



POWER TO THE PEOPLE

PARLIAMENT IN SAINT LUCIA RECOGNIZES THE PEOPLE AS SOVEREIGN

The next time a Parliamentarian, Government Minister, Cabinet Secretary or Judicial Officer takes office in St Lucia, he or she will be pledging allegiance to the people and Constitution of St Lucia, instead of the Queen of England who doubles as the island's head of state.

In an historic vote on Tuesday, July 8, the House of Assembly amended the Official Oaths Ordinance which dates from the British colonial period, to give formal recognition to the people of St Lucia as the real repository of sovereignty and power in an independent St Lucia.

"We are making a very gentle departure from the past," said Prime Minister, Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, as he introduced the amendment. "We are asserting finally in the commitments that we make to Government that the people of St Lucia are sovereign...."

Whereas in the past parliamentarians swore "to bear true allegiance to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, her heirs and successors according to law", they will now swear to be "faithful and bear true allegiance

to St Lucia", to "uphold and defend the Constitution and the laws of St Lucia" and to "conscientiously and impartially discharge (their) responsibilities to the people of St Lucia."

"The Constitution of St Lucia protected or preserved the then Oaths Ordinance but gave clear authority to Parliament to alter that ordinance if it so wished," Dr. Anthony explained. "So we are exercising that power today to alter the Ordinance to reflect the spirit of the times."



The Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony takes the oath in House of Assembly

"All one is seeking to do is something, in fact, that has been done by a number of countries in the Caribbean which yet retain the monarchical system of Government." Hon. Mario F. Michel.



Member of Parliament for Babonneau, Hon. Felix Finisterre signs after taking the oath

"This amendment will have some resonance and ought to be read along with other measures that we have taken or other measures that we are likely to take in the immediate future," added the Prime Minister, pointing to changes in the House's Standing Orders a few years ago to permit the use of Kweyol in debates, and planned Constitutional amendments to recognize the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) as the island's highest court.

Full Consultation

Abandoning the monarchical system of government altogether and switching St Lucia to republican status, however, is not on Government's immediate agenda, Dr. Anthony assured the House. The clarification was made in response to queries raised by Opposition Micoud North MP, Hon. Marius Wilson.

"When we determine that this is a course of action that we would like to see considered as a Government, it is a course of action that we would take in full consultation with and after elaborate discussion with the people of this country," House leader, Hon. Mario F. Michel said.

(cont'd on page 3)

EDITORIAL

POINT TO PONDER

A recent judgement handed down by the Privy Council in London in a 1996 libel case against the Jamaica Gleaner newspaper, provides much food for thought for the Caribbean media.

At a time when maligning public personalities has become so commonplace in some sections of the media, often with an emphasis on fiction more than fact, the Privy Council's judgement sends a sobering message.

It reinforces a basic point in law: that everyone is entitled to a good reputation and has a right to defend it in case of malicious attack.

Anthony Abrahams, a former Tourism Minister in Jamaica, sued the Gleaner after it published an Associated Press report attacking his integrity. The High Court considered it a gross libel and Mr Abrahams was rewarded a record J\$80.7 million.

This sum, however, was later reduced by the Appeal Court to J\$35 million. Not satisfied, the Gleaner took the case all the way to the Privy Council which confirmed the Appeal Court's decision.

As there can be no more appeals, the case has finally come to an end in Mr. Abrahams' favour.

An ancient philosopher reportedly said a good reputation is worth more than gold. Unlike gold, however, reputations can be easily damaged sometimes beyond the point of repair.

A lesson of the Privy Council's judgement is that the media ought to exercise caution whenever they are publishing information which can damage a person's reputation.

The exercise of freedom by the media should go hand in hand with responsibility - the responsibility to ensure the accuracy of information they publish. Regrettably, that's often not the case.

The Privy Council's judgement is a reminder that there is a heavy price to be paid for journalistic excesses and recklessness.



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Every Friday at 6.15 p.m. on NTN, Cablevision Channel 2.

Government Notebook

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EU ASSISTANCE BRINGS BENEFITS

With foreign aid increasingly hard to come by for most developing countries, it pays nowadays for a recipient nation to put resources that come its way to effective use and within reasonable time.

As Wilfred Pierre will tell you, it's an approach that's working for St Lucia in its development cooperation relationship with the European Union (EU). So much so that for two consecutive years, the EU has rewarded St Lucia by providing more aid under one aspect of the programme than was originally planned.

"The EU has worked out a system of performance," explains Pierre, who coordinates the EU's aid programme operating out of the Prime Minister's Office. "Once you perform well, you get additional resources. If a country doesn't perform, it doesn't get resources."

The EU is the largest foreign aid donor to St Lucia today, pumping millions of Euros into various aspects of the island's development under the so-called Cotonu Agreement with the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group.

Building Private Sector Capacity

The programme covers a wide area: the planned construction of a new general hospital, revitalization of the banana industry, low income housing development, building capacity for the local private sector to cope with the challenges of globalization, poverty alleviation, and skills training, to mention a few examples.

In fact, as Pierre points out, 90 per cent of aid financing in the Government's current budget comes from the Brussels-headquartered EU. Last month, when an EU team visited to carry out a review, St Lucia received high marks for how it is using EU aid. This, however, wasn't always the case.

"we are really up there when it comes to EU cooperation, not just in the region but in the whole ACP group."

Just a few years ago, EU aid to St Lucia was in jeopardy because it wasn't being effectively utilized. At the time, the programme was being coordinated by one official operating out of the Ministry of Finance. EU aid wasn't flowing into the island at the rate it should.

To achieve the results he wanted, Prime Minister, Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, brought the coordination of the programme directly under the Office of the Prime Minister and handed the task to a fully-staffed office headed by Pierre.

The turn-around has been simply amazing, and significant benefits are beginning to flow to the population. For example, the \$8 million low income housing programme under which nationals who qualify, are getting a \$20 000 grant along with a loan to assist with acquiring a home.

There's also the \$16 million Rural Credit Facility, operating on the same grant/loan principle, which has helped 20 persons so far to set up small businesses. There has been tremendous public response to both programmes which were launched just a few months ago.

"We are very happy about that," says Pierre, whose official designation is National Authorizing Officer. "That was the vision of the Prime Minister."

EU aid to St Lucia is made available under a number of programmes. There's the Special Framework of Assistance, better known as the SFA, under which the island is down to receive around EC\$24 million a year for 10 years, beginning in 1999.

From 2004, this annual allocation will be reduced by 15 per cent every year.



EU AID COORDINATOR: National Authorizing Officer, Wilfred Pierre.



HOUSING BOOST: EU-financed Low Income Housing Project is helping many St Lucians to acquire a home.



EU-financed irrigation system under construction in Cul-de-Sac.

However, if St Lucia continues to use the aid efficiently, as it's doing now, it could have the yearly allocations increased as happened in 2000 and again in 2001.

Instead of receiving the yearly allocation of 8.5 million Euros, the equivalent of EC\$24 million, St Lucia received 8.7 million Euros in 2000 and 9.2 million in 2001. The additional funds were reallocations from countries which had failed to use up their quota.

The EU came up with the SFA to compensate ACP countries like St Lucia which have traditionally exported bananas to Europe under a preferential arrangement, but suffered heavy losses as a result of the United States' challenge of these preferences before the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

"Under the 1999 programme being implemented, the Banana Industry Trust has received almost \$8 million to support the recovery of bananas, the Poverty

Reduction Fund has got close to \$2 million and the National Skills Training Programme has got \$1 million," says Pierre.

"The SFA started with us here in St Lucia," Pierre points out. "We were the very first ones to receive the resources. We have now received resources for 2000 and 2001 and we are looking at 2002. We need to prepare now all the documentation to access those funds because implementation starts in January next year."

"We are really up there when it comes to EU cooperation," Pierre proudly notes. "Not just in the region but in the whole ACP group."

Other sources of EU aid are the National Indicative Programme which has two components: a so-called A envelope under which \$4.5 million will be made available over five years and a B envelope with \$15 million.

(cont'd on page 3)

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

(from page 1)

"All one is seeking to do is something, in fact, that has been done by a number of countries in the Caribbean which yet retain the monarchical system of Government. Jamaica has done it, a number of countries have done it merely to change the language of the oaths," Michel added.

"If there is a temptation to see this amendment as a symbolic act, then I want to emphasize how important it is for this country," Dr. Anthony went on, emphasizing the powerful role of symbols.

"Those who, for example, feel that nothing surrounding Her Majesty should be tampered with, should bear in mind that while we have great respect and reverence to that office, ... that does not mean that from time to time it is not necessary to make adjustments in our constitutional behaviour to accord with new realities."

Adjusting to new Realities

"We do have to make those adjustments but in making those adjustments it is vital to bear in mind that one is not seeking to cause any offence. It is rather a question of allowing our democracy to evolve, allowing to our conventions to evolve as we grow constitutionally and otherwise," he explained.

Hon. Philip J. Pierre, the Parliamentary Representative for Castries East and Minister for Commerce, Tourism, Investment and Consumer Affairs, zeroed in on the issue of "responsibilities" which elected officials pledge in their oaths to discharge to the public.

Referring to the so-called Rochamel issue, he observed: "...For the last two or three months, we have seen a blatant fraud by certain people who have the responsibility as taken by the oath of allegiance.

"They have gone all over the country speaking about \$90 million, \$101 million, cost overruns of \$200 million, all sorts of figures, and these people took an oath to be responsible to the people of St Lucia."

Giving the People the Facts

Saying Government had made it clear that the overruns were in the vicinity of \$12 million, Pierre went on: "There has to be something in the laws of this country that speaks about people who blatantly misrepresent, who lie, who deceive and continue to do it and they have an oath."

"I, at some point, will ask to bring an amendment or some act or some law to speak about withdrawing people from this Honourable House when they are in a position to have information and they deliberately misrepresent the facts for political gain," he said. "It cannot be right."

What has come out of Government's involvement in the Rochamel project, Pierre pointed out was a five-star hotel employing 650 St Lucians and paying wages of \$1.5 million a month. In addition, he revealed, the hotel buys roughly \$1 million in goods from farmers and local suppliers every month, and pays \$700,000 in hotel occupancy tax to the Government every month.



The Cabinet of Ministers about to start their weekly meeting.

Dr. Anthony had also touched the subject of responsibility, specifically the collective responsibility of Cabinet ministers, and had cited an example of breaches of that responsibility in the Rochamel issue specifically involving George Odlum, the former foreign minister who served in the Labour Cabinet until early 2001.

Mr. Odlum, Dr. Anthony pointed out, supported Cabinet decisions regarding Rochamel but was now using Cabinet documents to write articles on the issue, giving the public the impression that he was not privy to the said Cabinet decisions and was only now discovering about Rochamel.

"You could not want a clearer and more naked breach of Cabinet collective responsibility or of the oath of office and, mind you, that is being done in the name of principle, so-called principle," Dr. Anthony said.

"How on earth could it be described as principle when you sat in that Cabinet room, you gave counsel in that Cabinet room, you are part of the decision in that Cabinet room. When a member of Cabinet decides that he is unable to stomach a decision of the Cabinet, what he does is to hand in his resignation to the Prime Minister and say 'I am unable to accept this on principle and therefore I will make my exit.'"

Dr. Anthony continued: "To the credit of former Cabinet ministers in St Lucia, it is rare to hear them making disclosures about decisions or matters in Cabinet...." Honouring the oath, he said, "is respecting a fundamental principle of our constitutional life and constitutional behaviour".

EU ASSISTANCE

(from page 2)

There are also balances remaining from the Stabex programme which ended in 1999. Stabex provided compensatory financing in cases where a country suffered a loss of export earnings, say, from bananas as a result of crop damage caused by a hurricane.

"We really have some resources that we can use to really assist the development of the country," Pierre says. "It is like a God-send to us and if we use it effectively and efficiently, it is going to redound to the benefit of St Lucia."

Following the overwhelming response to the Low Income Housing Project and the Rural Credit Facility, Pierre's office which designed both programmes after Prime Minister Anthony explored the possibility with EU officials, is considering another initiative which is expected to trigger a similar response.

It's a scholarship programme to finance degree and other training programmes. Lots of St Lucians have been coming into Pierre's Office to enquire about the possibility of EU aid covering such a programme. If the initiative gains approval, it will offer a combination of grant/loan financing to beneficiaries.

However, the EU project which is generating most excitement is the new general hospital, earmarked for construction in Coubaril.

Pierre estimates that construction will begin in 2005 and last for three years.

Estimated cost of the project, including construction of buildings and the purchase of equipment, is \$67 million.

"As it is now, we have prepared the terms of reference for the design of the hospital itself," Pierre explains. "Brussels is going to look at it around July-August and once it is approved and they give us the go-ahead, we will launch the tender process. That whole process will take about a year."

St Lucia, which is pursuing closer cooperation with neighbouring Martinique in the context of its EU relationship, is collaborating with the French island on the hospital project.

A new hospital is under construction in Martinique and the St Lucia general hospital project team recently paid a visit there to see how they can benefit from the Martiniquan experience.

"Out of this step, a bio-medical engineer from Martinique is to visit St Lucia to have a look at the equipment in use at the Victoria Hospital and then prepare a transition plan so that we can get the hospital project moving effectively and efficiently," Pierre says.

ACCOUNTING TO THE PUBLIC



Cabinet Secretary, Dr. James Fletcher, briefing reporters on the conclusions of a weekly Cabinet meeting in the studios of the Government Information Service (GIS). On his left is Director of Information Services, Embert Charles. This innovative public information initiative is an attempt to demystify Cabinet meetings and give ordinary St Lucians an insight into the deliberations of Government's top decision-making body.

CASTRIES - REDEVELOPMENT THE CASTRIES CITY COUNCIL AIMS

There was a time when Castries was regarded as the cleanest and most beautiful city in the entire Caribbean, What we are seeking to do with the help of the present Government and other stakeholders, is to restore that image which was lost some time ago due to neglect of the city."

Mayor Irving John.

The Castries City Council has gone about the job so quietly, many St Lucians may not have even realized their 235-year-old capital is undergoing major redevelopment and renewal, even though there's quite a bit of tangible evidence.

From a marked improvement in the general cleanliness of the city to the magnificent transformation of the Derek Walcott Square, from the

extensive rehabilitation of sidewalks including the addition of strategically-placed ramps to give handicapped persons unprecedented access around the city, to substantial physical improvements at the public market, Castries is starting to take on a whole new appearance.

A row of potted ornamental plants running through the middle of Bridge Street has done much to

enhance the city centre. And, with the opening of well-maintained public washrooms on Jeremie and High Streets, some men have absolutely no excuse to continue the unsightly and unhealthy habit of urinating all over the place.

Passed by the Choc Cemetery recently with its glistening white tombs and beautifully maintained grounds? Don't you agree the City Council has done a fantastic job cleaning up and beautifying the place? Choc easily ranks among the best managed burial grounds to be found anywhere in the Caribbean today.

"There was a time when Castries was regarded as the cleanest and most beautiful city in the entire Caribbean," says Mayor Irving John. "What we are seeking to do with the help of the present Government and other stakeholders, is to restore that image which was lost some time ago due to neglect of the city."

\$12 million on Beautification.

Appointed four years ago to manage the affairs of Castries, the incumbent City Council has spent roughly \$2 million so far to beautify the city, despite growing pressure on its finances. The project to upgrade the Derek Walcott Square, an historic city landmark, received much-welcome assistance from the St Lucia Electricity Services Ltd (LUCELEC).



THE BOULEVARD: Earmarked for trans

Last February, a City Council decision to give a patriotic touch to the John Compton Highway coincide with Independence celebrations, earned commendations from Prime Minister, Hon. Kenny D. Anthony. Inspired by a display Mayor had seen during a visit to London, the effort, however, soon fell victim to vandals.

One by one, pots of flowers began disappearing overnight from metal holders emblazoned with the national flag which the City Council placed on each electricity pole lining the highway. As a result, the holders were taken down and the Council has decided it will put them back with new flowers only on special occasions instead of leaving them on permanent display as was originally planned.

This act of vandalism, the refusal of some to use the new public washrooms instead,



A COUNCIL GIFT TO CASTRIES: The busts of St Lucia's Nobel laureates, Sir Arthur Lewis and Hon. Derek Walcott, occupy centre-stage in the Derek Walcott Square.



MARKET IMPROVEMENTS: New booths for vendors as part of the Council's efforts to improve vending at the market.



PUBLIC CONVENIENCE: Fully staffed washroom on High Street operated by the City Council.

NT AND RENEWAL ENERGIZE THE CAPITAL



pedestrian mall.

g all over the place, and vagrants who mess the city as soon as it is cleaned, is naturally tiring – if not demoralizing – for the Castries administration at City Hall.

Another frustration is the unsightly kiosks popping up all over the city by persons engaged in illegal vending. These contraptions on the sidewalks pose a threat to the safety of passers-by. While the Council acknowledges these nuisances are merely seeking to make a living, it wants people to appreciate that vending must be regulated and conducted in an orderly fashion in the interest of public safety.

Returning to his 5th stint as mayor, he is generally pleased with the response of most Castries residents to the changes taking place in the city. Nonetheless, he's appealing to St Lucians to take ownership of their capital and to support the efforts of the City Council to keep Castries beautiful.

Tourism Benefits

"In cleaning and beautifying Castries, we are doing this primarily for the benefit of the residents of Castries and all St Lucians," he emphasizes.

"In addition," he adds, "we also have many visitors who come to Castries as tourists. A clean city is attractive for our tourism because these visitors will see and tell others what a wonderful city Castries is and some of them may then wish to visit here."

The next big project for the City Council is the transformation of the historic William Peter Boulevard into a pedestrian mall. The Castries administration is getting assistance from the city of Lamentin in Martinique, with which Castries is establishing a 'twinning' relationship.

Following a recent meeting involving Minister for Urban Transformation, Culture and Local Government, Hon. Menissa Rambally, the City Council and other stakeholders, a technical team

from the neighbouring French island was expected here this month to carry out preliminary work aimed at coming up with a concept for the project. John is hoping the project will get off the ground within the next year.

With the establishment of the pedestrian mall, the present Boulevard area will become off-limits to vehicular traffic. The mall is expected to open until late at night and will feature the usual shops, cafes, entertainment, etc. – all with the aim of stimulating more spending by tourists, especially cruise ship passengers, and encouraging St Lucians either to stay on after work or return for recreation after normal business hours.

Employment for 238 persons

"The whole objective is to inject more life into the city," says Town Clerk, Lambert Nelson.

Despite its ambitious plans for Castries, the Castries City Council is grappling with some formidable financing challenges. It's the result of the virtual drying-up of its two main traditional sources of direct revenue: an annual subvention from Central

Government and the transfer of the collection of property tax to the Inland Revenue Department a year ago.

The City Council, which provides employment for 238 persons, has an annual operating budget of \$10 million. Fifty per cent used to be financed from property taxes. To cope with the new situation, the Council has improved efficiency by computerizing some aspects of its operations like the cemetery records.

"We are in an area now where we are being asked to do more with less," Nelson says.

The Council has achieved some success in developing new sources of income. For example, revenue from vendors' fees at the Castries market as a result of the expansion of facilities and the provision of new vending space has gone up by 20 per cent.

Another significant source of revenue is dividend payments on shares held by the City Council in LUCELEC. These payments average \$2 million a year, but have to be contrasted with the \$65,000 the Council pays LUCELEC every month for street lighting.



PUTTING HEADS TOGETHER: Mayor Irving John, Deputy Mayor Joseph Fedee, and Town Clerk Lambert Nelson discuss city business.

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CDC building being demolished: making the city safer

Sales of tombs at the Choc Cemetery, averaging \$500,000 to \$600,000 a year, are another important revenue source. And when paid parking is introduced in Castries, as proposed, the Council will have an additional source of revenue.

"We manage but the revenue doesn't flow as it used to in previous years," says Deputy Mayor, Joseph Fedee.

Seeking to benefit from the Castries experience in improving efficiency, other local government bodies – namely the Vieux Fort City Council and the Gros Islet Town Council – have approached the City Council for technical assistance. Gros Islet has received assistance in cemetery management while Vieux Fort benefited from advice in the management of its constabulary.

Castries, named after an 18th century French colonial official, became St Lucia's capital in 1768. Home to 60,000 residents or roughly a third of the national population, its boundaries extend north to the Choc bridge, east to Balata, and south to the Cul-de-Sac junction with the Millennium Highway.

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FIGHTING PASSPORT FRAUD STIFFER PENALTIES UNDER AMENDED ACT

Months after Prime Minister, Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, warned the nation of the serious national security implications of the growing worldwide problem of passport fraud, the St Lucia House of Assembly has strengthened the hand of local authorities to combat such abuse.

At a regular sitting on Tuesday, July 8, the House passed an amendment to the 1991 Passport Act, toughening penalties for persons convicted of various passport offences which allow persons to use St Lucia for the purpose of illegal migration to other countries, especially in North America and Europe.

Under the beefed-up legislation, anyone convicted of forging a passport faces a \$25,000 fine and seven years imprisonment. Other key provisions are a \$50,000 fine and 15 years imprisonment for unlawful production of a passport, and a \$30,000 fine and ten years imprisonment for selling forged passports.

Protecting Our Citizens

"These ... are very, very important amendments because these actions ... can compromise the security of a state in a very serious way and can indeed put every citizen at serious risk," remarked Hon. Sarah Flood-Beaubrun, Minister for Home Affairs and Gender Relations, as she introduced the bill.

She added: "We have situations where countries in the Caribbean now have to obtain visas for entry into countries in North America where previously visas were not required and that is because of the kinds of things that are happening.

"People are presenting themselves with passports that are forged and it is important for us to ensure that we deter these practices and where, in fact, they do occur, to ensure that very stringent sanctions are placed on persons who engage in that type of activity."

Some St Lucian nationals aid and abet the scam by applying for passports and then passing them on to the racketeers in exchange for hefty payments. However, most of the culprits were identified as "persons from other countries who live here" as well as "citizens from certain jurisdictions within our region". No country was named.

Government believes that certain weaknesses in the Immigration Department may also be facilitating the scam. Therefore, a bill to amend the Immigration Act will go before the House shortly with the aim of tightening up administrative controls of St Lucian passports.

In addition to imposing harsher penalties, the amended Passport Act makes provision for the confiscation of any equipment used to commit passport fraud. Further, it widens the list of offences for which the Minister of Home Affairs may revoke someone's passport once a conviction has been imposed by the law courts.

The 1991 Act had only listed the crime of trafficking in dangerous drugs. Now, trafficking in firearms and ammunition has been added, as well as the smuggling of persons into, from, or through St Lucia, and money laundering.

Under the amended Act, a passport now can also be withdrawn if the minister considers on reasonable grounds that a person is involved in any of the aforementioned criminal activities.

"Some people are of the view that their passport belongs to them. That is not true," Mrs. Flood-Beaubrun emphasized. "A passport is and always remains the property of the State."

Contributing to the debate, Prime Minister Anthony disclosed that when he addressed the nation a few months ago on passport fraud and other national security issues, he was not at liberty to go into detail because a sensitive investigation was underway at the time.

Passport fraud done locally, he pointed out, was a sophisticated operation involving the use of foreign expertise.

"Not only do you have forged St Lucian passports being used but you may even have forged Canadian passports and you've also had forged British passports," Dr. Anthony revealed. "The operations are so sophisticated that unless you have the skills and the equipment, it is not easy to identify that you are dealing with a false document."

**"Some people are of the view that their passport belongs to them. That is not true. A passport is and always remains the property of the State."
Hon. Sarah Flood-Beaubrun.**

Hon. Sarah Flood-Beaubrun, Minister for Home Affairs and Gender Relations.

There's even a macabre side of the scam. Some culprits have even visited local cemeteries, taken dates of birth from tombstones, used them to get a birth certificate from the Registry and then applied for passports.

International passport fraud, being battled by several countries, is driven by desperation among some persons who are bent on migrating to certain countries at any cost.

Dr. Anthony said the intent of the beefed-up Passport Act was to put out a clear message to such persons.

"St Lucia is not a safe haven to be used in these designs to engage in travelling to other countries on false or forged documents," he made clear.

**"St Lucia is not a safe haven ... to be used in these designs to engage in travelling to other countries on false or forged documents."
Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony**



Additional checks and increased monitoring are two of the new measures at the Immigration section of the island's airports



The St Lucia Passport: Amended Act seeks to protect its integrity.

GOVERNMENT OF SAINT LUCIA INVITATION FOR TENDERS

1. FOR THE SUPPLY OF FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and International Financial Services hereby invite Tenders for the supply of **FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT** for the Fiscal Year 2003/2004.

Details and quantities are available upon request from the Procurement Unit of the Budget Division, located in the Old Government Buildings on Laborie Street, Castries.

Catalogue/Brochures with samples should be supplied whenever possible and prices quoted must be valid for at least six (6) months from date of Tender.

Prospective bidders are asked to note that Government is not obligated to accept the entire proposal from any one bidder.

Payment of goods supplied by successful bidders will be made following delivery of goods in keeping with Government Policy.

2. SUPPLY OF COMPUTERS AND PRINTERS

The Ministry of Finance, International Financial Services and Economic Affairs is inviting Tenders for the supply of Computers and Printers. Details and quantities are available upon request from the Procurement Unit of the Budget Division, located in the Old Government Buildings on Laborie Street, Castries.

Prospective bidders are asked to note that Government is not obligated to accept the entire proposal from any bidder and that prices quoted must be valid for at least six (6) months from the date of Tender.

Payment of goods supplied by successful bidders will be made following delivery of equipment in keeping with Government Policy.

3. FOR THE SUPPLY OF STATIONERY AND OFFICE SUPPLIES

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and International Financial Services hereby invite Tenders for the supply of **STATIONERY AND OFFICE SUPPLIES** for the Fiscal Year 2003/2004.

Details and quantities are available upon request from the Procurement Unit of the Budget Division, Located in the Old Government Buildings on Laborie Street, Castries.

Catalogue/Brochures with samples should be supplied whenever possible and prices quoted must be valid for at least six (6) months from the date of Tender.

Prospective bidders are asked to note that Government is not obligated to accept the entire proposal from any one bidder.

Payment of goods supplied by successful bidders will be made following delivery of goods in keeping with Government Policy.

In all the noticed posted above, the tenders should be submitted no later than August 8, 2003, in a sealed envelope clearly written and should be addressed to:

**The Chairman
Central Tenders Board
Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
Laborie Street
Castries**

Government does not bind itself to accept the lowest on any Tender.

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the hearing of the application for the confirmation of the scheme to transfer the general insurance business of Alliance Assurance Limited to Caribbean Alliance Insurance Company Limited, will be held on Tuesday August 05, 2003 at 9:30 am, in the office of the Registrar of Insurance at the Ministry of Finance, 3rd Floor, Financial Centre Building, Bridge Street Castries. Persons with objections to the scheme, or who in the opinion of the Registrar, are likely to be affected by the scheme are entitled to appear and to be heard. Please be advised accordingly.
Registrar of Insurance.

ANIMAL PROTECTION - ROAD SAFETY

from page 8

dog is liable to be fined," Lansiquot explained. "The owner of a potentially dangerous animal must display on his property a notice indicating the existence of a potentially dangerous dog on his property."

The law prescribes penalties where an animal endangers persons or public property. For example, the fastening of dogs or any animal on a public pathway, the reckless riding of horses and donkeys on the beach and other public places.

"I am sure that this bill is not intended to cause people not to be able to protect their property or their homes from intruders," said Commerce, Tourism, Investment and Consumer Affairs Minister, Hon. Philip J. Pierre.

"What it does," he added, "is it puts some order in the way you have to keep these animals and some order that would allow you to still be able to protect your property but allow other people their right to pass on the streets, their right to pass on a footpath or pathway, even though you have your dog for your own protection."

Pointing to numerous complaints received by the Ministry of Tourism regarding the riding of horses on the beach, Pierre said there previously was not any clearly defined law to deal with these inconveniences "that can impact on the quality of life of both locals and visitors".

"While I am happy that today we are putting forward this piece of legislation, I believe that we must still appeal to the good nature of the citizens of our country and the society to understand and realize that the care for animals is really a responsibility of all of us and that it really should not require the intervention of the law to say that they need to take care of their animals," said *Minister* for Social Transformation, Culture and Local Government, Hon. Menissa Rambally.

"No longer should parliamentary reps – and I find myself in that situation very often – where we have to be appealing to persons to remove their cows and animals from public property – playing fields in communities," she added. "It is time that people in our communities recognize that the care for animals is a basic part of human life." ●

VACANCY NOTICE

POST OF DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons for appointment to the post of **DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS**, at the Office of Public Prosecutions, Ministry of Justice.

Qualification

Applicants should possess:

Masters Degree in Law plus a Certificate in Legal Education with eight (8) years experience in legal practice OR Bachelors Degree in Law plus a Certificate in Legal Education with ten (10) Years experience in legal practice;

Duties

The successful applicant will be required to perform the following duties:

1. manage the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
2. undertake the prosecution of all criminal matters before the Courts of the State;
3. appear in, or coordinate all criminal appeals before the Court of Appeal;
4. appear in, and conduct all criminal appeals before the Court of Appeal
5. advise the Police on all criminal matters;
6. supervise all other Prosecutors on all criminal matters.

Salary

Salary is at the rate of \$86,400.00 per annum (grade 20)

Applications on the prescribed form along with Curriculum Vitae plus certified copies of documents pertaining to qualifications should be addressed to:

**The Secretary
Judicial and Legal
Service Commission
Block B
Waterfront
Castries**

To reach no later than **August 04, 2003.**

ANIMAL PROTECTION - ROAD SAFETY

The new Animals Act attempts not only to resolve the issue of stray animals; more importantly, it establishes a framework for the keeping and treatment of animals in general.

One of the biggest fears for every motorist using two of the island's highways in the north, particularly at night but also early in the morning, is the possibility of a sudden encounter with a stray animal.

Such meetings, mostly involving cows, are frequent on the John Compton Highway near the Choc junction, and on the Vieux Fort highway near the Hewanorra International Airport. In cases of actual collision, the result is often extensive damage to vehicles, injury to persons and the animal, and sometimes death.

It's a longstanding road hazard for which motorists have been crying out for a solution. On Tuesday, July 8, the House of Assembly made a welcome step to deal with the menace by passing a comprehensive new Animals Act.

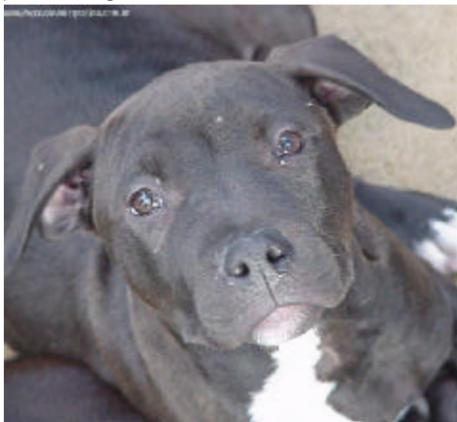
Irresponsibility on the part of some animal owners is usually the main contributor to the problem. It seems as if they just allow their animals to roam freely, without any apparent concern for the safety and well-being of road users.

The new Animals Act attempts not only to resolve the issue of stray animals; more importantly, it establishes a framework for the keeping and treatment of animals in general.

While it recognizes the right of individuals to own animals, the law seeks at the same time to ensure that the rights of other citizens are not jeopardized as a result. It does so by imposing certain responsibilities on owners to make them accountable for the actions of their animals, and establishes penalties where they fail to live up to their obligations.

Control of Animals

"This bill is extremely significant as it makes provisions for the prevention of cruelty to animals, the proper control of animals, and for other related matters," said Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Hon. Cyprian Lansiquot, in presenting the bill for consideration.



Untrained pitbull - a potential menace.



A cow roaming on the edge of the Millennium Highway. Moments later, it was in the middle of the road.

"Too many of us very often feel at liberty to ill-treat animals with the attitude that animals have no right to exist," the Parliamentary Representative for Anse-la-Raye/Canaries added. "We all have equal rights to exist ..."

Stray and Dangerous Animals

When the law takes effect, animals found on highways or other public property will be caught by the relevant authority and impounded. Following capture, an attempt will be made to find the owner within 48 hours, failing which the animal can be put up for auction.

The legislation addresses, among other things, the problem of stray dogs, especially the potentially dangerous type like pit bulls, dog fighting, abuse of animals, and the reckless riding of horses on some public beaches which is an irritation for locals and visitors seeking quiet relaxation.

"What is very strange is that when you call to find out who those animals belong to, nobody claims responsibility," observed Minister for Health, Hon. Damian Greaves, relating an encounter he had with a pack of dogs on the prowl one night. "But the day something happens right, then it's a different story."

Welcoming the legislation, Minister for Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities, Hon. Felix Finisterre, mentioned the struggle by his Ministry to provide a solution to the stray animal problem on the highways in response to persistent public complaints.

"We have tried our best at the ministerial level to find ways and means to actually implement and act within the existing law as it was then," he noted. "That had proved

to be extremely difficult and the reason why it has proved to be so is that we found there was a number of bureaucratic measures."

"The second impediment was that there was no clear responsibility as to who was answerable, who was in charge of that activity," he went on. "Was it the police? Was it an agricultural officer? Was it the Ministry of Communications and Works official? Our understanding of the law, as it now stands, is that the police are responsible."

The Animals Act, representing a consolidation of all animal-related laws into

a single body of legislation, makes a decisive move to deal with the public menace posed by the growing number of potentially dangerous dogs on the island.

It bans the importation of such dogs, requires their registration and licensing by owners, and bars anyone under the age of 18 from owning such an animal. Further, the owner is required to take out an insurance policy to cover risks associated with the dog. And he or she is liable for injury or death caused by the animal.

"If a potentially dangerous dog escapes and causes damage or injury, the owner of that

cont'd on page 7



Even on the roadside stray cattle present a major danger to motorists and pedestrians

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