

## Majority Rule Day - January 10th, 2013

*Members of the Fawkes Family visited two schools on Majority Rule Day, 2013.*

*Lady Jacqueline Fawkes, accompanied by David Fawkes, attended an assembly at H.O. Nash Junior High School and Rosalie Fawkes travelled to Spanish Wells All Age School and spoke at a morning assembly.*

*Below is the text of a speech given by David Fawkes at H.O. Nash Junior High School:*

A pleasant good morning Madam Principal, administration, government officials, staff and students.

It is indeed a pleasure for me to be here today at H.O. Nash. My mother, Lady Fawkes, who is present, has asked me to convey her greetings and good wishes on this Majority Rule Day.



*David L.E. Fawkes*

My sister, Rosalie sends her apologies for not being present today. She is in Spanish Wells this morning doing a similar presentation at the Spanish Wells All Age School.

In recent years, Rosalie through the work of the Young Women's Christian Association has been closely associated with H. O. Nash. Due to her involvement, I have heard many good things about this institution of learning.

I would like to take a few minutes in this assembly to tell you about one of Sir Randol's greatest passions in life. Now I say one of his passions because he had several. His passions included politics for a start, trade unionism, swimming, music and watching 60 Minutes on CBS every Sunday afternoon at 7pm. The one passion that I would like to highlight at this time though is reading.



*Sir Randol reading in the garden at McPherson*  
 floor space.

A singular memory that family members would still have of Sir Randol is that of a figure sitting at a table or a desk reading, studying or writing. While people will talk at length about his contributions to the labour movement, they don't realize how much of his life was devoted to reading....He loved going into book stores and he spent vast sums of money purchasing reading materials. He had a library in his home and he kept the door to the library locked because he wanted to ensure that none of his books went missing. After Sir Randol died and we were able to unlock the door to his library, we found that there was no space on the floor to walk because books were on the shelves, on top of the shelves, under the shelves and boxes of books covered every inch of



Library at La Campanella, John F Kennedy Drive

When Sir Randol graduated from high school, the old Government High School, his parents did not have enough money to send him away to college and so he remained in Nassau and became a law student in the chambers of a local practicing attorney, Mr. T.A. Toote. Sir Randol complained that Mr. Toote made him do all the work and never gave him a red cent...in fact, he said that Mr. Toote never even gave him a Christmas card. But the one favorable thing that he said about Mr. Toote was that he had a vast library and all of the books in the library were put at his disposal. A quote from "The Faith That Moved the Mountain" reads as follows: "Mr. Toote's well stocked library was like a palace to me and I took full advantage of it."

This quest for reading and studying remained with Sir Randol his entire life. In the evenings he would watch the local news on television and then go to asleep. At 2:00a.m. every morning, he would awaken and go to the library and read until daylight. What kinds of books did Sir Randol read you may ask? He was not given to trifling literature. He read the literary masterpieces, the great books of the Western world, biographies and autobiographies of people like Martin Luther King, Winston Churchill and Marcus Garvey, history books, books about the civil rights movement in America and always and at all times, the Holy Bible. Reading conditioned Sir Randol's mind and his thoughts and it was because of this kind of exposure that he was able to make such a valuable contribution to the nation.

If Sir Randol were here with you today, I know that he would tell you young people to stay in school and get a good liberal arts education.

On this day January 10th, 2013, 46 years later after Majority Rule was ushered into the country, I pause and I give God thanks for the part that He allowed Sir Randol Fawkes to play in helping to usher in Majority Rule. Sir Randol was the lone Labour candidate in that election; who would have thought that God would have orchestrated the events of that year so that one man would be given the privilege of having a pivotal role to play in the destiny of his country.

Yet, what deeply troubles me, is the celebration of Majority Rule Day, in many instances, without the mention, or accurate account of Sir Randol Fawkes' pivotal role.

In many revisionist accounts now in circulation, if Sir Randol is mentioned, it is in the context that Sir Randol and Sir Alvin Braynen gave their parliamentary vote to the PLP and these two votes ultimately brought about Majority Rule. Another revision is that the PLP won an outright majority and became the government. These historical revisions are simply not accurate. Sir Alvin never joined the PLP. In 1967, he became the Speaker of the House of Assembly and remained an independent. This was documented in the January 14, 1967 Nassau Guardian.

The 1967 election was a tie where the PLP and UBP each won 18 seats. It was Sir Randol's labor vote that broke the tie.

Despite my Father's parliamentary vote successive governments have not seen fit to rename Labour Day and call it "The Sir Randol Fawkes Labour Day" (despite promises and my mother's age of 83). Successive governments have not named a building after Sir Randol, successive governments have not named a road, bridge or school after Sir Randol.

Why is this? I have my opinion.

You see, Dad giving his vote to the PLP showed that he operated on a high level of integrity, honesty and put the best interest of the Bahamian people before his own. He sided with the majority despite being asked by Sir Roland Symonette of the UBP, and I quote "Name your terms, whatever it is, we will meet it". This is documented in a Miami Herald article dated February 6, 1967. Also, my mother, who was a witness to this phone call was listening in on the other line at The House of Labour on Wulff Road and can attest to the generous offer of Sir Roland. Unfortunately, Dad's dogged determination to remain a man of integrity ultimately led to his being thrown out of the PLP Government in 1968, only 14 months after giving them the vote ushering in Majority Rule. You see Sir Randol could not be "bought out" by the UBP neither could he be "bought in" by the PLP. These are principals that we as Bahamians must emulate in order to create a great society. Before Dad passed, and in one of his last interviews he was asked by Consumerism Today:

### **Consumer Today:**

"Do you feel that the government and people of The Bahamas recognize and appreciate the many significant contributions that you have made to the development of The Bahamas during your career? Do you feel slighted in any way?"

### **Sir Randol Fawkes**

"No, I do not feel slighted because I know that I have the power within me to make my own destiny. And with God's help, He's going to help me write my books and as a result of my books, Randol Fawkes will never be erased. The word is far more powerful than any sword."

Indeed the Fawkes Family is doing its best to keep the legacy alive by printing his books and placing them on the internet at <http://sirrandolfawkes.com/>. The site provides a free download of his books and can be utilized to assist in the study of modern Bahamian history.

In conclusion dear students - integrity, honesty, the appreciation of the truth and caring for each other above self are virtues that we must all emulate.

If you didn't get an opportunity to watch 60 Minutes on CBS last Sunday night I encourage you to watch it on the internet. There is a story of an innovative company called IDEO. To solve business problems and create revolutionary products including assisting Steve Jobs in the creation of the ubiquitous "Computer Mouse", IDEO brought scholars and students from all walks of life to bear on a problem. The 1970s IDEO/Apple Computer project group brought together accountants, aerospace engineers, business administrators, software engineers, business administrators, business administrators, software engineers, journalist, doctors and



David, along with trade unionist, Sheleta Collie, view a 1958 copy of *The Workers Voice*.

anthropologist to collaborate and brain storm to find a solution to mimic human movement on a computer screen. Best of all the company was imbedded in Stanford University, a place of higher learning.

The result was the Mouse and the world has never been the same.

Dear Students, likewise, to build a great Country it takes all of us working together, doing our part, encouraging each other and having tolerance for those who are different from us. No one party, person or idea will create a better Bahamas. The sooner we fully acknowledge this and become a fully inclusive society the greater we will become.

In closing boys and girls, we are who we are today and have what we have today because of what persons did yesterday. So let's remember and celebrate the brave men and women who fought for the privileges we now enjoy.

I would like to say that the key to understanding the significant event of Majority Rule is to be found in one of Sir Randol's favorite verses of scripture "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to the mountain, "Move hence to yonder place," and it shall be removed and nothing shall be impossible to you." Matthew 17:24.

Thank you for your attention and may you be blessed in this New Year.



*Sir Randol and David at South Beach 1963.*