

Topic: The ~~empty-Empty~~ archives Archives: Policies for governance, development and establishment of the National Archives ~~service~~ Service in Paradise.

Preface

Opening a can of worms ~~can be shockingly distasteful and horrible; warranting instant discarding is a distasteful experience~~. This was ~~the my~~ my initial reaction ~~while when I began~~ exploring the literature relative to this dissertation topic. ~~However, upon further investigation, it was necessary to continue exploring the contents~~. This scrutiny revealed the ~~dormancy, lapse and inadequacy from the~~ non-existence of established policies or legislation ~~consistent with relevant to the~~ governance of the operations of the National Archives of Paradise. ~~56~~ Fifty-six years to date, after much discussion and ~~suggested~~ recommendations, there ~~have-has~~ not been any movement towards drafting, implementing or establishing policies and legislation.

This unfortunate ~~revelation-situation~~ however, is not, ~~however, specific-limited~~ to Paradise. There are a few other islands within the Caribbean region whose archival institutions operate without policy/legislation while others have solely established legislation.

~~Fortunately, the~~ This dissertation ~~has not only reopened~~ will serve not only to reopen the discussion ~~but has proposed also to propose~~ policies which ~~may now can~~ be implemented in Paradise and serve as a guide to the other Caribbean islands without archival policy.

Introduction

‘A nation must be judged on how it conserves its archives. Our future depends on our past and we must make sure that it is always available’- the words of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu during the UK Parliamentary debates in 1993 and 1994. (Kitching, 1996, p. 1).

Paradise, located in the heart of the Caribbean, ~~known as the ‘Nature Island of the Caribbean’ because of its luxuriant forest, waterfalls, rivers, boiling lake and rugged mountainous volcanic topography is~~ is a small 275 sq. mile island with a population of 70, 000. ~~It is known as the ‘Nature Island of the Caribbean’ because of its luxuriant forest, waterfalls, rivers, boiling lake and rugged mountainous, volcanic topography of this English-speaking territory. The main economic contributors of this English speaking territory~~ are agriculture and Tourism (Government of Paradise, 2019).

The journey of the records of the Commonwealth of Paradise through the tunnels of history has been a turbulent one. Like in many of the other small Caribbean islands, these valuable records ~~until today, have, until today,~~ experienced neglect, man-made and natural disasters, hazardous and detrimental environmental and storage conditions and ~~in the absence of understanding the~~

Comment [WU1]: What happened 56 years ago? At what forum did discussion and recommendations take place?

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~~value of these records destruction even destruction at the hands of persons who were ignorant of the value of these records.~~

According to Peter Hulme, ‘official buildings offered little protection from the ravages of natural disasters. On Paradise, for example, much local documentation was destroyed in Hurricane David and in the Court House fire in 1979.’ (2017, p. 263).

Over time, and with the increasing thirst for knowledge ~~and research~~, strides have been made by many concerned individuals, governments and organizations to secure many of these records ~~by many concerned individuals, governments and organizations~~ and as a result the island can passably celebrate some association with the archive fraternity worldwide which shares the vision that archives are a vital source of information and a sound integral part of a country’s development. Several reports on the state of affairs of the archives in Paradise have been prepared by Herbert C. Bell and David W. Parker in 1926, Michael J. Chandler and George F. Tyson in 1979, Clinton V. Black in 1983, Carol Collins in 1984 and D.G. Saunders in 1994.

Firstly, the Bell/Parker guide which Clinton V. Black referenced in his 1983 report noted, ‘some of the most valuable records of the colony are allowed to be on the floor of a room in the court-house is not likely to inculcate in the minds of younger officials a high regard for their value’(Black, 1983, p.5).

Secondly, the Chandler/Tyson Report report also referenced by Black, focused on the treatment of the island’s records after the passage of ~~hurricane~~ Hurricane David in August of 1979. They noted,

‘The records were lying in a heap in the open ~~;~~; those on top of the heap having been badly damaged by exposure to sun and rain, while those at the bottom had suffered severe water damage. These records have since ~~being been~~ removed and now occupy a wash-room in the Public Library building where they lie in a chaotic, moldy mass. (Black, 1983, p.4). Because of the lack of space there, the records had to be stacked up instead of spread out for drying to not encourage mildew’. (1983, p.4).

Comment [WU3]: Why did you break up the citation?

Thirdly, Clinton V. Black’s Report report on 7th November 1983 for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) ~~which~~ revealed at that time that Paradise lacked any legislation or policy which would establish an archives department (1983, p.2). ~~;~~ To date, there still remains an absence of any such legislation or policy in place to govern operations of the national archives ~~at a national level;~~; hence the ~~reference made title of this paper:~~ ‘The eEmpty aArchives.’