



THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE  
BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS

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May 12, 1998

Chairman  
Advocate Newspaper  
Heritage House  
Pinfold Street  
BRIDGETOWN

Dear Mr. Evelyn,

*You are aware that on Sunday May 10<sup>th</sup> an article concerning the relationship between the Government of Barbados and the IMF appeared on pages 1 and 3 of the Advocate Newspaper.*

*This article appeared without the courtesy being extended to the Government of providing a balance to the views being expressed. This was in contravention of the undertaking given to me by your Chief Executive Officer that the views of the Government will be sought whenever any major article is to appear that bears upon the policies being pursued by or recommended to Government.*

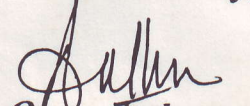
*You will agree that an article which led both page 1 and page 3 was indeed a very major article.*

*I am also to inform you that I discussed this matter with your Managing Editor, Mr. Eversley, on Tuesday, following a front page Editorial which condemned the response I had been forced to make.*

*Mr. Eversley advised me that he was taking no note of our discussion.*

*I write to express my great outrage at these amazing departures from good journalistic norms, and at the behaviour of Mr. Eversley in this matter.*

*Yours sincerely,*

  
*Owen Arthur*  
*Prime Minister*



Established 1895

# The Advocate Company Limited

P.O. Box 230, Fontabelle, Barbados, W.I. Tel: (246) 434-2000 Fax: (246) 434-2020

31 December 1998

Mr. Reudon Eversley  
C/o The Advocate Company Limited  
Fontabelle  
St. Michael

Dear Sir,

It is with the greatest concern that the Directors have directed me to write you with regard to your conduct at the media luncheon hosted by the Barbados Labour Party on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> December 1998 at the Island Inn Hotel, which conduct was far below the norm of acceptable behaviour by civilised society.

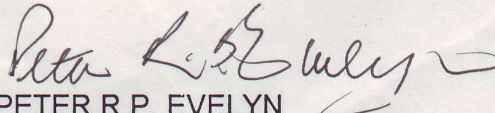
The other Directors and myself have pointed out to you before that since you are the Editor of the Advocate, your actions in public reflect on the Advocate Company Limited, its shareholders, management and staff.

This action by you following so closely on the warning letter of the 21<sup>st</sup> December and our discussions on the 18<sup>th</sup> December are forcing the Directors to the conclusion that you have no intention of complying with the terms of your employment. Further to have allowed Ms. Mia Mottley's statement that you support a particular political party in the context in which she made the statement to stand unrebutted is of the gravest concern to us. The reaction of the persons at the lunch suggests that Ms. Mottley's statement was not new to them.

You terminated Ms. Nalita Gajadhar writing on women's affairs because you stated that she was a likely candidate in elections yet to be called, when you terminated her. Yet you allowed Mr. Carl Jackman to write and to act as proof reader at the Advocate knowing full that he is the public relations officer of the Democratic Labour Party for the upcoming general elections.

The Board of Directors has resolved that you be given the severest reprimand in respect of your conduct at the lunch and to inform you that any further transgression on your part will constitute grounds for termination of your employment.

Yours faithfully,  
THE ADVOCATE COMPANY LIMITED

  
PETER R.P. EVELYN  
Chairman



**Publishers of**  
**Barbados Advocate**  
**Sunday Advocate**  
**Weekend**  
**Investigator**  
**Sunseeker**

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**Advocate Creative**  
**Services**



**ADVOCATE COMPANY LIMITED**

**P.O. Box 230,  
Fontabelle,  
St. Michael,  
Barbados.**

January 8, 1998

Mr. Peter R.P. Evelyn,  
Chairman,  
Advocate Company Limited,  
P.O. Box 230,  
Fontabelle,  
St. Michael.

Dear Sir,

I write in response to your letter dated December 31, 1998.

I reject the charge levelled against me that I had displayed "conduct ... below the norm of acceptable behaviour by civilised society" at the Barbados Labour Party's media luncheon on Tuesday, December 29, 1998. While you did not give specific details showing how my conduct was unacceptable, I assume you were referring to the fact that I did not eat or drink on that occasion.

In this regard, I wish to state the following: (1) that at the time of the media luncheon, I was taking medication prescribed by my doctor for a recurring stomach ailment; (2) that as an individual, in the circumstances, I had a right to determine whether or not to eat and drink; (3) that the Barbados Labour Party was discourteous in sending me an invitation about three hours before the luncheon; (4) that I did not wish to go to the luncheon but was informed by the acting CEO Mr Lorde that we had to attend; and (5) that I felt uncomfortable in the company of persons who, because of their perception of my political affiliation, have displayed considerable hostility towards me. Such conduct certainly can be described as below the norm of acceptable behaviour for persons, especially those holding leadership positions, in a country that is civilised and supposedly democratic.

In your letter, you also remarked that it was a matter of "gravest concern" to the Board of Directors that I had not rebutted a statement by Miss Mia Mottley that I supported a particular political party. In response to a legitimate question I raised as to whether David Comissiong had joined the BLP seeing that he had been designated a zonal leader for the

election campaign, Miss Mottley replied to the effect that Mr. Comissiong did not have to join the BLP to support the party in the same way that I supported a political party and had not joined. On this matter, I wish to make the following points: (1) as an adult, I am free to decide whether or not to respond to comments or questions when I am outside the Courts of Barbados; (2) Miss Mottley has no power to compel me to provide an answer in any prescribed form; and (3) like any other citizen of this country, I enjoy the fundamental right to freedom of expression and association under Chapter III, 11 (d) of the Constitution of Barbados. Being affiliated to a political party, therefore, does not constitute any violation of the laws of Barbados. I am concerned about this thinly disguised attempt to breach and circumscribe the fundamental freedoms granted to me under the Constitution of Barbados.

I also wish to reject your charge that I am showing "no intention of complying with the terms of (my) employment". My letter of appointment dated September 24, 1997 clearly sets out the terms and general conditions of my employment. They are very specific and bear no relation to any of the issues raised in your letter of December 31, 1998. In fact, I have generally complied with my mandate by improving the quality of the newspaper from a design and content perspective, by so efficiently managing the Editorial Department's budget that overspending has now become a feature of the past, and by significantly reducing the incidence of libel.

I wish to say that I do not recall having any discussions with you on December 18, as stated in your letter. Further, I wish to make it clear that the letter of December 21 was not identified as a warning letter as we know it in industrial relations practice; it was a private and confidential letter which questioned my judgement, generally with regard to the reporting of political matters and, in this specific instance, the placing of a picture of David Thompson on page one of the Sunday Advocate of December 20 which was done in order to strike a balance, seeing that the page one picture a few days earlier had shown Prime Minister Owen Arthur relaxing and playing a game of dominoes. Upon receiving this letter, I commissioned the librarian to undertake an analysis of front page stories and pictures for the months of September, October, November and December 1998. The findings show that the Barbados Labour Party and its government received around 70% of coverage as opposed to 30% for the DLP.

Your letter also accused me of allowing Carl Jackson to write and act as proofreader for the Advocate, knowing full well that he is the public relations officer of the Democratic Labour Party. The facts are otherwise. Contrary to what the letter seems to imply -- namely that I am in tune with the deliberations of the inner council of the DLP -- I was not aware that Mr. Jackson was under consideration for the post of public relations director for the DLP's election campaign. Mr Jackson came to inform me of his appointment just before the announcement was made and it was agreed that with immediate effect, his relationship with the Advocate, both as a columnist and part-time proofreader when required, would be suspended until after the general election. I also took the same decision with respect to David Comissiong and Eric Sealy. The decision was communicated to readers in the Sunday Advocate of January 3. Mr. Jackson's column does not deal with domestic politics. As a proofreader, I must emphasize that he

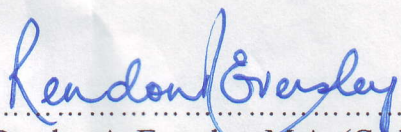
works in this capacity only when any of the staff proofreaders is ill or on vacation. He has absolutely no influence on editorial policy in this capacity.

May I emphasize that in performing the role of editor, I do so as a professional, always **mindful** that I have to uphold the honour of Carleton University and its internationally acclaimed School of Journalism and Communications, my alma mater. Certainly in recent history, I am the most academically qualified and professionally trained journalist the Advocate has had as its editor. I have not prostituted the office for political, personal or other reasons. Despite being subjected to all types of pressures, including political harassment, I never allowed myself to be distracted and delivered in key areas, making a solid contribution to the turn-around the Advocate recorded in the past year. Naturally, I wish to continue building on this foundation but, in the final analysis, the decision is up to the company.

For the record, I wish to say in closing that my conduct at the BLP's media luncheon was exemplary as a representative of the Advocate. I was polite and civil to all party officials who spoke to me, even telling Miss Mia Mottley that I was looking forward to an improved working relationship between the Advocate and the BLP during the course of the election campaign and beyond. I was photographed in a jovial mood with Reginald Farley, the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Business Development who happens to be an old Boys' Foundation School mate. Obviously, mischief-makers will report more than what transpired in pursuit of their publicly stated goal, namely engineering my removal as editor.

Exercising my rights at the luncheon in determining whether I should eat or drink or answer any comment or question made about my political affiliation does not constitute, in my view, reasonable grounds for "severest reprimand" from the Board.

Yours faithfully,



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Reudon A. Eversley, M.A. (Carleton), J.P.  
EDITOR.

