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GRENADA

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GRENADA NEWSLETTER FOR THE WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 5TH 1974

BLAZER PROTEST STILL UNSOLVED.

There is still no solution to the "blazer problem" at the State-owned Grenada Boys' Secondary School (GBSS), but the situation has become clearer.

Sources close to the parent Teacher Association (PTA) disclosed this week that discussion over the blazer as a compulsory item of the school uniform began early in 1971. At that time, concerned over what he called "growing restlessness" among students, the Headmaster, Mr Dillon Baptiste, sent a circular to parents. Throughout the West Indies, there has been a movement to adopt modes of dress more suitable to the climate, and, in his circular, Mr Baptiste suggested that, in keeping with this, a change in the school uniform might be desirable.

Following this, the PTA set up a research committee on the matter. The views of parents, teachers and students were sought and, after discussion, recommendations were forwarded to the Headmaster. These recommendations were, essentially, that the uniform should remain unchanged. That is, students should wear black shoes, grey pants and a white shirt. It was recommended, however, that the blazer (which was then required for ceremonial occasions) should be dropped as a compulsory item of the uniform.

These recommendations were accepted, and commencing with the Michaelmas Term (September) 1972, the blazer disappeared.

Friction

In August 1974, however, an announcement on Radio Grenada stated that the blazer was to be reintroduced when GBSS reopened on September 16th, and, since then, there has been growing friction between the Authorities on one side, and students and parents on the other. Both the P T A and Students Body have made open protest, and only a handful of the 600 Student Body has complied with the blazer requirement.

During the first two weeks of term, the Acting Headmaster, Mr Val Francis, made efforts to get the blazerless boys to leave the school compound, but his requests were ignored. This week, following a further directive from Mr John Morris, Minister of Education, it was announced that no student would receive tuition unless he came to school in a blazer. This directive, has been thwarted by the staff who held a meeting this week and decided to continue to teach all students with or without ~~the~~ blazers.

While, up to now, the focus has been on the blazer issue, this is a relatively minor matter in the stack of complaints relative to GBSS. This week, the PTA and the Old Boys Association held separate meetings to discuss these complaints and a delegation

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from these Bodies, together with representatives from the Student Body, was appointed to interview the Governing Body of GBSS.

Girl Students

One of the chief complaints is that, for a school of some 600 students there are only four lavatories. And, these lavatories serve, not only the students and staff, but a group of girl students who attend the school for special sixth form tuition.

The situation is made worse by the fact that the school is not properly served with water. Sources close to the school say there are several water tanks in the school compound which are full of water. The outlets from these tanks, however, are not connected to the school's water system and, it is felt that, if these connections were made, the supply would be improved greatly, and provision could then be made for drinking water facilities which are now non-existent.

There are complaints too, relative to the inadequate supply of fire extinguishers and to safety precautions in the science laboratory. But, these are relatively unimportant compared with dissatisfaction over shortage of teaching staff.

Parents complain that there is no games master although, this term, increased games fees have been charged. Nor is there a music teacher. In addition, because of staff shortage, history, mathematics, english and geography are not properly covered throughout all the forms.

The combined delegation was scheduled to meet the Governing Body on Thursday (3rd) to discuss the blazer affair and these complaints, but the meeting did not take place. The reason for this could not be ascertained, but it is believed that, now that Prime Minister

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Gairy has returned from the United Nations, Government will issue a statement on the matter.

(685 Words)

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POLICE BRUTALITY ?

The Grenada Seamen & Waterfront Workers Union has protested to the Commissioner of Police over the alleged beating of Ted Hazzard, one of its members, by the Police.

In a letter to the Commissioner dated September 24th, the Union alleged that Hazzard was arrested and taken to the St. Pauls Police Station where he was beaten with a "bull pistol" by the Inspector in charge.

(63 Words)

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ASSOCIATION WINS CASE

The Grenada Cooperative Nutmeg Association has been successful in a suit brought against the Government of Grenada relative to a parcel of land acquired by Government from the association six years ago.

This land, slightly less than half an acre, is situated on the Garenage waterfront and was purchased by the association for the purpose of erecting its office and warehouses.

Government acquired the land in 1968, but made no payment to the association, nor was any use made of the land until recently when it became a parking lot for school buses.

An assessment Committee under the chairmanship of Mr Justice Bishop valued the property at EC\$7.25 per square feet, and in a judgement handed down this week, the Court ordered Government to make settlement at the rate and the pay interest to the association at 5% per annum from October 10th 1970. The Court also ordered that Government should pay

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the association's cost in bringing the suit.

It is estimated that, to date, the land will cost Government over  
EC\$ 160,000,00, plus the cost of litigation.

(176 Words)

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4th October 1974

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