

Commendations

For

Caribbean Perspectives



FORMER CARICOM SECRETARY-GENERAL

Dr. Edwin Carrington

It is truly my pleasure to contribute to this sterling effort to chronicle the thoughts, ideas, events and actions that have fuelled the vehicle of regional integration on its long journey. There are few better placed or informed to drive this task than Sandra Baptiste, a committed regionalist with whom I have had the pleasure of sharing information and views since my earliest days in the engine room of the integration movement at the CARICOM Secretariat in the 1970s.

Our many interactions in Georgetown as well as exchanges during my years in Brussels, Belgium at the then ACP Secretariat, enabled her to gain great insight into the mechanics of integrating small states in order to further their development. Also being present in the formative stages of CARICOM and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), for example, gives her a unique perspective embellished by the access to many of the leaders and major participants in the then fledgling process.

In drawing from those rich sources, this publication will be an invaluable resource for students and researchers and anyone with an interest in the Caribbean Region. Many of the issues today had their genesis in the birthing era and this publication is a good guide to the how and why they were embarked upon.

As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of CARICOM, Sandra's book is an important addition to setting down the record of our efforts at development.

FORMER CARICOM SECRETARY-GENERAL

Dr. Roderick Rainford

Sandra Ann Baptiste has had a lifelong interest in the journey of Caribbean integration and of CARICOM specifically. This volume makes concrete that dedication. The collection Caribbean Perspectives occupies an important place in chronicling the details of this movement.

It is an important contribution to the broad understanding that is warranted of the region. It is highly commended and will be of great interest to all who have followed the history of regionalism in the Caribbean.

The enormous task of producing these reports for over thirty years required tremendous research and is quite a labour of love that tells the story of the ebbs and flows of regional developments over that period.

The collection is meticulous and a great gift for those studying the region and its quest to be financially and regionally integrated. This is a historical document and should be greeted by those who wish to know the hard work expended on our being an integrated region.

Her interviews with me and Secretary General Carrington, show her access and her commitment to the real story. We Thank you for this successful completion of a hard and diligent task. Caribbean Perspectives will be required reading for those interested in Caribbean regionalism. Bravo!

FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

University of the West Indies, Trinidad

Dr. Anthony Bryan

Finally, a vibrant proper history of major developments in CARICOM has appeared. Sandra Ann Baptiste was one of the regional journalists who followed developments in the integration process at the time and wrote about them continuously. This is no ordinary history. She has put together a fascinating story using her original writings over the years. What has merged is a real time, at the time, revelation of the process of a movement struggling to meet its objectives and to fulfill its various mandates.

The scope of work spans the eras of two Secretaries General of CARICOM, as well as her working relationships with regional presidents and prime ministers, prominent business icons and veteran journalists in the region. Sandra has brought the multidimensional nature of the Caribbean integration process alive in a way that is easy to read, and which can serve as an inspiration to a younger generation of technocrats.

Although she left the print media in the early 1990s, she still works as a business and communications consultant. Her consulting group, Carigold Signature, focuses on promoting business and travel to the region. She produces the *Caribbean Business & Travel* magazine, and the *Caribbean Tourism and Hospitality Investment Guide*. Given her journalism expertise, her investment promotion background, and international trade and international relations training, she successfully promotes business and travel to the region.

I first met Sandra when she was a student at the Institute of International Relations at the UWI in Trinidad during my lengthy tenure as director and professor. She impressed me then and she continues to impress me now.

Dr. Anthony T. Bryan
Professor Emeritus
University of Miami

FORMER ASSISTANT CARICOM SECRETARY-GENERAL

Edward Greene

Sandra Ann Baptiste is to be highly commended for producing **Caribbean Perspectives**. It is indeed a treasure trove based on her extraordinary collection of insightful articles, television series and radio documentaries that reveal seminal images of the Caribbean Community.

Her reflections on the views of Heads of Government, regional institutions, private sector executives, civic and trade union leaders, academics and other professionals, cover over three decades of path breaking work.

How appropriate it is that this publication should be released to coincide with the celebration of CARICOM's 50th anniversary. It adds to the historiography of the regional movement, provides vital references for students engaged in Caribbean studies and primary source material for researchers including scholars, media personnel, Caribbean citizens, the Caribbean Diaspora and others engaged in unraveling the role of Caribbean political leaders and policy makers in the global arena.

The publication includes a focus on a variety of issues affecting the regional integration movement and individual Member States.

Caribbean Perspectives provides a balanced menu of views that highlights the region's achievements, challenges and lamentations on failures. It reflects the enduring character of the author: forthright in her analysis, thorough in her preparation and presentations, fearlessly committed to pursuit of the truth, and passionate in promoting the aspirations of the Caribbean. It is essential reading.

Professor Edward Greene

Chancellor University of Guyana

Founding Member Diplomats Without Borders

FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL
Caribbean Tourism Organization
Hugh Riley

Sandra Ann Baptiste's *Caribbean Perspectives* describes the region from the point of view of a knowledgeable Caribbean author with a solid understanding of the politics, history and culture of the region. Her impeccable journalism credentials and professional credibility have earned her the right to express strong opinions! That is not to say that a merely historical narrative is not also appreciated; but rather, to have the facts accompanied by the author's well-reasoned perspectives, laid out in an easy-to-read manner, is everything a reader could have wished for.

Historical accounts of Caribbean development have often suffered from distortion inflicted by foreigners who allowed their own biases and political coloring to twist the narrative to fit - and sometimes excuse - the actions of the region's former colonizers. Whenever that happens, a confused and disoriented audience is left to sift through history's debris to find their own truth. Sandra Ann cuts through all of that by including direct quotes from the region's leaders over a thirty-year period and inserting her own thoughtful and inspiring guidance.

While the world is often distracted by the loudest voices, the generally low-keyed Caribbean region owes a debt of gratitude to writers who, like Sandra Ann Baptiste, are able to zero in on the most discerning audiences and capture their attention with incisive, informative text. This is the Caribbean taking responsibility for telling its own story.

This new book is a fine complement to Carigold Signature's other two publications - *Caribbean Business & Travel* and the *Caribbean Tourism and Hospitality Investment Guide*, both of which were conceptualized and written by Sandra Ann and her team. They demonstrate her involvement and contribution to the work of the Caribbean Tourism Organization and its member countries, as well as investment agencies across the region. In totality, this trilogy of her work recognizes the essential need for true and lasting Caribbean integration.

For her exemplary service to the Caribbean and her communications expertise, Sandra Ann is to be commended on her latest work.

Hugh Riley

Partner, The Portfolio Marketing Group, USA

FORMER PRESIDENT
CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION OF MEDIA WORKERS- CAMWORK
Rickey Singh

It was my pleasure over the years to observe Sandra's tremendous growth as a professional journalist, starting from her period as a cub-reporter on the staff of the Guyana Graphic newspapers in the early 1970's.

She distinguished herself as a practitioner of the journalism profession in the Caribbean Community. Outside of her own professional duties as a journalist, she was a productive and exemplary member of the Barbados Association of Journalists. She chaired the education committee and played a key role in the design and delivery of the certificate programme in journalism at the UWI Extra-Mural department in Barbados.

I have heard from politicians, academics, and journalists some very commendable comments about her dedication to work, to research and to professional performance. I share these sentiments knowing that they also reflected the thinking of many of her media colleagues across the region who either worked with her or knew something about her work.

Caribbean Perspectives provides an opportunity to a new generation of Caribbean peoples, at home and in the diaspora to gain insights into our rich socio-political history and provides a brilliant documentation of the integration process and the noble objectives of a single Caribbean Community.

I have no doubt that this work will provide valuable reading and commentary on key developments in the regional integration movement and who we are as a Caribbean people.

Rickey Singh

Retired Caribbean Journalist

**FORMER GENERAL MANAGER
GUYANA BROADCASTING SERVICE
and Diplomat
Sir Ronald Sanders**

It is with great pleasure that I contribute these remarks on the occasion of the launch of "Caribbean Perspectives," authored by Sandra Ann Baptiste, whose career in broadcast journalism I helped to launch.

Her early work was a harbinger of her later career in which she maintained a commitment to promoting regional integration as a viable framework for the development of Caribbean countries and for establishing their place in the world.

It is good that all in the Caribbean be constantly reminded of the importance of standing together as a "Community"; and the perils of trying to stand apart.

I hope that 'Caribbean Perspectives' will inspire and inform its readers, fostering a deeper understanding and renewed commitment to our shared goals in the Caribbean.

**Sir Ronald Sanders
Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the U.S. and OAS**