

# CONGRATULATIONS

The Knighthood conferred on Governor-General Florizel Glasspole by the Queen will no doubt be the subject of discussion for some time. Many people in the society will share the good feeling of the Governor-General, while others will feel uncomfortable.

Jamaica is not yet a Republic, and so it continues to have the Queen as its sovereign. The Governor-General is her representative here. As such there is nothing wrong in the Queen knighting her representative.

What the official release from Jamaica House did not make clear was whether the honour was initiated by the Queen or by the Government of Jamaica. The distinction could be of importance to some people.

Since the early Sixties, this country has instituted its own system of honours and awards. At the higher levels of these awards very few can quarrel with the selection process; but at the lower levels greater selectivity should be practised to ensure that they continue to be meaningful.

The Governor-General has had conferred on him the Order of the Nation, which is the nation's second highest honour, after the Order of National Heroes. It is an honour peculiar to the post of Governor-General.

If as a people we are confident in ourselves, and take pride in that which is our own, then there can be no discomfort in accepting honours and awards from foreign countries. What we should ensure and we are ensuring it, is that our own honours and awards take precedence over all others.

So it is that the Governor-General will be addressed as the Most Honourable Sir Florizel Glasspole, O.N., G.C.M.G., C.D. There is therefore no reason for any Jamaican to feel uncomfortable about the Knighthood being conferred on a son of Jamaica who has risen to prominence by serving the people of this country, and enhancing the best traditions of the Westminster model.

Florizel Glasspole has served this country in the trade union field, as a politician, as a Cabinet Minister in charge of education, as a parliamentarian and now as Governor-General.

The nation has recognised his services to his people and has rewarded him with high office and with honours. There can be nothing wrong in this case of gilding the lily. There is no need for us to keep looking over our shoulders, or to go tip-toeing through the world hugging close our independence.

The Governor-General himself has mentioned the more than 150 letters, telegrams and telephone calls which went to King's House in the wake of the announcement. They were all congratulatory.

It is against this background that we congratulate the Governor-General and his Lady on the honour bestowed on them. It is our hope that they will continue to serve their country well, and to set that example of dignity, loyalty and patriotism so badly needed at this time.