## ANTIGUA BARBUDA WORKERS' UNION

## AT 50: New generation New challenges for New Workers

50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE MAGAZINE





UNITY IN DIVERSITY

ORGANIZED 16<sup>™</sup> MAY 1967 I REGISTERED 31ST MAY 1967 UNDER THE TRADE UNION ACT 1939



## CONGRATULATES THE

## ANTIGUA & BARBUDA WORKERS' UNION

on its







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**Editor** D. Gisele Isaac Creative Designer Chaneil Imhoff

# Work is Changing, Not Disappearing

## **MESSAGE FROM DAVID MASSIAH**

GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA WORKERS UNION

and Gentlemen:

I am delighted to welcome you to the that does not propel the courage to adopt launch of the Antigua Barbuda Workers' liberalism, far less a democratic socialism. 3. We have witnessed the informalization Union (ABWU) 50th Anniversary Commemorative Magazine.

you some insights on the theme: At Fif- pact adults in the current workforce, and more workers are distributed among small ty: New Generation, New Challenges for will impact, even more, the current gener- businesses, it becomes far more difficult to Workers

The world of work is changing and some of these changes are challenging the tra- Allow me to highlight some of these chal- migration on the labour movement in any ditional understanding of employment, lenges: work-time, place and companies.

extraordinary destructive bubble of slav- have had serious damaging impacts on affiliation. ery or in the so-called "free world," have our national economies, especially in relabeen exposed to what can be considered tion to fiscal deficits, and national debt. as existential challenges. Some of these the worker; the consideration that labour reduce the benefits to workers. The exam- worker may be empowered, but the trade is somehow subordinate to capital, when ples in telecommunications and banking union may be weakened.

embers, Colleagues, Friends, Ladies the reverse is actually true; an individual- are clear: Labour is often substituted by lectivism; and a personal embrace of fear pand the wages pool.

> ation of school children who will make the maintain the union's density of the past. future work force.

ism that does not yield to the spirit of col-technology, and it is often difficult to ex-

of labour in the arowth of micro. small and To these existential challenges can be medium enterprises. Trade unions have added others that have generated over traditionally been stronger by organiz-It is with great pleasure that I share with the past thirty (30) years or so, which im- ing workers in large-scale operations. As

4. We must also recognize the impact of society. As we open our doors to migrant labour, there is need to develop strategies 1. Globalization of recessions: as in 1973- to ensure that such labour is organizable We can never cease to emphasize that 1974; 1982-1985; 1991-1994; 2001-2003; and and is not subject to a multiplicity of obliall generations of workers, whether in the 2006 to the present. These recessions gations in terms of memberships and/or

5. We also need to be mindful when laws are made - especially laws that appear existential challenges have included: the 2. Another aspect of globalization has to empower workers, but where it is done concept of labour as a commodity, sepa- been the strategies used by multinational through the weakening of the collective rate and distinct from the human nature of corporations, in the face of competition, to process within trade unions. The individual

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how the use of technology is impacting for this to happen and for them to control able to use our European Partnership our workforce by increasing stress, remov- such institutions. ing the work-life balance, and forcing higher demands in terms of productivity: all 4. Interest-based bargaining and con-more closely what we can gain from our without necessarily leading to increased flict-management strategies must be in- Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States remuneration for workers.

beyond our shores and region.

What then are the strategies to be adopt- 5. The recruitment for the next generation ed in light of the challenges, both existential and generational?

trade-union organisations, have to ac- above and beyond expectations. Addi- this presentation will further generate diacept is that, historically, the labour move- tionally, the trade union staff of the future logue and debate on the challenges idenment has had to fight against tremendous will require legal specialists: accounting tified. odds. Nothing much has changed in that and financial analysts; ICT specialists; and regard. The truth, however, is that even in corporate communication/education spe- So now, as I conclude, let us as trade unionthe dire and darkest days, the movement cialists. has survived; and in spite of the current challenges, it will continue to survive.

sued.

have a focal point towards social justice.

to transcend capitalism, unionism, la- discuss national issues. bourism, and communitarianism, as an umbrella for nationalism and for collabo- Trade union leaders must always protect time in reading this article. ration against external threats to our small the image of national leadership. economies.

tored against job expansion, increase in struggling to get a decent wage is still Long live the ABWU! employment and increased consumption the reality in many parts of the globe. We as a driver for growth against the mobi- need to adapt to and take advantage of lization of savings by the working class. new developments to boost job creation, Trade unions must create expertise with- matching skills to jobs. in their own organization of trade unions, whereby they can manage and offer We have not been able, from the time of pension schemes and insurance schemes the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), to atfor their membership. They must invest in tract any meaningful jobs from our neigh-

seldom ever really gauged.

alities of operating in small island-nations ment. The world of work is changing more However, certain strategies must be pur- where party politics is extremely influential, rapidly than ever before. The question is: and where the party leaders can have a What are the best policy responses to en-1. National Trade union movements must and, indeed, on the entire country. Trade ed going forward? be solidified. There is urgent need to link unions should reserve the right to have frethe waged and the non-waged worker. quent conversations on matters affecting Please permit me the use of this forum to 2. Social partnerships must be established meet with civil society and businesses to the years. ABWU is better for having you.

The old obscenity of the 10% owning the glasses in a toast for the ABWU: 3. Expanding the wages pool must be fac- wealth of the world with the other 90%

6. Nor must we leave out the equation of specialized training for their staff in order bours from the North, nor have we been Agreement (EPA) to impact our economies significantly. We now have to examine tentional options to complement the tra- (OECS) Economic Union and our Caribbeditional approach, which has been a trial an Single Market Economy (CSME). Let us Let me inject here that these challenges go of strength. However, true strength is very not consider these to be matters of peripheral concern to the Labour Movement, but to see them as very central to our being.

of trade union leadership must start with Dear Colleagues, ultimately work is changtested loyalty to the Labour Movement, as ing. It is not disappearing. We have to be well as proven adherence to trade union aware of the new challenges that change The first thing we, as trade unionists and values, including solidarity, and working will impact on workers. It is my hope that

> ists reiterate that work provides the means to tackle poverty, empower minorities by Finally, we need to reflect on the political re- being inclusive and protects our environpowerful impact on the labour movement sure that workers' benefits are safe guard-

Bands of solidarity must be formed which their welfare with existing political parties, congratulate the Executive, Staff, Members and not just with the Government and and the whole team at the ABWU for their Opposition. Unions should also be free to golden contribution and involvement over

To each and every one, thank you for your

Finally, come on, and let us all raise our

Oavid Massiah General Secretary

## JUMBY BAY A ROSEWOOD RESORT

ANTIGUA



Jumby Bay, A Rosewood Resort congratulates the Antigua & Barbuda Worker's Union on 50 years of exceptional work in cultivating the nation's well-being and human capital especially in the fields of hospitality and tourism.

We look forward to working collaboratively with the Antigua & Barbuda Worker's Union and the talented individuals that it represents.



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## **MESSAGE FROM SEN. HAROLD E. LOVELL** POLITICAL LEADER OF THE UNITED PROGRESSIVE PARTY

## and praise are in order!

On behalf of the Central Executive are no longer with us. Committee and the entire membership of

your mandate and your mission over the president from 2010 to 2016. years, reflected in your commitment to the welfare and upliftment of workers in the Today, you stand on a proud record & Barbuda.

adversity even more remarkable.

infancy were years of struggle. It took strength and a beacon of hope to many. demonstrations, pickets, the law courts and personal sacrifice to survive the early trials Most critically, the ABWU has helped to courageous leadership.

the business and political establishment brothers and sisters. predicted its demise within 12 months. They tried to intimidate and bribe the leaders. We say "People First." You say "Unity in Thankfully, the weapons formed against Diversity." Together, we all say: you did not prosper. You are still here and vou have the scars to show.

Accordingly, we pay homage to the tireless efforts of those who spent their lives fighting for workers: Sir Keithlyn Smith and the late Sir

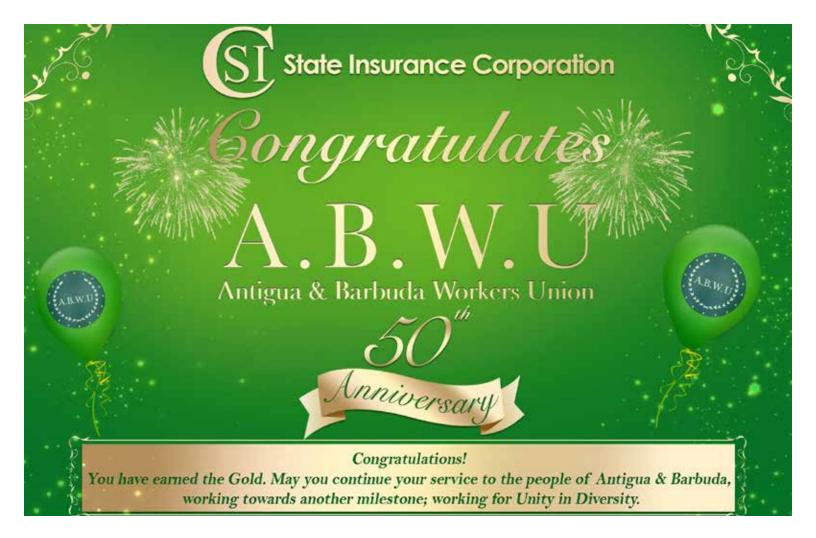
ifty years and counting. Congratulations George Walter, Donald Halstead, Malcolm Daniel, Joseph Cornwall, Prince Hurst and other titans of the Labour Movement who

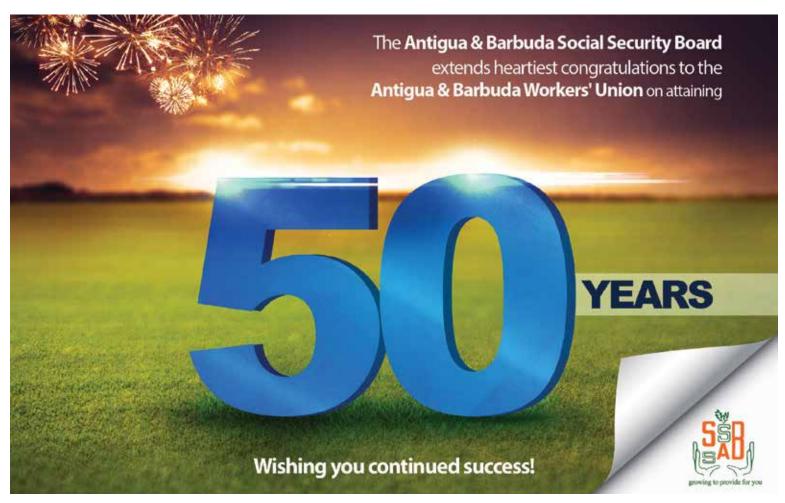
the United Progressive Party, I salute the Internationally and regionally, you have Antigua & Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU) also gained recognition and acclaim. for your perseverance, fortitude and Significantly, your General Secretary, institutional discipline. Brother David Massiah, was selected by his peers to head the regional body, The You have remained faithful to your mantra, Caribbean Congress of Labour, as its

hotels, banks, industrial plants, shops, the of achievement. As the major union in waterfront and other workplaces in Antigua Antigua & Barbuda representing workers in the private sector, you have secured improvements in wages, salaries and Very few organizations make it to fifty (50) working conditions for your members. No years. In fact, there are so many examples one can deny the contribution of the ABWU of institutional failure in the Caribbean that to the quality of life enjoyed by thousands this makes the Union's rise and triumph over of families and all working people in this country. And as the Union continues to weather the changing economic fortunes of As history will confirm, your birth and Antigua & Barbuda, you remain a tower of

and tribulations. Yet, your maturity came shape and influence the political landscape at a relatively early age, with visionary and of the nation – producing two heads of government in this regard – and the United Progressive Party is proud to recognize the In 1967, when the Union was first registered, Union and its members as our fraternal

LONG LIVE THE ANTIGUA & BARLUDA WORKERS UNION!







## **MESSAGE FROM THE ILO SPECIALIST FOR WORKERS' ACTIVITIES** To the Antigua & Barbuda Workers Union On the Occasion of its Fiftieth Anniversary, May 2017

well as to improve their quality of life, is early days of the movement have been to have to fight for their survival through a moment for celebration. I therefore slipping away. Trade unions must today getting back to basics - organizing and extend heartiest congratulations on the aspire to once again be considered the mobilizing workers on the one hand - as achievement of this milestone not only on guardians of our democracy and leaders well as to fight at the policy level. my own behalf, but also on behalf of the of social progress if trade unions are to Director General, Mr Guy Ryder; Ms. Maria regain the confidence of the majority of unions cannot rest on their laurels. Trade Helena Andre. Director of the Bureau of their constituencies. Workers' Activities (ACTRAV); and Ms. Claudia Coenjaerts, Director of the ILO Barbuda, like the wider Caribbean, is organizations, as well as consistently Office for the Caribbean, and her staff.

This 50-year milestone marks the economic uncertainties. coming of age of the ABWU as a mature examine labour-market prospects in so no worker is left behind. institution. Indeed, it is a milestone worthy the Caribbean, we see more and more of celebration, but it is also a moment quality jobs disappearing from the formal in the Caribbean to embody Samuel which calls for reflection and assessment economy - even from the public sector, Gompers' concept that "the trade union of the work and services offered by the which once upon a time provided long-movement represents the organized Antigua & Barbuda Workers Union to its term secure employment for a large economic power of workers... It is in reality members and to the working people of the majority of working people. country.

history and body of work of your union budgets and public sector reform, it is even a rich history to live up to and the times provide the platform for articulating a more marked that government policy- are demanding unions take up their vision and developing strategies for the placing favours private sector interests, responsibility as guardians of democracy next 50 years, with a view to build on past often to the detriment of the ordinary and social justice. For as Mary Harris successes, improve shortcomings and worker. Trade unions need to take stock Jones, co-founder of the Industrial Workers expand union outreach and services for and determine what future we want for of the World, and better known as Mother the good of the society. This process is the Caribbean and its peoples. The policy Jones, warned: "The next generation will vital for ABWU to ensure that the needs measures chosen today will shape our not charge us for what we've done; they and aspirations of working people are not future tomorrow. To retake the initiative, will charge and condemn us for what we only listened to at all levels of society, but the trade unions need to articulate social have left undone." respected and taken into account at all and economic policies which place the levels of policy formulation and decision- development and interests of the ordinary this milestone and best wishes for another making.

Pope Francis declared: "Trade unions have decent work with dignity for all. been an essential force for social change, without which a semblance of a decent trade unions and the ILO alike. The Paula Robinson and humane society is impossible under complex social and economic realities Senior Specialist for Workers' Activities capitalism."

the history of the Caribbean labour forced to be shoring up the gains that

arking 50 years of struggle to movement bears witness to this fact. many had begun to take for granted.

confronted with a whole host of socio- represent the interests of workers, always When

Reflection and assessment of the another era of fiscal restraint, balancing working woman and man at the front 50 years of successful endeavours, Noam Chomsky posited that and centre of every plan, which will lead increased membership for ABWU and "labour unions are the leading force for Antigua & Barbuda and the Caribbean enhanced social justice for all in Antigua & democratization and progress." Further, to a peaceful and prosperous future with Barbuda.

Social justice is the goal of the of the day cannot be fought with ILO Decent Team & Office for the Caribbean We know this to be true because complacency. Trade unions today are

protect workers' rights, their Nevertheless, we must admit that the However, the impact of globalization and freedoms, and their dignity, as influence and leadership exerted in the neo-liberalization is forcing trade unions

> To realize the future we want, trade unions have to increase their membership At this juncture, Antigua & and become learning and mobilizing we articulating inclusive positions and policies

> The times call for trade unions the most potent and most direct social Now that we are experiencing insurance the workers can establish."

> > Caribbean trade unions have

Once again, congratulations on





GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA Attorney General, Minister of Legal Affairs, Public Safety and Labour



CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF LABOUR

n behalf of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, and the Ministry of Labour in particular, I express congratulations to the Antigua and Barbuda Workers' Union (ABWU) on its fifty years of service to the workers of Antigua and Barbuda.

The ABWU was born in 1967-the same year that Antigua and Barbuda began its irreversible journey out of colonialism and into sovereignty. 1967 is a memorable year, for the generations then alive witnessed the near-culmination of the struggle to win our people's freedom after 300 continuous years of worker degradation and colonialism.

The ABWU was an outgrowth of that great movement to enlarge freedoms and to bring about societal changes that ultimately engulfed our country and region. Trade Unions served as the vehicle upon which political and constitutional changes traveled. The charismatic and courageous leadership of the ABWU, in 1967, explains its success and its continued longevity.

During its five decades, the ABWU has grown in stature. Its maturity is measured not only by its age but also its evolving role in worker representation. It has attracted talented men and women to its ranks, and has never retreated from its primary objective.

As the ABWU continues to grow and to strengthen its foundation principles, the workers of Antigua and Barbuda will undoubtedly lend their support to this worthy institution that has been pivotal in securing greater rights for workers and their families.

Long live the ABWU ! Long live freedom and justice for workers!



Attorney General and Minister of Labour

Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



SALUTE FROM THE ANTIGUA TRADES & LABOUR UNION

t is my distinct pleasure to extend warm greetings on behalf of the Executive, Staff, and Members of the Antigua Trades & Labour Union to the Antigua & Barbuda Workers Union on the occasion of celebrating your 50th Anniversary of existence and service to workers in Antigua & Barbuda.

This is, indeed, a landmark for the Antigua & Barbuda Workers Union and its membership; therefore, we congratulate you on your success in promoting and protecting the interest of the working people in our fair land.

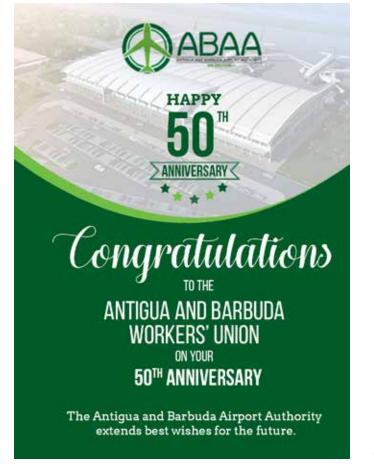
The occasion brings with it the opportunity to look retrospectively with pride and to confidently prepare for the new challenges that confront the new generation. As we all prepare to accept new challenges, we must strengthen the bonds of solidarity that bind us together, thereby enabling us to more efficiently and effectively meet the needs of our membership.

The Antigua Trades & Labour Union salutes you on your 50th Anniversary of dedicated service and extends best wishes for a successful celebration.

Hugh Joseph

General Secretary

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## MESSAGE FROM THE BERMUDA PUBLIC SERVICES UNION

s the Antigua & Barbuda Worker's Union (ABWU) reflects on its achievements over the past 50 years ABWU members should feel a sense of immense pride.

The vision and commitment of ABWU founders provided a rich legacy for all of the inhabitants of Antigua and Barbuda.

From within the Union ranks came leaders who helped to shape the destiny of your people by influencing Government initiatives such as the Social Security Act, The Labour Code and the Development Bank

This unwavering stewardship will undoubtedly be a source of inspiration and impact on the Jives of many in a positive way. The herculean efforts of your leaders enables the ABWU to navigate the challenges that confronted members, and prepared them to face future obstacles with resilience.

May I, on behalf of the Bermuda Public Services Union beg the honour to congratulate the ABWU on its Golden Jubilee, and express my personal appreciation of the association I share with the ABWU's dedicated leaders in matters of mutual interest.



Bro. Edward Ball Jr., JP, LLB, FCMI General Secretary - Bermuda Public Services Union



**GREETINGS TO THE ANTIGUA & BARBUDA WORKERS UNION** FROM THE DOMINICA WATERFRONT & ALLIED WORKERS UNION ON THE OCCASION OF THE OBSERVANCE OF ITS 50<sup>™</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

#### **KERTIST AUGUSTUS** SECRETARY TREASURER

of the Waterfront & Allied Workers

Antigua & Barbuda Workers' Union (ABWU) The Antigua & Barbuda Workers' Union consulted on any strategy by government on the observance of the 50th Anniversary mustbe concerned when certain categories that seeks to eradicate or to significantly of the Union in May of this year. Fifty years of workers are left out of coverage under reduce the incidence of unemployment. in the life of any organization is, indeed, our labour laws. In that regard, we must no mean feat and must be witnessed as a ensure that our Caribbean governments must receive the attention of the Union, historical milestone.

"At 50: New Generation, New Challenges one from Trinidad & Tobago and the other creation potential of Antigua & Barbuda. for Workers," is truly representative of from Jamaica, forming their own unions, Further, issues such as the state of the the present environment in which both viz, National Union of Domestic Employees economy, the environment, and regional workers and trade unions operate. One (NUDE). could conclude that much thought was given to its selection amongst the many with political organizations that are leadership of the Union. before you for consideration.

for both workers and the Antigua & will introduce and pass labour legislation be established) with the Employers Barbuda Workers' Union was organizing/ that will promote and consolidate labour Federation and government. Such a recruitment and unity. This had to be unions. so, in order that the Union would secure representational and bargaining rights on Labour Movement is the recruitment of should seek to guarantee that its input is behalf of the workers.

meetings was the strategy employed by the are not attracted to our old tradition of government. Union to inform and educate members to mass-membership meetings and, on most cement and secure that representational occasions, they are absent. We need to the leadership of the Antigua & Barbuda right. Education and training were the be able to use the new technologies of Workers' Union resides the capacity of vision engaged by the Union to build and Twitter, email and Facebook, etc. to bring persons who can address the challenges develop second-level leadership capacity them into the fold of unionism, since this is which confront the Union now and in for it to keep true to the very definition of a the form of communication young people the future. We in the Waterfront & Allied trade union. Solidarity was the feature, or use to speak to each other. strategy, utilized by the Union to strengthen Caribbean governments sought to outlaw in your 50th year - is to speak to, and be

"he Executive, Staff & Membership what is known as "sympathy strikes."

sympathetic to, or supportive of, the In 1967, the main challenge "vision" of organized labour; ones that of the relationship which exists (or should

union/worker co-operation and unity. So of unions, including the Antigua & in the celebration of your 50th year of effective was that strategy that some Barbuda Workers' Union - and, more so, existence.

vocal on, such issues as employment Today, the challenge to workers and job creation. Unemployment must Union join me in extending profound and trade unions continues to be in be eradicated since it represents a waste greetings and fraternal best wishes to the the areas of representation, be it at the of our most natural resource, our human Executive, Staff and Membership of the domestic, regional or international level. resource. ABWU must be involved and be

Issues like crime and violence ratify ILO Convention 189, which was as well, since they could influence the level The theme you have selected, spearheaded by two Caribbean women, of investment and, by extension, the jobintegration are the extension of the Unions must continue to associate representational status expected from the

Social dialogue must be a feature dialogue should be institutionalized. A new challenge for us in the The Antigua & Barbuda Workers' Union young workers, particularly those in the considered prior to the finalization and The scheduling of membership clerical and administrative category. They presentation of the annual budget of the

> I have every confidence that in Workers Union wish the Antigua & The challenge and responsibility Barbuda Workers' Union the very best

Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary





Chris Furbert, IP President

H. Molly Burgess, IP General Secretary

## To The Antigua & Barbuda Worker's Union

he Officers and Members of the Bermuda Industrial Union Labour Movement generally. are extremely honored to have this opportunity to pay

and solidarity to the Officers and Members of the Antigua 50 years of struggle for the benefit of the workers in Antigua & & Barbuda Worker's Union on the occasion of this your 50th Barbuda. anniversary.

Greetings...

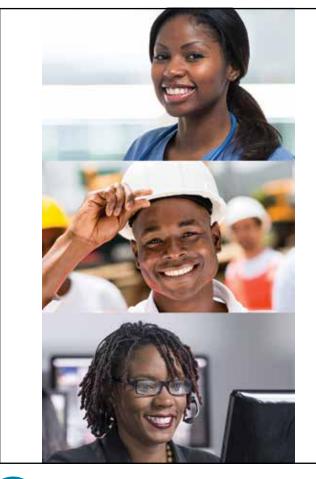
Fraternal

We commend you on your long history of continuous struggle for binds both our organizations. It's our heartfelt prayer that the the protection and improvement of working conditions for your officers and members of your great union will continue to enjoy membership and the workers of Antigua, enabling them to have many more years of success. a better life. Further, for your commitment and solidarity to the

tribute and extend a message of congratulations, warmth We wish you all the best for this year and strength for the next

We look forward to the continuation of the strong bond that

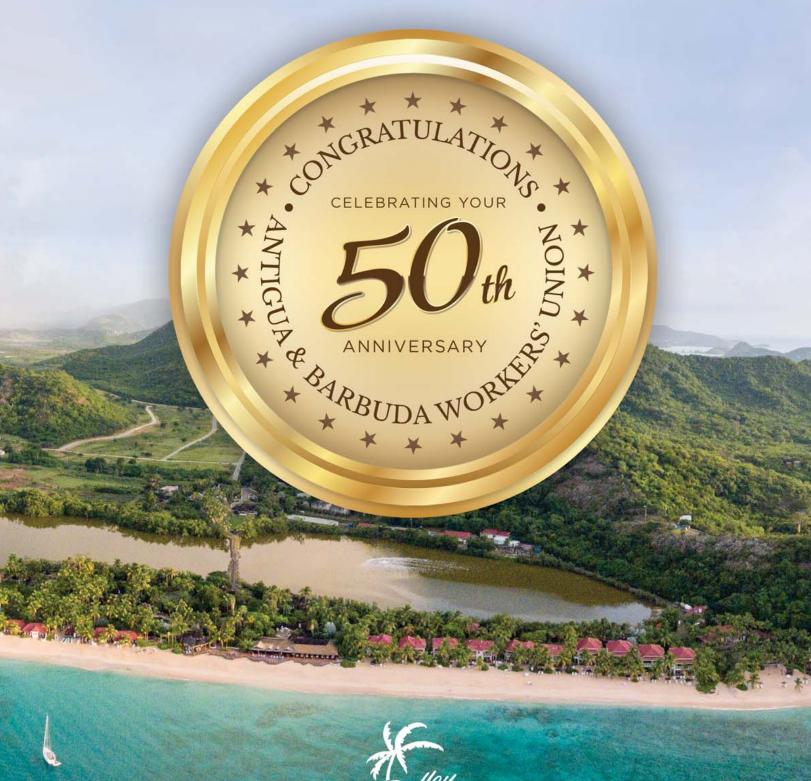
## from the Bermuda Industrial Union



## 50 years of fostering progress.

Scotiabank salutes the Antigua & Barbuda Workers Union on 50 years of sterling service to the employees of this nation. May you enjoy many more years of strength and success.







Congratulations to the **Antigua & Barbuda Workers' Union** on **50 Years** of success serving the workers of Antigua & Barbuda!

from GALLEY BAY RESORT & SPA

## As Baldwin Spencer Recalls **HOW TWO PREMIERS SHAPED A PRIME MINISTER**

union. Over the past 50 years, three of new union!" this country's five leaders have emerged to tell his – and their – story....

& Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU), Dr. more even than death. It drives them out W. Baldwin Spencer's trade union and of their safe little worlds of traditional political roots are buried in the soil of the beliefs Antigua Trades & Labour Union (AT&LU). Thought is subversive and revolutionary, On that fateful Saturday morning, May destructive and terrible...." 5, 1967, as Baldwin moved through Grays Farm onto Market Street, on the way to his who refused to publish it and threatened job at the Workers Voice, he heard the talk to report Spencer to V.C. Donald that George Walter and Donald Halstead Sheppard, too, questioned his loyalty had been fired the night before from to the AT&LU and accused him of siding the monolithic AT&LU. In disbelief, the with Walter and Halstead. Meanwhile, 19-year-old reporter stopped Comrade pressure continued to mount as the sugar Clarissa Davis, who verified the story.

When he arrived at 46 North brigade against the senior union. Street, he recalled, he was summoned upstairs by Voice editor Levi Joseph, Baldwin was facing further uncertainty. who, in the presence of Novelle Richards He had already been told about a and William Buntin, explained what Canadian fellowship to attend Coady had transpired. "Poor me!" Spencer International Institute at St. Francis exclaimed at the memory, admitting that Xavier University – by V.C., himself, who he was both surprised and appalled by had defied his own brother to secure the action V.C. Bird had taken against his the scholarship. Spencer laughed as he former union colleagues.

About a week later, he recalled, the Big Man, himself, called him aside. thing at the Ministry of Social Services," he "Young man, you must be confused," said, "and his brother, Oscar Bird, was the V.C. reportedly told Spencer. "But permanent secretary. Well, Oscar looked whatever you do, we can't mash up this at me and said there was no application. organization...."

situation The continued of waterfront workers and others.

"Arwe nah want hear nutten 'bout the memory. widdy-widdy bush! Arwe want fuh know

t used to be, in Antigua & Barbuda, whah mek you fire Walter and Halstead!" that the road to the seat of government Spencer recalled them bellowing. "No began at the doorstep of the trade Walter, no Halstead, no Union! Form a

Young Spencer was in a difficult from careers in trade unionism. But with position, working at the Voice from Premier/Prime Minister Sir V.C. Bird and the AT&LU's headquarters while his Premier Sir George Walter already having sympathies lay with Walter and Halstead. finished their courses, only former Prime This ambivalence inspired him to pen an Minister Dr. W. Baldwin Spencer remains editorial based on the Bertrand Russell quote, "Men fear thought as they fear Like the founders of the Antiqua nothing else on earth, more than ruin, and preconceived notions.

> The article outraged the editor, workers joined forces with the waterfront

> In the midst of all this, young recounted the life-altering incident:

"V.C. had sent me to secure this So I went and reported to V.C. I remember to how he tapped his fingers on the desk deteriorate, however. It culminated at a in that way he had, then picked up the meeting held at the Antigua Recreation phone and called Oscar. 'You said there's Grounds, where V.C. was shouted down no application?' V.C. asked him. And by Reginald Mussington, leading a band then, he declared, 'Well, he applied to ME...!" Baldwin collapsed in laughter at



the naysayers, "Leave the young man apply to the civil service, instead. alone; the young people are our future."

spend nine months in Canada. He recalled application, Spencer went elsewhere, onboard at the Union now that Walter the debate there, at that time, was, "Can spending time working at The Star and Halstead were in government. conflicted, he attempted to defend the Dow Hill Tracking Station; and, later, with the ABWU, he was off again, this time to position he had left at home, where the the construction company AIDE, which Ruskin College Oxford. He recalled that AT&LU's Central Executive was dominated was engaged to expand the West Indies this opportunity came via a competitive by persons in government. He noted, Oil Company facilities at Friars Hill. however, that the exceptions were former General Secretary Walter and Industrial was relentlessly pursuing the expansion to Milton Benjamin," who worked closely Relations Officer Halstead, who comprised of the fledgling Antigua Workers Union. with him on the required entrance essay. the breakaway faction.

explained, was a conflict of interests. boldly announced that Spencer would for me." The exposure was wonderful, Government had bought out the sugar serve as education officer.... syndicate and was having issues running the industry, he said. Without consultation he had not made a commitment to the toward educating the working class, trade with the Union, the Government, via V.C., Workers Union, despite being ostracized unionists, social workers and political had unilaterally changed the terms of by members of the AT&LU. When, on the activists - mature students." the Collective Bargaining Agreement and following day, Branch Chairman Lionel reduced wages.

been betrayed, Walter rebelled, Spencer was in trade unionism, he said, and he he took part during this period, including said. He advocated that the Union and accepted the post as a call to service. He demonstrations and miners' strikes. With Government sit down and thrash the became integrally involved in the Union obvious pride he shared that his thesis, matter out in an attempt to reach a thereafter. decision together. It was that bucking of the Government's position that had led to in 1971, the party of George Walter and approved with commendation from the acrimonious and terminal split.

gone to tell V.C. not to send me," Spencer General Secretary Adolphus Freeland that would, in time, capture that seat and hold continued. "But to his credit, he defied there was no work at either the newspaper it for 28 years - to date.) them." The then premier reportedly told or the Union. Freeland advised that he

He was successful in setting up a branch The dividing issue, Dr. Spencer in the Grays Farm area and, at its launch, at Oxford as "a marvelous experience

atmosphere to which Spencer returned in the general elections that saw even V.C. recalled Moore saying of his work. 1968. Nevertheless, he reported to his job at Bird losing his seat in St. John's Rural West

"Many of the dissenters had The Workers Voice, only to be told by now to Selvyn Walter. (Interestingly, Spencer

Shortly after the elections, Spencer recalled, Keithlyn Smith came to visit him But since the civil service never at the West Indies Oil compound, and And with that, Spencer was off to bothered even to acknowledge his convinced him that he should come fully government and union be one?" Still newspaper under editor Tim Hector; at the Subsequently, as a full-time officer of scholarship, a single bursary funded by the Meanwhile, however, Halstead British Council, and he is "forever grateful

> Dr. Spencer recalls his two years he said, affording him the opportunity of Up to that point, Spencer said, learning at "a left-wing college geared

Maraaret Thatcher was in Gomes called and apprised him of his power, then, and Spencer recounted the Feeling that the sugar workers had "new position," the die was cast. His heart consciousness-raising activities in which "Political Involvement of the Unions The Union's activism paid off and, with Special Reference to Antigua," was Donald Halstead, the Progressive Labour his appraiser, Roy Moore. "With strong This was the tense and brittle Movement (PLM), was swept to victory in editing, it could be a book," Spencer

Upon completing Ruskin, Spencer

relations officer and then moved up the never George's desire to be premier," he however. For its unstinting support of the ranks, eventually becoming assistant insisted. "He was pushed into political life AWU's efforts, Spencer gave recognition general-secretary to Smith. During his as a result of what unfolded in the Union; to the then Government Customs tenure he was involved, with one Dr. forced into the leadership of the PLM. Summers, in the crafting of the Labour Code, and he represented workers before within six months the AWU headquarters Daniel. Romig Michael and Llewellyn the Industrial Court in landmark cases would be a warehouse," he went on. Smith, though managers at Dews, was such as the Royal Bank of Canada strike. "Hence, political action was necessary to also very active as executive members of Two other such cases – the dismissed hotel keep trade unionism alive and thrivina." workers matter and the negotiations for the waterfront workers - ended up before prediction, Spencer said he greatly the Privy Council, he noted.

in the lives of ordinary people," he said. As of Hurst's knowledge of the waterfront and and executive members," including a consequence, his work – and the people- The Point, and described him as sound, Glennette Francis and Peggy Arrindell, centered approach he brought to it - articulate, measured; never vociferous or who were then hotel employees, as well significantly raised both his union profile boisterous. He also remembers him for a as Margaret Henry and Lena Barthley and his political stock.

Workers Union shaped the Baldwin game." Spencer we know today," said the prime minister who always referred to himself as brother, Denfield, as "the figures man." Parker and Christobel Lake of the Grays The Chief Servant. "I was always seeking to Chuckling, he said, "Anything with maths Farm-Greenbay community, and Sisters do the best I can, especially for those not in and stats, call Comrade Denfield." More Gwendolyn Joseph and Elizabeth Floyd of the position to look out for themselves.

juvenile member of the AT&LU, since I was "When the right hand offends you, cut it Spencer added Eugenie Piggott, Clarissa very, very close to V.C. Bird. I held several off .... " positions, including education officer, and played a part in the Union's cultural influenced or impressed Spencer on his elder George Piggott.

even before his political dreams."

the notion that George Walter was a and international issues.

came home to his position as labour competitor to V.C. in the AT&LU. It was

Notwithstanding that ominous senators, Spencer said.

importantly, he recalled him remarking, Five Islands. "I also learned a lot while I was a on the dismissal of Walter and Halstead,

Other personalities and intellectual life," he said. He noted journey were Malcolm Daniel, Keithlyn AWU prepared him for eventual leadership that, in the absence of a formal "political Smith, and Lionel Gomes, whom he of the country, Spencer stated. After a Political Committee; he served as the with holding the Union together. Spencer ticket, in 1989 he was elected to Parliament youth representative from the Rural West also paid tribute to Prince Hurst, Joseph by the St. John's Rural West constituency on constituency, alongside his senior, the Cornwall, and Raymond Simon who, he the UNDP slate. In 1992, he became leader said, really encouraged and supported of the United Progressive Party (UPP). He In detailing his other political him. He gave great credit, as well, to Tim led the UPP to victory in the 2004 elections, influences, Spencer described former Hector for the work he did at The Star; for was sworn in as Antigua & Barbuda's the workers' situation; as was Halstead, fight against Birdism; and for the influence terms in office. He remains in the House Hector had on his own perspective of Representatives as the Leader of the He said he wanted "to dispel regarding a number of national, regional Opposition.

The credits did not end there, Department, particularly the late Charles "Lionel Hurst had predicted that "Eddie" Hunte and current MP Willmoth the Union and eventually were appointed

And where would great men be admired Hurst in his capacity as minister without women? Dr. Spencer also gave "I always tried to make a difference of labour, trade and production. He spoke lavish praise to "the early Union women particular quote: "It's not always whether from the Union's Freetown Branch. From "To a great extent, the Antigua you win or lose, but how you played the his home branch in Rural West, he named Sisters Ethlyn Laviscount, Ethlyn Joseph, Spencer also remembered Lionel's Eunice Joseph, Frances Ferris, Millicent

Not forgetting his "comrades," Davis, Mildred Bailey and Edna Wehner who among his women of influence.

His years of experience with the party" in the early years, the AT&LU had credited, along with Walter and Halstead, contesting the 1984 elections on the UPM Premier George Walter as "empathetic to his later struggles with The Outlet in his third prime minister, and served two

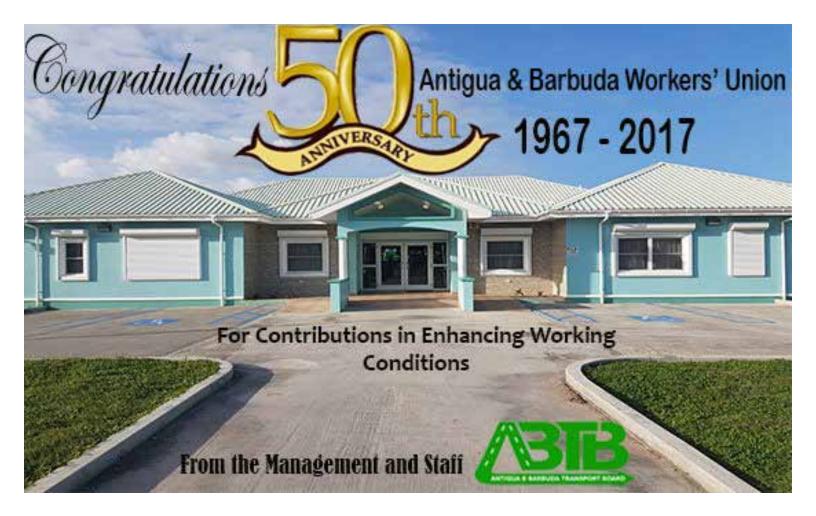
The roll call of Antiqua & Barbuda Workers Union officers who have served in the political life of the nation includes:

#### House of Representatives:

#### The Senate:

Sir George Walter, Premier Sir Keithlyn Smith Dr. W. Baldwin Spencer, Prime Minister **Chester Hughes, Deputy Speaker** Donald Halstead, Minister of Home Affairs and Labour. Lionel Gomes

Malcolm Daniel **Prince Hurst** Romig Michael Leonard "Tim" Hector **David Massiah Chester Hughes** Malaka Parker



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## WORKERS' UNION

(REGISTERED 4th OCTOBER, 1941)

GENERAL SECRETARY TONI MOORE

P.O. BOX 172 "SOLIDARITY HOUSE" HARMONY HALL ST. MICHAEL, BB 11000 BARBADOS

Dear Brothers and Sisters

General Secretary, Mrs. Toni Moore; President General, Ms. Linda must be a renewal process and the outcomes must have an Brooks and the Executive Council and staff of the Barbados ageless quality and attraction. Workers are confronted with Workers' Union greet you on this the occasion of the celebration of shifting personal priorities and organizational inequalities, your 50th Anniversary under the theme "At Fifty: New Generation, sometimes at lightning speeds; frequent new changes that do New Challenges For Workers."

PRESIDENT GENERAL

LINDA P. BROOKS (MS.)

well you have been able to actualize and expand the vision of the workers face then they must keep relevant. pioneers of your movement but indeed to introspect and clarify your vision.

Your theme captures the times we are living in - challenging. The present reality is that the trade union movement stands in one of its greatest times of challenge and controversy. Labour The Barbados Workers' Union urges the ABWU to continue to is challenged by capitalist-driven globalization which seeks to be relevant and exhibit vitality that is exemplified in service to legitimize widespread labour exploitation. Many governments, members as well as in your ability to change and transform several of which only bear the word "labour" as a moniker but to reflect the changes in this new order. Your pursuit of the have not advanced labour in any way, have bowed under the advancement of the workers must be just as vigorous as when pressures from corporate interests run by the economic and you were half of fifty. In so doing, yours will be a legacy that political organizations of the bourgeoisie.

The fight for workers' rights and justice is not just for new lives of countless working class people and their families. advancements but so that those hard-earned gains already in place are not removed entirely. Health, education, and workers' The Barbados Workers' Union salutes you, the Antigua and pensions, to highlight a few, are now under threat of being rolled Barbuda Workers' Union on the attainment of 50 years. We salute back to pre-Independence levels.

Your theme also introduces what has to be the most relevant the next 50 years and beyond. dynamic of contemporary trade unionism, the generational divide and the expectations that are intrinsically linked.

Youth and youth integration, involvement and engagement must be the focus of the new trade union movement. Young Solidarity Forever. workers have a different response to the age-old problems of the movement and unions must harness their youthful enthusiasm and channel it into positive, constructive activism for the advancement of the movement.

In some instances that will require the movement to become General Secretary

unglued from ideologies and methodologies employed decades ago which · are now neither attractive nor relevant. There not always address workers' need to do significant, meaningful and emboldens their highest potential, and if the trade union Fifty is a moment for reflection. A time to reflect on not just how movement is to be thought to be able to handle the challenges

> Relevance is important as it will ensure sustainability. Labour must continue to build a movement which is sustainable and relevant to all workers - potential and present.

> continues to inspire an unbound optimism in the continued relevance and impact of the ABWU in shaping and enriching the

> the vision of the founders, the propelling action of the members and wish you continued forward movement and meaning for

> Please accept our most profound best wishes and solidarity as you celebrate this milestone.

Toni Moore

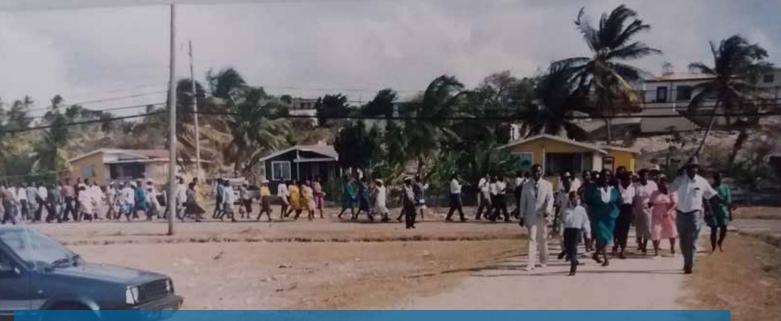
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## Palm Sunday FATHOFOUR FATHERS AND MOTHERS...



ccording to the Keithlyn Smith book No Easy Push- hill into the venerable stone building. There, delegations waterfront workers had hoped to have a service talent, singing, in particular. of blessing for the Union at the Bethel Anglican Church in The Point. But the Rev. Dean George Baker, despite Freetown being the easternmost village, and considered pleading from Donald Halstead, a devout worshipper, quite distant from St. John's, some delegates would make June 4, and the entire church district backed him.

But, as Antiguans of a certain era would say, "Every disappointment is a blessing ... "

...Thus, it began on April 7, 1968, that glorious tradition of Union's 50th Anniversary. the Union's Palm Sunday Service, held at the Freetown Methodist Church. For decades, the service was These photos, from the 1990s, show the marchers led preceded by what one could properly call a march of by The Late President Malcolm Daniel alongside The witness, as ABWU officials led the faithful - of the Union Late Sir Raymond Lake, Executive Member and of the congregation - through the village and up the

o-ver, in 1967, the Antigua Workers' Union and the from the various Union sections would showcase their

refused to hold the service of dedication, scheduled for an excursion of it, spending the entire day with families from Freetown - the very first section of the Union.

> While attendance has waxed and waned through the decades, the service held on April 9 this year saw a significantly boosted congregation celebrating the







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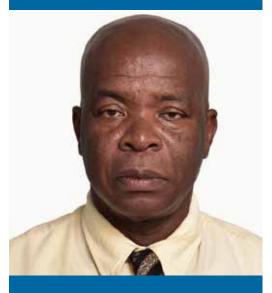


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ifty years of existence and still forging strongly ahead is, indeed, an awesome milestone.

Over the years, the contribution of the ABWU's leadership to trade unionism – locally, regionally and internationally – has been significant. Many of your leaders have stood tall among globally recognized trade unionists.

The trade union movement has been at the pinnacle of regional integration and the role of the ABWU, in that regard, is evident by the many different nationalities which the union represents in the various work places. Many political leaders have emerged from the ABWU and have all contributed towards the unification of Caribbean citizens.

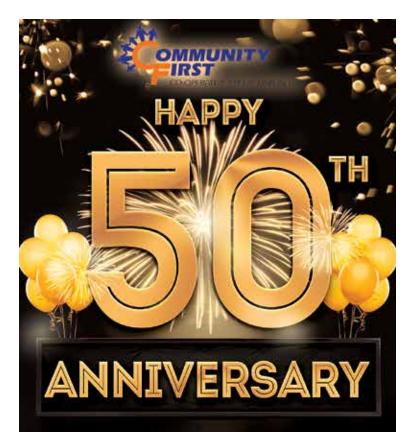
We are confident that the ABWU, in reflecting on achievements of the past 50 years, will build on those successes in spite of the many challenges which confront the movement.

The Dominica Public Service Union salutes the ABWU and joins in full solidarity as you press on with your determination to continue the fight on behalf of the working force.

Forward Ever! Backward Never! Long live the ABWU.

Thomas Letang

General Secretary



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Antiqua and Basbuda Woskers Union celebrating.



A Milestone of Servic to the Nation's **Workers & Employees Best Wishes & Continued Success and Prosperity** 

Through the Years... by Dotsie Isaac Gellizeau

#### Union

... The coming together of two or more things ... An organization formed to protect workers' rights. But we know the cart didn't come before the horse In order for there to be rights. First – there had to be fights:

For equal pay, a fight. Against victimization and spite, a fight. For labour rights, a fight. And, in the face of intimidating powers, Trying to get this unintimidated Union established, Many fights ... and sleepless nights.

That state of emergency you faced in 1968 Was merely your training ground; With tear gas in your face and guns on their waists You didn't retreat. You did NOT back down.

But before there was the gas ... there were tears. Before bullets were fired ... workers were fired For taking a firm and principled stand, For daring to carry placards in their hands. The government, in its usual vitriolic style, let go those it had hired.

Men and women who came before us sacrificed their jobs. The price of rights is high; someone had to pay. But with THAT indomitable spirit nurtured by this Union They won privileges employees take for granted today.

In your infancy, you laughed in their faces When government told you that you would die. You stood nose to nose and traded blows; The more they bullied, the more you defied.

The protagonists of THIS proud Union Marched from VC's office with determination; And on that APRIL day at Government House They got their respect and recognition. Vere Cornwall Bird predicted, 48 years ago, That in nine days you would cool down. But just look at you, all grown up today, An establishment still sizzling and strong. Marches and demonstrations. Meetings and negotiations. Court cases; arbitration. Work to rule and ... you know: Strikes and sit-ins and go real slow. This Union did what it had to do, And though it seems inadequate, we say, Thank you."

Thank you for fighting for prorated vacation. Thank you for giving women more than six pence worth of representation. Thank you for knowing a woman's worth: For fighting for equal pay for equal work. And for something women of old could never conceive, Thank you for paid maternity leave. Thank you so kindly for your input in crafting the Labour Code: The rules to employ and work by all – manifestoed.

Still, they're those employees who think that rules are made to be broken And feel they're untouchable because they pay you the little token.... They say, "Me ah go ah Union" – And even though they're wrong, they're strong, And expect you to take action.

Unions change lives and save countries, Protecting the integrity of people and trade; Fighting because it's the right thing to do, With knowledge and passion, without accolades.

And so, Antigua & Barbuda thanks this Union for its vision; For being unafraid; for staying on the path; For fighting with those who can't fight alone And for keeping workers' rights at heart.

Even today you are fighting still Against victimization and dangerous Bills; The more things change the more they stay the same, But you are committed to the cause in the workers' name.

And so ... the struggle continues.

## **HADEED:** A HEAD FOR BUSINESS AND A HEART FOR PEOPLE

Workers' Union (ABWU). The year the Union to secure credit for other goods and services satisfied customers. was born, 1967, is the year the Hadeed patri- that he might not have qualified to borrow arch, Fares Elias Hadeed, began diversifying from the less flexible banking institutions. the family's business interests.

getting into its now-signature business: An pendent venture, AMP adopts the same us- Halcyon Steel Orchestra.) automobile dealership. Today, only folks er-friendly approach that started back in the above age 50 would remember the Datsun 50s with Papa Hadeed and his customers. Agency; but even children know the brands deed.

West Yard define the upper stretch of Old power-generation business. In short, if it is a for small business start-ups - run into the Parham Road, that location is home to Fi- commodity that people need, the group, ba- hundreds. In fact, it is an open secret that nance & Development Company Ltd. (FDC), sically, can supply it. as well. The name needs no explanation. It is exactly what it says, with its reputation for Hadeed Motors celebrated its 25th annihelping people develop through financing versary, what was striking about the staff family called Hadeed, who defines business, that is accessible and user-friendly.

defining adjectives of the Hadeed Group through the years to grow with the compawhere the working-class is concerned. For ny, describing themselves as "one big family."

profile was that most were not "new;" they and whose businesses, in turn, define suc-Those words, one could say, are the had come in on the around floor and stayed cess....

t almost 60 years old, one could say not only has the company changed the pro- Nearly two decades later, many of the faces the Hadeed Group of Companies is verbial "man on the street" into the "man on are the same, testament to the fact that the the senior of the Antigua & Barbuda wheels," it has afforded him the opportunity employees – like its loyal clientele – are also

The customer-satisfaction ethos is not reserved for paid and paying customers, But it does not stop there. Antiqua however, since the Hadeed Group - Hadeed According to an earlier publication, Masonry Products, a household name, con- Motors, in particular – is known for supportthe Hadeed family branched out from its tinues to build new households under the ing causes: from Carnival to church work, retail store, established in 1960, into a fur- Hadeed umbrella. In a culture of self-help, from sports to social work. (Just read the niture factory, then followed that up with a where aspiring home-owners still purchase back of the soca and calypso CDs in any givgarment factory and a restaurant before and stockpile cement blocks for an inde- enyear, or think of the veteran and masterful

Giving back is simply part of the business ethos which is so deeply rooted in The conglomerate is, likely, the most "family." And the number of individuals who Nissan and Suzuki are synonymous with Ha- diversified of local businesses. The Hadeeds will tell, privately, of the family's generosity – can boast of also being in the real estate whether in providing medical assistance or While the huge car dealership and sector; the hotel/hospitality industry; and the giving "loans" which turn out to be "gifts" the Group has been known even to help the When, in 1998, the now-branded Government, itself, by easing the squeeze.

But it's all in a day's work for this

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## **ANTIGUA & BARBUDA** LABOUR COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE

**ELTONIA ROJAS** 

the workers and people of Antigua & of a better twin island. Barbuda should be proud of.

"At Fifty: New Generation, New Challenges confidence. As you face the future in for Workers," this time should provide a globalized economy and world, you ABWU to keep its members united, while the occasion for reflection on the many must stand together to fight and defend increasing the overall membership, it is the struggles waged by selfless working men the rights of the working-class people in Department's hope that the years ahead and women in pursuit of social justice Antigua & Barbuda, whenever these rights will see the consolidation of ABWU into a in Antiqua & Barbuda. These past 50 are violated or denied. Workers have toiled forceful organization, working to secure years have seen many struggles, marking endlessly with dedication to find their the development of decent work and a great strides and achievements, but also rightful place in our society. enormous sacrifices for the working people and this organization.

and members for the tireless work being rights and also ensure that in the highest

As you celebrate under the theme this occasion to look to the future with social dialogue.

In this forward march, ABWU should remain resolute and authentic in Anniversary. We congratulate the leadership the defense and promotion of trade union

he Labour Department salutes the undertaken to strengthen the trade union representative bodies in the country, the Antigua & Barbuda Workers Union movement. On this occasion, we also pay voice of workers is heard loudly, clearly on the occasion of its Golden Jubilee tribute to all those countless activists who and penetratingly. The interests and celebration. The 50th Anniversary of the gave their all to the building of the trade concerns of union members must exhibit founding of the ABWU is a milestone that union movement and to the construction themselves in the active participation of ABWU in structures and processes that I encourage the ABWU to use provide the framework and occasion for

> With confidence in the ability of decent life for its members.

We wish you a happy 50th





ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA EMPLOYERS' FEDERATION Working together today, for to

Anniversary.

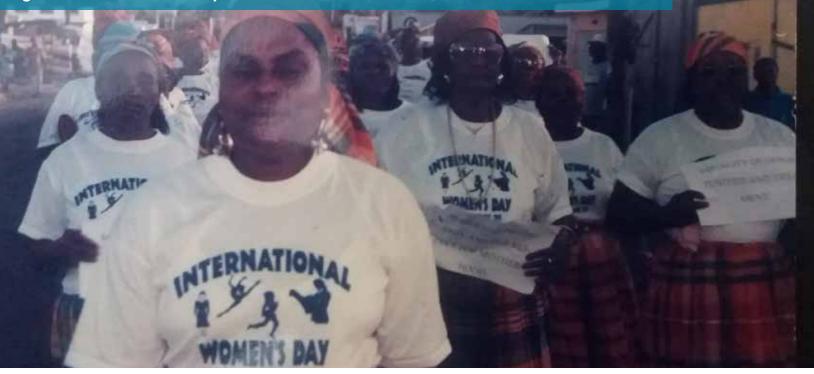
It is indeed a milestone and the Antigua go a long way in being successful. & Barbuda Workers Union ought to be commended for its efforts in building It is with pleasure that I express sincere goodwill among its membership.

Many have benefitted from the services offered and the important contributions Sincerely, made at the national level; these are readily manifested in their ongoing progress and *O. Arlene Martin* continued growth. It is extremely gratifying *Executive Secretary* also to note that the Union continues to

n behalf of the Antigua & Barbuda make its position known on matters of Employers' Federation and on my national importance without fear or favour. own personal behalf, I would like Further, the theme for this anniversary also to take this opportunity to extend sincere states that the Union "At Fifty: Is embracing congratulations to the Antigua & Barbuda a new generation, with new challenges for Workers Union on the occasion of its 50th workers." I do implore the Union's leadership to pursue those goals with the knowledge that partnership in the spirit of tripartism will

> congratulations and best wishes for many more years of service to your membership.

The women of the Union were champions, risking their lives to prevent the setting of fires and the bombing of public buildings ...voluntarily serving their government and country.



## A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE UNION by Lila Simon

s I reflect on the work done and life. My husband, Raymond Simon, also and-buy sales in an effort to strengthen the pickets, and other industrial actions taken, in brainstorming the motto, "Unity in and an annex to the existing structure. This it is evident that the founders, Sir George Diversity." Walter, Donald Halstead, Sir Keithlyn Smith, and others knew that they wanted to members were very much involved in establish a "new union." And in spite of the bringing awareness to other women in members migrated, and ill health difficulties and challenges encountered the community. This brought forth the hampered the mobility of other onceduring the process, the men and women formation of the Women's Group in 1972, dynamic personalities, thus removing held together as they knew the goal they started and spearheaded by Edris Knight, them from active participation. wanted to achieve.

recognition in all aspects of labour months later as an active member. relations throughout the Caribbean, Latin America and internationally. With women groups in every village all over risking their lives to prevent the setting of this connection, many members and the country; and under the auspices of fires and the bombing of public buildings. employees of the ABWU were given the the Union, the Women's Group organized They became watchers with the men, opportunity to go abroad to be trained in classes in typing, shorthand, spelling and night after night, resting on cardboard various disciplines in trade unionism, thus accounting. These classes were conducted outside various institutions, voluntarily enhancing the knowledge and function of by Mrs. John, Merlene Joseph, Cecile Harris- serving their government and country. its membership.

When November 7, 1978, I also became a The Women's Council hosted a number of upon me to carry on the Women's beneficiary of such training – not only in fund-raisers, including dances, barbecues, Council. Because of the victimization trade unionism, but in other aspects of fetes, jumble sales, flea markets, and bring- that many women and their families

As the Union grew, its female to the Union by the women. Ernie Dyer, Bessie John, Yvonne Henry,

Porter, Everette Jonas and Lila Simon. Music

recall the many meetings held, night played a pivotal role in the development union financially. Our efforts assisted in after night, and the demonstrations, of the Union, and was instrumental building a room at the back of the building is evidence of how much was contributed

As time went by, some of our

Between the period 1971 to Over the years, the Union gained and Ruth Joseph. I joined the group a few 1976 - during the administration of the Progressive Labour Movement (PLM) – the We worked to organize other women of the Union were champions,

In 1976, when the PLM lost the I joined the staff on was taught by Lois Lee and Amos Gloade. General Elections, the task was thrust

were experiencing, fear had begun efforts were still carried out, and gratitude gained was put into practice. taking over. Accordingly, persons began is in order for Hilson "Brother B" Baptiste, absenting themselves from meetings and Christophine Peterson, Nathalie Hurst, and congratulate the Antigua & Barbuda from the union, itself – which decreased Esme Baptiste and Rex James. membership.

was high, and with the then authorities situations that had developed, and, since development. threatening they would turn Freedom Hall then, no one has taken over the reins to into a warehouse, this created a greater revive the group. challenge for me to carry on the group effectively. But those of us who remained and I continued as a staff member of the my hope is to see the leadership maintain did not give up, and with God's help, I Union in the position of accounts clerk, its upward mobility by creating new struggled on.

class and added new classes, such as and workshops and official functions - Long live the Antigua & Barbuda dress-making; food preparation; cake preparing and cooking for them. During Workers' Union! baking and icing; health and nutrition; my tenure at the ABWU I enjoyed my Fund-raising worked immensely and the knowledge and exercise and health.

then moved to the rank of office manager. challenges for its membership. I was able to continue the typing I maintained the organization of seminars

I take this opportunity to salute Workers Union (ABWU) on its celebration of In 1996, I resigned from leading 50 years and for its achievements in trade The fever of political discomfort the Women's Council because of certain unionism and participation in national

> Because of my involvement in the Union from its inception, my love and My role did not end there, however, affection for its success have grown, and



**PICTURED ABOVE ARE the Founding Members of the Women's** Council.



## WILBUR PURCELL:

Making his Security Services 'Special'

is company is the largest private- empire. sector employer, with a roster of nation that prides itself on its diversity, officers, their nationalities, and their work known to give second chances. And thirds. Special Security Services (SSS) is all that habits. And although SSS is unionized and Why? Because he is a boss with a worker's and more, employing persons from employs a variety of persons to see to the sensibilities and knows that employees are Antigua & Barbuda, the OECS and the human resource and industrial relations people first. CARICOM region.

managing director of SSS Ltd., was born would describe it. At a distance, he can SSS headquarters offers subsidized meals in Curacao to Antiguan and Grenadian spot prohibited false eyelashes or a hairdo and a "charge" service in its cafeteria, parents and migrated to Antigua at that prevents a cap from sitting properly as well as cable television and gym the age of 11 years. After completing his on a female security officer's head. Not equipment in the staff area. This is so secondary education, his penchant for that he does not appreciate the vanity; that security officers who are on call and, law and order and the protection of others but he knows, in an industry now virtually therefore, mandated to be on the premises led him to join the Royal Police Force of dominated by women, that safety comes have activities to occupy them. Antigua & Barbuda. After eleven 11 years first - for staff as well as clients. As he is as an officer, he saw that his future lay in famous for saying, "A security guard must rests with him, Purcell has a reputation crime prevention and detection, and he never assume - what? - anything ....." went forward to meet it.

SSS is the premiere name in the security speak one-on-one with security officers have come to know his guiding principles, industry. It offers services ranging from and managers, alike - about their including another well-worn quote: "The stationed guards at business places to housing; about their credit purchases; faintest of marks is better than the best of specialized officers, trained to international about education opportunities; about in- memory." standards, at the airport; from armed house interest-free loans; and about every officers to armoured transportation; and challenge that faces workers who, often, that a 12-hour day is not possible for this from residential and commercial electronic are without family on island. sophisticated security systems and surveillance devices to standalone security scholarships for a number of administrative as he explains it, there is always a busy systems.

hands-on boss at his huge All Saints Road education. His company has also paid for the company he built from the ground up headquarters, and you will quickly deduce driving classes for many administrative always delivers the best service the first that Mr. Purcell is about people - both and security workers. Purcell is known, in time. customers and staff. One would think that rostering, to accommodate even workers' with such a large number of employees, religious schedules. After all, he quips, "SSS but Purcell takes a practical approach to there would be significant distance won't come between God and man." between them and the owner. But not so. Purcell practices an open-door policy style could be described as aggressive, is stupidity. The third must be arrogance, (though staff have to be prepared to wait and is often heard saying, "This is a dog- and this becomes a case for removal...." to see this busy man); and, in an almost eat-dog world" when referring to the He also insists, in the customers' interest, in paternalistic manner, the boss is involved security industry. However, he ensures his "truth at all costs." in all the details - small and large - of his company puts its workers first. To date,

aspects of the business, Purcell, himself, is

has provided He employees who have all successfully season coming up. He is not complaining, But spend some time with the completed their CXC studies and tertiary however, because his aim is to ensure that



all entitled employees have received Heknowsthenamesofasurprising vacation pay, sick pay, maternity pay approximately 850 staff. And in a number of the hundreds of security and retroactive pay. Purcell has also been

Accordingly, in addition to the Wilbur Purcell, the founder and "in the middle," as a popular soca song expected amenities in the workplace, the

Although final decision-making for discussion, calling several meetings a Purcell's human side, coupled day to iron out problems as soon as they Now, 30 years after its founding, with his "personal touch," allows him to arise. Out of these meetings, his managers

> Naturally, his proactive style means managing director, and "vacation" is just partial another word in the dictionary – because,

Not that this always happens; things going wrong: "The first time," he He admits that his management said, "is a mistake. The second mistake The man behind the big desk is always looking out for new developments, innovative equipment, and expanded services to keep abreast of the changing needs of business. So where does Purcell see his company going as it enters its fourth decade? Regional: That's where. He has his heart set on expanding into the island of Grenada, where he has already registered his company, as well as into St. Lucia, St. Kitts and St. Vincent, and into Barbados, where he has plans for a merger.

By year end, he expects to have started business in at least three of these islands, while Jamaica, Guyana and Trinidad are longer-term prospects. Given that a large Trinidadian security firm is currently operating in Antigua once more, breaking into that country would appear to present more than the usual challenges. But Purcell is undaunted. "I'm going to take the fight to that turf," he stated, then went on to explain that Trinidadian businessmen would be part of that venture.

He is not fazed by the reputation of St. Kitts and St. Lucia as high-crime jurisdictions, either. He believes that he will be welcomed as a provider of employment opportunities, and with selective recruiting plus proper training, he expects to be successful.

On the home front, Purcell's ambition is to offer a scholarship – he hopes by next year – through which a local police officer can be trained in polygraph testing. He believes it will be a boost to the Force's crime-detection efforts. Purcell spoke modestly of receiving a citation for bravery when he was a young corporal. He has a phenomenal memory – not only of his feats, however, but of those who helped him to start and grow his business and contributed to his success. Among them he gave credit to God, first, and then, in glowing terms, to businessman Aziz Hadeed. Hadeed, he said, imbued him with confidence because of the great trust he showed in him. "He caused me to step up to the plate," Purcell stated.

Assistance and encouragement also came from George Ryan, and financial guidance from several supportive bank managers. From among many other persons, he singled out Pascal Hughes for assisting him in getting his first house; Jeff Hadeed for accommodating his first order of uniforms; Alfred Shaw for services without charge; and Dr. Malvern Spencer, form teacher, and Vincent Benjamin, school principal, for helping him transition from student to entrepreneur. And from his days with the Police Force, he commended Sir Wright George and colleagues Gibbon Ferguson and Cleveroy Byrne for their encouragement and advice over the years.

The SSS managing director is also known for a paraphrase of the quote, "A man persuaded against his will is of the same persuasion still." But Wilbur Purcell needs no persuasion. For 30 years, he has proven he has the will to succeed....

## "NEXT TO EXCELLENCE IS THE APPRECIATION

OF IT." William Makepeace Tharckeray

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## A WIG TOO BIG, **BUT MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!**

#### by Justin L. Simon, QC

The Antigua & Barbuda Workers' Union had paved the way for Industrial Court judgments to be reviewed by the Privy Council...

y first appearance before the Privy ber 1992.

pal of the Sir Hugh Wooding Law School hectic Christmas Season! from 1973 to 1975, and I had been one of his adoring students then. From time to time, gal advice, called off the strike. But when strike action - the Privy Council held, firstly, in reverent tones, he would speak of the the workers returned to work on Decem- that a judgment from the Industrial Court Privy Council and its procedures and for- ber 25 and 26, the employers refused to constitutes "civil proceedings" from which malities. "Whenever the usher calls: 'Coun- accept them, except if they signed new an appeal "as of right" lies to the Privy sel ... Court is in session,' you must enter the contracts of employment. So, legal action Council, by virtue of Section 122 of the Conhallowed chamber slowly, and bow before was promptly filed in the High Court. Byron stitution of Antigua & Barbuda. Secondly, the seven Lord Justices sitting at the huge J (now Sir Dennis Byron, president of the it held that the workers had been unfairly semi-circular desk filled with case files and CCJ) declared that the strike action did not dismissed in circumstances that "were not texts of legal learning," he would advise us amount to an abandonment of their em- in accordance with the principles of good sternly.

membered; and wanting to do my former employers then dismissed the workers ef- ingly, be paid. lecturer proud, I bowed deeply – and then fective January 31, 1984 on the ground that the lawyer's wig I had borrowed from my they had participated in an illegal strike. big-headed friend began falling off my head.... But the important thing was our ately filed in the Industrial Court on behalf be reviewed by the Privy Council. It was mission there: It's a tale which must be told. of the workers, claiming unfair dismissal a "first" that has been followed many Flashback to December 1983, when Brian and compensation. Following a hearing times over the ensuing years by the Union Gonsalves, as president of the AH&TA, be- which spread over 26 days, between June (against Bryson's Shipping and Cable & gan negotiating with the Antigua Workers 1987 and November 1988, on May 18, 1989 Wireless, to name a few) and by other ag-Union (as it then was), Baldwin Spencer the Court unanimously held the dismissals grieved litigants. and Keithlyn Smith over the terms of a new to have been unfair and awarded comcollective agreement for hotel workers. pensation. The employers appealed to the ciation with the Union and my appearanc-With no agreement reached, the matter Court of Appeal and won. And that set the es before the Privy Council as lead council, was referred to the minister of labour, then stage for a momentous step, a first in our I having discarded the "falling wig" for the Hon. Adolphus Freeland, whose com- legal history. promise the Union accepted but the employers rejected.

Industrial Court, thereby making the con- ed but nervous me. Dr. Ramsahoye had been princi- tinuation of the strike illegal. Such was our

When we applied for leave to appeal to the Privy Council, the Court of Ap-

On December 23, two events oc- peal held that no appeal lay to the Privy Council was as junior counsel to Dr. curred simultaneously: The Union called Council on judgments from the Industrial Fenton Ramsahoye, SC, on an ap- the workers in the hotel sector out on a Court. The Union then engaged the serpeal by the Antigua Workers Union in the strike, which caused a near-total shut-vices of Dr. Ramsahoye, SC, to fight the famous case against the Antiqua Hotels down of the hotel industry, and the min- matter in London before our highest ap-& Tourism Association (AH&TA), in Decem- ister of labour referred the dispute to the pellate court; and with him went an excit-

Both decisions of the Court of Appeal were overturned, and on February 1, On December 25, the Union, on le- 1993 – nine years and two months after the ployment and held that their contracts of industrial relations practice," and that the So, on that December day, I re- service were not thereby terminated. The awards of compensation must, accord-

By this historic judgment, the Antigua & Barbuda Workers Union had paved Proceedings were then immedi- the way for Industrial Court judgments to

> And so, too, began my close assogood!

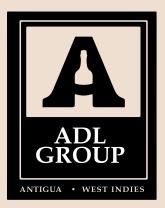


wishes to congratulate the Antigua and Barbuda Workers' Union

on its

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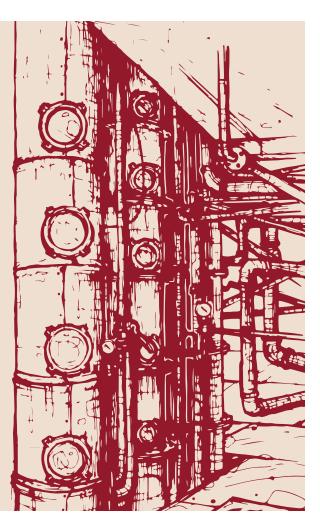
The Antigua Distillery Group of Companies Congratulates the Antigua Workers Union on their 50th Anniversary Celebrations. It has been a Pleasure working with you and we look forward to Strengthening our relationship in the future.

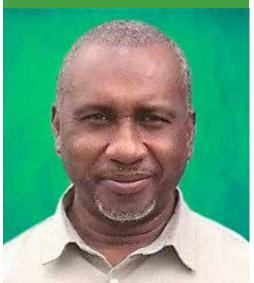














#### FRATERNAL GREETINGS **50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS**

Strength through Unity

he Banking, Insurance and General Workers Union (BIGWU) wishes to congratulate the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU) on the occasion of your 50th Anniversary being celebrated in May 2017.

This is indeed a momentous occasion as your Union, over the past 50 years, has become one of the most significant institutions in Antigua & Barbuda, bargaining for the rights of workers and protecting their jobs with consummate confidence and efficiency. Your track record of success in Antiqua & Barbuda resonates throughout the Caribbean.

Your Union is also noted for its contribution to the development of labour codes and jurisprudence throughout the Caribbean and also by your participation in the Caribbean Congress of Labour, The International Labour Organisation Caribbean activities, as well as several global union federations, including UNI Global Union to which several other Caribbean unions are also affiliated.

The current global socio-political and economic crisis in our region demands the proactive approach of strong unions with capable leadership. ABWU has weathered all of the inevitable challenges that are confronting the entire Labour Movement in the Caribbean region. Workers are daily being retrenched or laid off and wage negotiations are being affected negatively as a result of this crisis.

BIGWU salutes the Antigua & Barbuda Workers Union and congratulates both your present and past executive teams for having the vision to chart a course for the Union that has brought you to this landmark achievement.

BIGWU commends your Union on this grand occasion and conveys greetings to your entire membership as you celebrate a welldeserved acknowledgement for your achievements.

Solidarity Greetings

**TREVOR JOHNSON** GENERAL SECRETAY



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# Congratulations from CIBC FirstCaribbean

**CIBC FirstCaribbean** wishes to extend **congratulations** to the **Antigua & Barbuda Workers Union** for reaching the prestigious landmark of **50 years of service** to the nation.



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## THEN & NOW

The Antigua and Barbuda Workers' Union

Groundbreaking of the ABWU Headquarters - 1971

Renovation of Freedom Hall -2017





#### Congratulations to the Antigua & Barbuda Workers' Union!

Antigua and Barbuda's hospitality industry sets an incredible standard for the Caribbean, and this is only possible through the dedication and commitment of our people.

With great pride in our employees, we are pleased to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Antigua & Barbuda Workers' Union. Thank you for everything you do to promote and protect the workers of this great nation!



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on this the occasion of the celebration plished. You have done well. of your 50th Anniversary under the theme "At Fifty: New Generation, New Challenges your theme, that successes gained in the business approaches, Government regula-For Workers."

most sustained mass-based institutions in cult. Not just because the employer class has trade union response must be just as fast. the world. Some of the oldest unions in Brit- an increasing appetite for wealth and deain are over one hundred years. The Antigua creasing willingness to share that wealth but are hallmarks of the Antigua and Barbuda and Barbuda Workers' Union is half that; no as well because Governments are inclined to Workers' Union and the Caribbean Congress mean feat.

a significant change. Not just change, im- sovereign states. provement, because one can change for the worse.

years, you must ask whether you can see differently than did our forefathers and they the direct hand of the ABWU in national and want different things, at a different pace. Solidarity forever, regional improvement of working class citi- They want things now. Your proactive recogzens. If you cannot, then there is work to do nition of that fact bodes well for your ability in the next fifty years.

I am confident, however, that you will be able into the movement. to see how well you have developed and en- Clearly you are willing to change approaches

42

he Executive Committee of the Carib- hanced the lives of working people and their and tackle actual and anticipated challengbean Congress of Labour greets you families. Be proud of what you have accom- es and that in itself is a changed methodol-

nothing; reaching significant numeric mile- on international indices. Many are almost

When you reflect on your past fifty unions. Youth see things in the world of work stone. to attract, harness and empower the youth **Gillian Alleyne** into the movement.

ogy. You must be able to respond quicker Clearly, you recognize, based on and therefore remain relevant. Changes in past fifty years are challenged now and tions, international practices and individual Unions are some of the oldest and making new strides will be increasingly diffi- expectations are mercurial in pace and the

Stability, credibility and soundness forget their social responsibilities and focus of Labour is justifiably proud of its affiliate. However, mere existence means on "balanced budgets" and looking good You have done well; you continue to do well.

The Caribbean Congress of Labour stones means nothing if you have not made corporate in their approach to running our salutes you, the Antigua and Barbuda Workers' Union on the attainment of 50 years. Your theme addresses the gener- Please accept our most profound best wishational challenges which confront trade es and solidarity as you celebrate this mile-

Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversarv

Congratulations to the ABWU on celebrating 50 years, from all of us at



Contact us at C&W Business by connecting to our website at www.cwcbusiness.com.



SALUTE FROM THE ITF **TO THE ANTIGUA & BARBUDA WORKERS' UNION ON THE OCCASION OF THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY** 

n behalf of the entire ITF, I would you and your union's future.

to its proudly proclaimed mission to pro- movement that is the best defense against achieve. You make us feel proud also. We, mote and protect the social and econom- those attacks on workers. It is trade unions like you, look forward to the next 50 years ic wellbeing of workers by defending their such as the ABWU that stand up to those of trade unionism in Antigua & Barbuda, rights and interests. I believe that we can kinds of injustices and exploitation, as part and worldwide. all learn from your motto, "Solidarity Forev- of an internationally-minded community er." Solidarity is our business, the ITF's guid- of trade unionists that can join togething aim, and we know that we can rely on er and defend the weak and oppressed. Stephen Cotton you to help us uphold it.

like to congratulate you as you cel- challenges set to working men and wom-That is what the ITF stands for and that is General Secretary

Uphold it we must, in the face of the what you are helping us to achieve.

For half a century, the ABWU has ebrate this truly important anniver- en by globalization, casualization and the represented the working people of Antisary – and also express our best wishes for undermining of public services, such as gua & Barbuda. We have no doubt that transport. As your mission statement as- you feel justly proud of that record and Since 1967, the ABWU has lived up serts, it is a strong and united trade union what you have achieved – and continue to





## FIXING FOR THE FUTURE



TI



ongratulations on behalf on the entire 20 million-strong UNI Global Union family on ABWU's 50th anniversary! You are leaders in Antigua, leaders in the Caribbean, leaders in the Americas and respected worldwide.

The theme of your anniversary celebrations is "At Fifty: New Generations, New Challenges for Workers," which resonates with UNI's commitment to ensuring the Future World of Work is a fit place for workers.

Under the strong leadership of President Esrome Roberts and David Massiah, ABWU has been at the vanguard of positive change not only in Antigua & Barbuda, but the entire Caribbean region.

ABWU is an important member of UNI Global Union and has taken up the gauntlet of the challenges presented by the ongoing digital revolution, which is transforming the work-place. We, like you, recognise the depth of the challenges – but also the size of the opportunities. The changes that we have seen in the workplace in the last 50 years will be dwarfed by the changes we will see in the next 30-50 years. We know that ABWU, along with the rest of the UNI family, is ready to fight for its members and all working people in this Brave New Digital World. New challenges, yes, but it means you must continue your tradition to mobilize, to negotiate and to keep growing.

The motif of the ABWU is "Unity in Diversity," and the spirit of inclusion informs your work as it does ours. Indeed, "Including You" was the theme of our last UNI World Congress in Cape Town in 2014. But, above all, now is the time for action, to fight back against the neo-liberal wave which is sweeping the globe, not least from your northern neighbour, the United States, with deluded and dangerous President Trump. And that is why our World Congress next year in Liverpool will have the theme, "Making it Happen."

ABWU, you have made it happen for half a century, and we stand in solidarity with you and wish you all our best wishes to move on to a century. We know you will succeed with all the vision, passion and skill of Antigua's famous son Sir Viv Richards. Fifty not out, well done!"

Philip Jennings

UNI Global Union General Secretary

Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

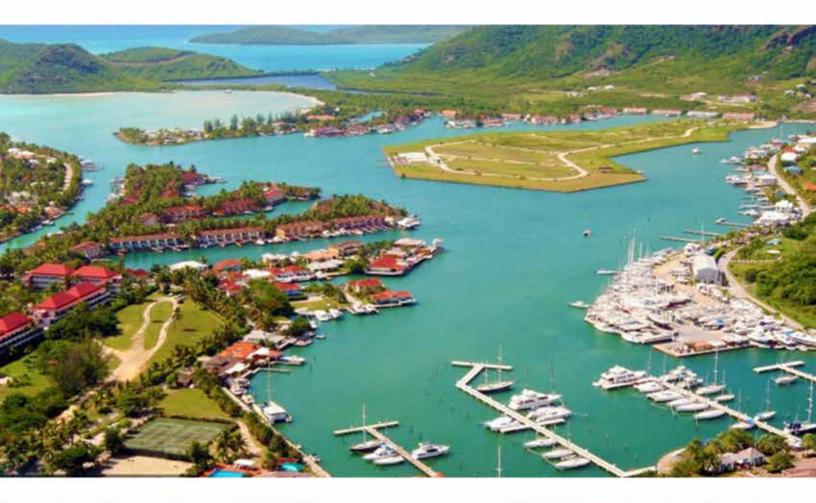


#### **MESSAGE FROM**

Philip Jennings UNI Global Union General Secretary



#### JOLLY HARBOUR Caribbean Developments (Antigua) Limited





TO THE Antigua & Barbuda Workers Union on their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

From Caribbean Developments (Antigua) Limited

#### **MESSAGE FROM THE IUF CARIBBEAN REGIONAL SECRETARY** Antiqua & Barbuda Workers Union 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations



celebrations.

the working class, your country and, working class solidarity. It was in your as it strives to be relevant in the work living. country, over 20 years ago, that the IUF environment. launched its Caribbean Regional Office and elected the first Regional Committee to be effective, it must take the necessary milestone in the life of your Union. at the first Regional Conference.

included in the sixteen (16) trade union which it operates. centres from 10 countries in the region.

n behalf of the IUF Caribbean including Bermuda, in attendance. The Anniversary celebrations at a point in Over the years, you have served Executive Committee, respectively.

The theme of the celebrations, "At

strategic decision to be able to function

At the staging of the IUF 5th in the world's knowledge economy and Regional Conference, held in Guyana, on the technological revolution that are Clipton Grant January 17 and 18, 2017, your union was impacting the working environment in IUF Regional Secretary

> You are staging your 50th

Regional Committee and Brother conference did not have any hesitation time when your union and the regional RonOswald, IUFGeneral Secretary, to elect your own Sister Cindy Blanchard and global trade union movement are I extend our heartfelt congratulations to and Brother Kem Riley as 1st Vice President required to take bold steps to strengthen your Union on this, its 50th Anniversary to the IUF Caribbean Regional Committee the working-class organisations and and 2nd Alternative Member to the IUF to protect the gains achieved through sacrifice and struggles.

We are hoping that this 50th by extension, the region and the global Fifty: New Generation and New Challenges celebration will give you the courage to working class with distinction. Your union's for the Workers," is recognition of your move forward with renewed strength to membership with IUF over the years is a Union's leadership and appreciation confront the challenges, as you re-commit clear demonstration of the impact of your in changing demographic challenges yourselves to serving your members and leadership on the need for international confronting the working-class movement, to create a better life and standard of

> Congratulations again and best For the trade union movement wishes as you celebrate this important

24 years

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31 years

From: The Management team



20 years



Standing from Left to right: Kem Riley, Edlorn Williams, Mlissa Joseph, Onika Williams, Kisha Gomes, Esrome Roberts, Samantha Francis, Stacey Baltimore, Stacy Ladoo, Fernando Samuel, Clarence Crump.





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1<sup>ST</sup> VICE PRESIDENT BRO. ALDO MCCOY





2<sup>ND</sup> VICE PRESIDENT SIS. CINDY BLANCHARD



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Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



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- Bro. Michael Roach
- Bro. Walter Armstrong
- Bro. Beresford Belle
- Sis. Lynette Nicholas
- Bro. Hilson Baptiste
- Bro. Frank Lloyd

## 2016 Awardees

- Bro. Keithroy Henry
- Bro. Vere Christian
- Bro. Leon "Kuma" Rodney
- Bro. David Abbott
- Bro. James "Tanny" Rose
- Bro. Keith Athanze
- Bro. St Lawrence de Freitas
- Sis. Emelda James
- Bro. David Jonas
- Sis. Debbie Symister
- Bro. Everod Roberts



- Sis. Glennette Francis
- Sis. Tessie James
- Bro. Wesley Barrow
- Bro. Shelly Clarke
- Bro. Harry Josiah
- Bro. Steve Lake
- Bro. Joseph Jones
- Bro. Daniel Tittle
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