



SIR GEORGE! In Your Honour Airport at Vigie named after first Chief Minister

On Monday 4th November, in an emotional and moving ceremony, Sir George F.L. Charles had the honor of participating in a ceremony in which Vigie Airport was officially renamed, the George F.L. Charles Airport. A bust of the first Chief Minister of Saint Lucia

was also unveiled as part of the ceremony. Surrounded by his friends, well wishers and supporters, Sir George sat beaming with pride as speaker after speaker reminisced on his life, his work, his social, economic and political contribution to Saint Lucia.



Sir. George F.L. Charles, St. Lucia's first Chief Minister, listens to the recollections of his life, during the of the renaming ceremony of the airport.



Governor General of St. Lucia H.E. Dame Pearlette Louisy unveiling the bust of Sir. George F.L. Charles at the entrance to the airport.

Many were left to wonder why an individual who had given so much to the development of his country, would have to wait nearly three decades after his retirement from active politics to be officially and publicly honored for his epic contribution to the development of Saint Lucia.

Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony Sets the Tone

It is for this reason that Prime Minister Anthony took the opportunity, during the ceremony, to remind the country of his Government's policy on the treatment of prominent citizens, former Heads of State and Government, and other leading personalities who have played critical roles in the development of the country. In his speech, the Prime Minister made reference

cont'd on page 8

EDITORIAL

VIVE SIR GEORGE

The official ceremony, on Monday 4th November 2002, to confirm the renaming of Vigie Airport after Sir George Charles, pioneer trade unionist, anti-colonial fighter, and St. Lucia's first Chief Minister, was a fitting, albeit long-overdue, public tribute to a humble man who gave so much to St Lucia but received so little.

The fact that 85 year old Sir George was able to be there made the occasion all the more special. He participated in the proceedings, witnessed the unveiling of a bust in his honour, and listened to the many glowing tributes from leaders of a generation that his struggle for a better St Lucia in the 1950s and early 60s has helped to mould.

Too often in the Caribbean, heroes receive their due recognition long after they are gone and their outstanding contribution has started to fade from the national psyche through the passage of time.

As Prime Minister, Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, remarked in his feature address, "We are not only formally renaming Vigie Airport but we are exploring new paradigms of Social and Historical Consciousness. We are not simply unveiling the bust of George Charles, but we are sowing the seeds of a new consciousness in the hearts and minds of this and future generations."

After Sir George retired from Parliament some 30 years ago following outstanding, selfless public service, he literally became "a forgotten man" until the incumbent administration announced in late 1997 that the Vigie Airport would be renamed for him. The choice has a powerful significance. Vigie is the cradle of St Lucian trade unionism which Sir George spawned and, by extension, the anti-colonial struggle that gave birth to the island's first political party — the St Lucia Labour Party.

As the PM noted, through Monday's ceremony, "the children of St Lucia are finally saying "thank you"..."

POLICE RENEWAL Sweeping Reforms Underway within RSLPF

Some exciting things are beginning to happen within the Royal St Lucia Police Force. Without a fanfare, the local constabulary is radically changing how it does business as it undergoes a necessary rehabilitation to meet the challenges of modern policing.

One aspect of the welcome transformation stands out, however. It's the modern infrastructure of newly-built or refurbished police stations, a substantial investment by



One of the technicians at work in the new Scenes of Crime Examination Unit

the incumbent administration to improve the physical conditions police officers work under.

On the other hand, what isn't so obvious is the extent of sweeping internal reforms. Being introduced with the help of British and Canadian police experts, these reforms are building professionalism and laying the foundation for the ultimate delivery of a better police service to the St Lucian public.

cont'd on page 2



"Take ②" - A fifteen minute news review of the week.
Every Friday at 6.15 p.m. on **NTN**, Cablevision Channel 2.

Government Notebook
A fresh news package
daily
on all local radio stations



POLICE RENEWAL

from page 1.

New Scenes of Crime Unit

Among major innovations is the recent establishment of the first-ever Scenes of Crime Examiners Unit. Manned by 14 specially trained officers, it's the centerpiece of a new approach to investigating major crime in St Lucia. The Unit uses scientific methods to gather good quality evidence at the crime scene for the effective prosecution of offenders.

"We recently had about 15 or 16 major crimes solved using that method," says Peter Cherry, Assistant Commissioner of Police responsible for Police Reform. "It has been very effective. We have adopted a team approach to solving major crime and it is working."

The minister responsible for the police, Attorney General and Minister of Justice Senator Petrus Compton, considers this achievement a major step forward in the government's all-out attempt to put the lid on serious crime.



The new Crime Examiners Unit uses scientific methods to gather evidence

"The ability of the police to solve crimes has risen to a level that it has never been in the history of this country," he says. "Nearly all of the serious crimes that have been committed in the last 13 months have either been solved already, people have been arrested and charged, or the police know very well who they are looking for."

Building Capacity for Change

When the incumbent administration took office in 1997, it was shocked by the extent to which the Royal St Lucia Police Force was ill-equipped to handle the challenges of policing a fast-changing society. As a first step, Prime Minister Dr Kenny Anthony established a small team to come up with solutions so as to rebuild flagging public confidence in the Police.

Canada and Britain were approached for help. Both governments agreed to support a far-reaching reform programme involving institutional strengthening and capacity building, and geared towards enhancing efficiency and public accountability.

Meantime, in a move to shore up police morale, Government set about improving their working conditions, focusing initially on upgrading a generally rundown physical infrastructure.

More Police Stations

A new \$1.5 million station was established at Marchand, the first to be built on the island in 30 years. A \$6 million southern divisional headquarters is currently going up in Vieux Fort and a new station in Anse-la-Raye is virtually complete. Major renovations were carried out to the police stations at Gros Islet, Canaries, Choiseul, Marigot, Laborie, and Soufriere.

The building programme, costing a whopping \$12 million to date, envisages the construction of additional new stations in Dennerly, La Ressource and Micoud.

"This government has invested more than any previous administration in a concerted effort to build the infrastructure of law and order and justice in St Lucia," says Prime Minister Anthony.

The internal reform process got going two years ago with the arrival of Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officer, Neil Parker.



By the time the former deputy commissioner completed his assignment earlier this year and handed over responsibility for guiding the process to Assistant Commissioner Cherry, considerable progress had been made.

Complaints and Fraud Units established

"We have completed a five year corporate plan which we will introduce in 2003," says Cherry. "In it, we have established a vision, a mission and strategic objectives for the force."

Other achievements include the establishment of a Human Resources Department to, among other things, support career development for officers including management of a proposed transparent system for promotion, and a successful new thrust in public communication through the establishment of a Press Relations Office and the launch of the weekly Police Vibes radio programme.

There's too the establishment of a Complaints Unit to handle internal and external grievances; the establishment of a Fraud Unit; and the introduction of community policing which is to be extended over the coming year following a successful test run in Marchand.

"What the reform has done is to establish what is required of the Force if it is to build the capacity to meet its mandate," says Cherry in an interview with *Nationwide*.

Strong Community Partnership

The new police vision focuses on building a strong partnership with the community. A recent survey done for the police showed St Lucians generally have two main grouses with lawmen: the attitude of some officers and dissatisfaction with police response time to calls. The leadership has moved to address both issues.

"We have embarked on specific training to help the officers build on their interpersonal relations," says Cherry.

"We are also developing standard operating procedures and will make the public aware of them so that when anyone makes a report, they will be aware of the things to

Saturday November 9th 2002

expect so that if it that isn't done and they make a complaint, we can see where any dereliction of duty lies," he adds.

"With the standing operating procedures, the officers will also be aware that it's their role to go through all the steps before they can say that they have done their job."

Enhancing Public Relations

Another innovation which should serve to enhance relations with the public, is a new system for dealing with complaints that will take effect next year under the new Police Complaints Act. The body which will hear complaints will have civilian representation for the first time, instead of being composed of only police officers as is currently the case.

"Our police force has come a long way from where they were in 1997," says Attorney-General Petrus Compton, who is urging civilians to support the police in upholding law and order. "When the police act in excess, we have to slam them, but when they act like police officers and protect us, we have to protect them."

Compton is concerned about a worrying trend, seen mostly in the media, where criminals are sometimes treated as good guys and the police as villains. "We are creating an environment where criminals seem to have rights to be criminals," he says. "We have to take the side of law."

As it goes all out to build a new relationship with the public, the police will be pursuing five major strategic objectives over the next five years. Among them, establishing a community-based policing programme; implementing a crime prevention strategy, improving detection rates and reducing crime; increasing professional standards in complaints, investigations, communication and internal reviews; and establishing an effective traffic strategy.

Despite the encouraging progress so far, Cherry is cautioning St Lucians not to expect drastic results overnight. "It will be over a period of time. We are trying to adopt a new policing ethos which involves changing the police culture and that will take time," he says.



The newly built Marchand Police station is staffed with officers trained in community policing

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

St. Lucia joined the rest of the member countries of the Caribbean Tourism Organization to celebrate Caribbean Tourism Day on Tuesday 5th November 2002. The theme for this year was "Tourism: A Tool for Sustainable Development". Minister of Commerce, Tourism, Investment and Consumer Affairs, addressed St. Lucia via electronic media. The following is the full text of the address.

St. Lucia's tourism industry employs approximately 12,000 people. It earned some EC\$629 million in 2001. These figures are commendable but reflect only a small fraction of the worldwide tourism figures, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that there is potential growth for St. Lucia's tourism industry.

The Government fully appreciates the need for policy development and forward planning if tourism is to be sustainable in St. Lucia, and the industry receives maximum support from the Prime Minister and Cabinet Members.

Surveys carried out by the St. Lucia Tourist Board inform us that the majority of visitors to the island have selected St. Lucia for its natural beauty; followed by culture, heritage, and the hospitality of our people. Natural beauty therefore is the premise upon which we promote our tourism. For St. Lucia, protecting our natural and cultural environment equates to protecting our livelihood, and at the same time the sustainability of our industry.

Heritage Tourism

In 1998, the Government of Saint Lucia, in fulfilling its promise of better sharing of the benefits of tourism, was successful in securing European Union funding to develop the Nature Heritage Tourism Programme as a means of advancing community-based tourism. Communities throughout the island have been provided with opportunities to be involved in the tourism industry by enhancing natural sites eg. waterfalls, thus converting them into tourist attractions. We must never forget that standards, competition and a quality product are still applicable even with within a community based tourism product.

As we pursue and negotiate a successor programme, we will be consolidating the policy framework that will provide the enabling environment for heritage tourism development and capacity building in the communities.

With the increasing global competitive environment of the tourism industry, the Government must develop policy that will offer both vision and practical assistance to businesses that wish to operate within the tourism sector.

Some of the areas under consideration are the tourism product (accommodation, services, attractions, linkages and marketing), investment facilitation, airlift and visitor safety, the underlying theme being the sustainability of the industry. We are developing these policies in full consultation and partnership with our private sector partners.

Standards and Regulations.

Government's role is to support the tourism industry by way of appropriate regulation and legislation, however the tourism related private sector themselves have the responsibility in an enabling environment to undertake the necessary product development and enhancements that will make the industry viable.

How far Government can take private sector regulation is debatable.

The Ministry of Tourism is planning a review of all existing tourism. The Government of Saint Lucia, through its liberal tourism incentive legislation, provides numerous incentives to the industry – but these incentives must be aimed at encouraging sustainable tourism development and standards.

To improve the quality and raise the standards of St. Lucia's tourism product, the Ministry of Tourism is currently working on a number of projects. These projects include reform of the tourism taxi transportation sector. Standards for accommodations, restaurants and other tourism services eg. tour guiding and tourism vending.



A musician entertains cruise ship visitors at the look-out on Morne Fortune

Tourism Planning and Marketing

Government's role is also to encourage a partnership approach towards tourism planning. Tourism developers must understand the need for planners to carry out the proper checks to ensure that tourism develops in an orderly fashion, and in keeping with the tourism policy framework. Likewise planning authorities must have an appreciation for the needs of the tourism sector so as to avoid unnecessary barriers to tourism development. In essence, what we seek is a win-win situation.

The Government, through the St. Lucia Tourist Board, supports general destination marketing. Individual hotels and tourism services still have a responsibility to market and promote their own individual businesses. Some of the smaller businesses in particular, with fewer funds to spend, are experiencing difficulties and we will pay special attention to that small hotel sector despite the fact that specific product promotion is corporate responsibility.

Additional marketing support is targeted at developing niche markets such as heritage tourism, sports tourism and yachting, which will open up avenues for new and varied tourism businesses

Commitment to a unified approach

In closing I wish to reiterate that the Ministry of Tourism is committed to a unified approach in the planning and development of the

tourism industry. We recognize the importance of partnership approach – with hoteliers, investors, developers, communities and other tourism interests. This can only be achieved through constant dialogue. I am pleased at the corporation from the SLHTA, the Southern Tourism Development Corporation and SLASPA, as we all seek to guide the industry in trying times.

The Chairman, Board, Director and Staff of the SLTB must be congratulated for their efforts at ensuring that the marketing mandate is pursued. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate some special persons – Camille Greer on recently winning the Miss Caribbean Tourism Pageant; Dallen James of Sir Ira Simmons for achieving the second runner up prize in the Caribbean Tourism Organization poster competition; Shantel Polius for participating in this year Conde Nast Essay Competition; and Nola Renee for participating in the Caribbean Youth Congress in the Bahamas. You have all made us proud.

The tourism industry is a dynamic one, which today faces many challenges.

I would like to pay special tribute to all workers in the tourism industry for their resilience and sacrifice as we, as a nation deal with the challenges of global competition. There are many things that are beyond our control, but let us as a nation positively influence the things we can control. To all tourism-cruise industry businesses and workers, I wish you a happy Caribbean Tourism Day.



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony in discussions with delegation.

Saint Lucia - South Korea Friendship

Prime Minister Dr Kenny D. Anthony and Minister of External Affairs, Senator Julian R. Hunte, on Wednesday November 6th, welcomed to St. Lucia a top-level delegation of commercial, business and diplomatic officials from South Korea. The meeting was held at the Official Residence of the Prime Minister at Vigie. There were brief exchanges of aspects of history and discussions on deepening of relations between the two countries.

The South Korean delegation was led by Mr. Y.S. Park, who is the Chairman of the South Korean Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Park is also Chairman of the Doosan business group, as well as a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Chairman of the International Judo Federation.

Also on the Korean delegation was Mr. J.H. Lee, who is the Executive Vice President of Samsung Corporation, one of South Korea's largest firms. The delegation also included Mr B. W. Ahn, head of S.K. Global, another major Korean corporation, as well as Mr. S.W. Kim, the Chief Executive Officer of the Chamber of Commerce. St. Lucia and South Korea established diplomatic relations in 1979, the same year of the island's independence.



The delegations record the historic moment

A DENT IN POVERTY, IMPROVING

Poverty Reduction Fund, Basic Needs Trust

Encouraged by many remarkable successes in the last few years, Government is opening up a new front in its escalating war on poverty in St Lucia.

The Ministry of Social Transformation, which is leading the crusade to improve the quality of life in poor communities, is looking to establish an acceptable minimum standard below which no St Lucian will live.

"Part of the goal of the Ministry is to ensure that within a reasonable time that there's no St Lucian community which lives below a certain level," says Minister for Social Transformation, Menissa Rambally.

"The work of both of those agencies is very critical to the advancement of the objective of the Ministry," says Miss Rambally.

"With the completion of the poverty reduction action plan," she adds, "it will pave the way forward for where we want to go in terms of poverty alleviation and how specifically we will use the agencies to achieve that."

EC\$15million on projects

When the world community observed International Day for the Reduction of Poverty last month, it presented an occasion not only for the government but

notes. "Poor, compared with non-poor households, had fewer income earners, more children and persons below working age, higher unemployment and labour force participation, and lower educational attainment."

Against this backdrop, it's little wonder that fighting poverty became a top priority for the present administration when it took office in 1997. Poverty, to all extents and purposes, had become such a burning social issue that it simply could no longer be ignored.

In addition, badly-needed maintenance work was done on a number of schools, health centres and other vital community facilities.

Skills training was another important component designed to provide interested St Lucians with the opportunity to equip themselves with employable skills required in today's marketplace.

"We have achieved a 60 per cent success in reducing poverty," says Clive Hippolyte, project manager of the BNTF. "Our activities have been scattered over the country and I think we have done some meaningful projects in the areas that are most in need."

The BNTF, which has been around for more than 10 years, is largely financed by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). Under Phase Four, which began in 1997 and ends in December, US\$3.8 million was spent on various projects in St Lucia. Thirty per cent of total financing came from the Government of St Lucia.

Phase Five starts in January 2003

Phase Five, to begin in January next year, will see an additional US\$4.8 million going toward the national poverty alleviation effort.

The PRF, on the other hand, has spent over EC\$1 million on roughly 100 projects over the last four years. Established in 1998, the PRF operates with financing from the World Bank, the European Union, and the Government of St Lucia.

As is the case with the BNTF, anybody – from a resident to the district representative – can request a project for a community. The key, however, is that it must be endorsed as a priority by the community in question.

"We have managed to make a dent in the infrastructural deficiencies of poor communities in terms of roads, footpaths, water provision and various other community facilities," says Donovan Williams, executive director of the PRF.

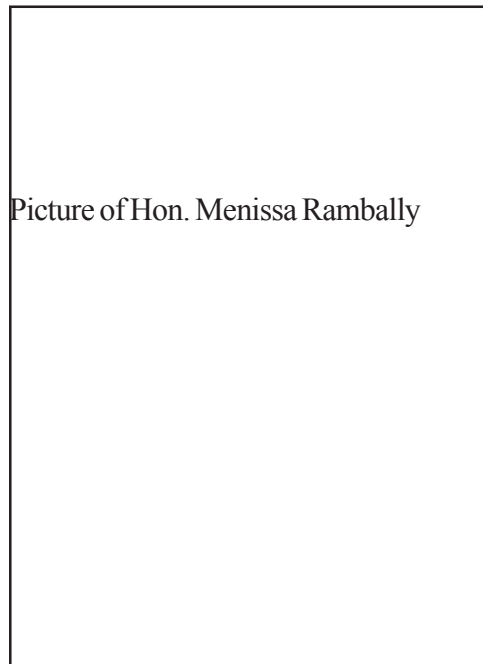


Women in action, constructing the footpaths in Joyeaux

"We have to define that level," she adds, "... the minimum acceptable standard of living that we want to create for our society."

Examination of the proposed benchmark is occurring in the context of discussions on a national poverty reduction action plan, being put together by the Ministry of Social Transformation.

Government agencies like the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) and the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) which have been attacking poverty from the frontline, are playing a key role in formulating the strategy.



Picture of Hon. Menissa Rambally

**Hon. Menissa Rambally
Minister of Social Transformation, Local Government and Culture**

the whole of St Lucia to reflect with pride on the significant strides made in combatting poverty in the last five years.

During this period, the PRF and BNTF together spent over EC\$15 million on various projects that have improved the quality of life for St Lucians, thereby giving tangible meaning to the Kenny Anthony administration's commitment to making a significant dent in the level of poverty.

There's also the BELFund, another poverty reduction initiative of the present administration. This credit agency has made available over \$1 million in loans during the last two years to give poor St Lucians an opportunity to find sustainable employment through setting up their own small businesses.

A United Nations report examining socio-economic conditions in the Eastern Caribbean, estimates that 32 per cent of St Lucia's population was living in poverty in 1995. The figure is based on the findings of a national poverty assessment survey conducted the same year. "The poor are concentrated in rural areas," the report



**Mr. Clive Hippolyte
Project Manager - BNTF**

Improving Access to Communities

Over the last five years, both the BNTF and PRF have focused considerable attention on remedying longstanding infrastructural deficiencies in many communities. The absence of proper roads, footpaths, drains, piped water, retaining walls, to name a few examples.



Officials on site at the Tet Chimen Water Development Project

IMPACTING PEOPLE'S LIVES

Fund score significant successes



Mr. Donovan Williams - Executive Director Poverty Reduction Fund

"What we have found in our experience," he adds, "is that we have been able to provide a sort of hope for communities which perhaps felt left out of the whole development process."

Miss Rambally says the creation of the Ministry of Social Transformation a year ago has given



Public facility at La Pointe , Dennery

"We are seeing the emergence of a new type of life, a new quality of life that is experienced by the people of the country," Miss Rambally says.



Skills Training Care Carpentry Workshop

more focus to the national anti-poverty crusade by achieving a synergy that wasn't possible before between the BNTF and the PRF in particular. Both agencies fall under the Ministry.

Working together to alleviate Poverty

The Ministry of Social Transformation provides that facilitating environment to ensure that the end result of social development happens in a harmonized way so that, as a country, we can place social development as a priority and understand clearly what the needs are and respond to the needs in a more impactful way," she says.

"(We) are seeing the types of benefits that these agencies are bringing to the lives of our community, intervening in different ways but with an overriding objective of improving the quality of life. It is happening with footpaths, drains, (playing) courts, creating micro-enterprises, putting down computer labs.



Champaigne road - Anse La Raye



Basic skills training in the north of the island

Notice

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates to fill the post of Deputy Director of the National Emergency Management Office, and will be based at the NEMO head office in Castries.

FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Works under the direction of and reports to the Director and collaborates with the other staff members of the Agency.

Required to respond when necessary to the Permanent Secretary and the Deputy Permanent Secretary.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Assists the Director in the preparation and implementation of the Agency's Annual Work Programme and Budget.

In Consultation with the Director, develop appropriate systems, Procedures and records for the management of the National Emergency Management Office's resources.

Ensures the operational readiness of vital equipment, machines and supplies required for disaster co-ordination activities.

Procures within budgetary allocation, the approved goods and services necessary for efficient administration and effective execution of National Emergency Management Office's work programme.

Prepares Mutual Aid Agreements between the Agency and other organisations.

Ensures that appropriate inventories for all furniture, equipment and supplies of the Agency are maintained.

Ensures periodic update, refinement and execution of the National Disaster Management Plan,

Submits to the Director, a monthly report on activities undertaken, challenges to be addressed with recommendations for action.

Attends meetings of Disaster Preparedness Committees, takes notes, produce minutes and undertake follow-up action as required.

Assist in the co-ordination and delivery of orientation or training related to disaster management.

Assist the Director in the co-ordination of emergency relief, relocation activities and funds management.

Performs any other duties which may be assigned from time to time by the Director.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Bachelor's Degree in Geography, Physical Planning or Natural Resource Management. Additional experience and training in Disaster Management would be considered as asset.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Expected to function beyond normal working hours and in cases of emergency on weekends, as the exigencies of the NEMO services require. Required to maintain a motor vehicle for the performance of duties.

All applications in a sealed envelope and clearly marked "Deputy Director" National Emergency Management Office should be sent to the Secretary, Public Service Commission, Sir Stanislaus James Building, Waterfront, Castries on or before November 15th, 2002.

DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL

FAST, FAIR, AND FRIENDLY

New Development Act seeks to ensure the preservation of the environment and the safety of people in all buildings.

The biggest concern of most persons planning to construct a house or undertake any kind of physical development is whether their project is going to be unnecessarily held up by the Development Control Authority (DCA).

"Everybody hears about the DCA," remarked Attorney General, Senator Petrus Compton, recently as he referred to the frustrations which countless St. Lucians and foreign investors have experienced with the existing planning approval system.

"You want to build a little house," he added, "they take six months. You want to put a little extension on your house, it takes seven months. An investor comes in (with) money to invest in this country. The DCA sends it back, forward, sideways. The investor gets frustrated and says let me go elsewhere."

Protecting the natural environment

Well, the good news is that such stories will soon be a thing of the past. In its ongoing drive to change the way St. Lucia does business, the Labour administration of Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony is effecting a welcome overhaul of the planning system. The aim is to speed up approvals whilst, at the same time, emphasizing an environment-friendly approach to physical development on the island.

It's all provided for under the new Physical Planning and Development (Land Development) Act 2001, which will officially take effect in the new year. The immediate impact will be the introduction of a new system that's faster, straightforward, even-handed and, most importantly, customer-friendly.



Mr. Blaize Nixon
Chief Physical Planner

The overriding goal is to ensure that St. Lucia is developed in an orderly, sustainable and balanced fashion to cater to the needs of the present population without jeopardizing the interests of future generations.

Integrated approach to planning

"We need to have sustainable development," says Hon. Ignatius Jean, Minister for Physical Planning, Environment and Housing. "The provisions of this Act supported by other bits of legislation will help to ensure that we have an integrated approach to our development planning so that we can regularize development in the society."

"If we all adhere to the provisions of the Act," he explains, "it will lead ultimately to an improvement of the quality of life for all citizens."

Under the new Act, the controversial DCA will be scrapped and replaced by a new decentralized authority which, as currently proposed, will operate out of a centrally-located headquarters, a Castries sub-office, and an office to serve persons in the south.

"It will remove the layers of bureaucracy to make (the process) friendlier to developers and the wider society," says Chief Physical Planner, Blaize Nixon, identifying a major benefit of the new system.



Hon. Ignatius Jean
Minister of Physical Planning,
Environment and Housing

No more DCA

A main deficiency of the existing system – and a source of considerable frustration for both its administrators and developers – is the fact that the authorizing legislation is more than 30 years old and out of touch with today's reality. That's why the new act was passed.

Nixon says while the DCA has received a lot of flack over the years for holding up developers, the fact is that the DCA often was not solely at fault and was simply following the procedure laid down by the Land Development Interim Control Act of 1971. Complicating the matter was the fact that applicants often did not understand the procedure.

"One of the striking deficiencies in the 1971 Act has to do with what is referred to as the limitation period. This simply meant that the Planning Department had 90 days within which to respond to developers who submit applications to the department for planning approval," he explains.

"The reality is that under the Act there are a number of referral agencies which also have an input in determining the application. So that after a given application has been dealt with by the other referral agencies and gets back to the Planning Department, the 90 days may have expired through no fault of the Planning Department."

Provision for Appeal

"The objective of the new Act," Nixon goes on, "is to improve the general efficiency of the planning approval process by putting in place a planning framework, removing the ambiguous clauses in the current Act, simplifying the processes, and making it very clear to the general public what the technical requirements and procedures are."

cont'd on page 7



New Act spells out straightforward procedure regarding approval for developments.

DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL

.....from page 6

For example, if an application is turned down under the new Act, the developer now has the option of lodging an appeal with the minister responsible for physical planning and having the decision reviewed by a special tribunal.

"Before, this was a bit hazy," Nixon explains.

The Ministry of Physical Planning, Environment and Housing considers the new legislation to be so critical to the future development of St. Lucia that it is embarking on an extensive public education campaign, prior to bringing the law into effect.

The aim of the exercise is to familiarize St. Lucians with the new planning system, spell out its many benefits, and enlist the full cooperation of the public to ensure that the system works smoothly when it goes into effect.

"If we all adhere to the provisions of the Act, it will lead ultimately to an improvement of the quality of life for all citizens."

Hon. Ignatius Jean

Public Education

"We want the public to understand and participate in what we are doing," says Jean. "There is a perception out there that the DCA and the Ministry of Planning act as a deterrent to development. That they are out to stop you rather than facilitate you.

"We want to change that perception," the minister adds. "We want the public to understand our role and appreciate what we are doing in the national interest."

The public education campaign will focus not only on the Physical Planning and Development (Land Development) Act but also two related and supporting pieces of legislation that will be put on the statute books.

These include the draft environmental assessment impact regulations and national building code, conforming to the uniform CARICOM building code. Other countries in the region are also adopting the code to ensure that buildings are structurally sound to resist hurricanes and other natural disasters to which the Caribbean is prone.

EU Dollars for Banana Recovery

Government's recovery programme for banana fields damaged by Tropical Storm Lili, has received an additional boost in the form of \$4 million from the European Union (EU).

Prime Minister, Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, and the EU's Representative to the Eastern Caribbean, Ambassador John Caloghirou, signed the financing agreement at Government Headquarters on Monday, November 5.

The EU assistance, approved in record time in response to a Government request, brings to \$5.5 million the amount of assistance Government has mobilized since the storm's passage on September 23 to help farmers get their fields back into production.

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) had earlier made available an emergency loan of \$1.5 million.

Fifty per cent of banana fields were damaged by the storm.

The \$4 million recovery project will be managed overall by the Office of the Director of Agricultural Services, and a Special Implementation Unit to be established shortly will have responsibility for its day-to-day management.

"We are expecting the following results from this intervention," Prime Minister Anthony said. "Banana production will

be normalized, direct relief to our affected growers will be provided so as to assist farmers to rehabilitate their farms and thus ensure their continued confidence in the industry, farmers will be sensitized to the benefits of crop insurance coverage, and appropriate understanding of the protocols would be fostered so that we can comply with the requirements of the EU marketplace."

Two officials of the Barbados-based EU Delegation Office were in St Lucia when the storm struck. They joined Ministry of Agriculture and other Government officials on the initial tour to assess the extent of crop damage.

Their involvement has been credited with the speedy approval of the Government's request for assistance.

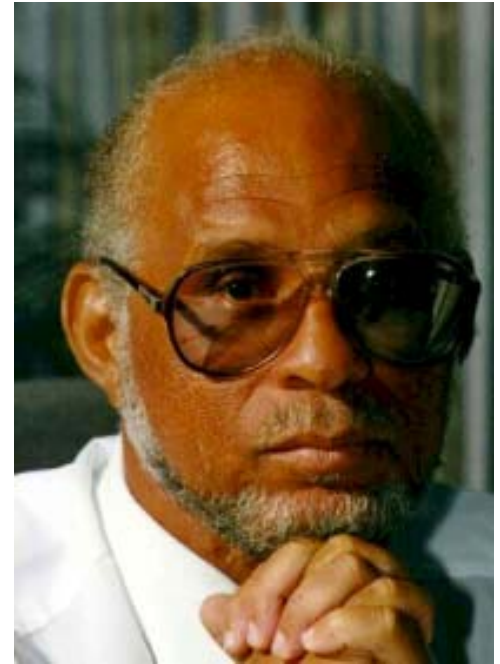
"This programme is related to the wider actions in the context of the banana sector restructuring and has to be seen in that context," said Ambassador Caloghirou. "... There are major efforts afoot to structure the banana industry of the future in the Windward Islands and it is in recognition of these efforts and in trying to avoid a setback in these efforts that the European Commission has agreed to mount this operation which aims essentially to bring assistance mainly to the farmers affected by the events related to Tropical Storm Lili," he added.

TOURISM BOUNCING BACK

After the beating St Lucia's tourism took following last year's terrorist attacks on the United States, there are some encouraging signs that business out of America is staging a vigorous comeback.

The turn-around was particularly noticeable during July, August and September when visitor arrivals from the United States grew by 26 per cent to 8,553, 23 per cent to 6,968, and 48 per cent to 5,509 respectively, compared with the corresponding months in 2001.

The US market performance was disclosed in the latest statistics released by the St. Lucia Tourist Board (SLTB) which launched an aggressive marketing campaign in the United States at the start of the summer to drum up business following the terrorism-related setbacks of last year.



Director of Tourism - Hilary Modeste. He is at the helm of a newly reorganised team at the St. Lucia Tourist Board.



Taxis on queue to benefit from the increase in tourist arrivals at Port Castries

Director of Tourism, Hilary Modeste, was particularly elated by the 48 per cent growth in arrivals for September, traditionally one of the slowest months for the industry.

Arrivals Up One year after September 11

"This 48 per cent increase in September 2002 can be seen as an indication that St. Lucia's tourist arrivals are recovering from the significant decline in arrivals experienced last September following the terrorist attacks in New York," he says in a release issued by the SLTB.

"...This increase also represents a net increase over previous years," he adds.

The SLTB and local hoteliers teamed up at the start of the summer to stage a month-long Road Show which visited over 20 US cities as part of a major promotional blitz. The promotion saw the introduction of an incentive programme which is rewarding American travel agents who send business to St. Lucia from August to the end of next April.

Almost simultaneously, the SLTB launched an aggressive advertising campaign on radio and television as well as high profile billboards on expressways of targeted US cities. This campaign is continuing into the fall months and is covering additional cities.

"If this upward trend in arrivals is to continue, the Board estimates that by the end of this year, St. Lucia will have surpassed last year's tourist arrivals for 2001 by about two per cent," says Modeste.

"We also expect that the new airlift out of the United States which has been secured by the Tourist Board will only enhance the returns from that market," he adds.

St. Lucia is expected to have the largest amount of airlift out of the US this year, with the introduction of a new mid-week flight by US Airways, a new Milwaukee/Detroit charter and the resumption of the GMV charter out of Boston.

With the decline of bananas, tourism has become St. Lucia's most important industry.

HONOURING SIR GEORGE F.L.CHARLES

from page 1.

to Cabinet Conclusion 331 of 2001, through which the Government of Saint Lucia agreed to accept the recommendations of a Government appointed Committee on the "Treatment of Former Heads of State and Government, no longer involved in party politics, as well as the spouses of past and present Heads of State and Government".

The privileges to which such persons are entitled include: the right to a diplomatic passport, the use of the VIP lounges at local air and sea ports and to consular services on overseas trips; the courtesy of special stickers for use on vehicles, similar to that enjoyed by Consular Representatives; the extension of special courtesies at official functions; and the right to be provided with body guards, upon request, for fixed periods of time after demitting office.

However, the most significant feature of the effort by Government to create a new culture and ethos for the treatment of National Heroes lies in the deliberate policy of creating independent mechanisms and institutionalised procedures for the treatment of such persons. By enunciating such a policy, the Prime Minister has taken a giant step towards ushering in a heightened political maturity in Saint Lucia.

Even more reflective of the political farsightedness of the Prime Minister was his admission that such an approach was

necessary precisely because of the callous practices commonly associated with Caribbean politics, in which those vanquished at the polls have seen their lives destroyed, and their legacies and contributions, ignored by the victorious parties. George Charles is a living example of such callous neglect. By enunciating those principles from the Prime Minister's chair, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony has given a clear indication that he intends to break the old pattern and to usher in a new and more mature political culture.

An Instrument of National Consciousness

Equally critical, is the fact that the Prime Minister has identified a clear link between the treatment of National Heroes and leading personalities, and the development of a heightened national consciousness. According to the Prime Minister, whilst Saint Lucia had inherited the "body of an independent state" on February 22nd 1979, the deeper attributes of nationalist consciousness and cultural pride had been largely ignored. The onus was therefore on his Government to create the mechanisms which would complete the process of psychological decolonization.

Quite interestingly, the Prime Minister contrasted the situation in Saint Lucia to that which obtained in the older civilizations and more mature democracies of the world,



St. Lucian trade unionist, Lawrence Poyotte, (l) and Chairman of SLASPA Board of Directors, Trevor Brathwaite' (r) both paid tribute to the life and work of Sir. George.

in which national heroes from all walks of life and from varied historical periods are all honored and revered for their contributions to national advancement. Thus according to the Prime Minister, "the grave of Karl Marx and the statue of Margaret Thatcher, both have their place in British society". In contrast, Saint Lucian society was steeped in political infancy, and this meant that the Government has to find the mechanisms to transcend the narrow political attitudes, and to establish a new nationalist political culture, which stands above the allegiances of class, race and place of origin. The Prime Minister acknowledged that such an objective was made doubly difficult by the fact that many of the persons who initiated the early struggles for decolonization are still around today.

A Clear Vision and a Deliberate Policy

Despite these difficulties, the Government has not shirked from its responsibilities to deepen nationalist consciousness in Saint Lucia. A clear vision has been articulated, and a deliberate set of policies have been pursued. The Government has transcended the attitude towards narrow political considerations and has ensured that all deserving Saint Lucians get their due recognition. This approach has been pursued at the regional level where the Government has ensured that Saint

Lucians who have worked towards the advancement of the Caribbean Community are duly honored by CARICOM. Government continues to explore vigorously the mechanisms which would facilitate the establishment of a National Heroes park. In addition, Government has sought to use significant National Holidays such as Emancipation Day, as a basis for deepening the appreciation of the struggles of ordinary Saint Lucians in the social and political emancipation of the country. In fulfillment of the policy of deepening national consciousness, the Kweyol language has also been elevated to a new level of dignity.

George Charles: A Sense of Fulfillment

The bust unveiling, and official renaming ceremony which took place at Vigie Airport on Monday November 4th, was therefore an important statement of the Government's commitment to shaping national consciousness and to elevating the political culture in Saint Lucia. As one observed the proud faces of the friends, family and supporters of George Charles and the noble humility of George Charles himself, there was a heavy sense that an immense historical wrong was finally being corrected. It was as if History itself was breathing a huge sigh of relief.

Many observers felt that Saint Lucia had finally arrived.



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony presented a plaque to Sir. George, and also delivered the feature address at the ceremony

JOUNEN KWEYOL SENT LISI

St. Lucian joined the rest of the creole speaking community worldwide on Monday October 28th 2002, to observe International Creole Day. Other places where the role of the language was observed include the Seychelles, Dominica, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Cayenne and Louisiana in United States. It was however on Sunday October 27th, 2002, St. Lucians celebrated in a grand way the creole

language and culture. In the communities of Micoud, La Guerre, Anse La Raye and Laborie. There were church services, exhibitions, cultural performances and the sale of creole food and drink. In this picture, the popular theatre and drumming group Tanbou Melee led a sewenal through the streets of Laborie. It was spectacle to some but a way of life to others.



Saint Lucia NATIONWIDE is published every fortnight by the Department of Information Services.

Contact us at: The Department of Information Services, Greaham Louisy Administrative Building, The Waterfront, Castries, St. Lucia, West Indies
Tel: (758) 468 2116; Fax (758) 453 1614; E-mail: gis@candw.lc; http://stlucia.gov.lc