

Technology is the future

By **RON FANFAIR**

A member of the Royal Commission on Learning has clearly defined the meaning of literacy in the 21st century.

"In order to be literate in the next century, people need the capacity to understand the images being created on computers, in studios and across networks — and to be able to communicate back in the same language," Dr. Avis Glaze told a community forum.

The former Commissioner made it clear that those who fail to become immersed in modern technology, and to grasp the new style of communication, will become servants — not masters — in the computer age.

Her candid views were expressed at the inaugural dinner of the Canadian Chapter of the Jamaica Computer Society (JCS), which was held at the Don Valley Ramada Inn.

A Superintendent with the North York Board of Education — and a course director in the Faculty of Education of York University — Dr. Glaze said that students today need a new electrographic literacy to assimilate, digest, absorb and express the huge quantities of information emerging through the various forms of electronic technology.

It was in this light that she proposed that families and schools interlock in a



DR. AVIS GLAZE

co-operative spirit, which will encourage and assist the learning and maturing process of students.

Dr. Glaze dumped on the "Back to the Basics" methodology, and suggested a "Forward with Fundamentals" approach.

"Focus on the home basics and life skills — and teach life-coping skills," she said. "These can help kids deal with racism, prevent domestic violence and make students more responsible."

She also urged parents to become more involved in parent councils and to insist on anti-racism education, which will help break down divisive walls.

"Anti-racist education provides teachers and students with the knowledge and skills necessary to examine racism critically, in order to understand how it originated," she said.

Dr. Glaze taught in secondary schools and at teachers' college in Jamaica, before pursuing post-graduate studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. She completed her doctorate in 1979.

The Canadian Chapter of the JCS was established in August, 1993, to — among other goals — assist Jamaica in advancing information technology.

"We look upon ourselves as a national professional body, concerned with all aspects of the application of computers to commercial and public administration in Jamaica,"

said JCS president Lance Seymour. "It's our function to design and develop software and oversee the operation and management of the island's computer departments."

The JCS is currently working with entrepreneur Warren Salmon of Black Board International to set up a computer bulletin board for JCS members.

The other members of the organization's executive are Cliff Johnson and Ian Clarke — vice-presidents; Arlene McDowell — secretary; and Vanla Macdonald — treasurer.