

COMMENTS AT
AIR JAMAICA AND UNIONS
MEETING MAY 2005

Commend all those involved.

These negotiations, though prolonged and difficult were of such fundamental importance to the nation that all of us would suffer from the disastrous consequences, had they been allowed to finally collapse.

All sides deserve warm congratulations for their stamina and the eventual acceptance that a settlement could only be reached by some give and take.

The role of the Minister and Ministry of Labour in conciliation.

Everyone knows that I believe in consensus rather than confrontation.

I have been engaged in the fields of Labour Law and industrial Relations for many years now.

I readily appreciate the distinction between issues of Law and the industrial practices which are conducive to harmony and maximum productivity in the workplace.

I believe the State, its Agencies and Public Companies must spare no effort in creating an environment which can serve as a model for best industrial practices.

At the same time, it must be appreciated that the State, and Public Entities, have, like any Private entity, a bar which they cannot clear if level is higher than can be afforded. For in the end, the losses cannot be borne.

Air Jamaica –

Shareholders

Stakeholders

Pilots, flight attendants,

Ground personnel, Marketing Agents

Management

All have a vested interest in securing the viability of the enterprise.

Partnership is vital.

No airline in the world today can operate without a constant watch on the bottom-line. – the moreso in the post 9/11 era and escalating energy costs.

Whether Air Jamaica remained in private ownership or reverted to public control, the need for restructuring was both obvious and the subject of extensive professional studies.

The Minister of Finance - Full Report to Cabinet; Presentation to House

Have seen or heard nothing which would necessitate any Commission of Enquiry or justify any Judicial probe.

The focus must now be on repositioning the National Airline to discharge its unique role and special functions in the acceleration of economic growth, the tremendous expansion of the tourism sector and transporting our exports. – both of goods and services.

To that exercise we must devote all our attention, rather than be distracted by those who want us to indulge in a blame game.

This new Collective Agreement enables –

The completion of plans to settle the routes, frequencies and aircraft configuration necessary for an Airline that remains efficient, reliable, good customer service and ability to command the confidence of creditors, financial institutions, , Civil Aviation Authorities and passengers alike.

For some time yet, the FASTEN SEAT BELT SIGNS will remain illuminated, but we have every confidence in landing safely at our chosen destination.