

The President of NJAC

A Message to Our Nation's Youth



Bro. AIYEGORO OME - PRESIDENT
NATIONAL JOINT ACTION COMMITTEE

In the current environment where youth are being condemned so much, our youth arm deserves the commendations and the congratulation of our nation for the outstanding contribution which it has made to the development of Trinidad & Tobago over the last thirty years.

The youth arm became significant when large numbers of students in secondary schools throughout Trinidad &

Tobago joined NJAC. One of their concerns was about the soldiers who had been charged with the 1970 mutiny and who were imprisoned in the Port of Spain gaol.

Because of military terrorisation by the Government, many adults who had marched in 1970, were scared of making a public demand for the freedom of the soldiers. On their own and in their school uniforms, students launched a series of demonstrations in 1971. This broke the fear of the adults and led to immense public pressure on the authorities so that eventually the soldiers were granted an amnesty.

The students also challenged the colonial curriculum which remained dominant in the education system in the 1970s and one year later in 1972, the student criticism of the education system had reached such a climax that the government called a National Conference on Secondary Education at Chaguaramas, under the chairmanship of the then Prime Minister, Dr Eric Williams. For the first time, at a conference of this nature, secondary school children were able to participate, just as the parents and teachers. As a result of this conference, there were major proposals for changes in the education system. One of proposals led directly to the implementation of the current Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) examinations.

Above all, we need to remember that those who were the pioneers of NJAC's youth arm, have gone on to become national leaders in their own right. Beside several who are now in Trinidad & Tobago, there are many who are overseas.

One of the most notable is the current head of the Transport Union in New York, Mr. Toussaint. When being interviewed, just as after his union had shut down the transport system in New York, Toussaint mentioned that he was expelled from St. Mary's College for student activity in the early 1970s. He said that most of his political and social consciousness, as well as his organisational skills were as a result of his student experience. Mr Toussaint was an early member of the National Organisation of Revolutionary Students.

Undoubtedly, the students and youth, both then and now, deserve the applause of the nation. May they continue to influence other youth in the positive direction that they have already established.

From the Editor

Bro. TAHARQA OBIKA - INFORMATION OFFICER
NATIONAL YOUTH ACTION COMMITTEE

A nation that prepares its youth is one that secures its future! Therefore, how much we achieve as a nation tomorrow, depends on the strides that can be made by our youth today. This tells us that our task is to ensure that every young boy or girl is given the opportunity to achieve to their fullest potential. To ensure youth development we must recognise youth excellence



in every field. This means awarding the efforts of our youth

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in sports, academics, business, community service, culture and government service. In so doing, we would deliver the message that hardwork, dedication and sacrifice are necessary to lead a nation. Preparation of youth for future leadership also means that we must foster an environment of caring in our communities. This new love for fellow man ensures that

the young academic sees it as his or her obligation to teach the brothers and sisters in their area. A renewed community spirit also results in the young African and Indian and by extension other races who dwell in this land, viewing each other as brothers and sisters who share the same objective of development and ultimately it teaches love, which is the main principle for the nurturing of any nation.

We at the National Youth Action Committee believe that it is only with positive and genuine guidance, mass mobilisation, true consultation and real action can we the youth transform T&T. To this end, our organisational activities are targeted at ensuring that every one of our peers in our nation channel their energies into service to the national community.

Our youth paper therefore serves to reach those young people who recognise the need for a national consciousness and are willing to work toward the creation of a new Trinidad and Tobago. We at NYAC are calling on our young leaders to join in this movement for National Action and youth organisation as we march toward a new

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