



The Eric Williams Memorial Collection

P.O. Box 561631*Miami, Fl 33256-1631*USA*Tel: 305-271-7246*Fax: 305-271-4160

ERIC WILLIAMS MEMORIAL COLLECTION CELEBRATES 7TH ANNIVERSARY

PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD (March 20, 2005) – March 22, 2005 will usher in the 7th anniversary of the inauguration of the Eric Williams Memorial Collection (EWMC), by former **US Secretary of State, Colin L. Powell**, at The University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago. In 1999, it was named to UNESCO's prestigious *Memory of the World Register*.

The Collection consists of the Library and Archives of the late Dr. Eric Eustace Williams, renowned scholar and first Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, whose sudden death on March 29, 1981 after 25 years in office, stunned the region. Dr. Williams was heralded by Mr. Powell as a tireless warrior in the battle against colonialism, among his many other achievements as a scholar, politician and international statesman.

Available for consultation by researchers, the Collection amply reflects its owner's eclectic interests, comprising some 7,000 volumes, as well as correspondence, speeches, manuscripts, historical writings, research notes, conference documents and a miscellany of reports. A Museum - containing a wealth of emotive memorabilia of the period; copies of the eight translations of Williams' seminal work, **Capitalism and Slavery** (Russian and Chinese among them); as well as photographs depicting various aspects of his life and contribution to the development of Trinidad and Tobago - completes this extraordinarily rich archive, as does a three-dimensional re-creation of Dr. Williams' study.

Dr. Colin Palmer, Dodge Professor of History, Princeton University, who, like several other academics, has conducted considerable research in the Collection, states that "as a model for similar archival collections in the Caribbean...I remain very impressed by its breadth....[it] is a national treasure."

The EWMC is actively involved in the academic and Caribbean communities through Florida International University's annual Eric Williams Memorial Lecture in Miami. Also in its seventh year, the Lecture has presented: John Hope Franklin, America's premier Black historian, 1999; former President of Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda, 2000; Hilary Beckles, Principal and Pro Vice-Chancellor of The University of the West Indies, 2001; a round-table session, *Women, Politics and the Caribbean*, with the Deputy Prime Minister of the Bahamas, Cynthia Pratt; the Attorney General of Barbados, Mia Mottley; the former First Lady of Jamaica, Beverley Anderson-Manley, 2002; the celebrated civil and women's rights activist, Angela Davis in 2003; and in 2004 in honour of the Haitian Bicentennial,

University of Virginia political scientist Robert Fatton, Jr., and prize-winning author Edwige Danticat.

Other initiatives are the soon-to-be-published, first-ever Spanish translation of Williams' history of the Caribbean, From Columbus to Castro; the 2000 republication, after decades, of the same book in Japanese; the first Korean edition of Capitalism and Slavery (2005); and its Japanese republication in 2004 after some 30 years. Appearing in 2004 also was a re-issue of the 1944 book, The Economic Future of the Caribbean – edited by Williams and the respected black scholar, E. Franklin Frazier. A selection of papers presented at a 1943 Howard University conference organised by Williams, the vision articulated in this work remains striking in its relevance to the 21st century Caribbean.

Thus, with its annual newsletter and Oral History Project, as well as many other endeavours, the EWMC is a model for the Caribbean, a means of showing to its younger generation the vital connection to the past – what that means for both the present and for the future.

Guests of the EWMC Museum continue to be inspired by their experience, as were former **Mayor of New York City Rudolph Giuliani** and two **Nobel Laureates** in Economics, Amartya Sen and Harry Markowitz. Thousands of Trinidad and Tobago students - along with five international schools from St. Lucia, Guadeloupe, the US Virgin Islands, Barbados and Chicago, Illinois, USA - have toured the facility since its inception. And the young continue to demonstrate their profound comprehension as they speak, following, to what the Collection means to the population at large and, as important, what it will mean to future sons and daughters of Trinidad and Tobago, in particular, and of the Caribbean in general.

- “One of the most insightful collections I’ve ever seen. Unique, compelling, wonderful!”
Alana Laura Lalman, Trinidad and Tobago student
- “Empowering, Riveting, Powerful!”
Joshua Kirven, Orlando, Florida, USA
- “Humbling & important.”
C.J. Leaver, Oxford University, UK

“Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it, or betray it...”
Frantz Fanon

“History...to inform of (the) past as an essential guide to...future action”
Eric Williams, August 31, 1962

For more information, please contact:

Erica Williams Connell
P.O. Box 561631, Miami, FL 33256-1631
Tel: 305-271-7246; Fax: 271-4160;

ewc.suilan@juno.com

Websites: www.mainlib.uwi.tt/eric.html <http://palmm.fcla.edu/ew/>
Researchers/groups: http://www.banwari.com/educational_tours.html