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### **Happy New Year**

What can we say about the new year? Well, if the old year was any example or indicator, this year will move like lightning. This is a leap year and according to our old sages, we should expect many horrible tragedies to visit the landscape of our society. With the looming shadow of a hotly contested General Election, the Summer Olympic Games to be held in Greece, and myriad other social, political and sporting events to take place this year, we can see that it is shaping up to be an exciting time.

This is a time of renewal and the opportunity to reflect and to plan for the future should not be overlooked. Remember that many of our brothers and sisters did not have the physical fortitude to withstand the rigours of life, and hence, they are no longer with us but they have left us a legacy of ambition and of hard work to be continued in order to improve our country. Press on brothers and sisters, we have miles to go before we sleep, yes miles to go before we sleep.



## BIRTHDAYS

Happy New Year, everyone !! We at the Establishment Department trust that your holiday season was a wonderful one and that you are all ready to begin the New Year on a positive note. What better way to begin the New Year than with a celebration of life in the form of a birthday. Birthday greetings to all celebrants in the wider service and beyond. At this time, the Department has nine celebrants of whom we must make mention. Happy Birthday all, you are:

Crystal Martin  
Stacey Gregg  
Lorraine Lewis-Simon

Alison Peters  
Cynthia Burke  
Kim Parker

Bernadine James-Jacobs  
Gareth Nathaniel  
Nicole Edwards

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# Did you know??

In the Civil Service, there are various types of leave, a number of which we have covered at length in previous issues of 'Focal Point'. Here, we will delve into the granting of 'special leave'. No, it is not granted because the event is special to **you** as an officer, (e.g. your sister's wedding) but rather it is granted where the leave is seen as an asset to the public.

**117.** (1) An officer may be granted special leave where the Chief Establishment Officer on the recommendation of the Permanent Secretary, considers that it is in the public interest for such officer to go on special leave.

(c) during the period of the special leave intends to sit for an examination which is recognised as necessary for the advancement of the officer's knowledge in the exercise of his duties.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1) "public interest" means a purpose which is directly for the benefit of the public if the officer -

(3) Special leave is granted in terms of this Regulation shall be granted with pay.

(a) requires the special leave to participate in a national sporting event;

(4) Special leave is granted in terms of paragraphs (2) (b) and (c) shall be granted for a period not exceeding 14 days in one year.

(b) during the period of the special leave intends to attend as a delegate at a social, religious or educational conference of a recognised National Association or Trade Union; or

(5) Special leave granted in terms of paragraphs (2) (a) shall be granted for such period as is determined by the Minister.

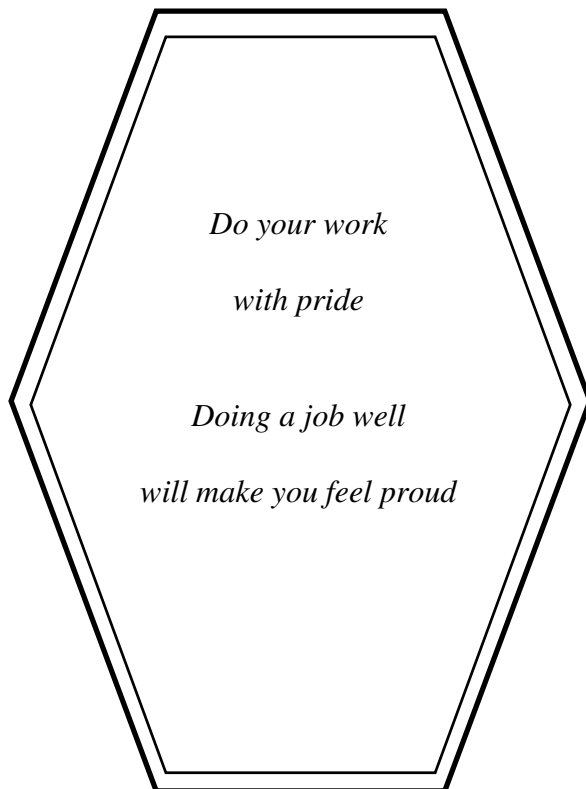
There is another way for the PublicService Commission to grant Special Leave. This is when it is not in the best interest of the Government for an officer to remain on the job. In such cases:

85. (1) The Commission may, if it is in the public interest, require an officer to take special leave at any time or to remain on leave at the expiration of any leave which has been granted to the officer; provided that the Commission shall inform the officer of any reasons why he is required to go on special leave.

(2) Any special leave given under this regulation shall be for a period of three months in the first instance which may be extended for three months over an aggregate period of not more than one year for the whole special leave.

(3) In this Regulation "public interest" means that the continued exercise of his duties by the officer is prejudicial to the interests of the Government.

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# INK

It is accurate to say that over the years, many of our forebears endured immeasurable hardship, fought and lived and died in an effort to put things in place so that we, their progeny can enjoy the many rights and privileges afforded to us today. We have gone from a colony where slavery was the order of the day, to a modern sovereign nation with a written Constitution and many modern amenities.

Adult suffrage has taken hold here and every five years, we have the right to exercise our franchise and vote in General Elections where we elect our political leaders. This ideal of one man one vote is the cornerstone of political democracy, something we hold near and dear. As a nation, we recently conducted a re-registration of electors totalling some 42,000 plus persons followed by the ensuing 'continuous registration' of electors. The re-registration is not just an event but a process and the next logical step is the collection of our individual Voter's Registration Cards. It is mandatory to present this document at the voting booth on election day so be sure to go out and collect it and keep it safe. If you happened to misplace your registration receipt, please visit the Electoral Office to seek a replacement document needed to collect the card.

Our elections are due to be held in the next few weeks. This does not leave much time but we all live here and have had ample opportunity to view and assess what has been going on here in recent years. We have all the information needed to make sensible and rational decisions as to where this country needs to go in the near future and which leaders are able to 'deliver the goods'. On election day after voting, and having had your finger dipped in the pot of voters' ink wear that dye proudly as a badge of courage because it represents the courage of so many who fought and died in the struggle to give us the right of voting that we enjoy today. Turn to page10 to see how Civil Servants fit into the elections mix.

# Love is in the Air

T'is the season of love. Though the business sector has commercialized this celebration, it's essence endures. We are all on a quest to capture it; I am quite sure that St. Valentine would be not only surprised but also pleased at the endurance of our celebration of love. 'Focal Point now salutes LOVE in all its forms and wishes our readers much more of it in the coming year. Have you been shot by Cupid's arrow? What a euphoric feeling! Such bliss and enchantment. Embrace and enjoy all this but don't lose your head, remember, your brain is in it. Try your hand at our puzzle and find these words all associated with Valentines.



- Chocolates
- Valentines
- Diamonds
- Amethyst
- Pearls
- Precious
- Rubies
- Opal
- Alexandrite
- Cupid
- Heart
- Dinner
- Champagne
- Roses
- Bouquet
- Perfume
- Love
- Kiss
- Hug
- Balloons
- Forever
- Arrow
- Jewelry
- Massage
- Loveletter
- Cards
- Poetry

'Focal Point ' graciously thanks Marcia Thomas, one of our resident wordsmiths here at the Establishment Department, for submitting this puzzle. Great going, Marcia, thanks and keep 'em coming!!



## Business Environment Report

The Ministry of Planning, Implementation and Public Service Affairs, in collaboration with (OECD) Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and (OAS) Organization of American States, is in the process of producing a Business Environment Report (BER) for Antigua and Barbuda. This report is funded by the British Government.

The Business Environment Report will support Antigua and Barbuda in its efforts to improve the investment climate, attract increasing flows of investment both foreign and domestic, and maximize the benefits that such flows may have in the economy.

In this regard, the Ministry hosted a two-day consultation on January 12th and 13th, with representatives from the OECD and the OAS, Pablo Kunik and Maryse Roberts respectively.

At the opening ceremony held in the conference room in the Ministry of Planning, were representatives from the Public and Private Sectors. The Minister of Planning, the Hon. Gaston Browne gave the feature address, with remarks from the British High Commissioner, Ms. Jean Sharpe.

During his address, Minister Browne elaborated on the concept of the BER for Antigua and Barbuda and why he thought that the report would be good for the nation. Some of his reasons given for the BER were the need to keep in touch with global standards, and the country's need to maintain best practices in order to have good governance. He also stated that in order to maintain our standard of living we have to ensure that we have a climate ready to attract potential investors.

The BER is being coordinated within the Ministry of Planning. Currently a questionnaire has been distributed among the Public and Private Sectors; which will form the basis for the information to be used in this national publication.

*(Submitted by Ms. Sharon James, an economist attached to the Ministry of Planning, Implementation and Public Service Affairs)*

Look out for more on this initiative in future issues of 'Focal Point'.

## RESIGNATION

We are cognizant that a job cannot fulfil all the needs of all the employees of an organization and at times there will be resignations. Whatever the reason, it is courteous to give the required notice. Being the Department of the Civil Service that deals with all Human Resource matters, we have had occasion to observe an emerging trend which disturbs us deeply. This trend is one in which resigning officers are increasingly opting not to give sufficient notice of their plans. Through our own investigations, we have discovered a number of reasons for this errant behaviour. In some cases, it is a matter of the officer thinking he/she may lose vacation leave due him/her, and in an effort to prevent this occurrence he/she ends up giving insufficient notice of resignation. Another reason is a privacy issue where the officer simply does not want anyone to know his/her "business". No matter the reason, an insufficient notice of resignation will result in a termination (dismissal) by the Public Service Commission. One's adherence to '**good industrial practice**' will hold one in good stead whether in the Public Service or in the Private Sector. In many cases, our reputation is all an employer has to go on in terms of assessing our character and this can be evidenced in our employment records. Remember our records follow us wherever we go - so do the right thing.

The Establishment Department sees this as an issue in need of attention so here we will highlight the Civil Service Regulations' take on the matter.

**28.** (1) An officer appointed on permanent terms shall give at least three month's notice of his intention to resign.

(2) An officer appointed on a temporary terms shall give at least one month's notice of his intention to resign.

(3) An officer appointed on contract shall if he intends to resign give notice of his intention in accordance with the terms of his contract.

(4) The period of notice given by any officer in terms of this regulation shall not include any period of leave for which the officer is eligible.

(5) The service of an officer shall be terminated on such terms and conditions as the Commission directs if the officer seeks to resign without giving notice in terms of this regulation.

**29.** An officer shall on resignation forfeit all the rights and privileges of his office except those to which he is entitled after resignation as provided in these regulations or as may be stipulated by the Commission.

**\*\*\*\*NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE\*\*\*\***

Are you working in the Civil Service and planning to further your studies this year - get a degree or a diploma? If so, this notice is something you should look into immediately. Deadline for submission of applications for duty/study leave is 30th April 2004. Be sure to have a letter of acceptance or evidence that you are seeking entry into a learning institution in academic year 2004-2005. Below please note eligibility requirements based on years of service.

- 0-4 years of service — not eligible for leave
- 4-10 years of service — eligible for study leave
- 10+ years of service — eligible for duty leave

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TRANSFORMATION

Since its inception in Antigua/Barbuda, Public Sector Reform has been placed under the Ministry of Planning, Implementation and Public Service Affairs, and more specifically within the Establishment Department. In an effort to set up a unit to handle this process, a Director of Public Sector Reform has been installed as of early December, 2003. The entire Establishment Department joins to welcome Mr. Elloy DeFreitas to our family. We anticipate a long, effective and fruitful relationship where, working in concert, we can achieve our mission and vision.

He and his team have begun to go out and meet and greet officers in various Ministries/Departments/ Divisions and will be doing much more of this in order to get a feel for what they do and what needs to be done to improve their output. This will be a participative exercise so we ask that you all give him your full support and assistance when he calls on you.

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**Establishment Staff Announcements**



**Our own Dorothy Vanterpool has added a new member to the Establishment family in the person of her brand new bouncing baby boy, *Ashani Dawson Zarian Davis.***

**He was born on the morning of Tuesday 21st October, 2003 at a weight of 7lb 12oz. after Mom had worked up to and including all day Monday. What a trooper!!**

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We began the year at the Establishment Department with sad news of one of our co-workers. Mrs. Rosa Greenaway and her son, Adien, met with an unfortunate car accident on the Airport Road at night. They both sustained serious injuries, but thanks to God, none life-threatening. Both spent time at Holberton Hospital but are now at home again with the rest of the family. Nestling in the embrace of your warm and loving family is probably the best remedy for you both right now. The Establishment Department prays for your speedy recovery and looks forward to seeing you back with us. Give thanks.

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RETIREES

*In this first quarter of the year, the Establishment Department celebrates with and applauds a number of Civil Servants who are retiring from the Service. After giving years of dedication you now embark on a new journey with exciting possibilities. Over the years, you have garnered heaps of knowledge and experience and all we ask is that you not bottle it up. Choose your own medium, but find a way to share it with all who will listen - let this be your legacy. We can all benefit greatly from what you can share with us. Some are retiring at the mandatory age while others are opting for early retirement. Whatever your circumstance, we all hail you!! Congrats!! You are:*

<i>Sonia O'Marde</i>	<i>Holberton Hospital</i>
<i>Morvelle Gordon</i>	<i>Ministry of Legal Affairs</i>
<i>Casroy Charles</i>	<i>General Post Office</i>
<i>Grethlyn Grant</i>	<i>Holberton Hospital</i>
<i>Dalton Joseph</i>	<i>Her Majesty's Prison</i>
<i>Roosevelt Bridgewater</i>	<i>General Post Office</i>
<i>Joshua James</i>	<i>V.C.Bird Int'l Airport</i>
<i>Nora Richards</i>	<i>Mental Hospital</i>
<i>Eric Henry</i>	<i>Ministry of Health</i>
<i>Ivy-Jean Benjamin</i>	<i>Ministry of Health</i>
<i>Francella Nurse</i>	<i>Ministry of Health</i>
<i>Conrad Antonio</i>	<i>Public Works Department</i>
<i>Claudine James</i>	<i>Holberton Hospital</i>
<i>Howard Warner</i>	<i>Ministry of Education</i>
<i>Johnson Southwell</i>	<i>Ministry of Education</i>
<i>Heather Doram</i>	<i>Ministry of Education</i>
<i>Bernadette Kirwan</i>	<i>Holberton Hospital</i>

**LABELS are EXTREMELY IMPORTANT....**

The health and care of our bodies depends heavily on the products that we put into or onto our bodies. Proper labelling of foods and pharmaceuticals can certainly contribute to the health and safety of consumers and can also support the credibility of those who supply these products. The key factor for consumers is that all labels should be read carefully before purchase and use of these products. However, **it is the responsibility of any person who sells or distributes any commodity to ensure that it is properly labelled.**

Wholesalers and retailers should be aware that a label affixed to or marked on a commodity or its external package **must** give proper description of the commodity. The label should also provide adequate information to a potential purchaser, enabling him to make informed choices depending on his wishes and needs. This information should include the net weight; volume; measurement or size where applicable, along with information on care, maintenance, storage and precautions during use. It must also provide information enabling the manufacturer or supplier to be traced and must state the country and/or manufacturer of origin.

A label has to be legible up to the point of sale, and where appropriate, during normal working life and use. It must in no way be false, misleading or deceptive. It must provide information regarding any specific dangers, which might be related to the use of the commodity, and first aid instructions where necessary.

In countries where English is the official language, the information to be included on the label must appear in the English Language, but the use of additional language(s) is not prohibited.

Apart from the above-mentioned requirements, individual commodities or groups of commodities may have additional specific labelling requirements or may as a result of their nature be entitled to exemptions.

At the vendor, 'expiry', 'use by' or 'best before' dates - known collectively as 'datemarks', are especially placed on perishable foods to give a definite deadline for consuming the food. The labels also should carry storage instructions along with proper date marking. It is therefore important to note that no one can be certain that food or pharmaceuticals are safe by looking at it or smelling it if it is not consumed according to the given date mark, or stored correctly.

Remember that both suppliers and consumers are responsible for the safe use of food and pharmaceutical products.

*(Submitted by the Antigua and Barbuda Bureau of Standards, Corner Redcliffe Street and Corn Alley.)*

### THE TRAINING DIVISION

**The mission of the Training Division is to provide quality training for the Public Service so that the staff of the various Government departments can upgrade their skills and competencies and thus be better able to render efficient service to the public.**

**The vision of the Training Division is that the Public Service will become an organization of excellence through continuous training and re-training.**

The Division tries to accomplish its mission and vision by seeking training for the Public Service at all levels. Many courses and workshops are done locally; however, training is also sought regionally and internationally. Currently, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda has various technical and economic agreements on training with countries such as the United Kingdom through the Commonwealth Secretariat (CFTC), Barbados through the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (BIMAP), Singapore, India, Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany, Israel, Malaysia and Greece. Many of the courses are of a short duration. Courses are also offered at the graduate and the post-graduate levels.

Over the past several years, the Government sponsored many public servants to pursue the Certificate in Public Administration (CPA) programme via the University of the West Indies Distance Learning Programme. However, on account of the increase in cost, students were asked to carry one third of their tuition. Some individuals, having completed the CPA programme, moved on to a degree programme at the University of the West Indies.

In 2004, the University of the West Indies will be upgrading the CPA programme to an Associate Degree programme. The Training Division is awaiting information from the University in order to formulate a funding mechanism for this programme.

Some of the local courses carried out by the Training Division are:-

- **Government Accounting for Junior Officers**
- **Stress Management**
- **Labour Management Relations Course**
- **Aids in the Workplace**
- **Programme Budgeting**
- **Public Service Laws and Regulations**
- **Stores Management**
- **Retirement Planning**

The Training Division is hoping to offer some courses, which are fundamental to the development of quality organizations. Some of these courses are:-

- **Induction/Orientation**
- **Ancillary workers**
- **Telephone Operators/Receptionist**
- **Registry**

Since the Training Division came into existence, most of the facilitators were either retired public servants or persons currently working in the Civil Service. However, recently it has become more difficult to offer some courses because of the lack of facilitators in certain subject areas. In order to combat this, the Division plans to develop modules for these courses so that they will be standardized and facilitators can be sourced more readily.

The Training Division looks forward to providing quality training to the Public Service and invite eligible candidates to make full use of the opportunities offered.

For detailed information of the programmes offered, please contact the Training Division by:-

**Phone: 562-3659/65 or 462-2370**

**Fax: 562-4183**

**Mail: Training Division  
Martin's Building  
Church Street  
St. John's  
Antigua**

*[Submitted by Mr. Leonard Grant, Chief Training Officer (Ag.)]*

*The Establishment Department has frequently sent interested staff members to local, regional and international courses and workshops offered by the Training Division. This regular exposure has improved our stock and we are the better for it. We encourage all ministries/departments/divisions to look into the various courses offered and urge staff members to take advantage of those that will help to improve their work in the department. We also applaud the work of the Training Division.*





## GONE TOO SOON



Sadly, the Civil Service has lost yet another member of its fold. Miss Goldine Knight, a Domestic Aide at the Holberton Hospital went home to glory on the 27th May, 2003. She was initially employed at the Holberton Hospital as a non-established worker in 1984, and joined the Civil Service in 1991 where she continued to serve at the hospital until her passing. We pray for the repose of your soul, and that God will bless and keep you. May your loved ones be granted peace and understanding.

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### IN MEMORIAM

On 3rd December, 1999, the Establishment Department suddenly lost an Executive Officer, Quinta Simon, after a brief illness. Those of us who knew her during her tenure at this department remember her fondly and often speak of her. Those of us who are rookies to the department are often regaled with stories of this much loved Quinta. We have all heard of how early she arrived at work, so much so that she was made a trustee to open the building daily. Described as hardworking, she was bubbly yet introverted at times and most speak of missing her loud, boisterous and infectious laugh. Her knowledge of the Registry and its operations is legendary - she knew it 'like the back of her hand'. Her dedication should be an example to the rest of us. We remember you Quinta. God bless.

- The Establishment Department

### **CROSQ - A way forward for the CSME**

In a previous article, the Antigua and Barbuda Bureau of Standards sought to highlight the benefits of standardisation as it relates to those of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). It is therefore important that business and consumers both take a closer look at the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ), to see how this institution will work toward assisting in reaping full benefits of the CSME.

Historically, CROSQ's predecessor, the Caribbean Common Market Standards Council (CCMSC) was set up in 1976 to advise the Council of Ministers (CM) of the Caribbean Community on matters relating to standards and the technical regulations. Under this regime a number of CARICOM standards were developed. In the ensuing twenty years, all over the world, the areas covered by standards and the scope of activity of standards organisations have drastically changed, and deal with matters outside the CCMSC's original terms of reference, going far beyond the capabilities of its informal structure.

In light of the foregoing and embracing the reality of changes in international trade regimes, as a region it became necessary to develop a single market and economy in order to more efficiently respond to the challenges they present. CROSQ can therefore be seen as the regional response to the WTO/TBT Agreement where there is a need for the CSME to function in the scope of standards forming the basis for market access in a single market. Other challenges relate to trade with the European Union trading block, FTAA, information and communications technology, and trade in services as these create challenges and opportunities for our region.

The main objectives of CROSQ are the establishment and harmonisation of standards for the enhanced efficiency and improvement of quality in the production of goods and services, in the community, thereby facilitating consumer and environmental protection and improved trade within the Community and with its affiliates (third states). More specifically CROSQ is established to assist the

CARICOM territories:

- manage the impact of liberalised trade and globalisation on the competitiveness in the production of goods and services;
- combat the unscrupulous trading practices that seek to take advantage of our nation's vulnerability to receive sub-standard products that could harm consumers and the environment;
- develop harmonised regional standards, technical regulations, conformity assessment procedures and metrology initiatives to meet the challenges of international trade agreements, as a formal, internationally recognised inter-governmental standardising organisation;

*(continued overleaf)*

(cont'd from page 9)

- establish the CSME as an institutional approach to the current developments in the international economy.

As is common with all other institutions of the CARICOM, participation and consensus are key for the full, effective and efficient functioning of CROSQ. Businesses and consumers therefore form the most crucial group of CROSQ's clientele since we are the beneficiaries of an increased market share and improved quality of goods and services as facilitated by CROSQ and the CSME.

For more information on CROSQ and how business and consumers can participate in standardisation and standards activities kindly contact **the Antigua and Barbuda Bureau of Standards, Corner Redcliffe Street & Corn Alley, P.O. Box 1550, St. John's, Antigua (W.I.) or Telephone 462-2424 or email: abbs@antigua.gov.ag.**



Ministry of Planning, Trade, Industry, Commerce,  
& Public Service Affairs

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**Establishment Department**

**Friendly Alley  
St. John's  
Antigua W.I.**

**Phone: (268) 462-0249/0944  
Fax: (268) 460-6876  
Email: estabdep@candw.ag**

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Should you have articles, ideas, comments or other correspondence to share with us, please send them to Focal Point c/o Establishment Department at the address, email or Fax facilities listed above.

## DID YOU KNOW.....

that the Civil Service Regulations speaks unequivocally about the Conduct of its Officers, and in Item 50, particularly about their participation in political activities? Read on:

- 50.** (1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this regulation, an officer may-
- (a) join any political party and subscribe to its funds;
  - (b) attend private political meetings of any political party and speak at such meetings;
  - (c) if eligible, vote at an election to Parliament or to a Local Government body.
- (2) An officer shall not-
- (a) hold an office in a political party or be nominated or accept a nomination as a candidate for a political party for the purpose of being elected to the House of Representatives or a local Government body;
  - (b) or participate in any selection process for the nomination of a person to represent a political party as a candidate in any elections to the House of Representatives or Local Government body;
  - (c) speak or vote or take part actively in a public political meeting;
  - (d) participate on behalf of any party or candidate, or act as an agent or subagent or canvas at elections to Parliament or to a Local Government body;
  - (e) address the electorate at elections to parliament or to a Local Government body as a candidate for such elections; unless he has first resigned from a civil service appointment he holds.

We have published this regulation in a previous issue but felt that at this election time, it is well worth a remention especially in the interest of those of us who have political ambitions.