

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday Jan 1st 1962 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: This is the first day of the New Year and as usual, most of us have made New Year resolutions. Some of us are going to give up drinking; some of us are going to give up smoking; some of us are going to stop that bad habit of talking about other people's business. And so on. On the whole our New Year resolutions are generally a list of the things we are going to give up or of the things we are not going to do. And generally speaking they are a list of private things, referring to our private lives. This evening I <sup>should</sup> ~~would~~ like to suggest that as well as that private list, we should also draw up <sup>a list</sup> of New Year resolutions of things we will and will not do for the sake of Jamaica. Here is some sort of rough guide of the kind of thing I have in mind. Let us begin at the top, with our leaders and the most important people in the Jamaican community.

Let those to whom we have given political power <sup>resolve to</sup> ~~do~~ what must be done for the good of the whole country, even if it is unpopular. And let them be honest and tell the people the truth about our problems, even if it hurts.

Let the backbenchers in our parliament resolve to stop being party rubber stamps and stand up and speak like responsible men and women who have been elected to speak and argue and question on our behalf.

Let our ~~civil~~ servants, especially in the middle grades, resolve to be civil in fact as well as in name. And please let us have much better manners among postmistresses in our country villages.

Let our merchant princes, our insurance bodies, ~~and all those~~

our capitalists, and all those middle-men who create nothing but live off percentages and grow fat in the pocket - let them all resolve to settle for a 25% return instead of the fat 100% of the past. If they do and carry out this resolution prices will drop, the cost of living will come tumbling down, and Jamaica as a whole will benefit.

And please let all those white people from abroad resolve to stop griping about everything Jamaican; and resolve further that if they cannot do this they will leave Jamaica. Just like the countries from which they come, Jamaica is both beautiful and ugly. If they stay, let them help us accentuate the beauty and eliminate the ugliness.

And coming down the scale, let our middle-class resolve to be a little more for Jamaica and a little less for itself. And let our trades unions and their leaders and our organised and unorganised workers resolve to put Jamaica before sectional interests. Our workers are entitled to a decent living wage, but the country is entitled to demand and get a decent day's work for a decent day's pay. And let the I.D.C. and the Tourist Board resolve to sell the Jamaica that is and not the Jamaica that was. And let all the so-called small people of this country resolve to <sup>to</sup> not ~~xxx~~ regard themselves as small any more and act and behave and conduct themselves as big and responsible people entering on independence. And let us all, the high and the mighty, the lowly and the weak, let all the people of this island resolve to make Jamaica a proud and happy place to live in by dedicating ourselves to its service and to the best interests of all its people.

Goodnight

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Tuesday Jan 2 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last year this time I selected Dr. Arthur Lewis, the Principal of the University College, as the man who had made the most important contribution to peace and stability in Jamaica in 1960. You will remember that 1960 was the years of the great Rastafarian unrest and it was to Dr. Lewis that leaders of the Rastas went to ask for help. And out of their talks with Dr. Lewis and his recommendations to the Government came the Mission to Africa and the creation of a very much better spirit between the Rastas and the rest of the community. You will also remember that all this creative work of Dr. Lewis was done quietly and with very little publicity. And for the same year I chose Mrs. Vera Moody as the woman who had made the most important contribution to the cultural life of the island because of her more-than-twenty-year long fight for the setting up of a school of music which came into being that year.

In both these cases I selected people who had not been in the forefront of the daily news but whose contributions, it seemed to me, were much more likely to bring enduring good to Jamaica than the deeds and words of much more publicised politicians and other big shots.

Now, using the same yardstick of genuine contribution for the long term good of Jamaica as a whole, who have been the most useful citizens in 1961? And I certainly do not mean those who have made the most noise. Apart from Busta and Manley, I do not think the contributions of any individuals stood out as sharply in 1961 as did those of Dr. Lewis and Mrs. Vera Moody in 1960.

In politics I think three men contributed most to the livening up of the scene during the past year: Mr. Edward Seaga with his initiation of the great debate on the 'Haves' and the 'Have-not'; Mr. Millard Johnson who started the public talk on race and colour, and Mr. Robert Lightbourne, who, mainly from behind the scene has had a great deal to do with the revitalisation of the Jamaica Labour Party. Of the three, I would put Mr. Lightbourne first. His work was done quietly, he was not involved in any big public issue or discussion as were the other two. But he had Busta's ear more completely than anyone else in the J.L.P. The new look and the new tone of the J.L.P., the new air of radicalism about it, all these stem basically from the Lightbourne influence behind the scenes.

But I think that by far the most significant event of 1961 as far as the whole of Jamaica is concerned was the creation of a new climate of thinking on social matters. And here, I think, the most important contribution was made by non-politicians. The Governor Sir Kenneth Blackburne <sup>and the President of the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Stanley Motta</sup> used the considerable influence of ~~his~~ office to bring groups of people together to quietly discuss the social problems of Jamaica and their moral implications. And the unspoken text of all these little gatherings revolved around that basic question for all Christians: 'Am I my brother's keeper?' And out of this has come an unseen ~~and~~, as yet, only slightly felt movement of social consciousness and social help which I am sure is going to change the whole climate of thinking in Jamaica in the years that lie ahead of us. So I should say that Sir Kenneth <sup>Blackburne & Mr. Stanley Motta</sup> had made a major contribution to the quiet revolution in our thinking, without which we cannot change the world around us. Tomorrow I will tell what I consider the most important institution of 1961. So till then,

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday Jan 3 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The world in which we live is more of a technological world today than it was ten years ago. And it will be more of a technological world five or ten years from now than it is today. And we can go on predicting with absolute confidence that the further you look into the future the more technological that world will be.

In that world your engineer, your scientist, your chemist, and all those who work in the applied sciences are going to be the most important workers and the key builders of that world. Already this is so in highly developed countries like Britain and the United States and Russia and Germany. Industry in Britain puts a higher value on the industrial technologist than on any other worker. Without his training and skills the British aircraft industry and the British motor industry would not be where they now are. And what goes for Britain goes for everyone of the highly industrialised countries. These are the people who have revolutionised our world. They are responsible for the splitting of the atom and the building of space ships that will take man to the stars. It is they who have created metals that are so strong that they can go hurtling through the air at fantastic speeds without <sup>being burnt</sup> ~~burning~~ up by the tremendous heat caused by friction. Think of the miracle of radio and television, think of your adding machines that are more accurate and quicker than men, think of your electricity - and when you think of these ~~and~~ you are thinking of the work of your scientist and your engineer, of your technologist. So you see, technology of

crucial importance for any country which wants to develop and expand its economy and which wants to make the best use possible of its manpower and its resources. And it is for this reason that I think ~~the~~ our College of Arts, Science and Technology emerged as our most important new institution in 1961.

Now, the College did not come into being in 1961. It was established in 1958 <sup>by the Ministry of Education</sup> and a permanent Statutory Council assumed control of it in 1959. This Council is an autonomous body made up of twelve members. One is a representative of the Ministry of Education, and one is a representative of the University College. The other ten are ~~chosen~~ appointed by the Minister from people who have experience in matters relating to Arts, Science, Technology, Commerce and Industry. It is perhaps unfair to ~~name~~ single out individuals from a team who have done remarkably well by the College, but the contributions of the Chairman, Mr. Donald Farquharson and Mr. O.M. Henzell have been outstanding in getting the College on a proper footing. Today the College has four departments, each with its own head and staff: there are departments of Engineering, of Building, of Science, of Commerce as well as an Institutional Management section. In 1960 there were 250 and 6 of them qualified in Institutional Management. In 1961 there were 475 fulltime and part-time students. Three qualified as mechanical engineers, 7 as electrical engineers and 4 in building. All this is the beginning of what will become a key aspect of our development in the future. And this makes our College of Arts, Science and Technology a key institution for the future development of Jamaica, and therefore the most significant for the years just past.

Gooding

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday Jan 4 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night's news that the Governor had, on the advice of the Premier, relieved Mr. A.G.S. Coombs of his post as Minister of Communications and Works, was no surprise to anybody. It was something that had been brewing a long time. The question in the minds of most observers had not been whether ~~or not~~ Mr. Coombs would cease to be a Minister of Government but rather when and how this would come about. The question was whether the Government and the P.N.P. would be able to remove Mr. Coombs without a big fuss and a big political scandal or whether we were in for a real public show-down. Some P.N.P. supporters hoped that ~~that~~ the show-down would be postponed until after the coming elections. The enemies of the P.N.P., on the other hand, hoped very much for a show-down somewhere just before the elections. They felt this would weaken the chances of the P.N.P. at the elections. <sup>statement</sup> Certainly, from the ~~statement~~ issued by Mr. Manley as leader of the P.N.P. it is clear that the party went to a great deal of trouble to try and settle the issue as peacefully and privately as possible. The party had paid off the mortgage debt on Mr. Coombs' house and had undertaken to pay ~~off~~ his ~~contributions~~ contributions to the pensions scheme for M.H.R.s so that he would be in a position to collect his pension immediately, if and as soon as it came into being. The price of all this - and the root of the whole trouble - was that the P.N.P. did not want Mr. Coombs as its candidate in the coming elections. But after seeming to go along with these arrangements to pension him off, Mr. Coombs changed his mind and so we had yesterday's announcement.

Now what does this mean for the P.N.P. and for its chances in St. James? And, was N.W. St. James, the seat which Mr. Coombs has

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday Jan 5 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think the Coombs affair illustrates a very important and very serious weakness in the political life of this country, and I think it also illustrates the beginning of the end of that weakness. I think this same point was illustrated, though in a much less dramatic form when we had the break between Mrs. Rose Leon and the J.L.P. earlier.

Let us consider case histories. Both Mrs. Leon and Mr. Coombs entered our House of Representatives in 1949. Both have done great service for their parties in the early years. Both became Ministers of Government when their parties assumed power. Both were people with strong grassroots influence: Mrs. Leon especially among the hillfolk ~~xxx~~ of Western St. Andrew, and Mr. Coombs among the islands workers. Mr. Coombs, indeed, was a pioneer trade unionist who formed the Jamaica Workers and Tradesmen's Union way back in 1936. He was President of what was known as the Radical Workers Union and a founding member of the P.N.P. Mrs. Leon was at one time Chairman of the J.L.P. Both these people played important roles in their respective parties at one time. And within twelve months of each other, Mrs. Leon was out of the J.L.P. and Mr. Coombs is on the point of being out of the P.N.P.

But the startling part of the whole business is in the reasons why these two pioneers left their parties. Mrs. Leon left the J.L.P. because she accused Busta of being dictatorial. But if Busta is dictatorial now then he must always have been dictatorial. Certainly, those who knew Busta in the early days insist that he is more tolerant now than he was in the early days. The reason for Mr. Coombs' fall-out with his party does not even have this doubtful hint of even the

slightest difference of opinion. Mr. Coombs wanted ~~to be~~ to be his party's candidate in the forthcoming election. His party did not want him as its candidate and so we had the fall-out. There was no issue of principle involved. There were no differences on matters of policy; he was not driven on by any deep conviction involving the interests of the country.

I think it is at this point that the question of principles comes in. Now I do not want to sound high-minded. Very few people go into politics, or indeed into any other undertaking, out of motives of ~~only~~ solely pure high-mindedness. People become politicians out of a combination of motives generally; there will be the mixture of the love of power, the desire to serve our fellowmen as well as the desire to improve our own positions and make money. And very often we will make out that what we want is good for the community as a whole when it is really just to serve our own selfish interests. Because we are human this is so for everyone of us. What can, and often does keep this pattern of mixed motives under control; what often restrains the purely selfish desires in us, is when we commit ourselves to a body of principles which are higher than our selfish interests and by which we try to regulate both our private and our public conduct. I feel that the lack of such a body of principles among most of our politicians, such a body of basic political beliefs that are more important than selfish interests, is a serious weakness in the political life of this country. This I think, has been clearly illustrated by recent events within every single one of our political parties. A most important need for the future then is to inject a measure of political principle into the minds of our party politicians both for the good of the parties and for the good of the country. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday Jan 6 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The great trek back to school begins on Monday and mothers and grannies are going to find their homes and their backyards strangely quiet after having grown used to having the children at home over the long Christmas holidays. For the majority of fathers there will be the problem of finding school fees as well as having to deal with all the different taxes we have to pay around this time of year. The lucky ones are those whose children are on scholarships. I am sure we would all welcome the day when education does in fact become free and compulsory for all children. But here too, we, as taxpayers will really have to pay for this free compulsory education when it comes. And this brings me to one of the problems of education which can be solved with a little intelligence and flexibility on the part of our education authorities.

From what I have been told by teachers - especially headmasters and headmistresses - over the holiday period, I am not very impressed with the Education Ministry's ~~xxxx~~ approach to building. I understand that in Government Schools and in schools that have become government-subsidised, the Ministry takes over all responsibility for the putting up of school buildings - even where it does not put up all the money. One can understand this with straight government schools but it is a little less easy to understand with government subsidised schools. For instances, I have been told of more than one school where a builder has come along and told the headmaster or headmistress that he had been instructed by the Ministry on exactly how a building should be put up. The headmaster or headmistress had not been consulted by the

Ministry, and when he or she told the builder that it would be best for the school and more economical to put up the structure a different way, the suggestion had been dismissed by the builder. He had received his orders from the Ministry and that was that. The result is that classes are often hot and stuffy and dark because windows are away from the line of the breeze or there are no windows where you could get most light. The plans have been drawn up by little bureaucrats who do not know the lie of the land and how to use it to best advantage or else who have made a quick casual visit to the site. And so the kids have to work in dark and stuffy classroom. This is just not good enough. The headmaster or headmistress of some government-subsidised school has probably been in charge for ten years or more and has had considerable experience in the putting up of buildings to the best advantage of the children. I think it is utter stupidity for the Ministry's officers not to make use of the knowledge and experience of these people to create pleasant surroundings for children to grow up straight and strong in both mind and body.

And then there is the question of costs. I have been told of school buildings which were put up privately for five or six thousand pounds and then, later, smaller and less pleasing structures were put up by the Ministry for ten or fifteen thousand pounds. Again, by simply drawing on the experience of those who know, the Ministry, can cut costs considerably. So I hope that this year the Ministry will make use of the knowledge and rich experience of the heads of schools. It's there for the asking and it will <sup>make</sup> learning a joy for our children. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday Jan 8 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Every now and then something trivial, something unimportant, happens and shows us some aspect of the world or of human nature in a striking and unique way. When this happens we often see and understand a personality or a people or a situation with a sharpness and clarity that is almost blinding. And we learn and understand in a way that no great teacher or great scholar could have made us understand. Towards the end of last week I came across one such slight happening. And it raised the question of what social and educational value we should put on a pair of lovely legs: Yes, I am talking about a pair of lovely legs of a living, breathing woman.

I am sure most of you, especially the men, would associate a pair of lovely legs with delightful thoughts and little else. Certainly few people would think of a pair of lovely legs revealing the social sickness of a society and a people more sharply than has ever happened before. And yet that is exactly what happened.

On Thursday of last week the Associated Press carried a report which I am sure most of you must have seen in your papers. It told the story of a young man of twenty who works as a cleaner in a railway station. One day this young man saw a young woman whose legs were so beautiful that he could not resist telling her so. And so the young man turned smiling and appreciatively to the young woman and said, politely and respectfully: "Lady, but you've got nice legs!"

The young man's name ~~was~~ is Alfred Majola. The young woman's name is Faith Jennifer Seaton. The place where the young man paid the young woman this great compliment for the beauty of her legs was on the platform of Johannesburg station in the Republic of South

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday Jan 9 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: On Friday of last week a listener got in touch with me and raised a problem which I think is of general concern to a large number of people. This listener had received a notice to say that there were two parcels for her at the airport. These had been sent from the United States by airfreight. Like the majority of us this listener is not rich or even well off. Indeed, as in most families, both she and her husband go out to work because that is ~~the only way they can make ends meet.~~ And so she had to try and get these parcels during her lunch hour. And like the majority of Jamaicans they have no car. And so there was the problem of how to get to the airport and back within her lunch hour. She tried to find out about buses but there was no bus going to the airport. There is a bus that goes to Port Royal. But with this should have to get off at the round-about and walk the best part of a mile to get to the airport; and the Port Royal bus did not run frequently. She had to give up that idea because it meant a trip of at least two or three hours. Next she thought of a customs brokers to get the parcels out for her. She soon gave up that idea because she found out it ~~was~~ was going to cost her twenty-five shillings straight off just for the broker's transport without the question of Brokers' fees coming up. And so, after exploring all possibilities, this woman had to hire a cab to go and collect two small airfreight parcels. That was the only way she could do it within her lunch hour, and it cost her thirty shillings. For that family thirty shillings is a lot of money and it means that for this week they have to budget much more tightly than they normally do.

I have told you the story of this one case in some detail because I have found out it is a pattern of many others. It is a story that can be duplicated over and over again. There is the story of the old granny who looks after the children of her daughter in England. A few days before Christmas a parcel of gifts for the children and the old woman arrived by airfreight. The old granny had to come down from the St. Andrew hills; she had only a few shillings and so by a combination of walking, begging rides and more walking, she spent all of one day and half of one night getting that parcel and getting home so that the children should have their mother's gifts on Christmas morning.

This getting to the airport is a particular hardship on the poorest and most hard-pressed section of our community. I know that it is best, in terms of airport organisation, that customs for the airfreight stuff should be at the airport. But surely we could try and make it easier for people without cars, and they are the majority in the community, to get to and from the airport without this fantastic hardship and high costs. Most international airports throughout the world have frequent and reasonably priced bus services to and from the airport. I should like to think that this particular hardship suffered by poor people without cars is due to an oversight on the part of those responsible for the setting up of our fine new airport. And I hope that now that it has been brought to their attention they will get a cheap and frequent bus service going between Kingston and the airport. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday Jan 10 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The news released by the Industrial Development Corporation over the weekend that the manufacturing industry made the largest single contribution to the Jamaican economy in 1960 is a very important landmark in the development of this island. In the past the ~~whole~~ foundation of our economic life was based on agriculture, with sugar as the cornerstone. And in those days any severe setback in agriculture, especially in sugar, automatically created a grave economic situation. Today things are different. Today a setback in one sector of the economy does not automatically threaten the whole economic life of the country. There is a resilience about the economic life of the country today which was not there ten or even five years ago. And the story behind this new economic resilience is the diversification of our economy. Instead of the nation depending mainly on agriculture, we now have a flourishing manufacturing industry as well as mining and tourism. Instead of all our eggs being in one basket, they are now in four big baskets. And the biggest of these baskets - the biggest money earner in 1960 - was ~~the~~ the basket marked manufacturing.

wondered about.

But there is a problem here which many people have ~~wondered~~. They say we hear about all this development; we hear about the coming of all these new industries; we hear that our Gross Domestic Product is so much higher than it ever was before; and yet we see very little of all this prosperity; certainly, very little of this new economic health and wealth of the country seems to have rubbed off on us.

In a sense these people are right, but only in one sense. You certainly cannot and will not see the effects of this stabilisation

and diversification ~~ofxxxx~~ and expansion of the economy overnight. In no society do you see the ~~bb~~enefits immediately. And the lower down you are in the economic scale, the longer it takes for these benefits to seep down, if nothing is done to hasten the process. And so it is that there are always people who do not seem to get anything from the expansion of the economy. And it is very cold comfort to say to these people that you cannot plant an orange tree today and expect to start picking fruit tomorrow. But that is a cold fact of life.

And yet we are seeing a fair measure of the benefits of our new economic health all about us. We are seeing some of it in the greatly increased and increasing numbers of children at schools; we are seeing some of it in the going up of health centres all over the island; we are seeing some of it in the spreading of piped water into remote rural areas; some of it we see in housing; some of it we see in the bigger pay packets workers take home on Friday nights. So we are seeing some of these benefits, and as time goes on we will see more of them - if we keep up the growth and expansion of our economy. But this does not mean we should be satisfied. Let us by all means push for a little more of the benefits. But let us not say ~~xxxxx~~ that nothing is happening because that is not true.

I think ~~this~~ diversification has made the country economically healthier than it ever was. To keep it that way and expand it we must all work hard. The great social need now is to make sure that the nation's wealth is shared much more evenly than it was and still is. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday Jan 11 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I am very glad that the Committee drafting the constitution has decided to reverse its original decision and entrench the proposed Bill of Rights. I am glad because civil liberties are fundamental and because there was a very real danger of a rift inside the Committee over this matter. And that would have been very bad in terms of the basic interests of Jamaica.

I think the pattern of pressures that led up to this decision <sup>very high</sup> ~~is~~ extremely interesting. It is a pattern that reveals a/degree of sophistication in power pressures and the acute sensitivity of our leaders to these pressures. It shows also how effectively the technique of the 'Trojan Horse' was used, and how cleverly the Committee safeguarded the country on an important issue. The issue, of course, had to do with the so-called sacred right of property.

It is no secret that one of the main concerns of some of our business leaders has been to safeguard, preferably by entrenchment, the right of property. Now there is nothing either wrong or immoral about this. Property owners, as a class, would be less than human if they did not try to safeguard their property rights. And it is no more wrong than it is for trade unionists to try to safeguard the right of the workers to organise themselves in unions. These are legitimate group interest within the community.

But no good constitution would put the interests of any single group above the interests of the community as a whole. And so it was no surprise to me when the Premier said, on January 4th, that with the exception of one person, all the members of the Committee <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ of one mind that the rights of property should not be entrenched in

the Constitution. It was also in that selfsame statement that Mr. Manley indicated that the Committee did not intend to entrench the Bill of Rights.

Now, it is almost impossible, in Jamaica today, to mount a popular campaign of pressure for the entrenchment of property rights. Indeed, the uneven distribution of the wealth and property of the country would make such a campaign very unpopular. The mood of the country is against this 'stand-still' entrenchment of property rights. And so too, are both of our major parties, according to their policy declarations. So, the only other possible way to safeguard property rights with any certainty of popular support, is to tuck in property rights somewhere in the Bill of Rights and then demand the entrenchment of the Bill as a whole. This is exactly what has happened. It was a brilliant move and one which could not be resisted. But please do not misunderstand me: I am not saying that the people who mounted the campaign for the entrenchment of the Bill of Rights were only concerned with protecting the sacred right of property. Many of them have proved their genuine devotion to civil liberties and the arguments they put forward were sound and solid. The entrenchment of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the citizen is a good thing. But let us face it, for some of them a main consideration was the entrenchment of the sacred right of property. But have they succeeded in entrenching property rights along with our other fundamental freedoms? And in any case, what is so wrong about entrenching property rights? I'll try to answer these questions tomorrow. So till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

FOR transmission on  
Friday Jan 12 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Is there anything wrong with entrenching the right of property? I think the answer to this question depends very much on where you stand, on your angle of vision and on what you are talking about. If by property we mean your goods and chattels and mine - the house and the plot of land on which it stands, the things inside the house, your few pigs and goats and cows - if by property we mean this, then there is nothing wrong with entrenching our property. Please do not dismiss this as a joke. In Germany under Hitler just such small possessions - household goods and chattels, jewelry and the like, were taken from millions of Jews by the Nazis. The point though is that when any society reaches that stage then what is in your constitution or your Bill of Rights just does not mean a thing. But this is not the aspect of property that those who want property rights entrenched are thinking about.

I think the property involved here is of a completely different kind and on a completely different level. An example that comes to mind is the Allsides property in Trelawny. That was the first property acquired by the Jamaica government under the Land Bonds Law. It was a property of 4,500 acres and it had been owned by absentee owners for over forty years. Just before it was acquired it had roughly 1,400 tenants eking out an existence of sorts on 2,500 acres. Each of These tenants paid the absentee owners a rent of thirty-four shillings for every acre of land they rented a year. For the absentee owners this was a very tidy income; for the tenants it was a very miserable life. After allowing for rivers and streams and roads and tracks, as well as the piece cultivated by the resident overseer, there remained 2,460 acres

of land lying inert and unused in a sea of land hunger. That was way back in 1955 and I am telling you what I saw for myself. Then the government acquired this land under the Land Bonds Law and redistributed it among the peasants who had worked it for the benefit of an absentee owner for so many years. I went back and had a look at Allsides towards the end of last year, and it was like going to a completely new place which I had not seen five years earlier. The five years between my first and second visit had created a fantastic change in the outlook and living of the people.

Now, if we had had a constitution in 1955, and into that constitution had been written a Bill of Rights which entrenched property rights the government may have found it impossible to acquire the Allsides property and the improvements in the living of those people would not have come. The question is: was it right to acquire that property ( and incidentally, it was acquired by due process of law though we had no Bill of Rights)? There are two answers/here: <sup>Possible</sup> the owners are likely to say no but those for whom this has meant a new chance in life the answer is yes. It is a question of whose interests should come first - that of the majority or that of a minority.

I suspect it is to deal with this issue of property rights that the Committee has decided that in special circumstances a Bill may be passed in the ordinary way <sup>with a two-thirds majority -</sup> which conflicts with any item in the Bill of Rights. And so property rights will not be quite sacred when it clashes with the general <sup>interests</sup> ~~good~~ of the majority Goodnight.

- 1) Agrict Marketing Boards
- 2) Floods & Droughts
- 3) Discipline in Schools

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday Jan 13 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Tonight I should like to touch briefly on three very important subjects. First on agriculture. On the face of it, there seems to be some duplication in the plans to set up marketing organisations for the island's agricultural produce. On December 5th of last year Mr. Rudolph Burke, the President, told a press conference of the Jamaica Agricultural Society's plans to set up an all-island marketing organisation to solve our very acute problem of internal agricultural marketing. Then, on Wednesday of this week, Mr. Keble Munn, the Minister of Agriculture, told the Half Yearly Meeting of the J.A.S. that the Government proposed to set up a Statutory Marketing Board at an early date to take care of the marketing of our agricultural produce, fresh as well as processed. For years the country has been in desperate need of an agricultural marketing organisation and then, suddenly, within the space of ~~ixxxxixan~~ just over thirty days we have the announcement of two agricultural marketing organisations. Why? Is there a conflict of interests between the J.A.S. and the Ministry of Agriculture? Are the two organisations going to work together or are they going to compete? And was there any sort of discussion between the Ministry and the J.A.S. on this important question of internal marketing? Agriculture is very important to all of us and it is not in such a healthy state as to allow us the extravagance of duplicated services, so some more information and explanations please.

Next there is the very depressing problem of floods and droughts.

We have had recent reports that north coast hotels have suffered losses in their tourist trade because of the heavy rains over the Christmas and New Year period. There have been reports of landslides

and of serious damage to roads and field and homes. In contrasts to this, we have had reports from certain areas of the island about a grave shortage of water, and in one place there was rationing.

If this were not so tragically dangerous for the future of this island, it would be laughably ridiculous. And please remember this alternation of drought and flood is not the result of any act of God. It is the direct result of the ignorance, stupidity and carelessness of men. We ourselves are responsible for these disasters by the casual carelessness with which we treat the land. Men clear the land by burning bush and tree because it is quick and easy and they get a good first crop. But in the process they leave its rich top soil exposed for the rain to wash away, and there are no shrubs and trees to hold and absorb the water and so check floods and seep down to serve us in dry times. This is one of our most serious long-term problems and some decisive action from the government is long overdue.

Finally, there is the very serious problem of discipline in our senior schools. Last year was a very bad year in this respect. We had the unhappy situation where senior schoolboys took their quarrels with a headmaster into the daily press. That this <sup>was published at all</sup> ~~should have happened~~ was tragic. And there have been a number of unhappy cases showing up this breakdown in discipline. Let us try to do better this year. Let teachers be loyal to their heads instead of carrying favour with their boys and girls. And parents too, <sup>should give more support to heads + teachers.</sup> ~~and not free of blame.~~ Discipline at school is one of the cornerstones in the hard business of <sup>moulding decent</sup> ~~building good~~ human beings who will grow into good and responsible citizens.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday Jan 15 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The new <sup>British</sup> ~~British~~ Colonial Secretary, Mr. Reginald Maudling is now in Trinidad. Today he will have talks about the future of what remains of the West Indies Federation with the present leaders of the Federal Government. Tomorrow and Wednesday he will have talks with Dr. Eric Williams and other leaders of the Trinidad Government. On Thursday he will have talks with Mr. Errol Barrow, the Premier of Barbados, and on Friday and Saturday he will have talks with the leaders of the Leewards and Windwards. So, all in all, this is going to be a very busy and a very tricky week for Britain's new Colonial Secretary. It is also a very crucial week for the future of the Eastern Caribbean.

What results are possible from this week's discussions? First, I think that Mr. Maudling will find out, if he does not already know, that ~~that~~ the present Federal Government is just about as unrepresentative as any government can be in a democracy. It has no popular mass support and it does not enjoy the confidence of any of the unit governments. It is in fact a government in name only. The Federal Prime Minister's party has lost power in Barbados, and it is most unlikely that either he or any of his present Ministers could win an election anywhere in the West Indies. So if Mr. Maudling is to get the picture in its right setting he will have to realise that he is dealing with a straw federal government. If he does not realise that then his talks with Dr. Williams will be doomed before they begin.

Dr. Williams is the key man in all the present efforts to revive and give new life to what is now a federation in name only. If Dr. Williams decides to have a go at keeping it alive then there might

still be a chance of salvaging what remains of the federation. If, on the other hand, he decides to wash his hands of it, then we might as well write off the whole idea. In any case, if Williams <sup>And today the P.N.M. decided to reject federation a week had alone</sup> ~~was~~ decided to try and keep it alive, the nature and structure of the federation, if it <sup>were to be</sup> ~~is~~ still <sup>would have had to</sup> called a federation, ~~will~~ be very different from the loose and clumsy and costly structure we know now.

Williams has made no secret of his belief in a strong, tightly knit and efficient centre. If he had his way he would probably <sup>want to</sup> set up one central government in Port-of-Spain with a parliament to which each of the units would elect representatives. He would want to scrap the costly business of Cabinet Government and Chief Ministerships in the seven islands of the Windwards and Leewards and treat each of these units as a parish with only a local government structure. Indeed, Williams has made it clear that he would welcome any island joining Trinidad on that basis.

The problem is that there are so many little vanities and political ambitions involved that people like Grenada's Eric Gairy will fight against this very sensible and practical approach with all their might. And this is where Mr. Maudling is likely to run into trouble. Dr. Eric Williams is not prepared to carry a costly and messy federation, and unless Mr. Maudling gets tough with people like Mr. Gairy, unless he spells out the hard facts of economic life to the smaller islands, then the whole point of his trip would be lost. The hard fact is that independence comes neither freely nor cheaply, and sometimes the price can be very high.....Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday Jan 16 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Up to now neither we in Jamaica nor any of the other British territories in the Caribbean have been concerned with foreign policy. Britain has been responsible for our foreign policy and for our relations with foreign countries. We have not had an independent voice in the councils of the world and, at governmental level we have not been able to express any views on the urgent international issue of the day. And whenever any leader from this area had meddled in foreign affairs, he had generally run up against British policy and there had been trouble. There was the case of British Guiana when that territory's constitution was suspended by the British Government because Dr. Jagan was alleged to want to align his country with Russia. And then there was the more recent case when Mr. George Price was accused <sup>of</sup> ~~with~~ conducting secret negotiations with ~~Guatemala~~ Guatemala on the future of <sup>British</sup> ~~the~~ Honduras. But all this is now ending very fast, for some of the territories at least. Sometime this year we will have complete freedom to arrange our foreign relations in any way we choose. And it is very likely that the same will apply to Trinidad because Dr. Williams is determined to have independence this year. And unless there is a very serious breakdown in relations between B.G. and Britain over the date of independence, that territory is likely to get control of its foreign affairs next year.

But having control of your foreign affairs is not as simple as it seems. Let us look at a few concrete examples. Finland has complete control of her foreign policy but there are certain things the Finnish government dare not do, even if it wants to. Finland may want to join the North Atlantic Alliance. But Finland borders on Russia and the

Russians are opposed to the North Atlantic Alliance; furthermore, the Russians have told the Finns that if Finland did join the Alliance they would consider it an act of hostility against Russia. They have also warned Finland not to allow the Americans bases on Finnish soil. So, whatever the Finns may want to do, there are certain things they dare not do for fear of offending powerful Russia. So you see, complete control of your foreign policy does not mean complete freedom of action in foreign policy. Then there is the case of Albania who is a member of the communist bloc of countries. Albania disagrees with Russia on the communist pattern of foreign policy. But she could only express that disagreement/<sup>openly</sup>when Communist China, which is big and powerful, gave her support. If Albania did not have Chinese support it is likely that the Russians would have done what they did in Hungary and send in tanks to impose their views by force. And nearer home, Cuba is under very heavy pressure, and the pressure will go on both in politics and economics, because her foreign policy is hostile to the interests of the United States, and this is an American sphere of influence. If the position had been reversed, if Cuba had been 90 miles away from Russian territory and her policies had been as hostile to Russia as they are to America, I doubt if Cuba would have lasted this long. This is just a fact of life in power politics.

So you see, hardly any small country in the world has genuine freedom in foreign affairs. They are all <sup>subject to pressure</sup> ~~pressured~~ by one great power or another and they shape their policies in this light as well as in the interests of their people. We will soon be in this position.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday Jan 17 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Let us get away from politics and very heavy news and go on to something very much more serious, very much more important and very much more delightful: let us talk about women. Incidentally, tonight's commentary is mainly for men - though women may listen if they wish.....Well sir, the big question is: What price woman? If you had to put a value, in terms of cash or kind, how would you go about deciding just how much your wife is worth? Or if you are on the point of marrying some young lady, what financial value would you put on that young lady? And how would you arrive at that value?

I think two cases might be useful in helping you to answer these questions. The first case took place in Italy and it is a rather sad one.

The shape of Italy, as you know, is like the old time long boots pirates like Henry Morgan wore. Well, right where the big toe of the boot would be is a little seaport town in which lived a young of 32 called Marino. Marino's wife was a very attractive woman called Francesca, aged 29 and mother of his three children. But Marino was in debt way up to his neck and over his head and he did not know what to do until his friend, Antonio Raffa, offered to buy his wife. Raffa already had a wife of his own, but she was on the island of Sicily so he did not see that as any problem. Besides, he was not committing bigamy, he was just buying somebody else's wife. It seems that when the matter was put to her, the beautiful Francesca did not object, so the two men set about arguing over price. They finally agreed on a sum just under £600. So Francesca and two of her three children moved in with Raffa. The three agreed to remain good friends and it

was also agreed that Marino could visit his children any time he wished to. It was further agreed that Raffa should pay the money to Marino in four equal installments.

Raffa paid the first, the second and the third instalments and seemed very happy with the bargain. But when it came to paying off the last instalment, he became difficult. At last Marino went to Raffa's house demand the final payment. But Raffa would not pay and so they got into a fight. When things got rough for Raffa and it looked as though Marino was going to beat him into submission, Raffa grabbed a pistol and shot Marino three times. Marino died on the way to hospital. Raffa gave himself up to the police and the case was recorded as 'Killed in a dispute over the final payment on his wife.' We are still to find out how Italy's courts will deal with this strange and tragic case of the sale of a wife.

The other case is much more cheerful. Tom Mboya, the young African nationalist leader of Kenya is going to marry a very attractive young woman, Pamela Odede. This marriage is a big political affair because Pamela's father, Walter Odede is one of the most influential African nationalist leaders and one of the men closest to Jomo Kenyatta. According to African custom it is the man who must pay what is loosely called the bride-price. So Walter Odede asked Tom for 16 cows. He said if he wanted to be harsh he would have asked for 24 cows, if he wanted to be soft he would have asked for twelve, so 16 is fair. No woman is worth more than 24 cows.... Well, how say you: what price woman? Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday Jan 18 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Yesterday the Draft Constitution under which Jamaica will become independent later this year was tabled in the House of Representatives. Tomorrow the same Draft Constitution will be tabled in our Legislative Council. And with this the formal task of the Joint Committee of our Legislature will be discharged. These fourteen people have done their job, and I think they have done it very well indeed. I think the country owes each and every one of them a debt of gratitude. And I think they <sup>all</sup> deserve special praise for the spirit in which they set about it. They have shown a sense of maturity and political responsibility that must be the envy of all our most immediate neighbours. In Cuba, just 90 miles away, the idea of the government party and the opposition party sitting down together to shape the future, is impossible to conceive today. In the Dominican Republic there is strife and tension and deep divisions between parties and power groups. In Haiti there is vigorous suppression of opposition. Only in Puerto Rico is there relative calm and peaceful progress. And much the same sort of picture holds true, though in a modified form, for British Guiana and Trinidad. The D.L.P. Opposition in Trinidad has boycotted the new Legislature so far and its leader, Dr. Capildeo has made all sorts of dire threats. In British Guiana Mr. Forbes Burnham has refused to meet Dr. Jagan in order to work out plans to move towards independence together. Only in Jamaica is the great and historic transition being effected without violence or the threat <sup>or fear</sup> of violence, without suppression or the threat or fear of suppression. And this is a great achievement of which everybody can be justly proud.

There is a strong current of critical questioning in Jamaica

today. And I think it is a very good thing. But it is very easy to overdo it: it is easy to see only the dark side of things, to see only the faults and the failures and the things that have not been done. And many of us tend to do that. I think we want to balance the picture and this is a good time to do it.

Let us be grateful for the fact that we have created a genuine parliamentary democracy in this island, where the leader of the government and the leader of the opposition and their followers can sit down together and peacefully work out the shape of the future of this island. This is a very great advantage we have over nearly everyone of our neighbours. We have a political leadership in Jamaica, which, in high and critical moments, puts country before party or selfish interests. And that is why this Draft Constitution for independence has been fashioned in such relative peace and harmony. This is something we should cherish and not allow to die in Jamaica. This is what gives the future such a hopeful look. So please do not take this quality of leadership for granted. It is something very rare in today's world.

And please, get hold of this Draft Constitution and read it. It is not just a piece of paper. It is our blueprint for tomorrow. I hope a vast number of copies will be printed and given away free. But meanwhile, today's Gleaner carries the full text of the Constitution as a special supplement. This too, is great public service. So read it, and keep it and discuss it and read it again. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday Jan 19 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think it was a most happy accident that Dr. Thomas Ballogh held his press conference on the same day that our Draft Constitution was tabled in the House. What he said ~~brings~~ puts our economic position in perspective in relation to the world and gives us a very hopeful point of departure on the high and challenging and happy road of independence.

But first, who is Dr. Ballogh? He is one of the world's leading economists who teaches at Oxford University. He is so highly respected as an expert on economic affairs that over the years a number of governments all over the world have invited him to look at their economies and advise them on how best to improve those economies. Among others, he has done this sort of work for the governments on Ghana and India, and he has also been an economic consultant to the United Nations. So, what Dr. Ballogh says carries great weight and great authority. And he has spent the last four weeks ~~looking~~ here in Jamaica looking into our economy and advising the government on its 10-year plan.

At his press conference Dr. Ballogh said that the Jamaican rate of economic growth had been phenomenal over the past ten years and that only Japan and Puerto Rico, among all the developing countries, had shown a higher rate of economic growth than Jamaica. And Puerto Rico, as you know, gets very special economic help from the United States which we do not get from anywhere, so really the Puerto Rican rate of growth might actually be less than ours without this special American help. This means that in relative terms the Jamaican rate of economic growth is been the second fastest in the developing countries of the world over the past ten years. And if we can continue at this rate,

Dr. Ballogh said, and if the growth of our population is not so great that it eats up all our gains, then, ~~in~~ within 10 to 15 years time, we might find ourselves in a position where we do not need to depend on the investment of foreign capital to keep the economy going. In other words it is possible for us to become as independent economically as we will soon be politically if population does not run away with the country. But this problem of population is tricky. The only way the population growth can be controlled is if all our major political parties agree to it. No one party is likely to stick out its neck on something so controversial and yet so absolutely essential for the future economic health of the country.

Dr. Ballogh showed that he was very aware of this problem when he talked about a 'Dutch auction' in politics in which the political parties make fantastic and unrealistic election promises which may win them votes but which are also likely to hold up or even put back the economic growth of the nation. And he expressed the fervent hope that the political parties would enter into an agreement not to make party politics out of the basic necessities for Jamaica's development. This, he says, would not only benefit the country economically, it would also help to create a more responsible attitude in the population as a whole.

I agree with Dr. Ballogh all the way. The future economic wellbeing of the country should not be a political football. It should be above party. And surely, the men who thought on a national level when they drafted our Constitution, <sup>are able to</sup> ~~can~~ think on a national level when it comes to the very life-blood of the nation. The challenge is to them. Goodnight



And now for a quick look at Mr. Maudling's talks in the Eastern Caribbean. Trinidad has now definitely decided that she, too, will go it alone. But she has let it be known that if any of the smaller islands want to become parts of Trinidad and Tobago, they would be welcome. So far none of the leaders of the smaller islands have risen to this bait. Instead, the leaders of the Windwards and Leewards and Mr. Barrow of Barbados are meeting Mr. Maudling together as a group to talk over the possibility of setting up a new and smaller federation.

But the irony of the situation is that these gentlemen should still go on talking in terms of a federation instead of facing up to the hard facts of life. Before Trinidad and Jamaica decided to leave you had a respectable land area of 8,000 odd square miles, a population of roughly 3 millions and some hope of economic viability. With these two big islands out, what is left is roughly 1,600 square miles and about half a million people and no hope of economic viability unless there is a drastic and ruthless paring of expenses to the bone and a fair amount of aid from outside. The one hope for any kind of worthwhile and self-respecting future of these islands now, is for all of them to join together as one unitary state under the leadership of Barbados - if she is prepared to assume that thankless task. But there must be an end to this silly series of little chief ministers with their Cabinets and costly governmental ~~xxx~~ structures. But few of those gentlemen will want to hear this, and Mr. Maudling is likely to have a really rough time trying to bring them down to earth. But in a sense Britain has brought this on her own head when she agreed to Cabinet government for these islands on the assumption that federation was here to stay. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday Jan 22 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Today's news of the resignation of Julius Nyerere as Prime Minister of Tanganyika has come as a great shock; it is a shock and a surprise even to those of us who knew of the struggle of ideas and the struggle for power that was going on inside the Tanganyika African National Union. We certainly did not expect Nyerere's opponents to be able to force him out of office so shortly after he had led Tanganyika to independence. But first let us get the picture clear.

The Tanganyika African National Union, the party which Nyerere founded in 1954, is still the party in power. It is ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ <sup>Nyerere personally</sup> ~~xxxxxxxparty~~ who has been forced to resign as head of the government and so, presumably, <sup>also</sup> /as head of his party. So this is a personal defeat for Julius Nyerere.

The story behind this defeat has two aspects to it: there is the aspect concerned with Nyerere's domestic policies and there is the aspect concerned with his external policies.

I am sure you all remember the slogan on which Nyerere led his country to independence: it was: 'freedom and Work' and he always stressed the work part and the responsibilities that would come with independence. And so he called for wage restraints and ran up against trade unionists inside his own movement who felt that independence meant getting higher wages without necessarily giving better work and higher production. And so he made enemies among some of the leaders of the Tanganyika Federation of Labour and one group, including railway postal and local government employees, broke away from the Federation and set up their own independent union movement. This group gave its

support to the Ghana-led movement for an All-African Trade Union Federation without any international links; and because the Tanganyika Federation was affiliated to the pro-Western I.C.F.T.U. they denounced Nyerere and his leading followers as pro-Western. Another point of criticism came from the Tanganyika African National Congress which did not want any part of Nyerere's multi-racial ideas. They wanted all Europeans out of the government and government service. This party has become increasing anti-Western in its policies ever since <sup>its</sup> their leader visited Soviet Bloc countries. This man, incidentally, was in Nyerere's party and only left because Nyerere would not give him the post of secretary of the party. But many Tanganyikans inside Nyerere's party were in sympathy with the racist line of the African National Congress. Many people inside his own party also wanted him to get rid of all white civil servants even though not enough Africans had yet been trained to take their places. On top of all this there were men inside his own party and men inside his own government, men of ambition and not much ability, who were frustrated by Nyerere's insistence on hard work and honesty. These were the men, who in the end led the attack which resulted in Nyerere's resignation just over a month after he led his country to independence. It is too early yet to say what is likely to happen but one thing is certain: we have not heard the last of Julius Nyerere. What all true friends of Africa hope is that the great work Nyerere is doing will not be completely undone. But let us face it, the resignation of Julius Nyerere is the most distressing as well as the most depressing news so far out of Africa this year. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
~~Monday~~ <sup>Tues</sup> Jan 23 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think the most pleasant piece of news for Jamaica in particular, and for West Indians in general, came from Canada over the weekend. On Saturday Canada's Immigration Minister, Mrs. Helen Fairclough, told Canada's Parliament that new migration regulations would come into force on the first of next month. And the effect of these new regulations would be to get rid of the present colour bar which limits the entry of non-white migrants into the Dominion.

The present regulations put very severe limitations on people from China, Japan, India, the Middle East, Africa and the West Indies who want to migrate to Canada. And this limitation has in fact been based on skin colour. Now, as from the 1st of February, all this will be eliminated.

But I think it is most important that we should all realise that the new regulations do not mean that Canada will now throw her doors open to all migrants. She definitely will not. There will still be limitations. The big thing is that these limitations will not be based on colour; instead they will be based on certain standards of education and ability, and, in theory if not in practice, they would be applied to all would-be migrants, no matter what their race or colour or where they come from.

But let us try and get down to cases: how would these new regulations benefit any Jamaican who wants to ~~migrate~~ migrate to Canada? Let us take the case of two men: call one John Smith and the other one Frank Jones. John Smith is an electrician who knows his job; Frank Jones, on the other hand, has no special skill. If ~~xxxx~~ both of these men apply for permission to enter Canada as migrants, and if both can fulfil

the country's immigration requirements, it is almost certain that John Smith will be permitted to enter and Frank Jones will be turned down: the one has a skill which Canada can use and the other one has no skill at all. And what Canada wants are people with skills. They have all the unskilled people they want. Indeed, they have quite an unemployment problem among their unskilled workers, and they are not anxious to add to it by admitting more unskilled workers. But they do need people with definite skills. So, if you have a skill, if you have a trade and you want to migrate to Canada, chances are likely to be very good for you from the first of next month. But if you do not have a skill your chances of migrating to Canada will be as remote as ever.

So I think we can fairly say that the new Canadian migration regulations will be of value to us in a limited sense as far as actual migration is concerned. But I think they might prove of even greater long term value in two other respects. First, I think this action by Canada is likely to influence the thinking and action of the United States Government as far as letting more people from the West Indies into the United States. And I also think it is likely to have an influence on Britain's current moves which are directed mainly at limiting migration from the West Indies on colour lines. And the second point of long term value is that people here in the West Indies are likely to see the acquiring of skills as passports for migration to Canada and a new life; and this in turn could lead to a general ~~maxim~~ improvement of skills right here at home. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

~~Wednesday~~ Tuesday Jan 24 at 6.15p.m.

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The four-man technical Mission which left for Africa yesterday underlines once more the importance of migration for the future stability of this country. Unlike the first Mission which went to Africa last year, this one is an official mission and that is why three of its four members are senior government servants. Mr. R.A. Foreman is our Commissioner of Lands; Mr. W.T. Miller is our Trade Administrator and Mr. Don Mills is a very senior economist in the Government's Central Planning Unit. Mr. Rex Nettleford, staff tutor in the U.C. Extra-Mural Department is the sole non-government servant on the Mission. And the purpose of this Mission is very different from that of last year's rather large unofficial Mission. Last year's Mission went to explore the possibilities of migration and to feel out the different African countries. This one is going to three specific countries - Ghana, Nigeria and Ethiopia - to try and work out the details of the actual machinery that will be needed to get migration going. I am explaining all this because a number of people have tended to scoff at this latest Mission as a waste of taxpayers' money. I think those people are dead wrong. No public money could be spent more usefully for the future good of this country than the money that will be spent on this Mission.

The three African governments with which the Mission will talk have made it clear that they are willing to accept migrants from Jamaica if satisfactory details can be worked out. What those details are likely to be, what will be considered satisfactory, will not be known until the Mission reports back. But I think there are two points on which we can speculate with reasonable assurance.

The first point has to do with costs and the second point has to do with where the would-be migrants are to be settled.

It is one thing to just howl for repatriation to Africa; it is another thing to set this in motion. Arrangements will have to be made to set up the machinery. There will probably have to be reception offices in Jamaica and in each of the countries to which the migrants will go. These offices will have to be staffed. And all this will cost money. If arrangements get as far as this then there will be the question of transporting the migrants. Ships or planes will be used and this too is going to cost money. And the people who are most anxious to go to Africa are not people with money of their own. Some of them may not even be in a position to fit themselves out with a decent set of clothing: this too may involve spending money. And when they get to where they are going in Africa they will probably have to be subsidised or helped in building up their settlements and clearing the land and getting their food growing. So that is the big first problem: migration to Africa sponsored by the Jamaican government and the government of the receiving country is going to involve the spending of quite a bit of money.

Next there is the question of just where the migrants are to go. I do not think any of the African countries will want their towns crowded with migrants. They will want the land cleared and put to use. Mr. Foreman is uniquely qualified to deal with land location; Mr. Mills and Mr. Miller can cope with the economic planning and administrative side /and Mr. Nettleford's contribution will be on the human level. We are now down to the practicalities of a very big and costly and important operation. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Wednesday Jan 25 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I am very glad that the incident ~~in which~~ <sup>in which</sup> migrant ~~was~~ <sup>intransit</sup> were refused admission to the Palisadoes airport/lounge has been given a public airing. And I am particularly pleased that Mr. Winston Jones, the Minister of Communications and Works, took such a personal interest in the matter. Mr. Jones said he found that no instructions had been given by the airport authorities that migrants should be discriminated against. I, for one accept his findings without any reservations. Mr. Jones said this incident was the result of misunderstanding on the part of an employee. And then Mr. Jones underlined the fact that it is airport policy to offer non-discriminatory services to all passengers and that nothing less would be tolerated.

I think it is good that all this has come out into the open because now everybody knows what the score is, and nobody will in future allow themselves to be put upon because of the misunderstanding of any employee. We know that quite often this 'misunderstanding' is because some employee gets drunk with a little power and authority and gets the notion that he can order the general public around like a little dictator, especially if he thinks he is dealing with poor people who do not know their rights. I am afraid there are still a very large number of these people who tend to get drunk with a little power. They do not understand the meaning of the word 'service'; and they certainly do not seem to realise that with power and authority must go a sense of responsibility. And the only way we can teach these people this lesson is by making it public every time they abuse their little authority. This is a public service which all the organs of publicity owe to the society they serve. And the reporter who

brought the incident of the barring of migrants to public attention was doing a good and useful job.

And yet last Friday's Gleaner, the same issue in which Mr. Jones' statement appeared, reports that a newspaperman who was assigned to cover Mr. Jones' Investigating tour was barred from going with the Minister into the intransit lounge.

Do you see the pattern? A newspaperman had reported an incident in which certain citizens were deprived of a service they were entitled to. This led to a great deal of publicity and a visit from the government Minister who is responsible for the airport. A newspaperman who has been assigned by his editor to follow up this story is stopped by a customs official from going with the Minister into ~~xxxxxx~~ the intransit lounge even though there are no passenger and all the in-bond shops are closed.

To me this report read like an act of reprisal; as though this particular airport official was getting his own back because the press had publicised that unfavourable incident. I hope the editor concerned will take up the matter with the Jamaica Press Association. It is important that newspaper people should do their work without fear or favour: it is important for the freedom of our press and for freedom of our society. Now, I am not saying that newspaper people are paragons of virtue who should get special treatment. As in every walk of life, you will find the good and the bad. But on the whole our newspaper people here are a very responsible group that we can be proud of and they should not be hindered in the legitimate pursuit of their work, as seems to have been the case in this instance. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
 Friday Jan 26 at 6.15p.m  
 Peter Abrahams speaking

monthly yesterday  
 Good evening: At his/press conference ~~xxxxxxx~~ Mr. Manley answered a number of most interesting questions on the draft Constitution. But this evening I should like to discuss only two points that came out of that conference. These are: the right to vote and the qualific-ation for membership of either the House of Representatives or the Senate.

From what Mr. Manley said it would seem that the drafting committee assumed that we would have the same voting rights that we now have, which is that every citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies who is over twenty-one and ~~xxxxxxx~~ is resident in the island is entitled to vote. Under the new Constitution as it now stands, no one who now enjoys the <sup>right to</sup> vote will lose it. This is much the same pattern as exists in the United Kingdom, where every Commonwealth citizen over twenty-one and of sound mind automatically goes on the voters' roll after he has been in Britain for a certain period. So independence will not deprive any Commonwealth citizen of his or <sup>her</sup> right to vote. This seems to me pretty reasonable, but it might be desirable to write this particular point of the franchise into the Constitution. There are problems of course, and Mr. Manley mentioned what could possibly be the most tricky one. That is the fact that the moment you write voting rights into the constitution you would also have to write the voting age in. And ~~ifxxx~~ that, as you know, is something around which a big arguemnt could easily develop.

On the second point - that of qualification for membership in either House - the draft Constitution is very clear. It state that

any person who is a citizen of the Commonwealth and who has had ordinary residence in Jamaica for twelve months immediately before nomination date will be qualified to either stand for the House of Representatives or for nomination to the Senate. It would not be necessary for such a person to become a citizen of Jamaica in order to sit in our parliament.

Let me confess frankly that when I first read this particular clause, I did not like it. I felt that anybody who wants to speak in the Jamaican parliament on behalf of the Jamaican people, should at least commit himself to the country to the extent of becoming a citizen of Jamaica. If citizenship of Jamaica is not good enough for such a person, then he or she should not sit in the parliament of an independent Jamaica.

But

~~anyway~~ when I began to think around this question after the press conference, I was not sure that I was right. At present Jamaicans in Britain exercise the same voting rights as the people of Britain. And this is not likely to change after independence. Citizens of Jamaica will continue to enjoy the status of Commonwealth citizens, who vote in the United Kingdom Elections and who can stand for election to the United Kingdom parliament. These people have not and will not be asked to reject their Jamaican citizenship in order to have these rights. So why should we ask the Britons in our midst to do so. If we did there would be no meaning to Commonwealth citizenship. So, from not liking the idea I have come around to seeing it as a good thing which gives importance to Commonwealth citizenship. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday Jan 27 at 6.15p.m.  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: It was on Wednesday of this week that I discussed the importance of the Technical Mission which left Jamaica for Ghana, Nigeria and Ethiopia/<sup>last</sup> on Monday. ~~At the time I described~~ At the time I described the Mission as a getting down to the practicalities of a very big and cost and important operation. I was then think in terms of migration only and some of you may remember that I discussed the question of what any large-scale migration is likely to cost. Well, Mr. Manley talked about what the Mission was going to do at his press conference on Thursday. And what he told us gives an even greater importance to the work of this Mission than I had estimated.

First, the Premier made it clear that the Mission ~~was~~ was not ~~only~~ going to Africa to discuss only migration. Migration is an important part of ~~the~~ its task but it is only a part. As important, if not more important, the Mission <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ going to try and work out details for the setting up of trading and cultural relations between those African countries and ourselves. The Mission, Mr. Manley said, took with it samples of some of our manufactured products, some of our books, tapes of some of our radio programmes: in short, the Mission took with it as much information on the business and cultural life of Jamaica as it could. And this gives ~~the~~ Mission a completely new look.

We had all assumed that the main concern of the Mission would be with migration, and my comments on Wednesday were based on this assumption. But, obviously, establishing trading and business and cultural relations with African countries is of far more importance to all Jamaicans than the mere setting up of machinery for some

Jamaicans to migrate to Africa. And it fits in very well with the announced intention of an independent Jamaica to establish a diplomatic mission in Lagos, Nigeria. Lagos might also very easily be the centre from which a Jamaican Trade Mission could operate in West Africa. Nigeria is the largest market on the African continent and if we can interest Nigerians in our manufactured goods we will have a big and very rich market in Africa. Of course there are problems here. The only West African country with a shipping line at present is Ghana, and relations between Ghana and Nigeria are not at the moment not as happy as they should be. But I am sure things will change and, in any case, it is not unlikely that Nigeria will set up her own merchant shipping service. And then of course there are other merchant shipping lines that would happily ply between Jamaica and West Africa, if the goods are there to be carried. I am sure you see the new importance that all this gives the technical Mission.

But what of those people whose sole interest is in getting to Africa? Mr. Manley said that no Jamaican Government had ever financed migration and the intention was definitely not to finance migration out of public money. The government would give all the help it can. But every would-be migrant would have to pay his or her own way.

And so it seems to me important that my Rasta friends face the fact that nobody, no government, is going buy their tickets for them and clothe them and put them on ships. They will be helped as far as possible by getting land for them to go to. But they themselves must find the means of getting themselves to Africa - just as all other migrants pay their own way. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday Jan 29 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The bulk of the Jamaica delegation to the Independence conference is now in London; and later this week the Conference itself will open. We who remain here in Jamaica are going to get very full reports on the day-to-day proceedings of the Conference. Mickey Hendriks and Hector Bernard will send back reports for this radio station. J.C. Proute will report back for R.J.R. and his reports, incidentally, will also be broadcast by Radio Trinidad and Barbados Redifussion; and Theodore Sealy, the Editor of the Gleaner will also be there to report back to Gleaner readers. On top of all this, the B.B.C.'s Caribbean programme will also broadcast reports of the proceedings. From all this it is clear that we in Jamaica are going to be extremely well served with information and reports on the conference; and that is as it should be because this is the most important of all the conferences ever held to plan the Jamaican future. And the other territories of the Caribbean will also get a pretty clear picture of what goes on. So, from this week until the end of the Conference all our attention will be turned to London; and it will be the last time that London will have this particular kind of importance for Jamaica and Jamaicans. After this Conference there will be a change in our relations with London and our world, although it will look the same, will be a very different world. It will be a world in which no colonial government and no colonial secretary will have the final say on anything we do. We will have absolute responsibility for our own internal affairs; we will have the same complete responsibility for our foreign affairs as well as for our defence arrangements. And I stress the word 'responsibility' because

it is essential that we should all recognise that with this kind of freedom, we as a people, must assume the kind of responsibilities we have never had before.

If some dictator were to try to take power in Jamaica now, or were to try and invade Jamaica, while Britain still has some responsibility for us, Britain will be obliged to come in and deal with the situation. But after independence we will be on our own and we will have to deal with this sort of situation all by ourselves - unless we have entered into some treaty arrangement with some other power in the event of an attack from outside. In the event of a strong attack on the established government from inside the country it is very unlikely that any external power would dare to come in and meddle in our internal affairs even if it were invited by the government of the day. So you see, this is a very important new kind of responsibility that we will have to assume after independence.

For myself, I would much rather that we thought and talked about all the possible implications of these new types of responsibilities that we will soon have to assume instead of spending too much time on some not very important points of the Constitution. But please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying we must not discuss and criticise the Draft Constitution. I think that is essential. But please let us make sure that we do not lose sight of the essentials. I do not, for instance, think there is much to be gained now from flogging the idea of a republic. But there are other important points which could be discussed to some useful point: tomorrow evening I will try to deal with some of these, so till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday Jan 30 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Is the present Draft Constitution a Conservative Constitution? This question has, I think, become one of the most interesting points of discussion on the Constitution. There are people who feel very strongly that this Draft Constitution is too conservative: and there are others who feel equally strongly that it is too radical.

Well now, in order to find which - if either/of these two views is correct, we should do a little defining and then a little checking. In its broad political sense the word 'Conservative' means sticking to that which is old or established and opposing or resisting change. In the same broad political sense the word 'Radical' means favouring fundamental or extreme change. So one school of critics of the draft Constitution holds the view that it is opposed to change and is therefore conservative; another school holds the view that it favours extreme change and is therefore radical. Which of these two views gets nearer the truth?

As the Constitution is now written it provides parliamentary recognition for two parties only. It assumes the existence of only two parties in our legislature and this is brought out most sharply in the provision and division of seats in the Senate. There are no provisions for a third or even a fourth party. If, for argument sake, the majority party wins 25 out of the forty-five seats we may have a situation where the opposition has twenty seats. But these twenty seats may not have been won by a single opposition party. The main opposition party may have won eleven and a third party may have won nine. As things now a

recognised as the official opposition and it will be entitled to nominate eight members to the Senate. The third party with nine seats will have absolutely no representation in the Senate. This, I think, is undoubtedly a conservative measure in that it is designed to perpetuate the two-party system as against a multi-party system. The dice are in fact loaded against any third or fourth party in the country. Whether this is a good or a bad thing is another question altogether. In France we have seen how having a vast number of parties and no clear majority can bring a country to near ruin from which a 'strong man' has to save it. So, although this is a conservative measure it is one which tends to create political stability. And in any case, the third or fourth party can always put its case to the country so forcefully and so well as to become either the first or second party. Finally, if this particular provision becomes so unpopular that the entire country wishes to scrap it the Constitution can be changed, though this is a deeply entrenched section on which the voice of the whole nation will have to be heard before any change can be made.

So I think it is fair to say that this particular section of the Constitution is in fact conservative. But then we have another point in the same section which is very radical. This ~~xxxxxxx~~ <sup>recognises the</sup> Leader of the Opposition constitutionally and provides that the Governor General can only act on certain matters after he has <sup>got</sup> ~~xxxxxxx~~ the agreement of both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. So here we have both a conservative and a radical approach on a most important aspect of parliament; and both are aimed at strengthening political stability. Tomorrow I'll look at another aspect of the 'radical' charge. Till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday Jan 31 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Those critics of the Draft Constitution who feel ~~that~~ strongly that it is too radical have tended to concentrate their attack on two aspects of it: the first has to do with the composition of the Senate and the second has to do with the Bill of Rights. These people do not complain because the present plans for Senate membership do not provide for the possible emergence of a third party. Their complaint is against the fact that membership of the Senate will be on a party basis. To them this is a very radical departure from the old ways. And in deed they are right. The composition of our present Legislative Council is not on strictly party lines. It is true that in recent years - and especially in recent months - Legco has tended increasing<sup>ly</sup> to reflect party views as expressed in the Lower House. But on the whole it has in the past been the place where 'special interests' - agriculture, trade and industry, mining and commerce - were represented. Legco provided a forum from which these 'special interests' could put their case before both the nation and parliament.

When the new Constitution comes into force these special interests will no longer have this unique forum, and it is perfectly understandable that they should deplore the new and 'political' character of the Senate. But of course Legco has always been 'political' though probably in a much more subtle and sophisticated way than the frankly party-lining Senate will be. But certainly the new composition of the Senate is a fundamental change and so the charge that the new Constitution is radical is true on this point at least. Whether this is a good or a bad thing depends on your point of view. If you believe

that 'special interests' should have special representation then you will probably say this new departure is a bad thing: if on the other hand you believe that no section of the Jamaican community should have special representation, other than through our recognised political organisations, then you will say it is a good thing. ~~xxxxxxx~~

I think much the same 'special interests' are behind the pressure to deeply entrench the Bill of Rights. And here the radical element for them is that section which provides for legislation which can upset the entrenchment in special cases. From their point of view this provision is obviously radical because it can upset the sacred right of property. The fact that this can only be done by due process of law is not good enough for them. It is understandable that propertied people should want their property rights trebly insured. It is equally understandable and socially more justifiable that the drafters of our constitution should think of the long-term interests of the majority in a society which is still growing and changing. But I think it is unfortunate that some of the defenders of the sacred right of property should suggest that unless this right is deeply entrenched we are doomed to darkness and dictatorship. This, as they know, is just not true.

My own view is that a number of changes and adjustments will be made in the Constitution before it comes into force. But basically the framework is sound: conservative enough to ensure that the best features of our political institutions remain stable, and radical enough to ensure that we can change the social structure of the society without violence and bloodshed. And these, after all, are the two major points. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: Earlier today the Jamaica Independence Conference opened in London, and between now and the end of the Conference we are going to have millions of words flung at us through press and radio and by word of mouth. And in this flood of words we will get plain and balanced information; we will also get speculation and a high degree of guessing disguised as informed opinion; and we will also get straight propaganda disguised as news and designed to promote party or sectional interests. This is normal; it always happens on important issues at important moments in the history of a country. And for modern Jamaica this is the most important moment of her history. And so it is also very easy to get misled or confused or to get the wrong slant on what is going on from this great big flood of words. So how do we cope with it? How do we get some sort of balanced perspective on all that is going on in London right now?

I think it is not going to be ~~very~~ easy, but I think it can be done. And I think the very first thing we need to do is to get it firmly into our minds that charting the independence of a nation or a people is not a party issue; it is not a class issue - it is not an issue where sectional interests should come into it in any way. It is a national issue in which all parties and all classes and all sections unite for the common goal of independence. And so this issue of charting our independence demands of all of us that we pitch our thinking and our judgements on the high level of the interests of the nation. I think if we do this we will be able to understand all the little cross-currents of the news from London so much better, and we will be able to pass much more balanced and much more creative judge-



## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday Feb 2 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Reports from Britain and the rest of Europe speak of a sudden and very severe spell of really cold weather; and when it gets cold in those countries, as every migrant will tell you, it is really cold. The cold burns your nostrils as you breathe in; your toes and fingers get chilled to near freezing point even if you wear thick socks and boots and gloves; your ears sting with the cold; to survive you put on pounds and pounds of clothes until you are uncomfortable with the weight of the clothes - and still you are not warm. European winters can be and generally are pretty miserable. So please do not think that our people at the independence Conference are having a ball. It is all right inside their hotels - if the pipes are not frozen; and it is all right inside the conference room - but outside things would be awful. I know; I have lived through many a bitter English winter. So I, for one, am very glad to be out here in the sun.

But on to more serious things. While our leaders are working out our independence details in London, an issue which might become important to us in the future, has taken a new shape. Some of you may remember that it was on January 16th that I talked about some problems of foreign policy that may face us when we become independent. In that talk I told you that hardly any small country in the world has complete freedom and independence in the shaping of its foreign policy in this modern world. They are all of them subject to pressure from one or another of the great powers. I gave you the example of the pressure exerted <sup>by</sup> on the Soviet Union <sup>on</sup> the foreign policy of Finland, and of the direct intervention of the Russians in Hungary when they used tanks and guns to suppress the Hungarians who did not want a communist regime

On the other side, I told you of the economic and political pressure that the United States was putting on Cuba because her foreign policies are hostile to the interests of the United States. And this, let us face it, is just a reality of power politics in the modern world. Eastern Europe is a Russian sphere of influence and the Russians are not going to put up with policies they do not like from small Eastern European countries; the Western Hemisphere is an American sphere of influence and the Americans are not going to put up with policies they do not like in their sphere.

And so, this week, the American pressure against Cuba of which I told you on January 16th, resulted in the Organisation of American States expelling Cuba from the Organisation.

It is too early to say just what the long-term effects of this action are likely to be in political terms, though it is significant that the six largest Latin American countries took no part in the voting, either for or against the expulsion of Cuba. Although it does not seem likely at the moment, this could create a split in the inter-American system unless the Alliance for Progress shows very dramatic results in the not too distant future. What seems certain is that it will mean a further tightening of their belts for the mass of the Cuban people. From our point of view, all this has up to now been a little distant. But soon we will be a part of these patterns of power politics. It is likely that we will join the Organisation of American States after independence. Then we too will have to think out our relations with the states around us in this area, and there will be issues on which we too will be called on to take a stand. I think now is the time to start thinking and talking on some of these issues.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday Feb 3 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Not all the issues which will face us in independence will be ~~either~~ as dramatic in terms of news value as either the current London Conference or the expulsion of Cuba from the O.A.S. and its implications for Jamaica's foreign policy. Some of the issues we will have to face will be domestic issues, and some of the most important of these may not even make the news headlines. But then the basic importance of an issue cannot and should not always be measured in terms of news headlines.

One very big ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ issue we will have to face has to do with our educational system, and I hope that this will be one we will cope with quietly and seriously and without any glare of publicity.

When I talked about some problems of education on <sup>both the 6th 13th</sup> ~~the~~ of January I did not expect to have such a big response from listeners. People have phoned me and written to me and stopped me on the streets to talk about one aspect of education on which I touched very lightly in that talk. This was the question of discipline in some of our senior schools. Many listeners felt that I had over-simplified the matter when I said that both teachers and parents should be more loyal to the heads of their schools. Loyalty, they said, should not be a one way traffic. Teachers and parents and students, they said, should be loyal to their heads; but heads in their turn owe the same loyalty to teachers, parents and pupils.

In a number of cases I have been told of heads who expected loyalty but gave none in return. And so it went on: one side blaming the other; everybody finding some excuse, but no-one denying that there is a serious breakdown in discipline in some of our senior

schools and that this is most marked in the boys' schools.

So, obviously, something is wrong and as far as I am concerned blaming anybody is not important. What is important is to correct the wrong. But before we can do that we must understand the point of our education. There are many people, and unhappily many of them are educationists, who feel that the sole point of education is to cram information into boys and girls until they reach a point of proficiency where they can pass an examination and get a piece of paper which will get them a job in the civil service or in business. For these people our schools are no more and no less than cram factories.

Well, I think this is wrong. It is all very well for a person to have a piece of paper showing that he or she has passed an exam for the purposes of getting a job. But true education is very much more than that. True education is ~~not just a cramming in of information that has not even been digested. It is also~~ a bringing out and development of character; it is a teaching of basic values such as decency, thoughtfulness, honesty, and the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong both socially and morally. This is the kind of education that prepares the child for citizenship and for life. And as far as society is concerned this is the aspect of education that is much more important than all the cramming in the world. If this were the education our teachers and parents and heads were interested in I am sure we would have less bickering among them and less talk of no discipline. The young are idealistic. ~~Let us give education its true~~ Let us give education its true meaning and value and bring out the idealism and the will to good in them. I think we will all be surprised by their response. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday Feb 5 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The much publicised 'doomsday' has come and gone, and the world has not exploded, has not been swallowed up by a giant snake, has not gone crazily off its course into darkness and destruction. In fact, there has been no doom. Now it may be that the Hindu prophets and other holy men, the star worshippers and the like, will say that this great disaster ~~will~~ has been avoided because they prayed and fasted so hard and so earnestly. If they do claim that they have saved the world some of us may not agree with them. We may say that the world was not doomed in any case, and that nothing would have happened even if no-one prayed. But they, I suspect, will just go on believing that it was the power of their prayer that saved the world, and I do not think any argument, no matter how powerful will change that belief.

I think we all know how this 'doomsday' talk came about; and the odd part about it is that it is all bedded in scientific observation and fact and can therefore be explained with reason and scholarship. The last time we had a similar 'doomsday' warning was one hundred and forty-one years ago, in 1821, when we had what is known as a 'conjunction of the planets', which is exactly what happened yesterday. Now, a conjunction of the planets simply means that instead of being scattered all over the heavens as they normally are, the planets in our solar system move into a line, one behind the other. This conjunction of the planets is such an exceptional thing that it has only happened ten times over the past one thousand years. And this has a lot to do with the prophecies of doom whenever it happens.

We humans have one very important thing in common with the rest of the animal kingdom and that is our fear of anything new and startling. And the conjunction of the planets is a new and startling reality for us. Our history tells us that it has happened before; we know that it happened / the last time one hundred and forty-one years ago. But this is a knowing with our heads only. We have been told so and we believe it; but no-one who is alive today has actually seen this and so there is great reservation in our sub-conscious. And in some instances this reservation becomes downright disbelief. And so the conjunction of the planets becomes a startling new and earth-shattering event signalling the end of our world.

It is all very well for scientists and others to scoff at this. But this is the pattern of human reaction, and it seems to me much more important to try and understand why men react as they do rather than to condemn them for their reaction. And I think there are two reasons why so many men have reacted as they do over this conjunction of the planets. First, because it is a rare event; if it were something which happened once every five years we would have taken it as for granted as we take the miracle of life on this earth. Familiarity, says the old cliché, breeds contempt. And second because man is, in spite of all his scientific advances, basically not a rational animal. In moments of crisis / Believing is still more important than thinking, and man still goes on his knees and prays in the face of actual or imagined disaster. In short, the human animal is basically religious. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: The Algerian crisis has now become an acute crisis for France itself and at this moment in time no-one knows just how it is going to be resolved. What does seem certain is that France itself and the people of France are likely to suffer grievously before this crisis is over. But what is this crisis all about?

It has been going on for so long that the original causes of it tend to get lost in the mass of detail of murder and arson and bombing and lynching. So let us try and get back to the fundamentals in order to see today's tragic picture more clearly.

One of the great after effects of the second world war was the liquidation of the age of imperialism. The British, the French, the Dutch, the Belgians, all had to face the problems of an emerging Asian and African people no longer willing to be the colonial subjects of European countries. Of all the European powers, the British came best out of this crisis of empire largely because they accepted the inevitable and went along with the 'wind of change' blowing through the world. They helped to shape the independence of their former African and Asian colonies and won the friendship of these countries and their peoples, and all but one of her former colonies decided to join the Commonwealth.

But not all the European countries saw the wisdom of this course of action. France fought and lost a bloody war in Indo-china before she learned her lesson; and then she only learned it partially. The Belgians and the Dutch only left the Congo and Indonesia when they could not hold on any longer. The result is that the Indonesians now hate the Dutch and there is the danger of war over New Guinea; and

the Belgians must take a goodly share of the blame for the unhappy situation in the Congo; and it seems pretty certain that relations between the Congo and Belgium are not likely to be friendly for a very long time to come.

After the Indo-china fiasco the French behaved much more wisely and did not resist the African demands for independence. But the one place where they came unstuck was in Algeria and the reason why they came unstuck there was because ~~the~~ there was a sizeable white settler group in Algeria. So, when the nine million Algerian Moslems demanded independence just over eight years ago the French reply was that Algeria was French, and so a bloody war broke out between the Algerian nationalists and the French. It is estimated that <sup>over</sup> 18,000 French soldier and 360,000 Moslems have so far died in this war. In fact, the Algerian war created a series of domestic crises which resulted in General DeGaulle being called out of retirement to lead the country and solve the problem of Algeria. But DeGaulle soon realised that the only way the Algerian war could be brought to an end was by negotiation with the nationalists. This, however, was not what the one million white settlers of Algeria wanted. They wanted Algeria to remain French and for the Algerian settlers to continue as lords and masters of the nine million Moslems. Rather than see this position changed they are prepared to terrorise and murder and destroy the political and economic stability of France itself. This is a terrible form of suicidal madness, which is not uncommon when great empires collapse or when a highly privileged group is faced of the loss of its privileged position. For France it is also a tragic situation.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: If the reports from London can be relied upon then it looks very much as though the Independence Conference will end tomorrow. This makes the Jamaica independence conference one of the quickest and smoothest of all the independence conferences held in Lancaster House in recent years. What I am particularly pleased about is that the conference has ~~gone~~ done its work much more smoothly and peacefully than even I expected and predicted when I spoke to you about it on Thursday February the first. There has been much less party politicking than I expected, and according to reports from London not one member of the official two-party delegation has given in to the temptation to play party politics on the world ~~stage~~ stage.

I am pleased about this because it confirms the sense of responsibility of our leaders, and because the way in which they behaved has given the world an image of Jamaica as a mature and responsible society. It would have been the easiest thing in the world to have create an atmosphere of crisis. Certainly, in such an atmosphere the conference and the personalities at the conference would have got even bigger and better headlines; personalities would have had a chance to impress themselves <sup>more firmly</sup> /on the consciousness of the British public. But it is likely that in the process the good name of Jamaican might have suffered. This way, the more quiet and orderly way, there have been no big 'splash' stories, but the reputation of Jamaica for orderly progress stands higher in the world today than that of most countries which have just entered independence. Indeed, I think it is fair to say that the reputation of Jamaica stands higher than most of the recently independent countries. And that is a very

good thing for very practical reasons. We are still an underdeveloped country and whether we like it or not we are still not in a position to finance all - or even / most - of our development projects out of our own resources. So, to ~~ix~~ create the prosperity we want we are going to have to raise money from the outside world. And it is a truism of economics that it is easier for a person or a society with a reputation for responsibility to raise money than it is for either a person or a society with a reputation for instability or irresponsibility. So this business of the behaviour of our delegates in London is not just a question of showing how well behaved we are. It is a question of building up our stock of goodwill in the world. ~~and~~ Any small shopkeeper will tell you how important ~~xxxxixixix~~ goodwill is, both for getting credit and for getting customers - and Jamaica in independence is going to be in need of both credit and customers. ~~and~~ <sup>So</sup> I should say that the members of both sides of the Jamaica delegation have done very well by the country.

Of course, when they come back the picture will change. They will adopt their party stands again and I expect some very rough things will be said. But that is all right. They will be home and they will be fighting an election, and, I hope, they will also try to come to grips with the serious economic problems which lie ahead of us.

Certainly, if the conference does close tomorrow, the manner in which it has been conducted, should bring pride and satisfaction to all those to whom the good name of Jamaica in the outside world is a matter of great importance. I think ~~they~~ <sup>our delegates</sup> have served Jamaica very well indeed. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I told you last night that the Jamaican delegation would stand firm against Mr. Maudling's sudden and unexpected attempt to put back the date of Jamaica's independence. I told you the two immediate reasons for this were: first, the British government would like the date of our independence to coincide more or less with that of Trinidad; and second, they would like to settle the future of the small islands before Jamaica becomes independent.

But of course there are a number of other reasons at work behind these two immediate ones. And one of these other background reasons is to be found in the current visit of Mr. Duncan Sandys, the Commonwealth Relations Secretary, to the Central African Federation. As you know, Nyasaland is determined to get out of the white dominated Central African Federation; and I think it suddenly occurred to somebody at the Commonwealth Relations Office that the African leaders in Nyasaland might use Jamaica's quitting of the West Indies Federation, and the ease with which it was being done, as an example. Dr. Hastings Banda might turn to the British Government and say: 'Look at how easily you allowed Jamaica to get out of the Federation and achieve independence on her own. Why can't you do the same with us?' I strongly suspect that it was partly in order to guard against this that Mr. Maudling made his sudden show of toughness on our independence date. Indeed, only yesterday Sir Grantley Adams used this very argument himself when he bitterly attacked both Britain and Jamaica for the collapse of the Federation. He attacked Jamaica for not consulting either the Federal Government or the other islands over the referendum. And he attacked Britain for giving way to the will of the Jamaican people.

The people of Nyasaland, Sir Grantley said, have been trying to leave the Central African Federation for a long time but the British government had said no to them. So why should the British government give way to Jamaica all down the line?

I think Sir Grantley is a very disappointed and a very bitter man and in his bitterness he would have loved the British government to refused Jamaican independence. And I think he has pressed these views very strongly with Mr. Maudling and the British government. And Sir Grantley is not the only one. The very powerful settler interests of Central Africa do see the break up of the West Indies Federation as an example which might lead to the break-up of their own federation. The London Daily Telegraph is a powerful supporter of the white settler lobby, and I think its proposal for a four-power protectorate for the West Indies is a very clever attempt to secure the future of the Central African Federation. The four power protectorate idea is no more and no less than a new form of international colonialism. And if they can push this through it would be a clear warning to the Africans of the Central African Federation that the choice is either to stay in the federation or else to become the colonial subjects of a new/more streamlined form of imperialism.

So you see, behind Mr. Maudling's sudden attempt to postpone our independence date are other and powerful political pressures some of which have nothing to do with Jamaica at all. If there had been any basic disunity in the country, and if this disunity had reflected itself in the approach of our delegation, there would have been a distinct danger of some of these clever designs being imposed on us: which once more highlights the importance of national unity.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I am very glad that the Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr. Wills Isaacs, has spoken up so promptly and firmly against the hint that the price of bread might go up once more. On Wednesday morning Mr. Isaacs said that if any attempt was made to increase the price of bread he would impose price control immediately. He then went on to say that there are many items of foodstuff which he proposed to bring under price control within the next week or so.

Now, when the price of bread went up the last time, I raised my <sup>some</sup> voice in bitter protest against it and the result was that ~~the majority~~ <sup>some</sup> of people in the baking industry were very angry with me. I was accused of using a very powerful medium of publicity unfairly to build up feeling against bakers as a group, and I was also accused of expecting the bakers to work for nothing.

Well, it is not, and it never has been my intention to build up feeling against any group or any section of the Jamaican community, and I take my job sufficiently seriously to recognise its responsibilities <sup>to</sup> and ~~try~~ to be as fair and balanced as is humanly possible.

I do not think that the bakers, or any other group for that matter should work for nothing. I think the business man is as entitled to a decent return for his effort and for his investment as is the worker <sup>to</sup> ~~for~~ a decent day's pay for a decent day's work. But let us face it, not every worker gives a decent day's work for a decent day's pay. And some business people have fantastic notions of what should be a decent return for effort and investment. Some business people feel that they are losing heavily if their profits drop from, say, 25% to 15%. I am afraid that many of our business people have slipped

into the habit of not being satisfied with anything but the maximum return possible. And if there is any kind of fall off in profits, they do not hesitate to pass it on to the consumer. Indeed, the return may sometimes drop by four percent, but instead of passing on the 4% to the consumer they might hike the price up by 8%.

The result of this sort of thing is a run-away inflation of prices and a shooting up of the cost of living. I do not think this is a point that needs to be laboured. Take the case of beef in amny country areas. Housewives in many rural areas find it impossible to get soup bones for under 1/6 a pound; and I know of some places where they have to pay as much as 2/- for a pound of soup bones. And yet it was possible last week to get these same soup bones - with a little more meat on them - at one of our big supermarkets for 9d a pound. In nine cases out of ten the attitude of the vendor is to soak the poor consumer for all he can get. And this is so widespread as to be pretty general.

What makes this picture of inflated prices even worse is the fact that the poorest sections of the community are <sup>hit</sup>hardest. Prices are geared in the main to what the pockets of the middle-classes can stand, and if the middle-classes find the burden heavy you can be sure that the poorer people must find it almost unbearable.

For the sake of all Jamaicans, I think it is time our government thought of the setting up of an agency to stablise prices, wages and profits. The alternative is serious trouble in the future.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday Feb 10 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I would like to comment on two none poplitical topics this evening: one is rather depressing and the other is very cheering and heart-warming.

To me the most depressing story out of Jamaica this week was the case in Old Harbour where a mother was found guilty of cruelty to her eight-year-old child. The woman had flogged the child and then tied it over an ants' nest. This was a sickening exhibition of deliberate and calculated cruelty against a defenceless child. I think Resident Magistrate Mr. McCarthy's biting remarks to the woman reflected the horrified feelings of all decent Jamaicans. All I want to say here is that I hope none of you will ever witness anything like this cruelty to a child without taking action. Not even a parent has the right to be cruel to his or her child. So please, if you ever see such inhuman cruelty to any child, make it your business to interfere, and call the police. This is the duty each and everyone of us owe to all helpless little children.

Now let us turn from the depressing to the more cheerful. I wonder how many of you read the letter from Mr. Edwin Todd in Wednesday's Gleaner. It was printed in the column headed: 'Jottings by the Native'. If you have not done so, please read it. It will cheer your spirits no end and it will make you feel proud of being Jamaican. It is the story of a good man from another country who brought his family to live in Jamaica, on Berry Hill, St. Mary. This man was a great doctor who did not talk about his goodness; he just lived it in a quiet sort of way and tried to contribute to the health and wellbeing of the Jamaicans among whom he found himself.

One day this man had to abandon his car on the road to his home. The rains had messed up the road and the car could not climb the hill. So his wife took him home in her little ~~car~~ German car with its marvelous powers of climbing even through mud. When they got home the doctor discovered that he had forgotten to lock up his car and he had left over thirty pounds in cash in the car. The doctor was horrified and wanted to go back to get the money and lock up the car. But his wife told him to leave the car till morning. She said nothing would happen.

Next morning when the doctor went down he found his car still where he had left it. But instead of it being as dirty and muddy as he had left it, it was clean and shining. The mud had been washed off and the car had been polished. The inside had been cleaned and dusted. His cash box with the money in it had been dusted and not a penny had been taken from it. Even his half-finished packet of cigarettes was still as he had left it. And there were two Jamaicans nearby. The doctor asked them who had done this? Who had cleaned this car and left everything of his intact? And the two smiling Jamaicans said: 'Is Hampstead did it'. A wonderful and true story which I hope you will read for yourselves. And for me the moral of it is that Jamaica and Jamaicans are not as bad as we sometimes make them out. There is an enormous fund of love and goodwill and honesty among the ordinary people of this island. All they demand for giving it is that they should be given the same in return. The Better Jamaica is all about us: all we have to do is to find it. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: It looks very much as though things are really going to start popping from now on until after April the 10th, when we have cast our votes. Indeed they have already started popping with the return of the country's leaders from the successful independence conference. I am glad that everything is moving at such a great lick. It is a good that our elections are not going to be dragged out. It is good that we will know within two months which party is going to form the first government of an independent Jamaica. To have dragged this process out, to have delayed elections until June or July, would only have helped to create confusion and uncertainty; and that is something Jamaica cannot afford at this moment in time. We want these important issues settled as clearly and as quickly as possible so that we can get on with the very much more important job of creating a decent life for all the citizens of this country. And ~~for~~ this is going to demand of all of us that we make a giant effort to understand all the issues before us so that we may choose wisely and in the best interests of the country when April 10th comes around. But I will return to this subject again. Tonight I would like to talk about the current telephone strike because it, too, forms a part of that greater understanding for which we must work.

Now the issues in this strike are very clear. Wage negotiations have been going on for some time now. The National Workers Union, has, I understand, made a demand for a general wage increase of 15% for one year. In answer to this the Company has offered a wage increase of 10% for one year or else a 15% increase for a two year period. The Union rejected this offer. So the company said, alright, let us put

the whole matter to arbitration. The Company also undertook to accept whatever award came out of the arbitration. But the union rejected this offer as well and so at midnight on Saturday the strike was on. The Union also rejected a plea from the Ministry of Labour to postpone the strike for twenty-four hours so that the Ministry could try and work out an acceptable settlement. Those are the basic facts behind the strike. What are we to make of them?

First, I do not think the matter had reached a point where there was any need for a strike as yet. All the avenues of negotiation had not yet been explored and exhausted. If the Company had rejected the union's demand out of hand the workers would have had a very much stronger case for strike action. But the company made a compromise offer; and when the union rejected that the company offered arbitration with an advance commitment to accept the arbitration award, however it went. It does seem to me a pity that we should have this elaborate machinery for negotiation and arbitration, and then not to make full use of it. As it is, it looks as though the matter will end up by going to arbitration but we will have had an unnecessary strike from which neither the workers nor the company will benefit and which has only brought inconvenience to the country as a whole.

To round off the picture the present wage structure in the industry is that senior technicians get £15.8.0 a week with the lowest grade technician getting a minimum of £5.12.6. with rising scales in between. The Clerical staff begin at £6.12.6 in the trainee category and rise to £14.3.0 a week. But the main point is that the workers should have gone through one more stage before resorting to strike action.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: One of thing, and possibly the most outstanding thing that made the Jamaican independence conference so unique and so wonderful was the spirit of unity shown by the leaders of the two parties. The leaders of both parties realised that Jamaica and the interests of Jamaica were more important than their parties and the interests of their parties. This, I feel, is something that can never be stressed too much. It is something in which our leaders have served us remarkably well, and I think this is something we can and must learn from our leaders, especially in the hectic weeks that will lead up to April 10th.

I think that unless we learn this lesson we may, in our passion and in our partisan excitement do things that will hurt Jamaica and damage the best interests of all her people. I think it would be a tragedy, for instance, if after this wonderful display of political maturity by our leaders we were to behave in a spirit of political irresponsibility. And the danger of that is very real.

Only last week we had an ugly display of labour violence at the Trafalgar Park Housing Development project when rival gangs of workers attached to our two major unions fought each other with machetes and iron bars and sticks and stones. This was as nasty and ugly a display of irresponsibility as we could have. This was the law of the jungle; the law of hooliganism, disguised as trade unionism. And let me say quite frankly that I am desperately disappointed that so far none of our union leaders have publicly condemned this labour hooliganism. This sort of behaviour is no good for the country and it certainly is

no good for the trade union movement in Jamaica.

And no sooner had our delegates arrived in Montego Bay on Sunday when there was a clash between the supporters of the J.L.P. and the P.N.P. If the reports from Montego Bay are correct then some P.N.P. supporters went to a J.L.P. meeting and started the trouble. If this was in fact the case then I hope the P.N.P. leadership will issue very firm instructions to its supporters to leave J.L.P. meetings alone. But of course the fault is never only on one side and you are as liable to have ardent J.L.P. supporters trying to break up P.N.P. meetings as you are liable to have P.N.P. supporters trying to break up J.L.P. meetings.

I think it would be a very good thing if our trade union leaders would get together and agree to issue joint directives to their followers not to act as scabs and strike breakers and trouble makers. I know that because of the political structure of our labour movement it would not suit any one of our unions to take such action on its own. This is one of those unhappy problems of the tail wagging the dog. But surely all our union <sup>leaders</sup> could arrive at and honour an agreement on standards of conduct and behaviour among their followers. Indeed, this might be one way of getting out of the sad situation of the tail wagging the dog so violently.

And I do hope that both Busta and Manley will make it quite clear to their followers that they expect from all of us the same high standard of good behaviour that they themselves showed in London. If they do, then our coming elections may not be marred by ugliness and violence. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: The silly season of election promises will soon be with us so, with your permission, I want to get in my own list of promises.

First, I promise to every male Jamaican from the age of fifteen upwards a regular weekly income of fifty shillings a week for as long as he is unemployed. And if this male Jamaican has a wife and three children, then I promise that the government I form, if you elect me, will see to it that he gets an additional allowance of one pound for his wife and ten shillings a week for each of his children. This would give an unemployed man with a wife and three children five pounds a week. In addition to this, if he has been unemployed for more than three weeks, he will get a tabbacco allowance of five shillings a week and a rum allowance of five shillings a week. So much for coping with the unemployment problem. All you have to do is vote for me and I will solve it. In addition, I promise pensions for everybody. Men will get their pensions from the age of sixty and women from the age of sixty-five because they are known to live longer than men. Of course, unlike all the other politicians who want your votes, I do not expect you to make any contribution to the pensions scheme.

To the trade unions I promise complete and total government support for all their wage demands, and for those poor people who have to work for a living, I promise a three day, twenty four hour working week. And if any employer objects to this I promise to nationalise his industry and hand it over to the poor workers who will then be free to run it as they wish.

To the farmers I promise unlimited supplies of money and

materials in the form of subsidies and grants and the like. I promise to pay half the farmers' wage bills and I promise to give them an unlimited supply of cheap labour and I shall see that their labourers work for them for ten hours every day. I also promise the farmers an assured market for all their crops. All the farmer has to do is to vote for me and all his troubles are over.

I promise a new deal for our merchant community. I shall protect them from unfair foreign competition and I shall introduce a labour code which will ensure that they do not ever suffer from strikes lock-outs and the like; and since they are good Jamaicans my government will guarantee that their margin of profit does not fall below thirty percent.

To foreign investors I promise cheap labour, tax-free ~~holidays~~ holidays for five years and a whole heap of other incentives about which I will talk to them privately at a closed meeting for foreign investors only.

To the housewives, those most important of all voters, I promise to introduce a bill which will make it compulsory for all stores to sell them food and clothing at rate which they really can afford. I shall also see that hairdressers' and beauty parlour charges are cut very drastically and that their husbands spend at least three evenings a week at home or out with them. For all these reasons, ladies and gentlemen, I ask you for your votes; and I think you would be be fools to vote for me or anyone else who comes along with a whole heap of impossible promises. So please, when the promises start coming in be on your guard, examine them carefully: most of them may just be electioneering hot air. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: It looks very much as though the telephone strike will be with us for the rest of this week. And as far as I am concerned the continuation of the strike is part of the unnecessary and unfortunate pattern that was responsible for its beginning. You will remember that it was on Monday evening that I sketched for you the background of this strike. I told you then that I thought the workers' representatives should have gone through one more stage of negotiation before resorting to strike action.

Well, on Tuesday morning when the Union and the Company representatives met at the Ministry of Labour the union changed its mind about arbitration and proposed that the dispute be settled by arbitration under the Trades Disputes Arbitration and Enquiry Law. The union said it was willing to call off the strike immediately if the Company agreed to this procedure. But the Company representatives now declared that they could not commit themselves until they had consulted their directors, and the directors could not meet before Saturday. In answer to this the union naturally said that the continuation of the strike must now be blamed on the Company. It seems to me that on this point the Union has reason on its side.

In the light of these developments it seems to me that we, the general public who are the victims of this inconvenience, are entitled to ask a number of questions of both the company and the union.

I should like to know why the union ~~xxx~~ resisted the idea of arbitration until Tuesday. ~~xxxx~~ If they had agreed when the company first proposed arbitration there would have been no need to call a strike? And why, after resisting arbitration, are they now willing to go to

arbitration. And I should like to know why the company, after proposing a settlement by arbitration, should now suddenly appear to be dragging its feet. The company had declared itself in favour of arbitration. Surely it must have had the views of its directors before making that declaration. So why must it now first consult its directors? And if the interests of the general public were in fact regarded as being paramount then surely an emergency meeting of the directors could have been called before Saturday. It seems to me that once again the poor subscriber has been taken for the mug. We are expected to foot the bill and we are also expected to put up with all the delays and inconveniences which in this instance at least, could have been avoided. I really think that both the company and the union owe the long suffering public a much clearer and fuller explanation than we have so far had. Both the union and the company are partners in the business of selling a service to the general public. And let us face it, the public is getting a pretty poor service today because of a very poorly handled dispute between these partners. And I do not think this dispute would have been handled quite as badly if there had been more real regard on both sides for the general public.

One last word on this unfortunate business. The union has firmly condemned the cutting of telephone cables and I hope this wanton destruction will stop. It is stupid and senseless and benefits nobody. So let us put an end to it. We can be creative and constructive even when we have labour disputes: that is the hallmark of national maturity

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday Feb 16 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The news of the General Strike in British Guiana has come as a surprise to most people, and there are many questions being asked. What does this general strike mean? Has Jagan suddenly lost the support of the Guianese people? And how widespread is this strike? Is it political? And who are the people behind it?

Well, let us try and find some answers to these questions. First let us get the current facts clear. This strike has crippled all government and commercial business. Reports are that well over 40,000 workers are out and that the British Guiana Trades Union Council which is the co-ordinating body for some twenty-six unions has officially called the strike. So this is the biggest official strike ever called by all the major unions in that country.

The background to the strike takes us back to the beginning of this month when B.G.'s first elected Minister of Finance, Dr. Charles Jacob, outlined his Budget proposals in parliament. Dr. Jacob announced a number of very sweeping ~~xxxxxxx~~ new tax proposals and financial restrictions.

Among the proposals is a compulsory savings scheme under which all workers who earn over a 100 dollars a month - that is just about £20 a month - must give up a portion of their wages to the government in exchange for Bonds which cannot be transferred and which will mature in seven years. Dr. Jacob hoped to collect additional revenue of \$6 million or roughly £1 million plus from this item alone. Another proposal was for ~~xxxxxxxx~~ wide-ranging tax increases on consumer goods - food, clothing, drinks and the like which he hoped would bring in an additional \$8 million or roughly £1.3 million.

Dr. Jacob also proposed new taxation of gifts, on properties over \$50,000 in value, on stocks and shares. He proposed a higher rate of income tax with lower rates of tax relief, higher stamp duties; higher charges for hotel licences, pawnbrokers, bonded warehouses, restaurants, rum shops, <sup>moneylenders</sup> and the like. He also proposed higher taxes on motor vehicles. He also proposed sweeping new taxes on business firms and non-resident companies and a reduction of all tax holidays.

In short, Dr. Jacob's Budget proposals were drastic and far-reaching. If put into operation, these Budget proposals would result in very radical changes in the economic life of the country. Anybody earning over £20 a month would be more heavily taxed than ever before, and the higher you go in the income bracket, the heavier the tax burden. The workers in particular would have felt the pinch of the compulsory savings scheme and the higher taxes on consumer goods. But every section of the Guianese society would have had to pay heavily for the government's development plans. And so you had this pretty general reaction against the Budget proposals. And this led to Tuesday's partial stoppage of work, first in commercial Georgetown, and then to the general strike which brought everything virtually to a stop on Wednesday.

Mr. Richard Ismael, the spokesman and leader of B.G.'s T.U.C. has said this strike is not political and he will call it off as soon as Dr. Jagan scraps this proposed Budget. Other political groups, however, have called for Jagan's resignation. So where does B.G. go from here? I will try to answer these questions tomorrow. So till then,

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday Feb 17 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think it would be a very serious mistake for the British Government, or anybody else for that matter, to interpret the B.G. General Strike as a vote of no confidence by the Guianese people in the ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ leadership of Dr. Jagan. There is a tendency for some people to see it in this light, and this is particularly marked with people who are hostile to Jagan's political views. I think, for instance, that both Mr. Forbes Burnham, the leader of the People's National Congress, and Mr. Peter D'Aguiar, the leader of the United Force, are hopefully seeing it in this light. But I think that any attempt by the British Government to slow down B.G.'s advance to independence on this score is likely to mean serious trouble. Jagan is still the political number one man in British Guiana, and unless he loses his head over this General Strike he will remain in that position for a long time to come. So the first thing I would say is that the strike does not mean a weakening of Jagan's powerful hold on the hearts and minds of the majority of Guianese.

I think he has blundered in that he has not prepared his people more carefully once he had decided to undertake these drastic economic steps. But I also think we ought to bear in mind that just as Kingston is not all of Jamaica so Georgetown is not all of British Guiana. And at B.G.'s last general elections Jagan deliberately did not put up any candidate in Georgetown. The P.P.P. left all the Georgetown seats to D'Aguiar and Burnham and concentrated instead in the country areas. And this General Strike has been a Georgetown based affair. We do not have much idea of what the mass of the Indian

people in the remote country areas feel about his Budget proposals. My own guess is that they will be inclined to go along with Jagan. After all, his proposals are intended to benefit them by getting the necessary money to open up and develop the Guianese hinterland.

On the other hand, Jagan's popular majority at the general election was not so decisive as to allow him to ignore the strong feelings of the people of Georgetown. Georgetown is <sup>still</sup> the financial and commercial/heart of the country and the lives of the people in the country areas are still very greatly influenced by what happens in Georgetown.

Jagan's present difficulties are very real and should be understandable. The vast majority of his people live in extreme poverty and funds for development are an absolute necessity. To a man of his ideas the redistribution of his country's wealth seems a logical and reasonable function of government. But any government exercising power in a democratic society has to deal with a vast multitude of conflicting interests. In a non-democratic government, in some form of benevolent dictatorship, it is easy to over-rule these conflicting interests and impose what is considered good for the country. In a democratic society, on the other hand, the government can only go as far and as fast as the people will allow it to go. And the people are often those who can make the most noise and create the most disturbance. This, I think, is something Dr. Jagan should have known and bargained for. It has now been forcibly brought home to him. His people have told him clearly what they do not want. How he reacts to this is important for B.G. and for all of us. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday Feb 19 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I am glad that the Telephone Company has decided to answer some of the questions I asked on Thursday evening, concerning the continuation of the telephone strike. You will remember I asked why the company, after itself proposing a settlement by arbitration, should suddenly appear to be dragging its feet. I also asked why the union, after resisting arbitration until Tuesday of last week, suddenly decided to go to arbitration after all. Well, in a big advertisement in today's Gleaner the company has given its side of the answers; and in terms of getting a clearer understanding of the issues involved, I find this statement very satisfactory, which does not mean I agree with every point it puts forward. But I do think the company has put forward a reasonable and strong case for its position.

It seems that the real point of difference between the company and the union has now reduced itself to the way in which the arbitrator is to be chosen and what he is to arbitrate on. Before the start of the strike, and when no agreement seemed possible, the company offered to submit all the disputes to arbitration by an impartial and independent arbitrator agreed on by the union and the company. The union rejected this offer and called the strike. Then, on Tuesday of last week the union decided to go to arbitration, but with a difference. According to the company's offer the union and the company would agree on the arbitrator; but according to the union's proposal it would be the Cabinet that would choose the arbitrator under the Trades Disputes Arbitration and Enquiry Law. So both had now reached the point where they agreed on arbitration but not on how the arbitrator should be chosen.

So far, the union has not explained why it is opposed to arbitration by an arbitrator chosen jointly by the union and the company. Today the company has explained why it is opposed to an arbitrator being appointed by the Cabinet under the Law. In essence, /it says that in present-day Jamaica we live with the fact that each of our two major trade unions is closely connected with one of our major political parties. Therefore, the Cabinet which represents the political party in power, must of necessity be a part of this close connection between the union and the party. (Let me point out here that nowhere does the company's statement spell these things out quite as clearly as I am doing now: but it is there and you cannot miss the point of it). And so the company feels it is unsatisfactory <sup>to have</sup> what amounts to an interested party choose the arbitrator. Justice, it says, must not only be done, it must also appear to be done. <sup>while</sup> And so the company is opposed to the Cabinet appointing an arbitrator under the Law. <sup>it gives full credit to the integrity of the Cabinet</sup> <sup>^</sup> <sup>^</sup> ~~but~~ feels that for justice to be done and also to appear to be done the union and the company should jointly agree on an arbitrator. It seems to me that whether we agree with the company or not, this is a very strong argument. Our unions are tied to political parties and the fact that I personally think that our Cabinet will not make a partisan selection does not weaken the strength of the company's case on an issue of principle. What I do hope though is that while this matter is being sorted out, <sup>the</sup> ~~that~~ parties will agree to a resumption without prejudice to either side. Over a thousand workers went home without pay packets on Friday and I am sure this has caused great hardship, so please settle this matter as soon as possible. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I ended my comments last night by saying that last Friday over a thousand workers went home without pay packets and that this must have caused a great deal of hardship in a number of families. Now that was the sort of statement that most employers and most enemies of trades unionism would seize on as a powerful argument against strikes or even against trade unionism itself. It is of course nothing of the kind. Indeed, the workers know that this is the situation and that strike action almost invariably means hardship and suffering for themselves and their families. And so they are not likely to resort to strike action lightly. You can be sure that <sup>when</sup> workers decide to go on strike the reasons must either be very compelling or else they must be convinced that they can win their case over a very short space of time. And this is one of the serious weaknesses of our labour movement in Jamaica, and it is a weakness that leads to all sorts of very bad results.

If you have a strike and it is not settled in quick time the workers feel the pinch and this becomes desperate if the strike goes on for a long time. And then the workers may resort to the desperate measures of desperate people. They may try to force the issue by resorting to threats or violence; they may try to damage machines, set fire to crops, cut cables, break windows, beat up the managerial staff and the like. Now, the standard thing is to denounce this and to read the workers lectures on good behaviour. Or else we blame subversive elements. This is the easy way out.

But the result of all this is that our union leaders know that in any strike time is against them. They must win and win quickly or

else they might find themselves deserted for the rival union when next a representational poll comes along. And so the union leaders, too are infected with the sense of desperation of their members. And so you find them condoning or defending things and acts which are wrong, and this, in the long run, leads to an attitude of almost desperate irresponsibility, of a desire to get a quick victory at any price. And so threats, violence, coercion tend to become weapons in our labour disputes.

And this, from the point of view of the overall national interests of the country, is a most unhealthy state of affairs which could, in a moment of crisis, destroy the stability and orderliness of the whole society.

So what is the answer? It seems to me that there is only one answer that will be real and effective; and that is for the unions to organise their finances in such a way that they will be in a position to give their members 'strike pay' for as long as an official strike lasts. This would at once remove the desperation which hits the worker when a dispute is not settled in a week or so. It would also put the unions in a stronger position when they deal with employers over strikes. The leaders would be under much less pressure for a quick settlement and there would be less fear of members deserting to 'the other side'. I think that once the workers are sufficiently secure financially to hold out for a reasonable length of time without getting desperate, then the whole labour relations picture will undergo a healthy revolutionary change for the good of both the workers and the country. This can be done; it is up to our union leaders to work out the ways and means.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: One of the really difficult things in this modern world of Cold Wars, world power blocs and journeys into space, is to decide just what is subversive. What is subversive? And how does one decide that any given thing, any attitude, any symbol is to be banned as subversive or dangerous?

Ever since I heard about the two students from our university college who had a body of literature seized when they came back from a sort of university exchange visit to Cuba, I have been trying to puzzle out this big problem. The books that these young people brought from Cuba were apparently not on the banned list but our security officials regarded them as dangerous, so they seized them. And I now understand that the Cabinet is to decide on whether they should be on the banned list or not.

And since the Cabinet is going to deal with this matter, there are two additional matters which I think our Ministers should also look at in passing. (I hope the 'dangerous literature' matter has not been dealt with otherwise the case I have been asked to raise might go by the board in default, as it were).

So let us get back to the question of what is subversive or dangerous.

The other day I was told of an American tourist who had come here to spy out the land in order to advise the shareholders in his company on whether Jamaica would be a good investment field for some of their not very active money. Like the shrewd and sharp businessman he was, this man dressed up as a dumb tourist in the loudest of shirts, hired

a small car and drove off to get the pulse of the country.

The first time he saw the red flag he made a note to tell his directors that we too had our communist problem. But he did not go very far before he saw another red flag and he ~~thought~~ made a note to tell his directors that the U.S. would have to do something because our communist problem looked serious. But a little further on he saw another red flag and his heart sank; and so he started counting the red flags. He went from one end of Jamaica to the other, and everywhere he saw red flags. And there were so many that he just could not keep up his counting.

This poor man returned to Kingston with a very heavy heart after his island tour. Jamaica, he decided, was beyond hope. But he was angry with his government too. They had talked a lot about Cuba but they had not told the American people anything about red dotted Jamaica with all its communist flags.

It was in this spirit of despair that he went to the airport to go home just as a great man was returning home to Jamaica from a triumphant conference abroad. And there were thousands and thousands of people to welcome the great man. He stood and watched, and as the great man stepped out of the plane thousands and thousands of hands went up in the salute of the clenched fist and the great man responded in like manner. The American fainted clean away. Well, ladies and gentlemen, where do we go from here? Are red flags and clenched fists more or less subversive than books from Cuba? How do you decide? What did that poor American decide? Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: The American spaceman, John Glenn, circled ~~the~~ our earth three times on Tuesday. He stayed up in outer space for four hours and fifty-six minutes, and in that time he travelled a distance of more than 81,000 miles. For two of his three trips round the earth, Glenn himself guided his spacecraft. And then he came down to earth and was plucked safely out of the sea. And all the people of the United States, as well as millions of other people all over the world, sighed with relief.

It was not just the relief that follows on a great and tricky mission which was successfully carried out. There was much more to it, and everybody knew it. If the American space attempt had failed, if Glenn had been killed in the attempt, the American loss would have been more than just the death of a man and the failure of an attempt. It would have been a terrible and crushing political and psychological blow to the United States and all her allies in the Cold War between communism and democracy. In terms of the Cold War, failure of the American attempt could and would have been used as proof that the American system in particular, and democracy in general, are inferior to the communist system. The Americans, and all the world knew this. And yet the Americans conducted all the proceedings that led up to Tuesday's successful space flight, in the full glare of world-wide publicity. We knew about every single delay and postponement; the anxieties were openly discussed; and we knew of all the misgivings of the American nation. And in a sense it is our knowledge of these things, our knowledge that the Americans entertained the possibility of failure, the knowledge that Glenn himself knew that he risked death

and had said that even if he died in the attempt he wanted his countrymen to go on with the space programme: it is our knowledge of all these things that has made this American space shot seem/less spectacular and infinitely more human than the two previous Russian space flights.

We only knew about the Russian shots when the men were already up in space, when success seemed assured. If there had been any failures before, if there had been any delays, any disasters, these were kept from the world and we only had rumours and speculations about them. Only the successes were recording and announced. And this is one of the basic differences between what are called open societies and closed societies. In the open society everything, failures as well as successes, are laid bare to the public gaze of all the world. In the closed society what the world is told and shown is carefully selected and carefully edited. This is why the closed society has an appearance almost superhuman infallibility. It suppresses its failures and tells only of its successes. But in the long run this becomes self-defeating as we have seen in the case of the collapse of the infallibility of Joseph Stalin. When failure has to be admitted, it shakes the closed society to its very foundations.

But perhaps the greatest achievement of Glenn's successful space flight was Mr. Khrushchev's proposal yesterday that Russia and America should pool their space efforts for the benefit of all mankind. If it comes to anything then John Glenn's flight may yet contribute to a more peaceful world for us and for our children.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: It is very good news that the Esso refinery will soon become more than something we just hear or talk about. Early next month the dredging operation is expected to begin at the site for the refinery at Hunts Bay. It is planned to reclaim a sizeable acreage of land from the sea near the Esso terminal by this operation. And between 60 and 70 Jamaicans will be employed directly by the company which will carry out the reclamation work. But in addition to this local contractors will also be hired by the dredging company and this, in turn, will provide work for other Jamaicans. And this dredging work is expected to go on for about six months. So in the first phase of the operation regular work will be provided for certainly not less than a hundred Jamaicans, but probably twice or three times that number.

The second phase, the building of the refinery, will provide work for a year and a half for between 600 and 800 Jamaicans. This will be the phase that will be of most direct help to our unemployment problem. In the third phase, when the refinery goes into actual production, 150 to 160 Jamaicans who have received special training, will get permanent jobs at the refinery. But all this is of course only one aspect of the whole thing. The company is going to need secretarial, clerical and messenger staff; it will probably need drivers and the like; the people who come here are going to need houses to live in; they are going to need people to work in their homes; they are going to buy food and clothing. And all this is going to put more money into circulation and it is going to create a new call for services, and this in turn might create more jobs in fields completely unconnected with

the refinery. In addition to all this the setting up of the refinery is going to bring more money to the government in the form of taxes and the like. And this money is going to mean that <sup>there will be</sup> <sup>A</sup> much more to be spent on the ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ development projects which must be carried through if the people of Jamaica are to get decent roads, a decent water supply throughout the island, and all the other things we demand such as more school buildings and more hospitals and a better medical service. So it is for very selfish reasons that I am glad this refinery is finally going into operation. It will benefit the Jamaican economy.

But there is a second and equally important aspect to my pleasure at the coming of the refinery and this came out in the speech of the President of Esso, Mr. L.J. Brewer, at the Chamber of Commerce lunch on Wednesday. Mr. Brewer spoke on the responsibility of business in a developing society and he made some very striking suggestions. He suggested that the business community could help education by supplying machinery and much needed laboratory equipment to schools and by offering awards of merit or scholarships to outstanding students. He suggested a loan fund for Four-H Clubs for social projects or experiments. He suggested that businesses sponsored exhibitions of art and sculpture, literary contests, and participated generally in the social, educational and cultural life of the community. I liked his ideas very much. I think Jamaica can do with more ideas like this in our business community; especially if they are translated into reality. If the new Esso concern helps to create a heightened sense of social responsibility in our business community then its contribution to Jamaica will indeed be important, both socially and materially. And we need this.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: Voting in India's third general elections since independence, has just ended. We do not yet know what proportion of the electorate of <sup>210</sup>~~125~~ million people have actually cast their votes; it may take a little time before we get this. But these voters will choose 494 representatives to sit in the lower House of Parliament, which is the equivalent of our House of Representatives. They will also choose 2,930 members to sit in the 13 state assemblies of the Indian subcontinent. This is the biggest election in the world where you have parliamentary democracy in operation and where opposing parties can, in freedom and without fear, put up candidates to oppose the party in power. Indeed, the total Indian electorate is greater than the populations of France and Britain and Canada and Australia. And so India can fairly and accurately be described as being physically the greatest democracy in our world. But even so, it is just about <sup>half</sup> ~~one-third~~ of the total Indian population of somewhere in the region of 400 million people who have the vote. You do of course get conflicting figures but even they only stress massiveness of India.

Let me give you a few more facts to underline the great size of this country and its population. It has a land area of 1,269,640 square miles, and about 250,000,000 acres of this land is under cultivation. About three-quarters of the population is engaged in agriculture and India is one of the world's leading producers of tea, cotton and tobacco; and there is a really massive population of dairy cattle though no beef cattle are raised. There is also a vast industrial undertakings, with the Tata iron and steel works near Calcutta as the largest of its kind in all Asia. There <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ more than

35,000 miles of railways; there are x 250,000 miles of roads without counting the roads of the great cities; there are about 400,000 registered motor vehicles; about 50,000 post offices; between 8,000 and 10,000 telegraph offices; there are 330 daily newspapers and about 4,300 monthly, weekly and other publications; there are 250,000 telephones and between 700,000 and 800,000 radio sets; there are about 3,500 cinemas which at one time can seat an audience of  $2\frac{1}{4}$  million people; and India produces 300 full-length features films each year. I hope this gives you some idea of the overall bigness of India.

In this election the main parties are: the ruling Congress Party led by Mr. Nehru (which is expected to win again), the Communist Party which held 30 seats in the outgoing parliament; the Praja Socialist Party, which is a non-Communist leftwing group with 18 seats in the last parliament; the Jana Sangh Party held only four seats in the last parliament and it is preaching a form of Hindu chauvism and Hindu race hatred against minorities, especially against the Moslems in India. Finally there is the Freedom Party which was founded three years ago and which is contesting its first election. This party is led by men who were formerly top leaders inside Nehru Congress Party but left Congress because they felt it was too socialistic. The leader of this Indian party was the only/Governor-General before India became a Republic.

This is the background to the massive voting that has just ended in India. And the results of this election, because of the size of India and because of the position it occupies in the world, and because of the quality of its leadership, can influence what happens in the world far more significantly than many of us realise. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: If the India general elections, about which I spoke last night, can be used to symbolise democracy in massive and peaceful and creative action, then what is happening in Algeria and in the Rhodesias can be used to symbolise democracy in an agonising and destructive crisis. And the heart of this crisis is that in both Algeria and the two Rhodesias minority groups are prepared to destroy ~~themselves~~ ~~themselves~~ democracy itself rather than give up the unique privileges they enjoyed and still enjoy under the protection of the colonial set-up.

Let us look at the Algerian situation first. After months of painstaking negotiations between the French Government and the Algerian Nationalist movement, agreement seemed in sight. This agreement would lead to the end of the more-than seven-year-old war between the French and the Algerians. Some of the points agreed on were that there would be a cease-fire followed by a referendum in which the people would decide whether they wanted independence: France would give up all claims to the Sahara provided her oil interests are respected; she would also give up her naval base and enter into a new lease agreement on it with the Algerian government; the Algerians for their part agreed that all the Europeans in the country would automatically become citizens for the first five years of independence, with all the rights of citizenship. But of course they were free to opt out. Those other Europeans who wanted to retain French citizenship from the outset would be treated as privileged 'foreigners' with certain guarantees. The Algerians also agreed not to stage war trials against whites who had committed atrocities.

All this looked like a reasonable settlement to a painful problem.

But as soon as this was known the terrorist Secret Army Organisation of Algerian settlers went into action. And in one day a score and more people were murdered in Algeria and bombings and arson erupted all over France. The Algerians settlers have a vested interest in slaughter and destruction and war. For them, the most dreadful thing that could happen is the coming of peace. And so they are doing everything possible to keep this bitter war going.

Further down the African continent, in the British Central African Federation which is made up of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland, Sir Roy Welensky, the Federal Prime Minister, has given a broad hint that his white settler followers might do what the white Algerians have done if Britain carries out her new proposals for the area. These proposals include a new constitution for Northern Rhodesia which would make it possible for the overwhelming black majority to win political power at the polls, and a British Government declaration that any unit ~~territory~~ territory of the federation can secede after about five years if it wishes. Sir Roy is bitterly opposed to these proposals because, like the South Africans and the white Algerians, he sees any extension of democratic rights to the black majority as the death-blow to the privileged position of the white minority. Welensky is due in London sometime this week to fight out the matter with Mr. Macmillan. If both Welensky and the British Government stick to their guns, then it is not impossible for us to see the eruption of an Algerian style white terrorist movement in the Rhodesias. If this does happen then the already weakened influence of the West in Africa is likely to collapse. The colour bar may yet be the grave-digger of democracy in Africa.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday Feb 28 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The news that work on the National Stadium has come to a stop is distressing. We have less than six months to go to our independence celebrations and it is touch and go whether the Stadium can be finished on time. I think it is still possible to get the job done, but only if it is treated ~~by~~ as an urgent national effort by all concerned. So I hope that work will be resumed very quickly and that when this happens both the contractor or contractors and the unions will come together and treat this as an emergency operation of national interest. It would be very saddening indeed if we have to ~~begin~~ celebrate the 1st day of our /independence in a messy and unfinished or makeshift place.

And now a word about the spirit in which we approach independence. Both the Jamaica Agricultural Society and Mr. Abe Issa, among a number of groups and individuals, have made calls for a responsible approach to our coming elections. The J.A.S. has called on candidates to be positive, to tell what they can and will do if elected, rather than smearing and abusing those who are opposed to them. And Mr. Issa has warned very strongly against making pie-in-the-sky promises and arousing prejudices and hatreds between one section of the community and another.

I am in complete support of these views. I think it is very important that we conduct this particular election campaign with more responsibility and a greater absence of any hint of fraud and violence than ever before. I think this because for the best interests of Jamaica this is a crucial election. More of the world's attention is going to be focussed on us than has been the case in almost any previous election. And the world is going to judge us by the way in which we conduct ourselves. And as I have told you before, we are

too small as a nation and too economically weak to adopt an 'I-don't-care' attitude. If we give the world the impression that we are an unstable and irresponsible people then neither the international agencies nor the private investors are going to fall over themselves to help us: we may have great difficulties getting development loans or private investment. So this business of conducting ourselves as a responsible people is in our own interest and it should not be difficult because that ~~xx~~ is what we basically are. My own personal feeling, and I have expressed it often enough, is that Jamaica and Jamaicans have a higher degree of social and political maturity and stability than almost any society I know in the so-called under-developed ~~xxx~~ parts of the world.

But of course, being responsible does not mean you have to be mealy-mouthed about what you consider wrong. And there is the danger that some of the calls for responsibility are really calls for no criticism under any circumstances. I think healthy criticism is a natural and healthy part of any growing and evolving society, and I, for one, do not agree with the idea that we must not criticise certain institutions because it might scare business or investors away. I am against destructive criticism, but I am all in favour of constructive criticism. That is the way we help to correct the faults and flaws in our institutions and make them function more effectively for the benefit of the country and all its people. No person and no institution are so perfect as to be above criticism. Our human fallibility touches all we do. So, let there be criticism, but let it be constructive and creative. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on *March 1*  
Thursday ~~Feb 29~~ at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: We have as an honoured visitor among us one of the most influential men in the world today. That man is Mr. George Meany, the President of the Federation of Labour and the Congress of Industrial Organisations of the United States. The source of Mr. Meany's great influence and power is the fact that he is the head of the largest and possibly the most united labour movement in the world which is not under the control of any state, any ~~part~~ political party or any dictatorship. Mr. Meany is here as a guest of our government and of necessity much of his time will be spent in talks with our officials. We already have indications that very great benefits to Jamaica might come from Mr. Meany's presence. He has already said that his organisation will recommend to the United States government that Jamaica should receive a separate sugar quota on the American market. And this, as you know, can make a world of difference to the Jamaican economy and to our employment situation. Mr. Meany has also said that he thought Jamaica should have her own separate quota for farm workers to go to the United States when we become independent. As things are at present our farm workers go to the United States as part of the West Indies quota. And when Mr. Meany makes these two recommendations to his government Mr. Kennedy's administration will treat them very much more seriously than if they had been made by a visiting Congressman or Senator because Mr. Meany talks with the authority of a labour movement that can win or lose an election for any party in the United States today. The A.F. of L - C.I.O. is composed, according to the last figures I have, of some <sup>140-odd</sup> 138 national and international unions which in turn have more than 60,000 local or branch unions. And the membership

of these unions is somewhere in excess of 15,000,000 workers. Let me hasten to add that these figures are probably very conservative because they go back to 1955 when the two big rival union bodies, the American Federation of Labour and the Congress of Industrial Organisations decided to merge into the one powerful body we have today.

And this brings me to my second point. Mr. Meany has had close personal experience of what happens when you have a divided labour movement. He knows the waste of energies and the negative effects on both the workers and the union leaders of a 'labour civil war'. And he, as much as any American labour leader, has worked very hard to create the unity that exists of the U.S. labour front today.

It is for this reason that I hope very much that Mr. Meany will have a chance to have really serious talks with our union leaders. I am sure our union leaders would gain a great deal from such talks.

Of course, our union leaders, as well as some of our political leaders might retort that the Jamaican situation is very different from that of the United States, that political unionism is a reality here and to upset it ~~xxxxxxx~~ might lead to upsetting the whole power balance in the country. And let us admit it, in present circumstances there would be a great deal of force behind such a retort. But present circumstances are always likely to change and if the change is for the better then an enlightened leadership should help it along. And certainly a united labour movement can only benefit the working people of Jamaica in the long run. Goodnight.

- 1) Nehru's Party Wins
- 2) Migration Bill Passed
- 3) ~~Racial Violence in Africa~~

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday ~~Feb~~ March 2 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: As was expected, Mr. Nehru's Congress Party Government has been returned comfortably in India's massive third General Elections. Those people who depend on Time Magazine for their information on world events and world trends may be shocked that Mr. Krishna Menon won his own Bombay seat with an increased majority. Time does not like Mr. Menon and so the way Time told the story, Mr Menon was the most unpopular ~~xxxxxxxixxiatixxiatixxiatixxiatixxiat~~ Minister in Mr. Nehru's government and there was a real possibility of his losing his seat. I mention this because with our own general election coming up we too may find ourselves in for a high degree of slanted and mischief-making journalism from certain sections of the foreign press. Some of you may remember how this kind of reporting whipped fears about violence in last year's B.G. General Elections. So it would suit us to take sensational stories as well as clever forecasts by unnamed little ladies with a large pinch of salt. Rumour-mongering is one of the ways in which interested parties always try to scare the people into voting the way they want. So, with voting just over a month say we need to keep our heads.

Now let me say my last word on a very sorry and thoroughly disreputable piece of work. On ~~Th~~ Wednesday night the British House of Commons finally passed the Commonwealth Migration Bill by 277 votes to 107; and so, thanks to our friends of both parties in the British parliament, a very much watered-down but still a very racially slanted Bill will soon become part of the laws of Great Britain. Now the law itself will not make any reference to the colour of a person's skin but, as both Conservative and Labour P.M.s said, the

idea behind it is racialistic and discriminatory. I think Britain has every right to decide whether she should or should not admit people. That is the right of every sovereign state. What is so tragic about this is that the founding and senior member of a multi-racial Commonwealth should, at this moment in time, pass a law which is clearly and obviously aimed at people whose skins happen to be dark.

But having told you of my own bitter disappointment at this action by the mother of parliaments, I should like us to balance the picture a little. I think it is important for us to remember that a very sizeable minority of British people are very ashamed of this action of their government. In fact the strongest opposition to this Bill has come from sections of the British people: from trade unionists, from professional people, from leaders of thought and from a majority of the British press. So I think it would be a mistake to condemn all Britons for the action of their government.

Our condemnation must be ~~against~~ a condemnation of prejudice and ignorance and stupidity. Indeed, ignorance and fear are the parents of prejudice. And these twin enemies of human progress and human understanding are not found only among the people of Britain, or even only among white people. So it is important that we should not allow our anger and our disappointment to lead us into being as prejudiced as those whom we condemn for their prejudice. But when all that is said and done, I still think this piece of legislation is the ugliest ever passed by a British parliament and I hope that when it comes up for review next year the people of Britain will throw it out and so show that they have overcome their particular fear and ignorance. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday March 3 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think it would be a pleasant change to get away from politics and talk about manners and morals for a change. And the moment you start thinking about manners and morals you immediately run up against this business that only bad news is good news. Man being kind and helpful to man, man being thoughtful and considerate to his fellow men, rarely makes the headlines. So let me break this pattern once more. There are more husbands and wives in Jamaica who are faithful to each other and who live up to their marriage vows than there are couples who are unfaithful and wreck their marriages. I know of more homes in which ~~that~~ family life is stable and orderly and happy than I know of broken homes and neglected and brutalised children. There are more good teachers in our schools than there are bad ones. The vast majority of our workers are decent, self-respecting people who try to give of their best. Our politicians of all parties do in the main have the best interests of the country at heart. And the political life of this country is as morally clean and healthy as that of any country you could care to name. The majority of our civil servants are decent people and ~~there~~ is no hint of bribery and corruption in our public affairs. Our business community is as civic minded as you would find business people anywhere. We are a law-abiding people in the main, respecting the rule of law and on the whole respecting each others' rights to live our lives as we choose.

I think we sometimes forget that violence is the exception rather than the rule, that for every bad and bossy policeman there are a score of decent and helpful ones. And seems to me important

that we should remind ourselves of these things from time to time other wise we may slip into the habit of seeing only the ugly and the nasty and missing all that is fine and beautiful. And the trouble about slipping into this habit is that it leads to a kind of self-hatred and a kind of discontentment and contempt for others; and this, in turn, can turn us into nasty and destructive people.

So let us get out of this negative habit and see the good and the beautiful as well as the ugliness around us. For instance, I have noticed a very marked improvement in the road manners of motorists. Not all motorists try to run pedestrians down and I have seen a line of cars stopping to let school children cross a road. I have seen motorists stop to help other motorists in trouble. I have seen people on the streets being helpful to strangers who do not know their way. I have seen neighbours rally around a family in trouble. I have seen a world of kindness and gentleness and helpfulness in the ordinary day-to-day living of the vast majority of Jamaicans.

So let us stop making Jamaica out as a place of lawlessness, bad manners and no morals. It is just not true, no matter how fashionable it might be to sneer at everything. There is a very real danger that unless we appreciate and enjoy and hold on to the things that are good and beautiful in this society, we might lose them and then Jamaica might become the bleak, miserable, mannerless and immoral society people talk about. It certainly is not that now. And I certainly am proud of the manners and morals of the vast majority of Jamaicans. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday Mar 5 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

So far  
Good evening: /The lines in the election campaigns of the various parties are still too blurred for us to see any clear and basic differences. Last Saturday the People's National Party, <sup>as an advertisement,</sup> published a very broad and general statement of its plan for Jamaica. But this was in such general terms that it must be regarded more as a manifesto rather than as a detailed programme on which an election will be fought. And this morning the Jamaica Labour Party published the first part of its declaration of policy. This dealt mainly with agriculture and it proposed, among other things, the cutting down of imports of agricultural produce by increasing our local production. It lists a series of imported agricultural food stuffs which run into nearly £4 million and which it says we must try to produce locally. The J.L.P. declaration also proposes the encouragement of the small farmer, the setting up of a marketing organisation, subsidies and guaranteed prices, the expansion of credit facilities to farmers and the encouragement of meat processing and animal feed plants. It proposes the reduction of licence fees for P.P.V. trucks and reduced market fees throughout the country; and it promises to develop the fishing industry on a larger scale by aid to fishermen and fishermen's co-operatives. It also proposes the establishment of more Land Authorities on lines similar to the Christiana and Yallahs Valley Land Authorities. This is the first of a promised series of advertisements outlining the Jamaica Labour Party's declaration of policy. I think it would be a very good idea for everybody to get copies of these declarations as they appear in print. I think it would be good to study them carefully

and, when the other parties issue their policy declarations, to study and compare these. In this way we will find out what differences in ideas and policies there are between the parties, and how important these differences are, and what each of the parties proposes to do, practically, for the development of Jamaica and her people in the years that lie ahead.

I also think it would be an excellent idea for all of us to put these declarations of policy away safely so that we can refer to them after the election and see what the elected government has promised and judge their performance by their promises.

I think if our politicians knew that we planned to judge them by the concrete and specific promises they have made, they will be a little more than scared of making rash and foolish promises. So let us keep these declarations and manifestos for future reference and let us warn the politicians that we shall judge their deeds by their promises.

In the main, however, I should say ~~that the lines are still~~ to choose between the parties on the basis of their programmes. ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~. To be sure there is a great deal of heat and a lot of words have been spoken. The skirmishes about election symbols and the like are no more than <sup>the</sup> clever manoeuvres ~~that~~ for some point of tactical advantage which happen in all elections. It is part of the shadow boxing and the by-play of the business. The real issues, the important issues that we want to concern ourselves with, are the solid and concrete and practical programmes which the parties must offer us when they ask for our votes. And we do not yet have ~~have~~ all of these from any of the parties. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I am not sure that I agree with Mr. Wills Isaacs in his use of the word 'pathetic' when he described the flight of business and civil servants to industry. When he spoke at the Jamaica Manufacturers Association Luncheon on Saturday Mr. Isaacs complained that after the government had spent <sup>public</sup> money to send people abroad for training for the Civil Service private enterprise took them away from government service by offering them double the money they earned as civil servants. It seems to me that there is nothing pathetic about this. Indeed it seems to me that this is part of the natural process of things, especially in societies such as ours.

I can see that the government does not like ~~to lose its~~ <sup>to lose its</sup> trained and best people to private enterprise, especially in cases where it has paid for their training. On the other hand it would be foolish for the government to expect people not to leave the service for better paid jobs, if these are available and once they have discharged their obligations to the government. And I think we must guard against over-stating the case. The incidence of civil servants leaving to go into private enterprise has not yet reached alarming proportions.

But in any case it seems to me that this process indicates a very definite development in the society. There was a time, and ~~it~~ so long ago, when the only openings for educated Jamaicans were the Church, the professions like law and medicine, and teaching - and of course the civil service. There was hardly <sup>for</sup> any scope ~~of~~ <sup>for</sup> them in business and industry above certain clerical positions: and let us face it, industry itself was very small beer in Jamaica until quite

recently. And so the fact that Jamaicans who once had no other employment openings except the civil service can now double their incomes ~~xxxxxxxx~~ by going into private enterprise strikes me as a sign of <sup>read</sup> progress both in terms of job opportunities and of the growth commercial and ~~the~~ industrial activities of the island. So I would not describe this process as pathetic at all.

Where I do agree with Mr. Issacs - and I think Mr. Hugh Falkner, the head of the College of Arts, Science and Technology, made the point brilliantly at the same luncheon - where I do agree with Mr. Issacs all the way, is in his appeal to businessmen to sponsor apprenticeship training. Mr. Falkner mentioned a number of industries, I think his figure was seventeen, each of which could only boast one single apprentice. Now that is really pathetic. It means we have to import skilled people from abroad <sup>to do jobs</sup> which could be done by Jamaicans if they had given the training. And with our unemployment problem we can ill afford this sort of luxury. But again we must not overstate the negative aspect. Both the government and private enterprise have of late shown very great interest in this question of training Jamaicans. And Mr. Falkner's college is going a first class job. What is needed is to speed up and enlarge this training job. I hope that by this time next year we will have, instead of just under a thousand registered apprentices, something like five thousand apprentices. The figure is high but not impossible. The challenge is to both the government, private enterprise and the people of Jamaica. It is one of the major challenges of independence.

Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: The news of the goings-on of Sir Grantley Adams in London tends to obscure some very positive ~~xxxxxx~~ attempts by the leaders of the small islands of the Eastern Caribbean to get out of the mess in which the break up of the federation left them. But before I go on to discuss these moves let us get one or two points about the now dead federation quite clear. The West Indies Federation is stone cold dead in spite of everything Sir Grantley Adams is doing and saying. He can no more 'save the federation' than he, or any one of us, can put life back into a dead duck. But it seems to me rather savage that some people in Jamaica should feel it necessary to go on lashing out at Sir Grantley in what must be the most bitter moment of his life. The man has lived to see his personal and public dreams crash about his ears and all he is doing now is going through the motions of a shocked and grief-stricken mother who cannot and will not believe that her only child is really dead. When people see a mother in this state they are generally silent and understanding. They do not mock or jeer at the mother for her grief. I think we ought pay Grantley Adams at least that consideration. Of all the West Indian leaders he suffered most by the death of the Federation because he risked more for it while the others played it safe.

And what seems to me particularly sad is that there are critics who now use Sir Grantley's present deeds and words as added justification for our getting out of the federation. This is like first putting out a man's eyes and then condemning him for stumbling blindly all over the place. It is very clever but very cruel.

And it is these same clever-cruel people who were the ones who assured us that our quitting would not destroy the federation.....I am sorry to rake up the dead past but I have been very disappointed at this kicking of a man when he is down and I wanted to get it off my chest.

Now for the positive efforts of the Windward and Leeward Islands and Barbados to get out of the mess in which they are. A conference of the leaders of these islands ended in Barbados on Saturday. At this conference they agreed that the West Indies federation is dead and that they proposed to start a new federation of their eight islands on a completely new basis and with a completely new constitution which would contain the best features of the old federation but none of its weaknesses. They have cabled the British government asking that their federation should come into being the moment the British government passes the bill dissolving the old federation. They have also agreed that no unit would have the right to secede and that there should be freedom of movement between all members. These two points will be entrenched in the constitution. They have also agreed on setting up a customs union as soon as possible. So the three issues which had wrecked the old federation were settled without fuss and bother by the leaders of the Windwards and Leewards and Barbados. It is now up to them to make the new beginning. And if they show more wisdom and more courage than the leaders of the old federation showed they may yet, in time, evolve a small but <sup>respected</sup> ~~powerful~~ unitary state, based on the ideals that we and Trinidad rejected. I sincerely hope they succeed.

Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: The disagreement between Mr. Wills Isaacs, the Minister of Trade and Industry, and the Jamaica Public Service Company looks like turning into a full-scale and bitter little war. The managing director of the Company, Mr. J. Marshal Hamill, has said that we, the consumers, will have to pay more for our electricity in order to help <sup>finance</sup> the company's five-year development plan. Mr. Hamill made this statement on February 25th. The next day Mr. Wills Isaacs issued a statement expressing the government's view that it did not consider any increase in the cost of electricity to the consumer necessary. Mr. Isaacs also said that so far the Company had not carried out the programme the government expected of it at this time. The company, he said, had told him they may not be able to raise the money to do so unless the government was willing to make a number of financial concessions to it. Mr. Isaacs said he told the company that the nature of their demands were such that it would not be possible to consider them until after the election. He said that it now appeared that the company was ~~now~~ trying to force the issue by threatening to raise its rates before these discussions had been finalised. He then went on to say that he hoped that the company would not embarrass the government with further publicity, and assured the consumers that the government would not allow any unfair burdens to be put on them.

Then, on March the 4th, Mr. Hamill issued another statement on behalf of the company. But before that one significant thing had happened. On February 26th <sup>the day,</sup> when Mr. Isaacs made his statement saying the government saw no need for a rise in electricity rates,

we also had the announcement that the Permanent Secretary in Mr. Isaacs' Ministry as well as the General Manager of the Jamaica Industrial Development Corporation, had resigned as directors of the Board of the Jamaica Public Service Company. These two men had been appointed to the Board as government nominees and their ~~resign~~ resignations underlined the rift between the company and the government.

In its March 4th statement the company said that it had revealed its assets and this meant that the increase to the consumers would be as small as possible. It was after this that Mr. Isaacs exploded with the angry declaration that the government would not allow the company to impose its will upon the country. And this morning we had <sup>news</sup> ~~another statement~~ of another statement over the radio from the Managing Director of the Company. This suggests that the company is determined to press for increased charges in spite of Mr. Wills Isaacs' declarations on behalf of the government.

I have sketched the background to this whole affair because I think two very important points arise from it: one is a point of principle and the other a point of tactics. On the point of tactics it seems to me that this is just about the most unfortunate time for an organisation like the Public Service Company to engage in a public quarrel with the government over putting up prices. No government - whether it be J.L.P. or P.N.P. - is going to agree to putting up prices so near an election, even if there is a good case for it. But is there a good case for putting up the cost of electricity? It is here that the point of principle comes in and I will discuss this tomorrow: so till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: As I told you last night, I think this is a bad time for the Jamaica Public Service Company to have a public quarrel with a government which is about to face an election, because, whether intended or not, it suggests an attempt to exploit a sensitive political situation. This seems to me most unusual for the Public Service Company whose public relations and sense of public relations have been exceptionally good in the past. It seems to me that whichever party wins power next month, this public quarrel at this time, is going to make dealing with the new government very much more difficult for the company. I think private enterprise should always remember that there are things in Jamaica about which opposing parties and opposing politicians are agreed.

But much more important than this tactical aspect, is the question of principle raised. Let us look at this in the form of a question. Is it right for any private company to expect the general public to finance its expansion programme? Or to help finance its expansion programme?

Now, in spite of its name, the Public Service Company is a private company working ~~maximally~~ primarily in the interest of its shareholders and paying dividends to those shareholders on their investment. The people who have put their money into the company may be and probably are genuinely interested in the development of Jamaica. The point is that these people are interested in making money from their investment. And they do make money from their investment. The property of the company is held in the name of its shareholder. Any time the company puts up a new plant it

becomes the property of its shareholders and the value of their investment goes up, which mean they can expect better dividends in the future. ~~The high question is whether it is~~ This is the way it is in private ~~an~~ enterprise and there is nothing wrong in it. People expect and are entitled to fair returns for their investment.

But the relations of the customer to the company are different. The consumer buys a commodity and pays for it and that is the end of it. He does not get any dividends from the company for being a consumer; he, as a consumer is given nothing when the assets of the company becomes bigger and richer. So why should he help to pay for the enlargement of the company's assets? It seems to me a thoroughly bad principle to expect the consumer to help finance the capital projects of private enterprise. The consumer, as consumer, does not share in the gains and profits of private enterprise, so, along with the gains and profits, private enterprise should carry its own risks, and not try to transfer these to the consumer.

One final word about costs. I have been trying to check what we pay for electricity against what people in other countries pay. At present we pay roughly 3.41d per Kilowatt Hour. The people in Britain pay roughly 3.66d for the same Kilowatt Hour. So we pay a very slight fraction <sup>less</sup> ~~more~~ than the British consumer. <sup>But</sup> Where they have a great advantage on us is that their prices drop more sharply than ours over a certain amount of units of current used. So I think it is fair to say that we pay no less for our electricity than do the British consumers, and I frankly do not see why we should pay more to finance the development plans of a private company.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday Mar 10 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I sincerely hope that Sir Robert Kirkwood's present efforts in Washington to <sup>get</sup> a sugar allocation for the West Indies on a barter basis in the United States market will succeed. Sir Robert If/~~it~~ does not succeed then we in Jamaica, and the West Indies in general, are likely to face serious difficulties in our sugar industry. And sugar is still so very important in the life of Jamaica that trouble of any kind in the industry is likely to have far-reaching effects. Sugar is still our largest single employers of labour and any severe set-back to the industry might result in large-scale unemployment which could lead to a tricky situation of labour unrest. And any labour unrest which starts in the sugar industry may not for long be confined only to the sugar areas. So much depends on Sir Robert's mission.

I must confess to a sense of great disappointment that the United States government has not seen fit to give us a sugar allocation outright. I would have thought that purely political considerations would have influenced them to give a reasonable allocation to the West Indies. With the Cuban example only ninety miles away from them - and us they have a vested interest in contributing whatever they can to the stability of the region. And large-scale unemployment in our sugar industry would certainly not ~~contribute~~ help stability either in Jamaica or elsewhere in the region.

It has been suggested that one of the reasons why the West Indies not no sugar quota this year was because of United States disappointment at the collapse of the Federation. I should hate to believe that there is any truth in this suggestion of a punitive

approach.

I hope the presence among us recently of Mr. George Meany as well as the arrival of ~~the~~ Mr. Ivan B. White, the new United States Consul-General in Jamaica, will lead to a better understanding in Washington of some of Jamaica's problems and what the United States can do to help us overcome them. Meanwhile, the success of Sir Robert Kinrwood's Mission is important to all of us.

Now for a word in support of the protests of the Harbour View Citizens' Association about the state of that stretch of road between Rockfort and Harbour View. It is and it has for weeks now been in just about the most dreadful mess, with dust choking people and ruts shaking and messing up people's cars. Harbour view has become a very heavily populated area and it seems that the K.S.A.C has not yet fully realised this fact otherwise it would not have left the road in this state for so long. Either this, or else the K.S.A.C. just does not care about the inconvenience suffered by the citizens on whose behalf it administers the Corporate Area.

I am sure the K.S.A.C Roads and Works Department could have that stretch of road in a decent useable state within a week, if they set their minds to it. So, as <sup>part of</sup> their contribution to bettering the roads of Jamaica for independence. let them show us that they can do it.

Finally, I hope electioneering will be strong and gay, but without violence over this weekend. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: Two very important international conferences are taking place in Geneva this week. The Foreign Ministers of Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union started their talks over the weekend. The subjects they are talking about are: disarmament, nuclear tests, the Berlin situation and what is happening in South-East Asia at the moment. On Wednesday the second of the two conferences will open and this one will be an 18-nation conference on world disarmament.

Really, of course, these two conferences can be regarded as one or, more accurately, the 18-nation conference will be little more than a sort of reflection of the positions and attitudes of the Foreign Ministers of the 'Big Three'.

Now these conferences between East and West: these Big Three meeting and these disarmament talks have been going on for the best part of 17 years and many people all over the world are understandably bored and skeptical about them. Nothing ever seems to come out of these conferences: no agreement seems ever to be reached. So why go on with them? There is one very simple and one very important answer: as long as the big powers are prepared to go on having their talking wars the world might be spared the horrors of a shooting war of atom bombs. So on that score alone these conferences are important to all of us. As long as they drag on the world has a chance of avoiding war. And I, for one, would welcome another fifty or a hundred years of disarmament conferences if it would mean another fifty or a hundred years of peace.

The second important point about these conferences is that

they are generally reasonably accurate guides to the temperature of the cold war, to the shifting positions in the world power set-up, and to the personal positions of prestige or power of the leaders within their own countries. This last point is particularly true of the leaders of the Soviet Union. Once we see these conferences in this light, a number of things fall into place. Mr. Khrushchev, for instance, was very anxious to have this as a Summit meeting with himself, Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Macmillan attending in person. Behind this fact are weeks of rumours that Mr. Khrushchev has been having a tough time with critics inside his own country as well as inside the communist power group. I am sure you know that for months now there has been a kind of cold war between the Chinese communist leaders and Mr. Khrushchev and his followers over the Khrushchev policy of co-existence. The Chinese feel that the two political systems of East and West cannot live side by side and in peace for ever, and they are ready to force a show-down. Mr. Khrushchev and his supporters on the other hand feel that in the long run communism can win without a violent show-down. But there are people inside Russia who support the Chinese view and some of them are pretty powerful. In order to maintain his position as the head of the communist world and to prove that his policies are right, Mr. Khrushchev must show that his policy can bring home the bacon: he must score a series of major victories against the West without actually resorting to violence. He hoped to achieve these at the Summit. Tomorrow I'll tell you how this is likely to work out, so till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: As I told you last night, Mr. Khrushchev was very anxious that instead of the Foreign Ministers who are now meeting in Geneva, it would have been himself, Kennedy and Macmillan. He needed to show the world, and the communist world in particular, a spectacular victory for his policies and he thought he could pull off at least one, or more such victories at the Summit. And so the British and American rejection of a Summit meeting was quite a blow to his plans. He then proposed that the 18-nation conference which opens tomorrow should be one of Heads-of-State. But the Americans again rejected this and proposed instead that if these two conferences went well then they might agree to a Summit meeting, perhaps in June of this year. The violence and anger of Mr. Khrushchev's reaction to this was a pretty fair measure of his disappointment. And when Mr. Kennedy announced that the United States had decided to resume nuclear testing in the atmosphere, the man who ~~was~~ had broken the agreement to suspend testing by letting off really high-powered bombs was the one who cried 'atomic blackmail! So for once it would seem that Mr. Khrushchev is not having things all his own way. The snub he administered to the United States after the Francis Gary Powers U-2 incident has been repaid. And it is the Americans, for a change, who are dictating the terms on which there should be a Summit meeting. All these are setbacks which Khrushchev cannot afford at the present time. So, what is likely to come out of these conferences?

I think that if Khrushchev feels he can gain enough to confound his critics and impress the world he may make a series of important



## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: On Ash Wednesday a group of young people who are members of a Christian Youth organisation invited me to speak to them. The subject on which they asked me to speak was: 'The Responsibility of Christian Youth in an Independent Jamaica'. I had been a guest of these young people at a previous meeting in the past and I liked them very much. They were lively, intelligent and interested in doing whatever they could for the good of the country. They attended or had attended some of the very best schools in the Corporate Area, and they were representative of the very best of the young people of this country. In the main they came from ordinary Jamaican homes where mother and father had to make very great efforts to give them a decent education, and I should imagine the majority of them who were still at school had won scholarships. So I should say they reflected fairly and accurately a cross-section of the <sup>best of the</sup> young people of this country; and they wanted to know what their responsibilities as young Christians should be in an independent Jamaica.

Out of our discussion it emerged that not a single one of them had read the Draft Constitution under which Jamaica would become independent; it emerged that they had no clearly planned and organised pattern of discussions on current affairs, either in their young people's Christian organisation, or at school. They had the haziest of notions about the facts of most public topics. They did not know why the United States had decided to resume nuclear testing or why Britain had decided to join the European Common Market. In short, when it came to a handful of solid facts about

the world in which we live, and about the important issues in that world, even about issues which might affect our own lives intimately, these youngsters were completely at sea. They just did not have the foundation of fact on which to base any opinions: though of course they had opinions in plenty.

Now I am not telling you all this in order to show up the ignorance of our youngsters. The fault is not really theirs: the fault is ours - as parents and as teachers and the fault is that of our educational system. At the moment our educational system seems to be geared only to the cramming of as much undigested examination facts into the heads of our youngsters. The only important thing seems to be to pass that exam which will get the youngster that piece of paper. I am not saying this is not important. It is. But it is not the only aspect of education. By far the most important aspect of education, in my view, is the preparing of our young people for good citizenship: and this means the creating of certain basic attitudes and values in our youngsters. I think all parents owe it to their youngsters to encourage a love of reading for its own sake. I know of no greater pleasure in the world than the joy that comes from the habit of good reading: and it is a habit that all man's finest thoughts as well as puts/all the information in the world at our fingertips. And let us, both at home and in the schoolroom, help our youngsters to become really well-informed by having intelligent and friendly discussions with them on current affairs. I think being really well-informed is one of the greatest responsibilities for all youth in an independent Jamaica. Let us help them fulfil it. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Thursday Mar 15 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: On Thursday and Friday of last week I gave you a detailed background picture of the current dispute between the Jamaica Public Service Company on the one hand and the Government of Jamaica on the other. The Company had announced that it would increase its rates to consumers in order to raise money for its development plans. The government, through Mr. Wills Isaacs, the Minister of Trade and Industry, had said that it saw no reason for any increase to consumers and would not agree to such an increase. But the Managing Director of the Public Service Company insisted that there must be an increase, and so we are now witnessing the full-scale little war I predicted last Thursday.

Since then a number of additional facts have come to light and I think it is fair to say that in the light of those facts the Public Service Company would be very hard put indeed to find any responsible person or persons, with no vested interest in the company, to support its demands for an increase in rates.

In Tuesday's issue of the Gleaner there was a letter from Mr. Gordon Austin of the Export Manufacturers Association which showed that the members of that organisation are not happy because manufacturers in Jamaica are charged at the highest rate possible. In nearly all other countries, certainly in Great Britain, large users of electricity in factories and the like are charged the lowest rate in the Tariff. And in yesterday's Gleaner there was a letter from Mr. F.W. Harvey enclosing a cutting from the Wall Street Journal of last December. This showed that the Company's shareholders were getting really

royal treatment, with their outstanding common shares being split two for one, and with a quarterly dividend rate of the order of 37½%. Look at this any way you like and it still works out as a pretty exceptional return on investment. To expect the consumer to help finance the capital expansion of an undertaking which treats its shareholders so well is more than a little unreasonable.

And I, for one, am rather curious about the attitude behind this. Sure this is a service to the Jamaican community; sure a whole heap of money has been invested; sure a large number of workers have been employed. But this has not been a sort of benevolent charity with Jamaica doing all the receiving and the Company doing all the giving for the future of Jamaica. Jamaica, in the form of its consumers, has paid and paid well for services rendered. The company has earned what it calls a 'fair' profit over the years, and none of us begrudge it that. I do not think it is in the company's own long-term interest to give out the impression that it is doing Jamaica a big favour by operating here.

I would also like to suggest that it is a mistake for any company to behave as though it is going to do something whether the Government of Jamaica approves or not. However imperfectly, the Government of Jamaica, any government of Jamaica, represents the <sup>will</sup> sovereignty of the people of Jamaica. The government of Jamaica is the final executive authority in the land, and Jamaicans of all shades of opinion demand respect for this fact. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday Mar 16 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think that the Trade Mission from the United Kingdom which started its tour of the West Indies in Jamaica earlier this week, can do nothing but good, even if that good only means helping us to face facts a little more realistically than we now do. For instance, I think Mr. Lincoln Steel's address to the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce luncheon on Wednesday brought home very forcibly to our business community some of the problems that lie ahead of us. He explained the pattern of Britain's negotiations to enter the European Common Market and said that whether these were successful or not, competition for world markets for our goods is certain to get tougher. We are going to have to work very much harder to sell our sugar, our bananas and our citrus, as well as our produce. I am sure this will be so even if Britain gets all the concessions she wants from the Common Market Countries and we are treated as an 'Associated State'. Our sugar would still have to compete with beet sugar from Europe as well as with cane sugar from some of France's 'Associated States' and the same goes for our citrus, bananas and other produce. There is no way of getting away from this competition. And people in the world are not going to buy Jamaican goods because they like us and our political system. They are going to compare what we offer with what our competitors offer. And if the other sellers can offer a better grown and better packed product at a better price than we do, then, I'm afraid, we are going to be in trouble, no matter how many friends we have or how much they love us. And so I think our manufacturers, our farmers, those who do our packaging and all our workers will do well to

take Mr. Steel's advice very seriously. He said: "For both the United Kingdom and Jamaica there must be a continuous drive for greater efficiency and more effective marketing. We have to do substantially better than we have done in the past." In other words, in order to survive in this competitive world we have to do much better, we have to work much harder than we have done in the past. The workers will all have to give a full day's work for a full day's pay; managements will have to run their businesses more tightly and economically instead of operating sloppily and with excessive overheads which they gaily pass on to the consumer; farmers will have to set Jamaica's idle land to use and aim for a maximum return from the land; and our proposed marketing organisations must be efficient and tight units rather than big and clumsy bodies whose prime functions are the providing of jobs for the boys. If Jamaica is to achieve the prosperity we all desire then we must all buckle to and think and plan and work efficiently for that prosperity. There is no other way; there are no fairy godmothers to wave magic wands and give us all we want. If we want the rewards then we must work for them.

Another member of the Mission, Mr. Tiarks, warned us against expecting large sums of private investment money to come from London. Money of this sort is short in London. So once again the message was that things would not be easy. I am glad these gentlemen have spoken so frankly. Of course there will be some aid but I think we should face the fact that our biggest aid will and must come from our own hard work and the sweat of our own brows. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday Mar 17 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The sad tragedy at Harbour View has now claimed the lives of three young boys and the distress and alarm of all the citizens of Harbour are shared by most Jamaicans. But I am not sure that any useful purpose would be served by holding an enquiry to find out who is to blame. It is clear that the shell which killed the boys was fired by the military more than ten years ago when the area was still in the hands of the military.

It is customary for the military to clear up areas which they have used as shooting ranges and I am reasonably sure that the military did in fact try to clean up after them. But we are faced with the fact that these shells were left behind - the one that killed the boys and the one that was found later. Incidentally, on behalf of Home Contractors, the builders of Harbour View, Mr. Oweh Matalon, has said that the shells were not found on the housing estate itself but on an area of land which is fenced off from the developed area. But this fact is likely to be very cold comfort to parents who are now understandably alarmed. And so it seems to me that something ought to be done, and I think the editorial suggestion made in Thursday's Gleaner is an excellent one. The Gleaner suggested that our local armed forces should be detailed to clean up the area. I hope the Ministry <sup>of Home Affairs</sup> and our armed forces will set about this matter without delay. No parent in Harbour is likely to feel secure about his or her child or children until they can be assured that a careful sweep has been made of the area to ensure no further tragedies. To make as sure as is humanly

possible that there are no more shells lying about seems to me of much greater urgency than finding out who is to blame. If after the place has been swept by the military the citizens of Harbour View still feel they want an enquiry then they are entitled to press for it but right now I would urge them to press for a really full-scale and effective sweep of the area by the military. Our first duty is to try and ensure that this tragedy does not repeat itself.

And while we are on the sad subject of sudden tragedy, may I please urge parents and guardians to teach youngster, especially youngsters between the ages of three and ten something about road safety. I am often alarmed to ~~see~~ a point of sickness when I see little boys and girls dashing across streets with traffic shooting in both directions. Often, you see the frightening spectacle of a child playing the dangerous game of 'dare' with a car or a truck; making as if to cross then hesitating, then going forward with a sudden leap and then dashing back again. This sort of action leaves the poor motorist allat sea. Please teach your children to stand where they can be seen; and when they cross a street to walk across firmly and decisively so that the motorists know exactly what is going on. And please do not allow them to go playing in the streets. I have seen tragedy strike on even the most quiet of street. So let us teach our children road manners and avoid the tragic unhappiness of weeping over a broken little body. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday Mar 19 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: More than a hundred candidates have today formally handed in their nomination papers, have paid their deposits, and have been registered as the ~~official~~ candidates for whom we will cast our votes on the 10th of next month. And so I think today, Nomination Day, is as good a day any for us to try and sort out some of our thinking on politics and politicians and ~~politi~~ on candidates aspiring to political position.

The first thing I think we should think about is just what sort of people these candidates are and what sort of relationship we have with them. I think you will agree that we tend to have a range of rather strange attitudes to our politicians. Some of us - generally those who have been fortunate enough to get a decent education - tend to look down on politicians with scorn and contempt. People in this group see politics as some sort of a dirty game. And they see all politicians as dishonest, self-seeking and hungry for power. When a politician is not particularly well-educated they take pleasure in pointing out just how stupid he is or how badly he speaks. And they are always hinting that the politicians who have gained power have used it to further their own personal interests.

Next there is the group in our community that sees all politicians as people who have failed to make the grade anywhere else and who have therefore turned to politics as an easy way of earning a living. They will tell you of the man who could not run a business successfully or the man who was a failure as a teacher, or the one who could not hold down his job. And they will suggest that politics is the last resort of the incompetent, the ignorant or the outright fool.

I think you will find these two attitudes throughout the community; but I think you will find <sup>them</sup> ~~it~~ most pronounced among the educated, the professional people and those who are successful in business.

The third attitude, that of looking up to our politicians, ~~that~~ of expecting them to do everything for us while we just sit back and wait, is by far the most general. The people in this group tend to feel that once they have cast their votes they have done their share and the rest is up to the politicians: the politicians must create jobs; they must create prosperity and guard our liberties. These people tend to want to surrender all thinking and all responsibilities to the politicians.

It seems to me that all three of these basic attitudes are wrong. The first attitude brings our political system itself into contempt and disrepute. If we have such low opinions of our politician it will only be a matter of time before only the lowest types of persons will want to enter politics. And if we go on branding our politicians as failures we may end up by getting only the failures entering politics. And there is nothing more dangerous to our free institutions than for us to surrender all responsibility and all thinking to the politicians. That is the road to dictatorship.

I think it is most important for all of us to keep reminding ourselves that the people who were nominated today are representative of us: they have all the strength and all the weaknesses we have; all the virtues and all the vices; the selfishness and the nobility. They are neither gods nor devils but ordinary men like us, who will only succeed, if elected, if we both sustain and restrain them.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: The news that the fighting between the Algerian nationalists and the French government has ended, does not mean an end to blood-letting in that unhappy land. The Algerian nationalists have won their ~~fight~~ independence after more than 7 and a half years of bitter fighting. But the price of their freedom has been fantastically high. Close on half a million people, just ~~about~~ <sup>under</sup> a third of the entire Jamaican population, were killed since November 1st, 1954 when the fighting started. In addition thousands of women and children have perished in concentration camps and from starvation when their villages were blown up and turned into what the French Army called 'empty regions'. There have been stories of torture and horror, against Algerian women, that have reminded us of the crimes of the Nazis. And so it is with relief that the world has learned that this terrible slaughter, or at least one aspect of it, has ended.

Now there is the remaining problem of dealing with the racialistic and terrorist Secret Army Organisation of white settlers. When the news of the cease-fire was announced by President De Gaulle on Sunday the Secret Army commander ordered a stepping up of its campaign of murder and terror and gave orders for white Algerians to fire on French soldiers. The Secret Army also called for Frenchmen to rise inside France and start a civil war.

For France itself, much will now depend on what support President De Gaulle gets from the French people and, much more important, from the French Army. If the people and the army are solidly behind him, and if he acts firmly and decisively against

the terrorist army, then there is still a chance that all fighting might end this year. If, on the other hand, large segments of the army defy De Gaulle then we might well see civil war in France and a stepping up of the secret terror in Algeria. And if this does happen then the Algerians, who have an efficient army of their own stationed in Tunisia of 35,000 men, may decide to clean up for themselves and meet terror with greater terror. And in the end there will be no future for any white settlers in Algeria. But in their mad determination to hold on to their special privileges the white settlers do not see this. This selfishness to the point of suicide is one of the most dreadful by-products of the white settler problem.

This same problem - though still in a peaceful stage - is fast coming to a head in the Central African Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland. There Sir Roy Welensky's government has resigned because Britain planned to give Northern Rhodesia a constitution which would give power to the black majority. There again white settlers have threatened violence rather than accept the will of the majority. Last week the British Government took the unusual step of ~~appointing~~ putting Mr. R.A. Butler, the British Home Secretary, in charge of dealing with the Rhodesias in the hope of achieving a peaceful settlement. The Algerians' situation ~~is~~ is a dreadful warning to the British Government. If Britain does not deal quickly and firmly with this problem of its settler minority violence may yet erupt. The white settler minorities are now serious threats to peace and order in many parts of Africa. That is <sup>the measure of</sup> how much the world has changed since the second world war. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: Some people are currently discussing what Jamaica's foreign policy should be when she becomes ~~independent~~. Sometimes the discussion becomes quite heated and tempers get very frayed. People have insisted that we should be neutralist, others have insisted that we should side with the West, and yet others have insisted that we should be Machiavellian and play off one side against the other to our ultimate benefit. In these discussions definitions are not always very clear. For instance, I have found that those who say we should follow a neutralist foreign policy do not always agree among themselves as to what is neutralism: some see it in terms of being pro-Soviet and anti-American; others see it in terms of following policies similar to those of the Casablanca Powers led by Nkrumah and Nasser in Africa; while yet others see it in terms of the policies followed by the group of African nations led by Nigeria. It seems to me that these discussions are often a little bit up in the air.

This evening I want to try to bring the foreign policy discussion down to earth a little. I think the foreign policy an independent Jamaica will follow will be dictated by a number of factors: our location, our size and influence and our basic security and economic needs. Obviously, if we were an island just about a couple of hundred miles away from the Soviet Union that fact would have a very great bearing on our foreign policy. We would have neither the military nor the economic strength to defy the Soviet Union by pursuing policies hostile to it. We could of course try, but I think the Soviet Union would soon use political or economic action, or

both, to slap us down and put us in our place. And I think fundamentally the same thing applies in terms of our relations with the United States. We are not as far away from both the United States and the Soviet Union as are the states of Africa. The attitudes they adopt in foreign affairs are conditioned both by their location and by the fact that each one of them is part of a great new power bloc that can influence world events. We in <sup>this part of</sup> the Caribbean may reach a point where Jamaica, Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico may form a small power bloc of modest influence; but even such a bloc would have nowhere near the influence of the African groupings. In any case there is no possibility of such a bloc at the moment or in the foreseeable future. We are dependent on Britain, Canada and the United States both in terms of defence in case of war and in terms of trade: and these are two key factors in shaping foreign policy. So in a sense the outlines of our foreign policy have been chosen for us by our size, our location and our needs. But I think we can make our own <sup>special</sup> contribution within these limitations. I think we can make a unique contribution to the problem of race relations in the world, and I hope that our Foreign Secretary will show up the madness of the fantastic arms and space races in a world where the majority of people do not have enough to eat and do not have adequate shelter. Being the conscience of the world, preaching bread and shelter and work and hope, is <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ key contribution the small nations can and should make. I hope this would be the pattern of our foreign policy. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY  
for transmission on 6.15p.m  
Thursday Mar 22  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The Jamaica Public Service Company yesterday announced a definite increase in the cost of our electricity. Mr. J. Marshall Hamill, the President of the Company said the increase will come into operation on the first of April. Under today Mr. Wills Isaacs, the Minister of Trade and Industry, said countered with the statement that he proposes to fix the ceiling for our electricity charges at what they now are. Mr. Isaacs said that he has this power under the law and he proposed to have consultations with the Public Service Company on Saturday about fixing rates for twenty of the twenty-five licenses the company now hold. In other words, Mr. Isaacs has countered Mr. Hamill's announcement by giving public warning, which he is required to do by law, that the present rates we pay for our electricity will now become the maximum that the company can charge us. So the company's proposed increase just will not come into operation on April the first, unless they can find some loophole in the Electric Lighting Law.

I may be wrong about this, but as I understand it, under the Electric Lighting Law and under the Company's present Franchise there are no provisions for an electricity Rate Board.

to regulate charges. There is a Rates Board for the telephone service and the Telephone Company must get the approval of the Rates Board before it can put up its charges. The Public Service Company has no such legally constituted limiting body to deal with. This means that as far as the law is concerned the company ~~seems to me to be~~ <sup>was</sup> within its rights. It has <sup>been</sup> broken no law, it is defying no government regulation in saying that it will increase its rates from April first. <sup>But with Mr. Seard's new declaration</sup> ~~And so if the government intends to keep its promise and prevent the company from putting up its rates, then it must either find some point in the Electric Lighting Law itself or else it must pass new legislation. And all this must be done~~ <sup>a new situation has been created & the company can now only increase rates by defying the laws of the land. And this I think will not happen,</sup> ~~within the next nine days.~~

<sup>In any case</sup>  
 It is hard to escape the feeling that the Company has timed this ~~move~~ <sup>move</sup> in such a way as to make it as difficult as possible for the government to take counter-measures: <sup>parliament has been dissolved</sup> ~~parliament~~ ~~is~~ and general elections are just around the corner. And there is no question about this being a most disturbing business for a government party with a General Election on its hands. In this sense the charge that the Public Service Company is trying to exploit a political situation seems to me true. Whether this is likely to serve the best long-term interests of the company is another matter. Indeed there are people who feel the only reasonable explanation ~~for~~ the company's present moves is that it wants to force the government to take it over. In any event, something must give, and we will soon know who or what. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: On Wednesday of this week the veteran Barbadian trade union leader, Mr. Frank Walcott, made a striking speech in the Barbados parliament. Mr. Walcott said that the British Government's Order-in-Council amending the West Indies Federal Constitution had virtually reduced Barbados to the status of a Crown Colony. In fact, if Mr. Walcott is right, and I suspect that there is a great deal in what he says, then all the islands of the British West Indies, except Jamaica and Trinidad - when they become independent later this year - all the other eight islands will, from a constitutional point of view, revert to Crown Colony status. These islands are still part of what is left of the West Indies Federation and the Order-in-Council, which was published on March 14th, applies to all of what remains of the Federation. This Order, as you know, transferred responsibility for all money matters from the Federal Finance Minister to the Governor-General. But more than just money matters are involved. The Order gives the Governor-General the power to act without obtaining the advice of the Federal Cabinet in any matter which he, as an individual, considers in the public interest. So the Federal Government has had its teeth drawn and has now been reduced to the status of a Crown Colony government. I am sure nobody will weep about this happening to the Federal Government. They called this down on themselves when they voted fantastically large sums of money to themselves as compensation. Something had to be done and Britain did it. But many of us overlooked the fact that what applied to the Federal Government also applied to the components of the Federation. And so the turning of the Federal

Government into a Crown Colony government also turns the eight remaining units into Crown Colonies.

The Barbados Premier, Mr. Errol Barrow, has cabled the Colonial Secretary, asking for clarification and setting a 48-hour deadline. And Wednesday's discussions in the Barbados parliament are said to have been very stormy and angry.

My own view is that this is largely a technical and drafting problem. I do not think the British Government intended to reduce either Barbados or the other small islands to Crown Colony status. But I think that in the anxiety to stop the Federal Government's proposed spending spree they took what seemed to them the quickest and best action. Of course, all things are possible and the British Government may have decided to reduce the eight islands to Crown Colony status until their little Federation gets going. But I frankly doubt this. I think the clarification, when it does come, will set the minds of the Bajans at ease. But as of now Barbados and the other seven islands are technically Crown Colonies. This is just another by-product of the death of the federation.

But something very much more pleasant, an example that I hope we will follow, also came out of Barbados last week. Barbados is, I think, the only British West Indian territory which gives pensions to its old people. Every person over 65 is entitled to a pension, without any means test. Last week the Barbados government <sup>announced</sup> increased <sup>increased in</sup> the pensions to its old people to <sup>\$2.40 a week</sup> ~~12.40~~ dollars a month. It is time we had old age pensions here. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: We now know who our candidates are, what their symbols are and how many people will be entitled to vote on the 10th of next month. The P.N.P. has the head as its symbol; the J.L.P has the hand; the P.P.P. has the star and the independent candidates have the horseshoe. It might be useful to remind ourselves once more about the real point of these symbols. There has been a great deal of propaganda made about the so-called special significance of these election symbols, and I am sure you still remember the stupid and unnecessary fuss that was made outside Gordon House about bells and trees. One can understand the politicians trying to score points: this is their business at this time. They are all trying to get our votes, and they will invest almost anything with some special quality if they think it will get them more votes.

But the hard fact about election symbols is that they are silent criticisms of a most important thing that we have not yet achieved. Election symbols are a clear declaration that the people of any given society has not yet mastered the problem of illiteracy. You only have election symbols in countries where very large sections of the populations are unable to read and write. In countries where you have a high degree of literacy, in places like Great Britain, there is no need for election symbols. Primary education has been free and compulsory for long enough for practically every citizen of voting age to be able to read. And so when the voter goes into his or her voting booth the names are there and the voter can read them and make his or her mark against the name of

his or her/<sup>chosen</sup>candidate, rather than against some little picture. So let us not make a virtue and a fetish out of an unhappy necessity. Our election symbols are a declaration of the illiteracy of the majority of our people. And as long as they are with us it means we have not yet licked our educational problem. Let us use them because we need to. But there is nothing grand or special about any of them. In fact, they should be a point of shame, especially to those who are ~~xx~~ our leaders. For myself, I look forward to an election day when there is no need for symbols because every Jamaican voter will be able to read the name of his chosen candidate and make his mark without having to look for some little drawing. That would be a sign of real and very great progress. So let us stop all this misleading nonsense about the virtue of symbols.

And now for a word about our voters' lists. Most of you should have received copies of your lists by now. You are entitled to these lists which show you where you are supposed to vote. More than 11,000 people who are entitled to are not going to vote because they have not taken the trouble to get their names registered. This is sad and dangerous for the political health of the country. Voting is one of the greatest responsibilities of the citizen in a free society. This is how we choose and control the people who run affairs on our behalf. If we fail in this we may end up by losing our freedoms. So, to safeguard and strengthen the freedoms we do have, it is the duty and responsibility of everyone of 795,000 voters to go out and use their votes. How you vote is your business but that you do vote is everybody's business. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: The ideas for some of these commentaries are very often given to me by listeners. A listener would phone or stop me on the street or write to me and either suggest that I talk on some particular subject or try to answer some particular question. And if the subject or the question is of general public interest I do my best to satisfy the listener. Well, there is one subject on which a number of listeners have talked to me for several weeks now: and is the subject of our coming independence.

From these conversations I have got the impression that there is a group within this society who are very worried about our coming independence. Some of these people have asked me: 'Do you really think Jamaica is ready for independence? Can we afford independence?' And they have worried about what would happen to Jamaica in times of crisis. They reminded me of the Red Hills-Sligoville troubles when half a dozen American Negroes created a crisis in this country when they tried to stir up rebellion, first among the Rasta brethren and then among the rest of the population. They said we were in a position to call on British soldiers to help us out of this mess because Jamaica was not yet independent. What, they asked, would have happened if we had been independent. An independent country, they said, cannot expect the soldiers of another country to come and keep the peace for them in times of trouble. And they pointed out that even that left-winger, British Guiana's Cheddi Jagan recently called in British troops to restore law and order in his country. If B.G. had been independent, they asked, would only Georgetown have burned or would the whole of the country have been

in the grips of arson and civil war.

And other people in this particular group have worried about what would happen after Busta and Manley retired from the Jamaican political scene. These people have said that our democracy looks strong and healthy largely because of the presence and influence of these two leaders, and once they disappear from the scene things would look very different.

And so these people are very worried about our coming independence? And some of them are so worried that if they could do so, they would happily cancel our independence and continue as a British colony, because that way they see more security, more stability and more protection. They frankly prefer the evil they know to the evil they do not know and fear.

It is the easiest thing in the world to dismiss these people as unpatriotic and worried only about their own safety and vested interests. But let us face it: there is truth in what they fear. Everything that they fear could happen. We could have trouble and rebellion and crises and no one to turn to. But this is the essence of independence. As the words itself makes clear: you depend on yourself, on nobody else. You are lord and master in your own home. The pride and the honour is yours, and so is the great and heavy burden of responsibility. You can no more escape this responsibility than a baby can refuse to be born because there are dangers in the world. An independent country, an independent people must carry a greater burden of responsibility than those who are not independent. Tomorrow I will list some of these responsibilities. So till then,

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I have been told of one Jamaican who looks forward with eagerness to our coming independence. He is a man in the £1,000 a-year income bracket and as far as he is concerned independence means licence. He says that after August 6th he is going to drive down King Street and park his car anywhere he wants to, and no policeman would dare bother him, because we ~~are~~ will be independent. I think I should warn this particular gentleman well in advance that if he does this, he will be hauled before an independent court by an independent summons sworn by an independent policeman and an independent magistrate will impose an independent fine on him: and if, because of independence, he refuses to pay that independent fine, he will find himself in an independent jail.

Independence does not mean licence. It does not mean that we can break the law. It does not mean that breaking will be any easier to get. It does not mean that new homes, new schools, new jobs, new industries, new money will appear in Jamaica overnight. In fact, August 6th and after are going to be ordinary, common and difficult days and weeks and months and years: as ordinary and as difficult as all the days and the months and the years we have known. So what is the point of independence if nothing special happens?

The point is that as a people we are now going to take on all the responsibilities for the shaping of the life and future of this nation. We, not Britain or any other country, will now have to safeguard the rule of law in this land. Our own volunteer force, not British soldiers, will now have to protect the country from rebellion and insurrection. And if our able-bodied men are not prepared to

voluntarily take up arms to defend the peace of the land in case of need, then our government must either conscript them or else the country will ~~will~~ be a tempting and defenceless prey to every political adventurer in search of quick power. That will be the first of our great new responsibilities under independence.

Our second great responsibility is to move as quickly as possible to bridge the gap between the hungry and those who are well-fed.~~any~~ Any time you have a nation where one half of the people are near starvation while the other half lives in luxury, you can be sure of trouble. So, if we want a stable and reasonably contented society in independence, we must create the economic and social conditions that make for stability. We cannot afford the great extremes of wealth and poverty. Within the limits of what we have we must share the wealth of the nation more evenly. This we must do by creating an enlightened public opinion pressing for the social good of the whole country.

Our third major responsibility must be for every one to take a much more active part in the political life of the country. Before independence we could always depend on Britain to ensure that no political leader becomes a dictator. After independence we will have to depend on ourselves alone. If we make wrong political choices, if we put the wrong people into power, we may end up finding it almost impossible to get rid of them. And there will not be any British army to come and restore democracy. And dictators are not easily removed. ~~These~~ These are the big new responsibilities that we, the people, must carry when independence comes. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday Mar 28 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: When I first went to Britain a little over twenty years ago there were very few coloured people over there. You had a sizeable coloured community in Cardiff in Wales, but these were people born in Britain and they were as British as the other natives of the United Kingdom: they knew no other homeland, they spoke no other language and they had the same culture patterns as the people among whom they lived. For the rest, there was a small handful of Africans, West Indians and East Indians at the great British universities. These people were there to study and as soon as their studies were over they went back to their homelands. The third group was an even smaller group and I belonged in this group. We were a group with political and artistic interests and we never knew when, if ever, any of us would go home. The late George Padmore was the leader of this group and its members included people like Jomo Kenyatta and Kwame Nkrumah. We were the expatriates, a small coloured minority living in a sea of white people, and for our friends among the British people we had the political figures and the writers and the artists - the most cultured and the most politically advanced section of the British community. On the whole life in Britain was good for us. The real difficulty was when any of us needed a job badly. It was awfully hard to get jobs.

But there was something else, and this is the point of my story. We were strangers in a strange land and we knew that the mass of the British people looked on us as strangers. We looked different; we were, so to speak, out of context. And we were always on our

guard. It was difficult for coloured people to get rooms to rent in those days, so we were model tenants. We knew that if we gave a bad impression all other coloured people coming after us looking for rooms would suffer. I am not saying it is a good thing for people to be on guard to quite the same extent that we were. The fact is, and we knew it, that in Britain in those days all coloured people were judged and either approved of or condemned according to the behaviour of the one or two the particular British group or community knew.

Now, I do not think the British expatriates in Jamaica are any where near as on their guard as we were forced to be when we were in Britain. And that is a very good thing indeed. People should be free to be themselves instead of just being patterns for group judgements. And on the whole, because of this sense of freedom, the British expatriates in Jamaica have made a fine contribution to the social and cultural life as well as to our economy, by the jobs they came to do.

But every now and then I have either met or been told about an expatriate who regards himself as indispensable. Someone who feels that he or she is really too good for Jamaica. They break our traffic rules. They are bad mannered. They demand instant service. They show scant respect for our law. And if they work for a government agency, they expect fancy pay and fancy conditions of work. And of course they always find fault. Whenever I meet these people or hear about them, I remember how things were for us as expatriates. And then I have a strong impulse to dispense with these indispensable expatriates.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: At last the little war between the Jamaica Public Service Company and the Government of Jamaica has ended. Last night the House of Representatives passed a Bill amending the Electric Lighting Law in such a way as to give the Minister powers to fix electricity rates throughout Jamaica. I hope that the Public Service Company has noted the fact that the Bill was passed without division, that both parties supported it. I mention this because the opinion is pretty generally held that the Company behaved as it did because it thought it had the backing of one of our two major political parties. Just how wrong this belief was, was shown by last night's unanimous vote. Whatever may have happened behind the scenes, this outcome was inevitable. I warned the Company of this in my commentary of March the 8th. And so the position now is that there will be no increase in rates to the consumer anywhere in Jamaica on April the first.

That is the first, and for us, the most important aspect of the matter. But there is the very important question of the Company's future in Jamaica and the Company's future relations with the government of Jamaica. And after what has happened this is going to be very tricky.

Whether it was persuaded<sup>to do so,</sup>/or whether it did so off its own bat, the Company's behaviour has given most, if not all, Jamaicans the feeling that it regarded itself above the control of the final executive authority in the land. Rightly or wrongly, most Jamaicans feel that the Company exploited the present political situation, the

it is  
remains as safe as/at present.

And the safest and most secure investment fields in any country are the utilities: light, power, transport, communications. We need our electricity and our telephones all the time and this is a need that will never come to an end. And because these utilities are part and parcel of the daily living of the people of a country, and because what happens in the utilities affects the life of ~~the~~ every citizen and every business undertaking ~~country~~/intimately, they cannot be regarded as ~~like~~ you would regard investing in a shirt factory or a shoe factory or a mine. So there must either be awareness of this fact by the operators of a utility, or an element of public control. Ideally of course, you have both.

The Telephone Company has recently shown a welcome awareness of the social responsibilities of a utility. This does not mean that it is anywhere/<sup>near</sup>being a model or that we are satisfied with the service we get. But it seems to me to be moving in the right direction. The Company rates are controlled by a government-appointed Rates Board; its dividends are in the region of ten percent. And it has recently taken a great step forward about staff. In the past its imported staff got more pay than its local staff doing the same job. This was in the form of an expatriate allowance. I understand this has been scrapped and everyone now gets the rate for the job, whether he be Jamaican, English or what have you. What I do not understand is why the Company is so shy about publicising this fact. And it is training Jamaicans for its highest posts. This, I think, must be the pattern for all privately run utilities in an independent Jamaica.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: One of the points that has worried some people about the dispute between the Jamaica Public Service Company and the Government was the question of foreign investment. Would the dispute and its results undermine the confidence of foreign investors in Jamaica? Would people abroad be afraid of putting their money into Jamaican enterprises because our government has decided that the sky is not the limit? I dare say that it is possible that a small handful of people who see under-developed countries as glorious milch-cows, as places where your pound or your dollar must earn twenty-five to thirty percent - I dare say that such people might think twice. I think this might be particularly true of people who have had their shares watered every few years and who have grown accustomed to fabulous dividends from under-developed countries. These people have been spoiled and they will naturally go on wanting to have all the gravy they can get. But if there is no more gravy - and believe me the gravy areas are getting scarce every year - then these people will settle for a reasonable return on investment. If they have to choose between leaving their money on deposit in the bank at between three and five percent or else investing it safely for a reasonable ten to twelve percent, they are going to invest. When you get down to brass tacks the crucial question for the majority of investors is whether their investment is safe. And Jamaica is regarded as one of the safest investment areas in this part of the world. So I am not at all worried about the flow of foreign investments, provided our investment climate - our political and economic stability -

fact that the House had adjourned and that elections were just around the corner - to try and impose its will on the country. And they feel that this showed a basic lack of respect for the government and people of Jamaica. They say the Company would not have behaved in this manner if it were dealing with either the Canadian or American governments. And I, for one agree with this view. So where do we go from here?

The Company has got itself into this box of bricks. It must now get itself out of it. It must now accept the government's ruling and do its very best to implement the island-wide electrification programme. If it does so it may, in time, restore the confidence and goodwill that existed between itself and the government and people of Jamaica. If there is any hint/~~that~~ <sup>of stalling, of going slowly,</sup> because it has not been given its way about the rate increases, then I predict further trouble for it. If the Company is unwilling to carry out the island-wide electrification programme under the new conditions then perhaps the wisest thing might be for it to pull out of Jamaica altogether. The next move is now up to the Company.

I do not think for a moment that the government of Jamaica will resort to punitive measures against the Company. Our leaders are much too responsible and sophisticated for that. <sup>I think that</sup> /If the Company had ~~realized~~ realised the quality of our leadership from the outset, it might not have got itself into this mess. It must now show qualities of good sense and leadership to get itself out of this mess. I sincerely hope it shows those qualities.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday Mar 31 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I had hoped that I would not have to talk about the mean and rather nasty business that is now going on between postmen and postal clerks at the General Post Office. I had hope that the clerical staff, or some members of it, would see the utter silliness of its behaviour and correct it. Alternatively, I had hoped that somebody in authority over the clerical staff would set them right on the meaning of good manners and good behaviour. I had~~ed~~ hoped for this because I always find it unpleasant to have to single out a particular group of people and cuss them out publicly. Unfortunately, none of the things I hoped for happened. The utterly stupid and anti-social nonsense that ~~was~~ was made public by the Star on ~~beginning~~ March 13th is still going on.

I am sure most of you still remember the Star's story telling of a go-slow by the postmen because a worker had been suspended. It then turned out that the ~~apparent~~ apparent reason for the suspension was because this worker had not been sufficiently polite to some clerk. The clerks, it seems, expected the postmen to address them as Miss and Mister; but they, in their turn would not/~~the~~ <sup>show</sup> the postmen the same courtesy. A young miss in her late teens or early twenties, or a young man who is still wet behind the ears felt so important that he or she expected as of right that a grown man of forty or so should address them as either Miss or Mister. But they felt free to call that particular man Jones or Smith or Tom or Frank. And when this piece of snobbish arrogance was made public they resorted to the device of touching postmen rather than addressing them politely. When we first heard about this, I think we all tended to treat it as a rather silly joke. But I think most of us realise now

that there is more to this than a silly joke by a bunch of young people who are swollen beyond bearing by their own conceit.

These clerks obviously feel that being a postman reduces the status of a human being. What makes them feel this? And what makes them feel that they are any better than the postmen? I think this can only be the result of an utterly distorted sense of values that sees certain forms of work as humiliating. This, I think, is one of the great tragedies of Jamaica. Far too many Jamaicans look down on people who do certain forms of work, and so they get their manners and their morals all messed up and end up being nasty and anti-social human beings. No form of work reduces the dignity of any human being: only prejudice and arrogance can do that. And that is what these postal clerks suffer from.

I think it is important for these clerks to remember that they are not the employers of the postmen. Like the postmen, they are servants of the public. They are fellow workers of the postmen, no more and no less. And let them learn the great lesson that you cannot reduce the dignity of any human being without also reducing your own dignity. If the postmen are unworthy of being addressed politely by them then, by the same token, they must regard themselves as being unworthy of being addressed politely by the general public who pay their wages in the form of taxes. So please, let there be an end to all this nastiness. For my money, every worker, no matter how humble, is entitled to courtesy and respect. All that the postal clerks have shown, as far as I am concerned, is the falseness of their values, and their lack of good manners. And of this I am utterly ashamed. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday April 2 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Every now and then something comes up which is both silly and ridiculous and which at the same time raises one or more very profound questions. I think the case of Mrs. Krobo Edusei's bed is one such happening. On the face of it, it is a silly and laughable business.

Mrs. Edusei is the wife of Ghana's Minister of Industries. And last week ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ we had the news of Mrs. Edusei's bed. It seems that Mr. and Mrs. Edusei are just having the finishing touches put to a new home in Accra, and because Mr. Edusei is a Minister in Dr. Nkrumah's government, newspaper reports have carefully pointed out that the cost of the house is estimated at £20,000. And some of them have reminded the world that it was not so long ago that Dr. Nkrumah had sacked some of his Ministers for having built up private fortunes as a result of being in high office. Dr. Nkrumah, they remind us, had set a ceiling on what property any of his Ministers should hold. The country was in some financial trouble and the government had called for a wage freeze and strong austerity measures. These measures had led to a wave of strikes and discontent.

This was the background to the news of Mrs. Edusei's bed. The good lady had decided that she wanted a bed befitting her new home, and so she ordered a gold-plated bed costing £3,000. But when the ladies of Accra heard about this they were up in arms. They staged a protest march and denounced the buying of the new bed. So strong was the feeling against Mrs. Edusei's new bed that Mr. Edusei telephoned his good wife in London and told her to return the bed to the store from which she had ordered it. In order to explain

as much of this embarrassing business away as he could, Mr. Edusei said that his wife had been out of Ghana for a year and she must therefore be out of touch with the dynamic and progressive changes that have taken place since she left. What, he asked, was he to do with a £3,000 bed after he had surrendered his properties to the state.

The long and the short of the whole business is that the world has had a laugh at the expense of a Ghanaian Minister and his wife - and, indirectly at Ghana itself.

But as far as I am concerned ~~is~~ the profound question is: How do we react to this question of the gold-plated, £3,000 bed? There are some of us who feel that the leaders of the new Africa can do no wrong and that it is treachery for anybody to criticise them. There are others who feel that even if they do wrong we must defend them because they are Africans. And there are yet others who feel that all we have to do to create a really prosperous Jamaica is simply to follow the example of the Africans in everything.

My own view is that in all three of these attitudes we sell both the Africans and ourselves short. If we say that the Africans can make no mistakes, can never be wrong, can never be mean and selfish: then we are in fact saying that the Africans are not human. And all human beings everywhere have the right to have human faults. For far too many of us in Jamaica the Africans are superhuman symbols rather than <sup>living</sup> people. I hope the case of Mrs. Edusei's bed will help us <sup>to</sup> see the Africans as being as glorious, as funnily and as pathetical human as all of us. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday April 3 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: On Monday and Tuesday of last week I discussed some of the fears and worries expressed by some people over our coming independence, and I listed some of the major responsibilities that we, as citizens, will have to assume in independence. But some listeners felt that I had not gone far enough in facing our problems. They said I had not faced the question of what would happen to Jamaica in the event of an attack from outside. And at least one listener accused me bluntly of running away from this, the most crucial issue, which is likely to face an independent Jamaica.

The basic idea and fear in the minds of some of these listeners is simply stated. On August 6th Great Britain will give up her responsibility for defending us from any outside attack. What is to prevent any country, what is to prevent Cuba, for instance, from launching an attack against us and occupying Jamaica?

All right, let us face this question. First, I think it is most unlikely that Jamaica will build up a large professional standing army for purposes of external defence. This would seem to confirm the fears of those who think that we will become militarily vulnerable. But against this is the fact that we will join the Commonwealth and I am sure that our government will enter into a defence agreement with the British government. This has been the pattern with nearly everyone of the Asian and African countries which became independent and joined the Commonwealth. So that will be our very first line of defence. Any military adventurer will think twice about attacking a Jamaica which has entered into a military agreement with the British and other Commonwealth Governments.

But there is a second, and even more immediately powerful line of defence and that is the Organisation of American States. This body was founded way back in 1890, and though at first its purposes were limited ( for instance, when it was first formed it decided not to discuss political matters) it is, today, the most powerful international body in this part of the world. Until the exclusion of Cuba recently, all the independent countries of North, South and Central America, as well as the independent islands in the Caribbean sea, ~~are~~ <sup>were</sup> members of the Organisation. Today Cuba is the single odd man out. One of the key functions of the Organisation has been the keeping of the peace between member states and in the Americas as a whole. The Organisation is maintained by annual contributions from all its members, and the share paid by each country is assessed on the basis of its population.

Now this Organisation has no standing army but it is just about the most powerful deterrent force in this Hemisphere and no single member state would dare attack another state for fear of reprisals from the Organisation. This is our second and most immediate factor for security from external attack. I think it is reasonably certain that an independent Jamaica will join the Organisation of American States and so make <sup>as</sup> sure as possible that no outsider will invade.

I still feel our greatest challenges in independence will come from our need to create prosperity for all our people, not from any external threat. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday April 4 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The great day is now less than a week away, and by this time next week we will all know the answers to a great many questions. I think there is enough election talk going on for you not to want to hear any from me. The only thing I want to remind you of between now and next Tuesday is that it is your duty and your privilege and your responsibility to go out and cast your vote. You owe it to yourself, to your country, and to the future of all those who cannot now choose for themselves. No good Jamaican must say he or she cannot be bothered to vote.

Now let me express my pleasure and appreciation at the latest results of Operation Friendship, that wonderful example of Christianity in action. I am very glad indeed that the 'American Citizen's Army' brought enough dental supplies so that a dental clinic may be set up in West Kingston. The care of the teeth of our people is one of our greatest health needs; and where people cannot afford to pay private dentists this need is and has been desperate. And so we have this fantastically high incidence of young and old suffering from bad and bleeding gums and rotten teeth. And this takes a heavier toll on the body than most of us realise. Bad teeth can lead to all manner of ailments including heart trouble. So here again, without too much fuss and drama, without beating drums or making pompous speeches, a handful of good citizens have used their influence to make a much more basic contribution to the wellbeing of an independent Jamaica than most of the people who are so good at talking. And let us not forget to say thank you to the Americans who collected the medical supplies and flew them out here. They have affirmed that important

point of Christian - and all other true religious beliefs - that we are all our brothers' keepers, irrespective of race, class, ~~xxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ or creed. Operation Friendship is a reminder that we do not live in a world that is only ugly or among people who are only selfish. There is much beauty too, and the spirit of brotherhood is a real and living thing. And this is something we should ~~not~~ never forget.

Finally, a word on shipping. Soon the West Indies Federation will come to an end and the functions of the Federal Government will be taken over by a Commissioner who will run the federal services until final decisions have been made. Among the assets in which we have a share are the two federal ships. A little time back the officers of these ships have said that they could do more business and earn more money if these ships were allowed to sail outside their limited caribbean routes.

~~xxxxxxxx~~ Our Technical Mission has just returned from Africa and although we must await their report, I think it is reasonably certain that they <sup>will</sup> report that we can do a fair amount of trade with African countries. The big problem will be that of carrying our good to Africa. This is where these two ships can come in. Trinidad has acquired B.W.I.A. Why should ~~we~~ not we acquire the two ships and let them ply the Africa route as cargo and passenger carriers? The more I think of the idea, the more I like it. It would solve a whole heap of problems; and since we have a large share <sup>of the</sup> in/federal assets buying these ships should not be too costly. In any case, I sincerely hope our government will look into what seems to me a most attractive possibility of getting our own small merchant fleet. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday April 5 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking.

Good evening: I think that for us in Jamaica, this time - election time - is possibly the best moment to discuss the question of television. It is very likely that this is the last election campaign in Jamaica which will be fought without the use of television. I think that when our next elections come around in five years' time the politicians and the parties will use the full force and power of television in their campaigning. And it is very likely that as a result street-corner meetings and mass rallies will increasingly lose their importance. The parties and the politicians will be able to come right into your home: into your living room, onto your veranda, and address you face to face while you sit in comfort. You will be able to watch their movements and their actions, you will be able to watch their eyes and, if you are observant, you will be able to note every ~~time~~ false note and every time they try to cover up a poor case by bluster. The camera is harsh and revealing, and looking at a person through the eye of television will show you more of the character of your candidate than you will ever see by watching and listening to him from a street corner.

This is the great power of television: it is a power that can be used for good and it is a power that can be used for evil. It was by his skilful use of television that the late American Senator Joe McCarthy built up his fantastic empire of fear and set in motion the greatest witch-hunts in the history of the United States. The goings on of his investigating committee were watched by millions of Americans sitting in their own homes, by their own firesides. And McCarthy used this fantastically powerful new medium to build up a kind of fear

sickness that spread throughout that great land and came as near to destroying freedom of speech, of conscience and of association as the American people have ever been.

But like all demagogues, like all people who get drunk with their own power, McCarthy over-reached himself. He saw himself as bigger than the great institutions of his country and dared to attack even the Presidency as well as people like Edward R. Murrow, who himself was a great television personality. That was his undoing. President Eisenhower treated him with contempt and Murrow fought back in one of the most brilliant television performances I have ever seen. And after McCarthy's empire of fear collapsed.

Another example of the power of television was the last American presidential elections. Many important observers believe that President Kennedy would not have won if Mr. Nixon had not agreed to debate with him on television. Mr. Nixon was a national figure with a national image, and a nationally known personality: Mr. Kennedy was not until millions of Americans saw him outscoring Mr. Nixon in those debates.

All this means that if television comes to Jamaica it is likely to revolutionise the political life of this country. But it will go much further than just politics; it will go into every facet of the life of the people of Jamaica. It will be just about this most powerful influence for shaping people's thinking and habits - much more so than either radio or the press. The big question is: who then, is to control such a fantastically powerful new medium? I will give you my views on this tomorrow. So till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday April 6 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: A few mornings ago my good friend Morriss Cargill expressed the hope that television would not come to Jamaica. I have a lot of sympathy with the reasons for his views. But let us face it: television will come. And let us also admit that television can be a power for great good in this land. Rightly used, it can bring the world into the homes of most Jamaicans. It can be a great educational and cultural medium. And if we have to use canned films from abroad, is this any worse than going to the cinema? Not all the films that are imported are bad. For instance, the B.B.C. has some magnificent television films on which we can call. And I am sure we will be able to find some good films elsewhere too. And I frankly see no reason why we should not do what we have done in radio and that is to gradually build up Jamaican programmes. For instance, <sup>some of</sup> the J.B.C.'s discussion programmes are excellent television material.

And in answer to the big question of who should run television in Jamaica, I should like to see this radio station do it. I think that in terms of the basic educational and cultural needs of this country it would be in the best interest of the nation that television be run along the same lines as the J.B.C. And since we have the J.B.C. in existence already, why not let it do the job?

But then there is the very big question of who is to finance it. I think a television station will need about £500,000 to get going. With a capital investment of that order it can go on the air. I think the J.B.C. should be in a position to borrow that kind of money for what will after all be a pretty sound investment.

Let me sketch out my line of thinking a little more clearly.

Let us suppose the J.B.C. borrows £500,000 at 5% over a reasonably long period of time - say twenty-five years. It should operate and, at a very modest estimate, make an annual profit of between six and seven percent on its investment. This would enable it to pay back its debt over the years without calling on any money from the tax payer. And so, at the end of twenty-five or thirty or even say fifty years, when the debt is paid, the television station would become the outright property of the people of Jamaica. It seems to me that if we are to put the interests of Jamaica first this, or a similar approach is ideal. Possible sources for getting this kind of money at a low interest rate are the Bank of Jamaica, the Jamaica Development Finance Corporation or some big foreign television Corporation which sells television equipment. Other possible sources which could be explored are the Commonwealth <sup>Development Finance Company</sup> ~~lending organisations~~ and the World Bank; and I think that the United Nations Educational and Cultural Organisation could also be approached on the cheapest way of raising the money. I am certain it is the sort of project they would be interested in.

Advertising revenue from television is bound to be greater ~~than~~ than revenue from both the press and radio and this is what is likely to tempt any private company to see television mainly as a money maker. This does not necessarily mean that a private company will not give us good television. But where the profit motive is reduced to an absolute minimum there we are more likely to get the very best from television both in education, in entertainment and in the arts. And this is what I should like to see when television comes to Jamaica.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday April 7 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: So ~~sixxxx~~ we have come to the last weekend before the great day. Now there is only tomorrow and Monday left and then the people of this island will go out from hills and valleys, from town and country, from fine houses and humble little homes - and some will walk barefooted or ride their donkeys while others will go out in fine and fancy clothes riding in big cars. But when they get into that polling booth, when they stand there and make their marks, they will ~~k~~ all be equal in their right to say whom they want to represent them and what group of men are to make their new government. The master and the servant, the mistress and the maid, the high and the humble, the rich and the poor, the ballot box will make them all equally powerful as free citizens, exercising one of mankind's greatest rights in a free society: the right to choose who should govern.

We must never take this right for granted. It is not a right that came easily to men anywhere on this earth. It is a right for which many men and women fought and died and suffered for many years in many lands. And as long as we have this right to choose freely who should govern us, and as long as we have the right to organise freely and to speak freely, for so long are we genuinely free men and women who can truly shape our own destiny and shape the world nearer to what we want it to be. As long as we have these rights we have hope and power. The homeless and the hungry can use this power to put into office those whom they think will give them bread and homes: the workers can put into office those whom they think

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday April 9 at 6.15 p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Tomorrow morning <sup>This</sup> ~~that~~ nation goes to the polls; and late tomorrow evening we will know the verdict of the people. We will know which party will lead Jamaica in the first years of its independence. And that knowledge will set the pattern and create the mood and atmosphere in which many private and important decisions are likely to be made. Whether we like it or not, there are some people, mainly business people, who will either invest or withhold their money, depending on how the elections go. And there are others who are terrified out of their wits at the prospect of independence, and who are talking of pulling out of Jamaica as soon as possible, no matter how the voting goes. But these are a small minority. The vast majority of the people of Jamaica are looking forward to tomorrow's voting and all that will flow from <sup>it</sup> ~~that~~. They are not thinking in terms of running away: they cannot and they do not want to run away from their date with destiny. For them tomorrow is the beginning of the great challenge of independence. And that is how it is with all peoples when they set off on a great new journey: they know the risks, the uncertainties, the fears and the challenges - but these only spur them on, because that is the nature of man: he must always brace himself and get a hold on his courage and march steadily forward until the unknown becomes the known. We are starting out on <sup>such a</sup> ~~the~~ great journey tomorrow by choosing the men who will set the pattern and the pace for a very long time into the future. It is this that makes tomorrow's voting more important than any other voting the people of Jamaica have ever done in all their history.

at the

And I am very happy ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ spirit<sup>x</sup> of in which the ordinary people of this country have approached this most crucial and important of all elections. The mood has been sober; the approach has been balanced and questioning. Wherever I have been I have had the feeling that the people know that tomorrow is a very special and a very important day for Jamaica and for the future of all Jamaicans. Of course there have been irresponsible elements. There always are: you have the flag wavers and the slogan shouters in every election everywhere on earth where men are free. And of course you have had the hooligans and the roughnecks with their stones and bottles. But let us face it, they were a very small minority and they were confined mostly to the Corporate Area. In almost every other part of the island the people have been sober and balanced and responsible. Indeed, an American visitor who has spent much of his life reporting on elections all over the world told me that this was the quietest and tamest election he had ever covered. I told him that most Jamaicans knew that this was a great turning point in their history and they were approaching it with the responsibility of a mature and sophisticated people.

And I think this maturity of the voters has influenced our candidates too: sure we had ~~a Russians in the Harbour scare and some other attempts to create panic.~~ <sup>some attempts to create panic - such as the Russians in the Harbour scare.</sup> But these fell flat. The people are in no mood for lying propaganda at this moment in Jamaica's history.

Tomorrow is almost here: let every voter go out and keep his or her date with destiny. And let us choose wisely and well for much depends on how we choose tomorrow. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday April 11 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: It is all over and the J.L.P. will lead Jamaica into independence with a comfortable majority of seven seats over the P.N.P. The popular vote looks very close, but in this case I do not think it is an accurate reflection of the feeling of the country as a whole. The closeness/<sup>of the popular vote</sup> is due mainly to the very large majorities most P.N.P. leaders got in the Corporate Area. Everywhere else in the island, even where the P.N.P. candidates won, the popular trend was away from the P.N.P.

So, what are some of the lessons to be learnt from yesterday's voting? I think the first lesson is that ~~the country~~ a tough, aggressive and revitalised J.L.P. was in much closer touch with rural Jamaica than was the P.N.P. The J.L.P. caught the mood and spirit of the country and was therefore able to reflect and mirror that mood in a way the P.N.P. failed to do. The P.N.P. was out of touch, and so the country areas rejected it and decided its fate. I think this lack of basic contact with rural Jamaica is the greatest problem the P.N.P. must face if it is to make a comeback. The fact that two P.N.P. Ministers lost their seats in the country just dramatises this problem. It does not matter how fine a party's plans might be, how noble its objectives, if it fails to sell its plans and its objectives, if it fails to sell itself, it will be rejected. And this is the measure of the P.N.P. failure ~~in~~ outside the Corporate Area.

I think the second important lesson we can learn from yesterday's voting has to do with the two-party system and the nature of Jamaican politics. I think Mr. Seaga's victory is particularly striking in this

connection. To the best of my knowledge none of the candidates spoke in racial terms from their platforms but there was racial symbolism in the nicknames the candidates were given: we had the 'Burning Spear' the 'White Hunter' and the 'Lost Tribesman'. Mr. Seaga's victory simply proves that this is not the way Jamaicans want things to go. The Jamaican impulse is still against a racialist slant in politics. The people voted for a party and its candidate rather than for any colour. I think the affirmation of this fact in Western Kingston at this moment in time is most important. The other important ~~fact~~ <sup>point</sup> is failure of the P.P.P. to influence the election in any way whatsoever as far as the results are concerned. I do not think this/proves that there is no room for a third party. What it does prove is that there is no quick way into the political life of this country. Any third party must be prepared to face a long and uphill struggle, possibly spread over many years, if it hopes to win even a handful of seats. The Jamaican voter has seen many a party formed just before an election and die just afterwards, and so he is going to wait and see whether any new third party has the capacity and will to survive in the political wilderness. Both the P.N.P. and the J.L.P. have proved themselves in the political wilderness: any new party must do the ~~same~~: that is the lesson and the challenge for the P.P.P.

Finally, for me the most important lesson of all/<sup>in this election</sup> is the fact ~~that~~ parliamentary democracy, rule by the will of the majority, is healthier here in Jamaica than in any other newly independent country in the world. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday April 12 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night Sir Alexander Bustamante/~~made~~<sup>broadcast</sup> his first formal speech to the nation since Tuesday's elections. It was a calm and sober statement in which he told us what his government will do when it takes over the reins of power later this month. Like most of such first statements by leaders who have just won an election, it was pretty general. But three specific points came out clearly.

First, ~~Busta~~<sup>Sir Alexander</sup> warned that the times ahead will not be easy. I am very glad he gave this warning because many people, especially supporters of the J.L.P., have talked as though things are going to be easy, as though we can all relax, now that ~~Busta~~<sup>Sir Alexander</sup> is back in power. It is important that these people should realise that there will be no overnight miracle bringing them work and homes and security. It is going to take time, ~~Busta said~~. I think it is going to take quite some time and a great deal of hard work by all of us. There is no short-cut to prosperity: there was no short-cut under Manley and there will be no shortcut under Busta. Busta said he had the team and the talent to do the job. But they can only do the job and deliver the goods if every citizen of this country pulls his/<sup>or her</sup>weight and gets down to the job of working a little harder and producing a little better. So let us all heed Busta's warning and brace ourselves for a long hard pull. That is the only way to fulfilling ~~Busta~~<sup>Sir Alexander</sup> promise of lifting the small man and giving him a better life.

I think all of us accept without question ~~Busta's~~<sup>Sir Alexander's</sup> second point

that there must be law and order in the land while the new government gets under way. Any political factional fights, any partisan damage to person or property, can only hurt Jamaica. Both <sup>Mr. Alexander</sup> Busta and <sup>Mr.</sup> Manley made their positions clear on Tuesday night when it was known that the J.L.P. had won. <sup>Mr. Alexander</sup> Busta said there will be no victimisation of his political opponents and Manley said that he accepted the decision of the people and prayed a blessing on his country. I sincerely hope that rank and file followers in both parties will follow and live up to the high example set by their leaders, and uphold the rule of law. Let there be an end to 'Molotov Cocktails', to stone-throwing and to arson.

And let everybody, ~~especially supporters of the P.N.P.~~ note the third point that came out of Busta's formal speech last night. He said the elections are over and he called on all people, of whatever political persuasion, to work together to build Jamaica into one of the greatest little nations on earth.

I think we should all remember that the new government will be the government of all Jamaica, responsible for the peace, prosperity and welfare of all Jamaicans. Once in office the new government will be responsible to and for all of us, it will be the government of the whole nation, not of just one section. So it is entitled to the support of all of us on issues that are national and above party. And there is no more important a national issue than building an economically better-off Jamaica. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday April 13 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: One of the most interesting questions among political observers has been on who is likely to be Jamaica's first Minister of Foreign Affairs in the new government. This is likely to be a key Ministry and one which is likely to become increasingly important as time goes on and Jamaica ventures further into the field of international affairs. Sir Alexander Bustamante has made it clear that he does not propose to set up elaborate foreign missions abroad and that we are going to cut our diplomatic cloth abroad to suit the measurements of our national purse. This will probably mean that to begin with, at least, we are likely to have diplomatic Missions in only the key countries in the world that are important to us in economic and political terms: and this I think means Britain, the United States and Canada. In these three I think we will have to establish full-scale embassies, though these embassies need not be as costly and elaborate as some of the embassies set up by the <sup>new</sup> African states. Then there is the question of United Nations representation. But I do not see why our ambassador in Washington should not also represent us at the U.N. For the present at least, I do not see any need for us to set up a separate Mission to the U.N. And if any really urgent matters come up at the U.N. which affect us vitally and which demands the presence of someone ~~senior~~ at Ministerial level, our Foreign Minister can fly to New York in a matter of hours. But even if our foreign representation is conceived off in these very modest terms, our Foreign Minister is obviously going to be a key person. So who is

he likely to be?

If we look at the list of likely government Ministers I think one name stands out ~~most~~ clearly in terms of experience, skill and natural diplomatic ability, (I am excluding the Prime Minister-designate from these considerations for the moment) and that is Mr. Donald Sangster. It seems to me that Mr. Sangster would be the most logical choice as Foreign Minister. But Mr. Sangster is marked down for the equally important job of Finance Minister, so where do we go from there? It is possible that the Prime Minister may himself take the job. But it seems to me that he should be as free from Departmental responsibility as possible in order to supervise over-all government policies and give guidance and advise to all his Ministers.

One possible way out of this problem, it seems to me, is to give Mr. Sangster responsibility for both Finance and Foreign Affairs and select ~~an~~ an able younger man as his understudy for Foreign Affairs. As this young man grows in experience he can assume more and more of the responsibilities ~~for~~ for Foreign Affairs, under the guidance of Mr. Sangster, until the day comes when he is sufficiently experienced to become Minister of Foreign Affairs in his own right.

The kind of relations we establish with the outside world, the kind of image we project to that world, especially in the early days of Jamaican independence, is going to be most important for our own best interests; so the choosing of our Foreign Minister is a matter of fundamental importance. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday April 14 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think the elections are now sufficiently far / behind us for us to pay a tribute to the defeated P.N.P. and its leader. Always, in the excitement of the moment, all thought and all attention is on the victor. This is a natural human reaction. It is always the winner who gets all the publicity and all the praise, while the loser stands alone in the corner, nursing his wounds and tasting the terribly bitter gall of defeat. And possibly one of the bitterest realities of defeat is not when the crowd turns from you but when those you thought your friends turn from you to woo the new champion, all old protestations of loyalty and friendship forgotten. It takes a very big man indeed to endure all this without turning savagely bitter about the fickleness of his fellow men.

So, let me pay tribute to the manner in which Manley took his defeat. As with the referendum, he has accepted his present defeat without complaint and without curses. Whatever his private grief, whatever his private thoughts and feeling, he has said:

'I accept the decision of the people....I can only pray a blessing on my country.' Judge this by any standard that you like and it still shows a bigness of spirit which many of his critics could emulate with great benefit both to themselves and to Jamaica. ~~It~~ And ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ quiet

this ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ acceptance of the will of the people is a measure of how deep the roots of democracy have sunk here in Jamaica. And for this too, we owe as much to Manley as we do to Busta. They - each in his own individual way - more than any other two men in modern Jamaica have led in the nurturing and the shaping of this

now strongly rooted Jamaican democracy. To deny Manley this because he has now been defeated, would be to rewrite history in the way the communists do when their leaders fall from power and from grace. In a free Jamaica even Manley's political defeat should not wipe out the great contribution he <sup>and his party</sup> made to his country.

And when his party came to power they set a high standard for hard work and for honest government. ~~For seven long years they ran the country and during that time no Minister of Government was ever involved in any charge of corruption, of bribery, of selling state secrets.~~ I think they set a new pattern and high standard of elective public service.

They attracted much investment capital to Jamaica, though not everybody agrees that this foreign capital served the interests of Jamaica as fully as it could or should have. It is very likely that one of the reasons for their defeat was the fact that almost all the new industries they attracted were sited in the Corporate Area, thus bringing work only to the people in the metropolis.

One of their major achievements was the great and ambitious educational programme which I hope will be continued and improved so that more rural children benefit.

Possibly their greatest achievement - and one for which Manley was mainly responsible - was the great and good name they built up for Jamaica in the outside world, thus creating a good investment climate. Of course they had their failures, but in this moment of defeat, let us salute them for what they have done and hope that the new government does better. Goodnight.

- 1) Kennedy and Steel
- 2) Algerian Referendum
- 3) Kenya Constitution

## Failure of Disarmament Talks

### NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday April 16 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abeahams speaking

Good evening: For all of last week we have been so preoccupied with our own election and its aftermath that we have had little or no time for what was going on in the outside world. Certainly, I have found myself hardly noticing the news from the outside world. I do not think there was anything wrong with this. We were, all of us, intensely involved in what was after all the most important news in the world for Jamaica itself. But I think we can now raise our heads once more and let our eyes sweep the wide horizons to see what has been going on in the great wide world.

Over in Geneva the disarmament conference has bogged down, as I told you it would over a month ago, on the question of inspection. The Western powers say that no disarmament agreement is worth the paper it is written on unless there can be a system of inspection which would make sure that no nation will build up its arms secretly, while pretending to disarm. The West still recalls how a defeated Germany secretly armed itself after the first world war in spite of the fact that it was not supposed to. And this, as we all know, led to the horrors of the second world war. And so today the West insist on inspection being part of any disarmament agreement with the Russians. The Russians want a disarmament agreement without inspection. They say that any inspection system would be used to spy on Russia. I frankly find this a very strange argument. If the point of a disarmament agreement is to see that all nuclear weapons are in fact destroyed by both sides, then surely <sup>each</sup> ~~both~~ sides should be entitled to make sure that the other is keeping its side of the

bargain. And if both sides have nothing to hide, if neither side intends to pull a fast one, then they would both welcome inspection, provided it is fair and equal to both. The Americans have declared themselves prepared to submit to any fair and reasonable inspection system. The Russians have given a flat 'No'. And so I think a fair assumption is that the Russians feel that they will have something to hide, even after a disarmament agreement is signed. And what is it that the Russians could want to hide after a disarmament agreement that does not include inspection. The most obvious thing they would want to hide would be a secret store of undestroyed atomic weapons or else one or more places where these weapons could be made after the present stock has been destroyed. The Russian refusal to agree to inspection can only make any impartial observer suspicious of Russian motives and intentions. Certainly, the West would be recklessly foolish if it agreed to destroy its own stock of weapons without being in a position to make absolutely sure that the Russians have done exactly the same. Everything the West does is public property, carried out in the full glare of publicity. When it launches a man into space or lets off a loud bang we all know about it because it is an open society. But what the Russians do is done in the darkness and the secrecy of the closed society and we only know what the Russians decide to tell us. And ~~so~~ they will not agree to inspection. <sup>And so</sup> The world is now in for a new period of nuclear testing and the most horrifying arms race in the history of mankind. This is the greatest tragedy of our ~~contemporary~~ time: and the glory and the beauty of our time is that men still live creatively, still love and laugh and are happy - even in the shadow of the bomb.

Goodnight.

- 1) Kennedy & Steel Prices
- 2) Algerian Referendum
- 3) Kenya Constitution

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday April 17 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Apart from the failure of the disarmament talks, three other events of importance took place on the international scene while we were preoccupied with our general election. First there was President Kennedy's masterful handling of the steel price situation.

One of America's biggest steel producers announced an increase of six dollars on the price<sup>a ton</sup> of steel. This was followed in rapid succession with other steel firms announcing similar increases, until it looked as though the entire steel industry would add an additional six dollars to the cost of a ton of steel.

Steel, as we all know, is one of the basic necessities of modern living, and it is more particularly so for a highly industrialized society like that of the United States or Britain. The American army uses millions of tons of steel a year to arm its soldiers and give them the necessary land, sea and air transport. The American motor industry uses a massive amount of steel; so does the building industry. And so this increase in the price of steel would have set off an all-round price increase, touching the lives of nearly every American citizen. Homes would have cost more: cars would have cost more: buses and trains would have cost more and the increased cost would have been passed to the consumer in the form of higher fares; plane fares would have gone up. And this would have been the case with everything in which steel is used - knives and forks and spoons, furniture and toys. In fact, the entire American economy would have been affected. The cost of supporting United States military forces both at home and abroad would have shot up fantastically, and in the

end, as always, it would have been the poor American taxpayer who would have had to foot the bill for increased military costs. And so the American citizen would have been penalised twice by the six dollar rise in the cost of a ton of steel: he would have been penalised as a consumer and he would have been penalised as a tax payer.

But then the President stepped in and denounced the proposed increase in very strong language. But I do not think it was just his <sup>, however strong,</sup> words/that stopped the increase. I am sure it was the American government's announcement that it would not do business with any firm which put up its prices. The U.S. government was too big a customer to offend and the President's clear and sharp stand obviously had the support of the nation, and so the steel interests backed down. I think that as a result of this the President's popularity/<sup>is</sup> as high today/<sup>as</sup> has been that of any President of the United States.

The second important event was President De Gaulle's sweeping victory in the Algerian referendum. This showed that the people of France had accepted the hard fact that Algeria is Algerian, not French. With this single fact the people of France have accepted /<sup>and endorsed</sup> the reality of the end of French imperialism. It took them seven years of bitter war to learn but they learned.

Finally, the Kenya constitutional conference ended in a kind of agreement/<sup>the future success of which looks very doubtful to me,</sup> ~~xxxxxxfuturexxxxxxdoubtful~~, but I will tell you more about when I have all the facts sorted out and when I know a little more of Jomo Kenyatta' plan<sup>a</sup> and thinking. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday April 18 at 6.15 p.m.  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Let us talk about people, rather than politics for a change. And let us begin with the boy who came back to life. In South Africa last week, a car ran into a nine-year-old boy and hit him with such force that it tossed him into the air. The boy dropped to the ground like a sack of potatoes, limp and lifeless. Fortunately, the car in front of the one which knocked down the boy was driven by a doctor who had a nurse travelling with him. It was the nurse, looking back through the rear window, who saw the accident. She told the doctor about it. He stopped his car, jumped out and ran back to the spot where ~~where~~ the boy lay. As the doctor examined him he realised that there was no life in the boy: the boy's heart was not beating; the boy was not breathing. The boy was dead.

But instead of accepting the fact of death, the doctor hit the boy on the chest with the outside edge of the flat of his hand. For five minutes that must have seemed an eternity the doctor kept hitting the little boy. And then the young heart began to flutter and to pump blood and the boy began to breathe again. And by the time an ambulance arrived the nine-year-old boy, Christo Viviers, was on his feet and strongly alive. The miracle here was in the timing. If the doctor had arrived on the scene only three minutes later than he did, it would have been impossible to bring the boy back to life. If any human being stops breathing for three minutes, the lack of oxygen causes such great pressure on the brain that it is damaged beyond repair and death is certain. So that doctor must have left his car, dashed to the boy and started hitting him

within three minutes of the boy being struck by the car. And because of this one in a million chance of a doctor being on the spot at the moment of the accident, a boy who should have been dead is alive today. And still there are people who say that miracles do not happen ~~today~~ any more. They do; all the time and all about us. The trouble is that we do not recognise them very often. So let us try to stop being hard-faced and cynical and see and recognised the miracles that happen all about us all the time. If we do we will find that life is richer than it seems and ~~prove~~ that human beings can be pretty wonderful as well as being ugly.

And talking about ugliness brings me to the goings-on ~~in~~ of possibly the most beautiful woman in the world today - that is, as far as looks are concerned. One newspaper described this woman as 'the hollow woman with one of the world's most breath-taking shells'. She is Miss Elizabeth Taylor, the Hollywood actress who at the age of thirty last week got rid of her fourth husband as a sort of hopeful preparation for hooking husband number five. The fact that she took husband number four, singer Eddie Fisher, from an adoring wife and children did not prevent her from dumping him without compunction when she wanted a change. The suffering she causes others does not seem to mean a thing to this fantastically beautiful woman. I only hope that Mr. Richard Burton, who also has a wife and two children, and who was happily married until Miss Taylor went after him, I only hope he has the good sense to see what lies beneath that very beautiful shell. It often happens that the most terribly destructive moral ugliness is found in some of the most beautiful and some of the most charming people who generally dazzle us into forgetting that real beauty and real charm are not just on the surface: they are of the heart and of the mind. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday April 19 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Did the presence of two Russian ships in Kingston Harbour swing the elections in favour of the Jamaica Labour Party on Tuesday of last week? In a statement yesterday Mr. Manley said it did. He accused the Jamaica Labour Party of using the presence of the Russian ships in Kingston Harbour to spread fear and confusion throughout the country, especially in the rural areas. And he said that this accounted for the sudden swing away from the P.N.P. in the last few days before voting.

There is no doubt that attempts were made to use the presence of the Russian ships as anti-P.N.P. propaganda, especially in the Corporate Area. During the week~~end~~ before voting Kingston itself buzzed with rumours and I myself heard at least one loudspeaker van blaring out that the P.N.P. had brought the Russian ships here to enslave Jamaicans. I do not know if the same sort of thing happened in the countryside, but I myself have no evidence to suggest that it either did or did not happen. But I do not think that is the important point. The big question is whether the presence of the Russian ships, and the attempts to use them as propaganda, really influenced the results of the election. I frankly do not think they did. I think a few people here and there may have been persuaded to change their vote but I think the overall pattern was already set. I think that if there had been no Russian ships at all the election results would have been the same. I think all the evidence points in that direction.

A little over a month before the elections one of our scholars from the university, an objective and distinguished research man,

conducted a survey throughout the country. This man's sympathies were, if anywhere, on the side of the P.N.P. But like the good scholar he is, he did not allow sympathies to blind him, and he came up with the prediction that the P.N.P. was likely to lose the election. And this was long before there were any Russian ships in the Harbour. And then there is the result of last year's referendum. The election results followed so closely the pattern of the referendum results that I think we must concede that the country had made up its mind long before the arrival of the Russian ships. So although I am prepared to go along some way with Mr. Manley by agreeing that attempts were made, in the Corporate Area at least, to use the presence of the Russian ships for political propaganda against the P.N.P., I must also go along with Sir Alexander Bustamante and Mr. Sangster when they say the presence of the Russian ships had nothing to do with the results of the elections. That, to me, seems to be the factual aspect of the picture. All the other, the denunciations and counter denunciations, are part of the tough, virile in-fighting of a healthy two-party system. What I do hope is that in this in-fighting the parties will not sell the people of Jamaica short. The electorate are not sheep, to be led blindly even in their own interests. They have shown in recent years a perception and an independence of thought and choice which I think both parties should note with care. Indeed, I think now is as good a time as any for both the victor and the vanquished to carefully re-examine their relations with the people in the light of this new spirit of independence within the people.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday April 20 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: As usual at this time of the year, I have made up a little Easter parable; and as usual, I leave it up to you to read your own meaning into this parable. This year my parable is about the good man, Mass John.

Like most Jamaicans, Mass John was born in a small village way up in the hills. The village had no running water, no electric lights, no clinic, no schools. The women and children of the village had to walk more than a mile to get their water. The children had to walk three miles to get to the nearest school, and that school had only one untrained teacher who had to cope with something like 300 children. Life was hard and young John felt all of its hardness: the long walks to get water and kindling and the longer walks to and from school. But life also had its joys: the joy and wonder of learning to read and write in spite of the odds, the joy of flying a home-made kite, of racing with his friends, of going with a bunch of boys in the season and ~~thieving~~<sup>stealing</sup> mangoes for the hell of it. And so he grew up like any other young Jamaican: knowing both the bitterness of poverty and the sweet joys of the sun-kissed beauty of his land. And because he was a little more sensitive than his fellows, he noticed things a little more; and he decided that when he became a man he would pull himself out of the poverty around him and also help pull up his fellow citizens of the village.

When he was nineteen John left his native village and no one heard about him for years. But they all remembered him: they talked about his willingness and his sweetness and his helpfulness as he grew up among them. And they wished him well wherever he was and

some of them wondered among themselves whether he would ever come back to his native village. And so more years passed.

And then suddenly one day, more than ten years later, he turned up in the little village square, and <sup>Joe</sup> Old one-eyed ~~John~~ who ran the little village rumshop and store recognised him straightaway. He was older and a little rounder in the body but he was the same John. The big difference was that the boy who had gone away barefooted now drove a big shiny car and wore fine city clothes and looked and behaved like a rich man. But he was as friendly and kind-hearted as he had been as a youth and he showed this by buying free drinks for everybody. John had come home and somehow everybody called him Mass John from that day on. It just seemed wrong to call him <sup>plain</sup> John. There was something new about him that made it impossible for anybody to be completely free and familiar.

Within months things started happening. Politics came to the village; running water and a sound-system came, electricity came. Mass John built a new store that put old one-eyed Joe out of business. A school was built and there were new roads. How Mass John made these things happen was a mystery to the people of the village. But he certainly made them happen. At first one or two of the older people tried to ask him but Mass John friendly face suddenly became distant and so the people stopped asking. And then, as time passed, an odd thing happened. Children stopped going to the new school; old one eyed Joe started his rumshop again and everybody shopped there. Hardly anybody went to Mass John's fine store or listened to his sound system. At last/<sup>a bitterly disappointed</sup> Mass John call his yardboy and demanded 'What's the matter with these people?' The yardboy said: 'Them say it is the way you give, sah'. Goodnight.

- 1) Jamaican Beauty Spots & Public Access
- 2) Water Conservation

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday April 21 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

My family~~xy~~ and in Portland & St. Thomas  
Good evening: /I spent a few days/ this week. The children are  
on holiday from school, <sup>as a family</sup> we have not had a holiday in years, and so  
I simply had to give in or else face the kind of atmosphere that  
wears any father down. But I was very glad I went because it gave  
me a chance to get a first-hand impression of the post-election  
atmosphere outside the Corporate Area. Kingston, when I left, was  
rife with speculation, with uncertainty, with joy - and almost  
every other range of political and personal emotion: some people  
behaved as though a new age had dawned while others behaved as  
though the world was coming to an end. And so it was refreshing  
to leave Kingston and move among people who were calm and relaxed  
and free of all post-election fever. In St. Thomas, in a little  
village, we saw two little stores facing each other across a  
narrow street: one sported a P.N.P. poster and the other a J.L.P.  
poster. And the owner of one store went across to the other to  
beg a piece of ice to serve his customers: he got it and they were  
friendly and amiable and I thought Kingston and St. Andrew could  
learn a lot from that little example. And I saw many such examples  
wherever we went.

Another striking thing, and I do hope the government that  
assumes power on Tuesday will do something about it, was the evidence  
of the relation of the shortage of water and the abuse of the land.  
Travelling on that narrow bridge across the dried up Yallahs river  
is one of the most depressing sights in all Jamaica for me. Once,  
before the forests had been cut down and the hillsides fired, that  
river had never been dry. It had been steadily fed by the ~~run~~

Blue  
 slow trickling water from the ~~xxxxxxx~~ Mountains; and all the land  
 around had been rich and fertile, with never a sign of drought. Today,  
 because of our wanton destruction of tree and bush in search of  
 quick returns, the river is dry and the land is parched. And when  
 it rains the water comes rushing down, flooding the river and carrying  
 valuable ~~st~~ topsoil down to the sea. And this is the pattern wherever  
 the land has been abused. Stopping ~~this~~ <sup>this</sup> is not going to be easy or  
 quick. A lot of hard conservation work will have to be done over a  
 long time if we are to restore Jamaica's title as the land of wood  
 and water rather than the land of floods and droughts. I know it will  
 be a great temptation for the new government to concentrate on  
 measures which will show quick and immediate results. That was  
 implicit in their election promises. But land is so important, both  
 immediately and for the long-term future of Jamaica, that it would  
 be a tragedy to ignore it, or to tackle it in a halfhearted manner.  
 Conserving the Jamaican earth so that it should feed the Jamaican  
 people is an urgent national problem which should be treated as  
 above party. It is a matter of national survival.

Finally, on the way to Port Antonio we stopped at the Blue Hole,  
 that breathtakingly beautiful spot, and then I discovered that it  
 was a private members club set-up. I have nothing against private  
 members clubs, and this one did say that visitors were welcome on  
 payment of a small fee. But I do feel that certain national beauty  
 spots should belong to the nation and should be enjoyed by all its  
 citizens, no matter how high or low, rich or poor. And I felt that  
 the Blue Hole was one such spot. It is the sort of places where busload  
 of school children should be taken to marvel and to fall in love with  
 the rare and delicate beauty of their country. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday April 23 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I hope you have all had a most restful and happy long Easter weekend, and that you all feel refreshed for tomorrow's workaday world. And since it is still Easter Monday, let us skip politics and political strife, and talk about human relations instead.

Today is observed throughout most of the world as the first day of 'Good Human Relations Week'. In the year 1955 the good human relations week was established, and the last week in April was chosen as the one week in the year when all human beings in the world are called upon to make an extra effort, and a conscious effort, to improve the human and personal and business relations between each man or woman and his or her fellow human beings. This year, for the first time since this U.N. inspired movement started, Jamaica is taking part. The Jamaica Christian Council, the Jamaica Boy Scouts Association, the Jamaica Pioneer Guild, the Jamaica Junior Chamber, and a whole host of other civic bodies are taking part in this effort to promote good relations between man and man. Each day there will be a motto urging all of us to concentrate on one aspect of good human relations; and there will be a publicity campaign going on all through the week.

As a background to this effort let us try and define just what we mean by good human relations. As we have seen recently in the rather silly post office affair, there is a great deal of downright ignorance about good human relations. Some of those postal clerks obviously thought it was good human relations for the postmen to call them Miss and Mister while they themselves were free to call the postmen John or Tom or whatever their names were. And we can

multiply this example of ignorance about good human relations by recalling the casual and careless treatment civil servants in post offices and tax offices give members of the general public - especially if these members of the general public are poor and humble people. Or we can recall the off-hand manner of some shop assistants, or of receptionists who make ordinary citizens wait while they make up their pretty faces or have chats with their friends. There is a whole world of rudeness by most members of the middleclasses to people whom they regard as their economic or educational inferiors. And nine times out of ten the so-called lower classes become rude because they have been treated with casual rudeness by the so-called better classes. And this, I think, is at the root of the bad human relations that exist in Jamaica.

So how do we overcome this? I think the basic principle we have to accept is that every human being is the equal of every other in human dignity. If we accept the proposition that no man's <sup>personal</sup> dignity should be reduced because of class, colour, education or the job he does or the money he earns, then I think we will be well on the way to building genuinely good human relations in Jamaica. If we respect the dignity of all men, including our own, then we will give to all men the thoughtful and courteous respect we demand of them. I think all the other virtues - good manners, tolerance and understanding, helpfulness, appreciation - all these are based on and stem from a basic respect for the dignity of all human beings. Respect for human dignity is the cornerstone of all good human relations. So let us make a start by seeing good human relations week in this light, and make it part of our everyday life for all the years that lie ahead. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday April 24 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: A new Government took office in Jamaica today. We all know it, and I think we all tend to take it as matter of course: one party, the People's National Party, has been voted out of office and another party, the Jamaica Labour Party, has been voted into office, and so a new government was sworn in today. All this is ordinary, normal and routine. In five years' time the people of Jamaica will again go to the polls and will again vote, either to put this government back into office or else to replace it. The pattern is clearcut and to many of us - especially the younger people - this is how it is and will probably always be; and there is no need to fuss about it.

And yet, you know, it is not all as normal and ordinary and inevitable as it seems. That it is so, that we can have a change of government without our former leaders being killed or imprisoned, without civil war, revolution or a blood-bath; that one party can replace another in power without thousands of people having to flee the country or go into hiding or be put on trial for the crimes of a past government, this, in our day and age and in our location, is a pretty wonderful thing. And I think it is something we should think about and always bear in mind.

To realise just how wonderful this is all we have to do is to look around at some of our nearest neighbours. In Cuba, just ninety miles away they had to fight a full scale war in order to change their government: and today there is no room for an opposition party which could be an alternative government. In the Dominican Republic they had to murder the iron man in order to break his power and force

a change of government, and the aftermath of this is a situation of profound political instability. In Haiti when the previous President fell he had to move fast to get out of the country before his enemies got him. And in all these countries today, whether they call themselves leftwing or rightwing or what you will, there is no room for dissent: no opposition party is permitted to challenge the party in power. And if you are a citizen of these countries, you either go along with the men in power or keep quiet. If you express your opposition, if you work for a change of government you can and most likely will be jailed or shot. This is the situation in three out of the five countries that make up the islands of the Greater Antilles. Only in Jamaica and in Puerto Rico do the people enjoy the freedom to choose and change their governments by free and secret ballot: only in these two islands are the opposition parties free to criticise the party in power and to campaign actively for its defeat by peaceful and constitutional means.

And so it seems to me that today, as a new government, chosen by the will of the majority, takes power in Jamaica, we should ~~spend~~ give a little ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ thought to this most important of all our liberties. Certainly, the citizens of very few newly emergent independent countries in either Africa, Asia, Latin America or the islands of the seas can boast of having the same degree of genuine political liberty as have the people of this country. And that is no ordinary or commonplace thing. Our new government must preserve and extend ~~enrich it with~~ this great liberty and ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ bread and homes and work for the poor because poverty is still the greatest enemy of freedom. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday April 25 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking.

Good evening: When most of us think of the word revolution, we think of violence: we think of guns and planes and tanks and political systems. And if called upon to give examples the student of history is likely to mention the French Revolution, the student of social change is likely to mention the Russian and the Chinese revolutions, and the young student obsessed with imperialism and independence is likely to talk about the African revolution and of the Cuban revolution. These are of course all true examples of different types of revolutions. And the one thing they all have in common is that physical upheaval - the violent overthrow of some government, the forceful taking of political power by some colony from the imperial country - the physical factor is the strongest and most pronounced. And if anybody wanted to quibble about these violent examples they could say with justice that before revolutionary action is possible there must first be revolutionary thought. In other words man thinks before acts, and before he can act out a revolution he must think it out first. This of course assumes that he is not utterly irresponsible. <sup>and using the word revolution</sup> Used in this primary sense, we could say that any revolution presupposes a basic and radical change in thinking.

And if we accept the proposition that all revolutions begin in <sup>today</sup> thought then I think we are/witnessing one of the most important and one of the most profound revolutions in the history of mankind. And yet, you know, many of us seem to ~~have missed it~~ be utterly unaware of this great revolution in the making. And I think the reason why we have missed it is because for some odd reason we do not associate the Christian Church with revolution. We have arrived at a position

where we just do not associate Christianity or the Christian Church with any kind of radicalism. And yet you know, the whole history of the world would have been different without Christianity. Christianity has been the most revolutionary single agent in the shaping of the world into what it is today. Of course there have been times when it has been less revolutionary than at others; and there have been times when it has been downright reactionary - but it has never been a basically conservative force. And I think that we are today on the threshold of a great new revolutionary from Christianity which is likely to remake the face of our world once more.

I am sure you have all heard something at least of the new wave of talk about the re-uniting of the Church of Christ. Protestant groups have come together to try and work out their differences: an Anglican Archbishop was warmly received by the Pope; and in his Easter message the Pope blessed all men, without exception. All these are very significant pointers of the great movement towards the unity of all the Christian denominations throughout the world. And Pope John, one of the greatest Princes the Catholic Church has ever known, is the central figure of this great unity movement. If the day comes - and to me it now seems certain to come - when the Christian Church is re-united and there is only one Church of Christ on earth, <sup>the Church</sup> ~~the~~ will once more become the greatest single power on earth with a worldwide community of a thousand million members. And no President and no Premier in all the world will be able to defy it. ~~xxxx~~ To me this is the most important revolution in the making today.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday April 26 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Our new government has now been installed and the new Ministers have taken over their jobs. I think one of the most striking things about the new government is its youth. The average age of Jamaica's new Cabinet is forty-eight years. At a quick guess, and without the figures to check it, I should say this is about ten years younger than the average age of the last Cabinet. Six of the Ministers in the new government are in their thirties: three are in their forties; three are in their fifties: and but for Mr. Ashenheim's sixty-one years and Sir Alexander's seventy-eight, the average age of the Cabinet would have been even younger than the youthful forty-eight. So, basically, this is a government of young men. It should therefore also be a government of boldness and of experiment which are the hallmarks of youth. And it is just sufficiently balanced with age and experience for the boldness and experimentation not to get out of hand.

But let me repeat my warning once more that it would be neither fair to Jamaica nor to the new Government to expect overnight miracles. It is going to take time for the new government to settle down and familiarise itself and work out its plans for the future; and of course it always takes a little time for those plans to bear fruit. So we have all got to be patient and we have all got to pull our weight. The Price of prosperity will always be hard work.

Now for a word about the university: and while I think of it, may I protest bitterly against that ugly monstrosity that some journalists are trying to make fashionable: the U.W.I. Since Dr. Lewis' press conference yesterday I have heard a number of references

to this thing called the U.W.I. It sounds downright ugly and I think that in this case this form of shorthand is unnecessary. The University College of the West Indies was a bit of a mouthful and so there was some justification for the shortening to U.C.W.I. And in any case U.C.W.I. was a much more pleasant sounding series of letters than U.W.I. But the University of the West Indies is not such a mouthful and I frankly do not see the need for this particular type of ugly shortening of it. The people of London are not so mentally lazy that they must say U.L. for the University of London; or the people of New York as to talk about the U.N.Y. when they mean the University of New York. I think we can comfortably say the university of the West Indies the first time and when we have to repeat it we can simply say the university instead of the ugly U.W.I. Once during the war when the craze for initials and jargonese was at its height, Sir Winston Churchill, a master of the use of words, had some very harsh things to say about this bad habit. I wish he were here to tell us off for our tendencies in that direction.

Anyway, Dr. Lewis forecasts more research and more post-graduate work now that our university is independent; and he also predicts a rise in standards. Dr. Lewis also said he approved of the establishing of colleges of the university in Trinidad and Barbados. And so, as Jamaica and the other islands move towards a new political status, the university does so too. I expect the university to contribute even more to West Indian life and thought in the future than it did in the past. More than any other body it must be the guardian of the educational and intellectual standards, and of the intellectual liberties of this West Indian islands in independence.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday April 27 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: It was as far back as Monday, April 16th, that I told you I was convinced the disarmament talks would end in failure and that we would see a new round of nuclear testing. Well, on Wednesday of this week the new round of testing began when the United States exploded a nuclear weapon off Christmas island in the Pacific. It is very cold comfort to me to know that what I predicted has now come to pass. I would have preferred to have been proved wrong. I would have been very happy if events had so worked out that I had to eat my words. But from the very start of the Geneva conference it was clear to any student of international affairs that the chances of success were really slender. And by the time I made my prediction, roughly halfway through the conferences, it was clear that the whole thing was hopeless. It is true that after that we had a short spell when everything suddenly looked hopeful. A group of neutral nations came up with a compromise proposal which looked so hopeful that the Russian and American delegates actually settled down to drafting a preamble for a disarmament treaty. The entire conference accepted this draft on the 17th of April, the day after I had made my prediction of failure. But there was disagreement between Russia and America on one paragraph and as far as I was concerned that was the end of it, because this paragraph dealt with the question of inspection. And I knew it did not matter how it was phrased, whether they used the word 'verification' or the word 'control' and hedged it around by saying it would be purely scientific and nonpolitical, or whether they said this 'verification' would be carried out by neutrals - I knew that once the Russians came up against this they

point of inspection they would dig in their heels. And that is just what happened. And all the world's sudden wave of optimism and hope was brought to nothing. And so, in the face of this failure the United States let off its latest bomb on Wednesday. The Russians have threatened that if the Americans resumed nuclear testing they will do the same and so I repeat what I said on the 16th: we are now in for a new round of massive bangs which could pollute the air we breathe and the food we grow and the fish in the sea. It may take a long time to see and effects of this pollution but that there will be some effect is generally agreed. And it is this knowledge that makes the appeal of Bertrand Russell and his followers so powerful. And yet you know, for these demonstrations and appeals to be really effective they must carry the same weight with both sides. If you had inside Russia the same demonstrations against nuclear testing as you have inside Britain and the United States then I think these demonstrations might have been more likely to influence the trend of events. As it is the only 'ban the bomb' protests are in the West and all the pressure, even from the neutralists seems to be concentrated on the West. And it is a simple fact that the Russians have exploded more and bigger bombs than the West. So you see the mess. Since the Russians do not want an agreement which can be enforced, the Americans must either make sure of their nuclear strength themselves and or else hand/the world over to the Russians. This is the stark and tragic reality behind Wednesday's big bang off Christmas Island.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday April 28 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I wonder how many listeners, if any, still remember the comments I made on the difficulties of getting to the airport. If you do not remember, that is alright. I made these comments a long time ago, way back on the 9th of January and we are now near the end of April. At that time I told you of a listener who had received a notice to say that there were two parcels for her at the airport. This listener was a working woman, and as with the majority of Jamaicans the family did not have a car, and so this listener had somehow to find her way to the airport and back in her lunch hour. After trying everything else, this listener finally had to hire a cab to go to the airport to collect two small parcels and be back at her place of work before her lunch hour was up. It cost this listener thirty shillings. And it was after this costly experience that she got in touch with me, and I told you about it. And at the time I told you that this listener was no isolated example. She was representative of a large number of people for whom getting to the airport was a long and costly business.

Well, I am recalling all this tonight because I want to pay a particularly warm tribute to the Jamaica Omnibus Service Company on behalf of that particular listener whose problem I raised and on behalf of all those other people who do not have cars and who are not well-off and for whom getting to the airport was a real hardship up to as recently as Tuesday of this week.

On Wednesday morning all their troubles ended when the new J.O.S. bus service to the ~~Rixx~~ airport came into operation. Now they can get to and from the airport reasonably quickly and reasonably

cheaply. And so a grateful thank you to the J.O.S. for responding to an urgent public need.

Another subject on which I have talked often has been the foul ~~smoke~~ thick black smoke from the exhausts of trucks and busses - mainly those that use diesel fuel. All of us have at one time or another been behind some truck or country bus, wrapped in a cloud of choking thick black smoke. This is a poison which pollutes the atmosphere and damages ~~the~~ the health of anybody who is continuously exposed to it. I think everybody, including the operators of trucks and country busses, agree that this is a nasty business which should be got rid of. The problem was what to do, how to get rid of it. Of course you get hardly any foul smoke from a new truck or bus, but who can change their truck or bus every two years? And to go in for the kind of regular service that will keep down smoke is a pretty costly business: <sup>garage</sup> service charges are high. But now I think an economic way out is possible, and I am indebted to Mr. Dougall of the Tropical Gas Company for the information, which is contained in the trade journal Butane-Propane News. This reports that for the past few years experiments have shown that by mixing the ordinary kind of gas that we use for cooking with the diesel fuel, exhaust smoke from trucks and busses can be cut very drastically. The installation <sup>and inexpensive</sup> seems to be a very simple operation. I would strongly suggest that that those firms using a large number of trucks as well as operators of smoky country busses, look into this idea. It would be a very great boon to all of us if this process is found to be cheap enough and effective enough and the foul black smoke of diesel exhausts is forever banished from the face of Jamaica.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Monday April 30 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think there is one important aspect of the current debate on Russian ships in Kingston Harbour which we seem to have ignored up to now. So far we have only discussed the presence of the Russian ships in terms of whether they did or did not have any effect on the results of our general election: and as you know, charges and counter-charges are flying about furiously at this moment. On Friday of last week, and still concerned mainly with the local political scene, Sir Alexander Bustamante announced that two more Russian ships are due here some time in the first half of May. Sir Alexander made it clear that permission for these ships to enter our Harbour was given by the previous government. But while the previous government had allowed the sailors <sup>on</sup> the two earlier ships to go ashore, Sir Alexander said those who are due in May would not be allowed to go ashore. He also said that the ships will not be allowed to take on any stores other than fuel, water and medical supplies. In other words, they will not be permitted to buy stores of foodstuff.

So we have the picture looking something like this: The previous government gave permission for two Russian research ships to ~~land~~ enter our Harbour, allowed the Russian sailors ashore and placed no restrictions on whatever stocks <sup>of food</sup> the Russians wanted to buy. This government, on the other hand, is only allowing the Russians to enter our harbour because they do not want to go back on a promise made by the previous government. But to show their disapproval they are not allowing any Russians ashore and they are not allowing the Russians to buy food. If the point is to show that this government

intends to be more thorough-going in its anti-communist stand than the previous government, then the point is well made.

But here we run up against the tricky new factor we do not seem to have taken into consideration. As from August 6th we are going to handle our own foreign relations and we are going to have relations both with states whose ideologies we approve of and states whose ideologies we detest, and the way we handle these relations is going to have considerable importance for our own interests. So let us look at the Russian ship business from that point of view.

Now that we have decided not to sell them food the Russians may not send their ships here in May. They may decide instead to go into a United States port for their fuel, food, water and medical supplies. And the Americans will let them have the stuff and the Americans will probably allow their sailors ashore because this is normal/<sup>international</sup> practice. But the matter does not end there. The Russians, if they want to, can take most effective reprisals against us for denying them this normal courtesy. The Russians have the power to veto any application for membership to the United Nations. So they can hit back at us by vetoing our membership. I am not saying they will do this: I hope they do not. The big point is that they can, if they want to. And if they do decide to veto our membership then there is very little we or our friends can do about it.

And the moral of this is that we will have to think a lot more carefully before we act in an independent Jamaica than we did in a colonial Jamaica. If we don't we may<sup>get</sup> ourselves into a whole heap of serious and unnecessary trouble, especially in international affairs.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday ~~April~~ May 1 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Speculation is an important part of the human condition. When man has not got all the information or all the knowledge he would like to have on some important topic of the day he is ~~xx~~ likely to take the little information he does have and use it as the basis for a wider speculative picture. So let us do a little speculation on who is likely to be Jamaica's first Governor-General. But in order ~~to~~ to speculate with any degree of intelligence we must have a basis of fact, otherwise we are not speculating but guessing rather wildly. So what are the facts on which we can speculate. First, quite some time ago, Sir Alexander Bustamante said that he would be the first native Jamaican occupant of King's House. More recently, without actually committing himself, he said that he had occupied all the posts that he said he would: he was Jamaica's first Chief Minister under universal adult suffrage and we will be Jamaica's first Prime Minister in independence. ~~xxxxxx~~ <sup>Now I have</sup> ~~is~~ an additional bit of new information which is not public property, but which strengthens this point even more. The story is that the Premier has asked the Governor to stay on at King's House beyond August 6th so that the Premier will have a little more time to complete his plans. So much for the base of tentative fact: now for the speculation.

My guess is that Sir Kenneth Blackburne will serve out this year at King's House. But I should be very surprised indeed if he stayed on much beyond the end of this year. Sir Kenneth has worked extremely hard and I think he would welcome a well-earned long rest. I don't think you need me to tell you what a fine job he has done,

especially in arousing the public conscience on behalf of the less privileged sections of this society. Operation Friendship, the Campaign for a Better Jamaica and a host of other good works were inspired by this very good man. But you all know this. In his own quiet and unassuming ~~way~~ and always friendly way he has done much for Jamaica. But I think he is now ready to hand over. So, if as seems likely, Sir Kenneth ~~Does~~ stay till the end of the year, he will in fact be Jamaica's first Governor-General for a brief period of five to six months and then a Jamaican will take over.

At the moment the hottest tip is that Sir Alexander himself will then take over King's House. But there are real problems here. Constitutionally the Governor-General will have a great deal of influence but very little actual power when it comes to real decision-making at the political level. If Sir Alexander goes to King's House he will have to give up his leadership of the Jamaica Labour Party and his seat in parliament. To whom will he <sup>hand</sup> the leadership of the party? I think to a very large extent the question of the succession will decide Sir Alexander's future action. If he is satisfied that the party will hold together without his leadership if he can be sure that there will be no destructive power struggle, that his nominee as the new leader of the party would be accepted by the J.L.P. hierarchy, then I think he might be tempted to go to King's House and what does in effect amount to retirement from active politics. But there are many and very big 'ifs' and anyone of these could prevent Sir Alexander's move to King's House.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday May 2 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night I speculated on whether Sir Alexander Bustamante would be the first Governor-General of an independent Jamaica: and I ended up a a list of big 'ifs' any of which could prevent him from moving to King's House - that is if he does in fact want to go there. Of course, Kingston itself is rife with a great deal of speculation. In some place the big point of conversation is whether Mr. Ashenheim will become Prime Minister if Sir Alexander goes to King's House; in others the point of speculation is whether Mr. Seaga is likely to become possibly the youngest Prime Minister in the world: and so it goes. But of course the speculation is not confined only to the government party. There is quite a deal of speculation on the future of the P.N.P. and its leader. And here there seems to be quite a strong body of St. Andrew opinion which would like to see Mr. Manley as Jamaica's spokesman on international affairs, preferably at the United Nations. Many people have used as an example the case of Mr. Adlai Stevenson who failed to win elective office and is now the main spokesman of the United States at the United Nations. But the comparison is false. Mr. Stevenson is a Democrat, working for a Democratic Party government. The comparison with the United States would have made sense if the defeated Republican, Mr. Nixon were the United States spokesman at the U.N. And then there are some people who feel that the leaders of the P.N.P. would somehow be mean and petty if they refused to co-operate with the J.L.P. government. This is nonsense. It is the business of the opposition to oppose. There job in a healthy parliamentary democracy is to harrass and the harry the government of the day, to make life

as difficult and uncomfortable for that government as possible. Any opposition that does not do this is not performing its proper function. And all this talk about the opposition having to be constructive is silly. They are there to oppose and, if possible, to bring about a public loss of confidence in <sup>the government</sup> ~~it~~, and to defeat it. This was the function and the duty of the J.L.P. in opposition and it is now the function and the duty of the P.N.P. in opposition and we are going to judge it in part by how it performs that function. Only in the event of a national emergency, only in the face of a clear threat to the entire nation and its institutions, can we demand of the opposition that it co-operates with the party in power. At all other times it must oppose as vigorously and as aggressively as possible.

On the personal/<sup>ity</sup>side there are many people who feel that Mr. Manley should take a long and well earned rest after his hard seven years in office. They feel that the P.N.P. has come to depend too much on one man and that it would be good for the party if it had to get along without Mr. Manley for six months or a year. They say it was a fantastic reversal of the ~~historic~~ <sup>and roles</sup> origins/of the two parties that the J.L.P. campaigned as the party with the programme while the P.N.P. projected a single personality. Certainly, it seems to me that this is a point on which the P.N.P. must seriously take stock. Is it a party than can hold together without Manley? And what will hold it together? To ~~perform its functions~~ <sup>effectively</sup> both inside and outside parliament, it seems to me that the P.N.P. needs to take a cold hard look at its internal set-up as well as at its relations with rural Jamaica. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday May 3 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: In terms of Jamaica's own interests, I am very glad indeed that the government has ~~xxx~~ after all decided to let the Russian ships now in our Harbour have whatever food stocks they want. As I told you on Monday, this is no more than normal international practice and it is wisdom on the part of our leaders to accept this fact of international life.

But let us now look at a very disturbing by-product of this entire business. All this talk about telegrams has led to a most curious situation. The question has been asked: If these telegrams have in fact been sent, how is it that the leader of the People's National Party knew about it? Then followed the next question: And does this mean that for the past seven years our mail has been censored by the late P.N.P. government? And then you get a series of conclusions, going something like this: Either there was secret censorship under the P.N.P. government or else some civil servants have betrayed their trust. In either case this is a gross infringement of our civil liberties, and somebody must be brought to account for it. And so you have a call for an investigation, and the accuser becomes the accused. This is very neat and very clever; and viewed by itself it is a reasonable move in the political game of cut and thrust. And up to this point I have no quarrel with it at all. In my own view - and I have told you this already - the Russian ships and the telegrams did not materially affect the election results. So, this business in itself does not disturb or bother me.

What does disturb and bother me is that we have recently had a series of calls for investigations of civil servants and of other

bodies and behind/<sup>all</sup>these calls there has been the hint of a threat, the suggestion of an attempt to frighten people into line.

Now please do not get me wrong. . I hold no brief for people who abuse their positions. I think any civil servant who is proved guilty of taking part in party politics should be fired. No civil servant is supposed to actively campaign for either party. And I think it is perfectly right and fair for this government, if it wishes to do so, to remove any political appointee of the past government from any board of corporation or any other statutory or semi-government body. When the P.N.P. government took office it exercised this selfsame right: the I.D.C. was a case in point. So I am not quarrelling with the condemnation of civil servants who are active in politics or with the removal of political appointees. This is fair and reasonable.

What I am quarrelling with is the creation of a climate of fear and anxiety. If it is allowed to grow, this sort of climate leads to grave sicknesses in the society: it leads to people denouncing each other, to telling tales in order to curry favour and secure their jobs, to the ugly mentality of always trying to get into the good books of whoever happens to be in power and , ultimately, to wholesale purges whenever there is a change of government. And this can be a very grave danger to democracy itself. So let us put an end to these threats and fears. The Premier called on all Jamaicans, of whatever persuasion, to serve Jamaica. The creation of a mental Ministry of Fear will not serve Jamaica: we do not want it here.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday May 4 at 6,15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: This month, the month of May, is Child Month, and I think you have all heard or read about it over the past few days. The history of how it came about, the facts and the figures and the needs of the three organisations that make up the Child Month Committee - all these have been talked about on the radio and written about in the press, so I will not go over the same information again. I think we all know that the three organisations concerned are : the Child Welfare Association which concentrates on the physical care of children and the education of mothers in the care of their children and the planning of their families. Then there is the Jamaica Save the Children Fund which concentrates on infant schools and play centres for children ~~far~~ before they reach school age. The third one is the Jamaica Children's Service Society which concentrates on problems of neglected children, foster care, adoptions by relatives in the United States and contact with parents who have migrated to Britain and left their children in Jamaica. So between them three organisations do in fact provide as rounded a pattern of child care as is possible and within the limits of their resources. And of course their major problem is the problem of money. In spite of grants from two government departments and the K.S.A.C. they just do not have enough money to carry on the job they are now doing. In 1960 alone they spent £497 more than their income on infant centres alone. And there are only nine of these centres: six of them in the Corporate Area, two in St. Thomas and one in St. Catherine. There are no infant centres in the rest of the island, and there is a desperate need for them all over Jamaica.

I think we should have an infant centre performing both the functions of a day nursery and infant school in every sizeable Jamaican community of say five hundred families. We owe at least this much to the children of this island. We owe them a chance, all of them, whatever their origin, to eat well and grow up straight in mind and body. And we cannot expect the government to do everything. We must play our parts too. And we can play our parts in a very concrete and practical way. And we can do it in a most painless manner.

Let every man who smokes give the price of one packet of cigarettes once a week for this month to help the children who are in need of help. If every man in every town and village of Jamaica were to do this, the cost to him would be very small but it will make a world of difference to hundreds and hundreds of children - some of them homeless and hungry and in desperate need of care. If boxes for the children were set up in every little store and every little rumshop in Jamaica and the <sup>man or</sup> woman behind the counter reminds each customer that this is Child Month and there are thousands of Jamaican children that are in depperate need, I am sure that we can raise a vast sum of money - in small coins - to bring comfort to these little ones. So please, will every leading <sup>in every community -</sup> citizen/the teacher, the priest, the district nurse, the local J.P. - will you please all start your own child month effort. And when you have collected your money send it ~~the~~ to the Child Month Committee, 13 East Street, Kingston. This is for our children.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday May 5 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Tomorrow will see the end of the week-long Consultation which the Jamaica Christian Council has been holding at the Union Theological Seminary here in Kingston. This Consultation was supported by the World Council of Churches and the Church of England in Jamaica also took part. So this week-long gathering of Christian leaders can fairly be described as being representative of every single denomination in Jamaica except the Catholic Church. There were representatives from America, Africa and Europe and it was to this gathering that Bishop Gibson announced that talks on unity were now going on between the Anglican Church and the Methodist Church. ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~

The subject which this group of high Christian leaders discussed the whole of this week was "The life and Mission of the Church in the Building of the new Jamaica" and they paid me the very great compliment of asking me to lead the discussion on social conflict and tension within our society, and <sup>so</sup> I met and spent the best part of Wednesday afternoon with our Christian leaders.

As a result of this meeting two things have impressed me very greatly. First, that our Christian leaders are very concerned about the role the Church is playing in our society; and second on the question of the unity of the Christian Church. I commented on the moves towards Christian unity on the 25th of last month and my meeting with Christian leaders have only confirmed the views I expressed then. So this evening I should like to comment on the role of the Church in our society.

Now, one of the things I have observed is the importance of

appearance in church-going. The women have on fine dresses and fine hats and shoes and stockings: they are all dressed up. And so are the children. And the men are equally spruced up. Suits, collars and ties, shining shoes and the like. The big question is: what happens if you are a Christian and you do not have a fancy dress or fine stocking or a pretty little hat? What happens if you do not possess a tie or a jacket? In all my years in Jamaica I have only once seen a man go to a church service in shirtsleeves and barefooted, and he went to a Catholic service. Everywhere else I have found that if you do not have the right clothes, if you cannot put up as good an appearance as the other churchgoers, then you just do not go to church. The person who is obviously poorly dressed, the woman who cannot afford a hat and silk stockings, the man who does not own a jacket, they know that the others are going to look at them in a funny way - and this is something I have heard again and again from people who are devout Christians but who are too poor to put up the right appearances - and so they stay away from Church. This is not just a question of being clean and neat and tidy and showing respect for God's house. A man can be without a jacket and barefooted and still be neat and tidy; a woman can be dressed poorly and with a kerchief over her head and still be neat and tidy. But the looks and frowns of their fellow Christians keep them from the House of God. So, when you go to your service tomorrow, look about you and think about this. And then ask yourself how you measure a person's Christianity: is it by the clothes they wear and the car they drive? Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday May 7 at 6.15p.m.  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The new session of the Jamaican legislature opens tomorrow. Members of both Houses of Parliament will be sworn in and the Governor will read ~~the~~ Speech from the Throne, which will give us an outline of some of the key things the new government ~~will~~ intends to do in the immediate future. So, by this time tomorrow evening we should have a pretty clear picture of just how, and in what order this government proposes to carry out its election promises. Of course we are not going to get any sort of detailed blue-print: Throne speeches never are detailed blue-prints; they are broad outlines of legislative programmes.

What are likely to emerge as the priorities from tomorrow's Throne Speech? I think to an extent Sir Alexander Bustamante told us what these priorities will be in his first/<sup>two</sup> formal statements as Premier of Jamaica on Friday April 27th. At that time he said his government would do whatever it could to reduce the cost of living; and he made <sup>two</sup> ~~the~~ specific undertakings - first, that market fees will be reduced and second, that the fees for truck licences will be reduced. He also promised that his government that his government would examine other ways in which the cost of living could be controlled. So I expect this attempt to grapple with the cost of living to be the most pronounced feature of the new government's legislative programme. This will be both popular and in keeping with the J.L.P.'s election promises. And in terms of party politics, any assault on the cost of living by the government would be much too popular an issue for the P.N.P. opposition to fight against. So I expect the new government, especially in these early days,

to look strong and decisive and in complete control in both Houses of parliament. My view is that we are in for a most exciting new parliamentary session. Both parties in the House are rich in debating talent. The Front Bench of the P.N.P. opposition, with all but two former Ministers back in the House, is strong and experienced. They are probably much more familiar with the details of the ministries they used to run than are the present Ministers. Mr. Wills Isaacs should be a formidable critic on Trade and Industry; and on Agriculture both Mr. Keble Munn and Mr. Allan Isaacs will speak with great authority and experience. And Mr. Glasspole with his vast experience as a former Minister of Labour, a former Minister of Education and a former Leader of the House, will be a potent force in any debate, and particularly so on Educational matters. If Mr. Manley does not go on the long holiday, on which there has been so much speculation, then his presence in the House is likely to be quite as dominating as that of Sir Alexander Bustamante.

But if the P.N.P. Opposition is rich in experience, the J.L.P. government is rich in youthful talent, in vitality, in native intelligence and a driving will to succeed. And this will, I think, offset P.N.P. experience in the early stages of our new parliament. I expect people like Mr. Seaga, Mr. Lightbourne, Mr. Tavares, Mr. McNeil, Dr. Eldermire - most of them very young men - to soon get into their stride and become <sup>as</sup> forceful and commanding parliamentary personalities/ as the most outstanding of their older colleagues on both sides. Certainly, this promises to be possibly the most exciting parliamentary session in the history of our legislature. Goodnight.

*Little England*

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday May 8 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: May 31st, the end of this month, was the date fixed by West Indian leaders in London last year as the date on which the West Indies Federation was to become an independent nation and a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Now, just about a year later, the British government has fixed May 31st as the date on which the West Indies Federation will formally come to an end. So, the same day which was to see the birth of a new nation will, instead, see the end of a dream. On that date the West Indies Federation will formally be declared dead and finished, wiped out, a complete failure consigned to the dustbin of history.

One of the striking things about this whole business is that the collapse of the Federation seems to have had such a small impact on both Trinidad and Jamaica, the two territories that signed the death warrant of the Federation. Almost without a pause, Jamaica has gone on as though she had simply taken a slight detour which took her off the main road for a little while, but now she is back on the highway and going full speed ahead. Much the same sort of thing happened with Trinidad, though to a much lesser degree than with Jamaica: Trinidad does not seem to have made even a temporary detour: she has kept straight on the highway, first to internal self-government and the Cabinet system, and now, this month, to settle the date for her own independence. The Trinidad independence Conference will begin in London on May 28th - three days before the West Indies Federation is pronounced dead.

The only people for whom the death of the Federation has presented serious problems are the people of the eight smaller islands of the

Winwards and Leewards and Barbados. With the possible exception of Barbados, none of these smaller islands can be self-supporting on their own; and it is doubtful whether they can be self-supporting even as a group. The only possibility of this group of islands becoming self-supporting would be if really drastic planning were undertaken to rationalise and integrate the economies of each/islands into a single whole, and if the political structure is completely overhauled to do away with the costly luxury of each island having its own little form of Cabinet government. So far not one of the present leaders of the 'Eight' seems prepared to face this painful fact of life.

The leaders of 'the Eight' are in London now for today's opening of the conference to try and set up a new and smaller Federation, popularly known as 'The Little Eight'. If these leaders will come down to earth, if they will face ~~that~~ <sup>the</sup> fact that their islands are small and poor and cannot afford costly governmental structures, then something might come out of this conference. If on the other hand they go on strutting around as though they are big shots wanting the best of everything without making any real effort to help themselves, then I am afraid the fate of the little eight is likely to be as disastrous as that of the bigger federation. The big difference is that the consequences will be tragic for the ordinary people of the eight islands. Britain is becoming poor, she can't afford an unending stream of grants any more. The U.N. and the U.S. will aid a <sup>little</sup> poor/independent nation if it proves itself. This is the lesson and the challenge for the leaders of the eight. I pray they rise to it. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday May 9 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I told you last night that of the ten islands which made up the West Indies Federation which will formally be pronounced dead at the end of this month, Trinidad and Jamaica have felt the impact of the failure of the Federation least. The death of the federation poses no great challenges for the people and leaders of these two islands. But it does pose very great challenges for the leaders and people of the Windward and Leeward islands and for Barbados. And it is in response to these great challenges that the leaders of these islands are now in London to try and set up a new and smaller federation of the eight islands.

This does not of course mean that Jamaica and Trinidad have come out of the disastrous federal experience utterly untouched. The heavy burden of the cost of running the four-year-old federation fell very largely on the Jamaican and Trinidadian taxpayers' shoulders; and money which could have been used to bring better services to the people of these two islands went into the financing of a top-heavy federal superstructure. Jamaica and Trinidad also contributed greatly to the common services which the federal government ran on behalf of the ten units. And Trinidad and Jamaica are under obligation to continue their contributions until the federation is formally ~~dissolved~~ ~~at~~ at the end of this month.

After May 31st an interim organisation, <sup>probably</sup> ~~probably~~ with Sir Stephen Luke as the interim Commissioner, will take charge of all the assets and liabilities of the dead federation and run them common services until the whole business has been sorted out and final decisions have been made. A conference to settle all these

matters will probably be held in about three months' time. Representatives of all the governments who share in the financing of the common services will meet at this conference, and it is there that I expect some really tough horse-trading to take place.

For instance, I expect the government of Trinidad to put forward a strong case for British West Indian Airways to be accepted as a common service. You will remember that the government of Trinidad bought out B.W.I.A. last year. This West Indian airline had been running at a loss for years as a subsidiary of British Overseas Airways Corporation. To the best of my knowledge it is still running at a loss. But it is an obvious necessity in the region. The islands, especially the islands of the Eastern Caribbean, would be even more cut off than they now are if B.W.I.A. were to go out of existence. I think it was the realisation of how desperately we need <sup>relatively quick</sup> inter-island communication that prompted Dr. Williams to buy the airline. But I think he is also finding the upkeep of B.W.I.A. a very costly business. And so, I think, he will press for it to be accepted as a common service with all the West Indian territories sharing in the cost of running it. And I think he will be particularly insistent that Jamaica should share in this. If the Jamaica government agrees that B.W.I.A. should be accepted as a common service then we will have to pay a part of the cost of running it. If on the other hand the Jamaica government refuses, then Trinidad may well decide to pull out of sharing in the cost of the running of our university. And if that happened it could be the start of whole new drastic chain of events.

Goodnight.

- 1) The Fear of Violence: A State of Mind
- 2) Tribute to Denis Gick

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday May 10 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I wonder if you have noticed/very significant - something and for me - something rather disturbing, whenever some big event comes up in Jamaica? Just think back to some of the big political events over the past five years and pick out a single factor that is common to all of them. For me one such single factor is, and has been, all the fearful talk about the possibility of violence. Have you noticed this thin thread of fear that runs through a section of the Jamaican community whenever we are on the verge of something big and important. Do you remember the atmosphere that was generated in the Corporate Area in particular during the federal elections of 1958? People expected violence and talked about violence and feared violence. And do you remember the same thing happening in our general elections of 1959? Once again there was talk of violence and the generation of <sup>an</sup> atmosphere of fear. And the same happened at the time of the referendum, and again at our last general elections. And when I attended this week's opening of the new session of the legislature I again heard talk of the possibility of violence. There were a few skirmishes and a few excited people - mainly party fanatics - pushed each other about. People tried to break the police cordons and the police had to restrain them forcibly. But I did not think this added up to any threat of violence: and yet someone said to me very seriously and with great concern: 'If it is like this now then we can ~~xxxx~~ forward to some real violence in August'. When I asked why the man said 'Everybody says there's going to be violence in August'.

Now why is it that a minority, a very articulate and influential

minority, of Jamaicans have gone on for years generating the fear of violence on every big occasion? Part of the reason could be a sort of subconscious desire for thrills and excitement, much as a child might wish for the thrill of experiencing a hurricane without thinking of the dreadful damage it could do. That could be a reason.

But I think there is something much ~~more~~ more important than the mere seeking of thrills behind all these prophecies of violence. I think these people genuinely distrust and fear their fellow Jamaicans. Deep down in their hearts they have no real confidence in the stability of their society and in the balance and maturity of <sup>the majority of</sup> their ~~people~~ fellow citizens. /And so they expect the worse to happen whenever anything important comes up. This is both a nasty and a dangerously destructive state of mind. I hope these prophets of gloom will take a fresh look at both themselves and at the majority they fear and then ask themselves whether it is not they who lack stability, maturity and a balanced outlook. They might learn a great deal if they are really honest with themselves.

Now let me pay a tribute to Denis Gick who died on Tuesday. Many of us are going to miss that quiet and friendly voice which introduced so much of our light classical music. Denis Gick was one of the pioneers of Jamaican radio and he did as much for radio as anybody else in Jamaica, if not more: and on or off the radio he never talked down to anybody or up to anybody. This, I think, was one of the things I liked most about him. He was a <sup>st</sup>right and unpretentious man who quietly and honestly gave much to the land he adopted and loved. He was a good man. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday May 11 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: On Tuesday of this week I spent a long, interesting and most rewarding evening with the members of an organisation called The Overseas Contract Officers' Association. They were all people from the United Kingdom - Englishmen, Scotsmen, Welshmen, Ulstermen, and their wives. The men were here working for the government of Jamaica on a contract basis. They possess the special skills that Jamaica needs and which not many Jamaicans have yet acquired. In other words, they were here doing jobs which had to be done and for which we either had no qualified Jamaicans, or else there were not enough qualified Jamaicans to fill all the jobs. These people know that they are here on a temporary basis. They know that as ~~soon~~ <sup>soon as</sup> Jamaicans become qualified the Jamaicans will take over the jobs they are now doing. So the first thing to note is that this particular group - and they are men with mainly technical skills and degrees - is not robbing any Jamaican of any job. But getting the kind of skills these people have - for instance, becoming a quantity surveyor is not something that can be done overnight. And so our government is likely to need to use the skills of these people for quite some time to come. Of course it will suit us to develop these specialist skills as quickly as possible. The sooner Jamaica can fill all these specialist technical jobs with Jamaicans the better it is going to be for us all round: it will cost the government less in terms of paying passages and the like and it will be good for Jamaicans to hold down the top technical and engineering jobs in the land. This is one of the reasons why pressing on with our technical training programmes are so important and why I selected our College of Arts,

Science and Technology as the most important institution of 1961 when I did my end of year round-up last December.

In any event, as things now are, we have these people with us and among us because we need their skills. They know and we know that as soon as we can ~~replace~~ replace them with Jamaicans we will do so. In fact they themselves expressed the view that it would suit Jamaica's best interests to develop our own technical skills as soon as possible. But while they are among us, and they are likely to be here, some of them at least, for a number of years more, how are they faring? How are they getting on with Jamaicans? What are the problems and difficulties they face? And is there anything we can do to make their stay among us as happy and as pleasant as possible? And do we want to do anything about it? And what are they doing to try and get along with Jamaicans?

I think one of the things that impressed me most about this particular group of men and women was their genuine desire to get along with Jamaicans, to do their jobs well, and to make life as pleasant and comfortable for their families. And I think one of the things that has distressed some of them a bit is the fact that some Jamaicans regard their presence as depriving Jamaicans of good jobs. Well, this particular group is certainly not depriving any Jamaican of any good job, or, if they are, then it is not their fault. The fault, if there is any fault, is with our government who brought them here. But I am satisfied that there is no fault, that we do need the skills of these expatriates. Tomorrow I will discuss some of their social and economic problems. So till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday May 12 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Shortly after an expatriate British contract officer had arrived in Jamaica and taken up his job, he struck up a friendship with a Jamaican in his department who held a post of equal rank. The Jamaican invited the expatriate and his wife to dinner with his family. The newcomers accepted gratefully and went. With typical Jamaican hospitality, a feast was laid out for them. There was rum and whisky and wine to drink and there was chicken and beef and pork and all manner of delightful things to eat. The British couple had a good time and enjoyed themselves immensely and liked the people with whom they were. They were invited out a second and a third time. And then the problem set in. They wanted to return the hospitality of the Jamaicans who had treated them so well. But after they had paid their forty or sixty pounds in rent, and after the man had sent off some money to Britain to keep up his insurance and to pay the instalment on the money he had borrowed to buy some tropical clothes, or complete his training or to help support his parents, the young British couple just did not have enough of his first month's salary to set up anything like the dinner which they had been treated to by the Jamaicans. In fact things were going to be very tight until the next pay cheque came along. So they did not return the hospitality of the Jamaicans. After the fine way they had been treated their pride and self-respect would not allow them to offer the Jamaicans any less. They could not offer them a modest stew or sandwiches and coffee or beer and so they just did not invite them. And when next the Jamaicans invited them, they found some excuse not to go. Their self-respect would not allow them

to accept hospitality which they could not return in equal measure. And so the inevitable happens. The Jamaicans say: you see, they were so nice when they first arrived, but look at them now. They are aloof and stand-offish and they've quickly learned to mix only with their own kind. And so secret resentments are built up and charges of prejudice are made. The expatriates do not realise that the Jamaicans have probably got themselves into debt to put on the fine feast and the Jamaicans do not realise that it is a combination of shame at not being able to return equal hospitality and self-respect that keep the expatriates away. This mutual misunderstanding is one of the big problems the expatriates face in Jamaica. I suggested that they ought to be frank with their Jamaican friends and say: look, we would love to have you at our homes but we just cannot afford to lay on the feast you gave us. Will you come and share what little we have. But as I said it I knew that this is a hard thing to ask of strangers in a strange land.

Another hardship these people suffer is the assumption that anybody with a white skin is loaded with money and should be squeezed. They experience this in markets and with higglers and unlike us, they are afraid to argue about prices and so they pay more for the same item than you or I do. We discussed a whole range of food items on which these poor people paid a sort of colour tax. And yet, in spite of some of their difficulties, these people gave me the impression that they are happy to be among us. So, next time either ~~a~~ Jamaicans or ~~an~~ expatriates<sup>are</sup> tempted to make snap and sweeping judgements on each other, I would suggest they pause and think. Most prejudices are based on pure ignorance and misunderstanding. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday May 14 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night the Premier, Sir Alexander Bustamante issued a statement on television. The Premier said that a rumour had been going the rounds that the government had finalised ~~finalised~~ *concluded* arrangements for awarding a contract for television in Jamaica. This, Sir Alexander said, was not the case: the government has made no final decision as yet and no agreement has been arrived at. Sir Alexander went on to say that when the time comes that matter would be publicly discussed before any contract is award.

Now, the very fact that Sir Alexander made this statement is proof that there is some furious negotiation and pressurising and jockeying going on over this business of television. On Thursday night Colonel David Stirling, the famous 'Phantom Major' of World War Two who messed up the Nazis so badly in Africa, flew in from London. Colonel Stirling is the Chairman and Managing Director of Television International Enterprises and he came to put a proposal for setting up television to our government. Also in Jamaica, having come in from London a little earlier, is Lord Buckhurst, the head of Redifussion West Indies which runs Radio Jamaica, Radio Trinidad, Barbados Redifasion, as well as two radio stations in British Guiana. Lord Buckhurst too is pushing his group's proposals for setting up television in Jamaica. The third group which is making proposals to the government  
/for setting up television in Jamaica is the Gleaner Company which published another statement of its proposals last Saturday. These are the three interests in the field trying to get the contract for setting up television in Jamaica. My view is that one, or possibly <sup>working together</sup> two/ ~~xxxxxx~~ in this group, will bring television to Jamaica.

Each one of these groups has presented its own proposals to the government and, under the pressure of competition, each has assured the government that it can, if necessary, have television in operation Jamaica in time for our independence celebrations. And, again under the pressure of competition, <sup>each</sup> ~~each~~ of the three groups seems prepared to put up all the money for the start of operations. I am reasonably certain that the government is not prepared to make any financial commitment: I think it is not even prepared to accept the money as a long-term loan to a government statutory body. So, if television does come to Jamaica, it will be set up without costing the taxpayers of Jamaica a single penny in terms of financing the operation.

The next big question is whether our television will be operated as a private commercial undertaking or whether there will be a degree of government control by running it as a statutory body. Here I think the government's decision is likely to be based largely on Mr. Seaga's advice to the Cabinet. Mr. Seaga is the Minister responsible for radio, films and other cultural matters and television, when it comes, will be under his Ministry. So his views on how television should be run are going to be crucial. My guess is that Mr Seaga will favour a measure of government-control, probably in the form of a statutory board. I think any one of the three bidders would accept government-control and operate as principal agents, earning their money as commission on sales and profits. So how is the government likely to decide between these relatively equal bidders? I'll give you my views on this tomorrow. So till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday May 15 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: If all three of the principal bidders for the contract to bring television to Jamaica are prepared to finance the operation wholly, and if all three are prepared to accept government control, and if all three are prepared to accept a modest return in the form of commission, then choosing between the three is not going to be particularly easy for the government. For myself, I am very glad that the government has decided ~~not to be rushed.~~ We would love to have television in time for independence, but television is a fantastically powerful medium for either good or bad and it seems to me that laying the right foundations and making the right choices is crucial for our future.

So there are a few important factors that I should like the government to consider in making up its mind.

First, when television comes it should come to all of Jamaica as quickly as possible. If television comes only to urban Jamaica, if in the first year or two or three we only have television in the Corporate Area and places like Montego Bay, then the wide and unhappy gap that now exists between urban and rural Jamaica is likely to get worse, and that will not be a good thing for the country. We must bridge the gap between the 'two Jamaicas' as quickly as possible. But this presents some problems: very few people in rural Jamaica will be able to afford the price of a television set. So I should like to see a pattern of community viewing, with the local village hall as the centre where the entire community can come and watch its television of an evening. But even for this we will need receiving sets and I would suggest that the government investigate the applicati

of all three bidders to find out which can bring television to rural Jamaica most quickly, and which can supply acceptable receiving sets for community viewing at the lowest possible price. If our television is not a purely commercial undertaking we should be able to get a number of free gift sets from organisations like U<sup>N.</sup>/E.S.C.O and some of the big Foundations like Ford.

Second, I should like our government to enquire pretty closely into the type of programmes each of the three bidders propose to offer us and what sources they have for television material. It is pretty well inevitable, especially in the early stages, that much of what will be shown will be imported stuff. I personally have nothing against imported stuff. But what we do have to guard against is the importing of the cheap and the shoddy and the ugly. There is some really wonderful television material on which we can call from abroad, and there is also some shoddy material. I think our government wants to make quite sure that we get the best from overseas. I also think it is most important to find out what plans each bidder has for producing native Jamaican programmes using Jamaican talent. I think this business of balancing imported programmes with locally produced programmes is so important that I hope Mr. Seaga will regard it as one of the deciding factors in awarding the contract.

Finally, let me repeat that it is because television is such an important medium that we must make sure that it serves the best entertainment, educational and cultural interests of the people of Jamaica, in both town and country. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday May 16 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: We are all very concerned about the high cost of living; and one of our new government's most important undertakings has been the promise to do everything possible to bring down the cost of living. This evening I want to discuss one possible way in which the cost of living could be brought down.

Bread is a staple foodstuff: I should say that at least ninety-nine point nine percent of the Jamaican community eats bread. And in every home in Jamaica flour is used practically every day: flour for cakes, flour for dumplings. So, bread and flour are almost as common to our existence as salt and water. And so, if we can bring down the price of bread and flour we will, in one single move, make a big and dramatic cut in our high cost of living. But how are we to bring down the price of bread and flour when our bakers are now complaining that their operations are uneconomic. They put up the price of our one shilling loaf to one and three because they said the price of flour had gone up.

Well now, one of the problems is that we import our flour from Canada. Canada is the largest single exporter of wheat and flour in the world and wheat and flour are the cornerstone of the Canadian economy. She exports milled flour and she exports wheat in bulk.

Great Britain gets all her flour from Canada but she gets it in the form of bulk wheat, <sup>then</sup> and Britain/mills ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ the wheat and bags it herself and distributes it. This means that Britain has had to set up mills to mill the wheat and this in turn has meant the creation of jobs for British workers. But, much more important, the shipping price of a ton of bulk wheat to Britain is \$3.50. If

Britain had bought the already milled and bagged flour she would have had to pay ~~\$\$22x~~ somewhere in the region of \$22.50 for her ton of flour. The shipping price for a ton of bagged flour is \$22.50: the shipping price for a ton of bulk wheat is \$3.50. If you make the maximum allowance possible for loss and wastage in milling, you come up with the fact that it is still a great deal cheaper to buy your wheat in bulk and mill it yourself than it is to <sup>import</sup> ~~buy~~ bags of flour. This is just a cold hard fact.

And this fact means one thing and one thing only; if we had a flour mill in Jamaica our flour would cost less than it costs us today. And if flour costs less our bakers would be able to sell us our bread for less and this is bound to make a striking reduction in our cost of living. So why do we, who are much poorer than Britain, <sup>get our flour</sup> /at the highest price possible?

I understand that Trinidad has just entered into an arrangement with a group of investors to set up a flour mill there: and I understand the same group is now negotiating with Barbados and it looks as though these negotiations are likely to be successful. I also understand that representatives of this same group of investors came to Jamaica recently to try and arrange for the setting up of a flour mill here. But I understand they were <sup>received very coldly.</sup> ~~veryxennixxxrxrxixxx~~ but I should like to know why. There is no question/that having a flour mill <sup>living</sup> /here will help cut/costs, so why the resistance? I think Mr. Lightbourne should look into this question of a flour mill for Jamaica

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday May 17 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The government is going to put price controls on a wide range of goods that are in common daily use. This was the statement made by Mr. Robert Lightbourne, the Minister of Trade and Industry yesterday. But before Mr. Lightbourne made this public announcement he had first invited Mr. Stanley Motta, the President of the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce to discuss the matter with him. Mr. Lightbourne put his proposals to Mr. Motta and asked for the co-operation of Jamaica's merchant community so that as fair and just and reasonable a pattern of price controls could be worked out. In other words, the government sees the need for a measure of price control as an urgent national need, and it believes that this need could be dealt with most successfully and with as little fighting as possible if an understanding could be worked out between the government and the merchants. The merchant community, not unnaturally, does not like or believe in price controls. But as Mr. Motta has made clear, the merchants appreciate the fact that Mr. Lightbourne has consulted them and they propose to discuss the whole question with him in a friendly spirit to try and work out some understanding.

So the first thing we can say is that on the whole the proposal to introduce price controls has started off in a relatively healthy atmosphere, with both the merchants and the government seeming prepared to approach the matter in a spirit of reason and compromise. I hope this spirit continues during the tricky days of negotiating that lie ahead.

Now let us look at the really big question which a number of

people have already asked: Why price controls? Is there a need for it?

We all know that one of the cornerstones of the J.L.P.'s election programme was the promise to bring down the cost of living, and this, I think, is the whole point of this price control move. I do not think there is any other motive to it. The government is committed to bringing down the cost of living: controlling the prices of the daily necessities used by the vast majority of Jamaicans is one of the most effective ways of doing this. Indeed, in Jamaica today this seems to be the only way it can be done.

And when we start making a list of all those goods which are, to use Mr. Lightbourne's phrase, 'In common daily use' we will immediately see the extent and importance of this move in terms of the national interest. What do we use everyday? Sugar, flour, bread, milk, cornmeal, oils and fats, fish, meat, ~~vegetables~~<sup>ban</sup>: shirts, pants, shoes and all manner of women and children's clothing ~~and~~<sup>^</sup> pots and pans and kettles and stoves - but you can go on making your own list. Now, if ~~on all these things the prices are pegged at what they are now,~~<sup>and</sup> ~~xx~~ prices are reduced on the more costly items, the effect will be very striking. Your pound note will be worth more than it is now because it will be able to buy more. And a genuine drop in prices will mean that more people will be able to share in what we have. Things will be ~~shared~~ spread out a little more evenly than now. But of course there will be problems, and I will discuss some of these tomorrow. So till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday May 14 at 6.15p.m

Good evening: I think all reasonable people would agree that the cost of living is unreasonably high in Jamaica; further, I think they would agree that this burden of the high cost of living falls most heavily on the poorest sections of the Jamaican community. The household in which the total family income is three or four or five pounds a week pays exactly the same price for items of foodstuff and items of clothing as does the household where the total family income is fifteen or twenty or thirty pounds a week. And so the poorer families often have to do without many of the basic necessities - let alone the little luxuries which give point and meaning to civilised living. ~~For~~ I think most people would see the necessity for price controls from this point of view.

But, some would say, while we agree that price controls will make things easier for the poorer people, is it not likely to do great harm to business and can Jamaica survive and prosper without a flourishing business community? Are not price controls likely to put some people out of business? When I spoke to Mr. Lightbourne on Wednesday I realised that he was acutely aware of this particular problem. And it is precisely to safeguard against this that he has called for the co-operation of the merchant community. I think the pattern of price controls is going to be related to the mark-up of price. For example, if it costs say a pound for a particular merchant to bring a particular item into the country - and in this pound is included a proportion for wages and other overhead expenses - and if this merchant then offers this item for sale at two pounds, this would seem a clear case for price control, if the item is one in common

daily use. The margin of profit in such a case would be a clear one hundred percent. The government may decide, depending on the turnover of business, that a reasonable profit on this particular item should be twenty-five percent and set the controlled price of the item at one pound five shillings. So instead of making a profit of a pound the merchant would be making a profit of only five shillings on the item. This would certainly be a big cut in his profits, but it would certainly not be big enough to drive him out of business.

Let us take another case where the mark up ~~is/low and~~ <sup>seems high but</sup> the turnover is very slow: a case where the merchant can just get by with a forty percent mark-up because sales are few and far between. It would obviously suit ~~neither~~ neither the interests of the country nor the merchant to impose price controls. Equally, in a case where the turn-over is very fast, as in locally produced soap, if the mark-up is reasonable there would be no need for price control: if on the other hand the mark-up seems unreasonably high then there might be price control. Certainly, price control will mean a lower margin of profit but it will not mean squeezing anybody out of business.

Another question and a very tricky one which I think is likely to come up is that of wages. I expect some merchants to say that if profits are to be controlled then wages should be controlled too. And here I think the unions will have a great deal to say. Indeed we can expect a ~~big discussion~~ <sup>great debate.</sup> But I think the fundamental point we must all face is that it is in the basic interests of all the people to bring down the cost of living as quickly and sensibly as possible.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday May 18 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I am sure you are familiar with most of the current headlines. The United States and Britain and Australia and New Zealand are building up their forces in Thailand in case of a communist attack from Laos; the United States in carrying on nuclear tests off Christmas Island; the British Home Secretary, Mr. Butler, is in Africa trying to bring peace and reason to the explosive racial situation in the Rhodesias; the leaders of what has become known as the Little Eight - the Windward and Leeward Islands and Barbados - are in London trying to set up a new federation and most of them are showing that they have learned hardly anything from the failure of the bigger federation. There is an enquiry on in British Guiana to find out the facts of the recent burning down of Georgetown. The daily bloodletting goes on in Algeria; the Chinese are starving in communist China and Mr. Khrushchev is making his usual noises. These are the headlines, the important talking points. And there is an equally wide range of topic right here in Jamaica: cost-of-living, price controls, television, and the works.

But let me skip all these and go a little off-beat this evening.

The little island of Martinique is in the West Indies, it is one of the Windward Islands and it lies between Dominica and St. Lucia. It is an overseas department of France, the glorified French name for a French colony. It is 425 square miles in area and it has a population of 265,000 people. A very unimportant little place, one might say. And yet, is it all that unimportant?

Since 1948 some very strange things are said to have been

happening on that little island: in fact strange are these happenings that the French Government has set up a special institute on the island and has sent some of its top experts to investigate what is going on. And this is the story behind it:

In 1948 a mysterious object, some people say it was a flying saucer, dropped from the skies and buried itself very deep in the ground. Whether an object did in fact drop from the sky or not, is a talking point, something that has not been proved or disproved. What is a fact is that since 1948 a very strange and powerful radiation has been going on on the island, and this strong radioactivity has made everything grow. Reports are that all creatures and all plants are getting bigger and bigger. Cats and dogs are at least six inches taller than before; insects like flies, ants and beetles have grown to eight times their normal size. The dangerous cobra-lizards which are normally eight inches long have grown to two feet and over. Horses, cows, pigs, chickens have all become larger than they normally are. Rats are the size of cats and attack babies and grown-ups. And even human beings are being affected, though to a lesser degree: a 64-year-old scientist grew two and half inches taller in two years. And the thing that is worrying the experts is that this growing process could go on and on, generation after generation, until a new race of giant creatures spill over the island and spread to the other islands then and/to the world, a new master race of ruling giants. It makes you wonder, doesn't it? ~~It makes me often wonder whether the really important news ever get the big headlines.~~ Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday May 21 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last Thursday Mr. Robert Lightbourne, the Minister of Trade and Industry, said that his Ministry intends to break the stranglehold that a powerful shipping cartel has on the future of Jamaica. The immediate reason for Mr. Lightbourne's outburst was the news that the shipping lines had raised the surcharge on the canned citrus that we export: the old surcharge was six shillings, the new surcharge is fifteen shillings. This means that we will have to pay nine shillings more for each ton of canned citrus that we ship out of Jamaica. This simple fact is serious enough and I, for one, both understand and share Mr. Lightbourne's anger. The dreadful fact is that it does not matter how hard the people of this country work to try to compete in the world markets, our chances of doing so successfully can be destroyed by high shipping costs. For example, it costs South Africa four shillings and nine pence to ship a crate of citrus to the United Kingdom; it costs Australia just over seven shillings to ship a crate of citrus to the United Kingdom; but it costs Jamaica eleven shillings and three pence to ship the same crate of citrus to the United Kingdom. And please bear in mind that in terms of sea miles and the like we are nearest to the United Kingdom: Australia is 11,630 miles from Great Britain; South Africa is 6,176 miles; Jamaica is 4,030 miles from Great Britain. And yet it is the place which is so very much closer to ~~the~~ Britain than Australia and South Africa, which pays a shipping rate that is so fantastically higher than the rates paid by those two <sup>more</sup> distant lands. This is the big handicap we face with practically everything we export except sugar and bananas.



## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday May 22 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think we are now beginning to see a lot more clearly how the new government sees some of Jamaica's basic problems, and the plans of action it has decided on - on some very important fronts at least. Perhaps the most important single decision in terms of the immediate interests of the majority of Jamaicans is the decision to impose price controls as a means of bring down the cost of living. This, again in terms of the majority, is a universally popular decision. It is now important for the government to put the decision into effect as soon as possible. Another decision, one from which the benefits will be seen in the long run and not immediately, is that ~~industries~~ people setting up new industries will be given incentives to set up factories in what the Minister of Trade and Industry calls the depressed areas of Jamaica. As I understand it this means that all our industrialisation efforts will no longer be concentrated in the Corporate Area of Kingston and St. Andrew, and with only a token factory here and there. I have before now expressed the view that the people of Jamaica would benefit a great deal more from our industrialisation programme if it were more scattered throughout the island than it now is, so I am very happy indeed about this decision.

The other area in which very important and potentially far-reaching decisions have been made is in the fields of agriculture; and none gave me as much pleasure as three points Mr. Gyles, the Minister of Agriculture mentioned in Port Antonio on Saturday.

Mr. Gyles said that the government was thinking of supplying mechanical tools where farmers could not get labour at reasonable

rates. With this kind of assistance, he said, it would be possible for the farmer and his family to get on with the job themselves. This, for us in Jamaica, is a pretty radical sort of approach. It means that it would be possible for a small farmer, using a small tractor, to plough up his farm in a day without the use of outside help. This sort of operation would of course only be possible on relatively flat land. But it would be possible to use ~~such tractors~~ <sup>contour ploughs</sup> on hillside land too, once really careful and permanent terracing has been established. Indeed, the decision to use mechanical help on farms would be a very strong argument for undertaking a long-term programme of terracing Jamaica's hillside land. This is the sort of thing that has been done most successfully in Israel; and places like Japan are models of how to get the very best out of land which is very much more mountainous than ours simply by good and carefully planned terracing. I think once we do get around to serious terracing we will be amazed at how little use we have made of our land in the past. That is the day I am looking forward to. But of course this using of machines is going to mean one very important thing: it is going to mean the displacement of many farm labourers, especially on the smaller farms. What are we going to do with these people who have been displaced by machines? Do not get me wrong: I am all for using mechanical help. But I do <sup>feel</sup> ~~think~~ we must think clearly about the problems that will ensue.

If I am right in my interpretation of what Mr. Gyles has said so far, then we are in fact going to bring a new look to our agriculture. We are going to try and put it on a proper business footing in stead of treating as a form of social welfare activity to help ease our unemployment problems. And if that is in fact the case then we are going to face a number of problems, some of which I will discuss tomorrow. So till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday May 23 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: If you look at any country in the world where they have made a success of agriculture, one striking thing stands out: successful agriculture is not a large employer of labour. This is so for big countries as well as for small countries: it is so for the big United States and it is so for the small island of Puerto Rico. I have been on really large British farms, running into hundreds of acres, where you have the farmer and his family and perhaps two or three agricultural labourers. But these people use the most modern methods of farming and no man does the work that can be done by a machine: the machine is stronger and the machine is quicker than a score of labourers. And so in these countries where farming is successful agriculture contributes greatly to the national revenue but its contribution to easing unemployment is lower than almost any other sector <sup>if</sup> of the national economy. So, ~~xx~~ <sup>is</sup> agriculture/becomex more efficient in Jamaica ~~xx~~ it is bound to use more machines and less men. I think this is a fact we must face squarely and make up our minds about. We must decide either an efficient and modern system of agriculture which will progressively use less and less people on the land or else we must continue the rather primitive pattern where welfare and employment considerations are paramount. If we choose efficiency then we must prepare for a great drift from the land and an upsurge of unemployment in the cities.

There are things we can do to make this transition as easy as possible. My pet national terracing programme is one such emergency measure: the setting up of factories in rural Jamaica and building

of satellite towns around the factories is another. And of course the new money brought in by a revitalised Jamaican agriculture could contribute greatly to the opening up and development of rural Jamaica.

My impression is that Mr. Gyles wants to give agriculture this new look. Certainly, from the long term point of view this is in ~~the~~ Jamaica's interest. But the problems of the transition are likely to be very great indeed. If this is in fact the broad pattern of Mr. Gyles' thinking then one thing becomes of vital importance and that is that the entire farming community in Jamaica does some very hard thinking on the part that agriculture can and should play in the national life of the country. I do not think the government can carry through this great exercise by itself. It is going to need the advice, the criticism and the suggestions of the farming community; and of course it is going to need their co-operation.

But many of our farmers and our farming institutions are set in their ways and shifting some of them is going to be quite a job. Some are going to resist change for no better reason than that they are used to the old ways and are against change. It is rather like the people who clear hillside land by firing. You tell them what terrible long-term damage it does but they go on doing it because that is how it has always been. They are hidebound by the wrong traditions, the wrong customs, the wrong habits. Breaking these/<sup>bad</sup> habits is often a hard and difficult job. But it must be done if agriculture is to <sup>play</sup> ~~take~~ its part in the building of a decent future. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday May 24 at 6.15p.m.  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Yesterday's Labour Day marches erupted into a nasty wave of violence. One woman was killed and a large number of other people were injured, some of them quite badly. A very striking aspect of yesterday's outbreak of violence is the high casualty rate among the police. Reports are that between fourteen and sixteen policemen were injured while trying to restore order. And from the reports it would seem that certain gangs went out of their way to attack the police.

What are we to make of this ugly outbreak of violence? And what are we to make of this deliberate attack on the police?

I think the first and the most important thing to do is to get the whole picture into its proper perspective. There are enough people who are already saying that political marches should be banned; that this is the beginning of a new wave of lawlessness in Jamaica, and that all their fears and warnings about violence have been justified. To these people yesterday's ugly outbursts are a terrible dark shadow of the shape of things to come. So, let us try and set the picture straight before a wave of destructive panic is generated.

Yesterday's outbursts were very ugly indeed. But this was not an island-wide outburst; in fact, it was an outburst in one section of Kingston only. There were Labour Day demonstrations and marches in other centres of Jamaica. And these went off peacefully and quietly and cheerfully. It was only in Western Kingston that we had the nastiness and the ugliness of violence. So let us not smear and brand all the good and decent ordinary citizens of Jamaica

for the crimes of a small bunch of lawless political fanatics. This is the first point we must get clear. This ugly outburst of violence was confined to a small part of Kingston: it was not a national thing. So let us not build it up into anything bigger.

I am not saying this to minimise the importance of this nasty business. I just want us to look at it in a balanced way. But even viewed in this balanced light it is still very serious. It is by these methods, by violence and intimidation, by breaking the law, by attack their opponents with clubs and guns, that most dictatorships come into being. These were the methods used by Hitler's goon squads, and Mussolini's fascist thugs to undermine the rule of law. And once the rule of law was undermined, the way was clear for the dictators. That is why I am particularly disturbed by what seems to have been a calculated attack on the police.

And let us face it, the leaders of our political parties must take a large measure of blame for yesterday's violence. Now, I am not saying that anybody in the top leadership of the parties specifically encouraged violence. It is not as simple as that. But the fact remains that for a long time now a measure of violence has been tacitly accepted by all parties as <sup>a</sup> legitimate part of party activity~~ies~~. I think our political leaders must now make it clear to their followers that an independent Jamaica cannot afford this brand of political activity. And if the rule of law is to survive then our political leaders must stop undermining the authority **OF OUR POLICE FORCE.**

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday May 25 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: After Wednesday's violence the relations between the police and a section of the citizens of Kingston are likely to be even more strained than they normally are. The police had to use strong measures to stop the violence; they used tear gas and they used their clubs; and in the process they must have hurt quite a number of people. It is likely that some people who were not doing anything wrong were also hurt in the process. And when this sort of thing happens people become understandably bitter about the police. And yet, you know, this business must have been quite difficult for the police themselves. But of course, the person who is at the receiving end of tear-gas or a night-stick is not going to worry about the difficulties of the man who throws the tear-gas or uses the night-stick. To him that man is the enemy, and there is never anything good about the enemy.

But let us try and think calmly about Wednesday's outburst. Let us assume that there were no police with their tear-gas and their night-sticks. What would have happened. The violence would have gone on unchecked; and instead of one person being killed and a number injured, we may have had ten or twenty or a hundred killed in an orgy of shooting and stabbings and the like. Indeed, if there had been no restraining force to stop the violence, it is most likely that it would have spread, like a wave of madness, reaching out further and further until it became utterly beyond control. And who knows how far such a wave of madness might have spread before sanity returned? I have seen mob violence at firsthand, and believe me, it is a form of madness that can spread like a forest

fire, consuming everything before it. If we had no police to stop Wednesday's outbursts the whole Jamaican picture might be different today. We are all of us subconsciously aware of this: we know that the police are our shield against the complete collapse of orderly living. And yet we all tend to resent the police and to regard them secretly as enemies.

And the police, on their side, often forget that they are there as servants, not masters, of the public. <sup>Some of them</sup> ~~They~~ tend to see every private citizen as a potential criminal: they tend to be bossy and high-handed, they tend to bully the weak and the ignorant.

Both these attitudes, that of the private citizen and that of the police, are hangovers from the colonial past when the police were the servants of an alien master imposing an alien rule on us. But all that is ended now. Today the police are our servants, the guardians of rules and laws made by us. The trouble is that neither the hearts and minds of the police nor the hearts and minds of the private citizens are as yet adjusted to this new fact. I think once both police and public are adjusted to this fact relations will be so much happier and so much healthier.

So I would urge every citizen to think very carefully about his or her attitude to the police, and about the part the police play in our society. And I would also urge every policeman to think very carefully about his relations with the public and his attitude to the public. It seems to me that after what happened on Wednesday such a careful thinking out of the relations between police and public is very badly needed for the sake of the society.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday May 26 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: We are always talking about the high cost of living, and certainly the cost of living is so high today that it is an important talking point. But I wonder how many of you have given any serious thought to something which has recently struck me very forcibly - and that is the high and rising cost of dying.

I first discovered this<sup>, for me,</sup> new phenomenon on my last visit to the United States. Some friends had taken me out for the evening, and after dinner and the theatre they took me to Harlem's most famous night-club, the Baby Grand. The fame of the Baby Grand rests of the shoulders of an entertainer called Nipsy Russell, and to realise just how good Nipsy Russell is you must combine the comic skills of Charles Hyatt and Ranny Williams. Anyway, it was while Nipsy Russell was telling one of his famous stories that a very tall and impressive man joined our table, collected all our bills and then ordered champagne. I protested but One of my friends said: 'That's all right. He can afford it. He's in the funeral parlour business'. And then I discovered that some of the richest<sup>Negroes</sup> in the United States are in what my friend called the Funeral Parlour Business. A large number of these men, he said, had become millionaires because of the high cost of dying. The big man who had joined us was one such millionaire. This interested me so I asked a number of questions.

I found out that having a really impressive funeral with a beautifully polished ~~xxxxxx~~ coffin of hardwood was a must for most American Negroes. They generally had an expensive dunlopillo at the bottom of the coffin and the walls were lined with the finest ~~stuff~~

and costliest silk materials. Often the body of the deceased was embalmed before burial: and all these preparations were generally ~~supplied~~ <sup>handled</sup> by the funeral parlour which supplied the hearse and the transport as well as a choir of really beautiful singers. I also found out that the lowest charge in New York for putting on such an impressive funeral was in the region of two thousand dollars, which would be somewhere near seven hundred pounds for us. This does not of course include the cost of the funeral plot or the clothing of the mourning family. And it is not ~~of course~~ the very best in funerals: it is impressive but no more. Something more elaborate could be had for two or three or four times the amount of money. And so an impressive but relatively modest funeral worked out at about a thousand pounds. And ~~so~~ in order to have the right kind of funeral people start paying off to these funeral parlours well in advance, <sup>dying</sup> in much the same way as we pay insurance. And so <sub>1</sub> dying has become a big and costly business with costs going up.

I was ~~reminded~~ <sup>3</sup> reminded of all this by a funeral I attended recently here in Jamaica. The man in the family had died leaving his wife and <sup>3</sup> young children a modest amount in savings and insurance. In order to put on the right kind of funeral the wife spent all the savings. And now she has to feed and house and clothe and educate three youngsters without a penny in reserve. It made me wonder whether the man himself would not have preferred a more modest funeral with some money in reserve for his growing and living young children. What do you think? ..... Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday May 28 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think there has been a certain confusion about the position of imported tinned citrus. The way the news has come out it would seem that the government has imposed a complete ban on the importing of tinned citrus, which comes mainly from the United States. But in fact this is not the case. The government has not banned the importing of tinned citrus. And I think the use of the word 'ban' was particularly unfortunate in this case because it gave the wrong impression, which can cause unnecessary misunderstanding between ourselves and trading interests in the United States.

What has in fact happened is that the importing of tinned citrus has been placed on specific licence, which is a completely different thing from banning. If tinned citrus had in fact been banned it would have meant that we would not import such tinned citrus under any circumstances. But with tinned citrus on specific licence, it simply means that no tinned citrus can be imported <sup>out</sup> with the importer first getting a licence from the Trade Board. So the position is that tinned citrus is not banned and still be <sup>can</sup> imported.

The big difference is that it cannot now be imported freely and any old how. If anybody wants to import citrus now, they must first go to the Trade Board and ask for a licence. And before the Trade Board will give such a licence it will consult the Citrus Growers Association. If the Citrus Growers Association proves to the satisfaction of the Trade Board that local citrus can supply the need then the Trade Board is likely to turn down the application

for an importing licence. If, on the other hand, the Association does not satisfy the Board that it can supply the needed citrus, then the Board is most likely to give the permission to import. This means that whether the supply is locally produced or imported, the consumer will not suffer: tinned orange juice will be available for those people who want it. Whether it is locally produced or whether it is imported, will now depend entirely on our citrus industry. So the challenge, as Mr. Gyles indicated last Thursday, is to our local citrus industry. They can have the entire market, if they can win it.

And it would suit both the industry and the country if they can meet the challenge and capture the market. But the industry will have to prove itself. I think this sort of challenge will be good, both for citrus in particular and for agriculture in general.

I think that one possible reason for the popularity of tinned orange juice, especially in the Corporate Area, is that it is always available and at a reasonable price, in and out of season. I think that most people would prefer fresh oranges if they were as available and if prices compared favourably with the tinned variety. It is a sad commentary on the poor state of our marketing that Kingston often suffers /such a shortage of reasonably priced/ <sup>fresh</sup> citrus that we have to import the tinned stuff. I look forward to the day when citrus growers have so improved their marketing that we will not need to buy the tinned stuff. The citrus growers now have the incentive to bring this about. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday May 29 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: On Monday of last week I gave you the hard facts behind Mr. Robert Lightbourne's statement that his Ministry intends to break the stranglehold that a powerful shipping cartel has on the future of Jamaica. You will remember that I gave you facts and figures to show that we who are nearer the United Kingdom than both South Africa and Australia had to pay more to ship our citrus to the United Kingdom than both those more distant lands. And the reason for this is that the Association of West Indies-Transatlantic Shipping Lines had agreed among themselves on the fixing of prices and other conditions and on the keeping out of competition.

Since ~~Monday~~ I made that broadcast a number of people have expressed their anger at this state of affairs. But over and above their anger has been the worried question: How can we break this stranglehold?

Well, I have been trying to get the answers to precisely this question. How do we break this stranglehold that this shipping cartel has on Jamaica's vital trading with the outside world?

The obvious answer is to try and bring in another shipping line to do business with us. And I can tell you that this is precisely what the government is doing now. Mr. Lightbourne's Ministry is now having talks with a new shipping group to try and work out arrangements for them to carry our cargo. I am sure/<sup>you</sup> will understand that it is not in Jamaica's best interests to name this new shipping group at this time. The Association of West Indies-Transatlantic Shipping Lines is going to do its damndest to try and wreck any such arrangement if it can; so the less the Association

knows of what we are trying to arrange, the better. All I will tell you now is that if this deal does go through, and it looks like going through, then our shipping costs are likely to be much lower than they are at present.

But as I told you on Monday of last week, this is going to be one of our toughest battles and our only hope of breaking the hold of this cartel is by united and determined support of the government, if the going gets rough, as it is likely to do.

For instance, when India tried to break the hold of this same ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Line by bringing in another shipping company, the cartel shipping charges dropped its/~~XXXXXXXX~~ to ~~XX~~ so low a level that it was losing money. In this way it underbid the new ~~XX~~ shipping company.~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~  
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ The Indian merchants did not realise what was going on. To them competition had simply resulted in a marvellous dropping of shipping charges, and as merchants and exporters would do anywhere, they gave their shipping business to the lowest bidder. And since the lowest bidder was the same big cartel which had previously charged so much, they gave their business to the same line. The result was that the new company was squeezed out, leaving the big monopoly once more alone in the field. And then the monopoly put up its/~~XXXXXXXX~~ <sup>charges</sup> to even higher than they were before: and India found herself more completely at the mercy of the cartel than before, because no other line would come in and take a chance in case the Indian exporters let it down. So, if the government does do a deal with another shipping line, we would be committing/<sup>a form of</sup> economic suicide if we let the cartel break it by under-bidding. This is the big danger in trying to break this shipping stranglehold. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday May 30 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: When the East German communist regime built its Wall to prevent East Berliners from escaping to West Berlin and to freedom, the entire western world expressed shock and horror. Newspapers, radios and every other means of communications dramatised this new form of communist barbarism. And every time East Berliners defied and defeated their communist overlords by escaping either over ~~and~~ <sup>or</sup> under the wall, the press and people of the western world applauded and welcomed them as brave and heroic fighters ~~at~~ for freedom. And we, all of us, generally assumed that the Wall was a particularly communist brand of wickedness and inhumanity. And we all of us condemned it, as it deserved and still deserves to be condemned.

But if we condemn the Berlin Wall, is it not our duty also to condemn the new Wall which the British have just erected in Hong Kong to keep out refugees from Red China? Or is there one standard of judgement for what the communists do and another standard of judgement for what the western democracies do? But let us get the facts straight first.

The British Crown Colony of Hong Kong is a tiny area of 391 square miles, ~~off~~ the south-east coast of China: but as well as ~~in~~ Hong Kong island the colony also includes a piece of steep hillside land on the Chinese mainland. So, ~~like~~ <sup>as</sup> with Berlin, there is a land border between communism and democracy. The border between British Hong Kong ~~xxx22xxxxxxx~~ and communist China is 22 miles long. The population of Hong Kong has always been high. Before the refugees from communist China started flowing into the colony its

population was estimated to be about two and a half millions. But since the coming of the refugees the population has shot up to somewhere around three and a quarter millions. Now this, by any yardstick is a staggering increase, and what makes it worse is the ~~xxxxxxx~~ very smallness of the colony. We in Jamaica with more than ten times the land area of Hong Kong are worried about population growth and our population is slightly over half that of Hong Kong's population. But against this we must set the fact that Hong Kong is not an agricultural country. It is one of the greatest free ports in the world, with a shipping turnover that makes ours look silly. It also does extensive ship building and repairing; and it is way ahead of us in its manufacturing industries. And you know that the more industrialised a country is, the more people it can support to the square mile. But having made all these allowances, the population is still fantastically high. And this is the reason why the British have built their Wall along the 22-mile long border to keep out the refugees from communist China. I have given you all the facts so that you should see that there is a practical justification for the Wall. But no matter how practical the justification, I cannot, on any moral grounds, find any excuse for the British sending the refugees back into communist China, especially when the Formosa government is willing to accept them. Sure there are problems and difficulties. But are these more important than human freedom? For me this sending back of the refugees is a monstrous and unforgiveable act of /inhumanity. To excuse this we must also excuse the Berlin Wall and more.....Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday May 31 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Mr. Donald Sangster, the Minister of Finance, this afternoon presented the Expenditure Estimates of our Budget for 1962-63 to the first business session of the new House of Representatives. After Mr. Sangster presented his Estimates the House adjourned until next Tuesday when his proposals will come up for formal debate. This will give members of our parliament roughly five days in which to study Mr. Sangster's proposals. I think they are going to need all of those five days to study the Estimates, and I also think we are going to see a really lively debate on the Estimates next week. I personally think it would be premature to shoot off my mouth about Mr. Sangster's proposals. Like our members of parliament, I want to take a little time to study all their possible implications, especially as this government's approach to our finances may be markedly different from that of the past P.N.P. government.

What I would like to discuss this evening is the much publicised statement that our national purse is empty, that the government finds itself without any money. This talk has alarmed many people who interpret it as a suggestion that the past government has led the country to the verge of bankruptcy. Now let us face it, there are great political advantages to the <sup>party</sup> ~~power~~ in power if such a view is popularly accepted. The government will be able to say: 'We had intended to do this, that and the other but we now find that there just is not the money to do it; so please do not blame us if we cannot do all we want to. This is the mess we inherited from the previous government'. This is smart politics and it can be an

effective way of winning sympathy in making unpopular but necessary decisions. But there is always the danger that this sort of talk could become more successful than the people who started it intended it to be. People might really believe that the country is on the verge of bankruptcy; people might really believe that Jamaica is flat broke and in a mess. And if they believe this, and especially if the investors believe this, then we could get into a real mess. A wave of panic might lead to a drying up of money and to a drastic drop in investment. So I believe that all this talk about how broke the country is can be a very dangerous thing, for all its political advantages.

But what is the actual economic state of the country? In terms of money Jamaica owes to the outside world something in the region of £30 million pounds: that is about the size of our national debt. Against this, our Gross National Product is in the region of £250 million pounds a year: in other words, the national economy generates about 250 million pounds a year. To describe this as being broke is like saying that a man who has ten thousand pounds invested in all sorts of profit-making things, but who does not have a penny in the bank, is broke. And this is patently silly. In fact, a really intelligent and pushing businessman does not want to have cash in the bank. That is idle money. And so the absence of hard cash is no sign of being broke. It is important that we should get this fact straight: Jamaica today is not broke. Tomorrow I will <sup>discuss the raising</sup> ~~suggest why~~ <sup>of money</sup> ~~it seems~~ broke. So till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday June 1 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I told you last night that it seemed to me silly to suggest that Jamaica, which owes roughly 30 million pounds and has a Gross National Product of roughly 250 million pounds, is broke. On the basis of such figures we are well-off as a nation. In fact, on the basis of such figures we are not being really honest in describing ourselves as an under-developed nation. Again, on the basis of such figures we should have no difficulty at all in raising loans provided the conditions are right and provided we project the image of a politically and economically stable/<sup>and mature</sup>society which will honour its obligations; and, of course, provided the money is available. So, on the basis of the size of our Gross National Product and on the relative smallness of our national debt, we should not have any <sup>normal</sup> difficulties raising/loans from abroad.

But I think we will come up against a completely different kettle of fish if we try to raise grants from abroad for development purposes. Furthermore, I also think we are likely to have a very hard time if we tried to raise special long-term, low-interest-rate loans from abroad for development purposes. I think agencies like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are likely to ask pretty searching questions if we approach them for these special kinds of low-interest loans. And certainly, the Americans will also ask some searching questions of their own if we appealed to them for development grants. Indeed, I think it was quite an achievement for the past government to get the kind of money they did from the United States for the low-cost housing and rural water schemes.

I think the first question these people are likely to ask,

once they have looked at our figures, is: What proportion of your Gross National Product, what proportion of your own money, do you use for your own national development schemes?

And how will we answer them? I cannot give the figures in pounds, shillings and pence and I do not know if anybody else can, but all the evidence suggests that we use a very small proportion of our Gross National Product to plough back into national development.

About seventy percent of our Gross National Product is in the hands of the private sector of the economy; so let us say the government uses a large portion of the 30% in its hands for <sup>national</sup> development. This would still be pretty small. Most countries use a very much higher proportion of the national product for national development, and some countries - Britain and the United States are classical examples finance all their own development projects out of their own national resources. When we think of aid, we automatically think of Britain and the United States. What we often seem to forget is that the money for such aid must come out of the pockets of the workers and business people of those countries in the form of taxes. So when we ask these people for help they are likely to ask: What are you doing to help yourself? They are likely to say: We see that as a nation you have a Gross National Product of roughly 250 million pounds, well, tell us <sup>how</sup> you use it. What share of it goes into the development of your nation as a whole? And what contribution is the private sector making to your national development? And how do you regulate it? These are some of the urgent questions I hope our parliament will deal with when the debate on our expenditure Estimates come up on Tuesday. Goodnight.



more middleclass families in Jamaica own cars than do families in those two great countries: and as for the two-cars middle class family, there are prortionately more of them in Jamaica than in those two countries.

On the other side of the penny, neither Britain nor the United States can match us for our extremes of poverty. Portionately, our unemployment and under-employment figures are vastly greater than theirs. And in terms of what your pound note or your dollar bill can buy a greater percentage of our working people earn less than do the working people of those two countries.

But you should know all this. Mr. Eddie Seaga brought all this to dramatic public light when he started the great debate on the 'Haves' and the 'Have-nots' when the J.L.P. was still in opposition.

I think we can say with complete fairness that possibly our major single immediate problem is the problem of the uneven distribution of the wealth of the nation. And I think it was the public regognition of this problem by the Jamaica Labour Party, and its promise to do something about it that largely won the election. In persuit of its promise it has announced that it will introduce price controls and it has put orange juice and tomato juice on specific licence. But these are really small dramatic gestures. The great big problem is still ahead of us. It is the problem the P.N.P. did not face up to; and it is the one Mr. Seaga dramatised, and it is the one Jamaica must face up to sooner or later: and that is the problem of the distribution of the wealth of the nation. At bedrock, and in spite of all our other fancy moves, this is Jamaica most profound political, economic and social problem. Its solution is going to demand much from both government and people. The sooner we tackle it, the better for Jamaica. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday June 4 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: On Saturday, which ~~was~~<sup>is</sup> celebrated as the official birthday of the Queen, we witnessed the formal leave-taking of the British garrison from Jamaica. There are still British soldiers at Up Park Camp and Newcastle, and some of them will be here until the 22nd of this month. But official<sup>ly</sup> the British army garrison has said goodbye to Jamaica. After 250 years of being responsible for our defence and for our security, they have handed that responsibility to our own people. And this is one of the most important aspects of the meaning of independence for Jamaica. I think most of us have taken the presence of the British army for granted: it was or it seemed a natural part of the local national scene; something that had always been with us and so we did not give it much thought. In times of stress and trouble - in a hurricane, in a strike that could stop the economic heartbeat of the nation, whenever ~~anybody~~ there was the threat of large-scale violence to overthrow the elected government - the British army garrison was always on hand, willing and able to go into efficient action in order to help keep the peace of the land. Without thinking too much about it, we knew this and the knowledge gave us a sense of security. And those who were bent on large-scale trouble and mischief we <sup>ne</sup> restrained by the knowledge of the presence of the British army among us.

Soon now all this will be over. We will have to carry the burden of our peace and security by ourselves. I think many people realised the full implications of this fact for the first time on Saturday morning as they watched the impressive farewell ceremony

at Up Park Camp. And I think a number of them suddenly felt a little worried, a little disturbed, a little uneasy. Possibly the greatest single prop on which Jamaicans' stability and internal security had been based in the past, was quietly being removed. And suddenly, a number of people thought very consciously for the first time of this protective shield to our stability which we have all taken so very much for granted. And let us face it, many of them suddenly became frightened of the whole thought of independence, and had second thoughts.

Quite frankly, I think this is a very much healthier reaction than the other and more prevalent one. For many people the coming of independence looks like being some sort of a monumental ball. I have already told you of the man who said he was going to drive down King Street on August 6th and park his car anywhere he liked and God help any policeman who bothered. And there are others for whom August 6th will be the beginning of a week-long drunken spree. And there are still others for whom August 6th will mean ~~freedom~~ that brand of 'freedom' which is not freedom at all but the worse kind of anti-social licence - expressed as the sort of violence and hooliganism we saw on Labour Day.

And so it seems to me that it would be a very good idea for us to try and do a little clean and straight thinking about this independence that is just ahead of us. When the celebrations are over, when our flag is flying, when the important guests have wined and dined and gone, what will we see in an independent Jamaica? What will independence mean? I will continue this theme tomorrow evening, so till then; goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday June 5 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I ended my comments last night by asking: what will we see in an independent Jamaica after August 6th. The answer is obvious but let me state it all the same. We will see no striking changes of any kind. If a decent clean up and paint up job had been done before we will see the remains of it after independence. The streets, the cities, the towns the villages will look the same after independence as they did before. Jamaica will still be the same land with the same hills and valley, kissed by the same sun, washed by the same rain, bounded by the same sea. If there is unemployment before independence the coming of independence will not wipe that out; if there is hunger and homelessness, if our cost-of-living is high, if the gap between the 'haves' and the 'Have-nots' is wide, if our marketing organisation is poor, if our imports are high and our exports are low, - if all these things are with us the month or the week or the year before independence, then the fact of the coming of independence will not wipe them out. Jamaica will be the same place; the people of Jamaica will be the same people. We will none of us suddenly achieve a new dignity, a new status, or new wealth simply because Jamaica became independent. That will be the position inside Jamaica both the week before and the week after independence.

It is outside Jamaica, it is in our relations with the outside world that we will see the most immediate changes. Immediately after independence we will have a High Commissioner in London and one in Ottawa; we will have an Ambassador in Washington; we will have a Consul in New York; and we will have a permanent representative

at the United Nations. And these people will take over the responsibility from Britain of speaking for us in the outside world and of arguing our case on trade, on aid and other economic and political matters. They will also take over responsibility of looking after Jamaicans who are abroad. And of course these people are going to need offices from which to work and staff to do the routine work. And so the government has allocated just over £320,000 for the setting up of the Ministry of External Affairs which will run our relations with the outside world.

And so the two most immediately recognisable realities to come out of our independence are: First, that we must take over responsibility for our own military forces, which is bound to involve us in the expense of ~~money~~ of keep up that force: and second that we must take over responsibility for handling our relations with the outside world; another costly job which Britain did for us formerly. So, in both these two very important matters/~~that~~ <sup>the</sup> coming of independence means the shouldering of responsibilities which Britain carried for us before independence. It is to the outside world and in the outside world that independence will bring to Jamaica and Jamaicans a new status and a new dignity. But we will have to pay a price in both money and responsibility.....But what does independence mean to the unemployed man or woman/<sup>in our towns</sup> or to the man scratching a living from a small holding up in the hills? Does it mean anything to the poor and the hungry? And should it mean anything? I'll try to answer these questions tomorrow so till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday June 6 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: If the coming of independence is not going to make any striking and dramatic difference in the conditions of the poor and the hungry and the unemployed and the dispossessed, then what is the point and meaning of independence for these people? Why should a man or woman who has nothing look forward to and celebrate an independence that looks like offering him or her nothing?

Trying to answer these questions bring us to what seems to me to be the heart of these discussions of the meaning of independence. I think most dispassionate observers will agree that the active preparations for our independence celebrations, as well as the active interest in these preparations, have been largely confined to that section of the Jamaican community which Mr. Seaga has described as 'The Haves'. The 'Have-nots' have shown singularly little interest. I think part of the reason for this may well be the fact that Jamaica has really been internally independent for quite some time now. But another possible reason for this lack of interest could be that the 'Have-nots' do not see this as the coming of their independence. From the point of view of someone who has nothing the coming of an independence which offers him nothing may very well look like no independence at all - that is, unless he gives it a meaning that includes qualities that are other than materialistic. So, what quality or qualities can we give to the meaning of our independence that would be ~~important~~ charged with the same emotional content to a Kingston businessman, an unemployed citizen of Back-o-Wall, a Rastafarian, a middle-class house wife, a city clerk, a man in the hills with a small holding, a big farmer and a countrywoman who has

to carry her household water from a standpipe half a mile away?

What does our independence offer that is <sup>so</sup> big ~~enough~~ and <sup>so</sup> strong and so compelling ~~enough~~ that it can bind these very different people together in a common bond of love and loyalty? This is just another way of asking whether Jamaica has in fact developed a national spirit that is strong enough to transcend class, colour, creed or wealth. Because **if it** has then this is the one factor that will make independence as meaningful to the poor and the hungry and the dispossessed as it is to the wealthy and the well-fed.

I think the <sup>seed</sup> ~~germ~~ of this national spirit is there. I think it has been there for a very long time. I think all the impulses of the society are to let this <sup>seed</sup> ~~germ~~ grow and <sup>flower</sup> ~~flourish~~: but everybody looks to everybody else for nurturing it and nursing it while they themselves do business as usual. This, to me, is the biggest of the challenges of independence. If an independent Jamaica is to be peaceful and stable then all of us must share in the responsibility of making it so: not only must the rich give up a share of their wealth ~~profits~~ for the general good, the poor must also give up a share of their wealth, which is their labour, for the general good. And our leaders must tell us clearly and simply the things we must do and the responsibilities we must shoulder, to make an independent Jamaica a better place to live in for all its citizens.

If we do these things then we do not need to fear the challenging adventure of transforming a people and a country into a united nation.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday June 7 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: When the debate on the Expenditure Estimates was resumed in the House on Tuesday, things went along very much more quietly than I thought they would. Mr. Arnett, who led off for the Opposition, criticised the Estimates on what were essentially points of detail, though he did make the point that with less being spent on development projects less work will be provided. But there was no sharp point of conflict of principle, and so there were no high and dramatic moments. One interesting point that did emerge from Mr. Arnett's speech was the fact that the government proposes to spend a round figure of £460,000 in all on our independence celebrations. I suspect that part of the reason for the relatively quiet response of the Opposition was because neither they, nor the country, are in possession of all the details of how the Government proposes to spend the nearly 43 million pounds in the Estimates.

But much more interesting to me than the actual argument about facts and figures were a few important side issues that came out of the House sitting. And here the people who raised topics of vital long-term importance were Mr. Lightbourne on the Government side and Mr. Manley on the Opposition side. Mr. Manley asked the Premier a list of questions on the very vital matter of Jamaican migration to the United States after independence. <sup>The citizens of</sup> ~~All~~ the other independent countries in this region of the world enjoy free entry into the United States to live and to work. Mr. Manley wanted to know whether the Government would make sure that the citizens of <sup>an independent</sup> Jamaica enjoy this same privilege. I do not think I have to stress the importance of this particular matter of free entry into the United States: we

all know that this could make a world of difference to our unemployment problem, and therefore to our economy, especially now that Britain has decided on restricting entry there.

From Mr. Lightbourne we had two equally important announcements. The first was that the structure of our tourist industry would be given a new look. A Director of Tourism, a man with professional experience of the tourist industry, will be appointed. This I think quite clearly means that the Government has decided to scrap the ~~present~~ Tourist Board which now runs the industry. In its place there will be set up a consultative board made up of persons who have a vested interest in the tourist industry. This board will be able to make suggestions and give advice, but the responsibility for running Jamaica's tourist industry will be the sole responsibility of the Director of Tourism who, in turn, will be responsible to the Minister.

I think the whole point of this new move is to try and make the industry much more Jamaican in character. Many people have felt that the benefits of the tourist industry have gone into too few hands; others have felt that the industry as now conducted was selling Jamaica short culturally. I think these critics were right. But I think it is only fair to say that given the simple objective of bringing dollars into the country, and with no social, political or cultural considerations, which was the original directive to the Tourist Board, that Board and especially Mr. Abe Issa, have done a pretty good job. And so I was glad that the Minister paid tribute to Mr. Issa. I think he deserved it. And so now we will have a new look in our tourist industry. Tomorrow I will discuss the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the vexing problem of mechanisation. So till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday June 8 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The second important announcement Mr. Lightbourne made when he took part in the Expenditure Estimates debate in the House on Tuesday evening was that Jamaica would join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. As its name suggests G.A.T.T. is an international agreement entered into by the nations of the world to regulate and streamline their trading relations. The Treaty setting up G.A.T.T. was signed in Geneva in 1947 by some 23 nations, including the United States, Canada and Britain. Today nearly 90% of the world's trading nations are members of G.A.T.T. The treaty setting up G.A.T.T. ~~stated~~ stated its main objective to be the reducing of trade barriers between nations by mutual concessions. This means that when Jamaica becomes a member of G.A.T.T. our exports would have favourable access to a larger number of overseas markets than we would have outside G.A.T.T. In turn, of course, we will also have to throw our markets open to other members of G.A.T.T. There is a safeguard though. If we can prove that letting in a particular commodity is likely to damage our economy, we can, by negotiation and agreement, restrict the entry of that commodity. Certainly, if it is ~~in~~ our intention to step up the volume of our exports then membership of G.A.T.T. is crucial.

And talking about stepping up our exports brings me to the urgent problem of mechanisation. On Monday of this week the Trade Board a notice placing all mechanical equipment for the cutting, reaping or loading of cane under open general licence. This simply means that no such mechanical equipment can be imported into the country without official approval. And on Wednesday the Premier,

Sir Alexander Bustamante, said the Government would not permit workers to be replaced by machines unless the interests of the displaced workers have been fully safeguarded. Now this statement of Sir Alexander's is one with which no fairminded person inside or outside the sugar industry can quarrel. People are more important than machines. And I think most of us would agree that if we had to choose between the interests of people as against efficiency and higher production, we would choose in favour of the interests of human beings. But is this in fact the kind of choice we have to make? I do not think so. I think it might seem so, from the short-term point of view; but from a long term point of view the interests of efficiency and higher production are in fact the best interests of the people of this country. It is obviously not in the best interests of the people of this country if we produce our sugar at such an uneconomic rate that we cannot compete in the open market: not only the industry and the workers in the industry but the whole country will suffer if our sugar industry collapsed because it could not stand up world competition in the open market. So it seems to me that the problem is not one of man against the machine, but rather of how <sup>best</sup> to put the machine to the service of man. And in our sugar industry this means a coming together of management and labour and the government to work out how best we can use machines to increase efficiency and production without <sup>at the same time</sup> hurting the interests of labour. Just turning our backs on the machines will solve nothing and might damaged our interests. So let us think creatively about the problems of mechanisation instead of ~~being~~ becoming latter day Luddites.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday June 9 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I am a great lover of meat, and since I also have to find the money to pay for my wife's housekeeping, I am particularly sensitive to any change in the price of meat. And so I was quick to notice it when the price of ~~stew~~ beef went up by two pence at the supermarket where we shop: the price of minced beef also went up by two pence a pound. And so I decided to conduct a little investigation, and then one of my most regular listners and correspondents, a Mr. Williams who lives in the Cross Roads area, telephoned to ask why I had not mentioned the rise in the price of beef over the past three weeks. He said that in the Cross Roads area the price of beef had definitely gone up over the past three weeks. I had to confess to my friend that I had missed it and then I looked into it: this is the picture for the Cross Roads area, as I found it.

Sirloin steak which sold for 6/- a pound just over three weeks ago, now sells for 7/-. Sirloin roast which was 6/- is now 6/6. Round steak which was 5/- is now 5/6. Other parts which used to sell for 5/- a pound now sell for 5/3. And shoulder which used to sell for 4/- a pound is now 4/3. And inside the Cross Roads meat market joints that used to sell for 4/- a pound are now selling for 4/6.

The basic reason for this is that there is a beef shortage at the moment, and the shortage is most pronounced with the cheaper cuts which most people can afford. When you go up to the more expensive cuts like your fillet and the like there is hardly any change. So it is the poorer people who are being hit hardest by

these new increases. Soup bones which used to sell for  $1/3$  and  $1/6$  are now  $1/9$  and  $2/-$ . And even worse is the fact that imported lamb has gone up because of the beef shortage. Stewing lamb which used to sell for  $1/6$  a pound now sells for  $1/9$ . And the leg of lamb that used to sell for  $3/-$  a pound now sells for  $3/6$ .

I think it is only fair to point out that I found this very marked rise in the price of meat - especially beef - only in the Cross Roads area. In the big supermarkets the mark-up was, as far as I could discover, very much slighter. But I am inclined to suspect that in places like Trench Town and other heavily populated working class areas the pattern is more likely to follow that of the heavy mark up of the Cross Roads area. And so it is most likely to be the bulk of the working people who will feel the pinch most. And this, I am afraid, is a rather standard pattern in Jamaica. When the price of things go up it is generally the poorer people who get hit hardest.

It was on May 16th - just over three weeks ago - that Mr Robert Lightbourne, the Minister of Trade and Industry, announced the government's intention to put price controls on a wide range of goods that are in daily common use. And having a piece of good red beef should be part of our daily common diet, even if it is not so for very many people. I know that three weeks is a very short time in which to work out all the details of a reasonable and fair price control system. But I think that in the light of this increase in the price of beef, Mr. Lightbourne's Ministry should try and do something quickly about beef prices, especially about prices of the cheaper cuts. The meat content of many a Sunday dinner is going to be very skimpy indeed tomorrow: so let us have some action, please.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday June 11 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: On Saturday evening I gave you the details of the rise in the price of beef in the Cross Roads area. Within hours of my doing so the Premier, Sir Alexander Bustamante, issued a statement condemning the rise in the <sup>beef prices</sup> price of beef and warned that his government would take action to see that beef prices are <sup>stabilised</sup> ~~stabilised~~ at a reasonable level. This, I think, means that by the coming weekend we can look forward to beef prices being at least what they were before the increases were introduced about three weeks ago. I am particularly pleased by the quick response of the government to my revelations: it shows a healthy and intelligent sensitivity to reasonable public opinion pressures, and that is a very good thing for our democracy.

And talking about prices and public opinion, one <sup>of</sup> my regular listeners, <sup>Mr. C. G. of Kingston</sup> Plummer, has written to me <sup>with</sup> disagreeing ~~on~~ what I said about price controls, or, at least, ~~on~~ an aspect of price controls. This business of price control is, as you know, one of our big talking points at the moment. But before I go on to the substance of Mr. Plummer's point, let me assure him and all my other corresponders that I do welcome both criticisms and disagreements. It is only under dictatorships or under what are known as 'guided democracies' that criticism and disagreement are frowned upon. Ours is a free society and everyone of us, no matter how high or how low, has a right to his or her opinions, and has a right to express those opinions without fear. And for me personally getting the frank opinions of listeners is one of the most rewarding parts of my job. And now for the substance of Mr. Plummer's letter: he wrote in part:

"I must disagree with you altogether about the controlling of prices, and 25% being adequate profit for a dealer....Let me draw your attention to what you probably oversighted. Any fast selling items in drugs or hardware that you make 5/- on the pound that you invest cannot work because you seem to forget that there are thousands selling the same article and most of them not far from each other. Then you must remember that there are people like myself who may import 30 or more items out of which three may take the market, the balance selling very rare. Most of the time, these things go bad, so how would the trade come in, or the importer with the Profit and Loss...."

Mr. Plummer then goes on to list some of the major expenses of the trader such as rent, light, telephone and wages, all of which are high. He then gives a list of some of the things on which the P.N.P. government had put price controls and goes on to say:

"If we are thinking of reducing the cost of living in the right way, we must start by reducing the cost of everything professional and otherwise. It is no use asking the importer or the merchant to control the goods and leave them with nothing to make a fair living on. I think if the government want to reduce these items, they should cut Customs Duty, the shipping cost should be lowered. I am not saying for one moment that the cost of living in not very high, but one cannot do business like that. The scale must be balanced. " Mr. Plummer's statement seems to me reasonable from the merchant's point of view. But in balancing the scales we must bear in mind always that it is the vast majority of Jamaicans who suffer from the high cost of living; and balancing the scales in their favour a little is an important part of good government. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday June 12 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: On Friday of last week we had the news that Trinidad and Tobago will be come independent on August 31st. So, Jamaica and Trinidad, the two most important islands in the British Caribbean, will become independent in the same month. This means that at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in September two new members will be welcomed and both will come from this part of the world. And it is very likely that both Trinidad and Jamaica will join the United Nations as sovereign independent states at about the same time. I think we will find that for some time/<sup>to come</sup> many countries in the outside world are likely to lump Trinidad and Jamaica together as just a couple of similar islands in the Caribbean sea. To an extent we must expect this: we are just a couple of small fry in the great big world. Indeed, Trinidad and Jamaica will be a couple of the smallest nations at the United Nations as well as in the Commonwealth.

But I think that the part Trinidad and Jamaica can play at the United Nations, as well as in the councils of the Commonwealth can be vastly more important than our two sizes suggest. Trinidad and Jamaica could speak with force and with authority for the entire Caribbean region, projecting an image/<sup>that is very</sup> different from the rightwing dictatorships of Haiti and the Dominican Republic on the one hand, and the leftwing communist dictatorship of Cuba on the other. Together, they can focus world attention on the needs of the Caribbean in a very unique way. I think they could, and probably will, do all this given two conditions: first, that their own political and economic systems are stable; and second, that there is general agreement among the leaders of the two islands on the approach to external relations. If

these two conditions do not exist then we may find Trinidad and Jamaica pulling in opposite directions and in all probability cancelling out each other's influence both at the U.N. and in the councils of the Commonwealth. ~~From~~ <sup>For</sup> this reason what happens inside Trinidad, and what policies the government of Trinidad pursue in its external relations, are of great importance to us: and of course, what we do is of equal importance to Trinidad.

And so the apparent unanimity worked out between the Trinidad government and opposition ~~at~~ on the constitution in London is of great importance to us. Trinidad has a racial-communal problem which, if it is not handled with care, could become serious. Some of the leaders of the Trinidad opposition are frankly playing the racial game, trying to play up racial feelings between Indians and Negroes. Some of them have demanded representation on racial lines and some have even called for an outright partition of the country on racial lines. If any of these racist moves succeed, Trinidad will be in trouble and its present political stability might be very seriously upset. Jamaica, in contrast, is politically very stable, with no communal problem at all. On the economic front Trinidad is very much better off than we are. They have more wealth per capita and richer natural resources. But we can, with sensible planning and distribution of our wealth, maintain and build up the stability of our economy. So, if Trinidad copes with her communal problem, and there is a meeting of minds between the leaders of the two islands, then, after August, we could have a strong <sup>new</sup> voice from the Caribbean speaking in the councils of the world. The challenge is to the leaders of Trinidad and Jamaica. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday June 13 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening:

~~My discussion~~ In the early part of last week I discussed the meaning of independence for us. What I said has provoked a fair amount of letters and comments from listeners. And of all the letters and comments, one note from a listener in St. Mary struck me very forcibly by the challenge it posed. The note said:

"I had always thought <sup>that</sup> ~~the~~ independence (from your parents or from your owner) meant (one) freedom to make your own decisions and (two) the necessity to make your own way in the world. In Jamaica we seem to be emphasising only one - which is the freedom to make your own decisions. The unions have recently come out stating all employers should give a bonus <sup>to</sup> ~~for~~ employees for independence. Why not everyone give a day's work to the island or the <sup>cash</sup> equivalent to the island for independence. All the indications are that Jamaica is starting off on the wrong foot. What we need to do is work harder - not to look for more gifts. Independence means a young person starting out life on his own, and while there are certainly happy moments, there is also plenty, plenty hard work!"

So there you are, ladies and gentlemen, an interesting and challenging question: Who among us, how many of us, are prepared to give to Jamaica either a day's work or the cash equivalent of a day's working as our contribution to our independence celebrations? And let each one of us think out for himself or herself the social implications of this very challenging question.

And now let me <sup>dramatise</sup> ~~discuss~~ this self-same challenging question in the political sphere and in an area which is a little removed from Jamaica.

When the leaders of the 'little Eight' islands of the Windwards and Leewards met in London last month to try and work out a new and smaller Federation, the British government tried very hard to persuade them to make some sacrifices in the interest of their people. At the moment those small and scattered islands have a total population of nearly 700,000 people. They have modest resources and with one or two exceptions, they have depended on the British government for financial help for very many years. Now the people of these islands want independence, which means making your own decisions and making your own way in the world. But these islands are too poor to make their way in the world without any help. The British government recognises this fact and has promised to help them. But the British government also asked the leaders of these territories to help themselves and their people. Each of the little islands has a full dress Cabinet system with Ministers and all the other paraphernalia<sup>ph</sup> of state. And of course the Ministers want nice fat Ministerial salaries and the like. The British government suggested that this was too costly a way to run islands whose populations were in many cases smaller than than the population our smallest parish. But these gentlemen had a vested interest and resisted this wise suggestion. But now, at last, one of the opposition leaders in Dominica has come out with the sensible suggestion that they should scrap Cabinet governments in all the islands except Barbados, and have them run off a Parish Council basis. This, for me, is the first real sign of hope for the Little Eight. We must all of us, Jamaicans and small islanders, learn to give, to make sacrifices for the general good. That too, is part of the meaning of Independence. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday June 14 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I was very disturbed by news reports that the Premier has announced that the Government was thinking of abolishing the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation Council. According to these reports the Government is thinking of replacing the K.S.A.C. by one or two City Commissioners or Managers. I think this idea has such far-reaching implications that we ought to look at it very carefully.

Let us first look at the most basic implication of such a move. The base, the grassroots foundation of democratic government in a free society is at the local level: at the level of your Town Council, your City Council, your Parish Council. At this level the base of parliamentary democracy is very broad, spreading throughout the nation and having a very personal meaning for every voting citizen. Generally speaking, all the voters in a given area generally know their elected Councillor personally because he is nearly always a man living among them. This is not often the case with the man who is higher up in the national parliament. The man in the national parliament often has to move his home to Kingston and so he loses personal contact with the small but important daily problems of his voters. The local Councillor on the other hand generally shares these day-to-day problems: and because he is among his voters all the time he is generally more subject to their pressures than is the M.H.R. in faraway Kingston. So the local Council and the local Councillor make up the cornerstone of our democratic system and practices. It is a simple fact of history that where you have a strong and healthy system of democratic local government, you also have a strong, healthy and democratic national government. But where the local government system is weak or does

not exist there is general very little, if any, democracy at the national level. If you abolish your local government system you at once destroy the intimate grassroots contact between those who govern~~me~~ and those who are govern~~ed~~ and, in time, a wide gap is bound to appear between our rulers and ourselves. And the business of meeting our representative once every five years at election time will not bridge this gap. This, it seems to me, is the major danger we face if we abolish our local government system.

But of course there are strong arguments on the other side too. I think a really good professional city manager with a first class staff would probably run the affairs of Kingston more efficiently than they are now being run. There would be less inclination to jobbery, favouritism, victimisation and the like. This has been the experience in certain parts of the United States. But even there the appointment of a professional city manager has not meant the abolition of the local government system. If the decision is to have a professional city manager, this can be done without abolishing our local government system.

I am sure you have noticed that I have talked about <sup>abolishing</sup> our local government system and not just the K.S.A.C. This is because any government which abolished only one local Council would lay itself open to the charge of the most terrible discrimination, and this I do not think will happen. In fact, I am certain that on reconsidering <sup>scrapping</sup> the matter the government will give up the idea of ~~abolishing~~ the K.S.A.C. It cannot be done without damaging the foundations of our democracy: and this, I know, neither party wants to do. But even more important, the people will not allow it. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday June 15 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: One of the things that often causes arguments and quarrels in families is the making up of guest lists for fairly formal parties. The wife, whose business it is to see to the managing of the affair, will know exactly how many guests should be invited; and she will generally have her own list ready when she consults her husband and family. It is at this point that the trouble generally starts - if the family is run on reasonably democratic lines. The husband may insist that for business reasons one guest who is not on the list must be invited: the wife may not like that particular person. The daughter may want and especially close friend or a boy friend to come. There may be someone on the list with whom the son has had a quarrel. And so you have one long argument about those who are on the list, those who are not on the list and those who should be on the list. I rather suspect the same sort of thing is going to happen about the government's official guest list for our Independence Celebrations as published in yesterday's Gleaner. I do not know if this is in fact the complete list of the guests the government will invite, but on the assumption that it is, I make these comments.

I think the very first thing to say is that when a country like ours celebrates its independence, it is not a party matter, it is a national matter embracing all parties and all sections of the society. That is what it is and that is what it should appear to be. And so, when the guest list is made up it should, as far as possible, reflect ~~not only the preferences~~ the wishes of all parties and all sections of the community. Of course, it is never possible to satisfy everybody, especially about state guest list. But I think there are a few really

glaring and surprising omissions from the list as published on Thursday. First, I did not see the name of Dr. Eric Williams, the Premier of Trinidad. Second, I did not see the name of Mr. Errol Barrow, the Premier of Barbados. Third, I did not see the name of Dr. Cheddi Jagan, the Premier of British Guiana. The point is not whether ~~our~~ <sup>the</sup> government approves or disapproves of these people, whether ~~they~~ we like their policies or whether we do not like their policies. The point is that these three gentlemen are the elected heads of their countries and we have had long and continuous relations with these countries. We are all in the same part of the world. We share in a number of common services. Until quite recently we were partners in a Federation with Barbados and Trinidad. We share a University. The pattern of our political evolution has been strikingly similar, and with the possible exception of British Guiana we are striving towards the same ends. So I find it very striking indeed not to see the names of Williams, Barrow and Jagan on our official guest list. I hope that there is a second list to come and that these three names will be on it. I think it would be a calculated insult to the people of the Eastern Caribbean if we did not extend an invitation to their elected leaders.

On a very much more personal level, I think it would have been wonderful to invite at least one <sup>official</sup> guest from East Africa where they are coping with the kind of racial problem we have largely solved. And I think Mr. Julius Nyerere would have been an ideal choice. But the really important omissions are the leaders from the Eastern Caribbean, and I sincerely hope this will be corrected. Goodnight.

## Independence Scholarships

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday June 16 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Those of you who listened to me on Wednesday evening will remember that I read out a note from a listener in St. Mary who ~~challenged~~ challenged Jamaicans to give something to Jamaica for independence instead of expecting something to come to them. And you will remember that he counter the suggestion by the unions that employers should give their workers ~~an~~ independence bonus, with his own suggestion that all of us, workers and employers, should give a day's work or the cash equivalent of a day's work to Jamaica to show our appreciation and understanding of the meaning of independence.

I liked this challenge from my St. Mary listener, and I told you so. Now I have another challenge for you. After hearing that <sup>another</sup> commentary on Wednesday evening, ~~a~~ listener phoned me to say that he was prepared to write a cheque there and then for ten pounds if I would tell him who to make it out to. He could, he said, make out the cheque 'To Jamaica' and send it to me, ~~but he thought~~ but he assumed other people would do the same and he wanted to know what would happen to the money that listeners sent in. He did not think it was a good idea for the money simply to be handed over to the government. He felt that if the money were collected and came to a decent sum it should be used to set up a more permanent memorial to our independence. So there it is, the first move in giving ~~to~~ instead of expecting only to receive. But if other listeners respond to this challenge, if workers offer a day's work, or the cash equivalent of a day's work, to what use shall we put this money.

Since I got that phone call on Wednesday night I have been brooding over this question of how best to use the money - if we get *it*

And the idea that appealed to me most, the more I thought of it, was that of establishing two scholarships - one for a young man and ~~xx~~ one for a young woman - to our College of Arts, Science and Technology. One of our basic and most pressing needs is to develop the technical skills of young Jamaicans. And this is a need that is likely to increase with time. Also, the more technical skills we have, the greater the benefit will be to Jamaica and all its people. So why not set up these two scholarships and call them the Jamaica Independence Scholarships. I personally can think of no more worthy and noble a permanent memorial to our independence than two such scholarships to continuously develop the skills of our young people. I think we could so arrange these scholarships that all the benefits do not go to students in the Corporate Area. It may be best to award these scholarships to a boy and a girl in a different Parish each time so that in time each Parish in the island will be awarded ~~xx~~ Independence Scholarships. But these are details that can be worked out. We would, <sup>have to</sup> for instance, find out how much money we would need as capital to ~~earn~~ enough to pay for two Independence Scholarships either once a year or once every two years. But all this can easily be worked out. The important thing is to make a beginning, to start giving to Jamaica. So, it is up to all of us to start giving, to start creating our own peoples' memorial to our independence. If your response is what I hope it will be, I know many people who will do the detailed work freely. The challenge now is up to you, up to all of us. We already have ten pounds in hand. What will you give? Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday June 18 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: On Friday of last week I spoke about the official guest list to our independence celebrations which had appeared in the Gleaner the day before. I told you that the thing that struck me most about the list was the absence of the names of three West Indian leaders: that of Dr. Eric Williams, the Premier of Trinidad, that of Mr. Errol Barrow, the Premier of Barbados and that of Dr. Cheddi Jagan, the Premier of British Guiana. I said it would be a calculated insult to the people of the Eastern Caribbean if we did not extend an invitation to their elected leaders.

Well, shortly after that broadcast, Mr. H.L. Londo who will be Jamaica's Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs after August, got in touch with me and told me what I had said was not strictly accurate. He said that the government had in fact invited all the British Caribbean territories to send representatives.

When I dug deeper into the matter I found that the Premier's Office had issued a statement on May 28th setting out the list of invitations sent out. These included all Commonwealth countries whose Prime Ministers attend Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conferences, the President And Secretary-General of the United Nations, the British Caribbean Territories, the United States, the Federal Republic of West Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Plus the list which was published last Thursday and on which I based my comments of Friday.

The fact that so very many people thought, as I did, that last Thursday's list was the one and only official list of invitations, shows the very great importance of co-ordinating the piece-meal release of government information on an important subject. A single

sentence in last Thursday's statement, referring to the May 28th statement, would have wiped out all the confusion and concern which was caused by Thursday's ~~statement~~ official guest list. Anyway, this is one time when I am very happy indeed to be wrong. The government has in fact invited all the territories in the British Caribbean to send representatives. And those African states which are members of the Commonwealth - and this includes Ghana, Nigerian and Tanganyika - have also been invited to send representatives. So everything has been done in the correct and normal and diplomatic fashion. The only point on which we can possibly find fault with the government is the bit of unnecessary confusion in the release of the information.

And talking about guests and celebrations brings me to another point which is causing some concern. August 6th - our independence day - is exactly 48 days away today. Many of our guests will arrive here two or three or four days before that day. What will they find? Will they find us ready to receive them as good hosts? Will our house be in order? Will our cities and town and villages be cleaned up and painted up? Will our new hotel be ready to receive guests? And, most important of all, will the National Stadium be ready for the great day of ceremony and celebration? The National Stadium is not yet ready and we have only forty-eight days left in which to get it ready. I am sure that if they want to do so our workers can finish the job on time. They have won their award. Now they should get on with the job and get it done on time. It would be <sup>a</sup> sad commentary for any of our visitors to come and find us not yet ready to celebrate our own independence. It is up to our building workers to now take up their tools and finish the job on time. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday June 19 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Sunday night's announcement of a peace settlement between the Algerian Nationalists on the one hand and the white settler Secret Army on the other, promises the end of just about the ugliest and bloodiest episode in the history of post-war Africa. For seven years France had conducted one of the ugliest wars in history against the Algerian Nationalists. There had been times when the methods used by the French soldiers were so ugly that nearly all of France's most brilliant intellectuals were forced to denounce them to the world. It was a young French intellectual who reveal to the world that the French forces had set up concentration camps where they used the terrible torture methods of the Nazis against young Algerian women. But after seven years of terrible bloodletting the Algerian Nationalists and the French Government arrived at a peace of sorts last year. This settlement between the French Government and the nationalists led to the new terror of the Algerian Secret Army. The white settlers of Algeria did not want an independent Algeria because it would mean an end to their privileged position. And so they launched a campaign of terror in which they murdered an average of a thousand Moslems every month. Their aim was to provoke the Algerians into a race war which would force France to step in, cancel the peace arrangements and take over the country again. But, apart from periodic angry retaliations, the Algerian nationalists behaved with almost abnormal self-control. And so the settler attempts to start a race war failed and the stage was set for Algerian independence. Thousands ~~of~~ of white settlers started leaving Algeria. The terrorists turned their attention on France itself: they made an attempt on the life of

President de Gaulle, they tried to incite civil war in France. But none of this, neither the murders nor the senseless burning of property could halt the unfolding of Algerian independence. And so, two weeks ago, after their/<sup>top</sup>leaders had been captured and sentenced, the settlers started making peace moves to the nationalists. After murder, torture and arson they had come to realise that the only way they can remain in Algeria is by making peace with the nationalists. And again with that amazing self-control they have shown throughout nearly eight years of bitter strife, the Algerian leaders have agreed not to punish any of the murderers and terrorists after independence. And so an end to bloodletting and terror seem in sight. But I think it is going to take a very long time indeed, generations perhaps, before the bitterness of these hard years is wiped from the minds and hearts of the mass of the Algerians. They may even yet take revenge.

From the general continental African point of view, the end of the Algerian terror will, I think, set off a new mood. The white settlers of the Rhodesias and Southern Africa had watched the Algerian struggle with very close interest. If the Algerian settlers had succeeded in holding out, and if they had won, this would have given enormous hope to the white settlers further down the continent. With the end of settler resistance in Algeria, the whites in those other parts see the writing on the wall. From Cape Town to Lusaka, the end of their power is now only a matter of time, and not too long at that. We can only hope that they will learn from the Algerian affair and not go in for a long and senseless wave of bloodletting before they admit the fact of the changing face of Africa. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday June 20 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The conference to try and work out a settlement of the Common Services that we share with the other islands will open in Port of Spain on July 10th. The announcement of the date for the conference gives point to the present discussion as to whether the Jamaica parliament should have a debate ~~before~~ on the Common Services before or after the conference.

In the House last week, Mr. Manley tabled a motion calling for a debate on the proposals the government intends to put before the Common Services conference. Mr. Manley wanted the Jamaican approach to the Common Services discussed and agreed on before the government sent its delegation to the conference. But Mr. Donald Sangster, the Leader of the House, felt that the government should debate the matter after the conference and not before. So here we have a point of sharp divergence of view between the government and the opposition on a matter of great importance.

I think we would, all of us, quite naturally, like to know just what the government is going to commit us to before it does so. There are some very crucial issues involved in this conference and the stand the government takes on any of these ~~issues~~ could have far-reaching and long term after-effects. For instance, take the case of B.W.I.A. about which I talk <sup>ed</sup> in a commentary on May the 9th. If, ~~xxxxxxx~~, the government of Trinidad puts forward a proposal that B.W.I.A. should become one of the Common Services, how will Jamaica react? It may be that the government of Jamaica ~~was~~ no part of the cost of running B.W.I.A. But what is likely to happen if it rejects the Trinidad proposal? Trinidad might decide that its

condition for continuing to support the University as a Common Service is that Jamaica should accept B.W.I.A. as a Common Service. And if Jamaica refuses to support B.W.I.A. Trinidad might decide to withdraw its support of the university. And if this happened it could lead to a very complicated chain-reaction of events. If Trinidad does withdraw from the university it is almost certain that most of the other territories will follow suit. A university of the Eastern Caribbean is then likely to be established and I am afraid that my guess is that if Dr. Arthur Lewis had to choose between running a university of Jamaica and running a university of the Eastern Caribbean he is likely to choose the Eastern Caribbean. This is just one example of how important Jamaica's decision on any of the Common Services is likely to be. And I have great sympathy for Mr. Manley's desire to know just what Jamaica's stand is likely to be.

On the other hand, a public debate before the Conference is <sup>bound</sup> ~~bound~~ to forewarn the rest of the Caribbean on exactly where Jamaica will stand, and this is likely to rob her of any bargaining power: her area for negotiation would be severely limited by the fact that all her cards will be face upwards on the table. So I have equal sympathy for Mr. Sangster's position. But of course there is a way out of this difficulty which would satisfy both sides. I think this is one instance where the government and the opposition could work out, in private, an agreement on the national approach to the Common Services without resorting to an inhibiting public debate. This is, after all, an important national matter concerning Jamaica's long term national interests. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday June 21 at 6.15p.m.  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I am very happy this evening: I am happy because it looks as though the challenge thrown out by the listener from St. Mary has struck a spark which may glow forever in the history of technical education in Jamaica. But let me tell you what has happened.

You will remember that it was on June 13th that I read you the challenging note from the St. Mary listener. He challenged Jamaicans to give to Jamaica for independence instead of always expecting something to be given to them. And his suggestion was that everyone should give a day's work or the cash equivalent of a day's work to show our understanding and appreciation of the responsibilities of independence. On Saturday June <sup>16</sup>~~15~~ I told you of the listener who had called me and who had offered ten pounds. And I also told you that I thought the best use to which we could put such money - if it came - was by creating two scholarships, to the College of Arts, Science and Technology: one of these to be for a man and one for a woman. Well, great and exciting things have happened since Saturday; and it is these things that have made me so happy.

Earlier this week I spoke to Mr. Felix Fox, the General Manager of Seprod about the idea. Mr. Fox was immediately interested and put the idea up to the workers at Seprod. The Seprod workers liked the idea and started an immediate collection. The amount they collected was £100. 16. 4. Then the next beautiful thing happened. The management of Seprod decided that they would match the workers' contribution and so, from one public spirited firm workers and

management contributed £201. 12. 8. And this is a wonderful act of giving. But the story does not end there.

A gentleman from Greenwich Town, a Mr. C. Redwood, telephoned to say that he was 'a little man' who had not had much opportunity for education in his day and he did not want any child in today's and tomorrow's Jamaica to grow up without a chance to learn a trade. And so, although things were not easy, I should put him down for ten shillings. I personally do not think that there is anything 'little' about a man like Mr. Redwood. He certainly shows that bigness of spirit which we must have if we are to make our independence something of real value for all Jamaicans. So I am as happy about Mr. Redwood's ten shillings as I am about the big contribution from the workers and management of Seprod.

Next, I had a note from <sup>that public spirited gentleman,</sup> Dr. J.L. Varma, expressing his approval of the idea of these Independence Scholarships and promising five pounds. I know Dr. Varma does not like being given this sort of publicity but I am sure that in the interest of <sup>such</sup> a noble cause he will ~~walk~~ not mind my calling his name. And then my good friend Mickey Hendriks did a piece of rapid calculation about his own income. As he worked it out, he earns about £3,000 a year; he works for about three hundred of the three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, so his income would be round about ten pounds a day. So Mickey Hendriks gave ten pounds which is the equivalent of a day's work for him. I decided to match Mickey's gift <sup>and give £10</sup> though I'm not in ~~his~~ <sup>too</sup> ~~income bracket~~. And so we start off with £227. 2. 8., a first class start. Tomorrow I will give you a little more detail about the plans for the fund. So till, then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday June 22 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: As I told you last night, thanks largely to fine public spirit of the workers and management of Seprod, the Independence Scholarship Fund is off to a fine start of £227. 2. 8. But there are many people who still do not seem to be clear about the point of this Fund, so let me repeat it very briefly. The idea is to establish two scholarships to the College of Arts, Science and Technology. We plan these Scholarships to be <sup>truly</sup> national in character, which means that each of Jamaica's fourteen Parishes will have its turn at getting these scholarships. One year the boy and girl who win the scholarships will come from, say, St. Elizabeth, another year from St. Thomas, another year from St. Mary, another year from Portland and so on; thus bright and ambitious youngsters from all over the island will get a chance to ~~xxxxx~~ become qualified in his or her chosen branch of engineering, in building, or in his or her chosen branch of commerce.

Now, the cost of a full scholarship for a year, which includes the teaching, the school material as well as boarding ~~ix~~ during term time, is £200. So, if we are to make these scholarships a permanent ~~thing~~ memorial to our independence, if we want them to go on year after year for the next twenty, thirty, a hundred ~~xx~~ years and more into the future, then we must collect enough capital to bring us in £200 a year. And you know, <sup>the</sup> amount we will need to set up such a scholarship in perpetuity is really surprisingly small. All we have to do is collect four thousand pounds and ~~deposit it in a savings~~ <sup>invest it safely</sup> ~~account~~ at 5% and we will have an income of £200 a year - forever! So to set up one scholarship which would run forever we need £4,000

To set up the two scholarships at which we are aiming, we would need to collect £8,000.

I know this looks like a lot of money, but let us work it out. ~~if~~ We have a population of a little over 1,700,000 and if one out of every two Jamaicans we to give just a shilling, you would get over £42,000 pounds! All we need would be for 160,000 Jamaicans to each give a shilling for us to get our £8,000. But just in case we cannot find 160,000 Jamaicans with a shilling to spare ( and I an sure we can), 80,000 Jamaicans giving two shillings each would also do the trick. So, really, collecting this money should not be such a big problem, ~~provided~~ And in spite of those who scoff and mock, I know Jamaicans will give, once they know the worthiness of the cause. And I think that to have a personal share in the educating of the future generations of Jamaica for as long as there is a Jamaica is just about the most noble thing in which we can share. Our link with the future will be real and practical~~al~~ and permanent. And it will be a contribution made by the ordinary private citizens of this country. So, let the money come in. I will soon tell you about the Committee of wellknown citizens who will run the Fund. Meanwhile, please send your contributions to the J.B.C. Independence Scholarships, 5, South Odeon Avenue, PO Box 100, Kingston ten. (Repeat) I hope the workers and managements of other firms will follow the example set by Seprod. And I hope the so-called 'little people' - who <sup>are</sup> really very big-hearted, will follow the example of Mr. Redwood. And of course, I am looking forward to a cheque from the listener in St. Mary who started it all. I know we can raise that £8,000. We have made a fine start. Now let the money flow; and God bless you.

Goodnight.

- 1) The Governor-General
- 2) The National Flag
- 3) Suspension of Grenada Constitution

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday June 23 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Wednesday's news that Sir Kenneth Blackburne will be Jamaica's first Governor-General has been received with approval everywhere. The announcement itself simply confirmed what many people expected to happen, so it came as no surprise. Indeed, as far back as the first of May I told you that I was reasonably certain that Sir Kenneth would be Jamaica's first Governor-General in Independence. But, unexpected or not, this is a most popular decision. And the warmth with which it has been received shows how completely Sir Kenneth Blackburne has become identified, in the public mind, with Jamaica's best interests since he came here in 1957. In this sense Jamaica has been, with two or three exceptions, very fortunate in her Governors during the now fast dying colonial days.

Now for a word about the flag. On Wednesday night the House of Representatives unanimously approved the design for our new National Flag. This, and some of the things that were said during the discussion on it, led to hurry to Gordon House to see the design for myself. And frankly, I like it very much. It is simple, dignified and without any frills or fuss. It has a diagonal cross in gold, two green triangles, one at the top and one at the bottom, and two black triangles, one in the hoist where the flag will be attached to the pole and one at the other end. So it is in gold green and black and a combination of diagonal cross and triangles.

What I found rather disturbing about the discussion on the flag in the House was the feeling expressed by some Members that

there is something wrong in having the colour 'black' in our national flag. Mr. Felix Toyloy objected to the flag because he disliked the colour black which symbolised too much the distress suffered by the Jamaican people. If black does in fact symbolise distress then, as far as I am concerned, that is all the more justification for having it in the flag. Distress has been, and still is, the lot of a large segment of the Jamaican community, and if our flag is a reminder and a challenge to overcome that distress, that is a good thing. I was glad to note that Mr. Coke, the former Speaker of the House, stood up for including the colour black in the flag. Of course, all this talk about colour as having and special significance is a little nonsensical. Colour, any colour, is just<sup>a</sup>/colour and the social significance men give it is not more than an indication of just how far we still are from being really rational creatures. Still, we have our flag now and I am all for it.

Now for a very brief word on the suspension of Grenada's constitution. Many legislatures in the Eastern Caribbean have protested against the suspension as a matter of principle. I frankly find myself on the side of Mr. Jimmy Lloyd, the Administrator, and the British Government. The British Government could either continue withholding grants and so punish the people of Grenada for the sins of their Chief Minister or else suspend the constitution and punish the politicians. They decided to punish the politicians and I am with them. The report of the Enquiry shows that Mr. Gairy had grossly abused his position both in terms of spending and in his dealings with the Civil Service. The British Government still hold ultimate responsibility for Grenada and I do not see what else they could have done without abdicating that responsibility. ~~It is a pity that~~  
Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday June 25 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: What is the state of the national economy? How are we doing, with independence only a few weeks away? These are the kind of questions a large number of people are asking themselves. Well, I think we can now get some partial answers to these questions. And I think most of us will find the answers reasonably reassuring. We will find the answers in the 'Economic Survey of Jamaica' for last year. This Survey, like those of previous years, was prepared by the Central Planning Unit and it was presented to the House of Representatives on Thursday evening of last week.. I would suggest that all ~~of~~ those of you who are really interested in the true state of the nation should try to get hold of a copy and read it. For a document that is full of facts and figures, it is remarkably easy to read. And it sets out ~~and~~ explains the state of the nation's affairs clearly and without any sort of bias. Tonight and tomorrow night I shall try to pick out the highlights of the Survey, but if you want to get the whole picture clear for yourself, do get hold of the Survey. You should be able to get it from either the Government Public Relations Office or else from the Central Planning Unit.

So, what are the highlights? Let us look at the nation's finances first. In 1961 the Gross National Product - which is the wealth generated by the people of Jamaica and businesses in Jamaica, stood at £256.4 million. I know this sounds like a big but meaningless figure. So let us try and put some flesh and bones on it. First, the Gross National Product is what we, the people of the country,

produce by the sweat of our brows and the use of our skills and our brains. We, workers, farmers, businessmen, technicians, white collar workers, are the creators of the wealth of the nation. And last year our efforts generated this sum of £256.4 million. To realise fully just what this means all we have to do is look back to 1953 - just eight years ago - ~~to~~ and we will see what a fantastic leap forward the nation has taken. In 1953 our Gross National Product stood at £114.6 million. This means that in eight years we have more than doubled the nations income. And this, by any standard, is no mean achievement. In 1950 our earnings from agriculture stood at £21.6 million. In 1961 those earnings had gone up to £31.3 million. In 1950 our mining operations were so small that the Survey does not even have a figure to show. By 1961 we were earning £21.5 million from mining. In 1950 our manufacturing industry brought in £7.9 million but by 1961 our manufacturing industries were earning £32.3 million. Indeed, in 1961, for the second year running our manufacturing industries earning more money than agriculture. This means that our economy is being successfully diversified and the life of the island is no longer completely dependent on agriculture alone. But the biggest single rise in the wealth of the nation is in wholesale and retail distribution or what you might call the services. They contributed 38.4 million pounds to the Gross National Product last year. In 1950 they contributed only £10.6 million. So you see, there has been a general and steady rise in the wealth of the nation. Given sound planning and reasonably favourable world conditions, the economic health of the nation should go on improving

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday June 26 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night in discussing the Economic Survey of Jamaica for 1961, I told you that the nation's income has been rising steadily and that we more than double our income in the eight years between 1953 and 1961. But when we look at how we spend some of this money, there is cause for concern. For instance, last year we spent £75.2 million on importing good from the outside world. In exchange, we only exported \$62. million worth of good. This means that we spent ~~£x~~ over £13 million more in the outside world than we earned from the outside world. If we had spent only £62 million on imports - which is exactly the same amount as we earned from our exports, <sup>A proportion of this</sup> ~~we would straightaway have had an extra~~ <sup>would have been available</sup> £13 million pounds to spend on urgent and necessary development right here in Jamaica. And you can do a great deal of really good work with £13 million. I know that this problem of trying to balance our imports with our exports is one that is worrying our authorities. But it is one that we ourselves, as citizens, should be interested in too. ~~Every time we spend more on imports than we export, we are really slowing up our own development.~~ And it is for this reason too that the private sector of the Jamaican economy contributes so very little in financing the long-term development of the nation. And something like 70% of our Gr<sup>o</sup>ss National Product is ~~in~~ the private sector. This is just another way of saying that roughly 70% of the wealth of the nation is in private hands and not enough of that is being used for basic long term development. Although everything has gone up as far as I know there has been no upward revision of busin~~e~~ss taxing.

And you know, of the more-than-seventy-five million pounds that we spent/on imports, somewhere in the region of forty million pounds went on food and items like cars. Now, I am not saying that people should not have their cars and their imported food. But it really is a little thick when we have to import citrus juice and tomatoes and carrots and ~~lettuce~~ lettuce, as well as a whole heap of other foodstuff that we could quite easily produce right here in Jamaica. And what makes this worse is the fact that we do have serious problems of unemployment and of rank poverty. So, as far as I am concerned, one of the urgent priorities for independence is that we should all make a concerted attempt to close our trade gap. And I am quite sure that any government that tries to do that will meet opposition. And yet this is an urgent necessity: nothing more and nothing less.

And while we are on this question of money for development, one of the big questions this government has to think out is its approach to development. Not all sections of a community get immediate benefits from long-term development projects: it make take a generation or two before these seep through the society. ~~But~~ But when the benefits do come, they are ~~generalizingz~~ <sup>generalizingz</sup> lasting. On the other hand, quick measures of immediate relief are always politically more popular but they generally do not have any real lasting effect. So the big question of a fine balacing of long-term development and immediate relief is possibly the most urgent one facing our national planners today. How they handle it can be crucial for the independent Jamaica of tomorrow. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday June 27 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: On Monday I told you that the internal state of the wealth of the nation looked pretty good to me, according to the figures of the Economic Survey for last year. But on Tuesday I told you ~~xxxx~~ we were not doing so well in our trading with the outside world. We are, and we have for a long time, spent more on imports~~x~~ than we earn from our exports. And this is a wasting of either cash or credit that we could have put to much more important use for long-term development undertakings. This is one of our big problems. And allied to it is the very big problem of making the best use of the wealth of the nation. I mentioned the very small investment made by the <sup>local</sup> private sector to the long-term development of Jamaica.

This evening I want to discuss that section of the Survey which deals with population, and then I will try to sum up what seems to me the main points for the future.

66,900 people were born in Jamaica in 1961. 14,400 people died in the same year. This means that we had a natural rise in our population of 52,500 people. But ~~of this~~ <sup>meanwhile</sup> 38,500 left Jamaica as migrants. This leaves~~x~~ us with a net population increase of 14,000. In other words, in 1961 Jamaica's total population rose by only 14,000. This is the lowest figure in terms of population increase which has been recorded over the past ten years. But this was largely due to the large numbers who left the island last year. So it would be a mistake for us to see this as a really striking ~~decline~~ <sup>decline</sup> in the growth of our population. If we did not have the big migration last year's population increase would have stood at 52,500.

But this in itself would have been lower than the figures for 1960 when the net increase, after allowing for deaths and migration, stood at 24,500. So, compared with 1960, there/<sup>was</sup>~~ix~~ a real decline.

~~ix~~ But it is much too early to see this as indicating any sort of trend. Indeed, the age structure of the population suggests that any real decline in the birth rate is unlikely unless something positive is done about the birth rate. According to the 1960 Census, just under 17% of the population was made up of infants up to the age of four years; just under 14% were in the five to nine age group; just under eleven percent were in the 10 to 14 age group; and 40% of the total were in the 15 to 44 age group. This means that those who are able to/<sup>produce</sup>~~ix~~ children are still the largest section of the community. So the chances of a natural decline in the birth-rate are not really as hopeful as a first look at the figures might suggest. And this is one of our really key problems.

The physical area of Jamaica is constant. It is just so large and nothing we do will make it any bigger. If our population goes on increasing at about 50,000 a year, if the death rate goes on dropping, in ten years there would be half a million more Jamaicans on the same land area. So, two things are crucial. First, we must have ~~ix~~ migration outlets for about 30,000 a year, and second we must have long-term development to house and feed and give work to our growing population. Of course, a real decline in the birth rate would help greatly, but that, unhappily for Jamaica, is a sort of religio-political football. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday June 28 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I now have a further report on the Independence Scholarships Fund. As I told you last Friday, a number of prominent citizens have been invited to serve on the Committee which will run the Fund. Most of them have only now received the letters inviting them to serve and so we have not yet heard from them. But I am certain that everyone of them will agree to serve on the Committee because they are all fine public spirited people who are known for their good work on behalf of all Jamaicans. These are the people who have been invited: Miss Lily Mae Burke who heads the Women's Federation, Mr. Stanley Motta, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Harold Cahusac and Mr. Donald Farquharson whose interests in the welfare and development of Jamaica are so wide that I cannot possibly list them here; Mr. L.A. Henriques Senior, the chairman of the Board of the J.B.C., Mr. Felix Fox of Seprod, whose staff and management started the Fund rolling, and Mr. F.M. Jones. Also on the Committee - but as the sort of working party on it - are Mr. Hector Bernard the J.B.C's Director of News and Public Affairs, Mr. Mickey Hendriks who will be our treasurer, and myself. Miss Kay Dupee of the J.B.C. will act as the Committee's Secretary. So you see that the machinery for getting the Fund really rolling has been set up.

And let me <sup>repeat for</sup> remind those who might not have heard what I said on Thursday and Friday of last week; our target is to collect the sum of £8,000 to establish two permanent scholarships to the Jamaica College of Arts, Science and Technology as the contribution of the people of Jamaica to our coming independence. These scholarships will

be awarded to a boy and a girl to complete a course at the College; and the Scholarships will be awarded to two students from each of the fourteen Parishes of the island on a sort of rota system, thus making <sup>them</sup> ~~it~~ truly island-wide Jamaican Scholarships.

Now for a brief word about the Fund so far. Earlier this week Mr. Felix Fox told me that the figure of £201.12. 8 which I gave you as the fine contribution from the workers and management of Seprod, have now sent us to was not the final figure. Those wonderful people ~~and so it looks as though the final Seprod figure will be much larger~~ <sup>have now sent us to</sup> grand cheques: one for £150. 14. 0 from the workers, and a matching one ~~and so it looks as though the final Seprod figure will be much larger~~ from the management, making a total of £301. 8. 0. ~~than it could be.~~ This is wonderful news, and I wish I had it in my power to give a special award to the workers and management of ~~that~~ Seprod ~~firm~~ for this display of public spiritedness and good citizenship. Incidentally, if only twenty firms were to match Seprod's ~~first~~ <sup>more than</sup> contribution, we would have ~~enough~~ money to set up one of our two scholarships in perpetuity. So there is a challenge to our business firms!

In addition, we have received a personal contribution of £15 from Mr. Donald Farquharson; we have also received a promise of £5 from Mr. V.G. Bailey, the Managing Editor of Spotlight magazine and ~~£5~~ from the staff of Spotlight Magazine. And a friend who has a very good reason for not wanting to be named has sent me a cheque for three guineas. <sup>From Saroff of Malvern came a cheque for £10</sup> And from Mr. Arnold Lee we received 2/6 as a first contribution from the workers of the Ligeaneau Terrace. So what about <sup>Please</sup> your contribution? Send it to the J.B.C. Independence Scholarship Fund, Box 100, Kingston ten. ~~Goodnight.~~ Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday June 29 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The so-called '70% Scholarships' debate has aroused strong and often bitter feelings among many people. There have been angry letters for and against it in the press, and a number of listeners have asked me to comment on the matter. So, let us try to sort out the business as calmly and reasonably as possible. Most of the facts behind this controversy are contained in a Ministry Paper tabled in the House of Representatives last week, setting out the reasons for the new basis of free place scholarship awards and I would suggest that you try to get hold of this Ministry Paper/and read it very carefully. It might help to bring an element of reason into/this date which is mainly notable for its strong passions at the moment. So, what are the basic facts? I think the basic facts are summarised in paragraph five of the Paper. According to that paragraph there were in all types of schools last year 88,000 children in the age-group 10-plus to 12-plus. This is of course the ~~xxx~~ free place scholarship age group. Of this total 84,000 or 95½% were in primary schools and 4,000 or 4½% of the total were in secondary of preparatory schools. But in the scholarship examinations for 1961 the preparatory and secondary schools with a total enrolment of 4,000 pupils got 1,155 free place awards; the primary schools with 84,000 pupils got 978 free places. In other words, the primary schools with 95½% of the total eligible school population got only 1.1% of all the free places while preparatory/~~xxxxx~~ got 32% of the free places and secondary schools got 33% of the free places. So, looked at any way you like, the distribution of free places between primary schools and other schools is fantastically uneven; and it has been fantastically uneven

ever since this free place system began. The dice have been loaded in favour of the children from the Prep Schools and from the Secondary Schools. And this in fact means that the dice have been loaded in favour of the middle-class children whose home conditions are such that they can study and do their home-work more easily, who are more exposed to books and discussions about what is going on in the world, and whose parents could, often with very great sacrifice, send them to schools which have relatively small classes where they get a very much better ~~grounding~~ educational base and more individual attention than is possible for the pupil in an overcrowded primary school. Often too, the teachers in Prep and Secondary schools are, on the whole, better qualified than the teachers in the primary schools. There are many primary schools, especially in the rural areas, where the only qualified member of the teaching staff is the head teacher: all the rest are often unqualified and with no working knowledge of the best modern teaching methods. Often, these poor quality teachers destroy the potential of very bright youngsters by turning them into mindless little parrots who are taught to cram rather than to think and reason. And this, I think, is why the youngsters from primary schools have done so poorly. It is not a question of ability. It is simply that the dice are loaded against them. Mr. Allen's new basis of awarding scholarships seems to me a genuine attempt to correct what is after all a most unjust penalising of the children from primary schools, and I am all for it, emotionally. It is socially just: it is what the country needs. The question is: how will it work? I will explore this question tomorrow. So till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday June 30 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: As I told you last night, I think that the present basis on which our free place scholarships are awarded is most unjust. It penalises very heavily the children from primary schools who happen also to be from the poorest homes and who make up the largest section eligible school population. And so I told you that in the interest of equity, in the interest of social justice, in the interest of a more broadly based secondary education, I am all in favour of Mr. Allen's proposal to reserve 70% of all the free places for children from primary schools.

But I think it would be a sad thing for education in Jamaica if this matter is approached by anybody in a sort of partisan class or political spirit. The people who send their children to prep schools, and they often do so at very great sacrifice, do so because they want to give their children the best type of education possible. I think our educational authorities would find, if they have not already done so, that many parents who now send their children to primary schools, would want to send their children to prep schools if they could afford it. And the reason is quite simply that all parents want to give their youngsters the best break possible. And this in turn means that the standards in most of our primary schools are not up to mark. So, if Mr. Allen simply reserves 70% of the free places for children from primary schools, and does not ~~not~~ raise the standards <sup>of teaching</sup> in primary schools, then, no matter what we say, the general standard and quality of our secondary education is going to be lowered; it is bound to be, especially in the rural areas.

So what can we do to avoid this? I think there are a few very

practical and very urgent things the Ministry of Education can and should do to improve the standard and quality of teaching in primary schools, especially in the rural areas. First, they should make it attractive for qualified and able young teachers to stay in the rural areas. I know some valuable people who started their teaching in rural Jamaica but at a certain point in their careers they had to move to the cities to get the right kind of promotion and salaries. For them, as for so many other people advancement in standing and in income means leaving the rural areas. And so you have all the best teaching talent drifting to big city schools or to the Ministry, and the children in rural primary schools are condemned to get their training from those of poor quality who cannot make the grade in the big city. Unless this trend is reversed the educational inequalities will persist in spite of reserving 70% of the free places for primary schools. I think it should be possible to work out a pattern of promotions that would both keep and attract some of our best teaching talent to the rural areas. The second thing the Ministry can and should do is to have <sup>a</sup> crash programme to give training to our large army of unqualified teachers and to set about raising teaching standards. If these two things are done, and done successfully, then I can see the reserving of 70% of all free places for primary schools as an important step forward in broadening the base of good secondary education in Jamaica.

Certainly, in terms of the best long-range interests of all Jamaica we must make secondary education much more widespread than it now is: but '70% Scholarships' is only part of the answer: good teachers/<sup>and development</sup> in rural Jamaica is the important other part. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday July 2 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Every now and then something happens that makes you stop and think. Sometimes it is the sort of thing that makes you proud of belonging to a country and a society; sometimes it makes you feel very humble. And usually when this sort of thing happens, it brings a lump to your throat and it gives you a renewed faith in the nobility of your fellow men.

I had such an experience this morning. There was a letter from the Salvation Army School for the Blind, specifically, it came from the Corps Cadet Brigade of the School for the Blind. In it was five pounds. But let me read the letter to you:

"Dear Mr. Abrahams, the prospective Corps Cadet Brigade of this School would like to send this small token offering to the Scholarship Fund which you have inaugurated. Please accept this in the hope that other young people will follow suit. Corps Cadets are Salvationist teen-agers dedicated to Bible study and witnessing for Christ to all, and serving people in any way possible. May God bless you."

That is the letter, all of it, and it is signed on behalf of the Cadets by their Captain, Mr. P.R. Lopez.

Just think about it for a little. A group of blind boys from the Salvation Army School for the Blind have sent five pounds to our Scholarship Fund - yours and mine - because they are dedicated to being witnesses for Christ and to serving people in any way possible.

You all, I am sure, know the old saying about the blind leading the blind. It becomes awfully false ~~and unique~~ in the light of the understand and unique vision of these young people. And it has made me feel very humble and very proud.

Now let me tell of another unique contribution to our scholarship fund - though on a different level. Towards the end of last week I received a delightful letter from Miss Gloria Escoffery, the artist. Miss Escoffery wrote to say ~~how~~ how very much she approved of our independence scholarships idea. She said that shee too wanted to share in it but at the moment she could not afford to send any money: so, she asked, would we accept a painting by her as her contribution to the fund. My answer is, yes and yes again. And thank you very much indeed, Gloria Escoffery. I am sure we will have no difficulty at all in selling the painting and putting the money towards the scholarships fund. I know that the painting of a picture often takes weeks and months to finish and so Miss Escoffery's contribution goes far beyond our appeal of the cash equivalent of a day's work. I think this is both a magnificent contribution and a magnificent gesture by Gloria Escoffery. Just one small but important point of detail. I should be grateful if Miss Escoffery will indicate the price we should charge when she sends or brings the picture to the J.B.C.

Next, the weekend post brought us a cheque for ten pounds from Mrs. Edna F. Munn of Mavis Bank. We are most grateful to Mrs. Munn for this fine contribution. And from Mr. and Mrs. Lester Kircaldy we gratefully received the sum of two pounds. I hope very soon now to tell you how our latest total stands. Meanwhile, remember the challenge of those blind young people and send your contribution to the J.B.C. Scholarship Fund, Box 100 Kingston ten. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday July 3 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I am sure you have heard some of the ~~panic~~ panic rumours going the rounds right now, especially in the Corporate Area. Have you heard the one that our independence day is going to be the start of trouble? Or perhaps you have heard the one about the buying up of all the machetes in the country. Or that this or that group is secretly traing to take-over after August 6th? Or perhaps you have heard about the moneyed people who are quietly shipping their money out of the country and who are making arrangements to get out of the country as soon as the going begins to get rough. And of course you have seen the reports from abroad of the goings on of Mr. Stan Grant, who it seems becomes a great political revolutionary leader as soon as he is out of Jamaica. There have been dark and sinister whispers of all kinds of trouble from the panic mongers among us.

Now why are these people trying to create this climate of panic and fear? And is there any truth to it?

The panic mongers among us are a very small group of people. I doubt if there are as many as a hundred of them. They are <sup>generally</sup> people who have a fantastic lust for power. <sup>But</sup> They have been unable to win the popular support of the mass of the <sup>ir</sup> fellow countrymen by the normal democratic processes. Some of them, a very tiny minority, sincerely disagree with Jamaica's present political system and would like to see it changed; but most of them are quite simply out to build up their own personal power and importance, now matter what the cost. But by themself es these people can do very little. And so these people must set about sowing the seeds of fear, of despair, of panic.

It is always much easier to get people to behave rashly and recklessly when they are frightened and confused: and so the aim is to frighten and to confuse. And one man can sow an awful lot of fear and confusion among a people who are not on their guard. One man says to another: "Boy, I hear there's going to be a lot of trouble on August 6th; I heard this from somebody really reliable; so me, I'm staying home." And the ~~next~~ decent and good citizen to whom he said it, repeats it to a group of his own friends over a drink; and they in their turn, repeat it to others. And before you know where you are, the talk of trouble is all over the place. And as it travels from mouth to mouth something is added to each version until you end up with the news that this or that group or party are planning an uprising on the morning of August 6th. It is in this way that one clever man with dangerous designs can plant the seeds of fear and watch them take root and spread. We had this sort of thing at the 1959 elections; we had it again about the time of the referendum; and we had it again at the last elections. There were wild rumours of violence and the threat of violence. And now we have it again.

So, is there any truth to it? There could be, if we allow there to be. If we help to spread this panic by passing it on, it could grow and spread until it robs us of all reason and balance and then we will be easy material for the trouble makers among us. But if we use our heads and refuse to become panic mongers ourselves, then there won't be any truth to it. We can cope with our problems without losing our heads if we remember that all we have to fear and to fight against is fear itself. Goodnight

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday July 4 at 6.15p.m.  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I was one of those people who were rather disturbed by Sir Alexander Bustamante's statement in New York that he did not care whether the Russians vetoed Jamaica's application for United Nations membership. I think it was unnecessary and rather like waving a red rag in front of a bull whom you have already provoked. It is not a question of caring or not caring what the Russians do. It is simply that they can hurt Jamaica badly by vetoing our application. Such a veto would effectively keep Jamaica out of the most important international organisation in the world, and it might also mean that we may not be able to make use of all the special agencies of the United Nations.

The reports suggest that the Premier made this statement to a reporter in what he probably regarded as a private conversation. But I am afraid that once a head of state speaks to an American reporter in this vein he is almost certain to be quoted unless he insists that his remarks are off the record. And even then he runs the <sup>grave</sup> risk of being quoted. This is the sort of indiscretion that the leaders of this administration must watch against, especially in the field of foreign affairs. In foreign relations we have to be absolutely correct and formal in what we say about other countries and in how we deal with them, even if we detest what they are and what they represent. The fact is that if the Russians do decide to veto our application and keep us out of the United Nations we will have ourselves to blame for not thinking ~~xx~~ of all the implications of what we say and do. Certainly, at the moment we are approaching the

handling of our foreign relations in a very casual, off-hand and often clumsy manner which can do us a great deal of harm.

For instance, I think the manner in which we invited the islands of the Eastern Caribbean to send representatives to our independence celebrations had a lot to do with Barbados and some of the others turning down the invitations. Our relations with the Eastern Caribbean have been very close and intimate in the past. Certainly, they have been so close that we could have asked Dr. Williams, Mr. Barrow and Dr. Jagan to personally come and represent their countries, and if they did not find it possible then to send representatives. My understanding is that we simply asked them to send representatives, as we did with the other Commonwealth countries. If this is right, then we were very correct in the formal diplomatic sense but on the personal and nationalist level those ~~xxxxxxxx~~ islands, which until recently shared a common membership of a federation with us, could regard our invitations as very cold and impersonal, as inviting a brother in exactly the same way as you would invite a friendly stranger. It is very easy to say that these people reacted in a petty way. Are we sure that the way in which we invited them, bearing in mind our past association, are we sure that was not petty?

In any event, it is important for us to learn and to learn quickly that the handling of foreign relations is a delicate and tricky art. All we can hope is that the damage done so far will not keep us out of the United Nations. Goodnight

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday July 5 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: My comments of last Friday and Saturday on the new basis for the free place scholarship awards have provoked quite a few comments, questions and criticisms from listeners. From these letters it is clear that those listeners whose children are at primary schools approve of reserving 70% of all free places for the primary schools; but those listeners whose children are at preparatory schools or secondary schools feel that this is an unjust quota system which is out to penalise children from middle-class homes. So it seems to me that it might be useful to discuss the social aspect of this whole question.

One listener asked: Is it a crime in today's Jamaica to belong to the middle-classes? Is that why they are now putting a handicap on our children winning free places? Don't we contribute very heavily to the nation both by what we do and by the taxes we pay?

I think this listener is on to a very good point. We have lately tended to sound as though being a member of the middle-classes is some sort of disgraceful thing. And indeed the whole argument justifying Mr. Allen's reserving of 70% of all free places did have an undercurrent suggesting this anti-middle-class bias. I personally am sorry about this because I do not think it will do Jamaica any good to ~~xxxx~~ dramatise and sharpen the class differences which already exist. I think it was and still is possible to put up a reasonably good case for Mr. Allen's new basis without dramatising class considerations.

I think the Jamaican middle-classes have contributed greatly

to Jamaica's economic and political development, especially over the past twenty-odd years. They have supplied the nation's top leadership in politics, in economics, <sup>and</sup> in education. Indeed, all our top political and trade union leaders come from the middle-classes. Our two main political parties are led by people who are basically of the middle-classes. And the present stability of our society owes a great deal to the fact that we do have a strong and stable ~~mk~~ middle-class whose members are pushing eagerly for personal advancement. Indeed, I think the Jamaica picture would look very different today if we did not have this strong and ambitious middle-class.

But having said all that we must still face the hard facts, as brought out by Ministry Paper No 31, that 95½% of all our school-going children are at primary schools and they got only 1.1% of all free places last year. The remaining 4½% of our school population got the remaining 98.9% of all free places. Now let us agree that ~~part of the reason for this~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ the reason for this is the effort made by middleclass parents to give their children a better break and part of the reason is the low standards at many primary schools. Do we then say, as middle-class parents, that the 95½% of the total - all those kids in the primary schools - are none of our business? I don't think so. And I certainly do not agree with the listener who suggested that middle-class kids are naturally brighter than kids from poorer homes. The real difference is that the kids from middle-class homes have been fortunate enough to have better opportunities. I think we must try to make equal opportunities for all. I think this present attempt to do this is makeshift and does not go to the root of the trouble. So let us try to offer constructive alternatives instead of starting a sort of class war in education. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday July 6 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: As I told you last night, I think it would be a very bad thing to make a political issue out of our educational problems. And we certainly do have some problems in education - as indeed in many other spheres of the nation's affairs; and it is always very tempting and very easy to try and make political capital. I think for instance that Mr. Allen's reserving of 70% of all free places for primary schools was approached in a political spirit as well as in a spirit of concern about education. Politically it is a good thing to have the benefits of secondary education spread as widely as possible. It is an obviously move in favour of equity and social justice and on those grounds no reasonable person should quarrel with it.

But when looked at in practical terms it is a horse of a very different colour. As I told you before, just to reserve 70% of the free places without also providing that primary school training will be so improved that the children from those schools will also be able to earn those places in honourable and open competition, is simply to invite a lowering of standards. And this, I fear, is possibly the greatest danger inherent in this move. It is for this reason that I think it is makeshift and not carefully thought out in terms of the best long-term interests of Jamaican education. By implication this move does in fact say that we must operate a double standard: one for children from primary schools and one for children from prep and secondary schools. And I dislike this aspect intensely. Double standards are always bad standards. And to examine kids from primary schools separately from those from other schools

is more likely to accentuate and perpetuate the differences rather than to break them down. The intention is not to divide but to bring together, but there is the clear and apparent danger that unless standards in primary schools are raised dramatically this intention will be defeated. I personally want to see a great deal more opportunity for children from primary schools and from poorer homes than is implied even in Mr. Allen's move. But I also want those children to have at least the same quality of education, <sup>as well as</sup> the same standard of education as is enjoyed by the minority in our secondary schools.

And now for a brief word about a big row that is now going on in United States education. On the 26th of June the United States Supreme Court handed down a ruling saying that it was against the American Constitution for any government education agency to compose prayers to be said in public schools. This was because the New York State Education Board of Regents had composed a prayer which it recommended for use in all public schools. But some parents objected to this on religious and personal grounds. They pointed out that the Bill of Rights in the American Constitution specifically forbids "an establishment of religion". And the wise old gentlemen of the Supreme Court, whose business it is to defend and interpret the American constitution, upheld these parents. The grey old Justices said that they were protecting religion from the state and that the government should leave the religious functions of the people to themselves or to the churches to whom they look for religious guidance. It seems to me a very good thing, this separation of church and state. But the American people are having a really monumental row about this matter at this moment. What do you think of it? Goodnight

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday July 7 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The British Guiana Constitutional Conference which should have opened in London this month, has been put off until September. Both Dr. Jagan, B.G.'s Premier, and Mr. Forbes Burnham, the leader of B.G.'s largest opposition party, have condemned the postponement. Mr. Peter D'Aguiar, the leader of the United Force, on the other hand, has welcomed the postponement. The British Colonial Secretary, said he had to postpone what would infact have been B.G.'s independence conference in order to get the report of the Commission which has just finished its hearings into the rioting and burning of Georgetown last February. To complicate the B.G. picture a little further, Dr. Jagan last month sack his Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Balram Singh Rai. Mr. Rai was fired because he dared to accuse his party leader of rigging the party elections in which Mr. Rai who is an Indian, opposed Mr. Brindley Benn who is a Negro, for the office of People's Progressive Party chairman. Mr. Rai said that he lost to Mr. Benn because Dr. Jagan had manipulated the whole conference. In this I think Mr. Rai was probably right. The majority of P.P.P. members are Indians and communal feeling is strong enough for Indians to tend to want to vote for their own kind against anybody else. But Dr. Jagan in particular is trying hard to keep down the communal aspect of B.G. politics and so for him it is important to have a Negro in a high position within his party and Government. And so, as a self-confessed Marxist, Dr. Jagan probably operated on the classic Marxist assumption that the mean justify the ends and did what had to be done to get Brindley Benn re-elected. The danger of these developments from Jagan's point of view is not that Rai

could cause a split in the party, or even oppose him successfully. The real danger is that Rai is joining a small band of influential Indians who were once with Jagan but who have left him. If this band were to form a small conservative Indian party which could take away five per cent of Jagan's popular vote from the politically unattached Indian masses, a completely new situation could arise in B.G. at the next elections. The violence of February and now the postponement of the independence conference has done Jagan no good; and what happens between now and September inside B.G. could be very important.

And for a look at Algeria. Last Sunday the people voted for Independence and ~~xxxxx~~ on Tuesday Premier Benkhedda and his supporters return home to take over after seven years of fighting from exile. The European secret army terrorists have given up; their leaders have fled and their pirate radio has gone off the air. There is peace, but it is an uneasy peace. The whites who remained behind are frightened and nervous. In bitterness some Algerians have taken over the property of whites who have fled. But on the whole there have been nothing like the ugly scenes in the Congo.

The real danger of trouble now is between the leaders themselves. Benkhedda leads a moderate government which wants to come to terms both with France and the settlers. But Mohammed ben Bella who had been a prisoner of the French for nearly as long as the war lasted, is a toughminded left-wing radical who wants to take over and who is bitter about the French. Unless this power struggle is contained, we may yet see more bloodshed, but this time between Algerian and Algerian. Goodnight

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday July 9 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The Jamaica Government Mission returned from London over the weekend, and because I have been out in the country parts over the weekend I have not had a chance to contact any of the people who were on the Mission. The result is that I have no more background information than appeared in the press or over the radio. So, in trying to assess what was achieved I do not start off with the advantage of having discussed the matter with someone who was on the inside. I cannot tell you about the atmosphere in which the talks were conducted or the precise nature of just what Jamaica asked for from the British Government. The news of last Thursday was that the Jamaica delegation asked the British Government for a sum of more than five million pounds to balance our budget, plus an unspecified but very large amount for development purposes. If this was in fact so then what the British Government/<sup>finally</sup>decided to give Jamaica must have been a great disappointment to the Mission.

The British Government has decided to give Jamaica an outright grant of about one million pounds. Next, all the War Office property here, which is worth about two and a half million pounds, will be given over to us after August 6th. So we will get about one million pounds in cash ~~xxxxxxx~~ and two and a half million pound's worth of real estate: a total of just about three and a half million pounds. In addition, the British Government will make an Exchequer loan of one and a quarter million pounds towards our budgetary needs.

This is a very small amount of money indeed; and I, like many other people, ~~were~~ disappointed by the meagreness of Britain's parting gesture to her most important colony in this part of the

world. If you put aside the War Office property - which is in any case Jamaican soil - all we got as a grant is a cool one million pounds. This is less than one pound per person. And when we consider the generosity with which Britain has treated places like Tanganyika when they entered into independence, then the smallness of her grant to us becomes particularly striking. So why did Britain give us such a small grant to see us on our way to independence?

Some people have suggested that it is because of our decision to get out of the Federation and that this was a form of punishment. I myself do not believe that this was any sort of punitive action on the part of the British Government. Of course they were disappointed when we decided to quit the Federation. But I do not think that it is their disappointment which is responsible for the smallness of the grant. I think rather that they had a very clear idea of the amount that they proposed to give to the original West Indies Federation when it became independent. But since we wrecked that federation, this same amount has now to be divided among three distinct groups: ourselves, Trinidad and the Little Eight. And I think that in the parcelling out of this money they have decided that the needs of the Little Eight are - and will go on being - greater than ours. They are committed to supporting the interim organisation of the Little Eight and when its federation finally gets going they will have to help it for quite a while to come. So it is not simply a question of punishing us but of making a set amount of money go around. And in British calculations there are others whose needs are greater than ours. That is one aspect of this matter: I'll discuss some other aspects tomorrow. So till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday July 10 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night I told you that I thought one reason for the smallness of the British grant to Jamaica was because they have to divide a set amount of money between Jamaica, Trinidad and the Little Eight. I also told you that I think they consider the long-term needs of the Little Eight greater than ours. If I am right in this then you will find that the Trinidad financial settlement, when it is announced, will not be vastly different from Britain's financial settlement with us. I think the British Government has decided to hold the lion's share of the grant money earmarked for the West Indies in order to help the Little Eight. But as I told you last night, I do not think the British Government has approached this in any vengeful spirit of wanting to punish Jamaica because of the federation fiasco. It is just that they are now assuming responsibilities which we have refused to share with the smaller islands. And whether we like it or not, they feel that the needs of the smaller islands are greater than ours.

views

Two other ~~arguments~~ have been put forward to explain the smallness of Britain's grant to us. The first is that the Premier has declared too loudly and too firmly that Jamaica is in the Western camp. Some people feel that the British and American reaction might be: Well, since they are on our side in any case, since we have them in our pockets, we do not have to win them over with aid and the like. These people feel that if the Mission had used the Cold War situation we might have got more money. In terms of the size of the British grant I think these people are wrong. I do not think that the striking of any political poses would have made any difference to the amount

of money Britain gave us. Whether this will cut any ice with the United States is another matter. As far as the British are concerned I think they had a clear idea of what they intended to give the West Indies and what share of that would come to us. And this point, I think, also covers the second view, which is that we would have got more money if this had been a delegation of a P.N.P. government led by Mr. Manley. Mr. Manley has proved himself to be Jamaica's most brilliant advocate to the outside world: he has been the principal architect of Jamaica's present high reputation in the outside world. But, given the same set of circumstances, I do not think Mr. Manley would have brought back any more than the Mission brought back from London. All the indications are that the British Government knew exactly how far it would go on this question of grants, and I do not think the political complexion of the Mission or the personality of its leader would have made any real difference, in terms of hard and solid cash grants.

As far back as the 31st of May and the first of June, I warned that we might have a rough time raising grants from abroad for development purposes. And I told you that one reason why we would have difficulty in raising grant money for development is because Jamaica has done so well over the past eight years. We have more than doubled the nation's income. If you have a Gross National Product of roughly 250 million pounds and you go and ask other people for help they are going to ask you: <sup>How do you use, how do you share what you have</sup> what are you doing to help yourself? They are going to say: show us how much you yourself have invested in your own development. This is our problem: this is <sup>the</sup> ~~our~~ challenge behind the smallness of Britain's grant to us. Goodnight.



the very bad feelings that now exist towards us down there. In fact, I do not think we have ever had a time when the fund of goodwill for Jamaica was as low as it is now in the Eastern Caribbean. So, Jamaica's acceptance of B.W.I.A. as part of the Common Services will do much to restore goodwill towards us. But no nation takes on a heavy financial burden just for the sake of goodwill. We all want goodwill but we will be fools to pay a yearly price for it. So the question of their goodwill must not and will not be a major consideration. The big question is whether it would also suit our own interests. I personally think we have more to gain by accepting B.W.I.A. as a Common Service. If we reject B.W.I.A. as a Common Service Trinidad and the others may withdraw from the University. And believe me, in both the short and the long run it will cost us a whole heap more to support a university on our own than to share in the cost of B.W.I.A. So I hope we will not be penny wise and pound foolish - if the matter comes up. As it is, we have benefitted more from the university than any of the other islands. Our sick have had free treatment at the hospital there, which is the best in the entire Caribbean. Our workers our merchants have benefitted because <sup>the</sup> university is here. And the other islands have contributed to all this.

Finally, a brief word on entertainment: the Little Theatre Movement's 'Dark of the Moon' is not highbrow or high-minded stuff; but if you want an evening's fun, do go and see it. And don't let the critics put you off: it is great fun. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

FOR transmission on  
Thursday July 12 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I should like to express my very warm congratulations to the Jamaica Public Service Company for its decision to set up two scholarships of its own to the College of Arts, Science and Technology. These two scholarships will be in engineering, and in one of them preference will be given to students who have a parent or close relation working for the company: the other will be open. I think this is a magnificent gesture and a fine contribution to technical education in Jamaica. I should like more firms to do this sort of thing as their contribution to our independence. Indeed some firms have been setting up scholarships to the College of Arts, Science and Technology - and they have been doing this quietly and without any fuss or publicity. But there are very far from enough of such scholarships. It will be a very long time indeed before Jamaica has anywhere near the number of technically trained people we need. So may I once again urge those large firms that can do so to set up their own scholarships. And to those whose resources will not permit this, I suggest a contribution to our J.B.C. Independence Scholarships.

Incidentally, contributions to our scholarship fund have not been up to expectations over the past week. We have received only two cheques: one for ten pounds from Mr. Stanley Motta and one for five guineas from the Savlamar Women's Club. This brings our current total so far <sup>to</sup> three hundred and eighty-eight pounds three shillings and six pence. I find this frankly disappointing. I had hoped that we will by now be nearer the thousand pound mark. So please, don't forget to send your contributions to the J.B.C.

Independence Scholarships Fund, Box 100, Kingston ten. Another point I should like to mention is that so far no other business firm has responded to the Seprod challenge with management and workers contributing an equal amount. And I am sure that the workers and management of Seprod do not constitute the only public spirited firm that cares about education in the Jamaican community.

Now for some of the more cheering and positive news about the fund. A number of listeners have written to say that they are collecting money in small amounts within their own communities for the fund. In this the ladies, as usual, are particularly prominent. I am particularly pleased about this because it is the only way in which we can turn this scholarship fund into a genuine community effort. So all power to all those good ladies who are busy collecting pennies and sixpences and shillings. One lady has asked for some sort of authorisation to show that she is collecting for our scholarship fund. ~~We will certainly send this lady a note of authority but~~ I think it would be so much more of a community effort if the local community organisation, the Women's Club, the J.A.S. Branch, the Local P.T.A., could be involved in the fund raising effort by getting them to authorise it. So please carry on with the good work: if we succeed, ours will be a permanent contribution to education in Jamaica. Finally, I have now received Miss Gloria Escoffery's painting and it is a beautiful thing, framed and ready to be hanged. It will go to the first person who sends us fifteen guineas for it. And that will be a bargain to whoever buys it. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday July 13 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I think it is time we did some clear thinking on this question of a National Anthem for Jamaica - and, in the process, on the whole business of independence and what it means and whose independence it is. There are now exactly twenty-three days to go to Independence Day, and what is the situation?

We find that we have no National Anthem that is nationally acceptable. The few tries that have been made are dull and dreary beyond words and absolutely unfit. And deep down in their hearts all our politicians, all our leaders, know that a song does exist which we can make nationally acceptable as our National Anthem. It is Jamaican to the core, the words are gloriously uplifting, and there is a marching swing to the music. More than any other song, it expresses the pure soul and the deepest aspirations of Jamaica. But no one wants to touch it because the whole business of choosing our National Anthem is bedevilled with the meanest kind of petty party politicking. The words of this song was written by a leading member of one party and that party has used it as its marching song; and so the other party cannot possibly accept it, no matter how good it is, no matter how well it fits the occasion. And all of us, by our silence, aid and abet this monumental folly.

So let us ask ourselves: Whose independence is this that we are going to celebrate? And for whom do we want a National Anthem? Does this Independence belong to Alexander Bustamante or to Norman Manley? Does it belong to the People's National Party or to the Jamaica Labour Party? Does it begin with the two leaders and their parties and end with the two leaders and their parties? I think we

have had clear indications that there are people, and some of them very powerful people, who see our coming independence and the question of our National Anthem in this strictly party political light. They see it as a question of 'face', of scoring points, of gaining an advantage.

And so you have some people in the P.N.P. who are not going to take part in the independence celebrations because their party is out of power and they see this as a J.L.P. celebration. On the other side, you have people in the J.L.P. who strut around behaving as though this is an exclusively J.L.P. affair. Both these attitudes are equally tragic and unfortunate for Jamaica. It shows that the interests of the person and the party are being put before the interests of the nation; and this is so wrong.

Sure the leaders and the parties have led Jamaica to this high: and for this they will always be remembered and honoured. But independence belongs, and will go on belonging to the people of Jamaica. Long after the leaders are gone, long after these two parties have either been completely changed or else replaced by other parties, Jamaica and its people will still be here: they will be here a hundred years, five hundred years from now. And for those Jamaicans our present petty little scoring of points will seem rather silly. And when they sing Jamaica's National Anthem they are not going to be concerned with the politics of the person who wrote it or whether it bring so-called advantage to this or that party. For them it will be the National Anthem: the song of the nation. What can we offer them as the true song of the nation? I'll tell you what I think tomorrow. So till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday July 14 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking.

Good evening: I think the truest song of the nation, the most beautiful and the most stirring national Anthem that we can hand down to the Jamaicans of the future is - 'Jamaica Arise'. But for this to happen our leaders in both political parties will have to rise to heights of real greatness. It will require of the Jamaica Labour Party, ~~in particular~~ and of Sir Alexander Bustamante in particular a rare sense of history and a recognition of that which is timeless and above party and person. To accept the fact that the song of his political opponents is really the best Anthem for the nation, is the sort of thing that only a really great man will do. I hope Busta does.

From the P.N.P. and from Mr. Manley it will require agreement to forever banish 'Jamaica Arise' as their party song, and a undertaking that it will never be sung as their party song. They must agree to only use it as the Anthem of the nation, at times when it is right and proper for the National Anthem to be sung. And I think they must also undertake not to make party political capital out of the question of the National Anthem. Indeed, if this idea is accepted by the two parties then a special law should be passed making it a punishable offence for 'Jamaica Arise' to be used other than as our National Anthem. I know that this too, will require a high sense of history and of the nation's good for the P.N.P. to give up this well-loved song. I hope Mr. Manley and his followers will rise to the needs of the occasion. This, I think, is the only fit song to become our National Anthem. It was written in 1939; the words are by William Seivright and the music is by Granville Campbell. The spirit is national and Jamaican through and through. Just listen to the words:

The Trumpet has sounded my countrymen all  
 So wake from your slumber and answer the call  
 The torch has been lighted the dawn is at hand  
 Who joins in the fight for his own native land.

Then you have the Chorus:

Land of my birth I pledge to thee  
 Loyal and faithful, true to thee

Then the second verse:

Oh the toil may be heavy the campaign long  
 The road may be dreary the barriers strong  
 Our progress may falter and energies wane  
 But steadfast in spirit our goal we will gain

And then you have the chorus, and then the final verse

In steadfast assurance that God will look down  
 And give us his blessings our efforts to crown  
 Let us all be united to build by His grace  
 A nobler Jamaica, a loftier race.

That is it, as noble a national call is you could find anywhere.  
 And there is nothing about party or sectional interest in it. And  
 the music, as most of you know, is as stirring as the words. I  
 frankly think that it will take an awful long time before anything  
 to match this is produced. Logically this should be our National  
 Anthem. It speaks for, and belongs to Jamaica more than any party  
 or section. And time will wash out all sectional feelings about it.  
 Are our leaders big enough to see all this? I sincerely hope so.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
~~Monday~~ Monday July 16 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Friday's news from Port of Spain on the progress of the Common Services Conference was very good indeed as far as the University is concerned. As you know, I was very worried in case Trinidad decided that it would only continue to support the University if we agreed to support B.W.I.A. as a Common Service. It now seems that the question of the University is now definitely settled - until at least 1972. This is a very good thing for all of us in the region and it shows a high degree of statesmanship and good sense on the part of all the delegations. But of course Dr. Eric Williams only return to Trinidad on Friday evening from his very successful European tour and there is now knowing what he will do. He might yet raise the question of B.W.I.A. as a Common Service. But at least the context in which it will be raised, if he does raise it, will not include support of the University as any sort of bargaining counter. And I am very happy about this.

But there were setbacks too, and possibly the most unfortunate of these was British Guiana's decision to withdraw from supporting the university after next year. I think this is going to prove a most unfortunate thing for the people of British Guiana. On my last visit to British Guiana I was particularly struck by the sense of isolation of some of its brightest young people. In some ways I found more of a sense of being cut off from world currents than I found in some of the smaller islands. The young thinkers, the young intellectuals, often talked and behaved as though their minds were in prison. I often felt a sense of desperation in them, as though they were trying to break out of this invisible prison of the mind.

But although this sense of isolation struck me ~~xx~~ most dramatically in my contact with the young thinkers, it was not confined to them. The whole society seemed to me isolated and cut off. And for such a society contacts are desperately important. Such a society must always keep up and extend the area of its contacts if it is to grow healthily and strongly. If it does not it could so easily turn in on itself and become self-destructive. And you know that we have already seen signs of the self-destructive powers of the B.G. society. It is for these reasons that I am so sorry that the B.G. government has decided to isolate itself further. They are going to establish their own Guianese university. But the size of the population and the present economic state of the nation is such that they just cannot reproduce anything like the university at Mona in terms of quality. Certainly, they will not be able to attract and keep ~~the~~ teaching talent of the scope and quality that we have at Mona. So, as well as getting what must almost inevitably be a lower quality of university education, the young people of that country are going to be largely cut off from contact with other young West Indians, as well as with the deep and wide current of thought that flows continually into the valley of Mona from all over the world.

I think time might well prove that Dr. Jagan's decision to break with the university was one of his biggest mistakes. On the other hand if he is bent on creating a Marxist state then this isolation from current western ideas is a necessary first step on a dangerously rocky road. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday July 17 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I should like for a change to discuss an aspect of the arts: specifically, I should like to discuss the big debate that is going on now in artistic circles on how the audience reacted to the Little Theatre Movement's 'Dark of the Moon'. I was one of those who went to the first-night of this play. And I was one of those who laughed heartily. On Wednesday of last week I told you that for me seeing 'Dark of the Moon' had been an evening's fun. And I urged listeners to go and see it if they wanted an evening's fun.

Now, it seems that those of us who laughed were wrong. It seems that we should have seen 'Dark of the Moon' as highbrow and high-minded stuff with a most serious and urgent message. And because we did not see it in this way, because we laughed and had an evening's fun, we are being criticised and lectured at and told how backward we are as audiences. The proposition seems to be that we, the audience were at fault; that since the intention was high-minded, we should have seen and understood and responded to that intention, no matter what we saw on the stage. But the proposition does not end there; by implication it suggests that laughter and understanding a message do not go together.

So, let us try and examine this proposition and its offshoots. As far as I am concerned the responsibility for creating what the artist considers the right mood and attitude in his audience is that of the artist alone. If the audience does not respond as the artist would like it to, then the artist has obviously failed in communication. The responsibility is his and no amount of abuse of

his audience can shift that responsibility. It is all well and good to be a genius but unless the fire of your genius can strike a responding spark in your audience they have no way of knowing your genius. Of course, there are artists whose thinking and whose creations are way ahead of their times - people who do not create just for the popular appeal of the moment. But you rarely find these artists turning on their audiences and abusing them for not making the right responses. They know what they are about and they do not feel that they are entitled to some special understanding and special recognition, or that they are particularly misunderstood as artists.

And now for the point about laughter. From the Greeks downward some of the greatest artists the world has known have made their audiences laugh, and using laughter they have taught us great lessons and given us messages of a depth and value far beyond that of 'Dark of the Moon.' But of course that laughter was intentionally created. I had thought that the laughter compelled by 'Dark of the Moon' was part of the intention. <sup>But</sup> It would seem that it was the clown trying to play Hamlet rather than the clown being himself and giving us something uniquely his own. But I ~~xxxx~~ am still unrepentant about finding it fun, all the high-brow stuff notwithstanding.

The sad thing is that once again the artist~~s~~ has blamed his audience instead of taking a searching look at himself and his creation. Blaming the ignorance of the voter when he throws you out is part of the political game: but art is not politics, and art will not flower fully in this part of the world until the artist stops high-hatting his audience. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday July 18 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Friday's news of Mr. Harold Macmillan's sacking was a sort of public acknowledgement of seven of his senior Ministers ~~from the Conservative Government~~ of the widely known fact that Britain's Conservative Government is in trouble. Over the past twelve to eighteen months, and particularly over the past six months the Conservatives have suffered defeat after defeat at by-elections, and then they took a terrible beating from the Labour and Liberal parties at the local government elections earlier this year. All the indications are that if a General election was called in Great Britain tomorrow or next week the Conservatives would be thrown out of office. At this moment it looks as though the star of the British Labour Party is very definitely rising, and if there were an election now Labour would be returned to power. But the Macmillan Government still has about a year to go in office and in that time a number of things can happen. The Liberal Party has suddenly come back into Britain's political picture very strongly, after being on the verge of death for many years. So, if this is in fact the start of a great Liberal revival it is possible that when election time comes around the Liberals might hold the balance of power in the House of Commons - or you might even have the fantastic phenomenon of an absolute Liberal victory. My own view is that a clearcut Liberal victory is not possible at the next election, no matter how strong the revival; but of course, I could be wrong. What is certain is that the Liberals have given British party politics a real shaking up and both the Labour Party and the Conservative Party are worried. At every by-election particularly, the Liberals have been taking votes from both the big parties. And the leaders of both

parties know that the eight seats the Liberals now hold in the House ~~parties are trying to contain the Liberal vote~~ of Commons does not reflect Liberal strength in the country. **And** the Conservatives are in the greatest danger. For every one vote the Liberals have taken from Labour, they have taken two from the Conservativ es. And this, I think, is responsible for the nature of Macmillan's Mr./Cabinet reshuffle. I think that when the dust has settled you will find that the new Conservative government looks a great deal more liberal than last week's. There will be more young men who have come up through the ranks, and they will look, if anything, more liberal than the Liberals themselves. The whole point behind this reshuffle then is to try and recapture the floating/<sup>lower</sup>middle-class vote which has kept the Tories in power in the past. This is the high stake for which Mr. Macmillan is gambling. The question is: can he get away with it? He has shaken the Conservative Party ~~from~~ to its very foundations with this drastic reshuffle. It is something that many powerful Tories, especially those in the rightwing of the party, will hold against him for a very long time. But I think they are going to put up with it for the present; they are going to put up with it because it looks like the only chance of staving off certain defeat. But if Mr. Macmillan's big gamble does not come off; if there is no restoration of confidence in the government, and if the great Liberal revival continues, and if this ends in a victory for Labour next year, then I expect the Tory rightwing to turn on a defeated Macmillan and destroy him. All in all then, this is a pretty desperate gamble that Mr. Macmillan has undertaken. If it fails the Conservatives will suffer a crushing defeat and he himself will be politically destroyed. If it succeeds, he will be SuperMac indeed.....Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday July 19 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: It was exactly a week ago today that I told you that I would sell Miss Gloria Escoffery's painting to the first person who sent fifteen guineas for it to our Independence Scholarship Fund. Well, on the same evening, before I reached home from this radio station, my good friend Mr. Dudley Thompson, had phoned to say that he wanted the picture and that he hoped his bid was first. And the next day Dudley Thompson sent me the following letter with two cheques in it: This is Mr. Thompson's letter:

"I heard your broadcast on the Independence Scholarship Fund and consider it a really noeworthy idea. That each year the people of Jamaica should renew their pledge to this, their own land, by sending two young Jamaicans to our own institution for improvement is one way of keeping the spark of liberty aflame.

"I am enclosing two cheques for fiftenn guineas and ten guineas - one for the painting offered by Gloria Escoffery and the other as a contribution to your Scholarship Fund, and let me add this: I too was awarded a scholarship. Let me hope that everybody in Jamaica who has won a scholarship before Independence, either from Jamaican sources or, as in my case, abroad, will contribute towards this Jamaican Independence Scholarship here. This is one form of saying thanks to the land of our birth and to those who gave for us."

That is Dudley Thompson's letter. It is a proud acknowledgement that even the most gifted among us needed help to reach where they are and from there to contribute to the good of the country. Dudley Thompson had to win a scholarship in order to become what he is

today. And I do not have to tell you of the good that he has done for this society as well as for the cause ~~of~~ for African freedom. In places like Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda the name of Dudley Thompson is honoured, and because they honour him, they also honour his native Jamaica. But let us just suppose for a moment that there had been no scholarship for Dudley Thompson to win - would he have been ~~able~~ to make the contribution he has? And think of all those other people whose names are so familiar to you: people who are famous in politics, in law, in the medical services, in scholarship, in our public service - who are where they are, and who have contributed so greatly to Jamaica's growth and development because they got their first break by winning scholarships. We would have been a much poorer society if there had been no scholarships for these gifted people to win. On the other hand, I think we would have been a much richer society if there had been more scholarships and greater educational opportunity for all the youngsters in this island. And the basic idea behind this scholarship fund is simply to create forever to extra scholarship opportunities for all the bright and gifted young sons and daughters of Jamaica so ~~that~~ they in their turn will contribute to making a better life for all the people who live in this island in the years ~~that~~ lie ahead. Surely, as Dudley Thompson says, this is a noble gift to hand down to the future. There is more good news about the fund but it will have to wait till another time. Meanwhile keep send your contributions to The J.B.C. Independence Scholarship Fund, Box 100, Kingston ten.

Goodnight

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday July 20 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: We have just sixteen more days to go and then Jamaica will be an independent sovereign state. So what does the picture look like at this moment in time? First, what sort of celebrations are we going to have. Some people have been genuinely afraid that there may be trouble of some kind. But to me, as the great day draws nearer, this seems less and less likely. There is a basic good sense in the people of this country, a basic impulse towards peaceful and orderly living, and I do not think we should underestimate this or sell it short. You have your hooligans and your idiots and your gansters in every society. And as with every society, we have our share of bad types. But these are such a tiny minority in Jamaica that we can contain them quietly and easily and without any fuss or bother. So the whole thing is up to us to make August 6th and the days that lead up to it and the days that follow it, as peaceful and friendly and quiet and happy as the vast majority of us would like these days to be. The whole affair is in our own hands.

For this reason I am very happy indeed that Mr. Manley yesterday made public the directive that the P.N.P. Executive has sent to all party groups. This states very clearly that independence belongs to all the people of Jamaica and that the P.N.P. will share fully in all the celebrations of independence. I hope we will soon read or hear a similar statement from the J.L.P. I hope for this not because I expect trouble but because I think it would be a very good thing to let that small group of fanatics in both parties know that their parties are against any kind of partisan stupidity and hooliganism.

Another pleasing feature that I have noticed with independence only sixteen days away, is the very great effort on the part of the police High Command to establish good relations with the public. I know that people like Commissioner Noel Crosswell and Superintendent George Mullen are doing everything in their power to foster good relations between the police and the public. And I think if all of us try to meet the police half way our independence celebrations will go off without any real ugliness. So, on the count of peaceful and orderly behaviour, I have no fears. And I am very glad to see that all these rumours are drying up, though still much too slowly for my liking. Let us turn the tap off once and for all. And if there is a handful of people who are afraid of independence, let them stay at home: nobody will bother them. Of course, the crooks and the petty thieves will be at work. Celebrations and the gathering of people are the times when they are most at work. But these are just criminals/and our police can deal with them provided we keep our heads and do not invest their criminal activity with any special significance. When these crooks try their stuff it is the duty of all good citizens to help the police.

Finally, I think the National Stadium is going to be ready in time after all. And so, with sixteen days to go, I am looking forward to a great time. I am taking my family out and we are going to move among the people and share in the eating and drinking and joyous laughter of a people entering man's noblest estate.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday July 21 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: The other evening I was lucky enough to find myself at a small and very distinguished dinner party with men who are deeply and genuinely concerned with the welfare <sup>and progress</sup> of this country. During the conversation the point came up that it might be a very good idea to have a sort of moritorium on party politics over the independence period, that from a given date before independence to a given date after independence, our two major parties should suspend all party political scrapping. This idea found a lot of favour among those present. But someone pointed out a very important fact and it was this. This person said, sure leading figures from both parties will go to official functions, they will drink and eat and talk together, they will share jokes among themselves and get along famously. He mentioned the famous photograph showing Mr. Manley and Sir Alexander Bustamante shaking hands after the successful constitutional conference in London. He went on to say that in the House of Representatives relations between P.N.P. and J.L.P. members are nearly always cordial and friendly except perhaps when there is a heated debate on some urgent and controversial matter.

And you know, all this is very true. Relations between the top leaders of the B.I.T.U. and the N.W.U. are good. Sometimes these leaders work together to achieve some particular gain for their members. And in the business world you will find J.L.P. supporters and P.N.P. supporters doing business together peacefully and amiably and only arguing and disagreeing on political matters. But they don't try to beat each other up or storm each other's

homes or attack each other in marches. So, to call for a moritorium on party politics among these people will be rather silly: they, the topflight politicians, the MHRs, the Union leaders, the business leaders, are going to observe this moritorium in any case. Sir Alexander Bustamante and Mr. Norman Manley are bound to meet at a number of official functions and their behaviour is going to be cordial and exemplary: the same will go for Mr. Sangster and Mr. Arnett and Mr. Lightbourne and Mr. Willis Isaacs and indeed all the way down the line. They are going to share the independence celebrations in a happy and friendly spirit whenever they come together at some function.

But what of the rank-and-file of their followers? What of the P.N.P. man and the J.L.P. man in Western Kingston? I think it is at this level that we do need a moritorium on party politics. These are the people who are likely to clash and cause trouble because their loyalty to party is greater than their loyalty to country. These are the misguided people who act first and think afterwards and who can bring us a whole lot of bad publicity in the outside world. So it is to these people that I would like to appeal. If these people will forget their parties and what good party people they are for the next three weeks, they will do all Jamaica a great service. Just take a holiday from screaming and fighting and throwing stones for your party. Instead, keep the peace for the sake of your country. You can go back to your hotblooded party stuff later. This independence belongs to all Jamaica, so for the next three weeks at least, please show your respect for all Jamaica as it enters nationhood. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday July 23 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I deplore what has happened at the National Stadium recently as strongly as the most ardent critic of vandalism. I think it is a great pity and a very sad thing that a number of misguided people should feel that because it is their National Stadium they have the right to befoul and damage it. This is as senseless and silly as a man who sets his house on fire because it is his; or a man who beats his donkey to death just because he is the owner. You do not destroy what is yours: you look after it and enjoy it and get benefit from it. But having said all that, let me say at once that I personally do not want to be associated with those people who have seized on this thing to condemn all the so-called small people of Kingston as a bunch of destructive vandals. Indeed, I had the feeling that some of these people were very happy at what had happened because it gave them a chance to say: 'See, I told you we are going to have trouble; and it is already starting well before August sixth'. And you know, all this is so much nonsense. You do not, if you are fair and just, condemn the whole community of an area for the stupid behaviour of a handful of louts. If you are fool enough to do so, you are just asking for trouble. If, on the other hand, you clearly separate the good from the bad, you are more likely to have the good helping you to keep the bad ones in their place. So let us not condemn the good majority for the bad behaviour of a small bad minority. And let us put an end to all this talk of the little people having to behave well in order to show their 'gratitude' for what has been done for them by either the government or anybody else. Democracy and this brand of paternalism do not go together. Instead,

let us enlist the help and support of the decent, law-abiding, proud and self-respecting majority to contain and control the bad-mannered and destructive minority. This, it seems to me, is by far the most constructive way of dealing with this business. Indeed, I am sure that if our authorities appealed to all good citizens to protect and safeguard their own National Stadium they will be surprised at the response.

And now let us try to get this vandalism itself into perspective. In Britain they have had great stadiums for generations now. The people of Britain are among the most law-abiding in the world. But even there these great stadiums have very high walls running up to thirty feet and more and with rolled barbed wire on top. And still on great occasions - like a cup final or the final of a rugby international (especially when Scotland or Wales play England) - you have some of the most fantastic attempts at getting over the very high walls. I have myself seen men arriving from Scotland armed with ropes and spiked shoes to try and scale the <sup>high</sup> walls of Wembley Stadium. Thousands of police had to control the crowds. But the atmosphere never got ugly because nobody accused anybody else of vandalism. And the good citizens helped the police to ensure that the very high spirits of the crowds did not get out of hand. Now, when you look at our stadium, you find that the walls are about seven feet high - but I will talk about that tomorrow. What I do feel is important right now is that we should stop talking as though we expect that worst possible behaviour from our fellow citizens. Instead, let us expect, and say we expect, the best of them. If we do even the gloomiest Jeremiah might be surprised. If you give them a chance Jamaicans are the most law-abiding people I know. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday July 24 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night I discussed this question of vandalism at the National Stadium and I told you I was more than a little concerned by the attitude of those people who seized on it to support all their gloomy warnings of trouble. Basically these people seem to have no faith in the good sense and decency of their fellow citizens, and this, you know, can of itself create unnecessary trouble. I am sure you know the old saying about giving a dog a bad name and he will be bad: but if you give a dog a good name he is more likely to be a good dog. Expect a man to ~~thx~~ steal and lie and be destructive and he will live up (or down) to those expectations

This is not to say that we must play ostrich and shut our eyes to the possibility of things going wrong. That would be utterly foolish. What I am saying is that there is a sort of morbid fear and expectation of trouble in the minds of some people which is unhealthy, and unclean for the mental stability of these people themselves and bad for the society: it is like an infectious sickness which, like the pox, can spread and do great harm. And the basis of this sickness is distrust of their fellow citizens. It is this that I want us to try and get rid of.

But there are practical possibilities that we must face calmly and soberly and plan to deal with. And one of these has to do with the height of the walls of our Stadium. I told you last night that in orderly Britain the walls of their stadiums were often thirty feet high and topped with rolls of barbed wire. This is not because the British are always expecting vandalism and trouble-making but simply because they have calmly faced the fact that given a certain

set of circumstances, certain things might happen. And they have provided against the possibility of those things happening. When a great event takes place it is never possible for all the people who wish to do so, to get into a Stadium and see it. And people who do not have the money, or as in our case where no money is involved, who do not have invitations are naturally going to try to get in. It would be inhuman to expect them not to make the try. The British certainly expect them to make the try and so the British have provided for it by building their high walls. We have not provided for this in the planning of our stadium and it would be the easiest thing in the world for thousands of people to get over our seven-foot high walls. And if this did happen we could be in for a possible great crush with great damage to persons and property. It will not be because anybody wants to do harm or damage. It will be simply because people are eager to see this great ceremony. The intention will not be evil or destructive: it will be high-spirited and eager, no more. But harm could happen unless we think about it and provide for it. So I think we want to make clear to our people what could happen if things got out of hand. Let them share the responsibility for good behaviour with our authorities. And let there be loudspeakers so that those outside the walls can listen to all that goes on inside the walls. In these ways we will minimise the dangers of wall jumping, and all those who cannot see it will at least be able to hear the details of the great ceremony. Let us think and plan for all the possibilities, and let us enlist the help of all good citizens. If we do these things and do them well, then I expect very little trouble at the National Stadium on the great day. It is up to us.

Goodnight.

- 1) The National Anthem
- 2) Independence Television
- 3) Our First Diplomats

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Wednesday July 25 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: A couple of weeks back I told you my own feelings about the National Anthem. Since then the House of Representatives has unanimously adopted a song for which the Reverend Hugh Sherlock wrote the words and Mr. Robert Lightbourne wrote the music, as our National Anthem. I frankly do not think this is as good as 'Jamaica Arise', but it is much better than all the other offerings we have had, and it is free of the party political taint of 'Jamaica Arise'. If I am sorry that immediate, <sup>party</sup> rather than long-term historical considerations cancelled 'Jamaica Arise', I am nevertheless satisfied that this is an acceptable anthem. I hope though that between now and Independence Day it will be played often enough for us to become familiar with the music. Many of us cannot read music and the only way we will learn the tune is by hearing it over and over again. Incidentally, we do not seem to have a title for it and it will be helpful if the authorities let us know what they would like us to call it. The most appropriate phrase in the words seem to me to be: Jamaica, Land We Love. But of course the authorities must decide this.

Now for a word on television. The Gleaner Company in association with the Dutch radio-electrical firm of Phillips are going to put on a closed circuit television show for about ten days over the independence period. According to reports they are going to have a number of television receivers in Victoria Park so that people can watch the opening ceremonies of our first parliament in Independence. In addition, I understand that they are also preparing nightly programmes of entertainment, to run from about seven to ten

in the evenings. For the vast majority of the citizens of the Corporate Area this will be their first view of television, and if it comes off it will also be their first look at one of the greatest ceremonies of a parliamentary democracy - the State Opening of Parliament and the first one for us in Independence. Whatever the motive, I think this shows excellent enterprise on the part of the Gleaner Company and I hope it is a great success. The great pity is that people in the rural areas will not be able to see ~~this~~ <sup>it too.</sup>. But this is something that cannot be helped with closed circuit television. But when permanent television comes we must make absolutely certain that rural Jamaica is not left out in the cold.

Finally let me say a rather belated word about the choice of our first group of key diplomats to represent Jamaica abroad after August 6th. Mr. Lawrence Lindo has been chosen to be our first High Commissioner in London. To my mind this is an excellent choice. Mr. Lindo is a career civil servant with wide experience, having been the Administrator of Dominica and acting Governor of the Windward Islands. To represent Jamaica in Canada the Government has chosen another career civil servant in Mr. Earle Maynier, the present Chairman of the Banana Board who was once in the Federal civil service. Thirdly, Mr. Egerton Richardson has been chosen to represent us at the United Nations, if Jamaica is admitted: he is our present Financial Secretary. I think these are all first-class choices. They are all good Jamaicans. The latest rumour is that Mr. Ashenheim might go to Washington but I would prefer to reserve comment on this one because there have been so many rumours about Mr. Ashenheim. There will be time enough to comment if there is an official announcement.

Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Thursday July 26 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking.

Good evening: I do not want to make a mountain out of a molehill but something happened yesterday which I sincerely hope will not happen again throughout <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ period that we celebrate our independence. The Jamaica Social Welfare Commission's Pre-Independence Float parade which was supposed to start off from its Hanover Street headquarters at ten o'clock in the morning was very late. The float parade did not start off until somewhere round about half past ten, half an hour after it should have been on the way. As far as I am concerned this was a very bad show; and it was made worse by the fact that it was the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission, a body from whom we have come to expect very high standards.

And because the parade started late the arrangements of a number of very important officials and citizens were thrown very badly out of gear. The Premier of Jamaica is a very busy man, and to have the Premier waiting about for more than half an hour for a parade which should have passed his office at an appointed time, is just not good enough. And the Leader of the Opposition, another busy man, was at Gordon House well before the time - ten minutes after ten - when he should have received and reviewed the float parade. I saw him, and the Chairman of the Independence Celebrations Committee, another very busy man, standing outside Gordon House at half past ten: and still the parade had not even begun. Up at the University, that good and patriotic Jamaican, Dr. Philip Sherlock, had to give up his long wait because this timetable had gone to pieces and he could no longer wait. And when the parade finally reached Gordon House Mr. Manley had gone. The Premier and the Minister of Development

were at their offices and they could carry on with their work until the parade finally showed up. But even in their cases, respect for our Head of State and for an elected Minister of Government, should compel us to ensure that we do keep time, whatever the difficulties might be. And in the case of Mr. Manley who had to leave his office and hang about outside Gordon House for over half an hour, this was something of an insult. Now, I am not saying that this was intentional. Indeed I am sure that it was not. I am sure that the organisers of the parade had absolutely no intention to show discourtesy to any of these dignitaries, and that they had no intention of being so very late. But we must face that fact that they were dreadfully late, not because of traffic hold-ups but because they started late. And this means that whatever their intentions, their performance was just not good enough.

And I think one of the reasons for this is that we are still a deal too casual in our attitudes towards high office and high occasions. No group of Americans will keep their President or his opponent hanging about for a ceremonial occasion. And this sort of thing would certainly not happen in Britain. And it seems to me important that we should learn and learn fast that there are important occasions when no excuse, no matter how justifiable, can be accepted for being late. I think this was one such occasion and I think the organisers of the float parade fell down badly. None of us, neither you nor I nor anybody else should ever keep the architects of Jamaica's independence hanging about on any high ceremonial occasion. They have the right to expect this of us - whatever extra effort we have to make. I sincerely hope this sort of thing will not happen again. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Friday July 27 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: In the Expenditure Estimates for the 1962-63 Budget which we had last month, the government planned to spend a little over forty-three million pounds. On Tuesday of this week the Minister of Finance, Mr. Sang<sup>ster</sup>er, presented to the House the Estimates of the Revue section of the Budget. Against the forty-three million pounds plus that we propose to spend in the current financial year we expect to earn just under thirty-nine and a half million pounds. So we will spend just a little over four million pounds more than we will earn. This means that if we are bent on balancing our spending against our income we have to raise just about four and a quarter million pounds. Now, raising this four and a quarter million pounds should be no problem, and I am sure the government will have no difficulty in getting that amount of money as a loan in the open market. <sup>of from the people of Jamaica</sup> Those are the bald details of the arithmetic of the Budget. <sup>a</sup> And if you look closely at it in terms of family house-keeping it will look a little like this:

Mrs. Jones has ten pounds on which to feed the family and pay the rent and clothe her children. But to do these things it costs Mrs. Jones twelve pounds. And so in order to balance her spending with her income Mrs. Jones borrows two pounds and her books are balanced. But of course, Mrs. Jones is in debt to the sum of two pounds, and the more often she borrows two pounds to balance her books, the bigger her debt becomes. And so, although the books may look all right, Mrs. Jones is really getting deeper and deeper into debt - and the business of balancing her books becomes something of a costly fiction unless she does something to earn an extra

three or four pounds so that she can both balance her books, pay off part of her debt and perhaps have a little in hand for all those little extras that turns a house into a home. In other words, in order to get away from a paper balancing of her books, Mrs. Jones must find ways and means of earning more money or spending less or both.

And this, in a very simplified form, is Jamaica's economic problem when we strip it of all politics. But there is one crucial difference between Mrs. Jones and the Government. Mrs. Jones is mortal and can only plan and borrow and earn within the limits of her lifetime. But the government is immortal. It can and must plan on behalf of both the present and future generations. Thus, unlike Mrs. Jones, the government can borrow on behalf of future generations. The real problem is one of making the best possible use of what we have and earning enough to supply and pay for all our present and future needs. How you set about achieving these things makes up the politics of economics. I think that both our major parties want to achieve this same end, because - let us not be blinded by partisan politics - both have the best interest of Jamaica at heart. The past P.N.P. government felt that the best and quickest way to achieve this was to concentrate on long term development projects to build up the wealth of the country. I think they did a pretty good job in this. They doubled the national income and they attracted a large amount of investment money into the country. But the major immediate benefits, let us face it, went into too few hands. The J.L.P. made a very big point of this, and as a result, won power. So, how do they propose to deal with this problem of development and sharing the national cake more evenly? I will look at this tomorrow, so till then, goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Saturday July 28 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: When the former Minister of Finance, Mr. Vernon Arnett spoke on the ~~Expendi~~ Revenue Estimates during Wednesday's session of the Budget debate he said that the government had spread fear and frustration throughout Jamaica. He said that if the revenue figures proved to be correct there would be less business activity this year than last, that total profits would be reduced and that this would not be to the benefit of the wage earner in the form of a larger pay bill or in the form of lower prices. He said the rot was spreading throughout the business community.

I think there is no question but that money has become very tight. The business community seems definitely to be holding back. But why? I think Mr. Arnett is probably right in part when he suggests that it is because both the Expenditure and Revenue sections of the Budget are, if anything, on the conservative side with a heavy emphasis on 'pause'. Whether the government accepts the fact or not, what it does and what it says, is accepted as an important pointer by the business community. And it was for this reason, among others, that I deplored so strongly all the talk immediately after the elections about the country being broke and there not even being a barrel to scrape the bottom of. This may have been clever politics but it was most unwise in terms of the national interest. And I think this talk contributed to the holding back by merchants and investors. I hope that with this example of what loose partisan point-scoring talk can achieve our legislators will be a little more careful in the future.

But I do not think that is all of the story. I think money is

also tight because some merchantile interests are opposed to certain aspects of the government's policy. The merchant community is, on the whole, opposed to the government's proposed introduction of price controls. But the hard fact is that the Jamaica Labour Party went to the country with the proposal to bring down prices and to give the smaller people a better break economically. On this basis the country returned them to power. To oppose any reasonable attempt by this government to carry out its election promises, is in effect to oppose the clearly expressed will of the country. I am afraid that there is a very strong element of this kind of opposition to the government in the mercantile community. I sincerely hope the merchantile community will not put their interests above those of the country and force the matter to a show-down.

Then of course you have the other side of the coin as exemplified by the Allen Award in the building trade. When he spoke to the Chamber of Commerce recently, Mr. Lightbourne mentioned <sup>the</sup> disturbing figures. <sup>He said</sup> The building trade had paid out somewhere around seventeen million pounds in wages last year; its profits were four millions. If it has to pay an additional 25% in wages its profits will be completely wiped out. You can imagine what that will do to building costs.

To sum up then, I should say that behind all the figures of the a number of Budget there ~~xxxxxx~~ very clear challenges: we must produce more, we must earn more, ~~and~~ we must share what we have more equally. <sup>and we ourselves must invest more in Jamaica.</sup> I think meeting these challenges is going to be very tough indeed. But the price ~~xxxxxx~~ of failure or of not facing up to these challenges would be worse than tough - <sup>it</sup> ~~they~~ would be disastrous. Goodnight.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Monday July 30 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I am very anxious to tell you some of the details of the National Savings Bonds scheme which Mr. Donald Sangster discussed with press and radio people at a Press Conference last Friday. But before I do so I want to talk about something else which has made me, and which I hope will make you, very angry indeed. It has to do with the exploiting of our national symbols for mercenary and commercial purposes.

I am sure you have all noticed how independence and the symbols of independence have been used as sales gimmicks by a number of stores and commercial firms. Some stores have announced that as their contribution to Jamaica's independence we, the consumers, can buy this, that or the other at five, ten or fifteen percent less than the normal price. And in their advertisements they have made free use of the national flag, the Coat of Arms and even the national motto. I suppose a certain amount of this sort of thing is pretty well inevitable, though it does suggest that the primary patriotism of some of these firms is to their sales figures. I think this tends to cheapen and demean the whole spirit behind our coming independence and I am glad to see that a number of people have reacted against it. There have been a few letters in the press protesting about the more obvious advertising stunts exploiting our independence. This sort of thing is bad enough. But on Saturday morning I saw an advertisement in our national daily that literally made me shake with anger.

I am sure you have all seen the Jamaica Coat of Arms. Well, as you know, at the bottom of the Coat-of-Arms and on a band with curling

ends is printed the Jamaican national motto: 'Out of Many, One People Well, with what I suppose they considered fine advertising zeal, the people concerned with this particular advertisement, replaced the symbols on the coat of arms with the symbols of the rum they sell: and in place of the two Arawak Indians they placed two ~~xx~~ pieces of cane. The shape and ~~xxx~~ fold of the band on which the motto is printed was just as it is under the real Coat-of-Arms. But one word in the Motto had been changed. The Motto on the Coat-of-Arms reads: Out of Many, One People. The wording on this parody of the national Coat -of Arms read: 'Out of Many, One Rum'. Yes, Out of Many, One Rum. The Jamaican Coat of Arms, the Jamaican National Motto, had been reduced to this cheap and sordid sales gimmick. I think it is disgusting. And I think the firm and the agency concerned have debased one of Jamaica's most important symbols. The fact that this was not their intention is beside the point. The person/<sup>or persons</sup> who prepared this advertisement, the person or persons who approved this advertisement, obviously saw nothing wrong with taking and twisting any national symbol in the drive after sales. And so we have: Out of Many, One Rum. I am sorry but I am extremely angry about this insult to one of Jamaica's most important national symbols.

I think we must insist that Jamaica's national symbols should not be ~~xxxxxxx~~ debased and exploited as advertising gimmicks. It is with and around these symbols that we hope to build ~~and~~ proud and dignified nation in independence. What sort of pride, what sort of dignity, what sort of self-respect will we achieve if any commercial firm can distort the national motto into: Out of many, one rum? Let us stop this cheapening and dirtying process right now. Goodnight

## NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on  
Tuesday July 31 at 6.15p.m  
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night I told you how very angry I was about the use of the Jamaica coat of arms and national motto to sell a particular brand of rum. Perhaps in my anger I did not make it clear that I am satisfied in my own mind that these concerned with this advertisement had no intention of showing disrespect for this important national symbol. My own view is that they just did not think about it. I am sure that all they thought about was the improving of their sales figures; and so, unthinkingly, unintentionally, they abused and debased the national motto. The reason why I have returned to this subject this evening is because it seems to me most important that with only five days to go to the great day, we should all of us think out our values and the values we place on our symbols. Deep down all of us, all human beings all over the world, have a strong and basic need for symbols to give point and ~~xxxxxx~~ meaning to their existence. A common respect for their national symbols, a common loyalty to the meaning behind those symbols, a common respect for offices like the Crown, like the office of President or Prime Minister, all these are the things that make for a united and orderly and peaceful society. Kings, Queens, Presidents and Prime Ministers may die or be changed, but their offices - the symbols - remain. And in mature societies it is understood that although we show this respect to a person this person is really a symbol as long as he or she holds that office. It is the office which ~~is~~ is important because it is more permanent than the person who occupies it at any moment in time.

And the interesting thing about this is that even people who

~~thinkxxxx~~ say that all symbols are childish, have symbols of their own. The revolutionaries, those who wanted to make nazi and fascist revolutions as well as those who wanted to make communist revolutions, scoffed at the symbols of the world they wanted to overthrow. But as soon as, and even before, they gained power they either adapted the symbols they had condemned or else set up new symbols. The communists who told European workers not to be fools and lay down their lives for flags had to raise a flag of their own. Men do not lay down their lives for flags but for what the flags symbolise.

Symbols are man's way of building <sup>and stabilising</sup> up/for himself universally acceptable patterns of values, manners and morals/ within his society. When all men stand for the playing of their national anthem there is something tribal and ritualistic about it: as ritualistic as certain African tribes bowing ceremonially to trees or birds or certain beasts. But behind the ritualism is the bringing together of men in a common and shared bond in which the song or the flag is the symbol of their love and loyalty to the land which is their home and from which they get their daily bread.

And so the symbols which will formally become officially effective from midnight next Sunday - the anthem, the flag, the coat-of-arms and all the others - are not meaningless or merely ritualistic. They are key factors in the unification of the society. As we cherish and love and institutionalise them, so we build up a common body of loyalties and a common set of values and a body of common aims and objectives. And in the process we deepen the manners and morals of the society as expressed between one citizen of Jamaica and another. The beginning of all this must be a common acceptance and a common respect by everyone of us for these symbols. They are the outward manifestations of society's profound desires for creative and orderly living. Goodnight.