



INTEGRITY COMMISSION

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

First Floor, PIOJ Building, 16 Oxford Road, Kingston 5, Jamaica W.I.

Tel: (876)-929-6460, (876)-929-8560, (876)-929-6466

Fax: (876)-929-7335

Website: www.integrity.gov.jm

Email: greg.christie@integrity.gov.jm

Chairman's 2022 International Anti-Corruption Day Message

Jamaica can be corruption-free. Jamaica must become corruption-free. The Integrity Commission is determined that being corruption-free should become the norm. And the Integrity Commission is working at this – step by step.

The Integrity Commission Act is aimed at keeping public officials honest, straight-forward, and accountable in all their dealings with the public and the public purse. There should be no doubt as to who is a public official as the law provides an elaborate definition. Nevertheless, the officers of the Integrity Commission have been reasonably busy sensitizing the officials themselves as well as the general public in this regard.

Jamaica's public officials are fully aware of what is required of them. They know what they cannot lawfully do. They also know that there are penalties for breaches.

Although the law is aimed at public officials, this does not mean that private individuals are exempted from consideration or involvement as regards integrity. The simple fact is that public officials were once private individuals, and they are likely to return to that status at some time. If persons in private life conduct themselves in an honest manner, practising strong moral principles, they are likely to continue in that vein if they become public officials. It is therefore very important that in electing, selecting or appointing public officials, these considerations should be taken into account.

Dubious characters ought not to be put forward for election to public offices. Indeed, no one should be put forward for elective office merely because of that person's electability. In the same way, persons who are being recommended for appointment to public boards should be known to be upstanding citizens committed to honesty and openness. Individuals who are known to be shady and corrupt in private life will be shady and corrupt in public life.

In ensuring incorruptibility, our homes, schools, churches, and private organizations have an important and continuous role to play in instilling wholesome values in our people. In my view, this is the strategy that will bring about a generational change. It is not a task for the Integrity Commission alone.

The entire society needs to participate in the process, and the Integrity Commission is seeking to make private and public institutions and organizations conscious of the need for collaboration and cooperation in this regard.

Poverty does not of itself cause corruption. However, corruption causes poverty. Private individuals should not be seeking wealth or its increase at the expense of the State. Private individuals should not be encouraging or inciting public officials to act, or not act, in an illegal or dishonest manner in order to benefit themselves and or others, including the public officials themselves. Acts such as these sap the nation's resources, energy and spirit.

Therefore, let us unite and cooperate with each other to rid the society of unwholesome and corrupt activities that cause a stench over our land.

Seymour Panton