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NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Thursday September 1 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: One of the biggest pieces of news affecting the working people of Jamaica broke today. Monymusk, the island's biggest and most important sugar estate, is going over to mechanisation. This means that a very big share of the work that is now being done by men will, next crop time, be done by machines. And this in turn means that very many men who now work will have no work during next year's sugar crop season. The West Indies Sugar Company estimates that roughly 1,500 men will go out of work at next year's crop time. My own estimate is that the figure is more likely to be 2,000 or more. And let us face it, this is only one estate. And this business of machines replacing men is not going to stop at one estate. I am convinced that once mechanisation comes nothing can stop it. And whether we like it or not mechanisation is coming to Jamaica and coming fast. Some of you may remember that I talked about this as long ago as early in March of this year when I discussed the Goldenberg Commission report. I told you then that the big estates may find it quicker and cheaper to use machines to do the work now done by men. I told you that this was what has happened in agriculture in England and the United States, in Cuba and in Puerto Rico; and that it was bound to happen here. Well, it is happening now. So how should we look at it? What should we do about it? You will remember that I warned at the time that this was a problem that both the unions and workers should think about and prepare for. Now it is with us. There will be about 2,000 unemployed next year, and a few thousand more the following year, and this is going to be the real problem for the country. This is the problem we must face.

Blaming the sugar industry will not help this problem. The moment

the Goldenberg report was accepted the coming of the machines became as inevitable as night follows day. To survive in the competitive world markets our sugar industry had to produce more or cut costs. Monymusk was using approximately 11.2 tons of cane to produce one ton of sugar; and the average for the whole island is 10.2 tons of cane to one ton of sugar. In Cuba and Puerto Rico where they use machines they use an average of about 8 tons of cane to produce one tone of sugar. The result of this is that it costs us about £4 to £5 more to produce a ton of sugar than it does Cuba. And so, to survive, and to pay the new rates laid down by the Goldenberg report our industry has to produce more efficiently and more cheaply, and the only way that can be done is by the use of machines. It is just no good blaming the sugar manufacturers or blaming the machines. In themselves the machines are a good thing. Efficiency is a good thing. Better and cheaper production is good for the country and good for the industry.

But what of the unemployment that is bound to follow the coming of the machines? This is our problem, and it is a very serious one. What are we going to do about the 1,500 to 2,000 men who are going to be out of work next crop time? What other jobs have we got to offer them? The coming of the machines to our sugar industry is a very great and very revolutionary social change. And whenever there are great social changes there is bound to be dislocation, and some people are bound to suffer. This is something that has happened throughout history, it is something we cannot escape. What we can do, what is the duty of a good government, is to use all its skills and energies to make the shock of the change as bearable as possible. I hope our government will do this; indeed I am sure it will. One thing is certain, from a long term view the coming of the machines is a great step forward in our sugar industry.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Thursday September 2 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Two evenings ago Mr. Ken Samuda, a man who is normally very calm as befits a Justice of the Peace, got very angry and worked up when our conversation touched on the topic of fish. Ken Samuda, like a great many of my friends, is a very keen weekend fisherman. You see these weekend fishermen all along Jamaica's coastline when the week's work is over. It is the way they relax and have their fun, and normally when they talk about fishing they become very enthusiastic. But there is one aspect of fishing which makes all these amateur fishermen all very angry. That is this business of dynamiting fish: and it was this that had made Ken Samuda so angry.

There has been a great deal of talk lately about setting up a proper fishing industry in Jamaica and about encouraging our fishermen to develop their skills. Mr. Allan Isaacs, the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, has worked particularly hard at the problem and I know that government is doing everything to try and get a really good fishing industry going. But I am convinced that much of this effort will be wasted unless something is done to stop this dynamiting of fish.

If any of you were to go along the Palisadoes to the marshes on almost any morning early enough, you are likely to see a number of fishing boats with men letting off dynamite. Sure dynamiting is one of the quickest ways of catching fish. The big ones are stunned and you can get them easily. But what happens to the little ones? Most of the little ones are killed outright. And what of the fish eggs? They are destroyed outright. And so, to catch one or two or three

dozen big fish thousands of little ones are destroyed, and millions of eggs are killed. I think this wanton destruction of fish can only be compared to a stupid farmer who cuts down all his citrus trees in order to pick the fruit more easily. Next year that farmer will not pick a single fruit: and if we do not put a stop to this dynamiting we will soon find ourselves without any fish along our coastline. And what of our dreams of a fishing industry then? I wonder if our Water Police are doing anything about this wholesale destruction of fish life. I think it is time they did something. And I think Mr. Allan Isaacs should pay attention to this dynamiting problem if his dream of a great Jamaican fishing industry is to bear fruit.

And now let me briefly touch on another urgent matter. The wage tribunal appointed to settle the dispute between the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union representing the workers in the K.S.A.C's Public Cleansing Department on the one hand, and the K.S.A.C. on the other, has handed down its findings. There will be a wage increase of 15% for all workers in the Public Cleansing Department, and the minimum daily rate for casual workers will go up from 11/- a day to 13/6 a day. This means that the K.S.A.C. will have to find an extra 30,000 pounds a year. And this of course means that you and I, the taxpayers, will have to find this extra £30,000. I am sure none of us are going to like this one little bit. And we are not going to like it because we have not received the service we are entitled to from the workers of the Public Cleansing Department. It is now up to the workers of the Public Cleansing Department to prove to us that they are worthy of this increase in wages. And the only way they can prove it is by cleaning up the city and keeping it clean, and by giving the citizens a decent service. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Saturday September 3 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think there are ^{three} ~~a few~~ important lessons for us to learn from the strike that suddenly flared up among workers of the Jamaica Public Service Company on the north coast last week. You will remember that it was on Wednesday of last week that some 30 Public Service Company workers at Montego Bay and Falmouth went on ~~the~~ a 'go-slow'. The reason for this action, according to the workers, was because they objected to the replacement of their Area Supervisor, Mr. N.R. Tonsingh; and because they also objected to the way in which this was done. The third of jection of the workers was that the man who was to replace Mr. Tonsingh was alleged to be a South African, and the workers said they were not prepared to work with a South African.

Now let us try and take a good look at the objections raised by the workers. First, they did not want Mr. Tonsingh replaced at all. This obviously means that the workers liked Mr. Tonsingh, that they got on well with him, and that they thought he was a fit man to hold down the job of Area Supervisor of the company. Also, Mr. Tonsingh is a Jamaican and all things being equal they saw no reason why a Jamaican should be replaced by an outsider in a top job. I think we can all sympathise with that outlook. The big question is: were all things equal? Did Mr. Tonsingh and the man who was to replace him have the same qualifications and the same experience? The answer is no. Mr. Tonsingh is a good man with a lot of drive and he is a hard worker. He worked his way up from the ranks and in the process he learned a great deal about engineering. But he is not a qualified engineer.

Some of the more technical and tricky aspects of running an electrical power plant are bound to be beyond the understanding of such a man, no matter how good he is. The hard fact is that electrical engineering is a tough and hard science for which you must be trained. And the man who was to replace Mr. Tonsingh had that training. He held university degrees in the subject and he had a vast practical experience as an electrical engineer who has supervised the building and running of power plants. So, all things were not equal. One man was definitely better qualified for the job than the other.

Second, the workers objected to the manner of the appointment. The new man was taken to Montego Bay and installed in Mr. Tonsingh's office without any explanation. Here I think the company was wrong and clumsy and handled the situation in a ham-handed manner. Any self-respecting person would object to having somebody put over him without so much as a word of explanation. This, I think, was poor labour relations.

Third, the charge was that the new man was a South African. Of course, we all know that what was meant was a white South African, though nobody actually referred to the new man's colour. It has since been proved that the new man is not a South African but an Englishman born in India who has worked in East Africa for a spell.

Now what are the important lessons we can learn from this business? The first, I think, is that there is a tendency among some of us to let prejudice take the place of reason. And this is wrong. Prejudice is wrong whether it is practised by a white man or a black man. The second is that managements should be much more thoughtful of the feelings of their workers. And the third is that we should judge a man by his qualifications rather than by what he looks like. This is something I should hate us to lose here in Jamaica. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Friday September 5 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Perhaps the most interesting thing about the Trinidad telephone strike which is now entering its second month, is the fact that it is very difficult to say exactly what caused the workers to go on strike. On July 30th, the day on which the telephone workers went on strike, negotiations between the Communications Workers Union and the telephone company were still in progress. In fact on July 29th, the day before the strike, the company told the union that it would give the union particulars of its new wage offer on August the 2nd, since August the first was a public holiday. But the union rejected this and at 6 o'clock the next morning the workers went on strike. Since they did not know what offer the company was making it is fair to say that the workers did not go on strike because they were dissatisfied with the company's offer. The union, on the other hand, had not at that stage made any ~~firm demands for~~ specific^{wage} demands. All it had asked for up to that point was 'a reasonable increase' in wages, without naming any figure. So we cannot even say that the union struck because its demands were not met.

Indeed, it was not until August 18th, after the Trinidad Minister of Labour had intervened and brought both parties to the conference table, that the union presented the company with a firm demand. On August 18th the union demanded a basic increase of 50 cents an hour for every category of worker (I am sure most of you know the West Indian dollar is worth about ~~for~~ 4/2 so that 50 cents is worth about 2/1). The union wanted this increase of 50 cents an hour to apply to all workers and to be back-dated to the first of January

1960. The company rejected this demand because it said ~~this would~~ such a wage increase would mean that it would have to pay over \$800,000 dollars more a year in wages. The company went on to point out that it had been operating at such a low margin of profit that the government of Dr. Eric Williams had authorised it to increase its rates and charges from the first of September. Certainly, I think it is a strong argument in favour of the company that Dr. Eric Williams agreed ~~it~~ to its raising its charges. I am sure Eric Williams would have done no such thing if he knew the company was making a heap of profit.

In rejecting the union's demand the company pointed out that the additional money it would get from the ~~xxxx~~ increase in rates and charges would amount to about \$500,000 a year. Obviously, if the company were to get \$500,000 a year more and pay out \$800,000 a year more, it would be the loser by \$300,000 a year. So it made a counter proposal. It offered an increase of \$4.50 a week for hourly, daily and weekly paid workers - not including overtime; and it offered an increase of \$20 a month for monthly paid workers. This increase, the company said, would with fringe benefits bring the yearly wage increase to about \$200,000 a year. The interesting thing about this figure is that when the Trinidad government agreed to the increased charges it suggested just such a figure as the workers' share of ~~the~~ increased benefits. *\$ 200,000 should be given*

I cannot escape the feeling that like the oil strike of July, a lot of politics is involved in this strike. Perhaps the trade union movement is out to show Dr. Williams that he is not the only force in Trinidad today. Perhaps John Rojas, ~~the~~ Trinidad's labour leader, is telling Williams just how strong he is. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Tuesday September 6 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Up to now all the good news that has come out of Africa has come out of the West Coast of Africa. The story of the dramatic advance of African freedom has really been the story of the great West African emergence. It has been the story of Ghana and Guinea, of the Ivory Coast and the Mali Federation, of the Sudanese Republic and Mauritania; and the brightest promise of further advance has also been from the West Africa: it has been from Sierra Leone, from the Gambia and from the massive and important Nigeria. All West Africa, all Negro Africa.

But when we looked at the East Coast of Africa, the picture was different. From Kenya through Uganda, down to Tanganyika and on to ~~Nyasaland~~ Nyasaland, we were faced with problems of racial fears and racial conflicts, and there was no great and dramatic forward movement by the African people. The reason for this was simply that in West Africa there were no white settler communities, while in East Africa there were powerful white settler communities. These white settler communities were terrified of what might happen to them if the Africans took power and so they resisted African advance with all their might.

Well, last week the Africans of East Africa achieved their greatest step forward when Tanganyika became the first self-governing East African state headed by an African Chief Minister. I think most people have under-estimated the importance of this event because it happened quietly and peacefully and without any violence. But make no mistake, this event is quite as important for Africa and the world as was Ghana's achievement of self-government in 1957. In 1957 Ghana

pioneered the African freedom movement on the West Coast. Now, in 1960, Tanganyika is pioneering the African freedom movement on the East Coast. And Tanganyika's job is much more complex and difficult than ever Ghana's was. Ghana was and is a small country with 92,000-odd square miles and a population of about $4\frac{1}{4}$ million people. She had no white and Indian minorities; so she had no real colour or communal problems. Tanganyika on the other hand is a large country of 343,000-odd square miles with a population of about $8\frac{1}{4}$ million people among whom there are some 20,000 Europeans and a slightly larger number of Indians. So Tanganyika has both a colour and communal problem to deal with. And of course, Tanganyika is part of that racial ridden stretch of Africa which used to be called the multi-racial areas or else white Africa. This stretch of Africa includes the Union of South Africa with its arrogant white racialists, the two Rhodesias which are slightly more subtle but just as racial, as well as Nyasaland and Kenya. You can see from this that what happens in Tanganyika will have a very important bearing on what happens in the other white settler areas. Tanganyika's new Chief Minister, Julius Nyerere, knows this very well, and much of what he does will be dictated by this knowledge. Nyerere is a small, slender young man of 38. He is one of the most gifted young Africans I know, and his modesty and humility might fool you into dismissing him when you first meet him. But I know him personally and I know he is one of the most mature and most responsible of the new crop of African leaders. I myself am very happy that someone like Julius Nyerere has come to power in that part of Africa just now. I think he is going to make a major contribution to Africa and the world in the field of racial relations and racial understanding. After Lumumba the coming of Nyerere is a hopeful promise for Africa's future. Goodnight.

- 1) Cattle Thieving & the Police
- 2) JOB & taxicabs
- 3) 'Lighter Skin' Ads

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Wednesday September 7 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think most of you who have listen to these commentaries with any regularity know that I try always to be fair when criticising. I think it is the duty of any person who is in a position to influence public opinion to use that influence carefully and soberly and responsibly. That is the way to help build up a mature and responsible public opinion on matters affecting our lives as well as the life of our country. It is for this reason that I have refused to join in the wholesale criticising of our police force. I think it would be wrong and not to the benefit of the country if those of us who help to mould public opinion were to build a wall of distrust between the police and the public at large. I think what we want to do is break down barriers rather than build them up. On the other hand, I think it is also our duty to tell the police when they are wrong or slack in the performance of their duty to the ~~public~~ public.

There is one criticism which I personally feel can validly be made against a number of our policemen and I saw proof of it over the weekend. In the village near where I live in the hills of St. Andrew in the cattle thieves killed two cows late on Friday night or/early hours of Saturday morning. They skinned and took away one carcass but were disturbed before they could finish the second. About half past eight on Saturday morning the man whose cow was skinned and taken away phoned the nearest police station to report the matter. The people concerned did not want to remove the remaining carcass until the police came. There might have been some clue help the police in their investigation. On the other hand the meat of the second carcass

could at least have been salvaged and used if the police showed up before it went bad and the John Crows attacked it. To cut a long story short, the police did not show up until after four o'clock in the afternoon. I don't know if by then the people had given up waiting and removed the carcass or whether they had left the carcass to the John Crows. The point is that they had to wait nearly eight hours before the police showed up. Now I am sure this would not have happened if this theft had been from some prominent citizens. I am sure the police would have been on the spot much quicker if it had been some Mr. Big-Name who had reported the theft instead of some poor hillfolk. I think Mr. Sieveright should make it quite clear to our police that they owe the same duty to rich and poor, to high and low. This double-standard of service must stop.

Now for something else. I see the Jamaica Omnibus Company is complaining about the increased number of cabs on our roads. I have the impression that the J.O.S. feels these cabs are taking business from the J.O.S. buses. I also understand the company wants these cabs properly regulated and controlled. Just how is not clear. But it does seem to me that the company's best answer to the cabs is to give us a more efficient service. If you or I have to choose between a bus and a cab and both are available there is no question as to which we will choose, especially if buses ran to time and conductors were thoughtful.

And finally, I have been disgusted by an ad in a certain daily paper offering a skin bleach cream to make dark skins lighter. Dark skins are no less beautiful than pale ones and I hate the suggestion behind the ad. I hope the Publishers Association will do something about this type of advertisement which trades on false colour snobbery. The night is no less beautiful for being dark. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Thursday September 8 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: It is exactly a week ago that we heard the news that machines will replace men in the loading of cane at Monymusk estate when our next sugar crop time comes around. I told you about this last Thursday when the news broke. I told ~~then~~ you then that the West Indies Sugar Company estimated that roughly 1,500 men would be affected by the change-over to mechanical loading and that we would be facing a ~~existing~~ labour problem as this replacing of men by machines would create unemployment. I also told you that my own estimate of the number of unemployed was more likely to be 2,000 next year and that we could not expect it to stop there. I think other estates are bound to follow the Monymusk example because using machines to load cane is undoubtedly quicker and cheaper than using men. And I have no doubt in my own mind that it is only a matter of time - a matter of two or three years - when not only the loading of cane will be done by machines but the cutting as well.

You will remember that I made it quite plain to you that I thought the coming of the machines was a good thing for the industry and for the country, in spite of the fact that it is going to give us a number of serious headaches in the beginning.

Now the general discussion has started and what is fundamentally an important economic innovation is fast becoming a very serious political football. Let us face it, any politician or any party can make big political capital out of this mechanisation business. Any politician can go out and say: This mechanisation is going to

take work from our people and create unemployment, it is going to take the food out of the mouths of our children, so let us stop it. Let us stop the machines from coming. And this will be a very powerful and effective slogan among the sugar workers, especially those who are going to be displaced by the machines. They will see the machines as the enemy and a great deal of pressure will be used to stop the coming of the machines.

But will the stopping of the machines help us? I don't think so. I don't think we ever achieve anything worthwhile by putting the clock back. And I think it is unfortunate, though understandable, that this mechanisation business is being turned into a political football. Let us ask ourselves what is likely to happen if the machines are kept out? First, ^{there would be the hope} ~~we hope~~ ^{would} that no workers ~~will~~ be displaced because there ^{would} ~~will~~ be no machines to displace them, so the threat of unemployment in the industry would be removed. But something else might happen too. The Goldenberg award has raised wages in the industry by 12½% a year and only the largest and richest among the sugar estates might be able to pay this and keep going. This in turn will mean that first one then another then another estate - starting with the smallest - will close down and go out of business because they are not making a profit or cannot pay their way. And so there will be unemployment in any case, though it might be more gradual. The one big difference is that in this case the sugar industry itself is likely to be slowly and gradually dying. And I am sure this is something none of us want. So the answer is not to keep out the machines. Rather, we must try to understand what the coming of the machines mean in terms of our national economy and we must try to use them to our advantage. I will try to look a little more closely into this tomorrow evening. So till then, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Friday September 9 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Jamaica is still largely an agricultural country and the sugar industry still plays a very dominant part in the life of the country. There was a time when sugar accounted for well over 50% of our exports and most of the money we earned from overseas was from sugar and its by-products. In 1957 our sugar exports earned us over £12½ million and we exported 359,000 tons. In 1958 we exported 333,000 tons and earned just over £10½ million. In other words, in 1958 we exported 26,000 tons less sugar than we did in 1957 and we earned about £2½ million less in money. In 1959 on the other hand we exported 378,255 tons of sugar and earned about £11,700,000 for it. This was nearly 20,000 tons of sugar more than we exported in 1957 and still we earned nearly a million pounds less for it than we earned for a smaller ~~xxx~~ amount in 1957.

Now this is a fact, and a hard fact that we must face. In terms of hard cash, in terms of pounds, shillings and pence, the value of our sugar exports has gone down. We are not earning as much from selling our sugar abroad as we used ~~xx~~ to. And sugar is one of our greatest employers of labour. And what applies to our sugar industry, applies to all the other sectors of our agricultural undertakings.

Why are we earning less from sugar and from our ~~xxx~~ other agricultural activities?

Here, I think, we come up against some very difficult problems. The first and most important of these problems has to do with efficiency. In today's world competition is fierce for export markets. We are not the only people who want to sell our sugar, our citrus,

our bananas, and our other agricultural produce to the world. There are countries in parts of Europe, in parts of Africa, there are some right here in our own Caribbean Sea as well as in the United States and Latin America who sell the same things that we sell. And the countries that buy these things which we and the other seller countries have to offer, are choosy. They are just as choosy as you and I are when we go into a store or into a market. Like us, they test what they are buying for quality and they check prices. You know how we go from higgler to higgler in the market checking prices and quality and trying to buy the best for the smallest price. Well, exactly the same thing happens in the international market. And those buyers are not concerned with the conditions under which we grew our crop, with our labour problems, or whether we earn enough to pay our way or not. They are just there to buy something and they want the best for the lowest price possible. And those countries that produce their stuff more efficiently than we do, and use a smaller labour force, and spend ~~more~~ less on producing their crop, are almost always in a position to sell at a better price than we can. And so, except for Britain which gives us some protection, we often find ourselves in trouble when competing in the open market. Our costs are high because our methods are old-fashioned; our methods are old-fashioned because we have a surplus population on the land and we use agriculture to sop up that surplus population and so save us from facing an unemployment problem. Efficient agriculture never employs a large labour force. In the United States only some 8% of the working population is in agriculture; in Britain the figure is about 4%.

So you see, we face a real problem here. To be efficient we need machines but what of the people? I'll look at that tomorrow. Goodnight

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Saturday September 10 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I ended my comments last night by telling you that in the United States only about 8% of the working population was engaged in agriculture, and that in Britain it was only about 4% of the population. In other words, in both the United States and Britain only a tiny fraction of the working population earns its daily bread off the land. The vast majority of the working people in those countries do not earn their living off the land. And the small handful of people who are on the land produce efficiently enough and enough in quality and quantity to feed their own populations and still have something left over for earning money from exports.

They can do this because they use the most modern and up to date methods of farming, and that of course, includes the extensive use of machines. They can do this because they see agriculture as just another important industry which must pay its own way and contribute to the nation's prosperity. They do not regard agriculture as some sort of welfare agency which is there to make sure that not too many people are ~~there~~ unemployed. And finally, they can do this because they have a vast number of other ways for their people to earn their daily bread. By its very nature a really efficient agriculture is not an employer of a vast labour force. We are see this even in places like Cuba and Puerto Rico. And the roughly 40% or so of our population that is on the land is a fantastically high rate in any terms except as something to ease our employment situation. And if you remember that every year, going way, way back to 1938, we have been spending more on imports than we have been earning from exports, then you will see the nature of our problem. It is, in very simple

terms, the problem which faces a man who earns £10 a week and spends £12 a week. And this, as I have told you, has been going on since way back in 1938 so there is no point in anybody making a party political issue out of it.

There are two things facing us then: one is the national economy and the other is the labour situation. I think if you look very closely at the government's policy you will realise that in all its planning government has been aware of these two problems. I am not saying that I, or all of us, have always agreed with the way it has dealt with these problems. What I am saying is that it has not been blind to them. In areas like Jamaica, and indeed in most other areas of the world, the greatest employers of labour have been building and construction and services. It has been Jamaica's building boom and schemes like Mona and Harbour View, it has been our road construction projects and the money earned from services such as the shop assistants, tourism, the barbers the shoemakers, and the like without which our Gross Domestic Product would ^{hardly} ~~not~~ have grown at all and which has employed more workers. Bauxite, our one industry which has maintained its level of export earnings and brings us over £20 million a year, is a very small employer of labour. Government is encouraging building and the services so that there is work for us. But we must also earn more abroad to pay our way hence the need for machines. This is a tough problem and I don't know all the answers. But I am sure we can solve it - if we do not play political football with it. The important thing is to look the problem fairly and squarely in the face and then seek the answers. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Monday September 12 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The last time I spoke to you about road accidents was just about a fortnight ago, on Wednesday August 31st, when I had just ^{seen} ~~read~~ the road accident figures for the month of July. You will remember that 25 people were killed outright on our roads in July and that many hundreds were injured and maimed. But I told you about this in my comments of August 31st so I will not repeat the sad facts now. What I do want to tell you about this evening is a letter I received from Mrs. Edna Neish, the acting secretary of the Jamaica Automobile ~~Association~~ Association. This Association, as I am sure most of you know, is an organisation which looks after the interests of motoring and motorists and it has worldwide connections with other motoring associations; so I think it is fair to say that it is the representative body for people driving cars. Mrs. Neish's letter to me is therefore based on a great deal of knowledge of motoring in Jamaica. Having said all that, let me quote from her letter. Mrs. Neish writes: "You are quite right when you say that drivers are callous and thoughtless and, even those who do perhaps give a thought to road safety, sometimes are quite satisfied to put a PLEDGED SAFETY DRIVER disc on their cars and then go happily on their way, with no real regard for road safety." She then goes on to tell me how the Safe Driving Pledge idea came about and goes on: "Two thousand drivers in Jamaica have now signed this declaration and we hope that many more will come forward to do so. We ask that perhaps you will be kind enough to mention this Declaration at some future date on your broadcast and, at the same time, appeal to those who have Safety discs

on their cars to honour these discs. It may be that a driver has acquired a second-hand car whose owner signed the Declaration and he has not himself signed it. We would urge such drivers either to take the discs off the car, or to come into the J.A.A. office to sign the Declaration. The Safe Driving Pledge is not for members only, it is open to all drivers who will freely and conscientiously come out on the side of Road Safety and better driving.

"There is no doubt that 'driver behaviour' is of the greatest importance. It seems to us that if drivers remembered these simple nine rules of good motoring that there must be improvement in the standard of driving. It is very true - 'Accidents don't happen, they are caused'." And these are the nine simple rules of the Jamaica Automobile Association:

- 1) Strictly observe the traffic code
- 2) Continually examine my own driving and make myself as skilful a driver as possible;
- 3) Never be impatient while driving on the road;
- 4) Never overtake on a bend;
- 5) Always dip my headlights;
- 6) Never pass a stationary car which has obviously stopped to let children or pedestrians cross the road or for some other good reason;
- 7) Always give hand signals correctly and clearly; Give the consideration to other drivers that I expect to receive from them; and
- 9) Never drive while under the influence of liquor.

I think if all of us tried to observe these rules there would be fewer deaths on our roads and fewer tragedies in our homes: so please, let us all try. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Tuesday September 13 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think any outsider coming into Jamaica would have^a/really hard time if he came looking for somebody who would be willing to sing the praises of our telephone company. Of course such a stranger will find a few people willing to praise the Telephone Company. But he will find these mainly among the Company's shareholders (who are doing very nicely, thank you) or among people who earn their living directly from the Company. But he will certainly have a hard time getting a word of praise out of the ordinary telephone users. Indeed, I am not sure that the Jamaica Telephone Company is not the most unpopular of our public services. Whenever people talk about the telephone service, and that is very often these days, it is in a spirit of anger and bitterness. People are bitter about the fact that the Company wants them to use only Company locks. They are bitter because they can buy locks for their phones at only a fraction of what the Company charges for its locks. People are bitter about the new metering system. Since metering there has been a fantastic rise in the wrong numbers we get. You dial one number and you get another; and, of course, the wrong number is metered and you will be charged for it. In theory, when you get a wrong number, you should get hold of the operator, explain it and the operator will then get you the right number without any additional charge. But this is only fine for people of leisure, people who have time to spare. The busy person just has not got the time to gamble on getting a quick reply from the operator. And it is a gamble. If you are lucky you may get the operator on the fifth or sixth ring but more

often you are not lucky, and after holding on for a few minutes you give it up in disgust. And so when your bill comes around it is a frightening figure because you have been charged for so many wrong numbers. Only last week I heard of one business executive who almost popped when he saw his telephone bill. He had been charged for an impossibly large number of calls - running into many thousands.

Now it is because of this sort of thing that the telephone company is possibly the most unpopular of our public services. Rightly or wrongly, there is a firm picture in the public mind that the company is more interested in its profits than in giving a decent service. Of course the company is out for profits; that is why it is in business. No sensible person would question its right to want to make money. What people do want is to get the service for which they pay. And this, it seems to me, they do not feel they are getting from our telephone company. I personally think the time is ripe and ready for the Telephone Company to take a really close and self-critical look at its relations with the public and at the quality of service it gives the public.

And now for a brief word about the first United States bank to set up business in Jamaica. On Saturday morning of last week the First National City Bank of New York opened its branch office in King Street and invited the public to do business with and through it. This is yet another signpost on Jamaica's road of progress and some-which I hope our prophets of gloom will note. Hard-headed businessman only bring their business to places they regard as sound and solid, and these Americans think we are just that. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Wednesday September 14 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I am sure all of ^{us} ~~you~~ have ^{heard} ~~seen~~ the large ^{statement} ~~advertisement~~ which ^{was broadcast by The Employers' Federation on this} ~~appeared in all our newspapers over the weekend~~ ^{on Sunday. Under} the heading: "Jamaica Employers' Federation", ^{also} it appeared as a full page advertisement in Saturday's Gleaner and as a half page advertisement in both the Jamaica Times and Public Opinion. Now, buying advertising space on that scale is a very costly business running into hundreds of pounds and people only do that sort of thing if they feel it is really important. As I say, I am sure all of ^{us} ~~you~~ have ^{and heard} ~~seen~~ the ^{statement} ~~advertisement~~ but I wonder just how many of us have read it carefully and thought about it. If you have not done so and you still have your weekend papers around, please get them out and read ^{it} ~~that advertisement~~. I think it is a very important ^{statement} ~~advertisement~~. It deals with matters which are very important to the health and well-being of this country and which will, in the future become even more important.

As you know, this country has for years now worked very hard at the business of diversifying our economy. This simply means that whereas agriculture was at one time the main way in which we earned our national income, we now earn the nation's money from mining, from tourism and from a wide range of manufacturing industries as well as from agriculture. In fact, industries have sprung up at such a rate in Jamaica recently that we tend to take them for granted a little. On Saturday a new bank was opened; on Saturday also a new food service equipment company came into being; on Monday Mr. Wills Isaacs took part in a ground breaking ceremony at Old Harbour where a jute factory will soon come into being. And so it goes - there is

so much happening that we get a little tired of trying to keep pace with it all. But all these things mean new money coming into the country and new jobs for our people. Those are the two important things: the investors' money and the working skills of our people. Without these two factors there could be no new industries. It is with the relations between these two important forces - the people who invest their money and the people who invest their labour - that the Employers' Federation advertisement deals.

The employers say they accept the principle that the workers / in industry are entitled to decent wages and decent working conditions. But they feel that wages and demands for increased wages should be related to productivity. In other words, they feel that the wages a worker gets must be related to the amount of work he does. This, they say, is important not only to the employers but to the country as a whole. The idea, I think, is this: a business which is making good profits because the workers are doing their jobs well is obviously going to be in a better position to pay increased wages. On the other hand a business which is not making good profits will be in a bad position when it is faced with demands for higher wages. This, I think, is the key point in the employers' federation advertisement although it does deal with a number of other points.

Certainly, I personally think that this one point - the point of relating wages to the worker's output - is a very important one. It is a point which I think the unions and workers should look at and discuss very carefully. It is a point which can and will affect our exports and therefore the national economy of the country. And of course, it can affect the workers themselves. And so I think it is important for ~~me~~ all of us to think carefully about this problem. That is why we should all read and argue about this document. Goodnight

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Thursday, Sept. 15 at 6.15p.m.
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: A letter I have received from a Mrs. Goldsworthy of Mandeville has taken me severely to task. Mrs. Goldsworthy had written to me a month earlier commenting on one of my broadcasts. In that letter she had made it plain that she was just expressing her opinions to my privately and that these were not to be used on any broadcasts. In her second letter she takes me to task and charges me with lack of courtesy from not acknowledging her earlier letter although she admits that no reply was called for by that letter.

I am very sorry that I seem to have offended Mrs. Goldsworthy, but I honestly find it impossible to enter into correspondence with every person who writes to me. As I have told you earlier, doing these commentaries takes up all my time and that this is not the only job I have to do, so I hope all listeners will please forgive me and bear ~~that~~ with me if I don't find it possible to answer their letters personally.

Now let us have a look at the report of the Board of Enquiry appointed by Government to look into the Printing Industry. You will remember there was a great deal of fuss when the Board was first appointed. The Master Printers' Association objected to ^{the} manner in which the Board had been appointed; specifically they objected to the appointment of Professor H. D. Woods as Chairman of the Board. You will also remember that at the ^{time} the Master Printers made it clear that they would not consider themselves bound by any decision or recommendations made by the Board.

Well last week the report on the Enquiry was circulated to the Master Printers and to the Trade Unions. There are 15 recommendations, but I think that two of these are of particular importance.

The first is - that wages for each category of worker in the trade should be increased by 15%, based on the present weekly salary. And where the present rate is £5 or less than £5 a week, the rate shall be increased by 15/-.

The second is - that the working week in the printing industry should be reduced to $42\frac{1}{2}$ hours. ⁷⁰⁵ The printeries other than the Gleaner the regular week should include Monday through Friday with Saturday and Sunday being paid for at time and a half. For the Gleaner, the week should be five consecutive days with different employees being assigned by Management to different 5-day shifts.

I think these two are the most important recommendations. constitution
There are a host of others suggesting changes in the ~~situation~~ of the ~~situation~~ Joint Industrial Council for the Printing trade.

On the whole I think these recommendations are sober and reasonable, ^{with the possible exception of the $42\frac{1}{2}$ hour week,} and looking back I wonder why the Master Printers made such a fuss about Professor Woods heading this Board.

Goodnight.

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NEWS COMMENTARY
For transmission on
Friday Sept 16 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The statement made by Mr. Manley on Wednesday on the question of mechanisation in the sugar industry seems to me eminently sane and reasonable. The essence of the Premier's statement is that the change is bound to come but that we can and should so control the change as to cause as little hardship as possible. One interesting point in the Premier's statement was the fact that bulk loading ~~started~~ in the industry - which was the beginnings of mechanisation - started during the period of the Jamaica Labour Party Government. I hope this one point will help us all to stop playing political football with this very serious and important matter.

And now let us have another look at the turmoil in the Congo. A number of people have said to me that they do not understand the Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah is playing in the Congo crisis and that it seems that he is supporting the Russian Communist line in the Congo. On the face of it, it does look as though Nkrumah's support for Lumumba puts him on the communist side of the fence. But I think that is a very superficial view and we ought to look a little deeper to get at Nkrumah's real position and the reasons for his actions.

In the first place Nkrumah is the most outstanding and the most outspoken Pan-Africanist on the whole African continent. His great dream, as I have told you before, is to bring into being a great United States of Africa with as many of the African states in it as possible. Of course he also hopes that he will be the first President of such a United States of Africa. But what is wrong with that? He would not be such a successful politician if he did not

have such great ambitions. Anyway, it is because of his great dream that he is in favour of unity and against any division anywhere in Africa. And so he supports Lumumba who represents unity in the Congo as against Tshombe who represents secession and the breaking up of the Congo state. This does not necessarily mean that Nkrumah approves of Lumumba. He approve of a single unified state because that will serve his own great dream and so he backs the man who represents unity. Sure the Russians are also backing Lumumba but Nkrumah refuses to let this upset his own plans.

In the second place, Moise Tshombe who leads the secessionist Katanga leans very heavily on his Belgian advisers and Nkrumah sees this as an attempt by the Belgians to keep a foothold in the richest piece of all Africa. And this Nkrumah will not tolerate. The Belgians, he feels, are responsible for the mess in the Congo and the sooner they get out, the better. And if they succeed in splitting up one African state, other African states might split up. This again makes it seem that he is persuing the same policy as the Russians.

But on Wednesday of last week Nkrumah made a major policy statement on the Congo which shows just how far he is from following the Russian line. He said that it was the policy of his government to keep the Cold War out of Africa. He warned all countries outside the African continent that they would be making a big mistake if they tried to exploit the Congo crisis. No t even the United Nations, he warned, should play power politics in the Congo. This statement plus the take-over of power by the Congolese army, should, I think, ease the Congo situation considerably in the months to come. But this, as I warned you before, is going to take time. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Saturday Sept 17 at 6.15p.m

Good evening: I wonder how many of you have read the article by Dr. Ivan Lloyd, the Minister of Health, in Monday's Gleaner. Those of you who have read it will remember that it deals with the rivalries between our two major political parties and the rivalries between our two main trade unions. I found this article really remarkable. I found it remarkable because it was written by Dr. Ivan Lloyd who is a Minister of Government and a very staunch P.N.P. man. I found it remarkable because it suggests that there is some hard and serious thinking taking place in certain political quarters and I found it remarkable in that it should have been written and published at this time.

The essence of Dr. Lloyd's article, as I understand it, is that there is too much bitterness and tension between our two political parties and too much rivalry between our two main trade unions. On Labour Day, Dr. Lloyd says, the ~~xx~~ two groups marched independently, each under its own banner "as if determined that never the twain shall meet". Worker ~~is~~ against worker, trade unionist is against trade unionist. A joint mass meeting between the two unions or the two parties on any issue is unheard of, says Dr. Lloyd; a banquet, a dance or other social gathering at which both sides freely mingle, converse and be happy together, is unknown, he goes on. On this last point I think Dr. Lloyd has overstated his case a little. I have been at public functions where leaders of both sides have mixed freely and relaxedly, though I have noticed that some of them seem touchy about it, almost as though they are afraid of their followers seeing them fraternising. But in the main Dr. Lloyd is right.

I personally think that political rivalry is bound to exist wherever you have a vigorous two-party democracy, and I do not see anything wrong with it. What is wrong, what is unhealthy, and Dr. Lloyd points this out, is when the political rivalry becomes personal; when political leaders abuse each other personally and try to work up feelings of hatred against their rivals in the minds of the public.

But I think the worst damage of all is on the labour front, on the trade union front. I think this inter-union rivalry is a very serious matter which the workers ought to think carefully about. At the present time much skill and energy which should be devoted to basic educational work among the workers, is spent on one side winning representational rights from the other side. The unions find themselves in the position of two lovers chasing the same woman. Each one must have a flashier car than the other; each one must bring better flowers than the other; each one must make bigger promises than the other in order to win the affections of the woman. Neither one will dare criticise any faults in the woman for fear she would go to the other man. In this position it is almost impossible for the union leaders to really lead. That is why we do not have a workers' educational movement in Jamaica: that is why mechanisation caught us unawares in spite of the warning that it was bound to come. Our union leaders are afraid of following necessary but unpopular courses of action because the other side will benefit. But just think how different the picture would have been and could still be if we had one unified trade union movement with all groups co-operating instead of trying to cut each other's throats. I sincerely hope Dr. Lloyd's article will get our union leaders thinking on these things. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Monday September 19 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The Russian ship Baltika which was built in Holland in 1940, and which the Russians took from the defeated Germans after World War II, is now lying in New York harbour. The Baltika steamed into New York Harbour ^{very} late last night or in the very early hours of this morning. And on board the Baltika was Nikita Khrushchev, the number one communist of the Western world. With him were three other communists who are top dogs in their own countries which are ~~satellites~~ satellites of communist Russia: these were Hungary's Kadar, Bulgaria's Zhivkov and Rumania's Georghiu-Dej. All three of these gentlemen are in power in their countries because they are supported by Russian tanks and guns; and so they are going to do and say and act exactly as Khrushchev wants them to. They are in fact no more than Khrushchev's stooges. These four are going to be joined by Poland's communist boss, Gomulka. These five people are they key communist bosses of the Western world.

Then there will be Yugoslavia's Tito who is a communist but who does not follow the Moscow line on all matters. Next there is Cuba's Castro and Guinea's Sekou Toure. Tito, Castro and Sekou Toure might be described as the front-rank communist fellow-travellers; they are certain to vote with Khrushchev on any major issue.

Next there is a bunch of neutralist leaders. These are likely to be led by India's Nehru, Ghana's Nkrumah and ~~Egypt~~ the United Arab Republic's Nasser.

All these people have arrived or will have arrived in New York before this day is over. And all of them are there to attend the

meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations which opens tomorrow.

Now the first thing that stands out about tomorrow's meeting of the General Assembly is the fact that ^{Khrushchev ally} every important head of state, ^{with the exception of de Gaulle & possibly Macmillan} every ~~important Prime Minister or President~~ will be there in person. This is something unique. Never before in the History of the United Nations have you had anything like it. Delegations to General Assembly meetings have not in the past been led by heads of state. Heads of state have met to deal with special issues on special occasions but never for an ordinary General Assembly meeting. And when heads of state have met in the past it has always been by special arrangement and after long and careful preparation. What has happened here is something quite different.

Mr. Khrushchev decided off his own bat that he was going to lead his country's delegation. He then sent off notes to the other heads of state - especially to the leaders of the neutralist nations - urging them to come. The hint was that those who did not come would be regarded as enemies of peace. In other words, Khrushchev had decided to turn this U.N. meeting into a big thing; and that was that. Everybody, whether they liked it or not, had to come, and come they did. Some came willingly, some not so willingly, but come they did. This is the measure of Nikita Khrushchev's power in the world today.

But just what is behind this latest move of Khrushchev? Why has he turned tomorrow's meeting of the General Assembly into a kind of super-Summit meeting? What is he after? And what does he hope to gain from it? I will try to suggest some answers to these questions tomorrow evening: so till then, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Tuesday Sept. 20 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night I told you about the coming of Khrushchev to the United States for the United Nations General Assembly meeting which opened today. I told you how he had forced practically every important head of state to attend this meeting; and I ended up by asking why he had taken this line of action. Well, Khrushchev will soon give us his own version of why he came to the United Nations in person. And you can be sure that it will be a very wonderful speech, full of fire and passion and anger and love of peace. I think we can expect him to deal with certain specific issues.

I am sure, for instance, that he is going to deal with the Congo situation. I expect him to say that the United Nations has failed to do its duty by the Congolese people and has tried to restore Belgian imperialism. I think he is also likely to make a personal attack on the United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Dag Hammarskjold. He is going to defend Mr. Lumumba, and I think he is likely to be particularly nasty now that the Russian and other communist embassies have been driven out of the Congo by General Mobutu. The whole point behind this exercise will be to show the Afro-Asian nations that only the Soviet Union is their true friend and defender.

Then, I think, he is likely to deal with Latin America and U.S. "imperialist aggression against Cuba", so called. The recent meeting of the Organisation of American States, many of you will remember, has very firmly declared itself as against communist interference in this part of the world. I expect Mr. Khrushchev to do everything he can to sow the seeds of bitterness between Latin America and the

United States.

The third major point I expect Mr. Khrushchev to deal with is the question of peace and world disarmament. Here we should get some fireworks on U.S. Spy flights, on the aggressive plans of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and on the war-mongering of the American militarists.

I think all of this will be very much up Khrushchev standard though I expect it to be a lot more angry and a lot more bitter.

There is one important thing to note though, and I should be very surprised if it does not come out in Mr. Khrushchev's statement, and that important point is this: on the face of it, Khrushchev will be speaking to representatives of the United Nations. His audience will be in a vast hall at ~~the United Nations~~ United Nations Headquarter, New York. But really, he will be speaking ^{to} another audience; in fact he will be speaking to two other audiences.

The United Nations Assembly will only be a platform. From this platform he will be speaking to the hundreds of millions of people in Latin America, in Africa and in Asia who are hungry and without jobs, those who are homeless and hopeless. I think the first important reason why Khrushchev has come to the United Nations is because the communist line in Russia has shifted to a position of 'toughness'. I think the Russians have decided that the Cold War must get colder. I think this is going to be ^{the} signal to step up their propaganda against the West and to make trouble wherever they can. This something which has been shaping for many months now; Khrushchev's duty is now to give it full force at the United Nations. Tomorrow I will try to give you the reason behind the new Russian 'toughness'. So till then, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Wednesday Sept. 21 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night I told you about the new Russian 'toughness' which I expect from the current General Assembly meeting which began yesterday and to which Khrushchev has personally led all the top Western communist leaders. I also told you that his major speech would really be addressed to two major audiences who would not be at the General Assembly meeting in New York. I then told you of one of these audiences - the masses of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

This evening I want to tell you of the second and very special audience in Khrushchev's mind. Indeed, it is this second audience which has, I think, a great deal to do both with Khrushchev's coming to the United Nations in person and with the new Russian 'toughness'. I am, of course, thinking of communist China.

I think most of us tend to dismiss or to ignore the power and influence of communist China: and it is a power and influence which is growing very steadily all the time. I think we are making a very serious mistake in dismissing or ignoring communist China. I think even the powerful Nikita Khrushchev is finding that he cannot dismiss or ignore communist China.

Russia is the largest ~~xx~~ single country on earth with some 6½ million square miles of land: but it has only some 200 million people. China, the second largest country in the world, is just a little more than half the size of Russia; but in communist China ^{you have} 640 million human beings. This is more than a quarter of all the people on earth. In other words, of every four human beings in the world, one is a Chinese. Now this alone is something you cannot

afford to ignore or dismiss. But there is a lot more. The Chinese communists and the Russian communists are, at the moment, engaged in a quiet but very bitter power struggle for the leadership of the communist world. The special communist name for the struggle for power is 'an ideological conflict'. And, again using the special language of communism, the basis of this ideological conflict is the Chinese attitude to the Russian policy of 'peaceful coexistence'.

The Russian communist line has for a number of years now been that it is possible for communism and capitalism to get along peacefully, competing with each other to win the hearts and minds of the masses of Asia, Africa and Latin America by peaceful propaganda means and without going to war. And because the Russians have had a hand in winning communist power in the Satellite states, the satellites have followed the Russian line. But the Chinese communists owe the Russians nothing. They made their revolution without any aid from the Russians. And China is a powerful country in her own right. She does not depend on Russia for military protection. And so she does not hide her disagreement with Russia. She thinks peaceful coexistence is a fraud and sooner or later there must be war between communism and capitalism. She feels that she is better qualified to lead the Afro-Asian countries, and she is definitely making a strong bid for leadership in the communist world. This has made things difficult for Khrushchev and he must show the Chinese just how tough he can be. I think if we bear all this in mind we will be in a better position to make sense of the news that comes out of the United Nations during this session of the General Assembly meetings. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Thursday Sept 22 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking.

Good evening: Every now and then my job of keeping up with the news brings me something wonderful, something exciting and something rare in the way of a news item. You will remember there was the time when among the news I got from the Commissioner for India in the West Indies, I got the story of the two mermaids which were captured in South India. To me that was a wonderful story and from the way you responded to it I know you enjoyed it quite as much as I did. Incidentally, I have discovered a little more about these mermaids. A number of people ~~of people~~ have been good enough to write to me about them. One gentleman lent me a book on the subject, and a lady sent me a picture taken off the coast of East Africa. The lady's picture, however, was that of a common sea-cow, though the picture described it as a mermaid. The best information on mermaids came to me from Mrs. J.R. Marshall. She had friends who had actually seen real mermaids and the picture she painted for me was far from the romantic one of beautiful Miss Jamaica type half-woman half-fish. These mermaids are, I understand, between eighteen inches and two feet tall with monstrously ugly humanlike faces and a sort of greenish rough skin. So I don't advise any eager young man to go to South India. But mermaids really do exist.

Anyway, just as interesting and exciting a story came my way by Reuter's news service on Monday of this week. It was carried on the front page of Tuesday's Gleaner and it ~~make~~ made my week really rosy. It was the story of Mr. Jeremiah Weeks from the West Indies (the story did not say whether he came from Jamaica or not; but I should like to think Mr. Weeks did come from Jamaica).

Mr. Jeremiah Weeks arrived in England on Monday as a migrant. From the ship he travelled to Victoria Station in London by train. For those of you who do not know it, Victoria Station is a really large station, larger than any of the largest markets in Jamaica, and it is always crowded. Trains are constantly coming and going and there are hundreds of people hurrying this way and that. Then there is something else which is very striking to anybody from the West Indies who goes to England for the first time; that is the underground railway system. The English have the greatest underground railway system in the world. ^{For example,} ~~and~~ you can go down some steps in King Street, Kingston, get into an underground train and travel all the way to Annotto Bay or Port Maria or Morant Bay or Spanish Town or ~~Tor~~ Old Harbour or May Pen without coming above ground, - that is if we had anything like it in Jamaica.

Well, from Victoria Station Mr. Jeremiah Weeks went down the steps to the underground, got into a train and then when the train had passed to underground stations, he realised that he had left his luggage behind at Victoria Station. So when the train came to the next station, he jumped out. By the way these underground trains are run by electricity and the lines are electrified. Mr. Weeks jumped down between the lines and began to walk back to Victoria Station. It was a miracle that he was not fried to death before somebody noticed him and switched off the electric current, so stopping all the hundreds of trains everywhere on the underground system of the great city of London. So there you have it. One migrant brought great London's underground traffic to a stop and lives to tell the tell. I do hope Mr. Jeremiah Weeks is a Jamaican; he ought to be. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Friday Sept 23 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Since the report on the Ras Tafari was published at the beginning of August there has been a great public debate on the matter. I do not think a day has passed without some letter on the Ras Tafari movement or on Ras Tafari as God or on some aspect of Ethiopian history appearing in the Gleaner. One of the liveliest arguments on radio - an argument men worked up and shouting at each other - was on the Ras Tafari question. And almost everywhere where people are gathered together for a social occasion or a business discussion the question of the Rastafari movement has come up. We seem to have gone from one extreme to the other.

Before the trouble and before the report by the three university scholars most of us behaved as though the Rastas did not exist, or if they did exist, they were a nuisance we could not be bothered with. In those days we dismissed them as a bunch of no-goods, as people who did not want work, as people who were out to thief what they could, as people who were on the outside of our society. I can still remember the number of times respectable and decent and honourable citizens of our community have told me that Rastas were no good and the best thing was to ship them off or put them in camps or something. It was something most of us could not be bothered about. And then we had the trouble and the report. And now there is the great debate in the press and on the radio.

I have tried to keep track of this debate and it does seem to me that it is getting a little lost. There has been such a great flow of words since the report on the movement was published that I am beginning to fear that the main points of both the report and

the problem are getting lost under the mountain of words. And after the first shock and the mountain of words it begins to look as though people are slipping back into their old attitudes. There are complaints about sending a Rasta mission to Africa at the tax payers' expense. There are the old tales of if they really wanted to work they would find something to do. And you are told to look at so and so who came from equally poor origins and pulled themselves up by their own bootstraps.

And, of course, that excellent report on the Ras Tafari movement has now almost come simply to mean the mission to Africa. All the other recommendations have been almost completely ignored. In the first place the report did not say that government should send a mission to Africa to arrange for Rasta Farrians to go to Africa. The report said the government should send a mission to arrange for Jamaicans to migrate and that Rastafarians should be included in the mission. Now this is a very important point: it should be a Jamaican mission, not simply a Rasta mission.

It seems to me most important that we should face the fact that the Rastafari problem is a Jamaican social and economic problem and that while we can ease it to some extent by migration, we cannot export our entire problem. Migration might help to contribute to the solution of this problem, but migration by itself cannot solve this problem. If the government only arranges the mission to Africa and then sits back and waits then it will be a waste of time and money. The mission will go; the mission will come back; perhaps a handful of people will find homes in Africa; and in a year or so we will have a worse problem on our hands. Migration is only a small part of the answer. I will try to give you the main part of the answer tomorrow evening. So till then, good night.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Saturday Sept 24 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: As I told you last night, I think we are getting ourselves a little lost in a maze of words in our discussions of the Rasta problem. I also told you last night that I thought migration could help to ease the probelm but that we could not export the whole of our problem. In the main it is a Jamaican problem which will have to be solved right here in Jamaica. And ~~we~~ if we don't solve it in time and sensibly then it may be solved for us - and not so sensibly or peacefully.

Now what is the probelm and how do we solve it? I think it is fundamentally a problem of rehabilitation. I think it is a problem of jobs, of homes, of education, of opportunity. These were in fact some of the key recommendations made by the three scholars who wrote the report on the movement.

They recommended that the building of low-cost housing should be speeded up. If it has been I have not heard about it. And yet the conditions in which many of these people live are such as to revolt the human conscience. They recommdended that the government should buy the main areas where the Rastas are squatting. Because these are now private lands no water is available. K.S.A.C. dirt carts will not remove garbage from private land so all their rubbish is dumped between the shacks where dirt breeds disease. Pit latrines are illegal in Kingston so human waste is also dumped between the shacks. Because these people are squatting the landlord is not obliged to provide~~d~~ water and sewage disposal. Now the reason for sqautting is shortage of housing, but sqautting also deprives the owner of right to his land; and so we have this vicious circle of humans living in

filth and the owner not getting any benefit from his land. I think the government should buy up this land, bring in water, light and garbage disposal facilities and then insist that all the squatters observe certain basic standards and conditions. I think the response of these people to such a move will surprise all of us. I have not yet met the man who chooses filth when he can have a little cleanliness.

But, you will say, where will the money for this come from? At the risk of being very unpopular I will answer: we are going to spend somewhere in the region of a quarter of a million pounds to play host to the Inter-American Games in 1962. We are going to put up a big sports stadium and spend thousands of pounds on entertaining foreign sportmen and visitors. All this is going to do our name a whole heap of good in the world. There will be honour and prestige in it. But if we can find this kind of money for the Inter-American Games then we should be able to find at least enough money to ensure that our fellow men live as humans instead of as animals. I should like to see at least some of the skills and energies of our Ministry of Housing and Social Welfare directed to this really depressed section of our community.

Then there is the question of jobs. So much of our land is wasted and unused. I should like to see some of these people put on to co-operative farming on the Israeli pattern where they have turned the desert into a flowering garden. These are just some of things which must go side by side with migration if we are to solve the Rasta Problem. We are our brothers' keepers, whether we like it or not. And if we want to turn Jamaica into the 'good society' then we must act according to that precept. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Monday Sept 26 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: There is a small debate brewing in some circles here in Jamaica. This debate is about something called fluoridation. I think this debate is sufficiently important to all of us for us to try and get an idea of just what it is all about; so let me try and sort it out for you.

Now sodium fluoride is a chemical just as chlorine is a chemical. As you know, chlorine is used in all our reservoirs to keep our drinking water free from impurities. If chlorine were not put into our water we would be risking/catching such diseases as typhoid, Diphtheria and dysentery every time we drank a glass of water. So by simply adding ~~just~~ chlorine to our water our authorities make sure that we can drink our water freely and without fear of catching any sickness from the water. Today we all take the chlorination of our water as matter of course. Hardly any sensible person argues that it was wrong or dangerous to put chlorine into it. And yet, when the idea of chlorination first came up a number of people reacted very strongly against it and objected to it being put into their drinking water. Well, much the same sort of thing is now happening with fluoridation.

Now fluorine has a lot in common with chlorine. Both are greenish-yellow gasses that can be piosonous. Indeed chlorine was used as a poison gas in the First World War. They both have the same kind of smell. They are both produced in the same form. And they both belong to the same family of chemical elements.

Fluorine, scientists have discovered, is an important part of

tooth enamel - and this is where our trouble begins. When the scientist discovered that fluorine was an important part of tooth enamel they experimented with it and found that it prevented tooth decay, or to put it another way, they found that people who drank water with fluorine in it, especially children, kept their teeth better than those who drank water without fluorine in it. The result is that most of the drinking water in the big cities of the United States is treated with fluorine. But a number of Americans object to it. Some on religious grounds and some on political grounds.

And now the question of fluoridation of water has come to Jamaica. Earlier this month the Water Commission said they were ready to introduce fluoridation here and that they were only waiting for the government's 'go ahead' signal. If you think of how many of our people suffer from bad teeth then the idea makes sense. But straight away there was protest against it. A Mr. A.M. Jackson wrote a strong letter of protest in the Gleaner on the 5th of this month. This was followed by another letter on Thursday of last week in which Mr. A.L. Hendriks saw fluoridation as interfering with the rights of the citizen. Both these gentlemen are against putting fluorine in our water. On the other hand, I have just seen a report from a team of scientists in the United States who say that they have found that rotting teeth among school children can be cut down by 80% ~~in~~ by putting a little fluorine into the milk of these children. So there we have it: fluoridation can save teeth; but there are people who say it should not be put into our public water supply because that would be interfering with our freedom. The question is, what do you think about this subject. After all, you are the majority who will drink this water: so please let me hear what you think. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Tuesday Sept 27 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: You will remember that I have told a number of times in these commentaries about the strange business of only bad news being good news. You know how it is: a man shoots up another man and it makes the newspaper headlines; but when a man helps another man nobody makes a song and dance about it. I mention this again because something very important in the lives of the people in the rural areas of Jamaica has been happening and we have not made the song and dance about it which I think it deserves.

I say 'something' but really a number of things have been happening quietly all over the rural areas of this island. If you are a city type and do not often go into the country you will be surprised at all that has been happening. Where a few years ago you had to drive across narrow and rocky roads now you drive across wide asphalt roads. But how many of us notice this kind of change? Anything good we take for granted; anything bad makes the news headlines. I am not saying all our roads have improved, there is always room for more improvement. What I am saying is that our roads have improved at a remarkable rate and that we should take pride in this fact. Then there is the water and light situation. I know many places where a few years ago people had to go long distances for their water. Now there are more standpipes in almost every village I know and running water right inside the house is on the way to becoming a normal thing in most Jamaican homes. And of course the great plan to bring electricity to every community of 500 or more is on the way. This sort of thing rarely hits the news headlines but

it is on this sort of thing - on decent roads, on a decent water supply, on decent lighting that the good community and the good society is founded. So let us all think from time to time on these little but very important things which are making a very quiet and peaceful revolution in the lives of the people of this country. The big headlines are very dramatic but the small stories can often be very much more important in the long run.

But the one thing I had specifically in my mind this evening concerns rural health centres. There is nothing more important to any country than its citizens. Without the vast mass of its people a country is nothing; it can do nothing and it can achieve nothing. And so the people of a country are its most important asset. And for a people to give of their best to their country, the first thing they need is good health. For this they need good health services. All civilised societies accept this and in places like Britain all citizens are entitled to free medical services and attention. We do not have the money to create such a system in Jamaica. But we do owe all our people the best we can give them in health services. For a long time we have had hardly any health services for our country people. Then, in 1957 a three year programme was started to build 54 health centres for our people in Jamaica's country parts. So far 35 of these centres have been built and are serving the needs of the people. And between now and the 6th of October another 13 such health centres will be opened. Now this, to me, is much more important than most of the big news we read about daily. Bringing health services to the remotest corners of this island is part of the quiet revolution for the good of our people. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Wednesday Sept 28 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Exactly two weeks ago, on Wednesday September 14th our second radio station as well as the Daily Gleaner, came out with a very big story. This story was that the Russians had put two men into space and then brought them safely back to earth. These two men, the reports said, had been shot sixty miles up into the air, and then they had been brought safely back. This, the reports said, was another tremendous achievement for the Russians. There were pretty detailed descriptions of what these first rocket riders wore, of how they kept contact with the earth, and of how they came down. It was reported that these men wore oxygen-filled helmets and silver suits, and that they kept in touch with the ground by radio throughout their flight and reported on their experiences in space. It was also reported that scientific instruments, presumably attached to their bodies, measured their heart-beats, their blood pressure and their other reactions. Indeed, the whole story was a fine report of an amazing Russian achievement which had once again caught the West with its western pants down. The only trouble with the whole story is that not a word of it was true. The Russians had not sent men into space and brought them back either dead or alive. And Nikita Khrushchev himself confirmed, indirectly, the untruthfulness of this story at a press conference in New York over the weekend. The Russians, he said, had not yet put a man into space though, that was obviously what they were working towards.

I am certain myself that ~~this~~ was a genuine mistake made by these two organs of information and I think I have a pretty shrewd idea of

how it came about. This story of the Russian rocket riders came out of London and I rather suspect that when it was first written it came out as a speculative story of what might happen. Khrushchev has in the past made startling revelations on the eve of international conferences. The reporter in London thought that he would be most likely to pull another rabbit out of his hat when he hit New York for the General Assembly meetings of the United Nations. And certainly, the most sensational rabbit of all would be to announce that the Russians had shot men into space. But somewhere between London and Jamaica what was a story of speculation became a story of fact. And so, two weeks ago, we in Jamaica heard the news that the Russians had put men into space; and this, of course was not true.

Now this is the sort of mistake that can happen to any organ of public information. After all, those who run our papers and radio stations are human and all human beings make mistakes some times. But I think it does underscore two very important points. First, I think it is our duty to check our information, especially when it is as important as ~~this~~ this rocket rider story. We owe it to our readers and our listeners to make sure that what we tell them is the truth. And second, I think it is important that when we have made a genuine mistake, and I am sure all of us are bound to sooner or later, I think it is important that we should correct the mistake by telling our readers and listeners that we have made a mistake. I am sure they would respect and trust us all the more for telling them when we have genuinely slipped up. I think this is most important in building and keeping confidence between those who report the news and those who read or hear the news. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Thursday Sept 29 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night I told you about the importance of health centres in our rural areas, and the numbers of these health centres that have been built and opened. ~~With me~~ I told you that this was not the kind of news that hit the headlines, but in spite of that I said it was part of the very important quiet revolution taking place in Jamaica.

Tonight I want to comment on a piece of good news that really is good and has made the headlines - though again not the front pages of our papers. I am of course thinking of the results of the Common Entrance Examination which were published in the Jamaica Times over the weekend and again in Mondays Gleaner. For hundreds of parents and children up and down the country this was wonderful news that made us all forget the gloomy headlines from the United Nations and the Congo and everywhere where men are fighting and hating and fearing. Here was good news that was really good. It means that several hundred children will ~~for sure~~ be sure of getting a secondary school education for free. It means that these children have earned the right to this free secondary education by proving their ability. I think this is very important, this fact of ability. Before the test of ability came into being the test of whether a child had a right to a secondary education was money. If the parents could afford to pay for it, the child got it. If, on the other hand, the parents were poor and could not afford it the child could have no secondary education - no matter how gifted he or she was, no matter how much ability he or she had. In those days secondary education was the

right and privilege of only the economically better off. Whether a child got a secondary education or not depended on money rather than ability. And those few children from poorer homes who did get a secondary education got it at great sacrifice on the part of their families. It meant skimping and stinting and going without in order that one child should have a better chance in life. But for the vast majority of poorer people secondary education for their children was out of the question. This automatically made of education something it should not be. It became associated with having money and with social position, and this gave it a false and snobbish aspect.

But what a changed picture we have today. Today, if the higgler's son has the ability he can get the same education as the rich merchant's son. The magic world of knowledge, of understanding and of beauty is no longer shut to the son or daughter of the peasant, of the house-maid or of the washerwoman. Through their ability they can, today, earn for themselves a decent education and so a better place in this world of ours. This, I think, is one of the surest signs that we are on the right road to building the kind of land in which men and women will respect each other for what they are and how they perform rather than for what social class they come from or how much money they have. And, of course, real ability will come out and be recognised, wherever it comes from, and the country will benefit.

This again, I think, is part of the quiet revolution which is transforming this land. So, when things seem bad let us remember the good; and let us remember education is spreading through the land. And that is very good news. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Friday Sept 30 at 6.15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The fifteenth General Assembly of the United Nations has been in session for ~~the~~ ten days now. For the past ten days New York has been the centre of the world stage. All the big names in the political world have been called from ~~the~~ New York: Eisenhower, Krushchev, Macmillan, Nehru, Tito Nasser, Nkrumah, Castro - and a vast number of lesser figures. And most of these big names have already stepped on to the centre of the stage and the spotlight has been on them while they spoke their words.

First there was Eisenhower who spoke to the General Assembly on the second day. His was what the Americans would call the keynote speech. To a large extent all the other speeches that followed were some kind of answer to the Eisenhower speech. First, the President dealt with the problem of world peace and disarmament. The Americans, he said, were ready and willing to renew the disarmament talks but they wanted the talks to be based on proper inspection and not to be used for propaganda purposes only. Eisenhower warned that world war could come about accidentally because the Russians might carry their game of power political bluffing too far. He also dealt with the problems of outer space and suggested that the United Nations should have the power to inspect the satellites shot into space by both East and West and so make sure that nobody shoots deadly weapons out into space. And then he made his final important proposal. All the economically advanced countries, he said, should take part in a programme of aid and education to lift the standards of living in underdeveloped areas in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and this should be done through the United Nations. He condemned the communists

for trying to make Cold War propaganda out of the troubles in the Congo. When Eisenhower finished his speech most observer agreed that it was a constructive and statesmanlike speech with important positive proposals.

The next important speech - and the one all the world had been waiting for - came from Khrushchev. He spoke the day after Eisenhower. As was expected, Khrushchev's speech was an all-out attack. His main target was the United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Dag Hammarskjold. He accused Mr. Hammarskjold of having been on the side of the imperialists in U.N. activities in the Congo. He described Mr. Hammarskjold as a 'stooge' of imperialism and called for the abolishing of his post. Instead of a Secretary General, Khrushchev said, the United Nations should create a three-man commission to run the world organisation. This was such an important thing that it overshadowed almost everything else. Many observers thought that if this ~~xxx~~ proposal were accepted it would kill the United Nations as an active force for world peace. I agree with this view. If instead of a Secretary General a three-man commission had to deal with the Congo crisis ^{to stop the fighting} nothing would have been done/and that sad country would have been gripped by a civil war right now with African killing African. I say this because Mr. Khrushchev's idea was that one of the three should be from the West, one from the communist bloc and one from the neutralists, and each would have the power to block all action and so prevent U.N. forces going to troubled spots.

Now what is behind this proposal of Khrushchev's? And is it true that he wants to kill the United Nations? I will try to suggest some answers to these questions tomorrow evening. So till then, Good-night.