

NEWS COMMENTARIES - December, 1960.

238.	Richard Wright	-	1st December	
239.	West Indian News Price of Bread The Police and the Public	-	2nd	"
240.	House for the Governor of the Bank of Jamaica	-	3rd	"
241.	Good Manners	-	5th	"
242.	Bradshaw's Announced Resignation Chaguaramas Talk	-	6th	"
243.	The Price of Bread and the Role of Backbenchers in the House	-	7th	"
244.	Jamaica and the Refugees	-	8th	"
245.	" " " "	-	9th	"
246.	Christmas Bangers and Stray Animals	-	10th	"
247.	End of Chaguaramas Controversy	-	12th	"
248.	" " " "	-	13th	"
249.	Trade Unionism in Jamaica	-	14th	"
250.	The Jamaica Bases Agreement	-	15th	"
251.	Ethiopia (1)	-	16th	"
252.	Ethiopia (2)	-	17th	"
253.	The Rate for the Job	-	19th	"
254.	1) Telephone Co. Plans 2) Focus 1960	-	20th	"
255.	The Commonwealth & Freedom of Movement	-	21st	"
256.	The Challenge of the Times (1)	-	22nd	"
257.	" " " " " (2)	-	23rd	"
258.	" " " " " (3)	-	24th	"
259.	Round-up of Year's Main Events (1)	-	26th	"
260.	Year's Round-up (2)	-	27th	"
261.	" " " (3)	-	28th	"
262.	" " " (4)	-	29th	"
263.	" " " (5)	-	30th	"
264.	" " " (6)	-	31st	"

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: On Tuesday evening of this week the radios of all the world carried the news of the death of the American Negro writer, Richard Wright. Wright's books have been translated into almost every language in the world and people in almost every country have read them. And just as his books have gone around the world, so the news of his death from a heart attack in Paris has echoed around the world.

I knew Wright very well. I think I was the very first non-American real friend he made. I introduced him to the late George Padmore and a whole host of African political leaders. And I think I was also the first to introduce him to a number of West Indian writers after the second world war. We first met in Paris in 1946 and our last meeting was in Ghana in 1952-53, when, in true Rasta spirit Wright had gone to Africa to see if he could make his home there. I think Wright's visit to Ghana was one of his most unhappy experiences. Like our Rastas he had looked on Africa as the mother country; and like them he thought of going to Africa as going home. But when he got there it was not at all what he expected. The ways were strange and different to him. The food made him sick. He could not understand the customs of the people. And they could not understand him. Many Ghanaian customs disgusted him. And I remember meeting him one sunny morning in Accra for breakfast and throughout our very American breakfast he kept complaining that although he was black and they were black, he could not understand them and they could not understand him. That, I think, hurt him very much because

he really wanted to understand the Africans and to be understood by them. But colour, being black, was not as important for the Africans of Ghana as it was for Wright. The Africans of Ghana had hardly any experience of colour bars and discrimination, and so colour was not important to them. If Wright was black, why, there were millions of other black folk all around them so why should they bother about one more.

But for Wright being black was important. He had been born in the American segregationist state of Mississippi and he had known discrimination and prejudice from childhood to manhood. He had been abused and insulted and race hatred had burned itself into his soul. He had known hunger and misery and the way he saw it he had suffered these things because of his colour. His first book, Uncle Tom's Children was a record of the suffering and misery of the black folk in the United States. And Native Son, was an angry and bitter book about racialism, made Richard Wright rich and famous and he took a great leap from poverty to riches and respect. I do not think any American Negro writer has received from the American people the wealth, the honour and the respect that they gave to Wright after Native Son and his autobiography, Black Boy. But by this time Wright had grown so bitter that he never returned to his native land. And since Ghana had disappointed him too, he lived out his life in France where he died last Tuesday. Richard Wright was a fine writer who made an important contribution to Negro writing. I think that if he had been able to control his racial bitterness I think he might have made an even more important contribution to world writing. But he has made his contribution, so let him rest in peace. Goodnight.

- 1) West Indian News
- 2) Price of bread
- 3) The Police & the public

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I hope most of you have listened to the 'West Indian News' which began on Monday to come over this station at five o'clock every evening from Monday to Friday. I think this is one of the most important and interesting radio events that has ever taken place. I think a point some people may have missed about this new news service is this: when you here in Jamaica listen to this five o'clock news, listeners in Trinidad, listeners in Barbadoes, listeners in British Guiana, and listeners in most of the small islands - which tune in to Radio Trinidad - hear exactly the same news, read by the same voices, at the same time that you hear it. Just think of it for little: across thousands of miles, across the Caribbean sea, we are all listening to the same news at the same time. The thing that we of the British West Indies have in common at the moment is that we know so little of what goes on in each other's territories; Trinidadians ~~we~~ are so ignorant of what goes on in Jamaica, Barbados and British Guiana; Jamaicans are so ignorant of what goes on in the other three centres; and the Guianese in turn are ignorant of what goes on in the islands. And nothing feeds prejudice and misunderstand as much as ignorance. I think this West Indian News Service is an important move to overcome our mutual ignorance, and that is a very important thing. So try to listen in at five every evening. I think you will find it both interesting and worthwhile.

And now to bread once more. I see that housewives are protesting at the increased price of bread. I am very glad. I think our

merchants and traders will think twice before putting up prices if they know that they are likely to come up against an alert public opinion. I think it is important for housewives to insist that nobody holds them up to ransom by charging unreasonable prices.

But I believe that there are merchants and traders who could not care less about public opinion. And I am now beginning to believe that our bakers are in this class. Their attitude seems to be one of saying to themselves: "Don't mind their fuss, let us just keep quiet and their fuss will pass away soon". I hope the housewives will prove them wrong. I am still feeling strongly about this business and the price and weight of bread. The bakers said that both prices and weight will go up. I told you about the crsipy that cost me 1/3d and still weighed only 12 ounces. Well, I've bought another one at the beginning of this week. I still paid 1/3d and it still weighed only 12 ounces. And yet the bakers said the weight would go up to 16 ounces when the price went up to 1/3d. I think this is a piece of straightforward bad faith on the part of this particular baker. I think that if the bakers cannot or will not keep to the weights that they have announced themselves, then it is up to the consumers to ~~introduce~~ call on the government to introduce weight and price regulations for the baking industry. That seems the only way in which the consumer can be sure of not being sold short.

Finally, it is most alarming to read and hear of police rough handling of citizens. This is not good for the building up of law and order in this society. The police are the servants of the public; not the masters. It is time someone in authority told them this.

Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: This evening I want to talk about something very serious and very delicate. It is the sort of thing I hate to talk about because a person is involved and because it is easy to arouse strong feeling, and I want to hurt neither the person nor to arouse strong feelings. And yet I feel this is so important that it would be wrong for me to keep silent about it.

As I am sure most of you know the Bill for the setting up of the Central Bank of Jamaica was passed in June of this year. And as I sure most of you also know, Mr. S.W. Payton has been appointed the first Governor of the Bank of Jamaica. On October the 1st of this year the Board of Governors of the Bank was appointed: these are: Mr. Egerton Richardson, the Financial Secretary, Sir Robert Barker, Mr. Harry Dayes, Mr. Allan Shaw Campbell, Mr. Stanley Motta and Mr. G.G.R. Sharp. These are all solid and respected citizens in the Jamaican community.

Now there is no question about our needing this Bank of Jamaica. It will be the most important financial institution in the country and it is right that it should be a national institution, regulating, controlling and keeping a watch on the nation's finances. And I for my part think that Mr. Payton is an admirable choice to head the bank. So much for the background to what I have to say.

During the course of this week I discovered that a house is being bought for Mr. Payton. Nothing wrong about that. Mr. Payton and his family have to live somewhere and as Governor of the Bank of Jamaica he has to live at a certain standard. He will have to

entertain as the head of the banking community in Jamaica; and he would also have to entertain distinguished financial figures from abroad, so he has to have a very nice house, reflecting the important position he occupies.

But the house which is being bought for Mr. Payton costs £37,000; and £37,000 in any man's language is a very great deal of money. Now this would be none of my business and none of your business if it were private money. But it is not private money. It is public money; it is taxpayers' money. And as a taxpayer I feel that spending £37,000 to buy a house for the Governor of the Bank of Jamaica, is too much. I think it is at least £17,000 too much. Since I heard this news I have been scouting around a little and I got the impression that the homes of the heads of the commercial banks are in the region of £20-25,000. That is very high, but that is private money. And in any case, what standards are we going to use? Would the Governor of the Bank of Jamaica enjoy less prestige or status if he lived in a £15-20,000 house? How do you measure status and prestige. Does anybody respect Mr. Manley any the less because he does not live in a palace with a swimming pool in his yard? We have not spent that kind of money on Mr. Manley.

Now let me make one thing clear. I do not think Mr. Payton is responsible for this fantastic buy. From the very little I've seen of him he struck me as a modest, unassuming sort of person. I think he is the sort of person who will earn his prestige and his status by the kind of job he does and I think that is the way he would like it. I think it was someone else's idea and I think it was a most unfortunate one. Too many Jamaicans are living on too little for this sort of extravagance to be allowed to pass unnoticed. I hope there is time to cancel this 37,000 buy. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: In my mail last week was a very important letter from a lady who lives on the North Coast. The letter came to me by registered mail, and in it was a ten shilling note. Before I go on to what was in the letter I should like first to settle the question of the money because I think it is very important that this should be clearly understood.

Now in the course of doing these commentaries many ideas and many suggestions come from listeners. Sometimes a listener brings a case to my attention and sometimes this case concerns the person who has brought it to my attention. If I am satisfied that ~~xxxxxxx~~ the person concerned has been wrongly or badly treated, I try to do something about it. And if I succeed in getting this bad thing made right then, of course, the person concerned will benefit. This sometimes happens with individual people and it sometimes happens with business firms or other organisations. And, of course, it is natural and human for people to want to express their thanks if you do something for them. So I sometimes have people offering me money or offering me money for having done them a service. And every time anybody offers me money or anything else because of what I have done over the radio, I have turned it down firmly. I have refused to accept a penny in money or even the smallest gift. I have done this because I know that I would be doing something very wrong if I accept any gift from anybody. Whatever I do, whatever I say, I say and do for what I believe to be the good of the community as a whole; I do not serve any private individual or the interests of any group. And

in order to go on doing this ~~xxxxxx~~ as honestly and fairly and fearlessly as I can, I must not and will not accept anything from anybody. Radio Jamaica pays me for what I do and it is only from them that I have any moral right to accept payment. So please, do not send me any money or offer me anything to do something. If you have a just and reasonable case I will do whatever I can for you without expecting anything. If your case is not just and reasonable then I will not touch it even if you offer me a fortune. So I will send your money back to you, Miss Nelson, and still comment on your case because it seems reasonable to me.

Miss Nelson's case is that she went to the Marrakesh Hotel because she had been called to an interview for a job. When she got there two of the hotel 'guards' ^{watchmen} stopped her and demanded to see the letter calling her to the interview. She showed it to them. They questioned her in an off-hand sort of way and then made her hang about for a long time. There was nowhere for her to sit and when she asked for a seat she was told to go out to the gate and wait there. This she refused to do because she felt she being treated in a very bad and rude fashion, and her letter makes me agree with her. In the end, after a lot more standing about, she saw the manager but did not get the job. Now it seems to me that the point about Miss Nelson's case is a point of good manners. Do you and I have to put up with bad manners just because we are looking for a job? I don't think so. I don't think any working man or woman is any less of a human being than any boss in Jamaica. I think there is too much off-hand bad manners to working people and I think it is time this was stopped. This business of treating people with respect, of showing good manners may seem small but I think it is very important for the good of this country. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: On Friday morning of last week Mr. Robert Bradshaw, the Federal Minister of Finance, told the Federal Parliament that he was leaving Federal politics. I am sure that those of you who listened to me two days earlier - on Wednesday November 30th - were not surprised by the news of Mr. Bradshaw's decision. You will remember it was on Wednesday of last week - two days before Mr. Bradshaw made his announcement - that I told you he was very unhappy in Trinidad and that he was likely to quit the Federal scene. But let me be quite honest with you; I did not expect him to make the announcement so soon after I forecast it.

Now what does this mean for the Federation? Are we seeing a sort of break-up of the Federal Government?

When I talked about this on Wednesday I told you that relations between the Federal government and the Trinidad government are not very happy. I told you that there was a lot of face and dignity involved in the scraps which flare up from time to time between Sir Grantley Adams and Dr. Eric Williams. I told you that Dr. Williams was often impatient with what the Federal government did and did not do. And I think that Sir Grantley Adams has often felt that Eric Williams was a brash young upstart. Mr. Bradshaw is very loyal to Sir Grantley. Mr. Bradshaw believes that if you are in a team you must back your captain all the way and so he has taken up many of Sir Grantley's battles with Dr. Williams.

But I think it would be a mistake to think that the clash of personalities and the question of status and face is the whole story.

There are people inside the ruling Federal Labour Party as well as people inside the opposition Democratic Labour Party who feel that the Federal government has not performed as well as it could and should have done. And ~~these~~ people tend to blame Sir Grantley Adams for all the faults and weaknesses of the Federal government. And so there is a strong pressure move to get rid of Sir Grantley and have him replaced by Mr. Manley as Federal Prime Minister. These people feel that the Federation would have been much further advanced today if Mr. Manley had decided to go federal instead of deciding to stay at home. And they feel that even today the only person who can put the Federation firmly on its feet and give it a clear direction is Mr. Manley. Even Dr. Eric Williams has made it clear that he sees Mr. Manley as the only man to head the Federation. And let us face it, all this is known to Sir Grantley and his fellow Federal Ministers. And this sort of knowledge has a very unsettling effect on them. They don't know where they are; they don't know what's likely to happen; and so there is a sense of uneasiness among them.

I think all this simply means we are coming to the end of one phase of federal politics and getting ready for a new phase. I think in the next stage we are likely to see a much stronger and much more stable federal set-up. Both Sir Grantley and Mr. Bradshaw have had the tough job of being the leaders of the transition period and that is never easy.

Finally, I am very happy that the difficult ^{Chagauramas} ~~Ggauramas~~ issued looks like being agreed on at last. I will talk about that at a later date; so, for the present: Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I am very glad to see that this whole question of the price of bread is to be raised in the House of Representatives. Mr. Lynden Newland, the J.L.P.'s M.H.R. for Eastern St. Thomas has put down eight questions for the Minister of Trade and Industry to answer in the House. I congratulate Mr. Newland. I think he has raised a matter which is of concern to everybody in Jamaica; and I think he will find that we are all grateful to him for raising this matter in the nation's highest forum. I think we will all of us look forward with very great interest to the answers the Minister gives to Mr. Newland's questions. And I personally hope they will be more than just answers; I hope that from the answers will come action on the part of the Minister.

But you all know what I think and feel about this bread price business so I will not repeat my views again. What I want to do instead is to raise a very important side issue that came out of this question of the price of bread; and this issue concerns the P.N.P. members of the House of Representatives.

As you know, we have two parties in the House: the ^{majority} ~~government~~ party and the opposition party. ~~But not everybody~~ ^{But} in the majority party is a ^{official} ~~member~~ of the government. The Ministers and parliamentary secretaries are members of the government and whatever they say must express the government's official policy. But the P.N.P. members who are not Ministers are in a slightly different position. They must of course support the broad principles and policies of the government because they were elected on the same

party ticket as the men who ^{are officials of} ~~make up~~ the government. The policy of the government is, in broad ¹outline, the policy of their party. But these backbench P.N.P. M.H.R.s are also representatives of the voters of their constituencies. And on day-to-day matters such as the price of bread they should speak up for their people in their constituencies and for the country. I do not think that because they are members of the party in power this should impose a total silence on them. In the British Parliament members of Mr. Macmillan's Conservative party do not hesitate to ask questions that are of national concern. Sometimes they ask awkward questions of their own government. They do not feel that they should leave all the questions to the opposition. They feel that they are helping their government by publicly bringing to its attention matters of public concern.

Now, I have said all this because I have been amazed at how rarely P.N.P. backbenchers have raised questions such as the questions on the price of bread raised by Mr. Newland. I know P.N.P. M.H.R.s who are just as concerned about it as Mr. Newland. But we do not hear from them. Why? Do they think it would be disloyal to their party to ask questions of public interest in public? I do not think it would be disloyal at all. I think it would be good for our parliament, I think it would be good for their party, and I think it would be good for the country.

I know these M.H.R.s do a lot of good private work. But I think it is important that we, the voters, should also see them asking some public questions. As well as being party men they are our representatives too: so let us hear them sometime. ⁵ Goodnight

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: On Tuesday of this week I took part in what I think is one of the most important public meetings I ever attended. It was held at the Tom Redcam headquarters of the Jamaica Library Service and it was not a big gathering, as public meetings go. I am not sure that we had much more than about fifty people there, if as many. And I am sure that any stranger walking into that meeting would have thought: what a small and unimportant meeting or, what a strange bunch of people, or I wonder what this little group is up to. And, listening to what went on, the stranger might have become confused because nobody made any stirring speeches. People spoke quietly and briefly and made their plans in a most businesslike manner. I am sure the stranger, after looking in, would have dismissed this as a small and unimportant affair.

But he or she would have been wrong. That little group of people in the library hall on Tuesday evening represented probably more organisations and more people than any other similar group which has met this year. The Jamaica Women's Federation, the largest and most powerful body of Jamaican womanhood, was represented; the Young Women's Christian Association was represented; the Catholic Women's organisation was represented; *the United Congregation of Israelites was represented*; the Jamaica Christian Council was represented; the United Nations Association was represented; the Jamaica Council of Voluntary Social Services was represented. And I could go on and on and on listing the names of the organisations that were represented at that small meeting of ours. Indeed, I think that I was the only person there not representing some organisation;

but I should like to think that I was the sort of unofficial representative of you good people who listen to me. Anyway, what I am trying to make clear to you is that if there had been a stranger looking in on that meeting he or she might have been misled by the smallness of the gathering and quietness of the meeting into thinking this was just another of those ~~ix~~ unimportant little things that go on all the time. And of course he or she would have been wrong. There were thousands and thousand of people behind the small group at the library. Now, what were these people about? What was the business that had brought them together?

They were there to set up a nationwide Jamaica organisation taking in all classes, all colours, all religious denominations. And they were setting up this organisation to do just one special job. The ~~special job of this organisation~~ organisation they set up is a national council to make a special effort on behalf of Refugees. And the special job this national Council set itself is that between now and the middle of February of next year it will raise the sum of £10,000 as Jamaica's contribution towards helping to solve the Refugee problem. This means that this national council, of which Miss Nita Barrow is the head, plans to raise £10,000 in about nine weeks. And the idea is that this should not be an official effort. We hope that the government will make its own contribution to the Refugee problem but this is seen as a special effort made by the people of Jamaica. But why should you make this effort? What have the refugees to do with us? Is it any of our business? And what about our own poverty and misery right at home? I will try to answer these questions tomorrow; so till then, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Friday Dec 9 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: You will remember I ended my comments last night by asking : why should the people of Jamaica make an effort to raise £10,000 over the next nine weeks to help the refugees? What have they to do with us? Why should we make it any of our business? And what about our own poverty and misery right here in Jamaica?

I asked these questions because I am sure there are many people who will ask just these questions. And I do not think we should ignore these questions. I think they are valid and I think they should be answered. But before I answer them let me tell you a little about refugees.

I think the first thing we ought to get quite clear in our minds is just what a refugee is. I think the most important thing about any refugee is the simple fact that he or she is just another human being like you and I. Many people talking about refugees often forget this simple fact and they sometimes make it sound as though refugees are a special breed of animal. Refugees are human beings. They are human beings who have no country, no home, no future and no hope in very many cases. They are people who have either fled from their own countries or who have been driven out of their countries because of racial or political or religious persecution. It is estimated that there are between 20-30 million such people in the world today. Some of them are white, some of them are brown and some of them are black. Many of them are found in Europe; a very large number of them are found in Asia and the Middle East; and there is a growing number of them in Africa. Some of these refugees are more fortunate than

others. The black political refugees from South Africa have been welcomed in places like Ghana and Nigeria; and I have of course been welcomed in Jamaica. Some Jewish refugees have found homes in Israel; and both the United Kindom and the United States have helped all kinds of refugees to a considerable extent. Britain has taken in thousands and thousands of refugees from all over Europe and her people have also raised nearly £10 million towards World Refugee Year. The United States has poured millions and millions of dollars into the effort. But, as I have said, there are still 20-30 millions of these people who can call no place on earth home.

Now I think this is our business because they are human beings like us. When we are in trouble, when a hurricane hits us, the rest of the world does not say: it is none of our business. You know this; many of you have experienced the warmth of human response in times of trouble. And we are all our brother's keepers. I think the poorest among us have something that many of these refugees do not have, and that is a sense of belonging, a sense of home and of roots. And that is what these people do not have and that is what we can help them to get. Especially at this Christmas time, it seems to me that this is a big challenge to the little people of Jamaica to show that they care about little people everywhere. So I hope that all of you will contribute to this very special fund. No sum is too small - if you can only spare a penny it will be a blessed penny - and no sum is too big. So, please send whatever you can to:

*The JAMAICA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
REFUGEES % Y.W.C.A. - 10 CALEDONIAVE
Cross Roads.*

And let us make this a really Christian Christmas by doing something very much bigger than just taking care of ourselves. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: The Comissioner of Police, Mr. L.P.R. Browning has issued a stern warning that anyone who is caught setting off fireworks in the streets will be arrested and punished. I hope everybody will take this warning very seriously and I hope the police will be very stern in enforcing the Town and Country Planning Law under which people are forbidden to set off fireworks in streets or lanes or public squares. Year after year this custom of setting of fireworks in our streets has caused damage and sometimes serious injury to human beings.

I know of cases where some youngsters, no doubt thinking that they were doing a very clever thing, have thrown lighted firecrackers into passing cars and setting off shocking bangs. I know of at least one case where this led to an accident and it was lucky that only the car was damaged and nobody was injured. And of course by the time the person got out of the damaged car the young hooligans had fled into the night. And I am sure we all know of cases where those lighting the firecrackers were themselves injured.

Now let us be reasonable and face the fact that children are children and they do like to let off a bang during the holiday season. I am not one of those who feel that everybody ought to be grim and earnest. I am all for a little bit of fun for every member of the family. But I think it is plainly anti-social to damage other people's property and cause injury to others in persuit of our fun. We can have all the fun we want without hurting anybody. So if your youngsterer do want to let off bangers, let them do it in the backyard and keep

a watch on them; or better still, join in with them and so keep control of the fireworks. After all, you do not want the Christmas holiday to turn into a tragedy for your family. But please, do keep it in your own yard.

And most important of all remember the animals. One of the most dreadful sights over this Christmas season is to see a bunch of little boys tying firecrackers to the tails of dogs or cats. I know of nothing more thoughtless and cruel than this. And in the main I am inclined to blame the parents when this sort of thing happens. Children are often thoughtless; they will do things without thinking of the consequences. But I have rarely found children to be deliberately cruel off their own bat. It is something they learn. They learn it either from their friends who have learnt it from their friends who in turn have learnt it from some parent or parents. So, if you trace the whole thing back you come up against some parent somewhere along the line who has either not been firm enough in showing the child the right way or else who has encouraged the child to go in for this senseless cruelty. I think that as a generalisation it is true to say that where parents are thoughtful and considerate of other human beings as well as of dumb animals the children from those homes tend to be thoughtful and considerate of both humans and animals.

Finally, there is this dreadful problem of stray animals. If we are going to keep death and disaster off the roads this Christmas then we must keep stray animals off ~~the~~ our roads. Christmas should be a time of joy and gladness and goodwill. With a little thought and consideration I am sure we can make it that this year.

Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: Yesterday Dr. Eric Williams received a hero's welcome when he returned to Trinidad from Tobago. Dr. Williams deserved the hero's welcome from his people. He had brought the bacon home in the form of a completely new arrangement between Trinidad and the United States about the U.S. Base at Chaguaramas.

The most important point about the new arrangement is one of principle: the principle of self-determination. The American government has accepted completely the proposition that only the people of Trinidad, through their government, have the right to decide whether they should have foreign bases on their island, where those bases should be, and under what conditions any foreign power should have those bases. So that now this new Chaguaramas deal is between the government of Trinidad and the government of the United States. The previous bases agreement was between the United States and Britain and the people of Trinidad had no say in it. Now, it is by their say that the Americans are in Trinidad. And this establishes a completely new relationship. The Trinidadians are now the masters in their own house; ~~and~~ they can now say with Jamaica's poet George Campbell: "Now we are tenants at will no longer. There's more room; more right of way". And yesterday Eric Williams told his welcoming audience that when they now saw an American they should look at him with different eyes because he might be one of those training one of their own people. I am sure yesterday was a very proud moment for Eric Williams. He had, almost single-handed, fought the Chaguaramas issue and brought it to a successful end. Trinidadian nationalism had

won a very great victory.

But I think it is very important for us not to lose our perspective about this victory. I think the Americans deserve a great deal of credit for the settlement of the vexed Chaguaramas issue. They were there not by conquest but by right of treaty. Under international law Britain had every legal right to lease the West Indies bases to the United States and the United States had every right to hold on to these bases until the terms of the lease had expired. I think it is very important for us to realise that if the Americans had wanted to hold on to the bases under their 1941 Treaty with Britain they could have done so. And if we had decided to challenge their legal right by going to the International Court of Justice, I think that Court would have given judgement in favour of the Americans. Instead, the Americans showed a bigness of spirit which many people do not appreciate. Instead of sticking to their legal rights they accepted the moral position put forward by our leaders and agreed to negotiate.

And so the Americans are giving up about 21,000 acres of all the land they held under the 1941 Agreement; this leave them holding about 13,000 acres. In other words they are giving up almost two-thirds of the total of 34,000 acres of land which they leased from Britain in 1941. Part of this land which they are giving up is of course on Chaguaramas. And they have entered into a new agreement with Trinidad for the 13,000 acres which they are holding. Tomorrow I will tell you about this agreement and also about one point which worries me a little; so, till then, Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Tuesday Dec 13 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: As I told you last night, I think the new Chaguaramas agreement between the Government of Trinidad and the Government of the United States, is a great personal triumph for Dr. Eric Williams. I also told you that I felt we ought to pay a great tribute to the United States for the bigness of spirit it has shown in dealing with what is afterall a very tiny little country in this modern world. If the United States had decided to stick to the letter of the law of its 1941 Treaty with Britain, the government of Trinidad would not have been able to do a thing about it. Little Trinidad cannot take on the United States in a physical show-down; the whole West Indies cannot take on the United States in a physical fight. And the International Court of Justice would have upheld the legal rights of the United States under the 1941 Treaty with Britain. I should hate to think what the position would have been if Chaguaramas were a Russian base instead of a U.S. base and if we were as close to Russia as we are to the United States.

Anyway, between the signing of the agreement and the end of 1962 the United States will complete the handing over of the 21,000 acres of land it has agreed to give back to the Trinidad government. Then, after a further period of five years - which will take us up to 1968 - the two governments will review the agreement which they made at the end of last week and make such adjustments and changes as they feel are necessary. They may, at this point, either cancel the agreement completely or let it run for another period of five years. This will take us up to 1973. In 1973 they will again review the position

and either work out a completely new agreement or else the United States will withdraw completely by the end of 1977.

In other words this new agreement between the governments of Trinidad and the United States ^{gives the U.S.} the right to remain at Chaguaramas for 17 years after which the agreement will either come to an end or a new one will be made.

It has also been agreed that the government of Trinidad will have administrative control of those areas held by the United States which are under cultivation. Another important point which has also been agreed on is that the Americans will create facilities for training Trinidadians to acquire the skills needed for running the base. These technical skills can and will, I am sure, be of enormous value to Trinidad and its people.

Finally, and most important, Trinidad and the West Indies - but mainly Trinidad - will get economic aid from the United States under the new agreement. We do not yet know what the size and amount of this aid will be but one correspondent has mentioned the figure of \$100 million dollars - though he did not say whether it would U.S. or West Indies dollars. But we do not know the amount yet. In any event, Trinidad will have the lion's share of this aid. Now the point that worries me about this is that I have reason to believe that the Federal government as well as the other Units have tacitly agreed that the question of aid should be handled on a regionwide basis rather than by each unit. And so Trinidad doing a solo aid deal is disturbing. After all, she has been the biggest advocate for strength at the centre. Still, we all welcome the end of the Chaguarama issue. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Wednesday Dec 14 at 6,15p.m
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: At Sunday's annual conference of the National Workers Union the Premier, Mr. Manley, announced that the government ~~intend~~ bringing in a law earl in the new year to make it compulsory for any employer to accept the right of workers to join a trades union if they choose to. I think it is a very good thing and I am sure most of you think so too. Indeed, I think it is amazing that in this day and age there should be employers - no matter how few in number - who are against the idea of trade unionism. Every free country in the world has accepted the proposition that trade unionism is a good thing for all concerned. It is good for the workers, it is good for the employers and it is good for the society as a whole. Indeed, recent experience has shown that trade unionism has been one of the greatest bastions of democratic freedom in the world. When the nazi were rising to power in Germany and the fascists in Italy the only really effective opposition they met came from the organised workers of those two countries. In the fight against racial discrimination in the United States the voice and influence of the powerful trade unions has been a very important factor. In our own struggle for self-government here in Jamaica and in other colonial territories the British trade unions, the British labour movement has made a major contribution. Some of the best colonial labour and political leaders received their basic training from the British labour movement. When Sir Oswald Mosley's fascist thugs were scrawling their 'Keep Britain white' signs all over England, it was the British trade unionists who went to the defence

of the coloured minorities.

Now, this is an aspect of trade unionism that many people tend to forget or ignore. When unions are on strike employers lose money and sometimes the general public is inconvenienced; and I know that many of us feel that unions are a damn nuisance and that life might be better without them. I've heard this sort of thing when we've had a bus strike or when we've had to go without our Gleaners or when the street cleaners were on strike. Of course these were irritations which none of us liked. But these should not blind us to the basic importance of trade unionism to our democratic freedoms. The world's trade union movement has a sort of basic and inherited tradition of defending and extending the areas of human freedom wherever it flourishes. And this idea of defending and extending the areas of freedom has become a sort of unexpressed but very key point of the labour movement everywhere. And where the labour movement has been free and strong and vigorous and flourishing the liberties of the ordinary citizens have been greatest. After all, the majority of the people of any society are its working people and when those working people join together to protect their interests they cannot but help to further the interest of all of us. It is for this basic reason that I am all in favour of trade unionism even when, as it sometimes seems, it hurts my own personal interests. In the long run the existence of a healthy and respected trade union movement is a guarantee of my personal freedom. I am sure that trade unionism in Jamaica will grow more responsible as a result of this proposed law. And then, perhaps, it will go on to educate itself for the basic job of extending and defending the democratic freedoms of all of us. True unionism is more than just getting better conditions for the union members. It is a great freedom movement which we should all support.

Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I think the news is getting a little too hot and exciting to be in keeping with the Christmas spirit; and as usual it is mainly the bad news that has hit the headlines. From overseas and in faraway Asia we have a very touchy war situation in Laos; things are so bad in Algeria that France's President De Gaulle had to cut short his tour of that unhappy colony of France after more than a hundred people had been killed in rioting and violence; from England comes the news that Dr. Hastings Banda, the leader of the African nationalist Malawi Congress Party of Nyasaland had walked out of the London Talks on the future of the Central African Federation; from the ~~Belgian~~ Congo there is the news of Patrice Lumumba's arrest and the threat of Lumumba's supporters to kill all the whites they can lay their hands on in Stanleyville; and from Cuba there is news of scores of refugees leaving Castro's land every week; and from the United States and Europe there is news of a savage and bitter cold winter which has taken a heavy toll in human lives. And yesterday we had the news that ancient Ethiopia was having political upheavals while the Emperor is on a State Visit to Brazil. And of course, the bitter word fight at the United Nations is as savage as ever. Not exactly ^{the} a picture of a world in which men are offering peace and goodwill to each other, is it?

But there was good news too. For instance there was the wonderful first Test match between Australia and the West Indies, with its history-making finish - but that belongs to the field of 'Mr. Sports' so I will not comment on it. And then there was the Jamaica stage

of the Leased Bases talks, which like the first Test ended yesterday.

I think most of us expected the results of the talks on the Jamaica bases to be what they are. Mr. Manley is a shrewd and brilliant negotiator and the American ambassador, Mr. John Hay Whitney, had shown in Tobago and in St. Lucia and in Antigua that the United States government genuinely wanted to arrive at a happy and friendly settlement with the West Indies over this bases business: and so we all expected a peaceful and friendly settlement.

The principles of the new agreement between Jamaica and the United States are much the same as those which were worked out over the Trinidad bases. I told you about the timing details of the Trinidad agreement on Monday and Tuesday of this week. Well, the same timing details will apply in the Jamaica agreement. The United States will return to Jamaica all the land it got from Britain under the 1941 Leased Bases Agreement except for a small parcel of land of one hundred acres. The amount of land involved is over 23,000 acres. We will get all that land back. In addition to that the United States will grant to Jamaica \$500,000 United States dollars to start a slum clearance programme and low cost housing scheme in the Corporate Area; part of this money will also go into preparing plans to raise a loan for an all-island water supply programme; and part of this money will also be used to extend education in both technical and trade fields as well as university education. This is for the current financial year up to ^{June} 1961. But the way has also been opened for us in the future to raise loans for slum clearance, low cost housing and the all-island water supply scheme. To me all this adds up to very good news indeed. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I know that Wednesday's news from Ethiopia is of very great interest to large numbers of people in Jamaica - especially to the Ras Tafari brethern. You will remember it was ~~only~~ Wednesday that we heard the news that Ethiopian soldiers and police have taken over the government of the country and that they have set up a new government in place of the old. Some reports said that the Crown Prince of Ethiopia was the leader of this peaceful revolution; other reports say that he may have been used as a tool by the rebel leaders of the Ethiopian army. Only time will show which of these two reports is the correct one. What has been confirmed is that there has been a take-over of the government while the Emperor, Haile Selassie, was out of the country on a state ~~visit~~ to Brazil. What I find particularly interesting is the reason given by the army people for taking over the government.

They say that for three thousand years the mass of the Ethiopian people have lived in poverty and have been exploited in the interests of a small and favoured minority. They go on to say that as a result of this a corrupt political system has grown up based on exploitation of the masses and on the privilege of a few. This has led, they say, to a position where the rest of Africa has moved ahead at great speed in the modern world and Ethiopia has been left behind.

I think this news has made Ethiopia more real, it has made Ethiopia seem more normal and more like other countries for many people who had a kind of mystical idea about Ethiopia. To far too many people Ethiopia was not so much a place as an idea and a dream. You know

the dream; you have heard it expressed very often here in Jamaica. In the dream Ethiopia is a land of milk and honey where no man has to work and there is land for everybody and every ~~xx~~ one of us who are black are princes. It is a very nice dream. It comforts a man to have that kind of dream, especially when he is poor and hungry and unhappy and looked down on. We all of us escape into dreams when things get too rough. And when we meet racial pride and arrogance in white folk we fight it with a racial pride and arrogance of our own. This is a very human reaction, a very human form of self-defence. But there are times when men hug a dream so tightly to them that the dream becomes more real than the real things about them. And when this happens we get ourselves into great mental and spiritual difficulties. I think many Jamaicans have got themselves into these mental and spiritual difficulties about Ethiopia. And so this news out of Ethiopia is likely to hit them with the shock of having an operation.

So let us ~~xxxx~~ put aside the dream and look at the real Ethiopia. First, Ethiopia is a land of 395,000 square miles: this means that it is larger than Nigeria; it is larger than Egypt; only the Congo (before it was split), the Central African Federation and the Union of South Africa are larger than Ethiopia. But it has only 18 million people as against Nigeria's nearly 34 millions and Egypt's nearly 25 millions. In terms of education, in terms of industrial development, in terms of political advance, in terms of exploiting its natural resources, it is less developed than almost any other country in Africa: and for more than a thousand years it has had its own brand of a racial problem. But time's up so I'll tell you more about Ethiopia and its revolt tomorrow. Till then, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Saturday Dec 17 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: Last night I told you about the size and population of Ethiopia. I also told you that it had its own special brand of racial problem and that in terms of exploiting its resources and developing its economy it almost less developed than any other country in Africa. Let me go into these points in some detail this evening.

First, the special racial problem. Of Ethiopia's 18 million people, 2 millions are Amharas: the Amharas are Hamitic people (which means they are of Arabic origin) and they are the ruling tribe. All the noblemen, all the powerful lords, all the court and palace officials are Amharas. All the kings and emperors were Amharas. Before he became emperor in 1928, Haile Selassie was an Amharic nobleman named Ras Tafari Makonnen. The next big tribe are the Gallas who make up a little more than half of the population. The Gallas are what we might call very dark brown men in Jamaica. They look ~~xx~~ like the people of the Sudan or the majority of Jamaicans though they tend to be a little taller. They are the ^{small}peasant farmers found in the remote hills and villages. And finally, just under half of the population is made up of a number of ~~Negro~~ black Negro tribes. Oh, and there is also a very small ^{community of} black Jews who are called the Falashas. Until about fifty years ago the ruling Amharas looked down on and discriminated against the Gallas and the Negroes and the Falashas as completely as whites did against the blacks of their colonies. And until as recently as fifteen to twenty years ago the Amharas declared very firmly that they were a European people and did not want to make common cause

with the black people of the rest of Africa. Indeed, if any of you take the trouble to look up the records of the Anti-Slavery Society you will discover that at the turn of this present century slavery was still going on in the remoter parts of Ethiopia. And this special racial problem has not yet been completely settled in spite of the fact that many Gallas have risen to high posts in the army recently.

Now let us look at the economic and political picture.

Ethiopia is potentially a very rich country. It has deposits of iron, gold, mica, rock salt, mercury, marble and potash. But none of this mineral wealth has been extensively exploited. When the Italians conquered Ethiopia after the 1935 war they ~~manufactured~~ set up soap, cement, textile, shoe, tile and other factories. When they were thrown out by the British in 1941 the Ethiopians kept some of the factories going but production dropped and some went completely out of business. You find sheep, cattle and goats on the highlands but there is not is no great sheep farming or dairy industry although the country is ideal for it. Most of the country's roads outside Addis Ababa are little more than tracks which cannot be used in the rainy season. Our educational effort is poor compared with that of England but the Ethiopian effort is nowhere near ours. And all this is so because Ethiopia has for so long been the private estate of a handful of Amharic nobles who were doing nicely. The people of the country had no say in the shaping of their lives or their future. Parliament was the Emperor's rubber stamp.

That is the background to the real Ethiopia in the real world. Now it seems that some of the people of Ethiopia are feeling the wind of change blowing through Africa and they want to become a part of this new Africa. This, I think, is behind the confused reports out of Ethiopia. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I wonder how many of you took much notice of a small piece of news that took place last Friday. That small piece of news was that the Mayor of the Corporate Area, Councillor Frank Spaulding, had walked out of a meeting between city officials and the National Workers Union representative. The meeting was to discuss a strike of women workers in the market service; and the Mayor's walk-out was in protest because these ^{women} workers had gone on strike without first giving strike notice.

Now the reason for this ^{strike} of women workers in the market service was because they wanted a 15% increase in their wages. You will remember that a little while back the workers in the KSAC's Public Cleansing Department got a 15% rise in wages after they had been on strike and after the Duffus Tribunal had recommended that they should get this increase. And as you know, it is men who clear our streets and collect our garbage. But the women in the market service of the K.S.A.C. also do a public cleansing job and so they feel that they are also covered by the Duffus recommendation; and so they have demanded the same 15% rise in wages that the men got. But a Corporation spokesman said the tribunal had dealt with the male workers only and its findings did not apply to the women workers.

Now it seems to me that behind this small news item is a very important principle to which I think both unions, workers and employers should give a great deal of thought. And that principle is this: Are we going to pay people the rate for the job, irrespective of class colour, creed or sex? Or are we going to operate a series

of different standards for different people? If a woman does the same job as a man, is she entitled to the same pay as a man? Or are we going to observe a double standard and pay her less than we would pay the man? I think this is an issue that will crop up increasingly as our industrialisation programme grows and develops.

This is a problem which has already been faced in more industrially advanced countries. In England, for instance, the principle of the rate for the job, has been completely accepted; and where men and women do the same kind of jobs they get the same kind of pay. Their rates of pay are not decided by their sex but rather by the job itself. But before England arrived at this position the English labour movement had to do a lot of soul searching and there was a great debate on this matter in the early days of the second world war when Britain's war effort depended greatly on women workers. In the end the British Labour movement decided that it was the job that was the thing: if the job was worth so much money, then it was worth the same money whether it was done by a man or a woman. One of the reasons - a selfish one - why the men agreed to this was because they realised that if there is equal pay for equal work then women will not be used to undercut them as cheap labour.

Now I am not here talking about equality: there are some things men can do better than women and there are some things women can do better than men, so any sweeping talk about complete equality would be silly: but I do think that where men and women do the same or similar jobs they should get the same or similar pay for those jobs. And this is something I think we had better start thinking about here in Jamaica. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I suppose we all of us live in hopes: and one of my big hopes for 1961 is that our telephone service will be so improved as to make it possible for me to get a telephone installed at my home at a reasonable price. I live way up in Red Hills, nearly twelve miles up and earlier this year I asked the Telephone Company for a phone; when you live as far away from town as I do there are times when you need a phone very badly. I got a letter back from the ~~Telephhnae~~ Company in which they said that before they went to the trouble of making a survey they would like to know whether I would still want a phone if installing it would cost me round about a £1,000. I did not bother to answer that letter. I did not have a £1,000 and even if I had it, I would still not have bothered to answer that letter. I know I am in an isolated spot but if the Public Service Company could instal my electricity for about £150 (and that required a lot more material and heavier poles) then I could not see why getting a telephone should cost me over six times more.

Anyway, I see that there is a three-quarter of a million pound development plan in hand for the Telephone Company for 1961: I hope that out of this new plan would come a really improved service. And if it does come I will be the first to sing the praises of the Telephone Company, whether the improvement brings me personally a phone or not.

And from Trinidad comes the news that our neighbours down there might have some of their telephones working again for Christmas. I

hope they do. They have stood up marvelously to not having phones for these many months but restoring their telephones now would be a very fine Christmas gift from the government to the people of Trinidad. I hope our own Telephone Company will learn the lesson of what happened in Trinidad and will not allow its relations with the public to rot away to the point where such action is thought of.

And now for something a little more cheerful. We have only a few days left to Christmas but I am sure not all of you have decided on all your Christmas presents yet; so I would like to make a couple of suggestions. First, if you have to do some last minute card sending and you are in Kingston you can get some very attractive cards from the Animal Hospital on the Spanish Town Road. These sell at a sixpence each with envelop, and the money from the sale of these cards will go to caring for sick and badly treated and stray animals; and so in the process of buying your cards you will also be doing something decent and Christian for God's dumb creatures.

And finally, may I recommend the gift of a book as a very useful small present. There are many West Indian books at all our leading book stores, but the one I would like to recommend to you particularly is the latest issue of Focus. It is called 'Focus 1960' and it has just been published. It costs 10/- and it is edited by Mrs. Edna Manley. It is a collection of poems, stories, sketches and essays, all written by Jamaicans and there are also fine reproductions of the work of Jamaican artists. I think this is a very interesting collection which would make a very fine Christmas present. Remember, it is called 'Focus 1960' and you can get it at any bookstore.

Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Wednesday Dec 21 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: I am more than a little disturbed at the news that the British Government may pass a law to restrict the entry of people from the Commonwealth in Britain. If such a law is passed it is likely to happen next year. And in any case the whole subject is down for discussion at the meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London in March of next years. It seems to me most important that if this matter is discussed our own representatives from the West Indies should be there to take part in the discussions because this is a matter that is of vital concern to the West Indies. In any event, I frankly do not see why Sir Roy Welensky, the Prime Minister of the Central African Federation, should attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' meeting while our own Federal Prime Minister is not invited. The Central African Federation is no further advanced on the constitutional road than is our federation. And if Roy Welensky can go to the Prime Minister's Conference then Grantley Adams, as our federal Prime Minister should also have the right to go. I hope that Mr. Manley will use his very great influence in both London and the West Indies to press the point home firmly. At the moment it looks as though the West Indies Federation is being discriminated against in the Councils of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers. If they say that only fully independent Commonwealth countries can be represented at the meetings of the Prime Ministers then the Commonwealth Prime Ministers should see that the Central African Federation, as well as the West Indies Federation, are not represented. If one is represented then the other should also be or

else the idea of Commonwealth equality will be a hollow mockery and we will be entitled to charge Britain, as the host country, of discriminating against the West Indies. And since they are going to discuss this matter of migration to Britain this issue becomes doubly important.

Now, as I see it, there are three aspects to this question of migration. First, there is the British position; second, there is the West Indies position; and third, there is the Commonwealth position.

Britain, as a sovereign country, is entitled to do as she likes about letting people in and out of her borders. But in relation to her colonies and ex-colonies Britain has established certain very special relations over the years. For instance our passports have the British seal and we are under British protection when we are abroad. There is a long tradition of freedom of movement into Britain from the colonies and ex-colonies. This has been a point of great pride in Britain. This whole traditional relationship will fall apart if Britain decided that Commonwealth citizens must in future be treated as foreigners entering Britain are treated. When I discussed the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference ^{earlier this year} ~~last year~~, I told you how important I thought the Commonwealth idea was. Well, I think that any restrictions, especially on obviously racial lines, will destroy this great idea completely. Let's face it: the whole idea of restriction is because the West Indian migrants are coloured. Of course there are problems and difficulties. But I think these can be solved by extending freedom of movement into all the other Commonwealth countries rather than by restricting it. I would prefer the Commonwealth Prime Ministers to think on these lines and I would like our Prime Minister to be there too. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: On Monday of this week Mr. Abe Issa published an article in the Gleaner under the heading: 'The Times are very dangerous'. I found this a very balanced and very reasonable article in which Mr. Issa pinpointed some of the things that are wrong with the Jamaican society. The most important statement he makes, I think, is when he says that we go on with habits of mind which we developed in the colonial days and which make us want to dodge our share of blame and our share of responsibility. He says we are always ready to blame someone else and we are always ready to put the responsibility on someone else: and this, he says, is why the times are very dangerous. Jamaica, he says, is more prosperous than it has ever been and yet nobody is happy. I do not think it is true that nobody is happy, but I think that what Mr. Issa means by this is true. There is a vast discontent among many people in Jamaica; there is a great restlessness and a reaching out for something more than life has offered so far; there is a feeling of unsettledness and this can give the impression of unhappiness.

Mr. Issa then goes on to list some of the things which make him say the times are very dangerous. He says we fuss too much about race feeling or colour feeling. And then he makes a very sound and sensible statement. After all, he says, race and colour do exist so there is bound to be feeling on the subject, but there is no reason why it should not be friendly feeling. What he objects to is that some people are trying to make use of racial feelings in

order to stir up racial hatred. I think I would have liked Mr. Issa to go a little more deeply into this subject of racial feeling and racial hatred. I am one hundred per cent with him when he deplores the stirring up of racial hatred. But on the question of racial feeling and racial pride I have a sneaking suspicion that what so many of us deplore and do not like is any sign of racial feeling on the part of black folk only. I should like to see the critics of black racial feeling also condemn racial feeling among the Chinese^{Jamaicans} among the brown Jamaicans, among the white Jamaicans, among the Jewish and Syrian Jamaicans and among the Englishmen, Canadians and Americans in our midst. If we are against racialism then we must be against all brands of racialism and not just against one aspect of it.

Mr. Issa then goes on to a very crucial point. He says we cannot make a success of Jamaica if we pretend we have a country somewhere else. To me this is one of his key statements. To do anything properly, to make a success of anything, a man ^{or} ~~and~~ woman must devote all his or her skills and enegries to the job in hand. If you are holding down a job but you are just waiting for the chance to move on to another one you are not going to make much of an effort with the job in hand. You are going to do it any old how while waiting for the next one. I think that all the people who are dreaming of Africa as home are doing just this. I think they are selling Jamaica terribly short: and this is one of the big challenges of the times here in Jamaica. Tomorrow I tell you of some other challenges, so till then, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: Last night I told you of some of the main points that struck me about Mr. Abe Issa's article: 'The Times are very Dangerous'. The thing I liked about this article was the fairness and honesty with which Mr. Issa faced the challenge of the times. He did not plead or argue for the interests of any special section of the community. He faced what he regards as a disturbing situation in a completely honest manner. And I know that Abe Issa was expressing the disturbed feelings of very many ^{responsible} citizens from every walk of life in the Jamaican community. He called on every citizen to assume the responsibilities of citizenship. Without assuming those responsibilities we cannot and will not build a good society in Jamaica.

I think it is very interesting and in keeping with this time of the year that we should all take stock of ourselves, both as individuals and as a community. And also on Monday of this week Mr. Manley did a job of stocktaking when he addressed the special meeting of the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation Council. The meeting was to elect a Deputy Mayor and Mr. Balfour Barnswell was unanimously elected to that post in place of Mr. Ben Bygrave.

In his speech Mr. Manley dealt with the problems of discipline and responsibility among those who are the leaders of the community and I think he said something of really great importance when he used these words, and now I am quoting Mr. Manley's own words. He said: "If there is lack of discipline at the top, do not be surprised if the people below disintegrate in their appreciation for what is required in the good citizen". Those are Manley's own words.

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He then went on to say that no one who has *been* following the affairs of local government over the past year can feel happy about everything that has gone on. All we have to do is to think back to the squabbles and wrangles and the cussings and the name-callings that have taken place in Parish Councils up and down the island to know how true this is. The leading citizens in our community have not always set for us, the ordinary people, an example of good manners and good behaviour. Often their manners have been bad and their behaviour deplorable.

I am very glad Manley talked of this because it might make some people take a good look at themselves. Very often I have heard well-to-do, well-off, educated people deploring the bad manners and lack of discipline in the country. And nearly always they have blamed the poorer people for this. Some times they have not said it in so many words, but they always made you understand that the fault was with the masses. This is what Abe Issa called always finding someone else to blame. Well, I think Jamaica's middle classes, I think Jamaica's civic leaders, I think those who shape Jamaica's public opinion - I think we have all been equally to blame for the lack of courtesy and the thoughtlessness and the crudeness and the bad manners which have crept into Jamaican daily life. Everyone is pushing forward, everyone wants to get there first; no one wants to stand and wait. And others see us being aggressive and assertive and they say to themselves: "the only way you can get anywhere is by pushing" and so they start to push too and we all try to walk over each other. Now how do we get out of this jungle situation? I'll try to answer that tomorrow, so till then, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: I ended my comments last night by asking how can we get out of this jungle situation in which every man is out for himself no matter over whose face he walks.

I do not think there is an easy answer to this. No government can pass any law to make us thoughtful and considerate of each other; no police force in the world can instil a sense of responsibility in us. The fear of punishment may prevent us from doing certain things; but laws, fears and punishments cannot, by themselves, make good citizens. Only a spirit of patriotism and a sense national community feeling can do that; and that can only come from inside the hearts and minds of a people. The challenge of the times for us, it seems to me, is how to bring out this spirit of patriotism and national community feeling in each individual in our society.

To bring out this spirit we have to get our values right. We must cut wealth and money down its proper size. We must stop measuring success by the size of a person bankroll. Instead, let us measure a person's success by the contribution they make to the community. By this standard we would give more honour to a really good teacher than to a merchant who just piles up a fortune. Now I am not saying we must make a virtue of poverty. I see no virtue in poverty. I think we must get rid of the kind of poverty that is still all too common in Jamaica. What I am saying is that the idea of service to the community should become more important than the idea of getting as rich as you can as fast as you can. What is wrong with us today is that we judge a man not by what he is but by what he has.

Money has become a sort of standard of judgement of a person's worth, and heaven only knows how wrong we are about this. Of course we will all go on trying to get as much as we can, and there is nothing wrong with that, but money is not and should not be made a yardstick of success or failure. Only service to the community should be given that high honour.

Next, I think we should sort out our values on this question of equality. I believe that all men are equal in dignity before the law and before God. I believe we should all respect the God-given dignity of each human being. But I know that all men are not equal in talent and ability. We do not all have the same gifts. The really good master mason who knows his job and takes pride in it can do something that you and I cannot do, so we are not his equals as masons. His is a special ability which makes him our superior at the business of being a mason. And so each man and woman and child has his or her own special gift in which he or she is superior to the rest of us. There is something in which each of us is the superior of the rest. The one thing in which we are equal is in our dignity as human beings. I think if we understand this much of the envy and bitterness will go out of our society. And then, we must create a greater social equality. We ^{can} never all be rich but we can reach a point where no one is hungry and homeless. These points, I think will help us to face and solve the challenge of the times. And there is one other: I know no land as beautiful and as deserving of a great love and loyalty as is this island and I think we want to build a pride in Jamaica and in being Jamaicans. Goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: This is the last week of 1960 - the last week of the old year that is now dying. What sort of a year was it? What were the important things that happened this year? I hope you will agree with me that it might be a good idea to do a sort of round-up of the main happenings of this year which is now dying. Of course, it will not be possible to cover everything in six brief commentaries between now and Saturday; but I think we can pick out the highlights as they were reflected by my day-by-day comments on events of this year that is now dying.

You may remember that I first started giving you these commentaries on the 29th of February, the day before our local government elections. This means that by Saturday, the end of this week which is also the end of this year, I will have given you 264 daily news commentaries. There were three big news items in that first week of my news comments. There were the local government elections in which we had a much better turn-out of voters than all the experts forecast. Then there was the public debate on whether dog racing should be allowed in Jamaica or not. As you know, the opponents of dog racing won that particular debate, when the government under strong pressure decided against permitting dog racing in Jamaica. In the same week I also commented on Mr. Glasspole's speech at the Bethlehem Training College when he talked about the great shortage of teachers. Mr. Glasspole said that between 1960 and 1967 we should produce 1,994 new trained teachers and that this would bring our total number of teachers up 6,181 by 1967. But by that time there would be 333,000 children at

school and we would need at least 6,952 teachers to deal adequately with them. This in turn meant we would be short of 771 teachers by 1967. Indeed, I think the problems of our educational system and especially the shortage of teachers was one of the most important news events of the year. You will remember that hardly a month passed without my making some comment on education. I think the government, and especially Mr. Glasspole, has done a first class job in education. But the problem is big and I will not consider it solved until every child in this island can be assured a decent education up to school leaving level.

On March the 7th I told you about the birth control pill which was being produced by a firm of British drug houses. According to the forecasts at the time this pill should be on the market about June of 1961 and will be sold for a penny. You will remember that when I told you about the pill I also told you that in every second of the day three children were being born somewhere in the world; I told you that a hundred and eighty children were born every minute and that from the moment I begin one of these comments till the moment I ^{about} stop/720 children are born in the world. About that number will have been born this evening by the time I stop talking. So the world's population problem and birth control was a very big and a very controversial topic almost from the start of this year - as it has been for many years. It was also early in March that the Federal scene began to get exciting that Africa began to hit the headlines. I will tell you about these tomorrow evening; so till then, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

~~There~~ Good evening: There were three important events on the Federal scene in March. Mr. Manley, as you know, had gone to England to find out from the British Government what conditions any country had to fulfil to become an independent member of the British Commonwealth. The conflicting views held by the Government of Jamaica and the Government of Trinidad had reached a point where things looked really bad. Dr. Eric Williams had argued strongly for a Federation in which the Federal Government had powers to direct and co-ordinate the economic affairs of all the units. Mr. Manley and practically all Jamaica had argued for a weak ~~central~~ central Federal Government which would not interfere with the internal economy of this island. In March Mr. Manley tabled a Ministry Paper setting out Jamaica's position. In this Paper Mr. Manley made two key proposals: the first one was that there must be equality of representation: this meant that since Jamaica had half the population of the West Indies she should have roughly half the representation in the Federal Parliament. His second proposal was that Jamaica should have complete control over her own economic affairs. There were other proposals but these were the crucial ones. Mr. Manley said that if these proposals were accepted Jamaica would play her full part in the Federation; if not, then Jamaica would go it alone.

The other important federal development in March was the blistering attack Sir Grantley Adams made on Dr. Eric Williams in which Adams accused Williams of being untruthful and of revealing confidential information. In contrast to the savagery of the Adams

attack Williams was surprisingly mild in his reply.

The third important Federal item in March was when the United States gave the Federal Government a $2\frac{1}{2}$ million dollar grant for the Federal Development Loan and Guarantee Fund. The British Government had contributed $1\frac{1}{2}$ million dollars to this fund and the Federal Government itself had provided a million dollars and this five-million dollar fund was to be used to help development programmes in the unit territories. Both Britain and the United States were doing their best to help strengthen the federal centre.

On the local scene here in Jamaica March saw the big rum deal which merged the rum companies of Wray and Nephew, Captain Morgan and Edwin Charley into the giant \$5 million Consolidated International Corporation. At the time I told you that this was something new in Jamaica and an interesting sign of the times. I also told you that we now had a virtual monopoly in Jamaica's rum business and I expressed my fears about a possible rise in the price of rum. This, as you know, has now come to pass. It was also in March that I told you that the decision to shut down the Rose Hall factory at the end of this year's sugar crop meant that we could expect difficult days ahead for the sugar industry. As you know these difficult days are on us now.

But I think the news which dominated the world in March was the mass racial killings in South Africa when over 150 people were shot down in cold blood by the racialist rulers of that tragic land. In April we had the first warnings of the Rasta troubles; but I'll tell you about that tomorrow, so till then, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on
Wednesday Dec 28 at 6.15pm
Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: April began with a bit of a sensation. R.J.R.'s early morning news had a scoop story. The story was that Mr. Wills Isaacs, the Minister of Trade and Industry, had been expelled from the P.N.P.'s East Central Kingston Constituency organisation of which he was the chairman. That evening I commented on the matter and told you that since Mr. Isaacs was elected to the chairmanship of the constituency party by an annual conference he could only be removed by an annual conference. The national executive of the P.N.P. later confirmed this view of mine when it dealt with the matter of the expulsion of Mr. Isaacs. But this was only the opening shot in the power struggle which was then brewing inside the P.N.P.

On April 6th I told you about the successful ending of the B.G. Constitutional Conference in London. Under this new constitution B.G. will get full internal self-government in August of next year.

On April 11th we had another sensational when David Pratt, a white South African, fired three shots into the head of Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd, the South African race hating Prime Minister. Equally sensationally, Verwoerd did not die in spite of the three bullets in his head.

April was also the month when we had the Gleaner strike; it was the month of taxes when everybody has to pay up; we learnt to live without the Gleaner and our two radio stations kept us in touch with what was happening; on Good Friday I told you a little fable about the people who are forever wanting to change the beautiful old names for new ones that are unimaginative and ugly; the citizens of Kingston were getting fed to their teeth with the dirt and rubbish and shoddy service they were getting from our public cleansing department and

I should like to think that my comments on this had something to do with the shake-up that took place later. We are still not getting the service we are entitled to but I think the K.S.A.C is at last making a genuine effort.

The big news in April was the Rasta business and I first commented on it on April 25th. The events at Rosalie Avenue had led to the Rev. Claudius Henry and some of his followers being arrested and since their trial was pending I would have committed contempt of court if I had made any comment on either Mr. Henry or on what had gone on at Rosalie Avenue. But I did comment on the Ras Tafari movement. And it was on the following evening, the evening of April 26th, that I first asked the question which became so very important to us later. I asked: What makes a Rasta a Rasta?

You will remember I spent much time dealing with the Rasta problem and you will remember that there was a great unrest in the land. Hundreds of acres of cane were completely burnt out on the plains of Vere, and many people allowed panic to take the place of reason and some people talked of putting all the Rastas into prison or giving them other such rough treatment. But the question remained; What makes a Rasta a Rasta and a great deal had to happen before we finally faced that question honestly and with open minds.

Early in May the Russians shot down the U-2 Spy plane and Khrushchev gave the West a tremendous propaganda licking. Then Ghana became a republic with Nkrumah as President; and there was a terrible earthquake in Chile. Early in June the price of beef was decontrolled and Busta dropped his great federation bombshell. Tomorrow I will continue my round-up for the year, so till then, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

For transmission on

Thursday Dec 29 at 6.15p.m

Peter Abrahams speaking

Good evening: In terms of the news June was really a crowded month. Things happened all the time; and the things that happened were important, both here at home and abroad. As I told you last night, we were hit by the de-control of the price of beef in June, and Busta dropped his great federation bombshell. Some of you may remember that I first discussed the lifting of price controls from beef on June the first. I feared then that the price of beef would go up; and I reminded you about what had happened to rents when the new property tax increase came into being on the first of April. You remember how rents shot up. In the weeks that followed the same thing happened with beef. I was very proud of the way in which the anger of the housewives spilled over at this new rise in the cost of living; I was proud of the concerted stand they took which forced the price of beef down to a reasonable level again.

And then, on Thursday, the 2nd of June, I discussed Sir Alexander Bustamante's resignation from the leadership of the Democratic Labour Party of the West Indies. Busta, you will remember, made this move on the eve of the St. Thomas federal elections. Busta said that he had taken this step so that, and now I am quoting his own words: so that "Jamaica, the West Indies and the world must understand that our decision that Jamaica should secede from the Federation of the West Indies is irrevocable". This meant that the J.L.P. which had as much of a share in taking Jamaica into the federation, had finally decided that it wanted no part of Federation. And this created a completely new ^{political} situation in Jamaica. The next

Manley announced to Jamaica and to the world that there would be a Referendum on whether Jamaica should stay in the federation or get out of it. In other words, we, the people, were to decide if we want to stay in the Federation or not. And I think the day of decision is not more than six months ahead of us now.

You will remember that I gave a lot of time to discussing the question of the referendum in the days that followed; I did this because I am convinced that whatever we, the voters, decide on this question is going to affect the future of the people of Jamaica for generations to come. I told you at the time that I saw what happened that week as a point of departure, a point of no return; that what had happened represented as clear a break with the past as anything that has ever happened before in the history of Jamaica; I told you I thought it was impossible for us to go back to a point before that week again. And I said I thought it right and proper that this dramatic and decisive break with the past should have been made by the two men who have had so much to do with the creating of Jamaica as we know it today. This decision to have a referendum was, I think, a very high point in political development in Jamaica and the West Indies in 1960; and this took place in the crowded month of June.

Then we had a visit from the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Ian Macleod who charmed all the West Indian political leaders; and we also had the first meetings of the Board of Inquiry into the printing dispute which had caused the Gleaner strike: there were crises in Turkey and Japan....But time's up, so till tomorrow, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: Our news round-up for the year is still in the crowded month of June, 1960. On the 14th of June I told you how a daring party of Jewish secret agents had captured Adolf Eichmann and spirited him out of Argentina and into Israel to be tried as a mass murderer. Eichmann, I told you, had been responsible for the deaths of more than five million Jews in Hitler's Germany.

On June 18th I told you about Mr. Morris Cargill's resignation from the Federal Parliament. Mr. Cargill also resigned from the Jamaica Labour Party at the time though he kept this a secret because he did not want to embarrass the J.L.P. at a particularly awkward time. And on the ^{same} evening of June 18th I conducted the first Forum on Federation in which Mr. Manley and Senator Douglas Judah took part.

Then, on June 20th, I told you about Guinea and the Congo. The little independent republic of Guinea, thanks largely to the meanness and political stupidity of the French, had become the first communist dominated African state. And the people of the Congo, who had ~~deliberately~~ been kept in complete political ignorance by the Belgians were celebrating their approaching independence with murder, arson, riots and tribal clashes; and the name of Patrice Lumumba, an obscure postal clerk who had spent six months in jail for thieving £800, became headline news throughout the world. This unhappy news out of Africa alarmed and ~~disturbed~~ those of us who are of African origin or of African descent. But Africa was stepping on the world stage with a vengeance, and soon the great good news out of Africa balanced and outweighed the bad news. Towards the end of the year Africa had become a dominating force in world affairs and I think we can honestly

and fairly say that in international affairs 1960 was the year of the Africans.

Then we came to the year's most dramatic and disturbing events here in Jamaica. Early on the morning of Tuesday June 21st military trucks loaded with soldiers and police made their way to the foothills of St. Andrew to the Red Hills area. They were on a large-scale raid to the Belever~~der~~ area of Red Hills where it was suspected that Rastafarians had stored away arms and ammunition. Suddenly, five young soldiers were ambushed. One was shot dead on the spot and three others were gravely injured: and then the greatest manhunt in the history of modern Jamaica was on. A handful of American Negroes from the slums of New York had smuggled arms into the island with the idea of stirring up rebellion and revolution; and they had chosen Jamaica's Rasta movement as the most likely means through to spread their ideas for a revolution of race and colour in Jamaica. Why did they choose the Rasta movement? And this leads right back to the old question: what makes a Rasta a Rasta? And so we had the days of shock and alarm and the wild manhunt through the fields and hills and gullies which ended outside Sligoville with the capture of the handful of American Negroes who had come here and killed and cast the shadow of fear over this peaceful island.

And on the last day of the eventful month of June Castro's Cuba seized an American oil company and set off on a campaign of nationalising foreign businesses.

After June the news of July was mild; and then in August we had the report of the Rastafari movement from the university. This explained what makes a Rasta a Rasta and many of us didn't like the truth of it. Then the Magnet bus company closed down. I'll sum up the year tomorrow, so till then, goodnight.

NEWS COMMENTARY

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

Good evening: As I feared, ladies and gentlemen, it has not been possible for me to run right through the whole of this year in this round-up of the important events of 1960. There just was not enough time. But I have deliberately concentrated on the earlier part of the year because that is further away from us and we may have forgotten some of the earlier events.

I think June was the most important and the most eventful month of 1960 for us. More news of basic importance took place in June than in any other single month of the year. The things that happened in June - the question of the Referendum, the Sligoville affair and the Rasta crisis - these things made us think and examine ourselves and made us ask questions about our society. There were other important events after June, of course. There was the coming of mechanisation to our sugar industry; there was the new farm development programme; there were the developments in the labour movement; the power struggles in the two parties; the growing road accidents; the cost of living; the discussion of the rising tide of race and colour feeling; the rise in the price of bread; the government's decision to buy up squatter land for low cost housing projects; the American Presidential elections; and, more recently, the settlement of the leased bases issue. This was part of the pattern of the serious news that unfolded during the years.

There were the lighter touches too - even though these did not make the headlines. Do you remember when I told you of the news from South India which said that mermaids were real and some of my young bachelor friends wanted to go to India to see for themselves? And

do you remember the scarifying story of the world getting to a point where there are only women in it and no men? And from time to time I have talked about the small and cheerful things that do not make the news headlines but which are so important.

All this, the serious and the tragic, the light and the gay, have been a part of the pattern of 1960.

And now it is only a few more hours to the end of 1960. In less than four hours' time we will be celebrating the coming of the New Years. So what do we want to say finally for 1960? And what do we hope for 1961?

On a political level I think the worse thing that happened in 1960 was the Sligoville affair. On the economic level the rise in the cost of living was dreadful, especially for the poorer sections. My own hates of 1960 were the rise in the price of bread and the spending of £37,000 on a house for Governor of the Bank of Jamaica. I think this last was wanton extravagance. I think there is still too much poverty and homelessness.

The most hopeful thing was a growing consciousness that we are all our brothers' keepers and the government's decision to do something big about low-cost housing. And for me the biggest gain of 1960 was the feeling of a growing civic consciousness, the feeling that all sections of our community are becoming more mature and balanced in their judgements of important issues. And for the New Year my hope is for more opportunity for everyone in our society to live a fuller and richer and more rewarding life in the year ahead. So, to all of you, with thanks for listening to me, I offer the hope of a really prosperous and happy New Year.

Goodnight.