



SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT To the Meeting of Central Executive Friday, July 17, 2015

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A warm welcome to this the final meeting of Central Executive for the Conference Year. We have survived the challenges of the year and give thanks that we are able to respond to and represent our members in the way we do. We consistently provide the inspiration and support in these challenging if not troubling times. The economic paucity of our resources poses a threat to our own survival but we are a resilient people and we seem to bounce back every time.

We continue to observe with alarm the decline in law and order and watch with consternation the increasing murder rate in this our beloved island. We stand amazed at the intemperate utterances of our crime chiefs and if we are not careful, we give up hope but we are a resilient people and we are not quitters. The struggle continues and our role as educators become even more critical. May you remain sober and focused as we seek to make this land a better place for all of us.

Again, welcome and trust we will have a good meeting.

2.0 DR. DOROTHY RAYMOND

We note the grave illness of Past President and former Senior Secretary Administration and Finance, Dr. Dorothy Raymond. She is currently in the Intensive Care Unit at the Kingston Public Hospital, having fallen ill while on Credit Union business in Mexico. We pray for her and her family in these difficult times. The Association committed itself to a contribution of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000.00) towards covering the air ambulance cost to fly her from Mexico to Jamaica.

3.0 PAST PRESIDENT WESLEY HEWLING

The Association notes the passing of Past President, former Trustee and Regional Officer Wesley Hewling. We acknowledge his contribution to the growth and development of the JTA in the various capacities in which he served.

We salute him as a Trail Blazer Teacher Unionist and pray that his family will be comforted by the fact that his living was not in vain.

May his soul find rest.

4.0 SALARY NEGOTIATIONS

4.1 Public School Teachers

As you will recall, the offer from the Government was rejected at the Special Conference held June 20, 2015. Since then, we met with Minister Dalley and his Team on Wednesday, July 1, 2015. We again reiterated our demands as well as made some suggestions as to how Pension Reform could be handled. This position suggested that there be a gradual roll-in of the contribution, for example 1% each year over five (5) years. We await the Government's response.

4.2 HEART/NTA

This process has not started for Instructors and Lecturers. We have been informed by HEART that they cannot begin negotiations before they get permission from the Ministry of Finance and this is not likely to happen before September.

4.3 Preparatory School Teachers

To date, we have not had any response from any of the preparatory schools. So we are playing the wait-and-see game as we believe the management of these schools are waiting to see what the settlement for public school teachers will be.

4.4 JTA/BITU

We have not been able to settle negotiation on behalf of our Clerical, Accounting, Ancillary and Security Staff despite a number of meetings. We have made them an offer and we await their response.

5.0 PRESIDENT ELECT ELECTIONS

This exercise went smoothly during Election Week June 22-26, 2015. The counting of the ballots was done at a special meeting of Central Executive on Tuesday, June 30, 2015. The results revealed votes cast for each candidate are as follows:

➤ Howard Isaacs	-	6,214
➤ Claudette James	-	1,703
➤ Ansell Palmer	-	963
➤ Collington Powell	-	3,865

Based on the above results, we congratulate Mr. Howard Isaacs on his victory and look forward to his proclamation at conference and his stint as President Elect for the Conference Year 2015 – 2016. High marks to the other candidates for a good campaign. In the end, the JTA is the winner.

Special thanks to Senior Secretary Administration and Finance, the Credentials Committee and other team members for a well-run election process.

6.0 GOLDEN TORCH AWARD

The Golden Torch Award Ceremony took place as planned on Thursday, July 9, 2015 at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel. It was an impressive ceremony that was well supported by recipients and well-wishers alike.

Thanks to all those who ensured its success.

7.0 ANNUAL OFFICERS AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF RETREAT

Over the period July 2 and 3, 2015 the Officers and Administrative Staff had its Annual Retreat. This was held at the Knutsford Court Hotel, Kingston. During this retreat, we took a retrospective look at the conference year as well as made projections for upcoming activities and the conference year. It is anticipated that this activity will contribute towards a productive year.

8.0 JTA AWARDS

The Awards Committee met on Wednesday, June 17, 2015 to consider nominations for the various awards. The report will be presented at this meeting for consideration and approval.

9.0 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Plans are well advanced in preparation for our Annual Conference to be held August 17 – 19, 2015 at the Hilton Rose Hall Hotel, St. James. The registration is going slower than we would like but we believe this will improve in the next few days. Registration must be done online, payments made at the Bank of Nova Scotia and ***the office must get a copy of the receipt with the name of the person for whom the payment is made.***

The Pre-conference Church Service will be held at the Gregory Park Baptist Church, Gregory Park, St. Catherine on Sunday, August 16 at 10:00 a.m.

10.0 FINANCIAL IRREGULARITIES

10.1 Re Marlon Francis: The matter surrounding Marlon Francis and his mother and aunt is still before the courts because they appealed the Summary Judgement Verdict. The Default Submission was made and we await the verdict..

10.2 Re Gary Bodden: We have completed payment to Mr. Bodden and hope that the matter is now closed.

11.0 PERMANENT APPOINTMENT OF REGIONAL OFFICER – WEST

Mr. Clayton Hall, Regional Officer West, has completed his six (6) months probationary period. Based on reports received and assessment made on his performance, I am recommending his permanent appointment as of July 1, 2015.

12.0 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

12.1 Education International (EI) 7th World Congress

The President, Secretary General Senior Secretary Administration and Finance will be attending EI's 7th World Congress in Ottawa, Canada, July 20 – August 3, 2015.

12.2 CUT 37th Biennial Conference

The President and Miss Nadienne Crossman will be attending the Caribbean Union of Teachers' 37th Biennial Conference in Dominica August 3 -8, 2015.

12.3 Loma Linda University Link

Five (5) teachers from Morant Bay, Oracabessa, Brown's Town, Denham Town and Manchester High Schools are currently participating in the EXSEED Summer Programme at Loma Linda University in California, USA, July 13 – 17, 2015. Dr. Mark Nicely also accompanied the group. This is a part of the Diaspora Initiative which started in 2014.

The President, President Elect and the Senior Secretary, Member Services also participated in the Diaspora Conference held at the Montego Bay Conference Centre in June.

13.0 THE SECRETARIAT

We say goodbye formally to Mrs. Evelyn Tugwell whose pre-retirement leave will end August 2015. We also must inform the meeting that Miss Yvonne White will be retiring at the end of August 2015 after thirty-eight (38) of service.

May they both experience much happiness in their retirement.

14.0 CONCLUSION

We give thanks that God has kept us through the year. I believe that we have become stronger and better and hopefully wiser. We acknowledge with gratitude the efforts of our President during this year. He has led the Association well in difficult times. May his future endeavours be filled with success.

In a few days, we will be welcoming our new President, Norman Allen. We pledge our full support as he seeks to navigate the Association through the year ahead.

I wish to thank you all – members of Central Executive – for your support and contribution during the year.

To all our staff members who gave so much for the good of the Association, I wish to express my thanks.

As we close the conference year 2014-2015, may we be encouraged to continue to give of our best to the JTA. May all our efforts work in harmony to enhance and promote ideals of excellence, creativity and commitment in all that we do as *Unite and Serve*.

**Prepared by: Byron Farquharson
Secretary General**