



**ADDRESS
BY
AMBASSADOR
RIGHT HON. SIR LLOYD ERSKINE SANDIFORD**

AT

**THE FORMAL OPENING
OF THE BARBADOS EMBASSY IN BEIJING
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

ON

**THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2010
AT 11.30 A.M.**

IN THE EMBASSY'S RECEPTION HALL

7/13/2010 3:53 PM

Vice Minister Li

High officials of the government of the People's Republic of China

Other high representatives of Chinese institutions and departmental agencies

Senator The Honourable Maxine McClean, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade in the Government of Barbados, and her delegation

Minister of Tourism in the Government of Barbados, Honourable Richard Sealy, and his delegation

Ambassadors and members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Specially invited guests

Staff of the Barbados Mission

Eminent ladies and gentlemen:

My wife, Lady Dr. Angelita Sandiford and I are happy, honoured, and privileged to welcome you!

We are assembled today at this favoured spot to mark symbolically the formal opening of Barbados' home in China, away from home in Barbados. By our presence here, we become exalted participants in, and authentic witnesses to a great act of state that elevates the status of relationships between the People's Republic of China and the parliamentary democracy of Barbados to its highest level ever. We have now squared the circle. China has its

embassy in Barbados, and Barbados has its embassy in China!

But, you may well ask, to what use will the Barbados Embassy and its premises be put? I hasten to respond as follows. Out of approximately 200 independent countries and major international organizations in the world, some 165 have established embassies or diplomatic centres in Beijing. Barbados, like those other countries, will use its embassy and premises as the heart and nerve centre of its dealings and deputations, its engagements and encounters with the government and people of China. It will use its embassy and its premises to promote the foreign policy goals and the interests of the government and people of Barbados, including its diplomatic thrusts, and its economic, financial, commercial, social, and cultural initiatives. It will seek to develop synergistic collaboration between Barbados and China in the areas of imports and exports, education, science, technology, investments, sports and tourism, the arts and popular culture. May I however interject at this stage that we have not yet embarked on a service of issuing passports and visas, but we are examining the implications of such a service.

Permit me, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, to recall the opinion that the policies we favour most today tend to be the formulations of some defunct or dead economist. I summon from the shade and Elysian fields of

the early nineteenth century, the English economist David Ricardo who, in his treatise “On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation” (1817), formulated the theory of comparative advantage, advocating nations not to seek self-sufficiency so much, but rather to specialize in the production of those goods and services in which they had a comparative advantage, and then engage in international free trade without protectionism. All countries, he persuasively argued, would benefit under such an international trade regime where trade is not only free but I may add, fair as well. The WTO is the supervising mechanism for such a perfectible regime. Barbados is basing its international relations with China and indeed with all countries, including its exchange of goods and services, on the basis of efficiency, quality, and goodwill, along with faith and hope.

But how does Barbados make its living among the nations of the world, and provide a high human development quality of life for its citizens, ranking it at number 37 in the world? Time was when agriculture was the mainstay of our economy. Today however it is financial services, international business, and tourism services that drive our economy. I recall that in March of this year, an international tourism forum, organized by the World Tourism Organization, the China National Tourism Organization, and the Hainan Provincial Government, was held in Hainan, China. It attracted some 1,100 delegates

from 50 countries. That forum was formally inaugurated by Liu Yunshan, Member of the Chinese Political Bureau of the Communist Party. He stated that on that occasion that the tourism sector and the cultural industries were taking the lead in China's economic recovery and social-economic development. I noted a parallel with Barbados in the early 1990s when I, with much very difficulty, located the tourism sector in Barbados into a lead trajectory to take Barbados out of the deep world economic recession of that time.

I pause to recognize the presence of the Honourable Richard Sealy, Minister of Tourism in the Government of Barbados, who is in China to present Barbados as an alluring tropical tourist destination to the people of China. He is accompanied by the Chief Executive Officer of the Barbados Tourism Authority, Mr. David Rice. Tourism is the largest industry in the world today. I define tourism as the temporary movement of people away from their accustomed domicile and workplace to other destinations for reinvigorating experiences. Tourism has a multi-sector impact on an economy, involving as it does the diverse facilities, services, and industries that enable visitors to enjoy their touristic experiences. The aim and endeavour of this new embassy is to attract Chinese visitors to Barbados in the short and medium term. For the long term, and in the spirit of innovation, I dare to suggest that China might consider a project, either alone or with chosen partners, to

fill the void created by the termination of the Anglo-French Concorde air services, and design and develop a new, fast comfortable, and efficient super-long haul aircraft.

Barbados operates a two party system for its parliament, which is 371 years old. Both of its political parties, the ruling Democratic Labour Party and the opposition Barbados Labour Party, pursue a policy of friendly relations with the People's Republic of China based on mutual interests and mutual respect. The foreign Minister and Minister of Foreign Trade of Barbados, Senator the Honourable Maxine McClean is a member of the Parliament of Barbados which is a bicameral institution consisting of an elected chamber, the House of Assembly, consisting of 30 members called Members of Parliament, and a nominated chamber, the Senate, consisting of 21 members called Senators. The Senate is one of the two legislative and deliberative chambers of the Parliament of Barbados. The term "Senate" is derived from the Latin words "senatus", and "senex" which means "old" or "old man".

I am going to call upon Senator Maxine McClean to expatiate on these matters shortly. As you will see, she is neither "old", nor "an old man". Rather she is an attractive, charming, elegant, intelligent, sensitive, and articulate lady who was educated at the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies in Barbados, and at Ohio

University in the United States. She has been a University lecturer, a Management Consultant, and is a specialist in cooperatives, credit unions, and in small business development, and has also sat on the Board of Directors of Directors of several profit and not-for-profit organizations. She is accompanied by Ms. Sandra Phillips, Senior Foreign Service Officer and Head of the Strategic Analysis Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.

The national emblems are now in place for this embassy. Fluttering majestically from its flagpole is the national flag of Barbados, comprising as it does two outer panels of ultramarine, signifying the blue sea and the blue sky of Barbados. The centre panel is gold, signifying the golden beaches of Barbados. In the centre of the flag is the magical three-pronged trident or spear of the sea-god Neptune, also known as Poseidon, who used his weapon to control the seas, and who is reputed to be the protector of fishermen. But the trident is broken, signifying the end of the dominating force of colonialism, imperialism, and all forms of hegemonism.

Also affixed to this building is the Barbados Coat of Arms on which is a golden shield displaying two Pride of Barbados Flowers, the National Flower of Barbados, below which is the Bearded Fig Tree which was plentiful at the time of the settlement of Barbados in the early sixteenth century. At the right side of the shield is a dolphin

representing our fishing industry, and on the left side is a pelican bird named for an islet that has subsequently been incorporated into the mainland. Above the shield is a helmet and a wreath of foliage out of which arises a strong Barbadian arm and hand holding two segments of sugar cane in the sign of a cross, signifying the independence of Barbados and the importance of agriculture.

At the base of the Barbados Coat of Arms is the motto: “Pride and Industry”, the two characteristics and personality traits to which the Barbadian personality and the Barbados national character aspire. “Pride” here means, not vanity, conceit, haughtiness, egotism, or arrogance, but rather self-respect, self-esteem, satisfaction in achievement, and appreciation of one’s self-worth. “Industry” here does not mean drudgery, laboriousness, or backbreaking hard work, but rather the qualities of diligence, perseverance, alertness, steadfastness, and determination.

Those national emblems and the dedication plaque are in place. Our aims and our working objectives have been adumbrated. I therefore now call upon Senator Maxine McClean, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade to address you, to formally declare this Barbados Embassy in Beijing, China open in a China that is already committed to a policy of reform and opening-up, and to ceremonially cut the cake to signify that this Embassy is now accessible and ready for business.

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