

THE LONG ROAD TO KING'S HOUSE FOR FLORIZEL GLASSPOLE

**Biography of
the new
Governor General
BY IVORALL DAVIS**

His Pledge

"I HAVE ALWAYS worked for the common good of our people and our country, and I pledge to continue this role with all the ability and energy I possess."

FLORIZEL AUGUSTUS GLASSPOLE WAS ONE OF THE EARLY POLITICAL PIONEERS WITH VISIONS OF A NEW JAMAICA. He was among the comparatively small group of patriots in the days of political and economic serfdom in Jamaica — for such were the 1930s — who pondered what could and should be done to set the people free to become masters of their fate.

Glasspole quickly realised that the Jamaica of the future had to be built by the toil and sweat of her sons; that the road to independence in an almost-impersonal world was rough and rugged, and that only the best could survive. He was determined to work toward that goal.

When Prime Minister Michael Manley announced last evening that Florizel Augustus Glasspole, Commander of the Order of Distinction, Member of Parliament for Eastern Kingston, and Minister of Education, would be the next Governor General of Jamaica, Glasspole's long and steady march from the ground up to the heights had been completed.

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF JAMAICA

Florizel Glasspole was born in Kingston on September 25, 1909 (two years after the "great earthquake" which wrecked most of the City). His father Theophilus was a Methodist Minister of renown and a great orator and preacher. His mother Florence (nee Baxter) was the typical well-bred, sedate, quiet parson's wife; a strict disciplinarian who bore her husband four other children — a son Theo, now a physician and daughters Florence, Thalia and Halcyone.

Between 1914-1918, the World War I years, Florizel attended the Buff Bay elementary school, Portland, because his father was then stationed there. They returned to Kingston and from 1919 to 1922 Florizel was a student at the Central Branch School (then at Church Street in downtown Kingston) under two of Jamaica's finest teachers—Alexander Chambers and Fred A. Meyers.

In 1922 he entered Wolmer's Boys School. In four years he graduated, having passed both Junior and Senior Cambridge Examinations, and absorbed the high tenets of a good character from that tough and thorough disciplinarian and headmaster — Reginald Myrie Murray.

Florizel Glasspole's first exposure to work "out in the world" was in the Government Service at the Registration of Titles Office and the General Post Office. His first pay packet was the handsome sum of £3.6.8 monthly—good money in Jamaica in those days.

Insatiable...

HIS INSATIABLE THIRST for knowledge led him to study accountancy under a local accountant, Mr. R. A. Parkinson, and through correspondence courses with the Scottish School of Accountancy.

A desire to employ his knowledge to assist his less educated fellowmen led him to seek employment outside the Civil Service, so in 1930 he went to Serke Island Sugar Estate, near Seaforth, St. Thomas, to work as an accounting clerk.

He recalls: "My heart shuddered with sympathy for those esnefield workers ... They worked six long days under a scorching sun for a mere 10/- per week ... It was snocking."

Returning to Kingston the same year Glasspole joined the firm of S. N. Shoucair, drygoods wholesale merchant

of Port Royal Street as accountant. These were the leavening years, for common with the hundreds of other clerks in the City he worked a 60-hour week.

Churchman

DURING THESE YEARS from 1932 upwards, Glasspole developed into a skilled debater and was to the fore among fine lot of young men who participated in the competitions organized by the Kingston and St. Andrew Literary and Debating Association, then the leading cultural organization of the City. Glasspole represented Coke (Church) Young Men's Club of which he was Secretary. From these early days he was a devout churchman and has been a continuous member of Coke Methodist Church.

By 1937 he was ready for the bigger life. Along with the late Barrister (and later a member of the Legislative Council) E. E. A. Campbell and the late Ernest A. Rae, a former Mayor of the KSAC and Jamaican cricket stalwart, Florizel Glasspole formed the Jamaica United Clerks Association (a union).

The inaugural meeting was

held in the open air under a tamarind tree of the Scout's Headquarters in Church Street, Kingston, where the offices of the Jamaica Teachers Association now stand.

The JUCA was an almost instant success. Looking back one recalls the efforts it made

on behalf of employees who worked long hours for 20/- to 30/- per week. When the hours of work were reduced to 45 per week, there was rejoicing everywhere.

The economic and social conditions of the country left most Jamaicans dissatisfied, in

Trinidad in 1937, Uriah Butler led workers in massive demonstrations. In Jamaica the National Reform Association led by the late N. N. "Crab" Nethersole, and Ken Hill, was formed. Glasspole was a member.

Rebellion

THE NATIONALISTIC sparks became a bright flame. Jamaicans were on the move. By May 1938 a simple payable incident at Frome, Westmoreland found hundreds of work-hungry Jamaicans in rebellion and this spread rapidly throughout Jamaica and became what is now known as "The riots of 1938"

All these conditions led to the formation of the Trade Union Advisory Council and in September that year of the People's National Party. Florizel Glasspole was an active

participant in all these movements.

Consequent on these conditions, a Royal Commission was sent to the West Indies under Lord Moyne. Sir Walter Citrine, then General Secretary of the powerful British Trade Union Congress was a member of the Commission. So outstanding was Glasspole's work among the workers, that Sir Walter (for the British TUC) awarded Glasspole a scholarship to study Trade Unionism at Oxford's Ruskin College. World War II erupted in 1939 and it was not until 1945 that Glasspole was able to proceed to Oxford.

In 1939 the Jamaica Trade Union Congress was formed, Glasspole was its General Secretary. Between 1940 and 1946 he formed the Water Commission Manual Worker's Union, the Mental Hospital Workers Union, The Municipal and Parish General Workers Union, The Jamaica Printers and Allied Workers Union, the Hospitals and Allied Workers Union as well as the Machado Employees Unions and became their leader and President.

'Fight'

IN CONTEMPORANEOUS political history one need not relate details. It is sufficient here to record that Florizel Glasspole was in the forefront of all efforts of the People's National Party in its representations and "fight" for a New Constitution for Jamaica based on Universal Adult Suffrage.

It was fitting therefore that Glasspole, backed by powerful union ties, being a workers' representative on several boards and committees, such as the Middleclass Unemployment Committee, the Minimum Wage Boards for baking, printing, drygoods trades; the Apprenticeship Committee of 1942

etc. should have been selected as the P.N.P. candidate for the Parliamentary Constituency of Eastern Kingston and Port Royal.

Triumphed

ON DECEMBER 20, 1944 Glasspole triumphed by 1,000 votes over his three rivals—Dr. G. E. Valentine (J.L.P.), Barrister E. E. A. Campbell (Independent) and Mr. Vivian Durham (Independent).

But throughout Jamaica only five of the 19 candidates of the P.N.P. won, and the J.L.P. swept to power with 22 seats from 29 candidates. Notwithstanding, the five members the P.N.P. had in the House—

(Continued from Centrespread)
Dr. Ivan Lloyd, Glasspole, W. D. Linton, F. L. B. "Slave Boy" Evans and Norman Sinclair—formed a formidable Opposition, with Glasspole being constantly in the limelight.

Glasspole was appointed Secretary of the P.N.P.'s Parliamentary Group, a post he holds up to now, and established himself as a skilled, tough and penetrating debater.

Although burdened with a great deal of trade union business, Glasspole held the reins of General Secretary of the TUC until 1952, when what became commonly known as "The Split" in which certain P.N.P. activists were expelled from the Party took place, with the result that the National Workers Union was formed. Glasspole again held the post of General Secretary and resigned in 1955 when the P.N.P. won its first Parliamentary victory and Glasspole became Minister of Labour in January of that year.

Distinction

WHEN THE PARTY assumed office, Glasspole became Leader of Government Business in the House, an office which he held with distinction until the processes of democracy once more brought in the J.L.P. as the Government in 1962.

By virtue of his office as Leader of the House, Florizel Glasspole automatically became Chairman of the local Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

During his incumbency as Minister of Labour, he exerted much effort and saved the then "dying" Jamaican Farmwork Programme in the United States of America. On a tour of that country in 1956, Glasspole lectured recruits, held meetings with farmers, U.S. government officials, and the powerful AFL-CIO and thereby revived this most important and invisible export arm of Jamaica's economy.

In that period too, he skillfully handled many important labour disputes including a general strike of the Kingston waterfront. He also introduced the Registration of Travel Agencies Law.

Impact

BUT IT WAS as Minister of Education from 1957 to 1962 that Florizel Glasspole made his most important impact on the Jamaican nation. Emerging with the new P.N.P. Government was a plan which aimed at EDUCATION FOR ALL, EQUALITY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL, and that theme became an integral part of the Ministry's administration.

It was Florizel Glasspole, too, who introduced free places to secondary schools on the basis of the results of the Common Entrance Examination.

A close associate of his Party's Leader, the Late Rt. Excellent Norman Manley, National Hero, Glasspole was one of Jamaica's representatives on the Standing Committee on West Indies Federation and laterly was a member of Jamaica's House of Representatives Committee and delegation which finalised the present Constitution with the British Government in London in 1962. On these missions Glasspole travelled extensively and with success.

After the P.N.P. lost the 1962 Independence elections, Glasspole was a member of the CPA delegation which toured Africa. It was his first contact with the Black Continent, and he was impressed with what he saw and heard. It was on this tour that his predecessor, retired Governor General Sir Clifford Campbell, heard of his appointment to that high office.

THE POLITICAL pendulum swung once more in favour of the P.N.P. in 1972, with a landslide victory, and the Prime Minister Mr. Michael Manley

had no hesitation in appointing Florizel Glasspole to the Education Ministry.

Over the past twelve months Minister Glasspole has been working hard for the implementation of his and his Party's dream—EDUCATION FOR ALL. This has now been announced.

In a foreword to the presentation of "The Education Thrust of the 70s," Minister Glasspole says inter alia: "This document is intended to set out in concise form, using 1973/74 as the base year, the policy programmes to be pursued, the challenge for implementing development, the fundamental strategies to be utilised in launching this new development. It is a guideline for educational activities which, if resolutely pursued, will produce substantial results in the future."

Florizel Augustus Glasspole, was made a Companion of the Order of Distinction in October 1970, for distinguished service in the Island's Legislature.

In January last Minister

Glasspole visited Caracas, Venezuela, as guest of that country's President. While there he was decorated by the Venezuelan President with the Order of Andres Bello, one of that nation's highest.

Pledge

I ASKED HIM, "Looking back, Mr. Glasspole, over a 40-year span of public life, what do you consider your ten most outstanding achievements?"

- MY WORK for the establishment of the democratic process in the Trade Union Movement.
- MY ROLE in having the Shop Assistants Law of 1939 introduced and passed.
- THE STAND I took in the internal struggles of the PNP and TUC which resulted in the reorganisation of the Party, the establishment of the NWU, and the eventual growth of both organisations.
- THE RESCUE of the Farm



SOMETHING SPECIAL: Governor-General Glasspole laughs heartily as a graduating student pins a "button

hole" on his lapel during a recent prize-giving ceremony at the National Arena.

Work Programme in the USA in 1955, including the winning of the friendship and support of George Leany of the AFL/CIO for the scheme.

- MY ROLE in education development from 1957 to 1962, and succeeding in getting the concept of Education FOR ALL, and EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL, capture the imagination of the grass-root people of Jamaica.
- THE ESTABLISHMENT and development of sound parliamentary practices and conventions and the present Standing Orders of the House.
- THE VOTE for 18-year-olds.
- EXPANSION OF technical education through technical high schools and the establishment of the College of Arts, Science and Technology.
- INTRODUCTION of free places to secondary schools, and the democratisation of these institutions.
- CONSTRUCTION of the Ministry of Education Headquarters and Gordon House.

He was next asked: "Now that you are committed to what must necessarily be your ultimate contribution to the land of your birth, what is your brief declaration?"

He replied:

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SUPPORTING Florizel Glasspole in his moments of triumph and defeat has been his wife INA JOSEPHINE KIN-

LOCKE, whom he married on July 7, 1934. Mrs. Glasspole will prove a gracious First Lady. Unostentatious and ex-dearlingly affable, she has a fine record of social activities behind her.

Born at Victoria Park, Fyffe's Pen, St. Elizabeth, she attended the Little London Elementary School and later received private tuition. She also attended a six-month social welfare course at the Oxford Centre, England, during 1946/47 while her husband was at Ruskin College. She has been responsible for the establishment of the East Kingston Creche which has been of great benefit to working mothers of her husband's constituency for many years, and was also Chairman of the East Kingston P.N.P. Women's Organisation during the 1960s.

While her husband was Minister of Labour, Mrs. Glasspole led the team of ladies which assisted the Ministry in selecting household helps for recruitment to Canada. She has been a dress designer and her hobbies are reading, swimming and gardening.

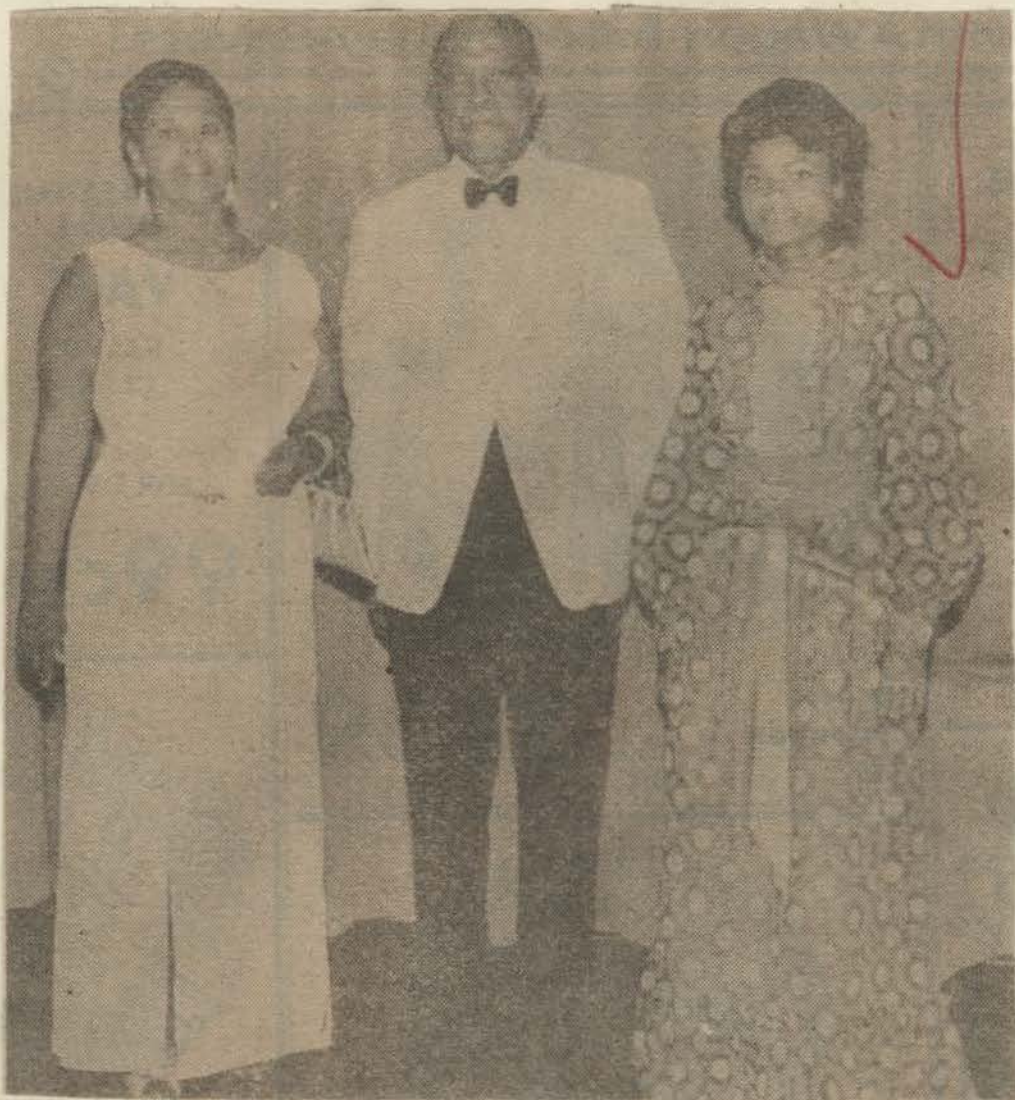
Fully committed to her husband's multifarious activities Mrs. Glasspole has long since learned to be patient about the demands upon his time.

THE GLASSPOLE'S daughter Sara Lou, is 17. She attended Vaz Prep School and was the winner of a free place to St. Andrew High School for girls.

She has passed the G.C.E. "O" Level in six subjects, with distinction in English Language and Literature and a credit in History. She is now preparing for the "A" Level exams.

Sara Lou's ambition is to become a teacher, with Spanish and History as her specialties. Her hobbies are swimming and tennis.

There is no doubt the Glasspole family will follow the fine tradition established by Jamaica's first native Governor General.



JAMAICA'S FIRST FAMILY: Their Excellencies the Governor General and Mrs. Florizel Glasspole, and their daughter Sara-Lou.



IN AFRICA: Glasspole (right) visited Africa for the first time in 1962. He was a member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association then holding its annual conference in Lagos Nigeria. It was at that time that the appointment of Sir Clifford Campbell (second from right) as the first native Governor General of Jamaica was announced.



LONDON CONFERENCE ON W.I. FEDERATION: Glasspole stood firmly with his Party Leader the late Rt. Excellent Norman Manley (left) on the issue of West Indian Federation and was a member of the delegation to London in 1957 to finalise the Federation Constitution. At right is the late Mr. J. Leslie Cudall, then Attorney General of Jamaica. Seated behind Mr. Glasspole is Sir Edgerton Richardson, then Financial Secretary of Jamaica.



"THE BROWN BOMBER": Back in the early forties Glasspole was a "firebrand" and his fighting spirit earned him the name "The Brown Bomber."



CHURCHMAN: New Governor General Glasspole has been a member of the church all his life. Here he is seen at Divine Worship with his wife, and daughter Sara-Lou.