of the community. The migrating students have to deal with double jeopardy. Failure for the migrating students means failure in Curaçao and on their own island, where they must return.
Twelve of the sixteen secondary schools included in this study, and shown in Table 7, were selected because they had students in attendance from the Netherlands Windward Islands and Bonaire. Five of these schools, and an additional four, were selected for interviews with Curaçao students.

When I first arrived in Curaçao I contacted the Head of the Government School Board, explained my research and what I hoped to accomplish, and asked for permission to work with students in the schools. Letters of introduction were written for me to the directors of the various government schools in which I wished to conduct my research. It was also necessary for me to get in touch with the Head of the Catholic School Board in order to visit the Catholic secondary schools. I contacted the Protestant School Board as well although there were only three students that I wished to visit in Protestant secondary schools.

One of the school directors helped me to select the five additional schools where I would conduct interviews with Curaçao students. All of the school directors were quite cooperative after I explained my research goals.

At the end of the 1986/87 school year I contacted the directors of the schools where I had worked, and they cooperated by supplying me with pass/fail information for the migrating students as well as the Curaçao students in my study (Table 8 and 9). I condensed this information (Table 10) and it is possible to observe the correlation of tables in re-
# Table 7

**Secondary Schools Included in Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Migrating Students</th>
<th>Curacao Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peter Stuyvesant College</td>
<td>HAVO/VWO</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Immaculata Lyceum</td>
<td>HAVO/VWO</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria College</td>
<td>MAVO</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert Schweitzerschool</td>
<td>MAVO</td>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amador Nita</td>
<td>MAVO</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goslingaschool</td>
<td>MAVO</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willem Hoyer Openbaar</td>
<td>E TAO</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Ruimers-Brakkeput</td>
<td>LTS</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Pablo Duarte</td>
<td>LTS</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prot Lager Technische School</td>
<td>PLTS</td>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacques Ferrandi Openbare</td>
<td>LHO-MBO</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huishoudschool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curaçaoose Avond Lyceum</td>
<td>HAVO*</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middelbaar Technische School</td>
<td>MTS</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middelbaar Admistrarief Onderwijs</td>
<td>MAO</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute Pa Formacion</td>
<td>IFE</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Den Enfermeria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akademia Pedagógiko Kòrsou</td>
<td>APK</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Night School
### TABLE 8

**PASS/FAIL RESULTS OF MIGRATING STUDENTS - 1986/87 SCHOOL YEAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Fail</th>
<th>Drop-outs</th>
<th>Status not Determined</th>
<th>Repeat</th>
<th>Not Allowed to Repeat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maria Immaculata H.A.V.O./V.W.O.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Stuyvesant H.A.V.O./V.W.O.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middelbaar Technische M.T.S.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middelbaar Administratief M.A.O.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute Formacion E.I.F.E.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amador Nita M.A.V.O.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willem Boyer E.T.A.O.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Ruimers Brakkeput L.T.S.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Schools</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>53</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* 1 Student expelled.
** 1 Student now goes to H.A.V.O. night school.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Fail</th>
<th>Drop-outs</th>
<th>Status not Determined</th>
<th>Repeat</th>
<th>Not Allowed to Repeat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maria Immaculata H.A.V.O./V.W.O.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Stuyvesant H.A.V.O./V.W.O.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute Formacion E. I.F.E.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akademia Pedagogiko E. A.P.K.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria College H.A.V.O.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amador Hita M.A.V.O.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goslingaschool M.A.V.O.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willem Hoyer E.T.A.O.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferrandi Huishoud L.H.O.-M.B.O.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Directors of Secondary Schools, Curacao, Netherlands Antilles.

* Attending another E.T.A.O.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Fail</th>
<th>Drop-Outs</th>
<th>Status not Determined</th>
<th>Repeat</th>
<th>Not Allowed to Repeat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands Windward I. &amp; Bonaire</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curacao</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
lation to pass/fail, drop-outs and how many failing students will be allowed to repeat their grade. There were a comparable number of failures between the two groups of students; however, 10 of the migrating students dropped out while none of the Curaçao students did so. During the 1987/88 school year the Curaçao students will have almost twice as many students repeating their grades as will the migrating students. The migrating students who will not be repeating will either drop out or go to school on another island.

Since language is such an important aspect of the educational system in the Netherlands Antilles, I asked for the grades for Dutch and English as well as Math, for the total enrollment of students in the schools where I conducted interviews (Table 11). Then I computed the grades for Dutch, English and Math for the migrating students and Curaçao students who were involved in my study (Table 12 and 13). Finally, I made a composite chart of the grade averages for Dutch, English and Math for the migrating students, Curaçao students in my study and the total school population in the schools I visited (Table 14). These grade averages indicate that Dutch presents an equal challenge for all of the students I looked at, while the migrating students are a bit stronger in English than the Curaçao students. All grades are based on a 1-10 system (Table 15).

**Results of Open-ended Questions**

I asked Curaçao students and migrating students to respond in writing to ten questions about education, housing and other matters, as follows:

1. Do you feel that you were prepared for the transition from primary to secondary school? (See Table 16)
TABLE 11

FINAL STATISTICS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS INCLUDED IN STUDY DURING 1986/87 SCHOOL YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total enrollment at start of school year</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>1115</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>4398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who successfully completed school year</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who dropped out during school year</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing students who will be allowed to repeat in 1987/88</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing students not allowed to repeat in 1987/88</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average grade for Dutch - 1986/87</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average grade for English - 1986/87</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average grade for Math - 1986/87</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Directors of Secondary Schools. Curacao, Netherlands Antilles. (Grade scale based on 1-10)

Note: 1 Only refers to 4th class.
2 Doesn't apply.
3 1st, 2nd and 4th class.
4 1st and 2nd class.
5 1st, 2nd and 3rd class.
6 Not asked for.

L.T.S. - Math average is a combination of Rekunda (6.12) and Masakunae (5.59).

Maria Immaculata H.A.V.O./V.W.O.
Averages based on number of students who completed the school year.

As math is not compulsory in the 4th H.A.V.O. and 5th V.W.O., the number of students were less in the 4th and 5th H.A.V.O. and 5th and 6th V.W.O.
### TABLE 12

DUTCH-ENGLISH-MATH AVERAGES FOR MIGRATING STUDENTS DURING THE 1986/87 SCHOOL YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>J. Ruimers</th>
<th>Brakkeput</th>
<th>HAVO/VWO</th>
<th>Maria Immaculata</th>
<th>HAVO/VWO</th>
<th>Peter Stuyvesant</th>
<th>HAVO/VWO</th>
<th>Amador</th>
<th>M.A.V.O.</th>
<th>Middelbaar</th>
<th>M.A.O.</th>
<th>Middelbaar</th>
<th>Technical</th>
<th>RAW SCORE</th>
<th>AVERAGE SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 13

DUTCH-ENGLISH-MATH AVERAGES FOR CURAÇAO STUDENTS IN STUDY DURING THE 1986/87 SCHOOL YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Millen Boyer</th>
<th>E.T.A.O.</th>
<th>Maria Immaculata</th>
<th>HAVO/VWO</th>
<th>Peter Stuyvesant</th>
<th>HAVO/VWO</th>
<th>Amador</th>
<th>M.A.V.O.</th>
<th>Maria College</th>
<th>Goslinga School</th>
<th>Ferrandi Haishoud</th>
<th>M.A.V.O.</th>
<th>Middelbaar</th>
<th>Technical</th>
<th>RAW SCORE</th>
<th>AVERAGE SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Migrating Students Included In This Study</th>
<th>Curacao Students Included In This Study</th>
<th>Total Student Population Of Schools In Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 15

**NETHERLANDS ANTILLES: GRADING SCALE OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficiently Satisfactory</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Satisfactory</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferior</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**TABLE 16**

*Question:* Do you feel that you were prepared for the transition from primary to secondary school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Migrating Students</th>
<th>Curaçao Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. What is your island's most important contribution to the history of the Netherlands Antilles?

3. What will be your island's most important contribution to the future of the Netherlands Antilles, in the next 25 years?

4. Do you still live at the same address that you did when this school year began? (See Table 17)

5. How many times have you moved?

6. What is your favorite video or movie?

7. What is your favorite T.V. show?

8. Which person do you most admire?

9. If you are in exam class, do you plan to attend school next August? If so, where? What do you plan to study?

10. If you do not plan to continue with your education after completing secondary school, what do you plan to do?

Since I did not introduce these questions until my study was nearly half complete, it was not possible to survey an equal number of students from the migrating students and Curaçao students. I did manage to reach most of the Curaçao students with the survey questions because they were the group that I was working with at that time. This gave me an added insight into their thinking about their island's history and what they believe their island's future will be. They talked about their participation in sports, community activities, their relationship to their family, and their living arrangements. These were topics that I had covered in my interviews with the migrating students; therefore, limited
**TABLE 17**

**Question:** Do you still live at the same address that you did when this school year began?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Migrating Students</th>
<th>Curacao Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't Move</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
comparisons are possible, as Table 16 and 17 illustrate.

There were several reasons given for not being prepared to make the transition from primary school to secondary school. In the case of Statia, the students felt that they should have been better prepared in their languages. Curacao students have learned Spanish in the last year of primary school generally, and have a beginning foundation in the language, while Statia students comment that they have no Spanish in the primary school. In this respect they are at a disadvantage when they arrive in Curacao. Dutch is also a problem for Statia's students even though it is the official language of instruction on Statia. The island of Saba officially introduced English as the medium of instruction in the classroom on March, 1986, according to the May 24, 1986 issue of The Saba Herald. According to a primary school director in St. Maarten, that island has used English as the language of instruction in the primary schools for the past 10 years. Therefore, language is a real problem for the migrating students from the Netherlands Windward Islands who must move into a secondary educational system that requires Dutch as the language of instruction. There is also the added pressure to learn Papiamentu. Bonaire students do not experience the same language problems that the Netherlands Windward Island students do. Their problems are generally similar to those of the students from Curacao.

Nearly all students said that they were forced by the method of selection to choose their track of study at too early an age, at the end of the primary school. Migrating students on the technical level emphasized that they should be given some preparation in Papiamentu before coming to Curacao, as so much of the classroom instruction and conversation is in Papiamentu.

None of the Curacao students who responded to the first question
mentioned language; however, their final language scores for the 1986/87 school year were not very different from those of the migrating students. The Curaçao students were a bit stronger in Dutch but rarely were they over a 6 on a scale of 1-10.

Nineteen of the Curaçao students did not think that they were prepared for the transition to secondary school. Migrating students also reported that they were uninformed about what to expect educationally when attending school in Curaçao. They had no idea, they said, that it would be so difficult and different from what they were used to at home, both in terms of teaching and classroom work.

The most distressing responses were the statements about homesickness. Some students said that they were prepared academically, in most cases, but they were not prepared to leave their home and family at such an early age.

Although there were a few good and well thought out responses to questions 2 and 3, most of the students, whether from Curaçao or elsewhere, did not know a great deal about the history of their own island. They had little idea of what the future would bring. This is not so much the students' fault as it is the system in which they must work. The history and geography that students are taught in the Netherlands Antilles has been traditionally centered outside of their country and their environment; books talk to the students of a world which in no way reminds them of their own (Carnoy 1974: 70; Horowitz 1971: 2-5). The answers to these open-ended questions reflect this situation.
CHAPTER VIII
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this research indicate that while migration is a necessary part of secondary education in the Netherlands Antilles, in its present form it presents serious educational and social problems for the students and the community (UNESCO 1976: v). However, with careful planning and preparation on the part of parents, educators and the students themselves, this does not have to be the case. Migration for secondary education, can be a very useful and positive means of bonding the wide cultural and educational life and needs of the Netherlands Antilles, thus establishing a firm base for a unified but diverse country. Recognition and development of all of its people--their unique characteristics and contributions--can establish a strong foundation for nation building.

Only through contact and interaction can these geographically and culturally diverse areas come to understand and acknowledge the pivotal points that will swing their islands successfully from colonial dependency to a more positive position of island interdependency, and limited outside support (Government of the Netherlands Antilles 1982: 7). Thus, the results of this study imply that there is a need for continued student migration, in order to educate the students of the Netherlands Antilles to a wider world view and promote within the island community a sound but creative understanding of their place in that world.

The migration of students from one island to another within the
Netherlands Antilles can be a positive experience, promoting the well-being of the country. How migrating students are received and how they are taken care of during migration and fosterage will determine the success of the student and the country, in the long run.

Recommendations

The people of the Netherlands Antilles must look to each other for their strength, their identity and the solutions to their problems. It is my hope that the findings of this study may prove helpful when dealing with some educational problems, and particularly with needs of migrating students. These students are an important part of the future of the Netherlands Antilles, and they deserve the utmost consideration and respect from their fellow countrymen.

I offer the following recommendations for consideration:

1. A full-time Commission should be established for overseeing the students from the Windward Islands and Bonaire. This undertaking would require the allocation of a larger budget for the Commission members, as the present members receive a relatively small stipend. If they work on the Commission full-time, the members will require a liveable wage. These people should be carefully selected according to their qualifications.

2. The Netherlands Antilles should provide a dormitory, in Curaçao, for migrating students. Qualified houseparents should be in residence at all times.

3. An orientation program should be provided for the
migrating students when they arrive in Curaçao. This would prepare the students to function in their new surroundings with more confidence.

4. Commission members should keep in contact with the students, school, guardian and parent on a regular basis in order to provide a definite support service and keep channels open between the home, the student and the school.

5. Commission members should intervene, if necessary, on the students' behalf if problems arise concerning the community, living arrangements or educational needs.

6. Personal and educational counseling should be made available to migrating students on a regular basis. These students are away from their homes and families and they need a strong basic support system that can handle their unique problems.

7. All students in the Netherlands Antilles should be familiarized (from kindergarten on) with their native language and the culture of their individual islands, as well as the other islands in the Netherlands Antilles and the surrounding Caribbean community. In this way, through education, perhaps prejudice and misunderstanding could be alleviated, or eliminated.

8. The Netherlands Antilles should strive to provide a coordinated and unified primary school program
throughout the islands. This would promote a smoother educational transition for migrating students.

9. A cultural exchange program should be introduced in the Netherlands Antilles which would allow selected students to attend classes for a limited time on an island other than their own. This experience would be intended to enrich and broaden the student, the culture and the educational system.

10. The educational system should have built into its structure the means to educate workers for its own job market. The present technical schools are outdated and are not coordinated with the job market in the Netherlands Antilles. Migrating students should be made aware of their own islands' economic needs and potential in order to stem the system's built-in brain drain.

11. Migrating students should be made aware that they are ambassadors and representatives for themselves and their individual islands. If they see themselves this way then others will have the opportunity to see them and their island at its best.

Migration for secondary education is necessary, due to the present educational system in the Netherlands Antilles; modeled after the Dutch educational system. It is, in its present state a very traumatic and negative experience for many of the students involved in the process.
However, it doesn't have to be this way. With careful planning and co-operation, migration for secondary education in the Netherlands Antilles could be a benefit to the students and the country. The negative aspects of migration for education—prejudice, loneliness, isolation, political and cultural conflict, inadequate housing, lack of supervision and, in many cases, educational failure—must be addressed in order to preserve this unique amalgamation of the north and south Caribbean—the Netherlands Antilles.
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CURAÇAO STUDENTS

(Written in Papiamentu—Translation in English)

1. Nòmber (Name) ______________________________

2. Direkshon (Address) ______________________________

Telefon (Phone) ____________________________________________

3. Bo ta biba ku: (Do you reside with:)
   a. mama i tata (Mother and Father)
   b. mama (Mother)
   c. tata (Father)
   d. otro (other) ___________________________________________

4. Kí ta e idioma mas tantu papiá na kas?  
   (What is the language most often spoken in your home?)

5. Bo mayornan ta di Kòrsou? Si no, di unda nan ta?  
   (Are your parents from Curacao? If not, where are they from?)

6. Bo mayor (nan) ta traha? (Do your parent(s) work?  
   Nan ta na kas ora bo yega kas for di skol?  
   (Is there anyone at home when you get home from school?)

7. Bo tin luga adekua na kas pa siña?  
   (Do you have an adequate area, at home, in which to study?)

8. Si surgí problema, kén bo ta aserka pa yudabo?  
   (If problems arise, who do you go to for help?)

9. Kuántu ruman bo tin? (How many brothers and sisters do you have?)

10. Kuántu di nan ta biba na kas? (How many of them live at home, 
    now?)

11. Ken ta paga bo skol? (How is your schooling paid for?)

12. Bo a bai lushi klas? (Did you attend Kindergarten?)

13. Kua skol básiko bo a bai? (Which elementary school did you at-
    tend?)
APPENDIX A (cont.)

14. Tempu bo a kaba skol básiko, kua skol bo por a bai? (When completing primary school, which school did you qualify for?)
15. Kuá skol sekundario, bo ta bai awor? (Secondary school you are now attending?)
16. Bo a keda sinta den skol básiko? (Did you ever stay back in primary school?)
   Si (Yes)__________  No (No)__________
17. Si kontesta di pregunta 16 ta si, den kuá klas bo a keda sinta den skol básiko? (If the answer to question 16 is Yes, which years did you stay back in primary school?)
18. Bo a keda sinta den skol sekundario? (Did you ever stay back in secondary school?)
   Si (Yes)__________  No (No)__________
19. Si di kontesta kí pregunta 18 ta si, den kuá klas bo a keda sinta den skol sekundario? (If the answer to question 18 is Yes, which years did you stay back in secondary school?)
20. Bo ta participá den aktividad p'afó di skol, por ehempel den klup a deporté? (Do you participate in activities outside of school, such as Clubs or Sports? Si ta asina, menshoná nan aki bou: (If so, list them below:)
21. Na kua religion bo ta pertenesé? (Which religion do you belong to?)
22. Bo a bishita lugánan for di Kòrsou? (Have you visited a place outside of Curacao?)
   Si (Yes)____________  No (No)____________
23. Si ta si, kuá luga? (If Yes, where?)
24. Kí lo mester ta idioma di instrukshon den skol básiko? (What should be the language of instruction in the primary schools?)
25. Kí lo mester ta idioma di instrukshon den skol sekundario? (What should be the language of instruction in the secondary schools?)
APPENDIX A (cont.)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NETHERLANDS WINDWARD ISLANDS AND BONAIRE STUDENTS

NAME_______________________________________________________________________
GRADE_______________________________________________________________________
DATE OF BIRTH_______________________________________________________________________
AGE____________________________________________________________________________
AGE LEFT HOME________________________________________________________________________
HOME ISLAND_________________________________________________________________________
GUARDIAN
  NAME _______________________________________________________
  ADDRESS _____________________________________________________________
  PHONE _________________________________________________________________
HOW MANY GUARDIANS HAVE YOU HAD?________________________________________
YOUR RELIGION_______________________________________________________________________
CHURCH YOU ATTEND IN CURACAO_______________________________________________
PREVIOUS SECONDARY SCHOOL_____________________________________________________
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL_____________________________________________________________
PARENTS
  FATHER _____________________________________________________
  OCCUPATION_____________________________________________________
  MOTHER _____________________________________________________
  OCCUPATION_____________________________________________________
HOW MANY CHILDREN ARE IN YOUR FAMILY?________________________________________
OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES_________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
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UNESCO  

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From June 1986 until February 1988, the author conducted research for this thesis on Curaçao and the other islands of the Netherlands Antilles.