

Allen honoured for 40 years of public service

The Minister of Education, the Hon. Edwin Allen was on Sunday honoured for 40 years of public service to Jamaica by the heads of Church and State in a ceremony held at the Frankfield Comprehensive School, Clarendon. The Minister's wife was also honoured.

Among those who paid tribute to Mr. Allen at the function which lasted for nearly six hours, were the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Hugh Shearer, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Education, the Hon. Dr. Arthur Burt, the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Mr. Arthur Williams, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Kingston, the Most Rev. Samuel Carter, S.J. CD, the Anglican Bishop of Jamaica the Rt. Rev. J. C. Swaby and the head of the Moravian Church in Jamaica the Rt. Rev. S. U. Hastings. A letter of congratulation from the Rt. Hon. Sir Alexander Bustamante was also read by the Prime Minister.

The large auditorium of the school, gaily decorated for the occasion, was packed to capacity by supporters and well-wishers of the Minister. Hundreds overflowed into the large school-yard barely able to get a glimpse of the guests of honour seated on the platform.

In paying tribute to Mr. Allen, the Prime Minister said the function was being given on the basis of the service that Mr. Allen had done. Mr. Shearer outlined Mr. Allen's record of service and said that he had served with undaunted and unquestioned dedication.

"In addition to his services in the political field, he was instrumental in sending girls to England to be trained as nurses. He took up the interest of citizens who needed his assistance and did so without reward. We honour him also for the dedication that he has given to his Constituency."

Dedication

The Prime Minister pointed out that a large section of the gathering bore placards outlining the benefits that they have derived

through the instrumentality of Mr. Allen. He said that the placards were testimony to a man who has given 40 years of public service. Here is tribute from the people themselves.

"We honour a man who has represented us abroad on many occasions, especially in the field of education. We honour a man who is a genuine Christian. We honour a man who is a devoted member of the Jamaica Labour Party. He is a man dedicated to his principles. We honour a man who Jamaica believes is genuinely honest. A man with vision. A man who is flexible. He is relevant today as he was 40 years ago. He has always been relevant to the times in which he lives," Mr. Shearer said.

Continuing, the Prime Minister stressed the need for more men like Mr. Allen, who are able to understand the role and entitlement of the masses because they were the ones who needed the most help. He said that Mr. Allen had given his support to every progressive measure that has been taken in Jamaica.

"As the Prime Minister of Jamaica I endorse all the praises and words of congratulation given to the Minister on the completion of forty years of service."

Mr. Shearer added that Mr. Allen had never hidden the fact that his wife had been a very powerful dynamo and source of inspiration to him over the years. He would continue to play a vital role of service to Jamaica.

"Whatever plans are made for stability and progress of the country can only be made if those plans include major contributions to education. . . . Edwin has been giving me sound advice for the progress of education in this country.

"Negotiations with bodies that deal with education are going ahead with the approval of Mr. Allen in his capacity as Minister of Education. It is a programme in which his colleagues has shown full confidence in him. Congratulations to Mr. Allen. Thanks to him for giving 40 years of public service to Jamaica," Mr. Shearer concluded.

Sir Alex. message

The Prime Minister, who was introduced to the large gathering by the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education Mr. Arthur Williams also read a message from Sir Alexander Bustamante to Mr. Allen congratulating him on his years of service.

The message said in part: "I am so glad that the people of North-Western Clarendon have seen fit to do honour to Edwin Allen. No greater honour could be bestowed upon a man than that by his people. . . . In the case of Mr. Allen he has done more than 40 years of service. He has served Jamaica on a whole. He has been blessed by the Almighty with the will and spirit to serve."

"He is a devoted member of the J.L.P. All Jamaicans should be grateful to him for what he has done in education and is still doing. Mr. Allen is a painstaking and meticulous worker. Lady Bustamante and myself join in wishing that the function be a success. God's blessing to you all. Wishing you all a happy New Year."

Also paying tribute to Mr. Allen were Mr. S. E. Edmondson, Education Officer; the Hon. Dr. A. A. Wright, Custos of Clarendon; Dr. F. Duhaney; Mr. K. A. Allen, Principal of the Alston Junior Secondary School; Mr. Victor Ellington, Supt. of Public Cleansing, Mandeville, on behalf of past students of Mr. Allen; Mrs. I. Lewison, representing Leicesterfield, Mr. L. A. Wilson, representing the Alston area; Mr. C. E. Randall Jnr; the Rev. Ivan Francis; the Mayor of May Pen, Councillor George Nelson and Mr. F. C. Latty, principal of Frankfield Comprehensive School who welcomed those present and introduced the chairman.

In reply, the Education Minister thanked all those who paid tribute to him and his wife. He thanked especially the Prime Minister and Bishops whom he said had "made the sacrifices to be present."

Great honour

"It is a great honour to be conferred on such humble persons as my wife and myself. I doubt very much that we are worthy of this compliment but the most we can do is accept your judgment and to "embody our feelings in the simple word thanks."

"I thank everyone who has attended and participated, whether by speaking or otherwise. What kept my wife and myself here between 1931 and 1950 was the plight of the people in certain parts of Clarendon. I do not believe that anywhere in Jamaica land tenancy has become as oppressive as it was in Leicesterfield. Tenancy was precarious. There were many unjust practices by unscrupulous landlords and I just could not turn my back on the plight of the people."

Continuing the Minister related how he came to be involved with migration to England and said that he was responsible for the many persons who went

ALLEN, HON. EDWIN

there to work and to acquire skill.

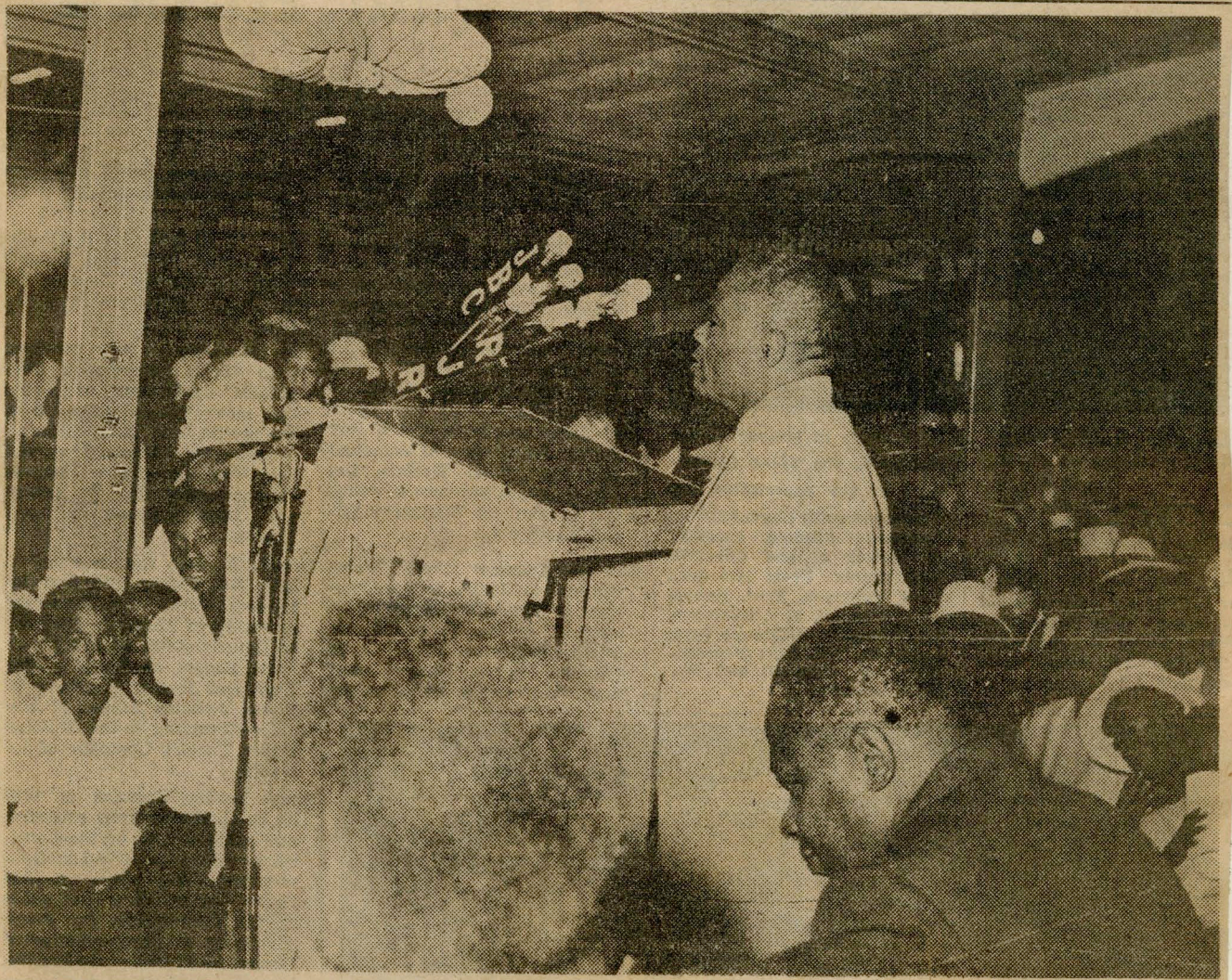
"Now you cannot depend on migration. You will have to turn to something else. Whatever else you turn to will depend on education and skill. The future of this country depends upon education and skill. Sir Alexander Bustamante was one of the persons who inspired me to serve my countrymen."

Mr. Allen said that goodness and mercy has followed him all the days of his life so far. "I have dedicated myself to the cause of building the nation, helping the poor and doing all the good that I can for the people of my country. My wife has worked hard both as a teacher and social worker and was honoured in the new year's honours list."

In closing, Mr. Allen once again thanked all those who had attended the function and also those who were responsible for organizing it.

Gifts were presented to Mr. Allen and Mrs. Allen by Mr. F. G. McLeod, Education Officer. An address, which was read by Mr. S. B. Reid, Principal of Lennon Junior Secondary School, was also presented to Mr. Allen. The opening prayer was said by the Rev. C. A. Jennings and the Scripture lesson was read by the Rev. C. O. Dawes.

Music for the occasion was provided by the Band of the First Battalion Jamaica Regiment.



THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, the Hon. Edwin Allen, replying to tributes paid to him at a function held in his honour at the Frankfield Comprehensive School, Clarendon, on Sunday. Mr. Allen was being honoured for "forty years of unbroken public service to the people of Jamaica." Also honoured was Mrs. Allen. In foreground (at right) is the Hon. Arthur Burt, Minister of State in the Ministry of Education.

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