

THE SUNSHINE AWARDS

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News Release

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For Immediate Release

Co-founder of Sunshine Awards Hall of Fame Says Dr. Eric Williams Vision Is Still Relevant

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New Jersey, USA, June 20, 2007 ----- Today, the Sunshine Awards organization released the complete text of Dr. Hollis “Chalkdust” Liverpool’s lecture, at the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Eric Williams Memorial Lecture series which was held at the Port of Spain Public Library on May 28, 2007. The Eric Williams Memorial Lecture Series is promoted annually by the Eric Williams Memorial Committee. Dr. Liverpool is the co-founder of the Sunshine Awards Hall of Fame.

Dr. Liverpool’s lecture titled “***Dr. Eric Williams, on Carnival, Culture and Development***” was very well received. As one member of the audience noted, “Dr. Liverpool’s lecture was an education for me. He gave me an in depth view of Dr Williams’ vision for Caribbean culture while at the same time underscoring his own observations with the skill and craftsmanship of a calypsonian”

The following is a complete text of Dr. Liverpool’s Lecture:

#### **One Caribbean: Dr. Eric Williams’ on Carnival, Culture and Development**

(Calypso: Let the Jackass sing; 4<sup>th</sup> chorus).

Mr. Chairman, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen! Greetings! It is indeed an honor and a privilege to be selected as your guest speaker for this 26<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorial lecture that seeks to ascertain whether Eric Williams’ vision for Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean is still relevant.

My topic for this historic occasion is: *“One Caribbean: Eric Williams on Carnival, Culture and Development.”* For those of you who may not be aware of my association with Dr. Williams, let me begin by saying that I was first introduced to him when in 1965 as a student of Government Training College for teachers in Port of Spain, Trinidad, he visited our European History class as I was speaking on the theme: “1848; the year of Revolution.” He listened to me for about five minutes then tapped me on my shoulder. From that little tap, Hollis Liverpool the historian was born, for I changed options then, read all his works and dedicated myself to the realm of history. On several occasions afterwards, as Secretary of the Calypsonians’ Association, I met with him. We would discuss carnival, calypso and culture generally. Sometimes he sent for me to either sing at the party’s convention and dances, even though some of my songs attacked his policies, or to discuss his development programme, culture, in his opinion, being a very important ingredient for their success. In 1968, not many know, I was dismissed from the Teaching Service for gaining “emoluments under the Crown while being employed as a public servant.” I was immediately reinstated when Williams made the statement: “Ah don’t know what they humbugging the young man for.” That statement of Williams leading to my immediate restoration to my former post is proof of his influence on Trinidadian, and I daresay, Caribbean society.

You would have noticed that, as usual, I began my address with a calypso and the verse I just sang was taken from a calypso which I sang in the early 1980s entitled “PNM Women,” but to most people it is “Let the jackass sing.” That was Dr. Williams’ masterly double-edged public response to a few PNM women who had complained to him about certain songs I sang. Ladies and gentlemen, years ago, when I had just started my singing career, as a Calypsonian<sup>1</sup> I submitted an article to a newspaper on the development of calypso. The Editor of the newspaper in Trinidad and Tobago, my country of birth, informed me to my face, that I was only a Calypsonian and, therefore, couldn’t write such an article. He was of course insinuating that calypsonians were simply singers and not academics. Let me begin by saying that Dr. Eric Williams saw the calypsonian in a different light. Don’t be fooled by his words: “let the jackass sing.” That was, essentially, Williams the Trinidadian; that was Williams the calypsonian; that was Williams the satirist. Indeed, Williams the intellectual, saw the calypsonian as an academic and indeed more than an academic. For Williams, the calypsonian was a political scientist in his own right. Hence the words of the calypso:

*“Without kaiso lavway, who go jump and sway?  
What will steelbands play?  
The calypsonian makes me understand public opinion.”<sup>2</sup>*

It is my hope that before I take my seat, you would be in a position to better understand the mind set of Williams in terms of his imagery of the calypso and calypsonian..

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<sup>1</sup> I sing calypsos as Calypsonian Chalkdust.

<sup>2</sup> Lyric from the calypso “Let the Jackass Sing” sung in 1974 by Chalkdust. (**First Time Around**, G.S Straker Recording 1974.)

In 1957, when the Carnival Bands` Union<sup>3</sup> demanded that their prizes be raised from \$8,000 to \$16,000 TT, and together with many Calypsonians, Sparrow and Lord Melody included, planned to boycott the national carnival competitions, the newly formed Government of Dr. Eric Williams instituted a Carnival Development Committee (CDC) concertedly to develop the Carnival. The fight for more money for calypsonians then is well documented by calypsonians Superior and Sparrow. Superior sang:

*She gets refrigerators, machines, radios and even motor cars;  
Sometimes a Simmons bed.  
All the king gets is a brass crown on his head.*

Sparrow sang:

*I intend to put all mi calypsoes on the shelf;  
Let them keep the prize in Savannah for dey own self.  
And let the queen run the show  
With she fridge and she radio.  
Who want to go could go up dey,  
But me aint going no way.<sup>4</sup>*

(Hear songs of Superior and Sparrow) Williams' Carnival Development Committee promised at the time to provide better prizes and facilities and to work hand in hand with the prevailing management structure, the Guardian Committee. Contrary to what many believed, Dr. Williams did not dismiss the Guardian Committee; they, as if by consented attrition, dismissed themselves and wished the CDC every success. Since then till now, the CDC has run every carnival celebration in Trinidad and Tobago. Moreover, most of the places that hold Trinidad-style carnivals in the U.S.A., Canada and England, and most Caribbean states in the archipelago from Jamaica to the Netherland Antilles, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guyana in South America, have instituted a Carnival Development Committee to manage their carnivals. They have all utilized the Trinidad and Tobago model. They have not, however, as I shall show, instituted the full Eric Williams model, but again their acceptance of Williams' model of carnival-management is proof of his influence on the region.

In 1968 at a calypso audition for selecting persons for the Calypso Theatre which was then managed by the CDC and at which Williams was present, (Note that Williams saw an audition to select calypsonians as a very important exercise – important enough to warrant his presence) in an aside and private conversation with him, he told me and I quote: **“I have instituted the Carnival Development Committee. Bring all the calypsonians into the fold. The word is development now. Don't forget ... development.”** Dr. Williams way back in 1957 had this profound vision. He was only one year in office at the time but already he had seen the need for development of the artform. Hence, he did not dismiss the Guardian Committee. When Mr. George Goddard, the Steelband Association President, questioned him about the role of the

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<sup>3</sup> An organization representing the masquerade then.

<sup>4</sup> Sung by Superior and Sparrow 1957; Personal Collection of lyrics by the author.

Guardian Committee in relation to the CDC, Williams felt that the Guardian Committee would carry out the working or operational aspects of the carnival in terms of competitions and prizes and the CDC would serve as the instrument to develop the artforms inherent in Carnival.<sup>5</sup> That, my dear friends, was the original Williams model. Since then, all the CDC's in the Caribbean merely run their carnivals; few carry out any intrinsic development chores; fewer still indicate any clear functional understanding of the meaning of development.

There was a time, I would say up to ten years ago, when development was emphasized only as a process of economic growth.<sup>6</sup> In terms of carnival, it meant the procurement of chairs, tents, a suitable venue for the festivity, and more and better prizes for the participants. Governments, too, looked forward to increasing their tourist potential and thereby enhancing their economy. Today, distinguished economists and social scientists no longer pursue that limited conceptual view, but see development also in terms of the holistic social progress of human beings.<sup>7</sup> In other words, the awarding of prizes to carnival artists or the generating of large sums of money from tourism or the increased sales, especially from alcohol, cannot be intrinsic carnival development. A member of the CDC in Trinidad once boasted of the huge financial returns from the sale of beer that carnival brought about. He was trying to show that his group was in some way responsible for increased sales and thereby increased money for the government to spend on roads etc. Williams knew all of that as the lyrics to one of my calypsos will show.<sup>8</sup> (Sing Verse 4 of Let the jackass sing.) But while all that may be good for the economy, it is neither development of the artform nor progressive development of the artist. What then is development? What was Eric Williams' vision for the development of Carnival?

As early as 1965, Williams, in an address to the graduating teachers of Government Training College, noted their participation in events cultural (they had sung calypsos and played the pan at the function). He however informed them of the need for them not only to partake in cultural events, but to make the culture become part of the educational practices, if any human development was to take place in the lives of their charges. In other words, Williams was saying that there can be no development without an appropriation of one's culture. When then he instituted the CDC, and stressed the word 'development' at the 1968 audition, I was again reminded of his consistent dream.

The World Commission on Culture and Development which was headed by former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar, had studied the problem over a six-year period. Its report, published by UNESCO in 1995, reflects Dr. Williams' vision very nicely. I quote: ***“Development divorced from its human or cultural context is growth without a soul.”***<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Eric Williams in reply to George Goddard, Calypso Theatre Audition 1968, CDC Office, Sackville St. POS. Trinidad.

<sup>6</sup> Gordon K. Lewis, **The Growth of the Modern West Indies** (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1968). See Chapter xvi. See also W.A.Lewis, “Industrial Development of the British West Indies,” in **Caribbean Economic Review 2** (1 -61).

<sup>7</sup> Bhoendradatt Tewarie & Roger Hosein, “Development Strategy in Trinidad and Tobago” in **Independent Thought and Caribbean Freedom: Essays in Honor of Lloyd Best** (Trinidad: UWI, St. Augustine, 2003), 309 - 352.

<sup>8</sup> Let the Jackass Sing” in G. Straker Recordings, 1974.

<sup>9</sup> **Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development** (New York: Unesco, 1995), 1 -10.

The Commission is stating here two outstanding premises. First, development must be seen in terms of human beings having the opportunity to choose a full, satisfying, valuable and valued way of living together: that is, the flourishing of human existence in all its unified forms and as a whole. Secondly, the Commission is saying that the human being cannot be developed if one is divorced from one's culture or soul motif. In other words, a person cannot be developed or consider himself or herself developed, if that person has no ties with the culture of his or her domain.

If this point of reference is generally acceptable and Carnival and its concomitant behaviors link the West Indian to his culture, then in the Caribbean especially, where, historically, carnival means so much to so many as a genre of art, art- in- movement with music, song and play, and transposes itself into functional art, then it must be welded into the elements that are basic to our development. May I remind you that for us in the Caribbean, carnival is a concatenation of things: It is artistic movement; it is sound, it is song, it is employment; it implies food and drink. It is a profusion of color and it is gaiety, fete, and lavish feast. It is what keeps our British and North American friends coming; it is what keeps us going to our British and North American friends. It is celebration and annual ritual of being human. It is, to a large extent, what keeps BWIA (Caribbean Airlines) flying; it is foreign exchange; it is for many their only payroll; it is a veritable harbinger of blessings and of woes. For us in the Caribbean, then, there can only be an arid education, no centered development, no holistic schooling or training, without a directional focus on the psychical carnival values. Small wonder that Theodore Sealy who wrote a biography of Williams noted: "he was an avid follower of Carnival." He could be seen in jacket without tie in the savannah and sometimes in Invaders steelband.<sup>10</sup> Some years ago, I attended a conference of Ministers of Culture of Latin America, held in Nicaragua, and they came to the cogent conclusion that Carnival must be seen as "the rhythm of our development."

Ladies and Gentlemen, yesteryear, there was talk also of sustainable development. It meant development that met the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Today, in keeping with Williams' vision, sustainable development must embrace more than the physical environment which economic growth must maintain in compliance with nature for the well-being of things. Maintenance, replacement and growth of capital assets, and renewable resources must of necessity become formatted in the modern definition of sustainability. Therefore, besides physical capital, human capital has to be maintained in un-severed body and spirit. Today, when progressive social scientists speak about the cultural aspect of sustainability in that they are saying that culture, or the progressive pattern of behavior of a populace must not be seen as something static or as an instrument for sustaining something else, Williams thought likewise and would have been extremely happy. For in Williams' mind, culture must be seen as an ideal of a particular *modus operandi* that embraces all functional development.<sup>11</sup> What, therefore, does this perspective of development espoused by Williams and a few progressive social scientists hold for the Carnival artform?

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<sup>10</sup> Theodore Sealey, **Caribbean Leaders**. Jamaica: Kingston Publishers Ltd. 1991. Page 200.

<sup>11</sup> See Isidore Okpewho, Carol Boyce Davies, and Ali A. Mazrui, eds. **The African Diaspora** (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).

It means Ladies and Gentlemen, first of all, that if we are to develop carnival in Britain, Miami, the Caribbean or elsewhere, there must be a great deal of concentration placed on the education of our people (no wonder he had loved Sparrow's calypso on Education; sing same) with a view to unearthing talent, developing skills, training administrators and practitioners, maintaining the human resource, documenting our past, ensuring the retention of our traditions, and recognizing the artistic creations and cultural expressions of our carnival population. Secondly, it means Governments and state agencies that are entrusted with the development of carnival must also develop cultural policies that are profoundly sensitive to and inspired by carnival itself. Such policies must demonstrate a different approach to funding of carnival projects in that cultural support must not be seen as a form of a hand out in response to the special plea of carnivalists,<sup>12</sup> but as a correction for market failure and a meaningful element in the support of productive growth. Governments and the private sector must match the ability of carnival to increase the GDP and bring about economic growth with a corresponding influx of financial and other resources.

All will agree, I am sure, that to produce a carnival band, to play a pan, to sing a calypso or to manage a carnival site-be it panyard or calypso tent-certain skills are needed. To manage a carnival site successfully calls for special administrative skills. Many persons do not see administrative and management skills at work in a carnival site;<sup>13</sup> they simply take these for granted. Deceased Lord Kitchener, who in his lifetime sang hundreds of calypsos on pan and pannist, told me that what drew him to the steelband is the fact that on his return to Trinidad from London in 1964, while all the pannists were practicing aimlessly and individually, giving rise to noise in the yard, when the captain struck the sides of the pan-Balang! Balang! Balang!-everyone stopped. The place grew silent. He was shocked. Such discipline in a panyard of all places!<sup>14</sup>

It is said by social scientists that in the field of management, human beings are the most difficult of the elements to manage. Had they studied carnival, they certainly would have found out that panmen and calypsonians are, most certainly, among the most difficult of all people to manage. Carl Jazzy Pantin who managed Kitchener's Revue Calypso Tent from 1965 to his death in 2004, when asked the reason for his success told me that besides being a manager, he had to be a friend, a referee, an advisor, a marriage counselor, a father, a tactician, and above all, a money lender who had to forget who owed him.<sup>15</sup> Surprisingly, these characteristics developed in the calypso tent by the Manager, represent fundamentals of modern management thought. Hugh Borde, the longest reigning captain of a steelband-he has been captain since 1948-told me that he learnt to steal his father's money and his mother's food to give to panmen or else the band would have broken up in the first year. He learnt too, to avoid steelband clashes with other steelbands and pannists by not taking any sides whatsoever when disputes arose.<sup>16</sup> Clearly, the management requirements for empathy and objectivity had developed naturally without the university lessons of the practicing psychologist. In 2003, there was a satirical calypso sung on Mr. Afong, a prominent bandleader in Trinidad. It was sung by a member of the NCBA<sup>17</sup> and was entitled "Ah Found the Thief."

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<sup>12</sup> Those involved in the production of Carnival.

<sup>13</sup> The Panyard, Calypso Tent, Mas Camp, Carnival Administrative Office or Carnival Museum

<sup>14</sup> Aldwyn Roberts (Lord Kitchener), Personal Conversation, P.O.S., Trinidad, 1968.

<sup>15</sup> Carl Pantin (Jazzy), Personal Conversation, P.O.S., Trinidad, 1986.

<sup>16</sup> Hugh Borde, Personal Conversation, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1992.

<sup>17</sup> NCBA – National Carnival Bands Association; Mr. Afong is the Chairman of the organization.

Besides skills of administration and management, producing the carnival band calls for skills in painting, welding, wire bending, designing, decorating, sewing, and above all, skills in the use of metals and other materials required for the construction of masks. Today the correct materials must be used to provide the masquerade with balance, resilience and movement, and to take into consideration weight and authenticity. The professional must forever be on the look out for modern or new synthetic materials to tap his creative spirit and still he has to wait for the further advance of adaptable technology from other fields, as science progresses.

In the area of pan-playing and tuning, everyone knows that it takes a special skill to play a pan well, but more so to tune it. When I was Director of Culture in Trinidad and Tobago,<sup>18</sup> my ministry decided to provide opportunities to obtain more pan tuners and welders for at the time there were only four known pan tuners in the entire island. At present, there are only six of them. To tune a pan at a professional level calls for years and years of training. This is at the level of the internationally recognized and gifted musician. The blending of pans calls for a different type of skill; so too is the arranging of music. Everyone is aware of this. Good arrangers were in such a demand that one man used to arrange for up to ten bands for carnival until Pan Trinbago, the national steelband body, put an end to the fiasco a few years ago. Skill in the reading of music saw, in 2002, European steelbands beating some top bands in Trinidad and Tobago in the World Steelband Competition.

In the discipline of calypso, the art of composing, singing, playing a musical instrument, reading music, and discerning different keys and rhythms are skills that all good calypsonians need to have. A few years ago, 1998 to be exact, a calypsonian in London asked me what I thought of his calypso. I replied that it was a good calypso, badly sung. He asked me to explain further. I simply replied: You need training. The stark look on his face was one of disbelief and painful surprise. He couldn't understand that calypsonians needed to be trained in the use of meter, rhyme, sequence of melody and even in the proper use of the microphone. (Give example of Cypher and Sparrow).

Over the years, Ladies and Gentlemen, there have been no formal schools to provide training for our carnival practitioners. Apprenticeship learning, however, has been quietly and subtly taking place. Our carnival artists and craftsmen have been trained in their art and craft under unwritten, but nevertheless, legal agreements that define the relationships between master and learner and the conditions of such relationships. Such training has sustained our carnival. Apprenticeship learning goes back to earliest times; it was organized in Egypt and Babylon to maintain craftsmen in large numbers, and by the 13<sup>th</sup> century, a similar practice reappeared in Western Europe with the emergence of the craft guilds, which supervised quality and methods of production and regulated conditions of employment for each occupational group in a town.

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<sup>18</sup> I served as Director from 1993 to 1999.

Today, Ladies and Gentlemen, new industries have created new needs. The instruction of airline stewardesses, for example, has become a highly developed operation for the major airlines. Television and sound-broadcasting organizations have introduced training schemes to improve the quality of their program services. At the U.N., there is a training scheme for the guides who conduct visitors around the building. In 1964, Britain initiated its Industrial Training Act that established training boards to supervise and manage training in industry. All over the world, agencies to train managers, craftsmen, artists and workers have begun. The rapid contemporary advance of technological change makes training a necessity in almost all walks of life. This is positively applicable to Carnival arts.

Ladies and Gentlemen, such new techniques as those introduced by Mr. Geraldo Viera<sup>19</sup> in Trinidad can be very instructive in our discussion. He has introduced electro-magnetizing methods for displaying fireworks on stage or pyrotechnics. One has to welcome technical innovation: new methods, new tools, new synthetics, new sources of power and increased uses of automaton since these have brought extensive changes in the past decade, and the rate of change tends to increase as time goes on. Steel rods, plastics and fiber glass sheeting and methods of molding using steel have overtaken paper Mache, mud and wood. Our people must be equipped to meet this change. To produce a carnival band, given the number of revelers today and the time frame needed to do so, calls for expert training in the skills needed. Similarly, to produce well-tuned steelbands and properly-recorded calypsos calls for the training of our talented sons and daughters in the carnival industry. Today, carnival has moved from a festival of mere festivity and fun into one of art and art movement and industry; it follows naturally, that to compete in the international world of carnival, the artists must be efficiently trained in the competencies and skills demanded by the industry.

In the recording industry, everyone today knows that to compete with the international market, calypso CD's must be of a high standard in terms of sound, musical arrangement, musical chords and musicianship. One simply has to go to a recording studio today to note the changes involved in the recording of a calypso. In 1968, when I first recorded, I had to sing along with the entire band. If any one made a mistake, the entire recording had to be re-started. Today, the recording is done individually, instrument by instrument, and the musicians simply have to record one verse of the song; the computer doubles up for the other verses and corrects all mistakes made. Today, I do not need all the musicians to gather in one studio; I can record my voice in Britain, put on the Bass in New York, put on the drums in Africa, the synthesizer in Toronto, the percussive rhythm in Boston, use the voices of my friends in Miami as chorus, and utilize the Police Band in Trinidad as the musical accompaniment. Moreover, I can mix and master the recording in Venezuela where it is cheaper and produce the CD's in New York where it is cheapest to do so. Developing the skills of artists to enable the world to see the magnificence of the masquerade, the steelband and the calypso was what Eric Williams foresaw; hence his appointment of the Carnival Development Committee. For his vision, we cannot bury him; hence I sang in 1998:

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<sup>19</sup> An Outstanding Bandleader in Trinidad and Tobago.

*Since 1981 when Eric Williams died,  
Ah dress for funeral in mi black suit and tie.  
In my mind Ah trying to bury his body,  
But politicians today they keep stopping me.  
Though is 17 years now that Eric met his death,  
Ah still dress in black; Ah can't bury him as yet.  
For where Dr. Williams embrace morality and good taste  
Today they replace that good taste with race.  
Chorus: Morality that was in Williams's day  
Has now changed to giving Ish his back pay.  
Is you scratch my back and I will scratch yours back  
So make your kick back from my contract – so darling  
Stop! Stop that funeral.  
Government contracts driving me up a wall.  
And when Ah see they bring back Miss Occah Seepaul,  
Ah can't bury Williams at all.*

I have a line there that says: Tho' he got blasted vex, he took his blows like a China wall, that's why Ah can't bury Williams at all.

In the area of education, it is to be noted, in keeping with Dr. Eric Williams' vision, that a person cannot be termed as educated if he or she is not grounded in their culture. Less you are not aware of what I am imputing; let me give you a few quick examples.<sup>1</sup> In 1974, at a secondary school in Couva, Trinidad, I listened to a History lesson from a teacher on the Amerindians. The teacher, Mr. Rudy Pigott used George Bailey's band<sup>20</sup> and its characters. The band was entitled: "Tears of the Indies." Secondly, I heard a teacher teach slavery using Sparrow's calypso "The Slave." As you, I am sure, realize, there is a calypso that can be utilized for every History lesson, for every Religious Education lesson and, indeed, for every lesson. (Sing Calypso Slave). Thirdly, I saw at the University of Lund, in Sweden, a professor using the steelpan to teach Physics.

Ladies and Gentlemen, every year on streets throughout the carnival world, thousands of Vikings, Romans, Egyptians, marines, sailors, tribal warriors, Chinese philosophers and Apache Indians-to name a few-roam in all their glory, teaching us thereby lessons in History, Sociology, Anthropology, Maths, Music and Science and yet very little of this rich and informative data reach the classroom. Moreover, it hasn't reached the halls of our universities, far less the primary and secondary schools of the Caribbean. We cannot call ourselves developed and have no understanding of the psychical elements driving the carnival on the streets; we can't be developed and still not be moved by the masses of human beings drawn into cohesion through natural bonding; we can't be developed and yet not wonder in awakened amazement why and how on carnival day the spirit of man can prevail without war, envy, greed, revenge, malice and not become students of this phenomenon in our universities and the classrooms of our children.

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<sup>20</sup> George Bailey – deceased carnival bandleader from Trinidad and Tobago.

Ladies and Gentlemen, our governments and universities in the Caribbean, North America and Britain know, to a certain extent, the role that carnival and culture plays and must play in the development of human beings. The problem is that they still see carnival as the masks of its practitioners and miss the greatness of its reality. In the same manner that some people saw Christ as merely the carpenter's son, so too they see carnival as belonging to the truants and lower-class miscreants of the society, while education for them breathes the air of higher altitudes and belongs to what some sociologists call "high culture," or what Orlando Patterson calls "Euro-West Indian."<sup>21</sup> The mere fact that the University of the West Indies bestows honorary degrees on our carnival practitioners is an apology and proof that they recognize their own failure to regard culture as a necessary ingredient of development. Sparrow was thus granted an honorary degree, but it came years after C.L.R. James upheld Sparrow's calypso on Federation as being the most profound paper on the subject.<sup>22</sup> Note that C.L.R. James called the calypso an academic paper.

In 1998, a University of the West Indies administrator informed me that I didn't qualify for a teaching post as professor, because I didn't produce enough academic papers. Imagine telling me this after I had produced records, CD's and 28 long-playing albums containing over 300 "papers." I am reminded, after having studied in North America, that progress in thinking takes longer to materialize itself in developing countries, than the apparent progress through physical consumables, like televisions, cell-phones, brand jeans, and HIV/Aids. And some church people still believe that the earth is the center of the universe that Evolution is a fairy tale and that carnival and calypso are abominations to mankind leading to the wide road of Hell. Somewhere in that milieu is positioned the UWI, at this point in time, while, no doubt, searching wistfully for a renaissance to make a meaningful contribution to the cultural growth of its own society and the population that pays for its existence. Perhaps we could attribute UWI's position to my grandmother who used to tell me that although "plenty cocks does crow on mornings, (but) everybody don't get up at the same time."

Ladies and Gentlemen, in 1991, while doing research at the University of Portland in Oregon, I happened to enter the public library in Oregon to look at an exhibition of African masks that I needed for my dissertation. I was struck and flabbergasted not only at the masks, but at the manner in which these masks were laid out. On enquiring, I found out that the curator for the exhibition was a Trinidadian. Of course, I rushed to find him. On finding him, I asked where he learnt his decorative and exhibition skills. He answered me in two words: "Carnival nuh!" Then he went on to tell me that he was being underpaid by the library personnel; others with less experience and skill were being paid much more than he, simply because he had no certificate to underscore his education. I am telling you this true story, so that you would understand the need for our carnival practitioners to be properly certificated.

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<sup>21</sup> Orlando Patterson, **Ethnic Chauvinism: The Reactionary Impulse** (New York: Stein and Day, 1977), 119-120.

<sup>22</sup> C.L.R. James, "The Federation: We Failed Miserably," Lecture in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, 1964.

There are thousands of carnival artists who not only make their living out of carnival, but who demonstrate outstanding skills in music, art, craftsmanship, leadership, management and sound, but who, because culture is not seen by the education system as the core of development, have no certificated proof of their own development. They walk our shores and the shores of Britain known only to and only recognized by the other practitioners like themselves. Logically, it must be one of the major functional roles of developing countries, in the elementary process of recognizing themselves and their worth to humanity, to acknowledge and proclaim the vital underpinning achievements of their human resource which is continuously devoted to the stability and sustainability of these countries. Here, the vision of Dr. Williams becomes perceptible in manifold applications. Williams, in case you don't know, visited every calypso tent during the official calypso season and learnt to laugh even if the songs sung were not in his favor. For example I sang "Clear your name to his shocked, amazed smile. (Sing: Clear yuh name). Williams appointed steelbandmen as advisors in the Public Service. He used the steelband at party and at national functions. Williams not only gave drum sets to a large number of steelbands, he visited hundreds of steelband yards and discussed with the pannists ownerships of the space they occupied.

Today, when steelband yards are considered the hallowed grounds of pannists, free from the legal tangles and underpinnings of the High Court, they have become so because of Williams' vision. I need not tell you too, that it was the application of Williams' vision that gave birth to the "Prime Minister's Best Village Programme" that has in itself given rise to the wealth of East Indian cultural traits like Chutney singing and Tassa drumming today.

The carnival world recognizes and pays for the wizardry of Boogie Sharpe;<sup>23</sup> our universities do not. The carnival world, the world of Miss Universe and the world of the Olympics hire the skills of Peter Minshall; the English-derived education system does not. In 1987, the Japanese ambassador in Trinidad praised band-leader Jason Griffith, who has been playing fancy sailor for over fifty years, for his efforts to display Japanese culture in a band entitled "the realm of Nipponese Wonder." The ambassador went on to say that Jason should be used "in the pursuit of international accord." The ambassador on behalf of Japan recognized Jason, but Jason has no certificate to show his skills. In 1984, Mr. J. O'Neil Lewis, then Trinidad's Ambassador in the U.S. openly told a crowd of patrons gathered at Howard University for a calypso show featuring Sparrow, Penguin and Chalkdust, that the three calypsonians had unearthed and pulled out more Trinidadians in Washington in one show, than the total number he had gathered throughout all his years as ambassador in Washington. None of the three singers have ever been officially recognized as ambassadors or given any diplomatic niceties for our contribution to the development of persons. And this brings me to today's illusion. Why have I been invited to address you?

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<sup>23</sup> Famous pannist and steelbandleader (Phase Two Pan Groove) in Trinidad and Tobago.

I have no certificate in calypso, but maybe it is because I have a Ph.D. in history and ethnomusicology. No person in the world can apply as yet for a job and put as his qualification the word calypsonian or pannist. No person in the world can apply for a bank loan and put as his or her asset the word masquerader. If we are to apply the word developed to the carnival artform, then an agency of international standing and repute must begin the process of granting awards at various levels to the hordes of professional pannists, masqueraders and calypsonians. In other words, a person must demonstrate certain skills before he is termed a pannist. Certification for the skills possessed by carnival practitioners will facilitate employing them at different levels, in different societies, and I dare say, at different rates of remuneration.

It was in keeping with Williams's vision for the development of the artform and the artist that I sang the calypso "Let the Jackass sing" in the 1970s. Most persons only see Eric Williams calling me a jackass and neglect to see in the song the role of the calypsonian. On that role he had lectured to me, when as Prime Minister he visited the calypso tents and I as Secretary of the Calypsonians' Association<sup>24</sup> accompanied him. Williams pointed out, as the song showed, that calypsonians by their creative abilities increased the general revenue of not only the treasury but the political party, that attacking politicians was their prerogative, and that through them he understood public opinion better. He pointed out to the women who had complained about me that they ought to have seen, too, business men who were exploiting the calypso mercilessly: "they make calypso paint, calypso dish and calypso sandwich." Above all, Williams in 1965, in keeping with his vision for development, had told graduates of the Teachers Training College that it was they, as educated sons and daughters, who should be involved in calypso.<sup>25</sup> Even though I was criticizing him, I was still sent by him to University. Thus, I was a bona-fide part of his vision for a developed populace for Williams saw the need to develop the artists by giving them the educational tools to reach their highest potential. Therefore, although in the perspective of Williams then, I was a jackass to deride his policies, yet I had the inalienable right to do so, and the right of any democratic citizen to celebrate his humanity and to be educated fully in the finery of his art.

Dr. Williams, it must be pointed out, had always been a Caribbean man. In his dealings with the Caribbean Commission and later with the British Secretary of State for the colonies, he spoke for the Caribbean chain as a whole. His pronouncements on Federation, his ideas for Caricom, his pioneering of Caribbean culture in the formation of Carifesta all underscore his longing for one Caribbean. So concerned was he about the future of the Caricom region that Theodore Sealey noted that during the era of Federation, he used his weekly press conference to speak to the Federal ministers of the region (Sealey 198). When in the 1960s, he made his famous speech "Massa day done," he wasn't speaking of Trinidad and Tobago alone, but was calling for an end to Massa and his colonialism operating in the Caribbean.

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<sup>24</sup> I served as Secretary of the then Calypsonians' Association from the late 1960s to the mid 1970s.

<sup>25</sup> Eric Williams, Address to Graduates of the Govt. Teachers College, 1965.

In 1976, Jamaica was suffering from internal political squabbles involving party violence. In the midst of the violence, a rather large team of artists from Trinidad was sent there to jumpstart, as it was, Carifesta. It was the largest contingent ever sent by a Caribbean country and included Desperadoes Steel Orchestra. Manley, the prime minister, told me at the end of the celebrations that, on behalf of Jamaica, I should extend my thanks to Williams for having the vision to bring off Carifesta in the midst of all the political violence. I further questioned Manley on Williams' role in the exercise only to be told by him. "Eric told me whenever there is a problem in his country, he uses the steelband. Therefore it was nice of him to send the steelband and all the other artists to give Carifesta the fillip it needed."<sup>26</sup> In other words, Williams understood the strength of the art forms to pacify violence, and the power of the steelband especially, to bring violent youths into subjugation. It was with that objective of stability that he and Forbes Burnham pioneered the showcasing of our arts through the holding of Carifesta.

When in 1977, he initiated the Caribbean Community treaty, he spoke of all the islands in the Caribbean chain having a "common history based on the Caribbean trinity—colonialism, monoculture with its polytechnic forced labor and racism" and described these three characteristics as "symbols of fragmentation." He noted: "There can be no new dispensation which does not mean the integration of the fragmented economies of the people of the Caribbean, by the people of the Caribbean, for the people of the Caribbean." It was with that larger aspiration that he signed the treaty. As he he said: "All our strength is in our union; all our danger is in discord."<sup>27</sup> It follows then that Dr. Williams' view of development of the arts that involved training for the artists was not confined to Trinidad and Tobago, but was intended for the Caribbean as a whole. When therefore I sang in 2005, the calypso "One Caribbean," it was in keeping with the vision of Eric Williams for the entire Caribbean. (Sing one verse).

Let me therefore close with a true story. In 1988, while studying for my Ph.D. at Michigan, the doctoral classes were to be addressed by Mr. George Lamming,<sup>28</sup> who was at the time made Professor in residence. On the morning of the lecture, George spotted me in the audience as he rose to begin his speech. Seeing me he asked the chairman: "What is that man doing here?" The chairman replied that that man is Hollis Liverpool and that he was reading for his Ph.D. in History and Ethnomusicology. George Lamming countered: "That is Chalkdust; Chalkdust is bigger than any Ph.D." Unlike the Editor who in Trinidad informed me that I was not an academic, George Lamming and Williams understood the skill and training that go into the making of a calypsonian. They understood too, the role that calypsonians play in the development of the carnival artform and consequently, in the development of people. George, like Williams, understood that if we are to develop the carnival artform, we must not only seek to develop the art; conjointly, we must also seek to develop the artist.

Go now, Ladies and Gentlemen, and do thou likewise.

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<sup>26</sup> Manley to the Author. P.M. Residence. Jamaica, August 1976.

<sup>27</sup> Paul K Sutton, **Selected Speeches of Dr. Eric Williams**, Trinidad: Longmans, 1981. See pages 338-90.

<sup>28</sup> George Lamming, World renowned writer, social scientist and poet from Barbados.