



**OFFICE OF THE CONTRACTOR GENERAL OF JAMAICA**

GUEST SPEAKER PRESENTATION BY

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When I received your General Secretary's kind Letter of Invitation, some six (6) weeks ago, to be the Guest Speaker at today's Jamaica Police Federation's 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Central Conferences, I instinctively knew what my answer had to be.

You may not know it, but in the almost six years that I have had the privilege of serving as the Contractor General of Jamaica, I have only been able to accept perhaps five or six such invitations due to a very pressing work schedule, among other considerations.

However, this was one of those very few occasions when I knew that my answer had to be yes. It had to be yes particularly because of the very deep regard that I have long held for the considerable responsibilities that are borne by the armed forces of this our beloved country, Jamaica.

I am, therefore, obliged to say to you that it is with a profound sense of humility and gratitude that I feel very honoured to be here this afternoon to speak and to share a few thoughts with you.

In reading one of your brochures – the one which is dated August 2010, and which is entitled “*The Jamaica Police Federation – Serving the Protectors*” – I noted that the Federation was established in 1944, some 67 years ago, under the Jamaica Constabulary Force Act, with the primary objective of representing the general welfare and interests of the sub-officers and constables of the Jamaica Police Force.

More specifically, I discovered that the Federation, whose membership now stands at more than seven thousand (7,000), is entrusted with the responsibility of lobbying for improved conditions of service, inclusive of better pay and benefits, for members of the Police Force, and is expressly empowered, by law, to bring to the attention of Commissioner of Police and the Government, all matters that are likely to impact upon the general welfare and efficiency of its membership.

What was most interesting for me, however, was the following statement which I found on the last page of the brochure:

*“... The Federation has now seen the need to balance the welfare of its members with the proper development of the Force. To achieve these objectives the Federation is also focusing its attention on matters such as discipline, motivation, morale and service delivery with the aim of achieving greater protection of the society. It is the belief of the Federation that if the Organization is properly developed, it will be much easier to promote and advance the welfare of its members”.*

The foregoing statement of intent and belief clearly discloses the mind-set, the vision and the culture of the Central Executive and membership of the Police Federation. It is one in respect of which you should be commended, for, above all, it recognizes that change in anything is possible and that success in any meaningful change effort must start from within.

And this, ladies and gentlemen, is one of the things that I would like to speak to you about today – changing the perception that some members of the Jamaican society have about you so that, as valued members of our country’s security forces, you will not only earn, but will come to get, the respect that is justly due to you.

It is also in this context, that I would wish to focus your attention on a topic that resides at the core of the defined objectives and mission statements which many organizations and civil groups utilize in order to conceptualize their purpose, their sense of direction and their intended output.

Against the background of the high levels of corruption which are now perceived to be a common feature of the Jamaican way of life, the severe weaknesses that are inherent in the accountability mechanisms of our State, the poor levels of professionalism, respect and work ethic which we see around us, and the diminishing levels of trust that many Jamaicans are now having in our public institutions, the appeal for effective leadership, professionalism and integrity in the discharge of civil duties and responsibilities, has never been more necessary.

With so many persons undeservedly wearing the *‘leadership cap’*, in many organizations across Jamaica, and yet failing to rise to the standard which will, in effect, bring about effective leadership and transformative change, it is important that we understand what the true concept of leadership is about because, without it, the change that we all seek, for a better Jamaican society, will be nothing but a fleeting illusion.

Change, ladies and gentlemen, is inextricably linked to effective leadership.

Harry S. Truman, the 33rd president of the United States, recognized this when he made the following profound statement:

***“Men make history, and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better”.***

Experience, however, should teach us that, as a people, we cannot solely rely upon those at the highest echelons of our society’s organizational structures, and/or political institutions, to bring about the kind of leadership that is necessary to facilitate positive change, growth and development.

Each of us must acquire within ourselves the attitude to lead and to be exemplary in executing our various daily tasks, regardless of what they are, or at which end of the spectrum they may reside.

Within certain spheres of the Jamaica public service, there is an unquestionable need for individuals who are prepared to lead the change for a new dispensation – a dispensation which will hold as fundamental the interests of the people and the country over that of greed, self-interest and/or political expedience.

There is a dire need for public servants who understand the value of optimum performance, who are able to display the attitude and disposition of the consummate professional, and who are capable of executing a superior work ethic, an ethic which has no place for mediocrity or failure.

The pursuit of excellence should and must be your ultimate goal in everything that you do, and aspire to do. This has been described as doing the right things right by selecting the most important things to be done, and then accomplishing them 100% correctly.

In Jamaica, we need political leaders who are strong on ethics, integrity, principle and discipline, and who are prepared to promote systems of good governance in government by ensuring transparency, accountability and the strict adherence to the Rule of Law in the affairs of the State.

We need political leaders who will hold true to the solemn Oath that they have taken to uphold the Constitution and the Laws of Jamaica, and to give pride of place to the people's interest over all else.

To become true Leaders, you must always do what is right ... not what is popular or what is expedient.

A great American of Jamaican lineage, the former United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, elaborated on the subject in another way when he had this to say:

***"Leadership cannot be a popularity contest. Trying not to offend anyone, or trying to get everyone to like you are sign posts on the road to mediocrity. Leaders who are afraid to get people angry are likely to waver and procrastinate when it comes to making tough decisions or choices. Leaders who care more about being liked than being effective are unlikely to confront people who need confronting. In short, they won't challenge the status quo".***

But what does all of this mean for you as members of the Jamaica Police Force?

1. It means that Jamaica needs police men and women who will express no qualms in disassociating themselves from their colleagues in the Force and, by extension, from those members of the wider society, who are dishonest, corrupt or who engage in activities that are of a criminal nature.
2. It means teaching the men, women and children of your communities 'a difference' through your demonstrated actions and, as such, refraining in principle and in practice from being a participant in any action which you know is unethical or unlawful.
3. It means never failing to hold to account your subordinate who has contravened the Force Orders of the JCF, irrespective of your social relations with that person.

4. It means, too, adopting an ethical and principled approach to the discharge of your duties, even if it means that you are likely to be alienated by many of your friends, or your colleagues, or be made the subject of ridicule or criticism.
5. It means that you should always be guided by what Tony Blair, the former British Prime Minister, once said, namely that *“The art of leadership is saying no, not yes. It is very easy to say yes.”*
6. Finally, it also means that each of you must become the change that we would wish to see in this country ... that is, someone who leads by example and who leads from the front.

It is critical that you understand and adopt these core values in the discharge of your duties as police men and women, for it is by the display of such principles that you will assist in repairing the indignity that many reckless police officers have inflicted upon the uniform and epaulets which you wear today.

To become a true and successful Leader, it is, therefore, imperative that you must establish for yourself a basic set of values from which you should never depart.

Paramount among these should be honesty, being truthful, being kind and being fair. These, together with integrity, character, self-respect, respect for others, and particularly respect for those whom you are sworn to serve and to protect, and your strict adherence to the highest possible ethical standards, must be the benchmark for everything that you do.

Regrettably, many Jamaicans, in both the private and public domains, have adapted quite comfortably to a new approach of *‘self determination’* and identity – one by virtue of which corruption, illicit behaviour and other immoral and criminal conduct have come to be accepted as common-place and typical.

Indeed, it was only a few months ago, while addressing the Mona School of Business 2010 Graduate Awards Ceremony, that I had cause to note that in Jamaica today, we have come to witness a distinct blur between what is right and what is wrong.

In many instances, behavioural patterns which were previously considered to be the exception, have now morphed deceptively into the norm.

What were once regarded as acceptable standards of decency, values, ethics, morality and discipline, have now fallen prey to a society that has seemingly lost its sense of direction.

Regrettably, the perception about what has gone wrong in our society has not excluded our public service, some of whose members, for example, have not spared a second thought to accepting bribes or using their influence and/or public office to provide illicit benefits to others thus propagating a culture of, and tolerance for, corruption, crime and dishonesty.

In the foregoing regard, the Police Force cannot seek to be exempted or excepted, for it, too, has had its fair share of bad publicity with numerous and recurring allegations of unlawful, criminal, corrupt, brutal, despicable and disrespectful conduct being leveled against its law officers whose primary role, ironically, is to enforce the law.

Indeed, the following are just some of the headlines that have emblazoned the media, over the past year, and which have brought not only grave harm but untold shame, in the eyes of many, to the JCF.

- **Video of cop killing surfaces**; Jamaica Gleaner; May 23, 2011. *AFTER A policeman shot 43-year-old Orville Wray, he walked back inside the Alexandria Police Station in St Ann, leaving the wounded man slumped and clinging to life. Wray was then pulled into his brother's black BMW sport utility vehicle (SUV) and carried to hospital where treatment would fail. These details aren't in any police generated report, but found on a video uploaded on to the Internet. According to the deceased's brother, Rodney Wray, and his lawyer Ernie Smith, the vehicle was chased by police all the way to the hospital. The police version of events contradicts that told by Wray, but video evidence captured by a resident has given Jamaicans an opportunity to judge for themselves. Before the incident, the Wray brothers were allegedly involved in a fracas at a bar in the area.*
- **“Police Clean House: Several Cops In Hot Water Over Corruption Allegations”**; Jamaica Gleaner; March 16, 2011. *“Almost 60 members of the police force were arrested for corruption related offences last year while a further nine failed lie-detector tests as the leadership of the force stepped up its house-cleaning exercise.”*
- **“Gold worth \$27 million missing from police station”**; Jamaica Observer; March 12, 2011. *“AN investigation has started into the disappearance of almost 42 pounds of gold (scrap jewellery) from the Half-Way-Tree Police Station where it was being kept as evidence in relation to a pending trial in the Corporate Area Resident Magistrate's Court”.*
- **“Five cops accused of gang-raping exotic dancer”**; Jamaica Observer; February 18, 2011. *“THE police have launched a probe into allegations that five of their colleagues sexually assaulted an exotic dancer at a nightclub in Dam Head, St Catherine on Wednesday night”.*
- **“Corrupt cops leaking info to criminals”**; Jamaica Observer, Friday, February 18, 2010; *“EFFORTS by the police to dismantle criminal networks operating in the old capital of Spanish Town, St Catherine, are being hobbled by corrupt members who provide crucial operational information to criminals. The revelation was made yesterday by head of the St Catherine North Police Division Superintendent Assan Thompson, who said the police's mode of operation had to be constantly revamped to counter the corrupt practice.”*

- ***“Police guns used in murders”***; Jamaica Observer, February 11, 2010, *“BALLISTIC tests have shown that several gun murders have been committed with weapons registered to the police armoury and stores...”*

By no means do I wish to credit any of the afore-mentioned headlines with any degree of certainty or legitimacy, for they are only but reported allegations and, in the majority of instances, constitute matters which are either currently under investigation or before the courts.

However, it would be remiss of all of us and, indeed, foolhardy, if we were to fail to grasp the inescapable fact that widely published allegations, such as these, do nothing for the great majority of honest and law-abiding police officers who seek to discharge their duties each day not only with integrity, pride and the highest possible degree of professionalism, but also with a recognition for the fact that, as police officers, they too are bound by the very laws which they are sworn to enforce.

Headlines and accompanying stories, such as those that are outlined above, can only serve to substantially undermine and dilute your efforts at doing that which is right. They will promote, in the eyes of the overwhelming majority of Jamaicans, whom you are sworn to serve and protect, disdain, hatred and contempt for the security forces, and they will, as a matter of certainty, impact negatively and substantially upon your ability to inspire public trust and confidence in your capacity to effectively and evenly fight crime and violence in Jamaica.

Consequently, if you are to develop effective leadership qualities, and if you are to define what you do by reference solely to the key values of honesty, truth, respect, integrity, character and professionalism, it follows that you will be left with no choice, in executing your duties as law enforcement officers, other than to consider the grave damage that alleged criminal police conduct can have upon you and the Police Force, and what you can and should do about it.

Here are a few things that each of you might personally wish to consider:

- (1) You must distance yourself from the unsavoury and criminal elements of our society in much the same way that you must distance yourself from anything which resembles criminal and unlawful conduct.
- (2) You must abandon the alleged code of silence which has permeated the Police Force for too long. The corrupt and criminal elements within the Force must be exposed. You have an obligation to yourselves and to the wider Jamaican society that you serve to shine the light of transparency on the dark shadows of the ‘Squaddies’, and those of your superior officers, who you know have crossed the line and who have engaged or are engaging in criminal or unethical conduct.

By their criminal actions, they have disgraced you. In point of fact, they have implicated you for they have stained the uniform of the Police Force and they have sullied the very foundation stones upon which the Force rests. They have dishonored the integrity of the Force, compromised its legitimacy, and have sacrificed and savaged the country’s trust and faith in each and every one of you.

Consequently, your moral ethics, your integrity, your conscience, your oath, the law, your self-respect, and your duty to serve and to protect, demand that you must be forthright, dispassionate and fearless and expose them for who and what they are.

- (3) For those of you who know of politicians and public servants who are engaged in corrupt or illegal activities, you must likewise expose them and bring them to book.

These persons are an abomination to their country for they have stolen and are stealing the very patrimony of our grand-children. They are traitors and they must be held to account. For too long they have been allowed free and unrestricted liberty to corruptly administer the affairs of the Jamaican state.

They have placed themselves, their greed and their self-interests before their country and are, therefore, not worthy of the privilege of holding public office.

I implore you to investigate them, get the evidence that you need and arrest them. Eventually, the exception will become the rule and we will succeed in ridding the Jamaica public service, and the country, of these and the other corrupt elements that are currently devouring it.

- (4) You must also come to the understanding that there is only one criminal code in Jamaica. For too long, the perception has been that there are two (2) laws in Jamaica – one for the rich and one for the poor, or one for those members of our society who are privileged and connected, and another for those who are under-privileged or who have no connections.

The law must be applied by you equally and dispassionately, without fear and without favour, and without regard to a person's colour, his station in life, his position, his economic means or his place of abode.

There should be no untouchables in Jamaica, for no one, irrespective of who he or she may be, is above the law. You are police officers, and you have been en-clothed with sufficient authority under the law to arrest anyone who you suspect has contravened the criminal laws of the country. So do not be deterred in doing what you know is right. Go forth and do your job.

In summary, in discharging your duties as police officers, you must always do what is lawful, what is right and what is ethical. You must scrupulously adhere to the dictates of the JCF's Operational Force Orders, not just in spirit but by the very letter.

You must, at all times, be forthright and fearless, never straying off course, never succumbing to what the misguided may deem to be the praiseworthy thing to do, and never allowing yourselves to be intimidated by your detractors.

Indeed, you should never fear to act when you must act and, conversely, you must never act out of fear when you should not act.



You must always be strong and courageous, but at the same time you must be humble and eschew pride and arrogance, whilst practicing self-discipline and self-control.

As Joseph Addison, the English poet and politician, once said, “*self discipline is that which, next to virtue, truly and essentially raises one man above another*”. So with faith, discipline and selfless devotion to duty, there is nothing worthwhile that you cannot achieve.

Remember that there is no greater honor that a man can earn than to make personal sacrifices in the service of his country. Consequently, you must fear nothing but fear itself. Stand up for integrity and be counted for doing what is right, knowing that you will never be branded as a coward or as a hypocrite.

Much of the success in effectively fighting crime, in any country of the world, has to do with the demonstrated preparedness of law enforcement officers to dispassionately and forthrightly enforce the law, irrespective of whether the offence in question is considered to be a minor or major one. If any member of the citizenry perceives that he can break the law and get away with it, then he will obviously persist in breaking the law.

It has been said that Jamaica has every conceivable law on its Statute books to prohibit deviant and criminal behaviour, but that what is lacking is the willingness and/or the capacity of the law enforcement authorities to enforce the application of the law and the very Rule of Law itself.

As police officers, you must, therefore, ensure that an environment of deterrence is created so that there will be such a high perception of risk, about engaging in criminal conduct, that anyone who contemplates the commission of a criminal act, irrespective of the his station in life or his status in society, will anticipate that in all likelihood he will be promptly detected, investigated, prosecuted and convicted.

It is a fact that whenever a criminal’s perception of the attendant risks is too low, he will proceed with his criminal conduct, for the simple reason that his *risk/benefit analysis* of the situation will suggest to him that it will be beneficial for him to proceed. It is also an incontrovertible fact that human beings will persist in a given course of deviant behaviour only if the State allows them to do so.

Interestingly, the concept of deterrence, as a crime fighting tool, is so powerful that even when the police are lacking in adequate operational resources, some measure of effective law enforcement can still be achieved if an environment of deterrence has been strategically created.

As I said quite recently at another Law Enforcement Conference, this can be accomplished by employing deliberate operating strategies which are designed to deter criminal conduct and to drive ‘*the living fear*’ into the hearts of those who would otherwise believe that they can successfully ‘*test*’ the system.

As members of the Jamaica Police Force, you have been charged with the responsibility to maintain social order, enforce the law, uphold the Rule of Law and provide assistance and service to the general public.

It must, therefore, be understood that while the execution of your mandate is an onerous and heavy responsibility, much is expected of you.

You must come to the realization that you have one of, if not, the most critical and pivotal roles to play in stemming the country's fight against crime and violence, and reshaping Jamaica's moral landscape, for, within the society, you are the most visible representative of the Jamaican State.

In recognition of this fact, and against this background, great pride, dignity and diligence must, therefore, be taken by you in executing your various functions as a police officer on a daily basis.

This means, for example, that you should:

- (1) Perform each task in compliance with the highest professional standards and integrity;
- (2) Promote community faith and confidence in the Police Force;
- (3) Act with pride and admiration for the policing profession;
- (4) Display impartiality and be fair and objective in your decision-making;
- (5) Act dispassionately without prejudice to class, position, race or influence;
- (6) Insist upon personal dedication, devotion and commitment to the performance of your duties;
- (7) Acknowledge ownership and responsibility for your actions; and
- (8) Be a role model for all of your colleagues, whether superior officers, peers or subordinates.

Effectively managing the problem of crime and violence in Jamaica requires 100% police/citizen cooperation and trust. As members of the Police Force, you cannot fight crime on your own, for this is not a battle that can be fought using brute force or reactive mechanisms.

The effective fight against crime in Jamaica requires a multi-dimensional approach – one which will depend, to a great extent, upon the pursuit of strategic initiatives which will improve the relationship between the police and the citizenry. This, in turn, will ultimately equip you with an enhanced ability to investigate criminal infractions as and when they occur or, better yet, to prevent crimes before they take place.

Definitive attempts must, therefore, be made by you to eliminate what some may perceive to be the JCF's tough draconian methods of policing, and the perception which prevails in many communities across the length and breadth of Jamaica that the police is the enemy.

Much has already been achieved in the reform and transformation of the Jamaica Police Force, as well as in the fight against Jamaica's high levels of crime, under the outstanding and exemplary stewardship of the incumbent Commissioner of Police, Mr. Owen Ellington.

For example, if one is to go by the JCF's weekly Force Orders, it is evident that Commissioner Ellington is leaving absolutely no stones unturned to significantly lift the professional and operational standards of the Police Force.

There is also no question that an unprecedented war is currently being waged by the leadership of the JCF to remove corrupt elements from the Force. With your cooperation, in supporting this commendable effort, there is only one way for the character and the prestige of the Force to go, and that is up.

On the national crime-fighting front, the JCF has also been registering record successes. In 2010, for example, the Force achieved the remarkable feat of reducing the annual murder rate in Jamaica by over 15%, when 1,428 murders were recorded in that year, versus 1,682 for 2009.

But even more astounding, was the announcement that was reportedly made by Prime Minister Bruce Golding only a week ago, on May 16, when he disclosed that he was informed by Commissioner Ellington that if the current downward trend in the commission of most major crimes continues, murders are likely to fall to an eight-year low this year.

In his statement, the Prime Minister made the startling revelation that police statistics show that murders were down by 40 per cent for the period of January to March 2011, when compared with the same period last year, in that there were 204 murders, or 150 fewer than the 354 murders that were reported over the corresponding period in 2010.

These successes vividly demonstrate that, with the right leadership in place, you can, whenever and wherever you want, bring about radical change in anything that you set your mind to.

These tremendous and patriotic accomplishments, for which the leadership and membership of the Police Force must be commended, are a direct result of your hard work, your commitment to duty, and your dedication to the cause of the Jamaica Police Force and your country. Many of you have sacrificed much for your fellow-citizens and country-men and, indeed, many of your colleagues have fallen in the line of duty.

But although commendation for these operational successes and accomplishments are justly due, I must, however, caution that there is still no room for complacency.

While it is common knowledge that the Police Force remains challenged by a multiplicity of factors, inclusive of low levels of remuneration for its members, inadequate operational resources, poor working conditions, and a tough physical and socio-political landscape in which to manage and to fight the scourge of Jamaica's unique character of crime, the reality, however, remains that you, the members of the security forces, are still the only ones who are charged with the responsibility to rescue our beloved country from the imminent threat of crime and violence.

You, as Police Officers, are also still the only ones who fearful Jamaicans can turn to in times of despair when the frightening spectre of crime and violence rear their ugly heads.

With this in mind, and in closing, I must, therefore, urge that you consider the huge impact that a change in your behavioural patterns, as police men and women, particularly with respect to effective leadership, integrity and professionalism, can have on re-shaping Jamaica's moral landscape, the development of a productive police/citizen partnership in the fight against crime, and the chance to meaningfully contribute to transforming Jamaica into a country in which our children and grandchildren can feel a sense of safety, security and pride.

Thank you.