

The origins of WIGUT, St. Augustine, reflect the character of the development of the St. Augustine Campus itself. Like the University, it has drawn both from the parent institution at Mona and from its local predecessor the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture. From both these institutions it inherited the notion of group activity by the academic and senior administrative staff in the pursuit of their own welfare and that of the University. But, at the time of the merger between UCWI and ICTA in August 1960, the path to be followed in the pursuit of such activity was far from clear.

Like Mona in earlier days, St. Augustine too was plagued by doubts and hesitations. Mona's experience had begun in 1958 when a few individuals of the academic staff joined the British Association of University Teachers as "corresponding members". Later these persons began to meet as a group soon calling themselves the West Indian Group of the British Association of University Teachers. It was only after much trial and error that WIGUT Mona was finally formed.

At Augustine the Senior Staff Association had been functioning as an independent body for years. In May 1959 the Association, through its Chairman, entered into discussion with the Mona Group and resolved on an exchange of minutes between both organizations. In October of the same year, with the merger in the offing, discussions were held at St. Augustine as to the future organization of the SSA. There seemed to be four possibilities. Interested persons could seek membership in the British Association of University Teachers. The AUT could function in conjunction with the SSA. Or, if the SSA were dispensable, the AUT could function with a new projected Senior Common Room. Finally, the SSA could be left as it is with members exercising the option to join the AUT if they so desired.

What was finally decided was that the SSA should be persevered with, and members encouraged to apply for corresponding membership of the British AUT. Since Mona had by this time partly resolved its own dilemma by forming the first West Indian Group of University Teachers in association with the AUT members were advised that they might if they wished, also join this body. Partly because the Mona Group was not independent, this option was never exercised, some thirty-four members preferring to apply directly to the AUT for corresponding membership.

Thus, the merger found the SSA still in existence at St. Augustine with many of its members, members also of the AUT. It was not until November 1962 that the SSA was

dissolved and provision made for the fulfillment of its social function by the Senior Common Room Committee and its other functions by the local section of the AUT. Later some time in 1963 WIGUT St. Augustine was formed becoming as Mona had already become an autonomous, West Indian oriented Group of University Teachers.

Today there are two WIGUT organizations functioning within the University, one at Mona and the other here at St. Augustine. Though, as already indicated, they are independent and autonomous units, the need for cooperation is keenly appreciated and minutes, correspondence, memoranda and views of all sorts are frequently exchanged. In addition both Groups have a common constitution, and to a large extent, the same aim. The main aim is according to the Constitution, "to promote the welfare of the University and its teaching staff and to safeguard academic standards by helping to maintain conditions conducive to this end".

Already, in furtherance of this aim, the local Group has done some valuable work, its latest efforts having been directed to the preparation of a memorandum, since submitted to the Working Party of the University Planning Committee on various subjects connected with the future organization and structure of the University.

Membership of the Group is open to all full-time members of the teaching staff of the University, to full-time research fellow, senior members of the Registry and Library staff, and to such other persons as may be accepted on the recommendation of the Executive Committee. The annual membership fee is five dollars (TT \$5.00) and should be paid to the Treasurer. Members of staff may also join by signing the book kept for this purpose at the bar of the Senior Common Room. ***Extracted from Issue No. 1, June 1965 issue of the West Indies Group of University Teachers (St. Augustine Section) Newsletter.*** □