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Are Media Watchdogs of Illegal State Practices in Post-Cold War Liberal  
Democracies?: A Case-Study of the Coke Extradition

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## **Abstract**

### **Are Media Watchdogs of Illegal State Practices in Post-Cold War Liberal Democracies?: A Case-Study of the Coke Extradition**

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Since the end of the Cold War, post-colonial states have progressively enacted a series of liberal-democratic reforms aimed at addressing forms of state illegality. Despite being good disciples of reform, political liberalization has failed to curtail illegal state practices, and may have encouraged new associations between political elites and illegal actors. Thus, politically-liberalized states paradoxically trumpet the transparent governance and law-and-order even as they forge ties with shadowy figures. As the watchdogs of the political establishment, free media — in the liberal conception — play a fundamental role in challenging or preserving political legitimacy. This study therefore explores how the media portray political establishment in the face of its paradoxical orientation. Drawing on the case of the extradition of politically-connected Jamaican drug lord, it compares the representation of Jamaican political actors across media in different parts of the world over a five-year period. It finds compelling evidence that domestic media tend to ignore frames that call the legitimacy of political order into question.

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## **DEDICATION**

For My Mother. May I Inherit Half Her Strength.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 OVERVIEW

Following the end of Cold War, the Jamaican political establishment promoted a series of liberal-democratic reforms aimed at ‘transforming’ and ‘modernizing’ the society. These reforms principally involved the curtailment of the state’s social intervention arm and the incorporation of non-state actors in governance matters with a view to promoting transparency and managerialism. While this evolution has reduced the power of state actors to regulate social life, elites in the private sector and civil society — who have broadly endorsed and embraced these measures — found themselves having an increased role in governance matters. Liberal-democratic reforms were equally promoted by Western governments and international financial institutions as well as liberal political scholars who saw them as promoting political development.

Of course, these reforms were justified, in large part, in terms of a need to combat the chronic levels of political cronyism and clienteles that prevent or undermine democratic governance in non-Western societies. Despite having had a history of liberal-democratic governance and being a good disciple of political reform, the empirical research suggests that state actors continue to engage in illegal practices, even adapting new ways to do so in the contemporary liberal political dispensation. In particular, the restrained social capacity of the state has encouraged political actors to rely on wealthy and influential criminal networks to gain support among the poor. In this sense, political liberalization merely refashions the longstanding nexus between politicians and criminals, rather than rupture it. This paradoxical outcome is not unique to Jamaica as a number of scholars looking at Latin America and beyond have pointed to similar trends.

The question of why political liberalization has failed to curtail illegal state practices and the political-criminal is a complex one. It must examine the social and historical processes which are tied to contemporary forms of statecraft in 'liberalized' states and societies. Furthermore, it must interrogate the normative assumptions of political liberalism as an ideological construct and ask whether reforms based on this construct can be shown to produce the empirical outcomes that its advocates promise.

This study posits the mainstream media as the natural site for such an analysis. Indeed, media represent a forum through which political and economic elites, as non-state actors, influence public discourse and bring pressure to bear on political actors and institutions. They are also held out by liberal political thought as independent watchdogs of the political establishment who bark loudly when they encounter illegal or immoral behavior. Therefore, to the extent that state actors continue to engage in illegal practices while enacting reforms to tackle them, free and independent media are expected to raise questions about the legitimacy of these actors and their actions. This is particularly true where political actors who are charged with tackling crime and ensuring public security are themselves associated with criminal networks.

This study draws on the case of news coverage of the Coke extradition controversy in order to assess media representations of political legitimacy and the political-criminal nexus in Jamaica. It situates this analysis in the wider context of illegal state practices in liberal democracy and the scholarship on media and politics, allowing for a discussion of the nature and limits of liberal democratic principles and the purported role of media as independent watchdogs of the political establishment.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND: THE COKE EXTRADITION CASE

On May 24, 2010, the Jamaica's oldest and most prestigious newspaper, the Jamaica Gleaner, reported that the country's Prime Minister, Bruce Golding, had declared a state of emergency in response to what he referred to as “a calculated assault on the authority of the Jamaican state” by criminal gangs<sup>1</sup>. The previous day, gunmen had shot up and firebombed a police station in the capital, Kingston. The attack was widely reported in domestic and foreign media to be a response by loyal gangsters to Golding's earlier announcement that his government would arrest and extradite Christopher Coke (known colloquially as “Dudus”), a reputed drug lord who had been indicted in New York on racketeering and drug charges<sup>2</sup>. Golding's state of emergency granted the Jamaican police and military the authority to restrict movement, search premises and detain suspects without a warrant throughout Kingston<sup>3</sup>. Indeed, the Prime Minister had promised “firm and decisive” action in response to the apparent attack on the state, adding that “[t]he criminal elements who have placed the society under siege [would] not be allowed to triumph”<sup>4</sup>.

Mere hours after Golding's declaration, hundreds of camouflaged military troops, accompanied by hundreds more police officers, entered the community of Tivoli Gardens (Tivoli, for short) on the western end of Kingston in search of Coke<sup>5</sup>. Coke was widely suspected to be hiding in the community which residents had barricaded with heavy debris in the hours before the security forces moved in. In addition to his reputation as a drug baron, Coke was well-known as the purported *don* of Tivoli—a title given to the gang leader who controls a given inner-city

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<sup>1</sup> Jamaica Gleaner. 2010. “Prime Minister (PM): We Will Repel Criminals.” May 24. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20100524/lead/lead2.html>).

<sup>2</sup> CNN. 2010. “Jamaica: State of Emergency in Kingston.” May 24. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://www.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/americas/05/23/jamaica/>).

<sup>3</sup> Witter, Earl. 2013. *Interim Report on 2010 Tivoli Operation*. Office of the Public Defender. 2013, p 21. Kingston.

<sup>4</sup> Jamaica Observer. 2010. “Jamaica Observer Limited.” May 23. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/Violence-will-not-be-tolerated---PM>).

<sup>5</sup> Witter, *op. cit.*, p 21.

neighborhood through an admixture of fear and patronage. However, Coke influence spanned well beyond Tivoli into other urban areas across Kingston. This exceptional reach earned Coke the aliases “President” and “General” among many inner-city residents<sup>6</sup>, including the hundreds who, two days prior to the state of emergency, protested the government's decision to issue a warrant for his arrest. The demonstrators—mostly women from Tivoli and the neighboring Denham Town community who dressed themselves in white—garnered much attention from media and the wider public, particularly for a placard reading: “Jesus died for us so we will die for Dudas”<sup>7</sup>. The sign would be an unfortunate presage of harrowing events to come. At least seventy-three civilians were killed in an almost week-long police-military siege on western Kingston which failed to nab Coke, but left at least seventy-three civilians dead. The security forces claimed that the victims were gunmen (many of whom, it was said, had travelled from across the island to protect Dudas) who engaged them in a fierce firefight after fortifying the area with explosive devices.

The residents of Tivoli, on the other hand, viewed the May 2010 siege as an act of horrendous state violence. They contended that the state security forces indiscriminately rounded up and executed young men from the community and its environs<sup>8</sup>. They also claimed that the security forces dropped bombs during the operation, and called attention to a strange aircraft which hovered over the community during the raid. While the government and security forces initially denied these allegations, investigative reports by the *New Yorker* magazine would subsequently confirm that the army had launched mortar shells into the densely-populated community<sup>9</sup> and that a U.S.

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<sup>6</sup> BBC. 2011. “Profile: Christopher ‘Dudas’ Coke.” *BBC News*. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://www.bbc.com/news/10146172>).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Fahim, Kareem. 2010. “Jamaican Forces Accused of Killing Unarmed Men.” *The New York Times*, June 2. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/03/world/americas/03jamaica.html>).

<sup>9</sup> Schwartz, Mattathias. 2012. “As Jamaican Drug Lord Is Sentenced, U.S. Still Silent on Massacre.” *The New Yorker*, June 7. Retrieved May 30, 2016 (<http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/as-jamaican-drug-lord-is-sentenced-u-s-still-silent-on-massacre>).

State Department reconnaissance plane had assisted in the operation by providing aerial intelligence to the Jamaican army<sup>10</sup>. While the precise nature of the U.S. government's role in the operation remains a matter of state secret, the cooperation between both governments during the siege recalls Jamaica's status as an important pillar and a longstanding ally in the U.S.-directed hemispheric War on Drugs. In fact, as the siege unfolded in Tivoli, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder hosted Caribbean leaders for preliminary dialogue on the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, the Obama administration's regional counter-narcotics and security assistance programme<sup>11</sup>.

As demonstrated by Golding's declaration that he would take a “strong and decisive” approach to confronting the country's criminals, Jamaica's political establishment sought to frame the siege on Tivoli as more than just an attempt to apprehend a notorious fugitive. Rather, the government argued that the incursion into the inner-city community represented a watershed moment in the state's effort to tackle historically high rates of crime and violence and to reassert its authority in areas of Kingston where drug dons held popular sway. In his public address moments after the attack, Golding explained that “[t]his will be a turning point for us as a nation to confront the powers of evil that have penalized the society and earned us the unenviable label as one of the murder capitals of the world. We must confront this criminal element with determination and unqualified resolve”<sup>12</sup>. The government's resolve to get tougher on criminality also received a measure of support from the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica (PSOJ), the country's influential coalition of business elites. During its annual general meeting (which also took place

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<sup>10</sup> Schwartz, Mattathias. 2011. “A Massacre in Jamaica.” *The New Yorker*, December 12. Retrieved May 30, 2016 (<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/12/12/a-massacre-in-jamaica>).

<sup>11</sup> Jordan, Levi. 2010. “Caribbean Security Initiative Takes Center Stage in Barbados.” *Americas Society/Council of the Americas*. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://www.as-coa.org/articles/caribbean-security-initiative-takes-center-stage-barbados>).

<sup>12</sup> Jamaica Gleaner, *op. cit.*

as the siege unfolded), the coalition's president emphasized the business community's duty in actively partnering with political leaders to fight crime.

Significantly, despite this express commitment to cooperation, the PSOJ head went on to bemoan what he characterised as “incestuous links that exist between our political actors and the criminal underworld” at the core of the country's crime problem<sup>13</sup>. Indeed, as the Golding administration publicly resolved to get tougher on crime, it was itself embroiled in controversy over its handling of the U.S.’s extradition request for Coke. Coke was himself a well-known supporter of the governing Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) for which Golding served as leader. Moreover, Tivoli was a political stronghold of the JLP, and Golding its parliamentary representative<sup>14</sup>. In the nine months prior to the Tivoli siege, speculation was aroused in the public domain that the connections between Coke and the JLP administration were causing the latter to stall the extradition<sup>15</sup>. However, Golding maintained that his government could not legally proceed with the extradition because the evidence brought against Coke by the U.S. authorities was both insufficient and illegally-obtained under Jamaican law<sup>16</sup>.

Clearly dissatisfied with Golding's response, Washington applied diplomatic pressure on his administration throughout the period. In its 2010 *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, the U.S. State Department questioned the Jamaican government’s commitment to fighting transnational crime. It further criticized the “unusual handling” of the Coke extradition request, citing “a dramatic change in the GOJ's [the Government of Jamaica's] previous cooperation on

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<sup>13</sup> Jamaica Gleaner. 2010. “‘We Must Walk the Talk’ - No More State Contracts to ‘Dons.’” May 30. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20100530/focus/focus6.html>).

<sup>14</sup> Golding served as Member of Parliament for Kingston Western, of which Tivoli Gardens is a part, from 2005 to 2011. He served as Prime Minister from 2007 to 2011

<sup>15</sup> Williams, Maxine. 2010. “Christopher ‘Dudus’ Coke Extradition Entangles Local and International Law.” *The Guardian*, June 2. Retrieved February 20, 2014 (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/jun/02/christopher-dudus-coke-extradition-law>).

<sup>16</sup> Jamaica Information Service. 2011. “Lightbourne Remains Resolute on Coke Extradition.” Retrieved March 31, 2015 (<http://jis.gov.jm/lightbourne-remains-resolute-on-coke-extradition-2/>).

extradition”<sup>17</sup>. The report also characterised Coke as a “high profile Jamaican crime lord with reported ties to the ruling Jamaica Labour Party, which currently holds a majority in parliament”<sup>18</sup>. Soon, it was rumored that the Obama administration's delay in appointing a new ambassador to Kingston and its decision to cancel the visa of several wealthy businessmen were both linked to a growing diplomatic standoff (although both suggestions were denied by the respective governments)<sup>19</sup>. The impasse also led to concerns in several quarters of society that the country could suffer serious consequences. The island's leading private sector groups—many of whom publicly encouraged the government to place the question of the illegality of the evidence against Coke before the local courts—voiced fears that the extradition standoff would damage the economy, while the Opposition People's National Party (PNP) expressed concern that Jamaica might become a 'rogue state' in the international community<sup>20</sup>.

The diplomatic row became a full-blown political scandal in March 2010 when the PNP brought to public attention documents filed by a major U.S. law firm with the Justice Department showing that its services had been retained by the Jamaican government. The document revealed that Manatt, Phelps & Phillips (which was co-founded by a former Democratic National Committee chairman) was officially engaged to assist in negotiations that the Golding government was pursuing with the Obama administration. A report in the Washington Post claimed that Golding's government had penned a US\$100,000-per-quarter contract with the firm specifically to lobby “the White House and other administration officials about why the United States should not

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<sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of State. 2010. *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report: Volume I Drug and Chemical Control*. 2010, p. 337. Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs: Washington, D.C.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Reid, Tyrone. 2010. “As Visa Fear Festers, Fewer Jamaicans Applying for US Travel Permits.” *Jamaica Gleaner*, April 25. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20100425/lead/lead4.html>).

<sup>20</sup> Jamaica Gleaner. 2009. “PNP Still Worried over ‘Dudus’ Issue.” November 17. Retrieved May 30, 2016 (<http://mobile.jamaica-gleaner.com/20091117/lead/lead7.php>).

extradite an accused Kingston drug kingpin”<sup>21</sup>. Citing unnamed U.S. officials and lobbying experts who characterised the JLP government's action as highly unusual, the report also described Golding as leading efforts to resist the extradition of Coke.

Golding initially denied that his government had contracted Manatt, but later claimed that he knew of and approved the lobbying efforts in his capacity as leader of the JLP, and not as Prime Minister<sup>22</sup>. Still, his vacillation on the subject gave rise to public suspicion that he was being deceptive, and prompted some civil society groups and the PNP Parliamentary Opposition to call for his resignation<sup>23</sup>. In face of this mounting public pressure, the Prime Minister announced on May 17 that his government would proceed with the extradition request. He admitted that there was an “[...] unavoidable perception that because Coke is associated with [his] constituency, the government's position was politically contrived”<sup>24</sup>. In the televised speech, a seemingly contrite Golding reiterated that he had not wished to sacrifice constitutional principles to avoid such a perception, but claimed that this desire became outweighed by his concern over “the public mistrust that the matter evoked and the destabilizing effect it is having on the nation's business”<sup>25</sup>. Vowing to atone for this error, he added that “[i]n hindsight, the [JLP] party should have never become involved [in the contracting of Manatt] in the way it did”<sup>26</sup>. It was, therefore, against the backdrop of popular criticism and a desire to regain public trust that Golding instituted the state of emergency and authorized the siege on Tivoli to capture Coke.

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<sup>21</sup> Eggen, Dan. 2010. “Politics.” *The Washington Post*, April 16. Retrieved May 30, 2016 (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/15/AR2010041503600.html>).

<sup>22</sup> RJR News. 2010. “PNP Calls for Prime Minister’s Resignation.” [Http://www.rjrnews.com](http://www.rjrnews.com), May 13. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://rjrnews.com/local/pnp-calls-for-prime-ministers-resignation>).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Jamaica Gleaner. 2010. “Forgive Me.” May 18. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20100518/lead/lead1.html>).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

The pressure faced by the JLP administration would, nevertheless, continue to mount. Golding gained more notoriety when ABC News cited an undisclosed U.S. government report describing Golding as Coke's "criminal affiliate" and that the JLP "was voted into power through 'Coke's murderous and strong-arm tactics'"<sup>27</sup>. The following day, a newspaper article by the U.K. Independent similarly reported that Coke and his Shower Posse gang were "openly used by the island's ruling party to bring supporters to the polls and intimidate opposition voters in elections three years ago"<sup>28</sup>. Both reports drew the ire of Golding who rejected them as part of a "scurrilous and malicious" international conspiracy to undermine his government's authority<sup>29 30</sup>. Locally, the controversy surrounding the Manatt contract remained problematic for JLP administration whose public approval rating suffered in its wake. In another bid to regain public trust, Golding set up a commission of enquiry into whether there was any wrongdoing on the part of his government. Following its deliberations, the government-appointed commission found that the administration was not guilty of misconduct, and that it acted appropriately both in initially refusing to proceed with the extradition request and in eventually signing it. However, the enquiry did little to assuage public skepticism after a number of government officials refused to answer questions about their role in negotiating the contract<sup>31</sup>. Three months after the commission released its findings, the embattled Golding announced that he would step down as JLP leader and the country's Prime Minister. He explained that the perceptions of improper conduct "had not been dispelled

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<sup>27</sup> Esposito, Richard. 2010. "U.S. Report: Jamaican Prime Minister Is 'Known Criminal Affiliate' Of Hunted Drug Lord." *ABC News*, May 26. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/jamaica-christopher-dudus-coke-escaped-security-forces-assault/story?id=10737428>).

<sup>28</sup> Usborne, David. 2010. "Jamaica Stand-off Highlights Links between Ruling Party and Drug Gang." *The Independent*, May 26. Retrieved May 30, 2016 (<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/jamaica-stand-off-highlights-links-between-ruling-party-and-drug-gang-1982887.html>).

<sup>29</sup> Golding, however, failed to offer specifics about who might have been behind this conspiracy or what their motivations would have been.

<sup>30</sup> Jamaica Gleaner. 2010. "PM Golding Outraged by ABC and UK Reports." May 25. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/power/19595>).

<sup>31</sup> Jamaica Gleaner. 2011. "Den of Liars - Jamaicans Say State Officials Were Untruthful at Manatt-Dudus Enquiry." June 22. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20110622/lead/lead1.html>).

notwithstanding the exhaustive deliberations of commission of enquiry” and suggested that his ongoing stewardship would damage both his party and the government<sup>32</sup>. Indeed, Golding's image had suffered greatly in public opinion polls and political commentators suggested that his continued stewardship would hurt the JLP's chances of winning a majority in elections which were due within a year<sup>33</sup>.

It would be hard to overstate the significance of the events surrounding the Coke extradition in the context of Jamaica's social and political history. Not only did Golding's resignation mark the first time that a sitting Prime Minister was forced to demit office under political pressure, but the JLP administration's subsequent electoral defeat was also unprecedented for a first-term incumbent. The extradition affair also led to the toppling of Jamaica's most powerful don whose drug empire spanned as far as the U.S., Canada and the U.K. Finally, and most importantly, the violent deaths of at least 76 civilians <sup>34</sup> during the Tivoli siege came to mark the bloodiest event in Jamaica's post-independence history. The sense of crisis which confronted the Jamaican society in 2010 was heightened by the competing representations that were offered by the protagonists concerned by the extradition. The Golding administration depicted itself as decidedly willing to get tough on crime, but unwilling to violate Jamaican law in the face of significant U.S. pressure. In contrast, the U.S. government suggested that the JLP government was uncommitted to fighting transnational crime, and likely acting to shield Coke from the course of the law. It nonetheless provided logistical assistance to the security forces during the operation to capture Coke after Golding acquiesced to its request. The island's prominent social groups, including the private

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<sup>32</sup> Jamaica Gleaner. 2011. “Prime Minister’s Address to the Nation.” October 2. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/power/32319>).

<sup>33</sup> Jamaica Gleaner. 2011. “Den of Liars,” *op. cit.*

<sup>34</sup> Witter, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

sector and civil society, took a more ambivalent position: on the one hand, accusing the political class of being at the centre of the crime problem due to their affiliation with the criminal underworld, and on the other, appearing to endorse Golding's declaration of a war on crime. Finally, the residents of Tivoli — a JLP stronghold which Golding himself represents — condemned the government's offensive as an act of state terrorism even as Golding claimed that the state was under attack. To understand how the events surrounding Coke extradition produced such sharply divergent representations, it is necessary to view them in terms of Jamaica's wider post-independence socio-political landscape. The following sections trace both the legacy of crime fighting in Jamaica and the paradoxical relationship between criminals and political elites. It evokes another contradiction: that of a liberal-democratic state which has been dedicated to political reforms in the post-Cold War era and yet where illegal practices continue to form an important element of statecraft.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The elements of the Coke extradition controversy condense in a single event the important contradictions which mark Jamaica's political landscape. Not only does the extradition case recall the history of informal ties between political elites and the criminal underworld, but it also demonstrates the state's longstanding willingness to employ tough-on-crime rhetoric and draconian crime-fighting solutions in poor urban communities. The following section establishes this paradoxical symbiosis between tough-on-crime political actors and politically-sponsored criminals in historical context, beginning with the island's political independence from Britain in 1962 before focusing on the post-Cold period of liberal political reforms. It further contextualizes Jamaican statecraft in the context of other post-Cold War liberal democracies that maintain ties with informal and illegal actors before discussing the purported role of the free media in calling these associations into question.

### 2.1 JAMAICA'S PARADOXICAL STATECRAFT: TOUGH-ON-CRIME PRACTICES AND THE POLITICAL-CRIMINAL NEXUS

#### 2.1.1 *Tough-on-Crime Policies*

In the immediate aftermath of independence from Britain in 1962, Jamaica's political elites began advancing the need for draconian law-and-order measures to manage unruly segments of the poor (Chevigny 1995:207). Throughout the 1960s, successive administrations of the JLP — one of the island's two major political parties — criminalized and abused unruly segments of the urban poor, particularly Rastafari and Garveyites who advocated that the newly-independent state address racial grievances and reject vestigial colonial institutions (Gray 2004:54–9; Thomas 2011:199–202). While the PNP government which came to power in the 1970s gave rhetorical

support to the idea of racial justice and enacted some progressive social reforms, it went even further than its predecessors in entrenching harsh anti-crime measures as part of statecraft (Harriott 2003:6–7). In response to rising crime rates, the government instituted measures which considerably extended the powers of the police to arrest and detain suspects while curtailing the rights of citizens to bail and trial-by-jury (Gray 2004:208–9; Time Magazine 1974). It also took steps which empowered the military to assume a primary role in routine policing activities (Harriott 2003:6–7).

Crime continued to escalate into the 1980s despite these measures, driven in large measure by the emergence of the global cocaine trade. Indeed, Jamaica’s geographical location made it a desired transshipment point for cartels seeking to move drugs from South to North America (Bair 2011:15–18). Local gangs capitalized on this development by facilitating the traffic through the island as well as by creating overseas offshoots (known as ‘posses’) as distributors to a number of major North American cities (Gunst 1996:117–18; Jones 2002:126). The involvement of local gangs in the global cocaine trade engendered important changes in the social life of Kingston’s urban communities. It afforded gangsters unprecedented material wealth which they could convert into considerable social status and influence. It also provoked an escalation in urban violence as gang leaders jostled to win and consolidate control over drug distribution by recruiting marginalized youth and importing and stocking-piling weapons (Gray 2004:238-41).

In reaction to the newfound wealth and influence of drug gangs, the state’s approach to crime-fighting became progressively militarized (Harriott 1997; Jaffe 2012). Beginning as early as 1976, a succession of elite paramilitary units was established within the national police force to tackle criminal gangs (McIntosh 2014) (see Table 2.1). These units often included or were complemented by high-profile, no-nonsense “super-cops” who had a reputation for fearlessness and the use of

lethal force (Chevigny 1995:213–14; Ehrengardt 2014:9). Between 1983 and 1993, some 135 and 358 people were killed by the police each year, representing anywhere between 17% and 30% of total annual killings (Harriott 1997:4). A 1991 study found that a staggering 56% of the officer corps were supportive of the practice of extra-judicial executions (Harriott 1997:4).

Table 2-1: List of Jamaican Paramilitary Police Units by Date of Formation

<b>Unit Names</b>	<b>Date Formed</b>
Echo Squad	1976, June
Ranger Squad	1980, March
Special Operations Squad/'Eradication' Squad	1981, February
Area Four Task Force	1986
Operation Ardent	1992
Anti-Crime Investigative Detachment (ACID)	1993, July
Operation Crest	1995
Operation Justice	1995
Operation Dovetail	1997, March
Organised Crime Unit	1998
Operation Intrepid	1999, July
Crime Management Unit	2000
Organised Crime Investigation Division	2003
Operation Kingfish	2004
Operation Resilience	2013

Although generally supportive of tough-on-crime policies (Meeks 2014:134), the public increasingly disapproved of the police force which it saw as too violent, corrupt and dismissive of the rights of citizens (Harriott 1997). International human rights groups and foreign governments also began focusing attention on Jamaica's policing practices during the 1980s, provoking widespread discussion in local press (Chevigny 1995:218). State officials responded to the growing scrutiny of its human rights record by instituting a number of 'modernization' reforms focused on improving accountability and professionalism (Harriott 1997, 2000). The reforms

included measures to surveil and punish police corruption, promote the respect of law and civil liberties, limit government influence over police operations and promotions and adopt new technologies and managerial techniques. These measures were further accompanied by a number of government-ordered reviews of the police and military throughout the 1990s underscoring the need for various reforms: Hirst Report 1991, Wolfe Report 1993, Hoodless Report 1996, Kerr Review 1997, KPMG/DFID Review 1998, PERF Report 2001.

The policing reforms were borrowed from models instituted in more advanced liberal democracies like the U.S. and the U.K. with the expectation that Jamaica would replicate their experience. However, as Harriott (1997) notes, there is little to suggest that the reforms succeeded in fundamentally transform policing practices or assuaging the concerns of rights advocates. Indeed, a 2008 probe into the police force found that it continues to operate in a militaristic and repressive manner (Strategic Review Panel 2008:21). By the government's own admission, as many as 90% of the arrests of young men in inner cities are arbitrary and illegal (Cunningham 2011). Whereas about 140 civilians were killed yearly by police in the 1990s, the figure averaged 250 by the end of the 2000s before jumping precipitously to 385 in 2010<sup>35</sup> (Inter-American Commission 2012:15–16). 'Modernization' reforms also failed to increase the low prosecution rates of the security forces. Between October 1999 and February 2006, none of 700 police killings of civilians resulted in a conviction on charges related to the use of lethal force<sup>36</sup> (Jamaicans for Justice 2008:11). This fact led the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Killings to issue the following damning statement (Jamaicans for Justice 2008):

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<sup>35</sup> The figures were 272 in 2007, 224 in 2008, 253 in 2009. See in-text citation.

<sup>36</sup> At the time of writing, the Independent Commission of Investigations (INDECOM) has brought a number of charges against police officers. However, it remains to be seen what impact this will have on police killings and convictions over time. See Laville, Sandra. 2015. "Jamaica's Police at Last Being Called to Account for Killings of Civilians." *The Guardian*, December 2. Retrieved February 20, 2015 (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/02/jamaica-police-killings-akieem-stewart-independent-investigators>).

The inexcusable situation of nearly complete impunity for these killings persists, reinforcing the tendency of law enforcement officials to substitute extra-judicial executions for investigation and criminal procedure. Indeed, in a number of respects [...], it would be difficult to devise a system more conducive to ensuring impunity for those committing extra-judicial executions. (P. 11)

The Jamaican state's attachment to tough-on-crime solutions has continued not only in spite of attempts to reform and 'modernize' policing, but also despite the evidence of its patent failure to arrest crime. Between 1976 (when the police began setting up paramilitary squads) and 2001, the island's murder rate shot up from 17.6 to 43 per 100,000 persons (Harriott 2003:7). By 2005, the country received the dubious distinction of having the world's highest homicide rate (BBC 2006). Additionally, the militarization of policing has failed to expunge drug gangs from inner cities where they continue to attract significant numbers of marginalized youth. In 2012, there were about 120 criminal gangs operating in Jamaica, said to be responsible for 80 percent of all major crimes in the country (Inter-American Commission 2012:8). While an assessment of why tough-on-crime measures have failed is beyond the scope of this study, the conclusion of a 2007 government report offers some insight in noting that such measures do not address the root causes of Jamaica's crime problem: high rates of youth unemployment, historically high levels of social inequality, and an ineffective criminal justice system (Inter-American Commission 2012:62). The finding is all the more problematic given that, while the state has focused its efforts at increasing and improving its security capacity, its ability to address urban dislocation through social spending has only weakened with the implementation of structural adjustment policies advanced by Washington-based institutions since the 1980s (Clarke and Howard 2006; Handa and King 2003; Holland 1994; Thompson 1996).

Despite an apparent critical stance towards Jamaica's human rights record (Chevigny 1995:218), the U.S. government has also prioritized and sponsored securitization and militarization in the Caribbean region as part of its hemispheric war on drugs (Harrison 1997:462).

During the 1980s, Jamaican Posses gained the attention of the U.S. law enforcement for their suspected involvement in the deaths of more than 1,400 persons over three years (Associated Press 1988). In addition to imprisoning and deporting posse members within its borders, the U.S. government created a legal apparatus to enable the prosecution of gangsters who direct the trade from Jamaica, including the signing of a bilateral extradition treaty. In more recent years, U.S. efforts have taken the form of security aid packages (mostly for military and police training and equipment) but, at times, have involved direct involvement of U.S. law enforcement and military in overseas operations (Bair 2011:20). Despite Jamaica's declining role in cocaine trafficking<sup>37</sup>, U.S. security aid to the country increased from US\$992 000 in 2008 to \$1.6 million in 2010 when Washington also licensed the sale of more than \$2.7 million in weapons to the island (Bair 2011:21). The U.S. has also directly funded paramilitary squads meant to tackle drug and other criminal gangs, included the much-vaunted Operation Kingfish launched in 2004<sup>38</sup> (Agozino et al. 2009; U.S. Department Of State 2008). Agozino et al. (2009) argue that there is ample evidence that the U.S. War on Drugs in the Caribbean Basin has been a failure. The initiative has neither reduced the overall supply of cocaine in the region, nor has it prevented the proliferation of illegal firearms over the last three decades. Instead, anti-drug operations likely contributed to the influx of weapons into Jamaica. Likewise, the effect on homicide is, at best, indiscernible, and possibly counterproductive. Despite the inception of Operation Kingfish, the frequency of homicides

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<sup>37</sup> The role of Jamaican gangs in the distribution of cocaine gradually lessened with the U.S.-led crackdown on South American drug traffickers and the supplanting of Columbian cartels by those in Mexico which rely on supply routes through Central America rather than the Caribbean. Thus, whereas as much as 11 percent of US drug supply went through Jamaica in 2000, the figure was a mere one percent by 2007. See Bair 2011, p. 17

<sup>38</sup> During its first two years of operation, Kingfish launched close to 1,400 operations resulting in the successful seizure of 56 vehicles, 57 boats, one aircraft, 206 firearms, and two shipping containers with drugs. Kingfish also intercepted over 13 metric tons of cocaine (mostly outside of Jamaica) and over 27 390 pounds of compressed marijuana. See in-text citations

increased dramatically from 975 victims in 2003 to 1,476 in 2004 and 1,674 in 2005, and has since remained above 1,000 (Agozino et al. 2009:297; Associated Press 2014; Jamaica Observer 2010).

### 2.1.2 *The Political-Criminal Nexus*

The legacy of colonialism notwithstanding, proponents of economic and political liberalism might have presaged a different future for Jamaica in terms of peace and prosperity. In making a similar argument, Werlin (2009:361) notes that after gaining independence in 1962, Jamaica was the world's primary source of bauxite and alumina, benefited from stable industrial and agricultural production, and had strong potential as a tourism market. Jamaica has also avoided the kinds of sustained civil or political strife which have befallen its neighbors in Central America and the Greater Caribbean. In fact, since independence, Jamaica has maintained a stable liberal democracy inherited from the Westminster system (Domínguez 1993) and become somewhat of an exemplar of parliamentary alternation (Ledgister 1998:74; Sives 2009). The country also benefits from other features of a liberal democracy, including a free press, an independent judiciary, a meritocratic public sector, an independent central bank, and influential private sector and an active civil society (Werlin 2009:340).

Despite these advantages, Jamaica's post-independence political landscape has been indelibly marred by what political sociologist Carl Stone (1986) termed *garrisons*. Stone used the term to refer to inner-city communities which serve as enclaves of political support for either of Jamaica's two major political parties (Figueroa and Sives 2002). These areas emerged in the 1960s as political representatives began using state resources to construct housing projects which were then distributed to party loyalists (Gray 2004:209–14; Thomas 2011:36). As each political party attempted to outpace the other when in government, garrisons gradually became an entrenched feature of urban political life. Politicians saw an advantage in creating these politically-segregated

zones insofar as they could identify and reward supporters with better infrastructure, pork-barrel public works jobs, cash handouts and other spoils while providing an incentive for under-served opponents to switch allegiances.

Political operatives quickly enlisted local ruffians, colloquially known as *dons*, as garrison enforcers and overseers. These dons—who trace their genesis as far back as the 1940s—were initially employed to intimidate political rivals and marshal urban residents into large crowds to attend campaign rallies or protest against opponents (Gray 2004:75; Johnson and Soeters 2008). Over time, dons came to assume the more important role of clientelist brokers between politicians and their patrons, often managing the distribution of benefits such as public works jobs or cash handouts (Jaffe 2013). This symbiosis between political elites and dons often meant that the latter’s criminal or violent activities escaped law enforcement and judicial scrutiny (Harriott 2008; Johnson and Soeters 2008). For their part, politicians who represent constituencies with a high concentrations of garrison communities and who have strong affiliation with dons have fared well at the polls and occupied the highest offices in both government and their parties<sup>39</sup>

The functional logic of garrison politics belies what is perhaps its most remarkable feature: the political predation and destructive violence it occasions. While political violence can be traced back to the 1940s, it greatly intensified in the 1970s and into the 1980s when the island became one of a great many ‘Third World’ proxy battlegrounds in the Cold War (Gray 2004:181–82; Sives 2012:418). Widely believed to be driven by the supply of arms from the Cuban government and the CIA respectively, tensions between democratic-socialist-leaning PNP gangs and JLP gunslingers were brought to a head around the time of bloody 1980 election. Over the course of that year, 844 persons were reported murdered (Helps 2012). In the years 1980 to 1981, just over

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<sup>39</sup> Of Jamaica's seven elected Prime Ministers, only one did not begin her or his political career as a representative of a garrison constituency.

one Jamaican per 100 was victimized by violent crime<sup>40</sup> (Harriott 2000:11). As a share of total recorded crimes, violent crimes ballooned from 10 percent in 1974 to 41 percent in 1984 (Harriott 2000:11). The rate of homicides, which stood at 7.3 per 100,000 in 1960, averaged 21.5 throughout the 1980s after a peak rate of 41.5 in 1980 (Heiland 2012:135). Unsurprisingly, scholars have pointed to the role of political parties in arming and protecting gangsters as an important impetus for Jamaica's chronic levels of violence (Figueroa and Sives 2002; Gray 2004; Harriot 2008).

Thus, Jamaica's political elites have engineered a quasi-permanent state of internecine warfare among rival political communities. The garrisonisation of inner cities has expanded the parameters of routine political competition to include ever-more brazen forms of social terror with a view to gaining electoral advantage. Still, this violence extends beyond the electoral rivalry. It constitutes an important — perhaps the ultimate — means through which political representatives, along with dons, have been able to exert a form of totalizing dominance over the lives of the urban poor in the absence of policies to address Jamaica's deep-seated social inequality. Moreover, the partisan schism across inner cities staves off the potential for a class-based alliance among the urban poor which might serve as a counterweight to the dominance of the society's political and economic elites.

Unlike classical forms of political violence, garrison warfare does not fundamentally challenge the liberal democratic state or the capitalist economy (Sives 2010:xii). Indeed, it is quite remarkable that although the political elites have shown themselves willing to direct and endorse violence in the pursuit of power, they have almost universally accepted the outcome of electoral contests and have never tried to seize power by non-electoral means. Thus, the features of liberal democracy — electoral politics, respect for constitutional rules and law, free and independent

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<sup>40</sup> The precise figures attained a staggering 1,112.5 and 1,009.8 per 100,000 respectively. See in-text citation

media, and basic rights to freedom of expression and association — have generally remained intact, notwithstanding the violent and clientelistic underbelly of urban politics.

### 2.1.3 *Liberal Political Reforms*

It should be noted that while levels of violence (especially murder) continued to increase during the 1990s and into the new century, political violence itself has declined significantly (Sives 2010, 2012:416). This shift was likely precipitated by the end of the Cold War and the PNP's embrace of free-market policies after its victory in the 1989 election. Jamaica's political establishment also embraced the post-Cold War consensus of 'Third World' political liberalization. The new orientation, which was trumpeted by Western-run global financial and governance institutions, garnered broad support from local business interests and civil society groups who were increasingly concerned that political violence could escalate beyond the inner cities and irrevocably compromise the state's liberal-democratic character (Figueroa and Sives 2002:102). As a consequence, state actors enacted a number of reforms during the 1990s which were targeted at strengthening the integrity of the electoral process and dissuading garrison-style politics<sup>41</sup> (Sives 2010). By the turn of the century, electoral fraud and homogeneous voting in inner cities were indeed on the decline (Figueroa and Sives 2002; Sives 2010). Additionally, there were indications that the ties between dons and politicians could be loosening. Some prominent representatives, including Bruce Golding, openly confessed to and renounced their affiliation with political thugs (Gray 2004:342) — although this remained the exception rather than the rule. Dons also appeared to be more vulnerable to the reach of the law after one high-profile strongman was

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<sup>41</sup> The National Democratic Movement—which counted number of disaffected former politicians, prominent business persons and notable intellectuals in its ranks—was formed in 1995 on the platform of ending garrison politics, increasing government transparency and reducing the political powers of the executive. In 1996, a National Committee on Political Tribalism was established to provide recommendations to combat garrison politics. By the 1997 election, international observer teams formally monitored Jamaica's elections for the first time; and foreign donors sponsored the creation of CAFFE, a local election monitoring group

arrested and convicted in 2006 and the security forces successfully disrupted two notorious politically-aligned gangs (Jamaica Observer 2005; Johnson and Soeters 2008).

Liberal political reforms also sought to fundamentally reconfigure state institutions and practices with the promise of ‘good governance’ and political development for which there was widespread consensus among business, civil society and political elites. As Gray (2004:346) notes, in a country like Jamaica where free elections and the basic protection of rights exist, political liberalization took the form of a promotion of political transparency and state rationalization in an effort to stamp out supposedly more patrimonial or traditional forms of government which lead to clientelism and corruption. Thus, in the 2000s, the government set up independent public bodies to advance political integrity and to audit government procurement procedures (Meeks 2014:176). In addition, Parliament enacted access-to-information legislation in 2002 (Kuunifaa 2012). In 2011, it amended the constitution to introduce a new Charter of Rights which secured—though not without restriction<sup>42</sup>—the right to vote, to information, to peaceful assembly, to protection from torture, among others (Chaplin 2011). Finally, these changes were complemented a 10-year program to ‘modernize’ and ‘transform’ the public sector to “become leaner, more efficient, flexible, responsive and accountable” (Cabinet Office 2015). Anchored in the view that the public sector is unfriendly to business interests and growth, this reduction in government oversight — couched in the language of efficiency and cutting red tape — represents a continuation of the retrenchment of state regulation of the economy which had already begun in earnest in the 1980s

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<sup>42</sup> O’Brien and Wheatle note that the constitutional change, while increasing the number of protected rights, also includes savings clauses, which place beyond the reach of constitutional review laws that govern the death penalty, which criminalize homosexuality and abortion, and which discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. See O’Brien, Derek and Se-Shauna Wheatle. 2012. “Post-Independence Constitutional Reform in the Commonwealth Caribbean and a New Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms for Jamaica.” *Public Law* 683–702.

when Kitchen (1989) described the Jamaican case as “probably the leading and most ambitious attempt at administrative reform in the Third World” (p. 339).

An important effect of liberal reforms has been the according of greater political influence to non-state elites. Formally, this shift has taken the form of social ‘partnerships’ between the political establishment, private sector coalitions, prominent civil society groups and public sector unions in governance matters: Partnership for Progress 2003, Partnership for Transformation 2013 (Collister 2013). The need for elite cooperation is driven by reformers’ view that adversarialism among different social sectors threatens the country’s development, and that sacrifices ought to be made for the ‘national good.’ In practice, however, these social pacts represent a check on the state’s ability to institute measures that challenge the interests of elites as well as an attempt to institute unpopular austerity measures disproportionately borne by the poor. Thus, they almost invariably entail the freezing of public sector wages, higher consumption taxes, and cuts to social spending in order to meet debt obligations to private creditors (many of whom are part of these social partnerships) and to comply with the conditionalities of multilateral lenders like the IMF.

It is worth underscoring the point that this kind of elite cooperation heralded by liberal reformers stands in ironic contrast to the forms of divisive and destructive politics that state officials have fostered among residents of the poor inner cities. The need for elite consensus is undoubtedly based on the liberal principle that multiple competing forces, by pursuing their individual interests, serve to counterbalance each other and — through a kind of ‘invisible hand’ — generate an overall social optimum. However, because they tend to involve an elite few whose shared interests do not align with those of the wider society, public-private social partnerships may well be more akin to oligopolistic cartels rather than competing firms. Moreover, precisely because they are not public bodies, private interests are free to operate in ways that remain unaccountable

and nontransparent to the public. Thus, private interests may encourage rather than dissuade government corruption or encourage bad public policies where beneficial. Finally, while social partnerships formally bring businesses and civil society groups into governance, political liberalization may also ironically strengthen the influence that informal groups like politically-connected drug traffickers and other kinds of criminal syndicates have over state officials. As discussed below, in a context where state's capacity to both regulate the economy and provide social services to the poor is restricted, political elites may very well find themselves more reliant on the support and resources of informal groups in order to provide a measure of political stability and satisfy the social demands of their patrons.

#### 2.1.4 *The Refashioning of the Political-Criminal Nexus*

Political reforms enacted over last two-and-a-half decades have not yielded the improvements in governance that advocates would have anticipated. In fact, Jamaica has shown a major decline in Transparency International's corruption perception index ranking, falling from 64th in 2005 to 99th in 2009 (Kuunifaa 2012:183-184). In fact, inasmuch as they have produced a raft of formal mechanisms aimed at ensuring transparency and accountability, post-Cold War reforms equally appear to have encouraged new forms of clandestine state practices and supplied novel avenues of cooperation between criminal actors and political elites.

Since the 1980s, Jamaican dons have significantly increased their influence in the inner cities as by merging traditional sources of money such as extortion and public works payouts with newfound wealth from trafficking guns and drugs (Harriott 2008; Jaffe 2013; Johnson and Soeters 2008). A 2003 estimate suggest that extortion by gang leaders adds 40 per cent to project costs, amounting to 'an official tax of perhaps \$100m a year' (Werlin 2009:364). In 2009 alone, the police seized 264 kilograms of cocaine (worth almost \$46 million) from traffickers which —

although only a small fraction of the total trade — was equivalent to 14 percent of the value of Jamaican exports to the U.S. (Bair 2011:17). By contrast, the ability of elected state officials to offer both formal and informal benefits to inner cities has diminished as a result of the restrictions in government expenditure imposed by structural adjustment. From 1975 to 1994, social expenditure declined as a percentage of GDP and of the budget, particularly in the health and education sectors (Girvan 1997:66–69). What is more, a substantial fraction of these dwindling resources went to services that were least likely to be used by the poor. In 2013, the Jamaican government further committed to reducing social spending as part of an IMF loan facility agreement (Jamaica Gleaner 2013). In the context of the retrenchment of social spending, political representatives have become progressively reliant on the ill-gotten gains of dons to provide a measure of relief to the urban poor (Sives 2012:425; Gray 2004). Thus, whereas dons were co-opted by and remained largely subservient to political elites prior to the 1980s, it is the politicians who now find themselves deferential to dons who command greater clout and resources (Meeks 2014; Harriott 2008).

To be sure, the decline in the state’s social welfare capacity and the increased social influence of dons which led to a refashioning of the political-criminal nexus are more proximately attributable to structural adjustment programs and the advent of the cocaine trade. Nonetheless, political reforms have provided avenues for dons to ‘formalize’ ties with political representatives and state agencies and consolidate their influence in poor urban areas. Jaffe’s (2013) work in Kingston’s inner cities reveals that, by positioning themselves as ‘community leaders,’ dons have taken on important roles the administration of donor-funded and public-private community projects. Dons have also set up businesses to legitimize activities such as the procurement of state contracts and the provision of private security (Harriott 2008). Duncan-Waite and Woolcock’s

(2008:28–29) ethnographic study shows that police in urban areas increasingly refer both victims and perpetrators of crimes to dons for dispute resolution in the face of low community policing resources and an overburdened justice system. Thus, political liberalization opened avenues for the most enterprising dons to accumulate quasi-state functions and earn significant social fidelity among the urban poor through the ‘purse’ (legal and illegal business ventures, handouts, jobs, etc.) and the ‘sword’ (security-for-hire, vigilante justice, etc.). Challenged by the post-Cold War conjuncture of a decline in their ability to address social dislocation and an increase in the influence of criminal networks, state actors opted to make figures like Coke “partners-in-governance” (Jaffe 2013:737), rather than enemies of the state<sup>43</sup>.

#### 2.1.5 *Jamaican Media as Political Watchdogs*

Much like dons and actors in the formal private sector, civil society groups have played an increasingly influential role in shaping Jamaica’s sociopolitical landscape since the 1980s. Lewis (2012), for example, posits that civil society coalitions led by Jamaica’s middle class has successfully “define[d] the parameters of political action in relation to human rights abuse, corruption of public officials, and the tendency toward criminalization of politics [...]” (p. 48). Lewis (2012) points to the events surrounding the Coke extradition as underscoring this tendency insofar as it catalyzed the creation of a number of new political pressure groups. The media, in particular, have been credited for acting as watchdogs of state officials, both in relation to the specific case of the Coke extradition (Jaffe 2013:734), and wider questions of illegal state practices such as clientelism and corruption and the political-criminal nexus (Sives 2012:430). For example,

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<sup>43</sup> To be sure, the shift in the relationship between politicians and dons contains the potential to undermine state authority in the long term, both by confirming the worrying appearance of an association among the middle class and by reinforcing its reliance on powerful dons within inner cities. However, this accommodation represents a rational attempt by political elites in the immediate term to forestall social discontent and maintain a margin of influence among the urban poor, while pursuing neoliberal reforms which place the state apparatus at the service of private sector interests and market imperatives.

Johnson and Soeters (2008) opines that “[t]here has been public indignation in recent years, *propelled by the media*, over the cozy, symbiotic relationship fostered between the political establishment and members of the organised crime industry” (my emphasis) (p. 186).

On its face, the effect of post-Cold War political liberalization appears paradoxical. On the one hand, Jamaica’s urban ethnographers suggest that shadowy state practices proved resilient in the face of political liberalization and that reforms themselves have strengthened and regularized informal political-criminal connections. On the other, political reforms are held by a number of scholars and reformers to have created spaces for open government, civil society participation that undermine corruption and clientelism. Moreover, media in Jamaica are said to have had a central part in highlighting and challenging the relationship between political authority and criminal networks. In spite of scholars’ optimism about its role, the media’s representations of the relationship between political elites and criminal networks (both its willingness to get tough on crime and the political-criminal nexus) and the legality of state practices have not been put to systematic study. Using the events surrounding the Coke extradition as a case study, this thesis addresses that gap in the literature. Because Jamaican media are free, private and independent of government control, proponents of political liberalism will tend to view them, as Johnson-Soeters suggests, as propelling public scrutiny of state officials. Thus, the emergence of new forms of formal and informal ties with drug dons, especially in the face of the political establishment’s commitment to greater transparency and accountability reforms and its willingness to use harsh anti-crime measures to go after criminals, suggests that media watchdogs are likely to raise questions about the nature and extent of the political-criminal nexus.

Before turning to the media's role in highlighting the political-criminal nexus, it is worth considering the Jamaican context within the wider literature on liberal democracy and state-society relations. As will be shown, the paradoxical dynamics of greater liberalization and a deepening association between state and criminals are not unique to Jamaica. The experiences of other post-Cold War regimes therefore serve to inform our understanding of the Jamaican case much in the way that the Jamaican case comes to shed light on contemporary social and political contradictions confronted by politically-liberalized states.

## 2.2 ILLEGAL STATE PRACTICES IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

Studies from other democracies — whether in relation to religious-ethnic tensions in Indian politics (Wilkinson 2014), the horrendous *La Violencia* period in Columbian history (Roldán 2002), the preservation of political patronage in Mexico (Powell 2012), or Central American state formation (Holden 2004) — reveal that the twinning of violence and patronage as instruments of political advantage and state rule is not unique to the Jamaican context. Veena Das (1990:12) has argued that it is poor slum dwellers who serve as the “human resource for conducting the underlife of political parties” as they come to be used as bodies to make up crowds at demonstrations and campaign rallies, and as henchmen for breaking strikes, intimidating opponents, rioting, and vote rigging. However, political elites also frequently find it in their interest to forge ties with powerful syndicates in the criminal world (Arias and Goldstein 2010:22; Knight 2012). In fact, this scholarship shows that these practices are every bit as impactful in shaping political and social realities of many societies as are overt, formal state practices (Arias 2006; Auyero 2007; Holden 2004; Wilson 2009). However, state illegalities and nexus between the political and criminal spheres remain largely unstudied and poorly understood, undoubtedly due to their clandestine nature. Still, a few scholars have sought to shed light on what has been termed the “dark side of

the state” (Gledhill 1999), or the “shadow state” (Reno 1995); or have begun to emphasize the melding of the both formal and informal practices into a grey zone of state power (Aretxaga 2003:402; Auyero 2007) (Auyero 2007; Aretxaga 2003:402).

### 2.2.1 *Post-Cold War Political Liberalization*

Despite the evidence that clandestine practices and networks continue to be an integral part of contemporary statecraft, post-colonial states have almost universally engaged in a process of political liberalization since the 1980s. For many regimes in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Eastern and Southern Europe, liberal reforms were justified as a means of consolidating democratic transition away from one-party authoritarian rule at the end of the Cold War (Huntington 1991). Advocates of liberal reforms saw in the fall of the Soviet bloc and the relative prosperity of Western society the confirmation that liberal-democratic principles were superior to and destined to triumph over the tyrannies and instability associated with socialist and communist statism (Abrahamsen 2000:34–35; Castorina 2009:52–61). Armed with this conviction, domestic elites and Western donors alike advocated for the adoption of multi-party electoral competition, the establishment of civil, political and property rights and openness to foreign capital and trade. Yet, the trend towards liberalization not limited to previously-illiberal governments. In more established liberal democracies like Jamaica’s (or even much older ones like Columbia’s), a number of political reforms were also undertaken beginning in the last decade of the 20th century. Indeed, a number of scholars have described the raft of political reforms which swept different post-colonial democracies during the 1990s (Cott 2000; Crisp and Ingall 2002; Grindle 1977; Popkin 2000; Posada-Carbo 1998).

The abandonment of state-led development in favor of liberal orthodoxy had already begun in the 1980s when mainstream Western thinkers and policymakers advocated economic

restructuring as a precondition for development. Guided by the view that state intervention in the market was distortionary and inimical to freedom and enterprise, Western governments and financial institutions advocated and imposed (through aid conditionalities and diplomatic and military interventions) the adoption of liberal economic policies centred on deregulation, divestments, debt-servicing and deficit reduction (Mann 2008). The socioeconomic burden imposed by structural adjustment was disproportionately shouldered by the poor who, in many instances, experienced rising poverty and unemployment even as levels of violence and insecurity increased. In Latin America, for example, the poverty increased by 40% between 1981 and 1989 (Morley 1995). Homicide rates on the continent also increased significantly throughout the decade, registering a four- to five-fold increase in countries like Columbia, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago (Ayres 1998:3). Thus, by the beginning of the 1990s, it had become clear that the political freedoms and economic prosperity that were to come from shrinking social spending and a deregulated economy would not materialize (Mainwaring and Scully 2008:116). Moreover, while reforms successfully limited the state's ability to regulate the economy, they did not lead to an erasure of government corruption and clientelism. A number of adjectives came to describe the failure of market reforms and competitive elections in causing post-colonial states to replicate those in the West: 'illiberal' (Zakaria 1997, 2003), 'semi-authoritarian' (Ottaway 2003), 'shallow' (Diamond 2008), 'delegative' (O'Donnell 1994), 'unconsolidated' (Schmitter 1994), 'pseudo-democratic' (Diamond, Linz, and Lipset 1995:8), 'competitive-authoritarian' (Mainwaring and Scully 2008).

From this disappointment emerged the new consensus that the state itself would need to be strengthened in order to fully realize the gains of market reforms and electoral competition (Abrahamsen 2000; Dollar 1998; Mainwaring and Scully 2008). The notion that liberalization

could, by itself, generate the conditions for development and political modernization therefore made way for the idea that “institutions matter” (Goldsmith 2007:166). Western governments and donors, thereafter, advocated the building the state’s institutional capacity. They also encouraged post-colonial political elites to develop a culture of ‘good governance’ by attaching political conditionalities to development aid (Abrahamsen 2000:30-1). To be sure, the focus on institutional capacity and good governance did not negate the need for a minimalist social state. Instead, reformers sought to strengthen the state only insofar as it could provide the technical, administrative and juridical capacity to meet market imperatives (enforcing contracts and property rights) as well as to protect individual liberties (limiting state repression, protecting rights of association and expression, providing security etc.).

Despite coupling institution-building and political accountability with economic restructuring and multiparty elections, political liberalization still did little to fundamentally address corruption, clientelism, poverty, economic stagnation. Not only did post-colonial states largely fail replicate their European prototypes, critics of liberal reforms point to the ways in which they are undemocratic. Diaz-Cayeros, Magaloni and Ruiz-Euler’s (2014) comparative study of local governance in Mexico during the 1990s found that indigenous communities which replaced customary forms of participation (which reformers considered less accountable and more clientelistic) with electoral competition actually experienced a reduction in political participation and lower levels of public service. Similarly, Cleary’s (2007) study of Mexico's 2,400 municipalities from 1989 to 2000 found that electoral competition and the threat of punishment through the polls had no effect on municipal government performance. The findings further suggested that forms of non-electoral participation consistent participatory democracy led to measurable improvements in governance.

Critics have argued that liberal democracy is elitist and exclusionary (Castorina 2009; Abrahamsen 2000). They note that seminal thinkers like Schumpeter and Dahl believed that it was undesirable and impractical to have electoral participation form the basis for political action since the masses were generally ignorant and disposed to supporting authoritarian rule. Instead, elites (said be more informed and more likely to hold democratic values) needed to play a preponderant role in the political sphere. Furthermore, because the need to win mass support during elections would tempt state officials to engage in populist excesses, the ability of elites to limit political action was held to be an integral part of responsible government. Elites were, therefore, encouraged to form factions and promote social partnership in order to prevent radical shifts in the status quo. Redistributive economic policies, however popular among the masses, would cause rebellion by powerful, shatter the fragile social consensus between labour and capital, and reverse hard-fought democratic gains (Abrahamsen 2000). Commenting on the case of post-authoritarian Latin America, O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) cautioned that new democracies need to preserve the interests of entrenched propertied, the privileged and the professional classes lest these factions turn to anti-democratic means of preserving their power. Positioning themselves as political realists, the authors argued that:

For a transition to political democracy to be viable in the long run, founding elections must be freely conducted, honestly tabulated, and openly contested, yet their results cannot be too accurate or representative of the actual distribution of voter preferences. Put in a nutshell, parties of the Right-Center and Right must be "helped" to do well, and parties of the Left-Center and Left should not win by an overwhelming majority. (P. 62)

This elitist vision of democracy came to dominate not only the post-Cold War scholarship on democratization (Diamond et al. 1995; Przeworski 2010; Schmitter and Karl 1991; Shapiro 2005), but also the developmentalist agenda of Western governments and global institutions in post-colonial states (Burnell 2000; Robinson 1996; Whitehead 2001).

Ironically, the active social and economic intervention and regulation by the state became the sign of weakness, instability and a deficit of democracy. Instead, liberal reformers promoted a minimalist state apparatus oriented towards technocratic and managerial support of market interests. In addition, these reforms were aimed at eliminating forms of political corruption, corporatism and clientelism seen as the result of statism. However, political liberalization did little to address the governance problems it sought to address. In fact, the retrenchment of the social state provided an impetus for political elites to fashion ties with powerful non-state actors in order to offer services to the poor and win their support. Thus, political actors found themselves relatively dependent, not only on the charity of local businesses and civil society groups and foreign donors and NGOs, but also on the vast material resources provided by criminal networks (Aspinall 2013; Escobar 2002; Luccisano and Macdonald 2011; Teichman 1996).

To a significant degree, these informal networks rely on violent force to acquire and keep influence and wealth. Latin Americanists, for instance, have noted that political liberalization in the region has been ironically accompanied by the multiplication of violent non-state forces such as paramilitary groups, traffickers, and vigilantes (Arias and Goldstein 2010:8; Pansters 2012:16; Pearce 2010:289; Roldán 2002:65). Whereas Cold War violence was tended to involve coordinated factions of political-ideological rivals aspiring to challenge or overthrow the state, contemporary forms almost invariably involve fragmented groups which opportunistically employ force in order to pursue wealth and escape the law. As a consequence, the latter's needs are not immediately irreconcilable with those of state officials who might find it less costly to accommodate rather than confront them. Because of the lucrative nature of the cocaine trade in the Americas, drug trafficking syndicates have especially profited in this environment, often co-opting local political figures to

do their bidding while converting their social influence among the urban poor into electoral support (Arias 2006). The clandestine and opportunistic nature of the political-criminal nexus also provides the important advantage of flexibility as politicians can make and unmake ties given the exigencies of the moment. Thus, it becomes possible for state officials to publicly target criminal gangs when confronted with popular fears of insecurity, and to covertly ally with these gangs when they can deliver the resources with which to patronize supporters. Naturally, the multiplication of competing violent actors has come at the cost of a rapid escalation in violence and insecurity across Latin America cities since the 1990s. This gives rise to the paradoxical situation whereby the very state actors who increasingly interface with and accommodate criminal networks are then called on by constituents to ensure their security and by Western governments to assist in the fight against transnational crime.

### 2.2.2 *Towards a Theory of Illegal State Practices*

If protection rackets represent organised crime at its smoothest, then war risking and state making – quintessential protection rackets with the advantage of legitimacy – qualify as our largest examples of organised crime. Without branding all generals and statesmen as murderers or thieves, I want to urge the value of that analogy. [...] The trimmed-down argument stresses the interdependence of war making and state making and the analogy between both of those processes and what, when less successful and smaller in scale, we call organised crime. War makes states, I shall claim. Banditry, piracy, gangland rivalry, policing, and war-making all belong on the same continuum – that I shall claim as well. (Tilly 1985, P. 170).

Charles Tilly's (1985) description of the parallels between statecraft and organised crime provides an important empirical framework with which to understand the political-criminal nexus. In "State Making as Organised Crime," he argues that European state consolidated power by waging wars against internal and external challengers and by strategically forging links with and co-opting rivals. Indeed, the extent to which some factions emerged as states and others as outlaws

depended on the relative scale and success with which they were able to dominate territory (by controlling its residents and providing protection from outsiders) and acquire resources (from trading with outsiders and extracting rents from residents). Without overstating the comparison to contemporary post-colonial states, it is instructive to retain two important contributions of Tilly's analysis. Firstly, liberal democracy is not the foundation of the modern Western state, but the product of its historical development—only appearing, in any real sense, in a country like the United States during the 1960s. Thus, the claim that it is political liberalization is the *a priori* condition for the formation of Western-like states appears ahistorical and causally spurious. Secondly, the use of force by illegitimate non-state actors does not necessarily constitute a threat to or a weakening of state authority. To the extent that states can incorporate and regularize the activities of powerful non-state actors these ties may strengthen state power. Even where informal groups remain antagonistic towards the state, this challenge may provide the basis on which states constitute and justify their own authority. As Tilly's (1985) work shows, a whole set of institutional apparatuses and practices, such as policing and the military, emerged from the state's need to confront internal and external rivals.

Rather than viewing statecraft in terms of a successful monopoly on violence over its territory, Wilson (2009) argues that a more empirically sound characterization of the state considers it as competing for power and legitimacy with non-state actors. From this perspective, states do not always find it advantageous to confront violent groups that do not directly challenge their political rule. Particularly where their capacity or legitimacy are low, states may find it less risky to allow other powerful groups to function in their shadows. Moreover, state actors may seek to co-opt violent groups, become co-opted themselves, or both. In the context of political liberalization and state minimalism, illegal actors, much like elites in the private sector and civil

society, are better able to inserting themselves into the continuum of political power to which Tilly (1985) makes reference. In such a context, it becomes less useful to view the state in terms of legitimate and illegitimate spheres as opposed to a grey zone of statecraft where criminal gangs might both be the source of insecurity and of social welfare and political actors might both support tough-on-crime measures and shelter criminals.

One of only a handful of scholars who have offered a theory of shadowy state practices, Wilson (2009) notion of ‘parapolitics’ aptly describe the phenomenon:

Parapolitics [...] is the study of criminal sovereignty, of criminals behaving as sovereigns and sovereigns behaving as criminals in a systematic way. It [...] proposes that the tripartite relationship between security and intelligence organizations, international criminal networks and quasi-states is systematic, extensive and influential. The task of parapolitics as a discipline is to identify the dynamics of that relationship and to delimit precisely the influence that it has, or does not have, on public politics. Nonetheless, parapolitics as a field sharply challenges the often-uncomplicated understandings of ‘the state’ prevalent in liberal political theory and conventional international relations. It does this by asking how it is possible to use terms such as ‘legitimacy’, ‘democracy’ and ‘sovereignty’ when there exists a multitude of powerful institutions which have many of the attributes of states [...] but are not internationally recognized as a ‘legitimate’ state (P. 8).

It is worth pausing here to contest the view among liberal reformers that ‘para-political’ states should be seen as illiberal or authoritarian, rather than as liberal democracies in their own right. This view would likely be founded in the idea that states which functionally depend on certain violent and illegal actors to achieve certain ends are necessarily not liberal-democratic, notwithstanding their adherence to practices such as competitive elections, elite-driven governance and the recognition of basic civil and political liberties. Borrowing a line of reasoning from Eriksen (2005), such an argument serves to reify the suppositions about the outcomes that liberal democracy ought ideally to produce at the expense of an empirical assessment of the social and political contradictions to which they might give rise in the real world. Thus:

[w]ith this move, one leaves the domain of theory as a tool of understanding and enters the realm of normative theory. In the case of empirical statements, a lack of fit between a statement and reality constitutes a reason for revising the statement. In the case of normative statements, however, the reverse applies. Here, a lack of fit between a statement and the world constitutes a reason for changing the world, not for revising the statement or theory (P. 232).

The expected outcomes of liberal democracy (electoral accountability, the rule of law, peace and security, individual liberty, justice, etc.) do not only represent criteria against which normative evaluations can be made. They also form an important part of the state's legitimation of its exercise of power. Thus, state actors often justify decisions to use or increase their authority by appealing to the need to provide security or preserve civil liberties against certain threats. However, it should also be recognized that the inability to achieve these outcomes also serves an important weapon of delegitimation by the state's critics. This gap between the normative expectations and empirical outcomes has widened with post-Cold War political liberalization, heightening the contradiction between the state's commitment to law and security and its association with violent, criminal groups. In fact, this contraction appears to provide its own impetus as post-colonial states increasingly fetishize and ritualize political reforms, the better to obscure clandestine practices. Comaroff and Comaroff (2006) have argued, for example, that post-colonial states have enacted a raft of new rights, new laws and new constitutions in the post-Cold War era, even as the social order becomes increasingly intertwined with violence, corruption and lawlessness.

Faced with growing levels of criminality and insecurity, contemporary post-colonial states have supplemented the ritualization of law with a devotion to order. This is to be seen most clearly in the shift towards the militarization of routine policing (Serrano 2012) and the securitization of democratic society (Pearce 2010). Such an orientation allows states to not only make the rhetorical case that they are serious about crime, but also provides a justification for enacting novel forms of repression and control. These strategies remain 'liberal-democratic' in the sense that they do not

target political opponents or shut down dissent, but respond to the purported need to tackle the problems of global and local insecurity (crime, drug trafficking, terrorism). As with political reforms themselves, these strategies are largely borrowed from Western approaches to security which, in addition to ramping up the state's crime control apparatus (Beckett 1997; Newburn 2002), have increasingly involved the private sector and civil society in criminal justice policy and the provision of security (Garland 2000). In a number of urban areas across Latin America, for instance, political elites have imported zero-tolerance policing policies (Godoy 2005) or hired private security consultants (Mitchell and Beckett 2008) from more 'modern' U.S. cities. In post-colonial societies, a host of informal non-state actors have also seized on the opportunities to enter increasingly privatized 'economy' of security provision. In some instances, drug cartels and arms dealers have turned to offering protection for profit or supplying weapons to clients (Pearce 2010:296). In other cases, state forces have formed informal death squads (Arias and Goldstein 2010:20) and citizens have turned to vigilante justice (Godoy 2004) in lieu of relying on state institutions to prosecute suspected criminals.

Thus, the post-colonial liberal democracy is confronted by a somewhat paradoxical trends. On the one hand, high levels of violence and crime increasingly invite the involvement of non-state actors over which political authorities have little direct control, while also serving as a pretext for increasing the state's repressive capacity. Drawing on the Latin American experience, Pearce (2010:289) provides an apt description of this reality in noting that:

[the] state increasingly claims its legitimacy not from a monopoly of violence but from its lack of such a monopoly. It is this lack which provides the state with the social outcasts and sources of disorder (criminals, drug mafias, youth gangs) which it must respond to with new forms of order, violently imposed, to win its authority. Political and social violences are in constant juxtaposition, with state and para-state armed actors — paramilitary, militia, police, and illegal police extensionism — occupying both worlds at once.

### 2.3 FREE MEDIA AND THE REPRESENTATION OF ILLEGAL STATE PRACTICES

The preceding discussion shows that political liberalization has not put an end to the political-criminal nexus and other forms of illegal state practices. In fact, the restriction of the state's social arm and the incorporation of powerful non-state actors into the governance process appear to have deepened these trends in unexpected ways. While reformers hoped that these changes would make the political establishment more transparent and accountable, in practice, these changes have made state officials reliant on the wealth and influence of both formal and informal non-state actors who might find it advantageous to pursue their own interests through undemocratic and corrupt means. The notion that private elites, if brought into a liberalized political sphere, might be as tempted as state actors to pursue their own interests at the expense of the public good is unlikely to shock the reader; and even less so, the idea that state officials might ally with criminals for political gain. Still, there is one organ of a liberal-democratic society for which such a conclusion might not appear evident — the media. This is because free and independent media ties its very *raison d'être* in liberal democracies to the notion that it is both a forum for the public to ask questions and express criticism of political power and as Graber (2003) observes, a “watchdog that barks loudly when it encounters misbehavior, corruption, and abuses of power in the halls of government” (p. 143).

The media's function as watchdogs of the political establishment gained prominence in the political thinking of Western (particularly American) revolutionaries (Donsbach 1995). Having been influenced of the writings of Thomas Paine, the framers of the 1789 U.S. constitution enshrined the principle of freedom of the press in its first amendment. In *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville also singled out the free press as the institution which “causes political life to circulate

through all the parts of that vast [United States] territory. Its eye is constantly open to detect the secret springs of political designs and to summon the leaders of all parties in turn to the bar of public opinion” (Graber 2003:139). Media not only serve to guarantee the liberal ideal of free and independent expression, but also represent a free market for the production and exchange of ideas (Ashdown 1994:682; Turner Broadcasting v. FCC 1994). Thus, media can present ideas and frame issues while being free from regulatory (coercive) influence of government<sup>44</sup>. Moreover, since citizens are held to be rational, self-interested voters, they are also expected to seek the best information when deciding among alternative political candidates and policies. Thus, free media also have a commercial incentive in competing to offer credible information that is otherwise hidden from public view, particularly about the misdeeds of public officials.

Landerer (2013) has referred to these two kinds of incentives that explain media’s watchdog function as the *normative* logic (driven by an ideological commitment to liberal democracy and the media’s sacred role in its preservation) and the *commercial* logic (driven by the desire to improve ratings and profits by offering salient news). Based on the scholarship on media and politics, it is also useful to identify a third, *bureaucratic* logic: driven by professional and institutional pressures to produce regular, high-quality news, journalists routinely turn to covering political issues where they can relatively easily and legitimately request public information and draw on established relationships with government insiders and media liaisons. Thus, the constant interface with political establishment means that journalists are well-informed about its dealings and well-placed to ask probing questions and spot irregularities. Moreover, holding political

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<sup>44</sup> Indeed, media institutions are generally considered to be functionally independent of the political class even where they are partly or fully state-funded or state-controlled in contemporary liberal democracies (Schudson 2002:250).

representatives to account is likely to improve the reputation of journalists and the outlets that employ them.

It should be noted, however, that while political actors and media practitioners consistently hold to the view of media as watchdogs (Graber 2003), there is little consensus among scholars on whether this is borne out empirically and on which ‘logics’ drive media’s orientation towards political elites. On the one hand, studies which find that media act as watchdogs tend to view this outcome either in terms of an attachment to their normative role as guardians of political transparency (Giglioli 1996; Leonard 1986; Markovits and Silverstein 1988; Marshall 2011) or, more cynically, as the result of the media’s commercial quest for ratings-grabbing denunciations and scandal (Kitzberger 2014; Peruzzotti 2006; Waisbord 1997). Yet another possibility is that the routine bureaucratic-occupational interactions between media and political spokespersons causes them to focus on investigating governance and political affairs (Lanosga 2015; Protess et al. 1992). On the other hand, media critics have argued that the press function as ‘lapdogs’ of the political establishment (Donohue, Tichenor, and Olien 1995). Again, these explanations may centre either on normative considerations: media uncritically reproduce the dominant ideology and discredit critics of the political and economic establishment (Gitlin 1978; Hall et al. 1978; Horkheimer and Adorno 2007). Or, they may find that advertising dollars provide a commercial incentive for not criticizing the status quo (Herman and Chomsky 2002). Yet another body of scholarship concludes that the routine and expedient interface with politicians and their spokespersons results in journalists uncritically accepting and reproducing the viewpoints of political elites (Bennett 1990; Cook 2005; Hallin 1986).

Table 2-2: Logics explaining the Watchdog or Lapdog Tendencies of Media

<b>Logic</b>	<b>Watchdog Tendency</b>	<b>Lapdog Tendency</b>
<i>normative</i>	ideological commitment to liberal democracy and political accountability	commitment to hegemonic role of reproducing dominant ideology
<i>commercial</i>	desire to improve ratings and profits by covering salient or sensational news	state advertising dollars disincentivize criticism
<i>bureaucratic</i>	ability to access information and get insight into the political system through familiarity with its actors and institutions	routine interface with politicians makes journalists part of the establishment

Of course, these explanations are premised on the idea that media are indeed free and independent of political control and coercion. However, one might equally ask whether media coverage might not be influenced by corrupt dealings such as bribery or violence and intimidation rather than the bureaucratic, normative or commercial logics mentioned above. Indeed, because the study has stressed the literature discussing corruption and violence in places like Jamaica and elsewhere, this would appear to be a distinct possibility, even for societies that have a tradition of liberal democracy. However, there is little to indicate that Jamaica is anything but free. In 2016, Reporters Without Borders (2016) ranked Jamaica 10th in the world on its press freedom index, above Germany (16), Canada (18), U.K. (38), U.S. (41) and France (45). Likewise, Jamaica outperformed the U.S. and a majority of Western European countries in 2016, according to Freedom House’s 2016 press freedom index (Freedom House 2016). Both indices use measures tied to liberal ideology, including freedom from political control, privatization and ownership concentration, a legal framework which protects individual speech and private enterprise, the lack of bribery and corruption on content, and the lack of abuse and violence. Thus, the Jamaican media operates in an environment of freedom from political manipulation which is, at least, comparable with and perhaps superior to media in Western liberal democracies.

Notwithstanding the watchdog versus lapdog debate, scholars broadly agree that media do play an important role in setting the public agenda and in influencing public perceptions of the political establishment. Hurrelmann et al. (2009:487) have gone as far as to argue that “the public spheres [in Western democracies] are essentially constituted by the mass media, and hence the media play a key role in the social construction of political reality, including legitimacy and its normative grounding.” While a number of powerful and influential non-state actors help to shape the conceptions of political legitimacy, the co-authors add that:

[...] media discourses are particularly important suppliers and repositories of the frames, interpretations and knowledge (e.g., knowledge about appropriate normative standards) that citizens are likely to draw upon in the development and transformation of their own legitimacy beliefs, or in the translation of behavioral dispositions into acts of support and dissent. [Thus,] media debates on political issues juxtapose the self-legitimizing claims of these elites and the legitimacy assessments of important stakeholders or professional observers (journalists, academic and legal commentators, etc.), occasionally giving voice to ‘average’ citizens as well (P. 487).

Extending this observation to the Coke extradition case and Jamaica’s liberal-democratic tradition, this study presents and assesses media representations of illegal states practices and the political-criminal nexus. It provides a comparative analysis of: (1) the frames, interpretations and knowledge supplied by different media on the events surrounding the extradition, (2) the overall claims made by different media on the legitimacy of Jamaica’s political elites, and (3) the decisions by different media to include or exclude competing accounts by different ‘stakeholders’ and ‘observers’ in order to construct a coherent narrative about what happened. It is beyond the scope of this study to determine the exact mechanisms or logic which explain the media’s decisions to frame issues in one way or another (a task that would require a great deal of information on journalistic preferences, occupational pressures, ideological orientation, editorial bias, etc.). Nonetheless, by comparing different news representations of the same story, it is possible to

observe patterns of convergence and divergence across media and make inferences about whether these representations favor a watchdog or lapdog orientation towards the political establishment.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 A NOTE ON EPISTEMOLOGY: NEWS AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY

The tendency to grant media a preeminent role in the preservation of liberal democratic society is reflected in the classical idea that it serves as a ‘Fourth Estate’ or a ‘fourth branch of government’ (Cater 1959). Media scholars have argued that the free press constitutes a political institution in its own right; an approach which has been traced back to Weber’s description of the journalist as a ‘political person’ (Schudson 2002:250) The conceptualization of media as a political institution is further underscored by the empirical research showing that news content influences the political behaviours and attitudes of citizens (Jochen 2004; Roberts 1992; Sheafer and Weimann 2005; Weaver 1991). In addition, the political influence of media explains the degree to which political actors expend time and resources to cultivate public relations through press liaisons and media campaigns (Iyengar and Simon 2000). However, the media’s effect on public opinion might also be said to be ‘political’ in the more generic sense. Because the news signifies what aspects of social reality are problematic, defines which problems are most urgent and offers ideas about how they might be remedied, media practitioners also offer implicit and explicit suggestions about whether and how the prevailing social and political order should change (Entman 1993; Gamson 1992). In so doing, they forgo alternative ways of representing and problematizing social reality (Edelman 1993; Entman 1989). Moreover, since journalists are rarely on the scene as newsworthy events happen, they must make implicit decisions about the credibility and reputation of the different actors who might help make sense of the story (persons implicated, eyewitnesses, experts, etc.). Invariably, the final news product comes to legitimate the worldview and interests of some social actors at the expense of others. Stuart Hall (Hall 2006) referred to this process as a

“politics of signification.” From this social constructivist perspective, media — rather than being mere conduits of information — become negotiators, interpolators, and producers of meaning about social and political life.

In his seminal study of the British media’s coverage of the ‘crime wave’ of the 1970s, Hall et al. (1978) treat the social production of news in terms of a hegemonic process through which dominant ideas are conveyed and reaffirmed to the public. In the context of post-war Britain, alternative representations of the crime phenomenon could have been outrightly dismissed because the dominant representation was commensurate with popular cultural attitudes around race and criminality and, therefore, resonated with what mainstream society knew to be ‘true’. For Hall et al. (1978:61), therefore, media do not simply convey ideas of political elites but also translate these messages into a ‘public idiom’ which invests them with a popular force and resonance and naturalizes them as commonsensical.

Hall’s framework, nonetheless, gives inadequate focus to the mechanisms through which alternative and oppositional frames *do* form part of mainstream media representations (Hall 1995:37). In instances where events are so novel or unprecedented as to not readily fit within existing mainstream discourse or where elite voices in mainstream political discourse disagree, media encounter a degree of contestation in making sense of what happened and what it should mean. The production of the news then becomes relatively politicized in the sense that alternative representations cannot be readily excluded without giving rise to controversy (such as charges of incompleteness, misrepresentation or bias in coverage). Granted, news producers might very well find it useful to represent conflicting ideas and to admit that the ‘facts’ are far from certain in these instances. However, since media also strive for a degree of cogency and ‘objectivity’ in producing

the news, they tend to settle on a single representation of the story. Hall et al. (1978) equally argue that:

If the world is not to be represented as a jumble of random and chaotic events, then they must be identified (i.e. named, defined, related to other events known to the audience), and assigned to a social context (i.e. placed within a frame of meanings familiar to the audience). This process — identification and contextualization — is one of the most important through which events are 'made to mean' by the media (P. 54).

Media scholars refer to this process by which events are brought into the realm of wider social meaning as 'framing'. Entman (1993) famously observed that to frame is to take "aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (p. 52). Frames have been shown to be important determinants of public opinion, so much so that simply altering the framing of a policy question can predict whether respondents are in favor or against it (Entman 1993; Sniderman and Theriault 2004). Yet, because the researcher, like the media's audience, only encounters the end-product of the news production process (i.e. the final story), it is difficult to determine the universe of alternative frames which might have been used to identify and contextualize a given issue, and to understand why these frames were ignored or rejected.

Hall et al. (1978) suggest that the researcher address this limitation by explicitly considering what else might be said:

Many of these structured forms of communication [i.e. favoring certain ways of setting up topics, and maintaining certain strategic areas of silence] are so common, so natural, so taken-for-granted, so deeply embedded in the very communication forms which are employed, that they are hardly visible at all, as ideological constructs unless we deliberately set out to ask, 'What, other than what has been said about this topic, could be said?' 'What questions are omitted?' 'Why do the questions — which always presuppose answers of a particular

kind—so often recur in this form?' 'Why do certain other questions never appear?' (P. 55).

The obvious drawback to this kind of counterfactual thinking is that it asks the researcher to assume the role of media practitioners without reproducing the conditions under which they operate. Besides, whatever alternative representations the researcher derives would also be constrained by her imaginativeness, and more or less tainted by his worldview. The solution adopted by the study is to rely on the comparison of a cross-section of different media. While this raises its own limitations<sup>45</sup>, comparisons across media provide the distinct advantage of varying the news representations offered for a given event. Moreover, the variation introduced in the study relates to our predictor of interest: the media's proximity to political power. Put differently, Jamaican media, in the liberal-democratic conception, are the immediate watchdogs of the Jamaican political establishment. Moreover, they have greater access to and are more knowledgeable about political elites. The 'watchdog' scholarship would therefore suggest that they will tend to raise more questions and criticisms about the Coke extradition controversy than the relatively distant and disinterested foreign press. From the perspective of 'guard dog' thesis, however, the foreign media are relatively insulated from the political-ideological reach of Jamaican political elites and, therefore, less likely than the Jamaican media to adopt pro-government frames. Furthermore, to the extent that the U.S. government was at loggerheads with the Golding administration before Coke's arrest, U.S. media should be especially critical towards the Golding administration. For this reason, the analysis distinguishes between the frames supplied by U.S.-based and non-U.S. based foreign media.

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<sup>45</sup> Different media are not perfectly comparable since they differ in any number of ways, including who the intended audience is and their access to resources and information.

Overall, the research presents a comparative qualitative analysis of news frames used during coverage of the Coke extradition events. This coverage represents a useful case-study with which to explore the media's representation of the political establishment for at least two reasons. Firstly, there were important points of divergence in how influential non-state actors in the private sector and civil society represented the Golding administration's handling of the extradition. Moreover, the U.S. government offered its own critical assessment of the government's decision to stall its request. The media had to therefore contend with and choose among competing frames from a number of powerful social actors in constructing the problem and its causes. Secondly, these events were largely unprecedented in Jamaican social and political history. As a consequence, they could not be readily reconciled with the kinds of frames that are routinely employed when covering the actions and ideas of political elites. The present case-study is therefore not 'typical' of the more mundane reproduction of mainstream ideas which Hall et al. described in their study of crime discourse in postwar Britain. In these more routine instances where ideas are widely agreed on by influential social groups and generally accepted by the general public, it becomes difficult to assess the extent to which media might be uncritically parroting the frames of one elite group or another, or seeking to act as public advocates. However, by selecting a 'deviant' case (Gerring 2007:101) where there are no clear consensus frames, the study is able to critically assess what frames are ignored or dismissed by the media as well as the extent to which these closely align with their purported role as watchdogs of the political establishment or guard dogs for its elites.

## 3.2 DATA AND METHODS

### 3.2.1 *Data Collection*

The analysis uses two sets of data, the first consisting of Jamaican news articles, and the second, articles from the foreign press. The articles covered a period of close to five years, from September 1, 2009 when news of the extradition request first broke in the media up until March 2014 when the data were gathered. Jamaican articles were gathered from the website of the Jamaica Gleaner, the country's premier newspaper company. The articles were taken from the primary news sections of the company's website<sup>46</sup>, which includes both articles published in the daily and Sunday editions of the Jamaica Gleaner, as well as 'Latest News' content. Latest News articles are published exclusively online and are continually added throughout the day. In generating the Jamaican dataset, articles published between August 1, 2009 and March 31, 2014 and containing the word "Dudus" (Coke's popular alias)<sup>47</sup> were scraped from the Jamaica Gleaner website using Python 2.7. This corresponded to 1,537 articles, of which 779 (51%) were published exclusive online and 758 (49%) appeared online and in print. Foreign medial articles, similarly published between August 2009 and March 2014 and containing the keyword "Dudus" were accessed using LexisNexis Academic's "US and World News" search engine. The search was restricted to include only newspaper and news wire articles (as opposed to press releases, magazine pieces, etc.). In total, 1,330 articles corresponded to the search criteria. To ensure that each article was accurately

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<sup>46</sup> Since 2010, the Gleaner has focussed its efforts on producing articles online rather than in print in response to the global decline in newspaper sales. It has been estimated that half-a-million Jamaicans, or 18% of the population, regularly read the Jamaica Gleaner online. Thus, the reputation and the wide circulation of the Gleaner makes it the primary source for mainstream news articles in Jamaica, and among the large constituency of Jamaicans in the Diaspora.

<sup>47</sup> The keyword 'Dudus' was found to be more reliable than the words 'Christopher' and 'Coke' in identifying articles that reference events surrounding the attempts to arrest and extradite him. The bigram 'Christopher Coke' was also produced less true negatives than 'Dudus' because he was sometimes referred to as "Christopher 'Dudus' Coke".

associated with the media agency which originated it, those that were found to be re-publications in other media were flagged and reassigned. In rare instances, articles were removed from the data for either of the following reasons:

- (1) They are duplicates of other articles returned in the search results. This occurred when the search algorithm incorrectly treated text with slight variations (such as including or excluding the newspaper section in the title) as different articles.
- (2) They are republications for which the original is already available in the search results. Articles which were abridged versions of longer articles in the results were also considered to be duplicates.
- (3) The keyword “Dudus” referred to something other than Christopher Coke and the events in Jamaica.

The majority of the deleted articles were removed because they were in the format of a news brief, often giving a roundup of news from across the world. These briefs were identified as reporting the basic facts of the extradition affair in under 100 words, and were distinct from standard 300- to 800-word news articles which rely on a degree of reporter analysis and greater editorial scrutiny (Reuters News Agency 2015). Excluding news briefs from the foreign news data, therefore, ensures consistency between articles included in the Jamaican and foreign datasets with respect to the level of journalistic and editorial input. Following the inspection of the foreign data, a total of 649 articles remained. 331 or 51% were digital publications from news outlets while the remaining half (318) originated with wire agencies that distribute content to other media companies. Despite this parity, the number of wire sources (9) was a fraction of the number of news agencies (56). This means that, on average, wires produced six times as many articles as news outlets. Articles were also concentrated in a few wire firms: the U.S.-based Associated Press

published 108 articles or 16.6% of the total, followed by Agence France-Presse which wrote 67 articles or 10.3%, and the Caribbean News Agency (CANA) with 51 samples or 7.9%. Articles were also clustered by region<sup>48</sup> with the UK representing 28% of the total foreign press, US readership representing 27%, agencies with Caribbean readership at 14%, and agencies distributing primarily in mainland Europe with 13%.

Table 3-1: Number of News and Wire Agencies and Frequency of Articles by Country

Country	Number of News Agencies						Frequency of Articles by Region	
	News	%	Wires	%	Total	%	Frequency	Total
Australia	9	0.16	0	0.00	9	0.14	31	0.05
Canada	8	0.14	0	0.00	8	0.12	41	0.06
Caribbean	1	0.02	1	0.11	2	0.03	88	0.14
Europe (mainland)	1	0.02	3	0.33	4	0.06	87	0.13
Ireland	2	0.04	0	0.00	2	0.03	9	0.01
Other	3	0.05	1	0.11	4	0.06	18	0.03
Thailand	1	0.02	1	0.11	2	0.03	19	0.03
United Kingdom	22	0.39	2	0.22	24	0.37	181	0.28
USA	9	0.16	1	0.11	10	0.15	175	0.27
<i>Total</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>649</i>	<i>1</i>

### 3.2.2 Representativeness and Comparability

The study treats the data from the Jamaica Gleaner as typical of mainstream media coverage of the Coke extradition. While relying on a single news outlet to represent coverage across all media presents a limitation, the data collection strategy remains adequate in the Jamaican context for the following reasons. Firstly, the media industry in Jamaica has a small number of competitors across broadcast, online and print markets, and only one other newspaper company. Founded in 1834, the Jamaica Gleaner is a more established and reputed than its competitor, the Jamaica

<sup>48</sup> Articles are assigned to regions based on the readership that they cater to. In each case, this appears to accurately reflect the proximity of news agencies to the political establishment and the industry within which they operate. Thus, although it is internationally known and regarded the New York Times would be classified as a U.S. paper because it is most proximate to U.S. political establishment and largely competes with other U.S. papers.

Observer, which was only founded in 1993. In fact, the Gleaner is the oldest and arguably the most respected newspaper in the Caribbean region. The Gleaner is also ideologically similar to the Observer in its editorial stances which tend to promote market economics and social conservatism. It should also be noted that, in contrast to the U.S. and other foreign press, the editorial boards of Jamaican newspaper outlets do not endorse or openly support political parties.

The foreign press articles, on the other hand, span a diverse range of news agencies operating in varied market environments with various ideological and political leanings and different levels of resources and kinds of professional practices. For this reason, it is not directly comparable to the sample from the Jamaican media. Nor is the analysis premised on this direct comparison. Rather, its task is to uncover a range of alternative frames that might be used to make sense of the extradition events. Variation is therefore desirable for constructing our universe of alternative frames. By identifying these alternatives (what else might have been said), the study is able to assess: 1) the extent to which these converge and diverge from the representations offered in Jamaica's mainstream media and 2) the degree to which representations were consistent with the watchdog or guard dog thesis.

### 3.2.3 *Sampling Strategy*

Because of their large size, articles were randomly sampled from the Jamaican and foreign media datasets for analysis. Given that the distribution of articles was concentrated around the most newsworthy events (such as the siege on Tivoli or the arrest of Coke), a strategy was devised to bin the datasets by period before sampling. Doing so ensured that the sampling would capture the range of events covered over the period under study and provide points of comparisons for these events across all media groups. In the case of the foreign media, it also increased the likelihood that outlets which provided continual coverage would be represented in the samples—

making them a lot more similar to the Jamaican press in terms of the time and resources devoted to coverage. Substantively, each period introduces new developments into the extradition controversy. Grouping articles in this way therefore means that it is easier to observe any shifts in framing which correspond to the introduction of new developments over the course of the extradition.

The five period bins, as well as the frequency of articles, are shown in Table 3.2.1. The sampling strategy uses a formula which finds an increasingly large percentage of articles to sample for smaller numbers of articles in a period bin, such that approximately 10% would be randomly chosen for a period with 250 articles, a half sampled for a 30-article period, and all for periods of four or less articles. Concerning the Jamaican data, articles from the “Lead News” section appearing in print and online were grouped separately from the “Latest News” articles which appear exclusively online and are published throughout the day. The separation was done in the event that, given that there is a shorter turnaround time for producing and refining the Latest News, there are systematic differences in framing. It was later determined that there was no such difference and, therefore, this distinction does not figure in the presentation of findings. In total, 327 articles were randomly sampled. The number of articles sampled for each period for both the Jamaican and foreign articles is given in Table 3.2.2.

Table 3-2: Article Frequency by Period (Population of Collected Articles)

<b>Period</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Jamaican Latest</b>	<b>Jamaican Lead</b>	<b>Jamaican Total</b>	<b>Foreign</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Sept 1 2009	Feb 28 2010	News breaks that Dudus is wanted, Gov't says it has concerns	8	34	42	1	43
2	Mar 1 2010	May 16 2010	US Narcotics report released, Golding claims extradition evidence is illegal, Manatt contract comes to light	41	55	96	12	108
3	May 17 2010	Jan 16 2011	Golding signs request, Tivoli siege, Golding defeats no confidence vote	242	259	501	460	961
4	17-Jan-11	Sept 24 2011	Manatt Commission of Enquiry	283	235	518	59	577
5	Sept 25 2011	Apr 30 2012	Golding resigns, JLP loses election	68	79	147	38	185
6	May 1, 2012	March 2014	Public Defender's report, PNP government sworn in	137	96	233	79	312
<i>Total</i>				<i>779</i>	<i>758</i>	<i>1537</i>	<i>649</i>	<i>2186</i>
<i>%</i>				<i>35.6</i>	<i>34.7</i>	<i>70.3</i>	<i>29.7</i>	<i>100</i>

Table 3-3: Article Frequency by Period (Sample of Collected Articles)

<b>Period</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Jamaican Latest</b>	<b>Jamaican Lead</b>	<b>Jamaican Total</b>	<b>Foreign</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Sept 1 2009	Feb 28 2010	News breaks that Dudus is wanted, Gov't says it has concerns	6	15	22	1	23
2	Mar 1 2010	May 16 2010	US Narcotics report released, Golding claims extradition evidence is illegal, Manatt contract comes to light	17	18	35	9	44
3	May 17 2010	Jan 16 2011	Golding signs request, Tivoli siege, Golding defeats no confidence vote	24	24	48	25	74
4	17-Jan-11	Sept 24 2011	Manatt Commission of Enquiry	25	24	49	19	67
5	Sept 25 2011	Apr 30 2012	Golding resigns, JLP loses election	19	20	40	16	56
6	May 1, 2012	March 2014	Public Defender's report, PNP government sworn in	23	21	44	20	64
<i>Total</i>				<i>114</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>237</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>327</i>
<i>%</i>				<i>34.8</i>	<i>37.7</i>	<i>72.5</i>	<i>27.5</i>	<i>100</i>

### 3.2.4 *Coding the Data*

The sampled articles were coded using Atlas.ti 7, a qualitative data analysis software. Each code had three components: (1) the idea, (2) tags and (3) source. An idea was identified as a fact, argument or opinion relating to occurrences, or the character, actions or ideas of persons or groups. Each idea was further associated with one or more tags that organise them into categories. These tags were interpretatively applied during open coding, then reorganized at the end of the coding process based on whether they appeared redundant, or captured too narrow or too broad a set of ideas to be meaningful. Sources provide information on whether or not the idea is attributed in the article to an external source (as opposed to the news outlet itself). Where sources exist, they specify who the persons or groups are and whether they are being directly quoted. This allows the analysis to isolate ideas that are presented by the media outlets themselves as their own independent assessment, as opposed to those that are presented as coming from external sources. The following example is an instance of how articles were coded:

#### Meta-Data

- Title: Hillary sends Portia help
- Date: March 11, 2012
- Outlet: Jamaica Gleaner
- Section: Latest News
- Period: 5

#### Text Excerpt 1

In January 2010, Reynoso - then the most senior US official to visit Jamaica after the election of Barack Obama - had made it clear that the Americans would not back down on the extradition request for Coke.

#### Coding 1

Idea: Snr USG official made it clear to GoJ Jan 2010 USG won't back down from extradition; Tags: diplomatic row, extradition, USG, GoJ; Source: Gleaner; Quote: False

#### Excerpt 2:

As the stand-off continued, Golding was to issue his now famous line, "constitutional rights do not begin at Liguanea," which is where the US Embassy in Kingston is based.

#### Coding 2:

Idea: standoff between USG and GoJ as Golding defends GoJ 2010; Tags: diplomatic row, extradition, Golding, USG, GoJ; Source: Gleaner; Quote: False

Idea: constitutional rights of Coke would be breached if extradited; Tags: diplomatic row, extradition, USG, GoJ; Source: Golding; Quote: True

Idea: constitutional rights do not begin at Liguanea; Tags: diplomatic row, extradition, Golding, USG, GoJ; Source: Golding; Quote: True

Codes therefore separate and summarize ideas presented in each article, and indicate to whom they are attributable. It is worth emphasizing that the ideas contained in each code are not independent of other ideas in the article, and that these ideas can be quite broad or quite narrow in the degree of meaning they convey. Furthermore, the extent to which persons/groups appear as sources is an artifact of the number of ideas identified for coding, and does not necessarily correlate with the overall significance of their ideas. Thus, the codes themselves cannot be quantified in any meaningful way. Instead, it is appropriate to treat these codes as elements which help to identify and organise the overall discursive representation of the extradition affair across different media. Where quantitative results are presented, the article is treated as the unit of analysis and the figures indicate the proportion of articles that contain certain idea tags and that reference external sources. Those figures, therefore, indicate the propensity for media outlets to signal certain ideas or include the views of particular actors in a given article.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1 QUANTITATIVE DESCRIPTIVE

In total, 3,009 individual codes were applied across the 327 articles. The frequency with which certain categories of idea tags appeared in articles is given in Table 4.1. The frequency of references to different sources is presented in Table 4.2. An important caveat to bear in mind with regards to these findings is that they describe a random sample, and not the complete population, of articles published. It is therefore possible that some frames which appeared in the news do not show up in the sample. Nevertheless, the samples are randomly-chosen and cover all the major events of the Coke extradition controversy.

Table 4-1: Frequency of Articles per Idea Tag

Tags	Number of articles			% of articles			Description of Tags
	<i>Jamaican</i>	<i>U.S. Foreign</i>	<i>Other Foreign</i>	<i>Jamaican</i>	<i>U.S. Foreign</i>	<i>Other Foreign</i>	
Civil Society Reaction	17	4	5	0.08	0.13	0.10	reference to Jamaican civil society in general or to groups or individuals from civil society
Commission	31	1	10	0.14	0.03	0.20	reference to the commission of inquiry set up to investigate the engagement of Manatt, or to the commission's proceedings
Extradition Delay	63	14	21	0.28	0.44	0.41	discusses issues and questions surrounding the delay of the extradition
Diplomatic Row	58	14	19	0.26	0.44	0.37	discusses diplomatic tensions between the GoJ and USG
Dudus	159	32	49	0.71	1.00	0.96	reference to Christopher 'Dudus' Coke
Economic Concern	10	6	5	0.04	0.19	0.10	discusses economic issues that arise from the extradition affair
Extradition	84	20	34	0.38	0.63	0.67	discusses the extradition request
Police/Military Forces	43	18	29	0.19	0.56	0.57	reference to the Jamaican police and/or military
GoJ	86	20	31	0.39	0.63	0.61	reference to the GoJ and/or members of the GoJ
Human Rights Abuses	22	8	8	0.10	0.25	0.16	discusses the idea that human rights abuses arise from the Tivoli siege
Illegal Evidence	22	6	3	0.10	0.19	0.06	discusses the legality of the wiretap evidence which the USG relied on to request the extradition of Dudus
JLP	59	16	16	0.26	0.50	0.31	reference to the JLP as a party
Manatt	66	9	6	0.30	0.28	0.12	reference to the Manatt law firm

MoU	11	0	3	0.05	0.00	0.06	reference to the Memorandum of Understanding signed in secret by a member of the former government
PM	85	19	29	0.38	0.59	0.57	reference to the Prime Minister
PNP	72	11	14	0.32	0.34	0.27	reference to the PNP
Political Gangs	18	15	13	0.08	0.47	0.25	discusses the link between politics and gangs
Resignation	32	10	9	0.14	0.31	0.18	discusses the resignation of the Prime Minister or calls for his resignation as well as for the resignation of others involved in the extradition affair
Tivoli	75	30	30	0.34	0.94	0.59	reference to Tivoli Gardens or its residents
Siege	56	29	35	0.25	0.91	0.69	discusses the police/military siege of Tivoli Gardens
US	41	17	21	0.18	0.53	0.41	reference to the United States government, or an agency or an official of the USG
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>1427</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>550</b>				

Table 4-2: Frequency of Articles Referencing Sources

Source Name	Direct Quotes from Source						Total (Direct Quotes and Reference)					
	Number of articles			% of articles			Number of articles			% of articles		
	<i>Jamai can</i>	<i>U.S. Foreign</i>	<i>Other Foreign</i>	<i>Jamai can</i>	<i>U.S. Foreign</i>	<i>Other Foreign</i>	<i>Jamai can</i>	<i>U.S. Foreign</i>	<i>Other Foreign</i>	<i>Jamai can</i>	<i>U.S. Foreign</i>	<i>Other Foreign</i>
Government of Jamaica	33	9	13	0.15	0.28	0.25	82	16	17	0.37	0.50	0.33
---Prime Minister	15	6	7	0.07	0.19	0.14	39	11	9	0.17	0.34	0.18
---Other Gov't	12	3	7	0.05	0.09	0.14	39	8	10	0.17	0.25	0.20
---Functionaries	9	1	0	0.04	0.03	0.00	17	1	4	0.08	0.03	0.08
JLP	8	2	1	0.04	0.06	0.02	15	3	2	0.07	0.09	0.04
PNP	17	7	3	0.08	0.22	0.06	47	8	6	0.21	0.25	0.12
US Government	5	6	6	0.02	0.19	0.12	20	16	10	0.09	0.50	0.20
-Justice Dept./State Dept.	2	6	4	0.01	0.19	0.08	15	15	9	0.07	0.47	0.18
---US Embassy	3	1	1	0.01	0.03	0.02	5	3	1	0.02	0.09	0.02
---US Forces	1	0	1	0.00	0.00	0.02	1	6	1	0.00	0.19	0.02
Experts	14	3	3	0.06	0.09	0.06	23	5	3	0.10	0.16	0.06
Civil Society	9	1	2	0.04	0.03	0.04	13	3	6	0.06	0.09	0.12
Private Sector	3	1	1	0.01	0.03	0.02	7	1	1	0.03	0.03	0.02
Human Rights Groups	4	4	4	0.02	0.13	0.08	8	4	4	0.04	0.13	0.08
Public	0	1	0	0.00	0.03	0.00	9	5	3	0.04	0.16	0.06
Dudus	5	6	3	0.02	0.19	0.06	8	9	3	0.04	0.28	0.06
Victims of Siege	6	4	2	0.03	0.13	0.04	12	6	5	0.05	0.19	0.10
Other Tivoli Residents	6	2	1	0.03	0.06	0.02	6	2	4	0.03	0.06	0.08

Police/Military	18	5	4	0.08	0.16	0.08	30	9	9	0.13	0.28	0.18
Courts (Jamaican & US)	3	0	0	0.01	0.00	0.00	6	1	1	0.03	0.03	0.02
Prosecutors	2	2	3	0.01	0.06	0.06	9	5	7	0.04	0.16	0.14
Investigators	2	0	1	0.01	0.00	0.02	13	4	6	0.06	0.13	0.12
Manatt	1	2	0	0.00	0.06	0.00	3	2	0	0.01	0.06	0.00

## 4.2 SUMMARY OF QUALITATIVE FRAMING RESULTS SUMMARY

A comprehensive presentation and comparison of the frames used by Jamaican and foreign media are provided in the Appendix. These qualitative results are presented to reflect the two broad aspects of the extradition controversy: (1) the diplomatic standoff between Kingston and Washington and its political ramifications and (2) the police-military siege on Tivoli. It also presents how (3) Christopher Coke and (4) the Tivoli Gardens community were characterised throughout media coverage. Of particular interest for the study is the framing around the historical nexus between politicians and criminals and the relationship between Coke and the JLP administration.

In brief, the framing of the extradition controversy in the Jamaican media was relatively favourable to the Golding government when compared with the foreign press. The Jamaican media's orientation can be summarized in terms of three framing tendencies:

- (1) the quasi-absence of discussions on connections between Coke and the Golding government and on the wider context of the historical nexus between politicians and criminals,
- (2) the initial framing of controversial developments in ways that cast the government in a less negative light,
- (3) the framing of some challengers of the government's siege in ways that marginalize or discredit their accounts

(1) *Absence of political-criminal nexus*: While the Jamaican media acknowledges that Coke is a supporter of the JLP on one occasion, there is no suggestion that the ties between the JLP and Coke motivated the government's actions in any instance. Likewise, Jamaican media evoke neither

the phenomenon of garrison politics, nor the historical political-criminal nexus in making sense of these events. In contrast, foreign media describe Coke as an influential and well-connected political operative. They also continually point to his ties to the JLP administration as a significant element in explaining the government's decision to delay the extradition and hire a U.S. law firm to lobby the Obama administration on the matter.

(2) *Pro-government framing*: the frames used by the Jamaican media to make sense of new developments were relatively favourable to the Jamaican government and consistent with the government's own representation of events. For example, the decision to delay Coke's extradition was presented in terms of the normally problematic nature of treaties and the questions around the legality with which U.S. authorities obtained evidence against Coke. Foreign media, on the other hand, consistently interpreted the government's actions as obstructionism and saw its connection to Coke as relevant to this stance.

There were, however, a number of events around which the Jamaican media later shifted its framing towards being more critical of the government. These corresponded to instances where the government itself backtracked on its account of events in response to public pressure and criticism. This was the case, for instance, with coverage of the Manatt contract affair which Jamaican media initially framed as a misunderstanding which the government would clarify before describing it as a mishandled debacle after Golding admitted to having authorized the contract, and as a web of deceptions after inconsistencies in the accounts of some government officials were revealed and others refused to testify during the inquiry into the matter. While revising frames in light of new information which casts doubt on previous accounts is not by itself surprising, it is important to note that the foreign press initially raised skepticism about the government's decision to hire Manatt which it viewed as an attempt to lobby Washington on Coke's behalf.

(3) *Discrediting certain government's challengers:* as the siege unfolded, the Jamaican media represented Tivoli as a community which traditionally poses a security threat to the state and where residents are hostile towards the security forces. It also pointed to what it said were indications that the state of emergency is received wide public support and depicted the government as making progress in dealing with crime hotbeds. Thus, the framing by the Jamaican media tended to discredit the claims of residents that the siege unjustifiably heavy-handed and resulted in the unnecessary loss of innocent lives. Coverage by the foreign media — insofar as they discussed the high humanitarian toll of the operation, the small number of arms recovered by the security forces and residents' allegation of abuses and anger at the state — was more consistent with the accounts given by Tivoli residents. While it is true that the foreign media depicted Tivoli as crime-plagued and sympathetic to drug dons in similar ways to the Jamaican media, they also pointed to the lack of state institutions and high degrees of social marginality in the community.

Although its characterizations of the U.S. government are relatively infrequent, early on the Jamaican media does depict Washington as having a hegemonic presence in the Americas and instigating coups against regimes that resist it. Following the JLP's election loss on the heels of Golding's resignation, the U.S. state is described in different terms as a traditional ally on security and economic issues. This shift in the representation of Washington from a geopolitical bully during the extradition standoff to an important security ally after the JLP election is consistent with the government's own framing of events as it resisted the diplomatic pressure during the Golding administration and sought a rapprochement following his resignation.

Finally, the results suggest that U.S. media frames also tended to depict the actions of the U.S. governments favorably, relative to the Jamaican and other foreign media. Of all groups, U.S. media were the most strident in representing the Golding government's actions as being driven by its ties

to Coke. They also gave relative weight to the contents of the State Department's 2010 Narcotics Report in their coverage. Unlike Jamaican and other foreign media, the U.S. media did not represent the U.S. government as exerting diplomatic pressure to force Golding to sign the extradition. This provides some indication that they might have been relatively uncritical of Washington. However, it should be noted that there was mention made in one instance of secretive ties between the White House and politically-connected lobbyists like Manatt.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The study's findings are consistent with the thesis that media in liberal democracy act as 'lapdogs' of state power. The Jamaican media's framing of events surrounding the Coke extradition is shown to be generally consistent with the Golding government's own representation of these events. By the same token, Jamaican media frames marginalize or ignore the representations of the government's challengers, particularly socially-marginalized inner-city residents. To the extent that the Golding administration was cast in a critical or unfavorable light, this corresponds to moments when the government itself was forced to backtrack on earlier explanations given to the public. Framing in the U.S. media also appears relatively consistent with the Obama administration's stances during the extradition standoff. Of all media groups, U.S. press offered the most critical and skeptical coverage of the actions and motivations of the Jamaican government.

Substantively, the most glaring divergence between the Jamaican and foreign media framing relates to the relationship between Coke and the JLP and the wider political-criminal nexus. Whereas foreign media represent Coke as an influential political figure with strong ties to the government, the sample from Jamaican media coverage gives only a single reference to Coke as a supporter of the JLP. Importantly, this unique reference is made in the context of the government's capture of Coke, rather than at moments where they appear reticent to act against him. The findings, therefore, counter the prevailing view among Jamaican scholars that mainstream media played an important part in the bringing the Coke extradition matter to public attention and in exposing links between politicians and criminals.

## 5.1 STRATEGIC SILENCE AND EXCULPATORY CRITICISM

More generally, these findings should give pause to liberal-democratic reformers who posit media, by virtue of their independence from government coercion, as watchdogs of the political establishment. Instead, two broad framing orientations can be extrapolated from the study: (1) media representations may reflect strategic areas of silence which serve to legitimate political elites, and (2) media may engage in a kind of exculpatory criticism, which is to say, their criticisms serve to distract the public away from more fundamental critiques that call into question the political establishment and status quo.

### 5.1.1 *Strategic Silence*

The quasi-absence of frames relating to the political-criminal nexus in Jamaica supports Hall et al.'s (1978) contention that media in liberal democracy help to reproduce and sustain representations which favor the powerful. This is the case not only because media tend to offer ideas about social reality that are consistent with the worldview of elites, but also because “maintaining certain strategic areas of silence” (Hall et al. 1978:65) serves to preclude lines of inquiry that threaten to delegitimize the political establishment. This social construction of reality through the news might therefore be described as ‘partial’ in both senses of the term; that is to say, it presents a fragmented representation of social reality and it favors certain representations over others. Indeed, the coverage in mainstream Jamaican media emphasized the relationship between political elites and criminals as one of antagonism (politicians are committed to fighting crime and upholding the rule of law) while excluding the history of political-criminal connections. It is true that all media invariably exclude some elements of a story, often due to limited print space and airtime. Given these constraints, media practitioners must decide what aspects of the story are most important to public knowledge and for making sense of the story. The Jamaican media’s exclusion

of representations of the connections between Coke and the JLP and on the wider political-criminal nexus therefore appears all the more 'strategic' given their potential news value and their relevance to making sense of the extradition affair.

The Jamaican media also marginalize the representations offered by less powerful social actors when they countered those of elites. This orientation can be explained in terms of Becker's (1967) notion of a social 'hierarchy of credibility'. Individuals, he argues, are socialized to be deferential to the views of more powerful social groups. After all, "[e]veryone knows' that responsible professionals know more about things than laymen, that police are more respectable and their words ought to be taken more seriously than those of the deviants and criminals with whom they deal" (p. 242). Thus, to question or contravene the official version of events is to commit a kind of socially deviant act which becomes a basis upon which alternative views are invalidated as lacking credibility, as irrelevant or as extremist. Where it concerns the media's treatment of the accounts of state officials and the political establishment, it might be said that authority becomes the sign of authoritativeness. Indeed, Tivoli is depicted in the Jamaican media coverage as a crime den from which attacks are frequently launched at the state and as showing raucous support for Coke. Against this backdrop, the relative lack of coverage on residents' claims challenging the official narrative becomes justified by this implicit view that the residents are antagonistic towards the state and sympathetic to criminals.

### 5.1.2 *Exculpatory Criticism*

To say that media maintain strategic areas of silence that favor political elites is not to say that media never represent elements of a story which the audience might view as unfavorable to or critical of government. In fact, media might be compelled to take certain critical frames for granted. In a society where there is, say, high cynicism about political corruption, reporting that 'there is

no corruption in government' would undermine the media's credibility. If its representation of the social world is to appear believable to any degree, media must attend, to some degree, to achieving what Benford and Snow (2000) refer to as 'experiential commensurability' (congruence with everyday experiences) and 'narrative fidelity' (consistency with commonly-held beliefs in the public). To the extent that they help to discredit claims of bias towards the state, criticism lends credence to the view of media as uncompromising and impartial watchdogs. Yet, certain forms of limited criticism may also mask more fundamental interrogations about the political system that are being avoided by media. Entman's (2012) recent study on media coverage of political scandals in the U.S. between 1988 and 2008 reveals a rather interesting observation: there is a surprising inverse relationship between scandals that are the most entrenched and socially-impactful and those given the most media attention. For example, President Bill Clinton's \$200 haircut received greater attention than the decision to repeal Glass-Steagall legislation which weakened banking regulations and introduced new forms of financial risk-taking. Furthermore, Entman's study shows that media neglect most instances of corruption and that, where scandals did arise, criticisms were largely driven by figures in governments and political parties who fed information to the media based on their own agenda. Indeed, critical coverage of the government's handling of the Coke extradition was almost exclusively based on the narrative offered by the Opposition PNP. Thus, rather than evoke the question of connections between politicians from both parties and illegal actors, criticisms concentrated to questions of the government's incompetent handling of the extradition and its controversial decision to hire a law firm to lobby Washington

Since they ignore lines of inquiry that call into question the legitimacy of the entire political order, exculpatory criticisms of political elites tend to fall within what Hallin (1986) calls the 'sphere of legitimate controversy'. In reference to the U.S. context, Tuchmann (1974) argues that

mainstream political debate “means in practice that Republicans may rebut Democrats and vice-versa” and that views of supposedly illegitimate challengers are rarely aired (p. 112). This ‘balance’ of views supposedly provides an arena for criticism and denunciation while ensuring fairness and neutrality in coverage. In reality, it does something closer to advancing the views of dominant elites, while exaggerating the extent to which ‘establishment critics’ (Tuchmann 1974) diverge on the spectrum of political alternatives. The Opposition PNP’s focus on criticizing the handling of the extradition and its calls for Golding’s resignation are indicative of this narrowing of the sphere of controversy to preclude certain questions. By criticizing the government on grounds of procedure, the Opposition was able to embarrass the government while avoiding the issue of the political-criminal nexus within which they are equally implicated. Instead of raising these issues, the Jamaican media largely served as a ‘neutral’ forum through which both parties could debate the government’s supposed legal and procedural bugles. The unwillingness to raise the question of connections between Coke and the JLP led to a rather intriguing outcome. Mindful of the need to deflect criticism on the Justice Ministry’s handling of the request, Golding claimed that he engaged a law firm to lobby Washington in his capacity as leader of the JLP and not as head of the government. This move made sense given that the Opposition and mainstream media only criticized the government on legal and procedural grounds. However, in the context of questions about the relationship between Coke and the JLP, such a decision by Golding ought to have raised a more damning question: why the JLP, which is a private organization, would have an interest in spending hundreds of thousands of U.S. dollars to lobby Washington on Coke’s behalf?

## 5.2 MEDIA COVERAGE AS MASKING AND MYSTIFICATION

How can we make sense of these findings in relation to the media representations of illegal state practices in liberal democracy? At a minimum, the study suggests the need for a more nuanced conceptualization of the role of the free media than is offered by proponents of the watchdog thesis. Despite being good disciples of post-Cold War political and economic reform, politically-liberalized states continue to rely on illegal practices and maintain clandestine ties with illegal actors. In the conception of reformers, this form of ‘shadowy’ statecraft is explained away in terms of the opportunistic political elites’ who rely on informal clientelistic and corrupt dealings and as the result of weak legal and judicial state apparatus. Yet, as has been shown, informal ties between the state and illegal actors form an integral part of state formation and preservation, and have become more so in response to political liberalization.

Because contemporary states derive political legitimacy from the normative force of liberal democracy (legality, liberty, equality, security etc.), the ways in which state practices themselves produce contrary outcomes (legal exceptionalism, elite domination, insecurity, etc.) must be hidden. As Bourdieu (cited in Baudrillard 2001:176) observed, political authority not only conceals itself as a relation of force, but further acquires its force from that concealment (“The specific character of every relation of force is to dissimulate itself as such, and to acquire all its force only because it is so dissimulated.”). It is here that free media derive their own force as a political institution in performing a kind of ‘legitimation work’ which masks and mystifies (through silence and misdirected criticism) the relations that underpin political power.

This production of mainstream news reinforces relations of dominance that constitute the wider social and economic order. Whether one considers the normative-ideological, bureaucratic or commercial factors that influence media coverage, those who are socially marginalized have

limited prospect of meaningfully inflecting discourse in ways that express and advance their interests. Moreover, the exclusion of representations from the marginalized mean that the reality of state practices in those communities remain largely hidden from mainstream discourse. As Navaro-Yasin (2002:175-6) has argued, the production of confusion in relation to state practices and clandestinity ought to be studied as a tactic of power. The author also points that the rapidity with which media present and dissolve political scandals (by portraying the political system as returning business as usual after a crisis) as producing cycles of cynicism and amnesia among the public. Thus, rather than developing into moments of social and political ‘consciousness-raising’, scandals become reinforce attitudes of passivity and defeatism.

In his analysis of the Watergate affair, Baudrillard (2001) famously argued that moments of scandal serve to mask the routinely scandalous nature of the wider political system. The immorality of the political system, he argues, must hide behind moral and legal structures. Thus, rather than calling it into question, scandal and condemnation serve to reinvigorate and rehabilitate political authority by extolling the fictive principles of morality and justice from which the state derives legitimacy. If the liberal-democratic principles of restrained state power, electoral competition, and elite-driven social consensus are the means of engendering freedom and democracy, then the ‘routine scandal’ is that political liberalization has failed to meaningfully the social and economic injustice in societies like Jamaica. In fact, the problems of clientelism and ‘populist excesses’ targeted by the agenda of political liberalization could as easily have been framed as stemming from this injustice and as a justification for considering social and economic rights as fundamental democratic principles. However, rather than being scandalized by this routine failure of democratic political order, media mask and mystify its unequal relations in constructing reality through the news. Indeed, as Chomsky (1989) argues, media is one of “a variety of measures to deprive

democratic political structures of substantive content, while leaving them formally intact” (p. vii). Moreover, it embodies forms of social inequality and reproduce new ones by marginalizing those who fundamentally challenge the sociopolitical order; all the while drawing on its own illusory principles of balance, independence and scrutiny that form the premise of its supposed watchdog role.

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## APPENDIX

### FRAMING COKE

#### *The Businessman*

Coke is described as a businessman across all media groups. In both the Jamaican and U.S. media, he is said to control a company which receives government contracts.

#### *The Community Strongman and Patron*

Coke is characterised in all media groups as a patron to residents of Tivoli. Jamaican media refer to him as a “father-figure” to the residents while he is described as modern-day “Robin Hood” or in the foreign press. He is also said to bring a certain order and stability to the community.

The Jamaican media characterizes Coke as a strongman wielding significant influence over western Kingston and as the figure to be credited with preventing bloody conflicts across different communities. He is further depicted as a "father-figure" to loyal residents of Tivoli for whom he staged parties and treats and provided security from violence.

The U.S. media report that Coke is noted for performing acts of altruism which won him loyalty and political clout—even the status of folk hero—among Tivoli ' residents for whom he provided a "lawless sort of order."

Coke is labelled in foreign media outside the U.S. as a popular Robin Hood- and Godfather-like figure. He is described as having provided a "mini-economy" of petty jobs and physical security to Tivoli residents.

#### *The Drug Baron and ‘Shower Posse’ Gang Boss*

Coke is described across all media as an alleged or convicted crime boss<sup>49</sup> and head of the Shower Posse gang, an international crime organization which distributes drugs throughout the United States. There is, however, relatively less emphasis on Coke's criminal activities in the Jamaican media when compared with the foreign groups. The Jamaican media sample also did not describe violence associated with Coke's activities in contrast to the foreign press.

#### *The Political Activist*

The relationship between Coke and political actors is constructed differently in the Jamaican press than in US and international media. While Jamaican media mention Coke as an activist and

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<sup>49</sup> ‘Alleged’ before his conviction versus ‘convicted’ after.

longtime supporter of the JLP, such references are relatively infrequent. In contrast, the US and international media underscore Coke's role as an influential player in Jamaican politics with strong ties to the Golding administration and the JLP.

### *Coke's Connection to Other JLP Figures*

In addition to Golding, media referenced the relationship between Coke and two other JLP politicians, Edward Seaga and Tom Tavares-Finson. The coverage of Coke's relationship with these two figures is indicative of the wider dissimilarities observed in the framing of Coke's connection to political actors across media groups. The U.S. and foreign media highlighted ties between Seaga and Coke's gang dating to the 1980s and 1990s when the former was leader of the JLP and representative for Tivoli. By contrast, the Jamaican media's representation of Seaga is one of him having made a "bold intervention" to expose Coke's criminal activities in 1994. Tavares-Finson, who was at the time a sitting JLP senator, served as Coke's attorney during the initial months of the extradition request. Throughout these months, the sampled Jamaican articles did not mention of the fact that Coke's lawyer was a JLP senator when referencing or quoting him.

## FRAMING THE EXTRADITION CONTROVERSY

### *Timeline of Events*

February 2, 2007: Jamaican Government seeks to have Christopher Coke's phone tapped

October 25, 2007: U.S. federal prosecutors file charges against Coke in the U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York, on one count of conspiracy to distribute cocaine and marijuana and one count of conspiracy to illegally traffic in firearms.

August 25, 2009: The U.S. Embassy sends the Government of Jamaica a formal request for Coke's extradition.

September 18, 2009: The Government of Jamaica requests that the U.S. provide additional information to support Coke's extradition. The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) pays nearly \$50,000 to the U.S.-based Manatt, Phelps & Phillips law firm to assist the government in handling the request.

October 2, 2009: The U.S. Embassy refuses to provide additional information to the Government of Jamaica on the extradition request.

October 30, 2009: The Jamaica government raises concern that the wiretap evidence used against Coke was obtained in contravention of Jamaican law.

December 8, 2009: In response to questions posed in Parliament by the Opposition, Jamaica's Prime Minister, Bruce Golding, maintains that the delay in extraditing Coke was the fault of the U.S. authorities who did not follow proper procedure in issuing the request.

February 24, 2010: A prominent Jamaican businessman has his visa cancelled amid speculation that the cancellation is tied to the Coke extradition standoff.

March 1, 2010: The US State Department releases its annual International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, blasting Jamaica for its handling of the Coke extradition request.

March 16, 2010: The Opposition makes reference to an alleged contractual arrangement between the Jamaican government and Manatt, Phelps & Phillips to lobby Washington on a treaty dispute.

May 11, 2010: Golding, under mounting public pressure for the extradition's delay and the engagement of Manatt, attempts to explain himself in another speech to parliament. He reiterates his administration's belief that the U.S. did not furnish enough evidence. He also states that Manatt was hired not by the government, but by his political party, the JLP.

May 17, 2010: PM Golding apologizes for his government's handling of the request and the decisions to engage Manatt. Reversing his nine-month refusal to proceed, he confirms that the extradition request will be signed and a warrant issued for Coke.

May 18, 2010: The government signs the extradition request and obtains an arrest warrant for Coke.

June 24, 2010: Coke is extradited to New York under heavy security.

January 17, 2011: A government-ordered commission of inquiry into the extradition procedure and the hiring of Manatt commences.

June 6, 2011: Following four months of hearings, the government-appointed commission concludes that no misconduct took place on either the government's initial refusal to sign the extradition on legal grounds, or its decision to proceed with the extradition despite those legal issues not being addressed.

August 31, 2011: Coke pleads guilty in a New York federal district court to the charges against him, avoiding the need for a trial.

October 23, 2011: Golding resigns as Prime Minister more than year before the end of his term, citing lingering concerns over the role he played in the Coke extradition as one of a number of reasons for demitting office.

### *Golding administration in diplomatic standoff with the U.S*

Jamaican media coverage initially represents the Golding government's refusal to sign the extradition, and the diplomatic standoff to which it gave rise, in terms of questionable actions by the U.S. Government. However, the controversy is later re-framed to focus on the questionable actions of the Golding administration as details of the Manatt contract emerged and caused public criticism. Foreign media, however, emphasize the Jamaican government's actions as the source of controversy throughout their coverage. This is particularly true of the US media which described the Golding administration as "balk[ing] at" the extradition request even before the Manatt contract revelation.

### *U.S. attitude towards diplomatic relations with the Jamaica*

As news of the request broke, the Jamaican media appears to downplay the significance of the impasse by noting that treaty matters are "normally problematic." Coverage does, nevertheless,

depict the U.S. as a geopolitical hegemon which “bullies” and “dominates” other states in the hemisphere. It further notes that the U.S. views the Americas as its geo-strategic “backyard,” pointing out its role in supporting a number of coups in the region. However, this framing shifts in the aftermath of Golding’s resignation and the installation of a PNP government at which time it is said that the U.S. government is an ally upon which the Jamaican state has traditionally relied. U.S. media, on the other hand, report initially and throughout its coverage that Washington is clearly frustrated with the response of the Golding administration and that the matter has put a serious strain on bilateral relations.

#### *The U.S. State Department’s 2010 Narcotics Report*

The U.S. State Department released a report in May 2010 criticizing the Golding government’s handling of the extradition request. The contents of the report are discussed across all three media groups, with each pointing to strong criticism levelled by Washington about Jamaica's commitment to fighting the War on Drugs. However, U.S. coverage is alone in pointing to aspects of the report discussing alleged ties between Coke and the JLP.

#### *Coke’s Political Ties (U.S. and non-U.S. foreign media)*

Coke's ties to the political establishment are also discussed in the U.S. media outside of the context of the U.S. State Department’s Narcotics Report. Other foreign media similarly highlight connections between Coke and the JLP in discussing the nine-month extradition refusal. However, references to ties between Coke and political figures was absent from the sample of Jamaica media frames discussing Golding's refusal to extradite Coke.

#### *The wider political-criminal nexus*

The foreign media place the extradition in the context of the historical nexus between politics and gangs in Jamaica. This frame is, however, absent from the Jamaican media. While there is a mention of the phenomenon of the garrison politics in the Jamaican media sample, the single instance appears as a reference to a political reform agenda put forward by the private sector. It does not provide details on the link between crime and politics, nor does it relate this reference to the Coke events specifically (although Coke is mentioned elsewhere in the article). By contrast, the US media represent a direct association between the extradition controversy and garrison politics in reporting that the extradition standoff served to underscore “the lingering affiliation between gangs and political parties.” Other foreign media also suggested that the politics-gangs nexus had a role to play in diplomatic row with Washington. In fact, it is reported that the PNP Opposition was “itself no stranger to the ways of garrison politics,” despite its criticisms of the JLP government for not moving fast enough to extradite Coke.

### *Golding's Decision to Sign After a Nine-Month Delay*

All media groups cover Golding's about-face, attributing the decision to pressure brought to bear on his government. However, the U.S. media are unique in not signaling that Washington played a part in forcing Golding's hand. Unlike the Jamaican media, both foreign media groups discuss ties between Coke and the political establishment in making sense of the decision to sign the request.

### *The Manatt Contract Controversy*

There are important differences in how the Manatt contract affair is framed in the sample of Jamaican and U.S. media groups. The former emphasize the idea of uncertainty and speculation about the circumstances under which the contract came about, and signal that the confusion would be readily cleared up by the government. U.S. media are less equivocal, however, in representing events, asserting that the Jamaican government had taken the unusual and controversial step to lobby the U.S. government to prevent the extradition of an influential political ally.

### *International lobbyists in Washington (U.S. media only)*

U.S. coverage was alone in evoking the strong influence “the opaque world” of international lobbyists has in the U.S. political system. In relation to the Coke case, it notes that the Manatt law firm which lobbied the Obama administration was headed by a former Democratic National Committee chairman. It also describes both major parties in the Jamaican political system as being dogged by perceptions of corruption, patronage and cronyism.

### *Golding's Admission to Approving the Manatt Contract*

Following Golding's admission that he personally sanctioned the contracting of Manatt, the Jamaican media shifts its framing of the issue towards the idea that the Golding administration was not being forthcoming on the extradition contract. Jamaican coverage appears most critical of the handling of the extradition during the Manatt-Coke commission proceedings at which time it is described as a messy affair which the government sought to contain with distortions and political scapegoating. By contrast, the foreign media remain consistent in representing the government's hiring of Manatt as an attempt to lobby Washington in Coke's favor. They also continue to underline the relationship between Coke and the government by suggesting that the Government was trying to aid an alleged international drug baron (U.S.), or by raising the specter that Coke might have provided the funds used to hire Manatt (other foreign).

### *Calls for Golding's Resignation*

Golding's admission to hiring Manatt leads to calls for his resignation. Both Jamaican and US media report on the political pressure faced by Golding during this time, implying that it might end his political career. The U.S. media coverage attributes this pressure to Golding's apparent

attempt to protect Coke from prosecution. This representation is absent from the Jamaican media which discussed criticisms levelled at Golding in terms of his mishandling of the Manatt contract hiring process.

### *The Manatt Commission of Enquiry*

The Jamaican media devote a significant portion of coverage to the Manatt-Coke commission of inquiry, painting the proceedings as a heated political spectacle during which members of the JLP and PNP continually faced off. There is also mention of the Commission's strident exchanges in non-U.S. foreign media, while not none of the articles sampled from U.S. media discussed the Commission.

### *What Triggered Golding's Resignation?*

Foreign media point to public disapproval of Golding's action as having triggered the resignation, suggesting that questions surrounding the link between Coke and JLP politicians had led to the criticisms levelled against the Prime Minister. The Jamaican media, on the other hand, initially reported that Golding had survived the public criticism and calls for his resignation over the extradition affair, but had been forced out of office due to party infighting. However, after Golding cited the extradition affair as a reason for his resignation, the Jamaican articles shifted towards this explanation. Despite Golding having cited lingering perceptions that his position on the extradition matter was "politically contrived," the Jamaican media (in contrast to its foreign counterparts) continued to not include references to Coke's alleged ties to the JLP.

## FRAMING THE INCURSION

### *Timeline of Events*

May 18, 2010: The government signs the extradition request and obtains an arrest warrant for Coke. Residents of Tivoli Gardens erect barricades around the community.

May 20, 2010: Hundreds of mostly women dressed in white from Tivoli and neighboring communities protested the government's decision to issue a warrant for Coke's arrest.

May 23, 2010: Four police stations are set ablaze in Kingston, allegedly by Coke loyalists. PM Golding declares a one-month state of emergency.

May 27, 2010: 73 persons are killed in the Tivoli siege after thousands of police and soldiers enter West Kingston in search of Coke. Security forces raid the home of businessman Keith Clarke in an affluent suburb of Kingston. Clarke is shot 20 times by the security forces.

June 22, 2010: Parliament votes to extend the state of emergency for another month and to extend its scope to areas outside of Kingston. Coke is arrested after police intercept a vehicle within which he is travelling.

June 24, 2010: Coke is extradited to New York under heavy security.

December 12, 2011: A report in the New Yorker magazine confirms that a U.S. Department of Homeland Security reconnaissance plane took surveillance imagery of May 24 operation in Tivoli. The Jamaican government later retracts claim it did not receive foreign assistance during the siege.

June 7, 2012: A report in the New Yorker magazine cites a U.S. State Department cable confirming that the Jamaican army used mortars during the siege. The army retracts claims that it did not use bomb-like mechanisms during the operation.

### *Security forces come under attack upon entering Tivoli*

Media in all three regions report that Coke's supporters had been preparing to battle the security forces to prevent his arrest in the days and hours prior to the siege on Tivoli. They cite the attack on a police station in Kingston as well as the erecting of street barricades as evidence for this assertion. Some of Coke's supporters are said to be mercenary gangsters from different parts of the island. Additionally, the Jamaican journalists report that persons could be seen patrolling the streets and the roof of buildings with what appeared to be high-powered weapons on the approach of the security forces.

### *Police-Military Siege on Tivoli causes deadly violence*

All media groups characterized the siege on Tivoli as a violent confrontation between security forces and Coke's armed supporters which left more than 70 persons dead. They represent the events as a significant threat to law and order on the island. The foreign media coverage also places significant emphasis on the scale ("massive operation"/ "thousands of security forces") and bloody nature of the siege ("one of the bloodiest episodes in recent Jamaican history"). The Jamaican coverage, on the other hand, focuses on the idea that the security forces were in the process of "purging" the community of "enemy combatants" during the siege.

### *Coke has connections to the JLP*

In covering the siege, Coke's connection to the JLP as a political supporter is referenced across all media. After Coke's capture, Jamaican coverage mentions that Coke is a longstanding supporter of the JLP which was expressing satisfaction at his arrest. This is, however, the sole reference to such a connection which was gleaned from the sample of Jamaican articles which discussed the siege. On the contrary, both US and other foreign media repeatedly reference such connections throughout coverage, framing as ironic the Golding administration's attempt to arrest its own supporter and a figure whose gangs, they report, were nurtured by successive political administrations.

*Golding declares state of emergency; hundreds detained by the security forces.*

All media groups cover the government's declaration of a state of emergency in the hours before the siege as well as the detention of hundreds of individuals which resulted from the declaration. While the Jamaican news represent the state of emergency as a crime-fighting strategy which appeared to receive a measure of public approval, the US media place relative focus on the scale of the resultant detentions and their impact on the individuals and their relatives.

*What triggered the violent unrest in Tivoli?*

Media across all three groups describe the siege as involving clashes between Coke's gunmen and the security forces. They also note that the declaration of the state of emergency occurred in a climate of unrest sparked by Golding's announcement that he would extradite Coke. Notwithstanding these commonalities, there are subtler but important distinctions in their account of what triggered the violence, suggesting different implicit ideas about the attribution of blame. In the Jamaican coverage, Coke's refusal to surrender to law enforcement is identified as having triggered the violence. The foreign media, however, trace the unrest to the Golding administration's equivocation in signing the extradition request and its decision to authorize a siege. Non-US media coverage also partly attribute the violence to pressure from the U.S. government to which the Golding administration is said to have caved when it ordered the siege.

*Allegations of State abuses*

*—The aftermath of Tivoli siege*

All media groups report on allegations of extrajudicial killings by the security forces during the incursion into Tivoli. However, discussion of these allegations does not appear in the sample of Jamaican articles until a year after the siege, at which time they report on accounts of abuse given by residents, questions raised by local human rights groups and the army's refusal to release an internal report into the operation. The foreign media, however, provide relatively frequent and detailed coverage of reported state abuses. The U.S. media appears particularly critical of the security forces as the siege culminated, pointing to their refusal to provide information on the death toll. They also describe the residents as "lashing out" at Golding for ordering the raid which claimed many innocent persons and for failing to remove decomposing bodies from the streets for days. A year and a half later, coverage notes that the Jamaican government had barely begun its promised probe into a number of alleged unlawful killings and more than 1,000 other complaints of human rights violations. Finally, it is reported that most of the 4,000 individuals detained during the siege had, in fact, been held without charge. Non-U.S. foreign media coverage reports that the line between civilians and gunmen was blurred during the operation, and that unarmed bystanders were caught in the violence. Attention is also drawn to the difference between the casualty figures given by the security forces during the course of the operation and those given by the public defender and hospital staff. It is also said that Golding was facing mounting criticism "as decomposing bodies of civilians lay unclaimed for days" after the siege and that the security forces

were increasingly confronting allegations of abuse by residents. In response to the allegations, the security forces are described by non-U.S. foreign media as being "on the offensive portraying residents almost as insurgent force that hid explosives and girded for heavy combat."

— *Journalists mistreated by the security forces during siege*

US and other foreign press report that journalists had been kept out of areas of Tivoli by security forces during the siege. For example, it is reported in the US media that soldiers were barring journalists from entering a cemetery where a crowd of a hundred residents indicated that a large number of bodies had been dumped. Crew are also said to have been hindered from taking photographs outside the cemetery gates from where dead bodies could be seen on the inside. Other foreign journalists similarly recount being prevented from entered parts of the community by security forces who "trained rifles on vehicles and ordered them back."

— *Prominent businessman killed in subsequent raid to capture Coke*

All media cover the killing of prominent businessman and accountant Keith Clarke by soldiers and police who went to his home as part of the attempt to capture Coke. The police and military said they had received intelligence that gunmen might be hiding in the community. Three soldiers would later be charged with the death of Clarke, representing the only state agents to be brought to court for deaths associated with the hunt for Coke. In contrast to the deaths of 73 civilians in Tivoli, Jamaican media's focus on Clarke, who was himself a former Gleaner columnist, is relatively high. They carry the results of a postmortem indicating that Clarke had been shot 20 times with the majority of wounds located in his back. Coverage also mentions extensive damage to his house caused by the bullets. Jamaican media also reports in the immediate aftermath of the shooting that the security forces are facing questions about whether the killing was lawful. Finally, both Jamaican and foreign media describe Clarke as a prominent figure. Jamaican media tends to reference the prominent social status of the victim, while international and US media point to his affluence. The US media was alone in reporting that gunmen opened fire on security forces before Clarke was killed.

*Government backtracks on denial of U.S. assistance and the use of explosives after New Yorker revelations*

An investigative piece in the American magazine, *The New Yorker*, revealed that a US reconnaissance plane took surveillance imagery of May 24 operation in Tivoli. The report was based on information contained in a diplomatic cable from the U.S. embassy to the U.S. Secretary of State which was obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. Another cable which was later obtained by the New Yorker said that a "bomb-like mechanism" was used by soldiers during the siege. Before these revelations, the government had denied any U.S. involvement in the operation and dismissed claims by Tivoli residents that bombs were used in the operation. All media groups report thereafter that the Golding administration had backtracked on their previous statements denying overseas assistance and the use of explosives during the siege.

### *Tivoli residents agitate for justice in the years after the siege*

The Tivoli residents organised in the aftermath of the siege to agitate for justice, investigations and compensation. Both U.S. and Jamaican media groups reported on these efforts.

### *Jamaica's crime scourge and the effectiveness of the state's response*

In discussing the overall fight against crime, the Jamaican media report that the security forces are making significant headway in curtailing gang activity, including the disruption of the activities by and the incarcerating of a number of Coke's cronies. Rather than depicting progress on tackling crime, the foreign media emphasize the scale and intractability of homicides and point to the failure of state institutions to arrest the problem. According to US media coverage, Jamaica is suffering from “eye-popping” and “soaring” violent crime. Moreover, the island's police force is depicted as ineffective in that it has developed a reputation for slipshod investigations and the indiscriminate use of weapons by its members. Other foreign media report that it would be quite difficult to convey the degree to which crime dominates life on an island as one of the most murderous nations on the planet. Coverage also characterizes the police force as having a history of institutional corruption and incompetence, a situation it describes as a national tragedy for Jamaicans.

## FRAMING TIVOLI

### *Tivoli as a crime-plagued slum*

All media consistently characterize Tivoli as an urban slum affected by high levels of criminal and gang activity. They also describe it as a fortified ghetto under the control of Coke and the Shower Posse. Specifically, the Jamaican and U.S. media similarly describe the community in terms of a decades-old rule of drug don “dynasties” and a longstanding culture of lawlessness. Nonetheless, there are important differences in coverage across geographic regions. Media in Jamaican characterize Tivoli as having a longstanding antagonistic relationship with the security forces stemming from the challenges posed by criminals who often use the community as a base from which to launch attacks on the lawmen, and also stemming from the hostility of its residents towards the security forces. Both U.S. and other foreign media, on the other hand, discuss the absence of state institutions as a persistent problem in addition to the community's crime scourge. They describe the police as seldom venturing into the area to do patrols, with the U.S. media juxtaposing the lack of community policing with what it describes as frequent and sometimes deadly raids conducted by security officers with high-powered weapons. U.S. media also point to Tivoli's social and economic marginality in describing its high joblessness and slum-like infrastructure.

### *Tivoli as a political garrison*

Both U.S. and non-U.S. foreign media contextualize Tivoli in terms of the wider political 'garrison' phenomenon. Importantly, this frame is absent from the sample of Jamaican media articles. U.S. media recount that successive Jamaican governments have nurtured the very gangs which challenged the state throughout May 2010. It explains that, for over 30 years, the country's most prominent politicians relied on gang leaders to deliver votes during elections and control inner cities areas. In return for their loyalty, the gangsters are said to have been given government contracts, arms, protection from the law, and a quasi-total control of garrisons. Though less detailed, coverage in other foreign media point to a longstanding "cozy" relationship between politicians and gangs.