



NEWSLETTER

The Antigua and Barbuda High Commission

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The Antigua and Barbuda High Commission's Newsletter is now published bi-monthly. Send your comments to: enquiries@antigua-barbuda.com

Governor-General Dame Louise Lake-Tack has audience with Queen Elizabeth II

Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda Dame Louise Agnetha Lake-Tack had her first audience with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the II on 17th October. She was invested with the insignia of a Dame Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George.

Dame Louise Agnetha Lake-Tack took office on July 17, 2007 becoming the first female Governor-General of Antigua and Barbuda.

The Governor General was born in the Parish of St. Phillip's in Antigua and received her education at the Freetown Government School before attending the Antigua Girls High School in St. John's.

After graduation, she migrated to the United Kingdom where she studied nursing at Charing Cross Hospital. Following the completion of her studies, she worked first at the National Heart Hospital and later at the Harley Street Clinic.

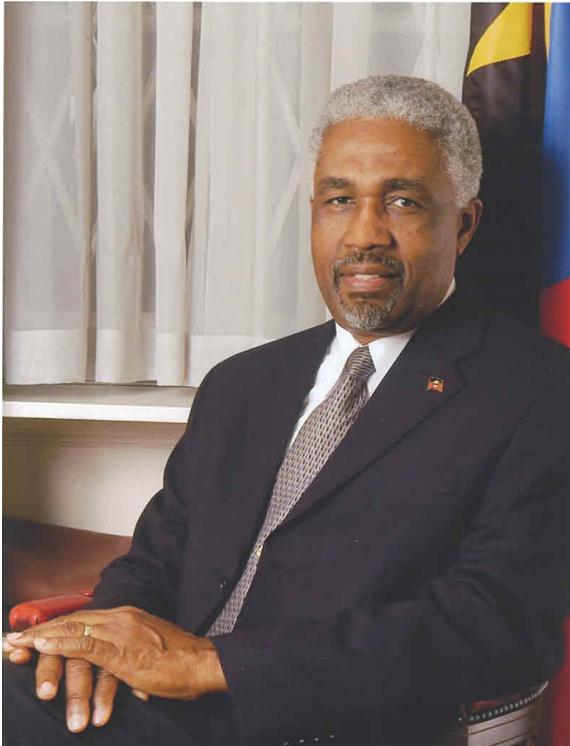
Dame Louise Lake-Tack later studied and graduated in law and subsequently served as a magistrate at both Marylebone and Horseferry Magistrate Courts. She also sat at Pocock Street Crown Court and Middlesex Crown Court to hear appeal cases from the lower courts.

Her Excellency served as a member of the Antigua and Barbuda National Association (London) for the 24 years preceding her appointment as Governor-General. She spelt out at her inauguration at a special joint session of Parliament that she wants an "open-door" policy at Government House - the official residence of the Governor-General.



Governor-General Dame Louise Lake-Tack and her family flanked by His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts (left) and Mr Phillip Bree (right)

A MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY DR CARL ROBERTS, HIGH COMMISSIONER



Dear Readers,

A Time to Remember

The 1st November marks another anniversary in the life of the young nation of Antigua and Barbuda. It also allows each of us a moment to reflect on the twelve months which have passed and a time to remember events which have influenced our lives as citizens, residents and well-wishers of our country.

We are saddened by the wave of adverse events, which have happened in our homeland and grieve that our homeland has so readily embraced a lifestyle which is so at variance with what we are accustomed to many years ago.

We can spend much time attributing blame but candidly that would get us only so far. What we need is a

united effort to stamp out this evil spirit amongst us before it totally and irrevocably changes the fabric of our society.

The Prime Minister has in his message, echoed not just the concerns of every right-thinking Antiguan and Barbudan but he has gone further with a clarion call to action. A call to action for all parents, leaders and advocates to demonstrate their faith and Christian beliefs by joining together to give the youths of our nation, the right motivation to discard this deviant lifestyle, this destructive emulation of what is really detestable in the so called developed societies and remember our heritage.

'It takes the whole village to raise a child' is a saying of great significance. Our Sovereign Lord's parable of the Good Samaritan teaches the same principle. Many of us still remember those days when we were indeed our brother's keeper.

Let us not forget, no let us never forget, the warmth and welcoming characteristics which so readily identified the Antigua and Barbuda we used to know. Let us take time to remember and then act. Act to restore a society free from fear and filled with peace and love. Lend your hand, or whatever gift God allows you to use, to this life changing cause. Let us recapture our Nation and then take time to remember so that such behaviours will no longer be seen in our shores.

Dr Carl Roberts
High Commissioner

Prime Minister to head delegation to CHOGM in Uganda

Prime Minister the Honourable Baldwin Spencer will lead a delegation which will include His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference (CHOGM) to be held this year in Uganda from 23rd to 25th November, 2007.

Meetings of associated committees usually take place in the weeks preceding CHOGM. These include the Committee of the Whole (COW), which consists of senior officials. The Commonwealth Ministers' Action Group on the Harare Declaration and the Ministerial Group on Small States also meet. Their recommendations are considered at CHOGM.

Parallel special events involving non-government organisations, business and youth now coincide with each CHOGM. Action plans are developed at these events to complement official Commonwealth statements.

Commonwealth Leaders meet every two years in a different Commonwealth country to review global political and economic developments and to take a strategic overview of the Commonwealth's work in support of its member countries' interests. The host of each CHOGM takes on the role of Chairman-in-Office for the following two years. The current Chairman-In-Office is Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi of Malta, who hosted the CHOGM in 2005.

In recent years, each CHOGM has adopted a Special Theme. The theme for the Malta CHOGM in 2005 was "Networking the Commonwealth for Development". At Abuja in 2003, Heads of Government convened under the theme "Development and Democracy: Partnership for Peace and Prosperity".

The theme at Coolom in 2001 was "The Commonwealth in the 21st Century: Continuity and Renewal". At Durban in 1999 Leaders discussed "People-Centred Development: the Challenge of Globalisation" and the focus at Edinburgh in 1997 was on economic issues. The theme for CHOGM 2007 meeting is **'Transforming Commonwealth Societies to achieve political, economic and human development'**.

The Kampala summit shall discuss the promotion of common political values like democracy, human rights, good governance and separation of powers. Also on the agenda are global economic issues, environment and climate change with emphasis to decreasing carbon emissions.

The summit will also discuss agricultural and trade subsidies, promotion of tolerance, understanding and respect to ease tension between Christian and Arab states.

Biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings also provide Commonwealth Leaders with a forum for informal exchanges and bilateral contact with restricted access for officials.

Commonwealth Ministers from a range of portfolios meet between CHOGMs to consider specific issues relating to democracy, economics and development, women's affairs, youth, legal issues, health and education. These meetings are held in different Commonwealth countries each year and are chaired by the relevant minister from the host government.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), shall as part of the agenda, appoint a new Secretary-General (SG) to take over from Rt. Hon. Don McKinnon,



*Honourable Baldwin Spencer
Prime Minister of Antigua and
Barbuda*

Prime Minister to meet Antigua and Barbuda Diaspora in UK

Following the Heads of Government Meeting in Uganda, Prime Minister Spencer will spend a few days in the UK to meet with members of the Diaspora in London and Leicester.

A Meeting will be held in London at the Antigua and Barbuda High Commission (ground floor) on the 27th November and in Leicester on the 28th November.

On the 29th November the Prime Minister will give a Talk at Oxford Union.

Prime Minister Spencer will return home on the 1st December, 2007.

Minister Derrick signs debt-rescheduling agreement with INTERPOL

On 5th September Antigua and Barbuda signed an agreement to repay its outstanding debts to the International Criminal Police Organization INTERPOL, thereby reinstating its full rights as a member country with the organization.

Antigua and Barbuda was in breach of Article 52 of INTERPOL's constitution through non-payment of its statutory contributions since 2001, which resulted in the withdrawal of a number of privileges as a member country such as the right to vote at General Assemblies, elect Executive Committee members, second police officials to INTERPOL and host INTERPOL conferences or police training meetings.

The debt re-scheduling agreement entered into by Minister of Justice and Public Safety Colin V.A. Derrick commits Antigua and Barbuda to repay the EUR 100,060 (363,089 East Caribbean Dollars) owed in 10 equal annual instalments, with the first to be made before 1 November, 2007 and means that the country can once again fully participate in the decision-making process of INTERPOL.

"I am pleased that Antigua and Barbuda and INTERPOL have reached this agreement which will be of great mutual benefit. Of major importance it will facilitate the training of our police officers and provide avenues for them to be seconded to improve their skills and competencies," said Minister Derrick.

"It is very important that Antigua and Barbuda fully participates in every aspect of INTERPOL's activities if we are to ensure the safety and security both of our citizens and the many people who



Minister Derrick (right) and Secretary-General Noble sign the debt-rescheduling agreement.

visit our country," added the Minister.

INTERPOL Secretary General Ronald K. Noble said; "Antigua and Barbuda demonstrated its willingness and ability to co-operate fully and effectively with INTERPOL and its other international police partners during the 2007 Cricket World Cup, and we are very pleased to see that momentum carried forward by Minister Derrick's commitment to ensure that Antigua and Barbuda is now once again fully integrated into INTERPOL's 186-member country police network.

"We realise that not all of our member countries are rich and that governments must prioritise the distribution of funds, but there can be no higher priority than the safety and security of their society,"

Under a system adopted by the General Assembly in 2001, each INTERPOL member country must make a compulsory annual statutory contribution calculated on the basis of their ability to pay.

"While we implemented a fairer system of statutory contributions in order to assist this process, INTERPOL is still woefully underfunded for the unique services it can provide and governments worldwide need to recognise that this situation needs to be remedied if we are to work effectively together in combating transnational crime and terrorism," added Mr Noble.

PM Spencer meets Maltese Foreign Minister on selection of new Commonwealth Secretary General

On the 3rd September Hon. Michael Frendo, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta, flew into Antigua for a meeting with Prime Minister the Honourable Baldwin Spencer. The Maltese foreign minister is a candidate in the race for Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.



Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer and the Maltese Foreign Affairs Minister, Michael Frendo

Commonwealth Heads of Government will hold their biennial summit in Uganda in November and they will be called on to choose a new Secretary-General to replace incumbent Don McKinnon. McKinnon, a New Zealander, will demit office having served two terms.

Two other candidates are already in the race and have made their rounds of CARICOM member states to rally support for their candidacies. Mohan Kaul, president of the Commonwealth Business Council, met with PM Spencer recently and outlined his vision of the Commonwealth. Karmalesh Sharma, the High Commissioner of India in London, is also a candidate and met with PM Spencer in late August.

While many in the Commonwealth acknowledge that it is Asia's turn to field a candidate for Secretary-General, the candidacy of Malta is seen as a small-states candidacy. The majority of the

membership of the Commonwealth comprises small states.

During his meeting with PM Spencer, Minister Frendo recalled the last Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting which was held in Malta in 2005. PM Spencer pointed out that he had been very impressed with his first CHOGM experience and he praised the Maltese efforts in organizing the meeting.

In Minister Frendo's view the Commonwealth should be seen as a development organization that would leverage resources to address the development needs of its members. He said that the Commonwealth needs to engage more with regional organizations such as CARICOM.

Minster Frendo has been a member of the Malta parliament for twenty years, and has spent the past ten years as a Minister.

PM Spencer emphasized that

the Commonwealth should have a priority development focus while not abandoning the governance and human rights dimension of its agenda. He saw the UN millennium development goals as being an important challenge which the Commonwealth should help its members to meet successfully.

Mr. Spencer informed the Foreign Minister that CARICOM is seeking consensus on support for one of the candidates for Secretary-General, and that the matter had been discussed at the CARICOM Heads of Government meeting in July in Barbados. He anticipated further discussions among the Heads during a special caucus in Port-of-Spain in mid-September.

Ambassador Colin Murdoch, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ambassador Anthony Liverpool were a part of the discussions with Prime Minister Spencer and Foreign Minister Frendo.

Independence Service at Westminster Abbey

Special prayers were said for the nation and its leaders and people of Antigua and Barbuda on the 30th October 2007 at Evensong -Westminster Abbey on the occasion of our 26th Anniversary of Independence.

Staff of the High Commission, fellow nationals, High Commissioners and friends of Antigua and Barbuda also accompanied High Commissioner Dr Carl Roberts, who was invited to read the second lesson taken from the sixth chapter of the first letter to Timothy.

Remembering Antony



Antony Richards died suddenly in 2003 whilst playing football. Antony's heart held a deadly secret he was suffering from hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, which is an excessive and abnormal thickening of the heart muscle.

Help us to raise awareness. In Antony's memory we are eager that other parents should not suffer the loss we did and hope publicity about this rare heart condition will prevent sudden deaths. Please support CRY (Cardiac Risk in the Young)

REQUEST FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Total Loving Care
Present

A Fundraising Dinner, Dance & Cabaret Evening
On
Sunday 30th December 2007
In Aid of **CRY**
(Cardiac Risk In The Young)
In Memory of **Antony Richards**

At
Tereza Joanne Luxury Venue
King George V Dock,
Woolwich Manor Way,
London E16 2NJ
Please arrive by 7.30pm
Tickets and Information contact:
Sonia 07956 551 748 or Steve: 07858 227 897.
Tickets £40 if purchased before 31st October. £50 thereafter
Formal Dress required

Charity no. 1050845

Black Cancer Care

by
Dr Frank Chinegwundoh

The registered charity Cancer Black Care (CBC) was founded in 1995 to support cancer sufferers and their families. Its focus was and remains to provide support to black and ethnic minority patients/clients, although it caters to the whole community.

One in three of us will develop a cancer in our lifetime. At CBC we know the devastation that cancer causes and how the whole family is affected. We are able to offer culturally appropriate support in a holistic fashion, which our clients appreciate.

We offer advice and information, counselling, visits, financial advice, health advocacy, befriending and running support groups. We work closely with other charities such as Macmillan and the prostate cancer

charity amongst others. We have excellent links with the NHS. Indeed the chairman is a Consultant Urological Surgeon with expertise in prostate cancer. This is apt as prostate cancer is three times more likely to affect black men than white.

CBC also plays an important national role in improving cancer services for black and ethnic minority patients. It is a member of the cancer campaigning group and a Department of Health cancer advisory group.

The headquarters are in Brent supported by the Brent Primary Care Trust. Other funding comes from the Big Lottery. It is a constant challenge, as with small charities, to raise funds so as to be able to support more of the community. We seek the regular support of the black community, either by payroll giving or via the website www.cancerblackcare.org or via Justgiving. Volunteers and potential trustees are welcome.



*Dr Frank Chinegwundoh
of Cancer Black Care*

The following concerns a recent client that one of our information officers was able to help.

"Mrs X, is a 36-year-old lady from Africa, she is married and has a very supportive husband. They have

two children, the first child is 2-yrs-10 months-old, and the second child is only 10-weeks-old, she was referred to CBC by her clinical nurse specialist for support, after her diagnoses of breast cancer which led to a mastectomy.

My initial contact with Mrs X was at our office where I was able to complete her needs assessment. Mrs X is a professional person and well educated she explained that she had been diagnosed with breast cancer whilst she was pregnant with her youngest child but nothing could be done until she had given birth. She discovered a lump in her breast and mentioned it to her GP who thought it may just be because of the pregnancy but decided to refer her to the hospital for a biopsy and could not believe when she got her result, all her options were discussed with her and treatment during her pregnancy was not advisable because of the effects to her unborn child.

She was finding her situation increasingly difficult, she lives in a privately rented accommodation with her

husband and children and the rent is quite high, this was not a problem whilst she was working and able to contribute fully. Her husband is the main bread winner now and was not able to do any more than he was already doing, she needed some financial support from CBC.

Mrs X was also not able to fully appreciate her children especially the youngest as she was not able to lift her children, play with them or care for them in the same way all other mothers do, and needed the support of family who would understand her cultural and emotional needs.

CBC was able to raise £450.00 for Mrs X. She also needed a letter written to support her need for her mother-in-law to enter the UK as a carer, supporting her and her family through her cancer journey, I wrote a letter which she sent with her application to the home office and she was successful in getting her mother-in-law from Africa to join and support her and her family.

Mrs X also attended CBC cancer support group meetings and was given support by other members who have also been diagnosed.

Mrs X has since completed her chemotherapy treatment and with the support of her mother-in-law she is well on the mend, and her children have had the opportunity to get to know their grandmother.

Mrs X has written and sent a 'thank you' card in appreciation of the support she has received from CBC, Mrs X has returned to work."

I trust that this gives an idea of the value of Cancer Black Care.

Dr Frank Chinegwundoh
www.urologyconsultant.co.uk

Cancer Black Care, 79 Acton Lane,
London NW10 8UT
020 8961 4151
Registered charity number 1086465

President of the Senate visits the High Commission

Hon. President of the Senate, Senator Hazlyn Mason-Francis was a guest at the Antigua and Barbuda High Commission on her recent visit to the United Kingdom.

Senator Mason-Francis was accompanied by the Executive Director of Gender Affairs in the Ministry of Labour, Public Administration and Empowerment., Miss Sheila Rosseau.

The President of the Senate was introduced to the staff of the High Commission and Tourist Office and also signed the Visitor's Book.



High Commissioner Dr Carl Roberts with Honourable President of the Senate, Senator Hazlyn Mason-Francis

Antigua and Barbuda participates in International Symposium in the Republic of Korea

The second International Symposium on Expo 2012, Yeosu Korea, started on Thursday 13 September, under the theme "Global Warming and the Living Ocean and Coast".

Speakers during the opening ceremony highlighted the importance of climate change as a global issue with serious implications for the world's oceans and coastal states.

Jae-Chul Kim, Chairman of the Bidding Committee for the Expo 2012 Yeosu Korea stated that the "Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report on Climate Change forecasts that the temperature of the earth will increase by up to 6.4 degrees Celsius, while sea levels will rise by up to 59 centimeters by 2100." This according to Mr. Kim is serious cause for concern and the need for the peoples of the earth to take remedial actions to deal with these phenomena.

Seung-soo, Han-United Nations Secretary General's Special Envoy on Climate Change, pointed out that the "fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC heightened international awareness on climate change."

The report, which represents 6 years of work involving over 2,500 experts, called on the international community to immediately begin addressing the issue of climate change, giving a clear warning that human-induced climate change has long been in progress.

Other key speakers included Duck-soo, Han, Prime Minister of the



(left to right) HE Dr Carl Roberts, Ambassador Anthony Liverpool and Ambassador Colin Murdoch at the second International Symposium on Expo 2012, Yeosu Korea

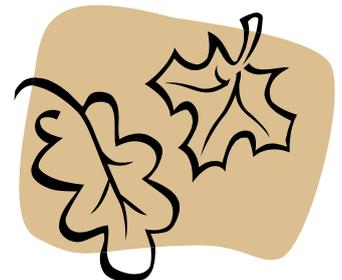
Republic of Korea, Alvin Toffler, Futurist and Vincente Gonzalez Loscertales, Secretary General of the Bureau of International Expositions (BIE).

The hosting of this symposium forms part of the Republic of Korea bid to host the 2012 Exhibition with a view to share experiences and visions of overcoming various problems faced by the global community, such as environmental pollution, food shortages and natural disasters. second International Symposium on Expo 2012, Yeosu Korea, second International Symposium on Expo 2012, Yeosu Korea, The Exhibition would also serve as a catalyst for facilitating cultural exchanges and cooperation.

Since the first exhibition held in London in 1851, the International Exhibition has shown the achievements and progress of human civilization and suggested visions for future development, thereby contributing greatly to world peace and prosperity.

Antigua and Barbuda's delegation to this symposium was made up of High Commissioner, Dr. Carl Roberts, Antigua and Barbuda representative to the BIE, Ambassador Colin Murdoch, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Anthony Liverpool and Karen Cabral, Sr. Foreign Service Officer, held a series of meetings with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea Han Duck-soo and other government officials and discussed possible areas for continued cooperation and support.

The symposium concluded on Friday September 14.



On the 19th October His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts and Mrs Roberts were Guests of Honour at a Dinner hosted by The Viscount Allenby, President of the International Cultural Exchange, in the Peers Dining Room of the House of Lords. On this occasion Her Excellency Dame Louise Lake-Tack, Governor-General of Antigua and Barbuda and her son Geoffrey Lake-Tack were also invited to attend.

Usually, invited guests are asked to speak after dinner on a topic of national or international interest. His Excellency spoke on his particular experience as an engineer of the disastrous Montserrat eruption. We reproduce below the contents of that address:

High Commissioner's Address at the House of Lords - 19th October 2007

Painting the Overall Picture-Background information

In July 1995, following my successful candidacy for the position of the Head of the Montserrat Business Unit of Cable & Wireless (W.I.) Limited, I was appointed to the position of General Manager or Chief Executive Officer for an initial period of two years. There I would be responsible for some one hundred and twelve persons with the Management Team structure which included five Heads of Division (Finance, Networks, Engineering, Sales & Marketing and Human Resources). The Population of Montserrat in June 1995 was just over 12,500 and the total number of subscribers on the network around 4,900.

The island is barely 5 miles wide at its widest point by 9 miles long, of volcanic origin with its highest point 3000 feet above sea level at Chances Peak. Plymouth, the Capital in 1995, was on the southwest of the island and was home for the majority of the population at the time.

I landed on the island on the 1st July 1995 to take up my appointment. This Business Unit was a wholly-owned subsidiary of Cable & Wireless providing a full suite of telecommunications services to the citizens, visitors and residents of this tiny island of 39 square miles.

Let me just set the scene of my arrival in 1995. Cable & Wireless Montserrat was, like the island it served, just recovering from the effects of one of the century's most powerful hurricanes, Hugo. July marked just a few months short of the sixth anniversary of the 17th September 1989 hurricane devastation of the island and in spite of this the inhabitants had been enjoying a spirit of hope and renewed life. The economy was on the upswing and with several major constructions underway; the company had high hopes for a good future which went with the exhilarating esprit de Coeur of the general population.

The company had moved from its cramped offices on Church Street to rented space on Houston Street and was

considering building its new headquarters on the old spot on Church Street. Staff numbers had increased to 112.

2 My Role

My role here was to clearly articulate the expectations of our Group Directors to the Management Team and staff of the Business Unit so that our efforts would be united and focused in one direction. My real challenge was to make the management team and members work together as a smoothly running operation.

Good as our plans were then, we were forced to rethink our entire strategy three weeks later when towards the 18th July, the long dormant volcano near Chances Peak began a series of activities that to this day are still ongoing. My role immediately changed to include the management of a crisis and the restructuring of the business to cope with the new demands placed upon it. As our internal Group staff magazine called it, this was indeed a "baptism of fire".

3 The Crisis

In presenting this topic I have decided to focus on six distinct periods. The first of these gives details of the situation as at July to September 1995, i.e. Just prior to the beginning of the major part of the crisis. The next periods will cover the First, Second and Third evacuations and activities surrounding these events.

The first sign that things were not at all well was the constant smell of sulphur in and around Chances Peak. There was also a sound similar to a large jet taking off. This turned out to be gaseous discharge from a hole in the mountain range next to Chances Peak. This required frequent trips to the high site by staff members to undertake engineering work.

On 21st August 1995, following initial vigorous steaming, strong earthquake swarms and a large phreatic eruption, the government with little notice ordered the evacuation of the southern and eastern half of the island. There

was a state of confusion. Many persons, approximately 2,500, left the island for Antigua, St Kitts & Nevis, Anguilla and Guadeloupe.

A Command centre was set up in a house in Woodlands and after several days a customer service area was established in a nearby storeroom. Customers were invited to settle their accounts there or via the mobile unit which went around the new restricted areas. Several customers gave selected staff members their payments, while those who left for Antigua were requested to make payments via the Antigua Business Unit. The evacuation lasted two weeks.

The crisis in Montserrat posed its own unique problems. During the early days, several staff who could not bear the stress of the situation requested to be relieved of their duties. One of these was my financial Controller, who was allowed, with his family to return to the United Kingdom. That left me without a head of finance for some time, as there was an understandable reluctance on the part of many perspective candidates to accept a posting in Montserrat.

As a result of the volcanic activities and the fear which was associated with it, the Business Unit saw a 55% decline in its revenues and reduction of over 60% in the useable portion of its network. I had therefore set a few critical objectives in the early period of the crisis. These were:-

- to secure the safety and life of staff
- to keep basic services available
- to maintain the business
- to maintain our licence obligations
- to keep the links available so that any interruptions to the ECFS and DECMS would be minimised
- to bring on board any new services in light of the instability of the population, which was constantly on the move.

During period two between 15th September and December, we noticed the first sign of Dome Growth. There was another large phreatic eruption and the sides of the mountain began to deform. There were increased earthquake swarms and over the course of one evening, the island experienced a very high number of earthquakes. I doubt anyone slept that night. Following these activities we took the decision to salvage all essential equipment from Chances Peak and decommission the site as it was becoming extremely dangerous to visit our station on the mountain top.

In December 1995, we were once again evacuated following the earlier return to our homes and offices in mid-September. The first sign of incandescent lava was noticed

within the crater. The evacuation this time lasted for one month. During this period the island experienced the effects of two regional storms which further added to the difficulties affecting the island. It was then realised that using tents for housing the evacuees was not a sustainable solution as threat of tropical storms and hurricanes was an additional risk which has to be taken into account in the disaster plans and provisions.

By Period three the volcano had entered a new phase which involved block and ash flows sending hot material towards inhabited areas below. A very traumatic experience was the first major pyroclastic flow on mother's day 1996 which blocked out the sun over the island for several minutes. Dome growth also intensified over this period. The government therefore ordered the third and final evacuation as new signs of volcanic activities, evidenced increased threats to livestock and humans alike. A volcanic risk map was provided and a direct link to the Government's Volcano Observatory Command Centre was made available to the heads of essential service providers.

During the period January to March 1996 the Business Unit attempted to evaluate its experiences to date. One thing was abundantly clear to all of us and that was that we could no longer operate from the Woodland Estate temporary office if called upon to evacuate again. The agent for the house had also indicated his intention not to rent the property to be used for business activities.

We were therefore faced with one of two options: rent another property or build something for our own use in the north. Finding another suitable property for rent was proving a problem. The location of the property was also critical as many of our customers were without transport and would find it difficult to visit most locations.

Additional criteria which should be taken on board include the expandability of the building on site, the requirement to site much needed spare network material closely and closeness to any concentration of business activities.

Members of Staff were also requesting assistance for housing, increased allowances and assistance with time off to wind the pressures of daily work activities.

New plans were therefore drawn up. These included the relocation of several porta-cabins from our complex at Lovers Lane to our exchange area in the north of the island.

- The new objectives of the business were developed:
- (1) Restore a radio link between Montserrat and Antigua
 - (2) Re-launch the cellular service

- (3) Reduce the stress of staff as far as possible
- (4) Ease the crowding of staff in the functional areas
- (5) Bring some level of normalcy in the operation in the north
- (6) Improve the performance of the Business Unit towards Group standards
- (7) Ensure some level of continuity in the management of the unit.

During this evacuation period the Business Unit's main operating area including its customer service centre, was moved to the North of the island at Sweeneys. Operations were conducted from porta-cabins which had been previously salvaged from the Telecommunications Engineering Centre at Lovers Lane, Plymouth. The population was spread over the northern half of the island and had by then declined to around 6,000.

Over the next three periods the situation continued to deteriorate. We upgraded our facilities at Sweeney with a new exchange building in which the salvaged equipment from our Kinsale Remote Line Concentrator Module exchange was re-installed. Plymouth by this time had been totally covered with ash and a special departure package was offered to the residence of Montserrat to relocate to the UK.

The repeated pyroclastic flows eventually destroyed the airport buildings and on the 25th June there was another major pyroclastic flow in several directions, completely devastated as many as 9 villages and killing about 19 persons. These were the first direct casualties of the crisis.

The useable area of this once beautiful emerald isle was now reduced from 39 square miles to well under 12 square miles. It was increasingly hazardous to one's health to visit, much less work, in any area other than zones F and G.

There is just one sad memory which I take with me always. During the entire crisis the Business Unit lost two of its hardest and most dependable workers. It was believed by the medical teams who conducted the autopsy that their death was as a direct result of the pressures of the crisis.

Unfortunately I must, as you are no doubt aware, state that the crisis continues to this day and the effects on the remaining citizens will be revealed over time. I am honoured to have been there to play the role that I played and to ensure that during my entire watch, Montserrat never lost one moment of communication. Of that I will forever remain extremely proud and thankful to all my staff and those who supported us during the crisis.

Commonwealth Scholarships

New CSCUK Website goes live

*Excerpted from the magazine
Commonwealth Scholarships News*

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission has recently launched its new website at www.cscuk.org.uk. The site provides information about awards offered by the Commission to citizens from across the Commonwealth and advice for students from the UK looking to study in other Commonwealth countries.

Prospective applicants for awards tenable in the UK can find information on the various schemes available, the selection criteria and how to apply. They can also access practical information about studying and living in the UK, both from our site and through links to the British Council and other organisations, and explore further study opportunities in the Commonwealth.

The new CSCUK site can be accessed independently, or via CSFP site (WWW.csfp-online.org) when browsing the list of countries offering awards. It is hoped that you will visit the site and take a look around.

About the CSFP

The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) is one of the oldest and most prestigious schemes of its kind in the world. It was established at the first conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers in 1959. Since, over 24,000 individuals have held awards, hosted by over twenty countries.

From the outset, the United Kingdom has been held here. CSFP awards in the United Kingdom are managed by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission, a public body established by Act of Parliament. Two government departments fund the Commission: the Department for International Development, which supports awards to developing Commonwealth countries, and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which supports awards to the remainder of the Commonwealth.

At present, the Commission offers six discrete types of award:

- General Scholarships
- Academic Staff Scholarships
- Academic Fellowships
- Split-Site Scholarships
- Professional Fellowships
- Distance Learning Scholarships

Further details of current provision and selection procedures can be found on the UK section of the CSFP website at <http://www.cscuk.org.uk>

Welcome Remarks at the Reception for the Governor-General of Antigua and Barbuda Dame Louise Lake-Tack on the 18th October 2007

"Ladies and Gentlemen, it is indeed a pleasure to welcome you to this special occasion when we greet for the first time the Governor-General of Antigua and Barbuda, Dame Louise Lake-Tack.



Governor-General Dame Louise Lake-Tack gives her address

Her Excellency took the oath of office on the 17th July earlier this year. The oath of office administered by the Acting Chief Justice, Mr Bryan Alleyne. Her Excellency was privileged to have her audience with Her Majesty, Queen Elisabeth II on the 17th October three months to the day of her moving ceremony in St John's the Capital of Antigua and Barbuda. On this occasion Her Excellency was invested with the insignia of a Dame Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George.

Her Excellency first resided in Antigua at Long Lane Estate in the Parish of St Phillip's. She was educated at the Freetown Government School

before attending the Antigua Girls High School in St John's. Having migrated to the United Kingdom, Her Excellency undertook studies to embark first on a nursing career and when her children attained adulthood, a second career in Law, thereafter serving as a magistrate in the UK for some time.



His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts gives his welcome address at reception in honour of Governor-General Dame Louise Lake-Tack

The accomplishments of Her Excellency have made her stand out as a dedicated and caring person, an ardent church member of the Anglican church and a founding member of the Antigua and Barbuda National Association. Her interest in the welfare of others shows in the membership of the British Red Cross and on Tuesday 16th Her Excellency was also invested with the insignia of

Reaffirmed in Britain in the mid-19th century, the Order traces its origins back 900 years to the Knights Hospitaller from whom St. John today derives its inspiration and maxims - for the Faith and in the service of Mankind. Today, the Order of St. John is an international body with some 30,000 members worldwide. The Order encompasses the foundations of the St. John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem and St. John Ambulance."

Dame of the Order of St John* by the Duke of Gloucester at Kensington Palace.

***The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, more commonly known as the Order of St. John. One of five mutually recognized orders of St. John, it is an order of the British crown.**



Governor-General greets the President and other members of the Antigua and Barbuda National Association in London



(above) Dame Louise poses with High Commissioner, Mrs Roberts and some members of the Staff of the High Commission and Tourist Office.



(above) Governor-General greets Mrs Pauline Williams-Sylvester - wife of HE Mr Lawrence Sylvester, High Commissioner for Belize (left) as HE Mr Burchell Whiteman, High Commissioner for Jamaica (right) looks on.



(right) Governor General greets Baroness Scotland, Attorney General, UK

Officials of Antigua and Barbuda Football Association visit UK

The President, Mervyn Richards and Executive Director Gordon Derrick of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association visited the UK recently and conducted a series of meetings with several UK Football Clubs.

Meetings were also held with the Antigua and Barbuda National Associations in London and Leicester. The purpose of these meetings was to identify persons of Antigua and Barbudan heritage, who might be recruited to play in the national team, whose objective is the Football world Cup.



High Commissioner Dr Carl Roberts (standing) with members of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association and the National Association in Leicester

Tourism Wedding and honeymoon Showcase at Cafe Royal

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourist Office recently hosted their first *Wedding & Honeymoon Showcase* dedicated to travel agents at Café Royal in London as well as launching their new dedicated Wedding & Honeymoon brochure.

The event was attended by approximately 80 travel agents from Thomas Cook, Travel Counsellors, Future Travel, First Choice, Tropical Sky, Argo Holidays and Kuoni among many others.



(left to right) Daniela Capodia - Elite Island Resorts, Lucy Quilliam - Model, Esther Jemmott - Model



His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts and Mrs Roberts at the Wedding and Honeymoon showcase

During the day the agents were able to speak one-to-one with many of Antigua and Barbuda's hotel partners such as Elite Island Resorts, Rex resorts, Sandals Grande Antigua, Jolly Beach Resort, Hermitage Bay, VIP Antigua and Jumby Bay. Also on hand to answer questions was Roberta John-Joseph,

marriage coordinator, at the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs in Antigua.

Following a welcome by the Antigua and Barbuda High Commissioner to the UK, His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts, the agents enjoyed presentations by UK tourism officers, Joyce Fyfe and Cherrie Osborne. The event ended with a selection of prize giveaways including an iPod and M&S vouchers from the Tourist Office, a bottle of champagne from Elite Island Resorts, box of luxury handmade chocolates as

well as a three night stay from Hermitage Bay plus seven night stays at St James's Club and Jolly Beach Resort.

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourist Office will also be running its second Wedding & Honeymoon FAM between 7 - 14 December as well as the UK Wedding Show in London on 2 & 3 February 2008. They also took part in the National Wedding Show at the Birmingham NEC from 12th - 14th October



(left to right) Karen Francis - Rex Resorts, Carol Hay - Director of Tourism Antigua and Barbuda Tourist Office, Esther Jemmott - Model and Roberta John-Joseph - Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs

Young Member of Antigua Diaspora wins first prize at the Nottingham Young Musician of the Year 2007 competition

Eleven year old Isata Kanneh-Mason won first prize at the Nottingham Young Musician of the Year 2007 Competition with a dazzling performance on the piano on Sunday October 14th.

Given a maximum of twenty minutes in which to perform without a music sheet, Isata with her wide-ranging programme from five different composers Scarlatti, Mozart, Chopin, Prokofiev and Martineau-wowed the audience with such wondrous poise like a seasoned performer.

As the audience buzzed with excitement and anticipation, during the interval, of the likely outcome from sole adjudicator, the eminent Peter Stark, those rooting for the young Isata were proved right.

In summing up, Mr. Stark began by saying that each of the finalists was a winner because that was certainly what the audience felt about the five brilliant performances.

Miss Isata Kanneh-Mason, the youngest to win the WINDBLOWERS Trophy since its fourth bi-annual inception 2001, proved to be a worthy winner and deserved the accolades showered on her.

Isata started playing the piano and the violin at the age of six. Her musical history is very impressive in such a short space of time. She is a principal study pianist at the Royal Academy of music in the hands of Parsy Toh, and a second study violinist with Juila Jasinski. She also studies composition at the Academy with David Knolts. Isata has composed a piano concerto in C Minor which she will perform with the St. Bartholomew Orchestra London in January 2008. In March she achieved the highest mark in the UK for her Grade 7 piano exam, winning the Sheila Mossman Memorial Prize, and the Nellie Greenhill Memorial prize for Grade 5 and 7 in 2006 and 2007 for the highest marks in Nottingham, where she currently attends the Trinity Comprehensive School. She also won a highly commended award at the Manchester International Piano concerto competition at Chetham School of Music in August.

Blessed with a gift, Isata's meteoric achievements in the field of music are due to a large extent to the firm



guidance and mentoring by both parents Kadie and Stuart, her aunt Rhonda Mason (all of whom are accomplished musicians on the piano, cello and violin) and also her grandmother Mrs. Megan Kanneh who provided Isata with Sibelius computer software.

Miss Isata Kanneh-Mason has a rare talent and has the support of people who can help her harness this gift, and with her musical siblings, two brothers and three sisters, breathing down her neck, she should go far.

Expect to hear more of Miss Isata Kanneh-Mason in the not too distant future as a virtuoso pianist.



Photos left and above are of Miss Isata Kanneh-Mason holding her trophy and playing the piano

High Commissioner's Address at the Antigua and Barbuda's National Association's Independence Service on 28th October 2007 at St Mark's Church in Dalston

The Worshipful The Mayor of Waltham Forest, Councillor Liaquat Ali, Councillor Faizullah Khan, Speaker of Hackney Council, His Excellency Mr. Lawrence Sylvester, Mrs Sylvester and Paul, Members of the Clergy, Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow citizens, friends and supporters of Antigua and Barbuda, welcome to this service of thanksgiving in celebration of the 26th Anniversary of the Independence of our nation. Much has happened since our Silver Anniversary celebration last year. Much still needs to be done to make our homeland the dream place we aspire it to be.

Our celebrations this year will be under the theme of ONE FAMILY – ASPIRING, ADVANCING, ACHIEVING and the Government has once again extended an invitation to nationals and friends of Antigua and Barbuda to join those at home for the Independence celebrations. As Minister Adams said in his address at the start of our celebrations *“each item on this stem, refers to forward and upward movement - a futuristic vision of hope and fulfilment - not one of looking back or standing still as though stuck in neutral or idle. Although we at times, need to reflect on the past, it should be for the purpose of us being guided in our advance to the future, and for us to respect and pay tribute to those who have shaped our present and are, more often than not, unsung heroes”*.

This year the week long activities commenced on 21st October with a Service of Thanksgiving at which the message was delivered by Evangelist Pastor Lucille Harris, at Sunday's Independence Thanksgiving Service at St. John's Anglican Cathedral. She was the first woman to deliver the address and further marks the emphasis that the UPP Government is placing on Women's affairs in our country. Many of the usual events will take place during the celebrations and these will climax with the traditional ceremonial parade at the Recreation Grounds on the 1st November.

Needless to say, the challenges faced by our islands are many. To help us along I have decided to form a “Friends of Antigua and Barbuda” Club to help us in advancing and achieving the aspirations of the citizens, residents and well-wishers of our nation. Letters will be sent to all who have expressed their interest and a few who we have specifically invited. We hope to host a special launch function very early in the New Year.

As you know, Antigua and Barbuda like so many other developing countries is in need of much direct investment; investment from its citizens at home and just as important from those citizens, friends and supporters overseas. The Government established the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority which will create the enabling modality to advance this objective.

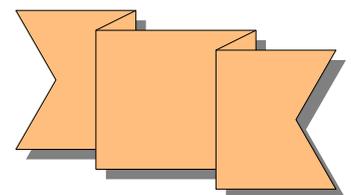
Our efforts have also begun to produce the positive results in tourism sector as well with impressive growth in tourist arrivals from the UK and the receipt of three awards (1) World's Best Beach Resort, (2) Best Wedding Island of the Year and (3) Best Beach Destination in the World. Let us pledge to join together for the common good – for by advancing together we can achieve the aspirations that will make Antigua



His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts, High Commissioner, Antigua and Barbuda

and Barbuda a better place for generations to come. As Evangelist Pastor Lucille Harris puts it **“as we seek to advance we need to discover how our future can be better than our past. Go forward with the awareness as one generation prepares for the next”**.

Thank you and may God continue to bless each of us as we work together as one family. Have a Blessed Independence Day.



National Broadcast Prime Minister the Hon. W. Baldwin Spencer October 25, 2007

Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans;

Residents and Friends of
Antigua and Barbuda:

Good Evening:

I know that currently all right-thinking and law abiding persons are deeply concerned over the shocking and callous wave of crime and violence that we are faced with in Antigua and Barbuda at this time.

I know too that many are distressed and fearful at this time.

Your government is deeply concerned!

This evening I can assure you that the security of our respective communities and the safety of all in our twin island state is paramount to your government.

I can assure that from this moment on no energies will be spared to tackle this seemingly escalating trend.

I have instructed the law enforcement officials, that from this very moment, it will be ZERO tolerance in their operations.

No act of crime will go unpunished. Zero tolerance will become the order of the day in Antigua and Barbuda from this moment onwards.

As I speak at this very moment, members of the Police Force are carrying out stop and search exercises

across the island.

No stone will be left un-turned to pluck out and destroy the elements of evil within our society.

We must act decisively and we must act now!

Citizens, Residents and Friends:

There are a number of you who are victims of the current surge of violent crimes, including armed robberies and are still traumatized by those experiences.

My heart goes out to you and members of your family who are suffering at this time.

I am certain that this too is the sentiment of the vast majority of the population.

The recent killings of three individuals in full view of others affect all of us.

When society is affected by an upsurge in crime and violence as we are experiencing today, all of us become victims.

When we see youth gansterism invading our schools and possessing our young people, we all worry about what will be next.

Our fear is then transposed into diminished trust in the law, law enforcement officials and authority.

As an upsurge in crime and violence makes us all victims, we all have a role to play in putting an end to this lawlessness confronting us.

Crime and violence is not only a problem for the law enforcement agencies and the Government. It is a

national problem that requires all of our efforts.

Government and the law enforcement officials will do their part. I call on every right thinking Antiguan and Barbudan to also do your part.

- Develop a stronger community spirit.

- Become your brother's and sister's keeper.

- Ensure that you build strong families.

- Always seek to know where your teenage sons and daughters are.

- Monitor and limit the destructive influence that foreign television can have on your children.

- Ensure that your children are in school where they should be, and

- Assist the law in their efforts to solve crime

Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans:
Citizens and Friends:

Satisfactory reduction in crime and violence also requires the vigilant and unbiased protection of the police. The police is society's first line of defence in combating crime and violence.

The government expects this. The people of Antigua and Barbuda demand this.

Last evening, I met with the Attorney General the Hon. Justin Simon, Minister responsible for Law Enforcement Senator Colin Derrick, Chief of Defence Staff Colonel Trevor Thomas, Commissioner of Police Ms. Delano Christopher and Head of the ONDCP Lieutenant Colonel Edward

Croft.

The meeting was called to discuss the current slayings, the increase in criminal activity and to devise short to medium term strategies to defend the population from criminals and to root out all lawlessness.

I expressed my concern over the seemingly uncontrollable increase in criminal activity and the seemingly lack of presence and visibility by the police in a number of volatile areas.

I also expressed the need to have a more effective response to incidences of crime and violence, the need for more coordinated patrols by the security forces and to combat the seeming proliferation of weapons on the streets.

Against that background, I therefore gave the following directives:

- Effective immediately, the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force be deployed to assist the Police in their operations
- All illegal tint must be removed from unauthorized vehicles. Members of the police force must also comply. You must lead by example. The law must be obeyed.
- Targeted and random Road Blocks and Personal Searches, across the country around the clock and across the calendar
- Arrest of all persons found to be carrying concealed weapons
- More police stations will be opened to the public throughout the day and night. No longer will they be closed to the public during the night.
- More coordination among the security forces – The ABDF, the Police

and the ONDCP

- Joint coordinated patrols especially within the areas of high crime.
 - More frequent patrols within other areas.
 - More use of the specially equipped Police Command vehicle for surveillance and other purposes. It has been under-utilized. It has significant detection and deterrent capabilities.
 - Improvement in the effectiveness and timeliness of responses to the public for assistance.
 - No effort must be spared in seeking to reduce the illegal smuggling and use of weapons.
 - The immediate reform of the Intelligence Unit of the force that will be required to maintain surveillance on known and likely lawbreakers.
 - Improved and significant cooperation between Law enforcement, customs and immigration officers. There must be more vigilance at our ports of entry
 - Constant television and newspaper crime detection and prevention updates together with publication of photographs of criminals and suspects wanted by the police
 - Minors found wandering on the streets after 10 p.m. will be apprehended and their parents called upon to account for their actions.
- Parents must recognize that they are responsible for the actions of minors under their care. Parents must also recognize that the absence of good values, traditions and discipline only leaves room for lawlessness to take root in their children

The Police will also be called upon to partner with the population in strategies for reducing the opportunity for crimes and also to partner with the population in community policing programmes.

Fellow Citizens and Residents:

I see these as appropriate measures for immediate implementation. These measures will be reviewed in a short timeframe to determine their effectiveness and if necessary to determine what other measures should be taken.

Immediate results must become the priority of our law enforcement officials.

Of course, for the long term, we will continue to equip the police with modern technology, scientific aids and continuous training.

We have provided the police with a fully equipped mobile surveillance vehicle.

This week, the police force has been provided with a fleet of vehicles – twelve in total.

Today, the Minister of Justice has just concluded negotiations with a view to purchasing a modern state of the art digital communications system for the use of the law enforcement agencies and the security services.

We will continue to make provisions for the training and re-training of members of the force.

Recently, the government has held discussions with British and Canadian government officials and INTERPOL in an effort to gain assistance in trained and specialized manpower for every division of the force.

The final report in respect of the Alphonse Breaux review of the police force is being studied. Whatever will be required of Government to ensure a more effective and upgraded Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda will be done. I will ensure that the Minister of Finance makes the necessary provisions to achieve these goals as a matter of utmost urgency and priority.

Government will also review the anti-crime measures that are enshrined in law.

Measures will be put in place to include but not limited to:

- Substantially stiffer penalties for violent crimes particularly those involving guns, knives and other lethal weapons.
- Substantially stiffer penalties for the supply and or possession of illegal firearms, and
- Substantially stiffer penalties for repeat offenders of such crimes.

Fellow Citizens and Residents of Antigua and Barbuda:

Today, your Government is faced with what appears to be a war between drug lords, an escalation in crime and violence and the deportation of criminals from North America to Antigua and Barbuda.

Our intelligence suggests that the recent slayings are related to the current raging war between the drug lords and their respective financiers. Two of the slain victims were deportees and known drug traffickers. One of the victims arrived in Antigua on Sunday, two days before the events.

We are also presented with intelligence that there are certain sections of society who are supporting and funding the increase in crime in our

society. I do not wish to believe that this is so. But if that is the case – I wish to assure you that you too will be flushed out with the criminals and will be prosecuted.

We must not allow fear for our personal safety and that of our neighbours to linger among us any longer.

Your government will not allow this.

Zero tolerance must become the order of the day. From the traffic infractions to the highest of crimes – zero tolerance will be applied.

I appeal to you to be patient and more so to be cooperative with the law officials. Your lives might become disrupted by the increased stoppages, searches and blockades – but it will redound to all of our benefit.

Support the government in its quest to prevent this unwelcomed development in our peace loving twin island nation. Our safety depends on this. The survival of our fragile tourism industry depends on this. Our economy depends on this.

Fellow Citizens, Residents and Friends:

As I conclude, I wish to go on record to commend Minister of Justice and Public Safety Senator Colin "Counsellor" Derrick in his efforts in dealing with issues involving the Police Force and its operations and in seeking to make this country safe and peaceful.

I also urge you not to submit to the fear on which the lawless thrive and which opportunists seek to exploit.

During this period of our celebration of Independence, let us unite to withstand assaults from virtually any

quarter. Accepting crime is not an option.

Let us unite in the war against crime. Support the police in their attack on crime with full force. Let us as responsible citizens of a fair Antigua and Barbuda attack crime with education, cooperation and with great caution.

I call on the Churches, the community, non-governmental and private voluntary organizations, civil society, the business community and neighbourhood watch associations to join with Government in its attack against crime and violence

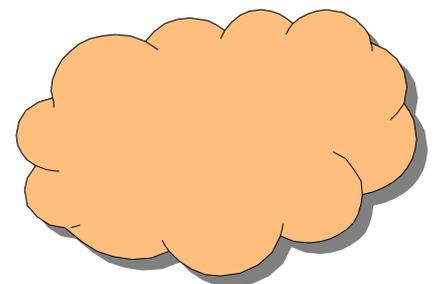
We all want a safe and secure society. It is your right. It is everyone's right to live in peace and safety. I promise you that as your Chief Servant that I will do everything possible to ensure that you and your loved ones live in peace, safety and without fear.

The recommendations of the Breaux report will be considered thoroughly and implemented where appropriate.

God bless you and those whom you cherish.

God bless the Antigua and Barbuda that we all love.

Good Night.



Commonwealth Countries League (CCL) Charity Fair

The Commonwealth Countries League (CCL) Fair was held this year on Saturday 20th October 2007 at the Royal Horticultural Society Lawrence Hall from 11 am to 5 pm.

Food and Crafts from the Commonwealth were well featured.

Along with the usual Antiguan products we also procured from the Central Marketing Corporation (CMC) in Antigua the 'Antigua Black' pineapples which were sold out in record time.

Antigua and Barbuda also featured food from our country prepared by the women of the Antigua and Barbuda National Association (ABNA) headed by its President Mrs Leontyne Manners OM.

Mrs Pauline Roberts, wife of the High Commissioner, would like to thank all who supported the Antigua and Barbuda stalls and look forward to their patronage at the next charity fair.



Photos of the Antigua and Barbuda stalls at the CCL Fair



A special 'thank you' to the steelband 'Sun Jets', who have always supported the Charity Fairs and Antigua and Barbuda events.

We cannot forget Mrs Molly Richards who continues to excel with Antiguan style sugar cakes, peanut sugar cakes and coconut fudge which she makes - all of which were quickly snatched up.

Thank you also goes out to Mrs Forde at the Central Marketing Corporation for the pineapples and Miss Sheila Roseau who was kind enough to bring them to London.

