

EDITORIAL

Juggling with crime-fighting

While we celebrate the reduction of crime in St. James for the first four months of the year (January to April), under the State of Emergency, we are not surprised. This is what every State of Emergency does—suppress crime.

The problem is that while gun killings in St. James went down from 90 to 30 compared to the same period last year, ten of the other thirteen parishes experienced increases in killings by criminal gunmen during this period.

Statistics from the Jamaica Constabulary Force show that shootings in Portland (2-5) more than doubled, St. Mary (8 to 16) doubled, St. Andrew (57 to 110) almost doubled, Clarendon (39-49) notched up double-figure increase, while St. Catherine (61-82) increased its high-volume shooting stats with Kingston (54-59) and Westmoreland (43-50)

close behind. St. Thomas stepped up from seven to thirteen. St. Elizabeth moved from five to seven and Trelewny went from four to seven.

Only Hanover (29-19), St. Ann (19-13) and Manchester (13-5) experienced reductions.

The Constabulary Force statistics say that between January and April, there was a 5.9% increase in gun killings throughout the island.

No matter how Prime Minister Holness or new Security Minister Dr. Horace Chang spin these figures, they have to admit that the overall efforts to curb crime in Jamaica are not bringing the ‘decisive’ results the nation has been promised.

Meanwhile, the “strategic anti-crime action plan” which was being prepared by the National Security Council and which Prime Minister Holness said on September 7, 2016 was “fairly advanced”

seems to have been abandoned.

On May 3, all hope for that plan was dashed with the Prime Minister’s announcement that a crime plan was already in place and that it is contained in his 2017/2018 Budget presentation of March 2017.

Indeed the Prime Minister’s 2017/2018 wide-ranging budget presentation, does include a section entitled Plan Secure Jamaica – the standard Vision 2030 - like assessment of the crime problem and a ‘things to do’ list, but certainly not the “strategic anti-crime action plan” which the nation has been promised.

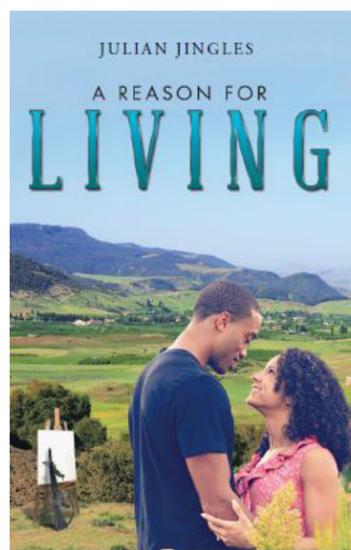
Prime Minister Holness seems to have resigned himself to juggling between extended Zones of Special Operation and States of Emergency. Time will tell how sustainable are these stopgap measures.

Julian Jingles delivers

‘A Reason for Living’

A Reason For Living, the just published novel by Jamaican-American writer, filmmaker and entrepreneur, Julian Jingles, had its official launch on Friday, March 9, 2018 at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY in New York City.

Set in Jamaica in the 1960s, the novel is described by keynote speaker Dr. Basil Wilson, retired provost and senior vice president of academic affairs at John Jay, as a significant achievement by the author, who began writing it in 1966, as a teenager just leaving high school in Jamaica. Both Dr. Wilson and the writer attended Kingston College high school, one of the leading boys school in Jamaica.



Dr. Wilson described the work as “riveting, long, but never boring, touching on micro and macro relationships of love, sex and politics, and the search of Jamaicans for the essence of their existence, battling social injustices, economic deprivation and inequities, and the role of culture in all of this. The book has many compelling scenes and some very touching, sensitive dialogues,” he said.

Professor C. Jama

Adams, former chairman, and professor in the Africana Studies Department at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, one of the sponsors of the event, served as host, and set the gathering in a contemplative mood examining the period of the 1960s in Jamaica to what’s happening there today, and queried if a revolution as the novel explores, would have a positive or negative effect on the nation’s outcome.

Education and Migration

Both Professor Adams and Dr. Wilson prompted the audience to consider the roles that education and migration, first to the United Kingdom in the 1950s and ‘60s and to America in the 1960s and ‘70s, have played in advancing or retarding the county’s development.

The author read two passages from his novel, and the audience was invited to pose questions to the author and the two other speakers.

Jingles said that one of the



Professor C. Jama Adams, at podium addressing the audience, while Dr. Basil Wilson and novelist Julian Jingles listen, at the book launch of *A Reason For Living*, at John Jay College, New York City.

Photos by Shaka U. Reynolds and Chardia Reynolds

most striking experience he has had, is that although “80 to 85 percent of the book was written 50 to 52 years ago,” it remains relevant to what is being experienced in Jamaica today, and quoted a line from William Shakespeare’s play

The Tempest, “what’s past is prologue.” He cited the ‘60s as a period of great creativity but equally volatile, with some 15 gangs operating in Kingston, naming **Mau Mau, Phantom, Spoilers and Untouchables**. Highlighting the emergence of ska, rocksteady and reggae music that

captured international attention, and too the rude boys projecting violence.

Career

Julian Jingles has had a professional career spanning 52 years writing mainly for **The Gleaner** in Jamaica, and the **New York Amsterdam News** in the United States and other publications including **JET magazine, the New York Daily News, New York Carib News, and the Daily Challenge**. He has produced three documentary films, several music concerts, and a stage play, along with several

entrepreneurial projects in agriculture, and development.

The audience comprising mostly Jamaican-American professionals, included gynecologist Dr. Millicent Comrie, newspaper publisher Karl Rodney, and educator Dr. Gerald White-Davis, participated with much interests and concerns. The writer drew attention to one of his friends Tommy Francis, in the audience, who he said may be the only person who was aware of the project from he began working on it.

The evening closed with book signings by the writer, and refreshments shared in stimulating small group discussions. The book is available at major online booksellers, amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com the publisher iUniverse.com, and in bookstores.

Other sponsors of the launch were Tower Isles Jamaican Patties, Dr. Basil and Phyllis Wilson, Orville “Villus” Tyson, and Wes “Bunny Toe” Taylor of The Lance Management Group.



Jingles (left) greets launch co-sponsor. Orville ‘Villus’ Tyson at an earlier function.