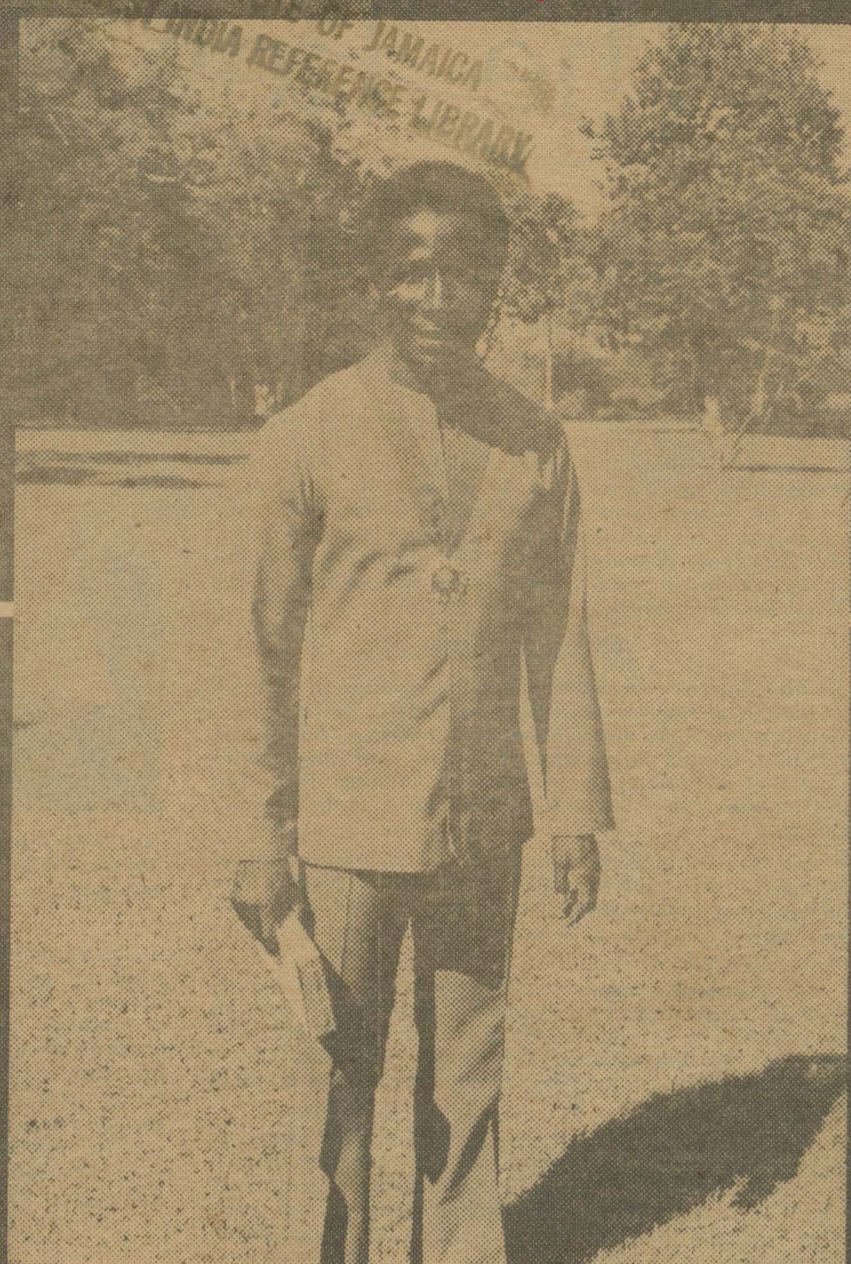


The Gleaner's Sunday MAGAZINE

KINGSTON, JAMAICA, SUNDAY, JANUARY 13 1980



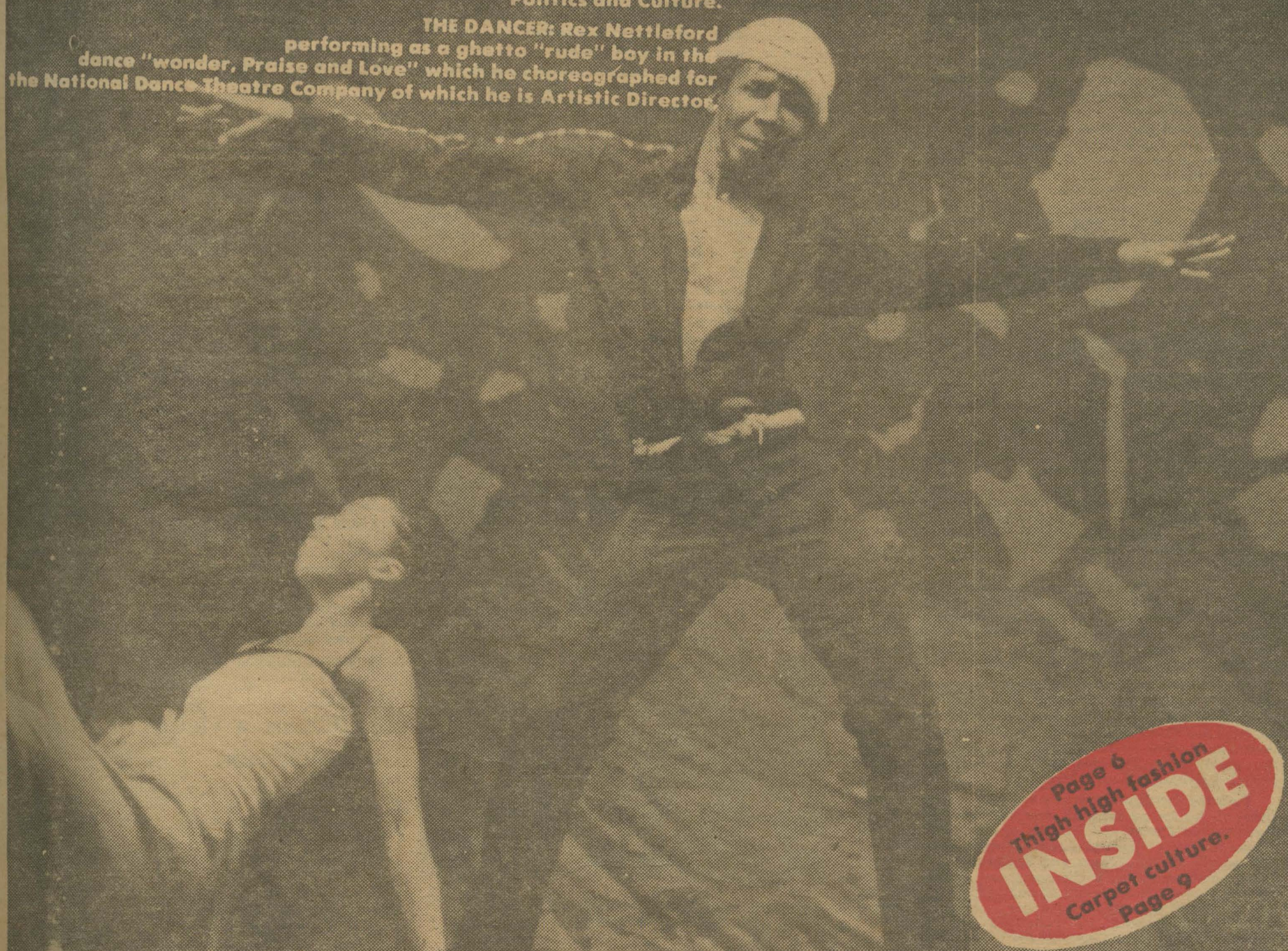
By BAZ FRECKLETON

THE LONG and arduous journey from a poor but proud rural district to the pedestal of an internationally acclaimed University professorship is not often traversed by many Jamaicans. One of the few covering the course — and doing it with style, versatility and distinction — is the Hon. REX MILTON NETTLEFORD, O.M., B.A. Hons. (UWI), BPhil (OXON), Rhodes Scholar and renowned authority on the political process and cultural matters in developing countries. The 46-year-old Professor of Extra Mural Studies and Director of Studies, Trade Union Education

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PHOTOS SHOW THE SCHOLAR: Professor Nettleford wears the insignia of the Order of Merit, one of his country's highest honours, awarded to him in 1975 for his international achievements in the fields of the Arts, Politics and Culture.

THE DANCER: Rex Nettleford performing as a ghetto "rude" boy in the dance "wonder, Praise and Love" which he choreographed for the National Dance Theatre Company of which he is Artistic Director.



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Thigh high fashion
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From Bunker's Hill to Order of Merit THE REX NETTLEFORD STORY

The Rex Nettleford story

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Institute, University of the West Indies, Founder-Director National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica and Chairman of the Institute of Jamaica spent "many of his early years hungry, tired, underfed, living like a leggo-beast and picking macka out of badly bruised feet, but being always at the centre of community activities."

An adult educator and researcher, creative artist and public-service oriented citizen, REX NETTLEFORD has made a unique contribution in areas vital to the developmental process in developing societies like Jamaica. By his scholarly work, his achievements through active involvement in the creative arts and his untiring public service, he has studied, articulated and demonstrated the role of cultural traditions in the strategy of social and economic development in the Third World situation.

Recognition

This has won him international recognition in addition to what is already acknowledged in Jamaica to be a great contribution to the development of a Jamaican identity and the nurturing of a growing appreciation of the creative capacities of former colonial peoples to forge their own institutional and philosophical forms out of their collective experience.

His studies of contemporary Jamaican affairs and of aspects of the country's cultural and social history have influenced a wide cross section of people, both in Jamaica and abroad, in their understanding of cultural change in social development.

International recognition has come to Professor Nettleford in many ways, not least among them has been his appointment as a Founding Member of the Board of Governors of the International Development Research Centre founded by the late Rt. Hon. Lester Pearson and based in Canada.

As a Founding Member, Professor Nettleford shared in the actual shaping of the policies and procedures which have had profound effect on the changes now evident everywhere in the approach to development assistance from developed countries to developing countries in the Second Development decade.

He has also earned recognition from the International Society for the History of Ideas as contributor to the Society's journal and in the preparation of papers for its learned international meetings.

Further recognition extends to Professor Nettleford in his career as adult educator, thus confirming not only his versatility but also his capacity for excellence in more than one field of endeavour.

As Director of Extra Mural Studies and Director of Studies in the Trade Union Education Institute at the University of the West Indies, Professor Nettleford has made contributions in both practice and theory, in a field that has attracted international attention.

He serves as Visiting Fellow to the Centre de Etudes Industrielles in Geneva and has lectured on Caribbean Industrial Relations and labour education at Universities and labour institutes in India, the Philippines, Israel and the United Kingdom. The work of the Trade Union Education Institute is internationally regarded as a model for Third World Labour education programmes.

Mr. Nettleford's early attempts to understand and articulate the cultural, ethnic and racial influences and forces which have been built into the fabric of Jamaican society, were given impetus by the pioneering study of the Rastafari movement undertaken in 1960 under the leadership of Professor the Hon. M.A.G. Smith, O.M.

His 'Mirror, Mirror'

His publication in 1970 of "Mirror, Mirror-Identity, Race and Protest in Jamaica" demonstrated his deep knowledge and understanding of issues which are currently galvanizing the attention of people in the Third World and Caribbean countries beyond Jamaica's borders. The book explored in a highly critical and evaluative way major themes and forces in Jamaica and by Extension, plantation society.

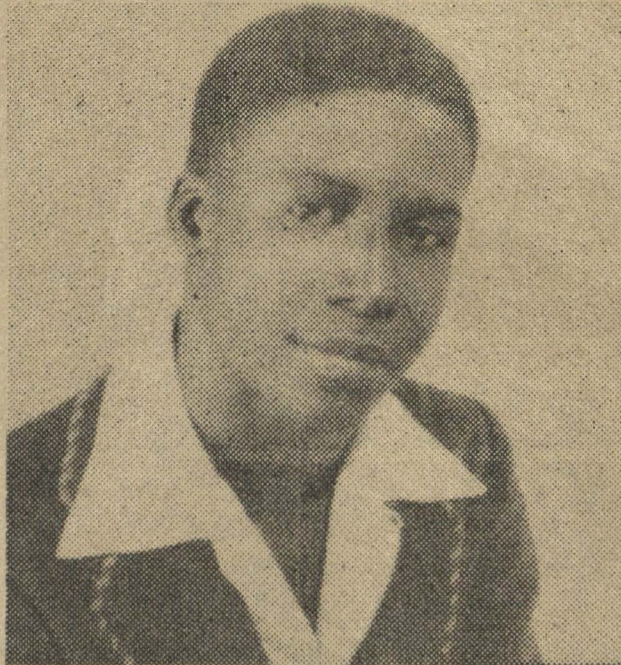
This made it required reading in many Universities in the Western hemisphere as part of Afro-American and Third World academic programmes. He continues to be an important source of information and seminal ideas on Caribbean cultural forms and the identity crisis for students of plantation society from all over the world.

He has delivered lectures and papers at several Universities including Harvard and Temple Universities, the University of Pennsylvania and Atlanta University where he is an Associate Fellow in the Centre for African and African-American Studies. He has also been published by some of the world's most reputable publishers and his work has attracted invitations from others.

Professor Nettleford's serious scholarly activity extends firstly to his lecture-tours all over the Caribbean, North America and Europe and secondly to such publications as Louise Bennett's "Jamaica Labrish" which he introduced and edited, his own "Roots and Rhythms - the Story of Jamaican dance-theatre". His essays and articles anthologized in international editions or published in journals. He edited "Manley and the New Jamaica - Selected Speeches and Writings" with an expanded and important introduction as well as CARIBBEAN QUARTERLY which he edits from the Department of Extra Mural Studies.

He has also been a long-time research student of Jamaican and Caribbean folklore.

It is from this last area that he draws in large measure to give form and purpose to the art of Jamaican dance-theatre. Professor Nettleford sees this as an instrument of defining the cultural contours of a new society emerging from plantation history. In 1962 he was a principal figure



NETTLEFORD at Cornwall College where he learnt "many of the things that helped to set the base for any success that has come my way."

in the establishment of the National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica, which under his leadership quickly became a vehicle for the artistic expression of certain cultural traditions in Jamaica and also provided the stimulus for growth of cultural forms and expressions throughout Jamaica.

As artistic director and choreographer of the National Dance Theatre Company as well as dance-educator working through the Festival Movement, Professor Nettleford gave tangible expression of his commitment to excellence and the force of the creative arts in national life.

The NDTC

He has helped to forge a dance company that has been internationally acclaimed not simply for the vigour and integrity of its presentations, but for the innovative aspects of its artistic work and the vision it manifests in terms of the realities of Third World nation-building.

The Jamaica National Dance Theatre Company, which began with some 30 members, has exercised tremendous influence on Caribbean dance and theatre and has been a real source of pride and focus of identification not only for Jamaicans but for West Indians in general, thus helping to foster appreciation by West Indian people of their common cultural heritage.

The Jamaican dance is already becoming a subject for serious study in certain British and American colleges under the rubric 'African Studie', thus acknowledging the achievements in Jamaican dance so far as a valid part of the international world of dance. For this no one can with reason deny full credit to Professor Nettleford.

To juxtapose the yesterday and the today of the "unashamedly rural" Professor Rex Nettleford, who says he "was deeply involved in all the rural customs from obeah to orthodox religion" is an exciting exercise.



AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY where Nettleford studied at Oriol College for his Bachelor of Philosophy degree.

Born in Falmouth on February 3, 1933, the third of four children of very poor but very proud and religious parents Professor Nettleford moved through infant school in Falmouth, Unity Government School in Falmouth "where I came under the stimulating influence of that great Miconian teacher C. W. Clifford Francis, on to the Montego Bay Boys' School where Rupert Bent coached me for a scholarship try at Cornwall College; through Cornwall where I

eventually became a junior master and in 1952 to the University College of the West Indies where I read History Honours, the first time that course was being offered there."

Professor Nettleford earned his B.A. (Hons.) degree in 1956, joined the UCWI staff as a Resident Tutor serving in Jamaica and Trinidad under Sir Philip Sherlock, then Director of Extra Mural Studies and Vice-Principal of the UCWI; won the Issa Scholarship in 1956 and the Rhodes Scholarship in 1957, going up to Oxford University in 1957 to read post-graduate work in politics leading to the Bachelor of Philosophy degree, the first West Indian to take this very stiff and prestigious degree which was specifically designed to train teachers."

At Oxford, "where he was president of the Ballet Club and encouraged an interest in Afro-Caribbean dance", Mr. Nettleford came under the impact of Sir Isaiah Berlin, a noted political thinker, Carew Hunt, authority on international Communism and K.C. Wheare, authority on liberal systems.

In 1959 Professor Nettleford came back to Jamaica and the UWI as Resident Tutor for Jamaica and passed through the positions of Resident Tutor for Jamaica, Staff Tutor in Political Education serving all territories, that support the UWI, and Director of Studies in the Trade Union Education Institute (TUEI), a position he still holds along with the Directorship of Extra Mural Studies, being the first Director of Extra Mural Studies to be honoured with the title of Professor.

Career shape-up

Much of the shaping of his career, according to Professor Nettleford, came from Bunkers Hill with its traditional society, attachment to strong dialect and absence of pretence at speaking what is called pure English and "my grandmother's inculcating in me a love for Jamaica, its people and for religion; also in Montego Bay where Dr. Herbert Morrison, the late Charlie Agate, Cornwall College and a stint at MoBay Boys' Club, near the infamous Swine Lane, did so much to mould my attitudes, my philosophies and my ambition."

Given Professor Nettleford's reputation as a political thinker and, according to international critics of his dancing, as "an extremely handsome athletic, educated, cultured and eligible gentleman" it was inevitable that I would gear questions to politics and the female domain. So here we go:

My first question was "what form of Government do you think is best for Jamaica?" The reply was "the type of Government which will offer the people fair and unfettered choice of its political leaders and one that will within the constraints of democratic freedoms implant the kind of policies that will bring to the large mass of the people material well-being if not affluence".

"How do you define such a Government" was my next question and "Sexie Rexie", as his host of female admirers call him, had this rejoinder "I hate to use labels. I have a great fear of labels imported from elsewhere. I feel that our history and the harsh realities, that are with us, dictate a sensible and rewarding approach to meeting the problems of persistent degradation among the large mass at the base."

"What is your view on Communism and its applicability to Jamaica" was the next delivery I bundled to the batsman Professor.

"That's a difficult question to answer when put that way" he parried and continued "there is no doubt in my mind that Communism has many faces and that any indiscriminating embrace of what the Russians or the Chinese do is going to get us into hot water just as the embrace of what 19th century England and what some of us now see to in Puerto Rico have gotten us into hot water."

"The truth of the matter is that we have tried several strategies over time from violence through to anancyism, and while these have produced some positive things none of them have delivered the goods and therefore the search for new strategies is therefore inescapable. I see the turn to Socialism with its programmatic assault on poverty and its emphasis on equality and merit as a perfectly reasonable and desirable development. But the very approach has got to be in terms of a collateral reality of our own history. And these realities and that history will undoubtedly change the approach from what it has been in other places. If we are not prepared for this we are likely to lock ourselves into a furnace of trouble".

Professor was next queried as to whether the virtues of equality and merit that he so eloquently spoke of were being practised in Jamaica at this time.

"I do not think so" he answered and added "it continues

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'Christ a victim of Israeli aggression'

LONDON, Jan 7 (CANAL-Reuters). Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi said today that Jesus Christ was a victim of Israeli aggression.

In a message to the Presidents of Christian states to mark eastern orthodox celebrations of the birth of Christ, the Libyan leader suggested their support for Israel was contradictory.

"Is not your governments' support for Israeli killers a contradiction to your faith in Christ?" he asked.

In a cable quoted by the Libyan news agency Jana, Colonel Gaddafi would like to affirm to you on Christmas that Jesus was the victim of an Israeli aggression and today the Palestinian people are the victims of an Israeli aggression."

In his cable, Colonel Gaddafi also said: "Did Jesus not curse the children of Israel for their deviation, stubbornness, selfishness and blasphemy, the fact that made them try to crucify him?"

"He who missed defending the first victim should get up and defend the second," he added.

The Rex Nettleford story

(Continued from Page 2)

to be one of the deep social forms that plague the society. I think old class lines are still present with a vengeance and sometimes the very social mobility achieved in the past 20-25 years has perpetuated among those who have "moved up." These are old values which tend to negate the so-called progress as there are so many of us who are suffering from a mistaken identity: in other words middle income has come to mean middle class and the effort to protect one's new-found position has only perpetuated the tensions between those, who feel deprived, and those, who think they have made it".

Views on the Church

Do you still go to Church? I next asked the Professor and his answer was prompt "not as frequently as before but I don't suppose that makes me any less religious".

"Why the infrequency? I asked. The answer: "No strong feelings. No really strong feelings, Baz. I feel that there is much in the Church that needs rethinking and I note that there is a whole crop of Jamaican clergymen who are indeed moving in that direction; but I do not myself get much from the formal liturgy of a Sunday morning service though I am fully aware of the force of religion in our lives and the all-pervading impact it has, more frequently outside of the Church building than in it".

Shifting a bit I asked Professor Nettleford if he thought the recent reshuffle of the Cabinet was as positive and comprehensive as it ought to have been in the context of the grave crisis in which Jamaica found itself.

"A Cabinet reshuffle" he replied as we understand in this type of system can never be as positive and comprehensive as a lot of us would like it to be. We operate a system predicated on the view that the people, who take decision in the name of the electorate ought, by and large, to have faced the hustings and "new faces" in any event could only have come by going outside the elected crew and this clearly would have been unwise and in any case impossible.



ON THE MONA CAMPUS: In the presence of the late UCWI Chancellor Sir Hugh Wooding (extreme left) and Vice Chancellor Dr. Roy Marshall (centre facing camera), Professor Nettleford (standing) addresses the audience at a Mona graduation ceremony.

"I think the Government will have to be courageous enough to take some unpopular decisions in terms of administrative rationalization of the Government machinery and in turn public sector employees will have to be made to understand that they cannot get more than the country can produce or is producing".

On marriage

"What are your views on marriage" was the fast delivery I hurled next.

"Gosh, that's a sudden shift in strategy Baz" he replied. "but let me play it with a straight bat" he added.

"It is perfect for some people and others had better leave well alone as they are likely to make too many people unhappy. And, of course, if it guaranteed a self-reinforcing link between two independent souls, it obviously is the finest thing for the human being. But it has to be seen as a risk and some people may feel free to take it and others not".

Q: "As you may well imagine someone as intellectually qualified as you are, as famous as you are, as handsome as you are, as athletically attractive as you are, and as financially independent as you are would expect to be deeply involved in the feminine world, so what is the situation?"

A: "Maybe the world is my oyster. And in fact I have been accused of being married to the public".

Q: May I ask you, despite your beautiful but evasive answer, if you now have, ever had or intend to have a girlfriend or a wife?"

A: "Let's say I have been through the ropes and contrary to common belief I do not Plan my life in the finest detail. So I am subject to fate.

No doubt the frustration in my mind at the vagueness of the Professor's reply was crystallised on my features for he added with convincing finality "Baz I am looking at your face and you do not appear to be satisfied with that answer but you will have to go with it". How right he was!

Professor Rex Milton Nettleford will unquestionably continue to be a solid name in the academic world. He will continue to be invited as guest lecturer on dance and black history at leading Universities the world over.

He will certainly be consulted again and again on cultural matters in the Third World and by African Governments and in whatever time he has left he will be in demand, as he has been in the past, to chair Boards of Inquiry, to be sole arbitrator in industrial disputes, sit on numerous statutory boards while being Chairman of the Institute of Jamaica and a member of the Inter-American Cultural Committee of the Organization of American States and its visiting consultant on culture.