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# NEWS

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# Watts' historic win

by **MARIA BRADSHAW**

**AN OFFICER OF THE COURT** who brought a case against the Judicial and Legal Services Commission headed by Chief Justice Marston Gibson has created legal history.

Acting Crown Counsel Elwood Watts, who was attached to the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions for the past six years, successfully challenged the appointment of a recently admitted attorney-at-law to the post of Crown Counsel ahead of him, without the position being advertised.

Yesterday when the matter came up before Justice William Chandler, Principal Crown Counsel Sharon Deane, who represented the Judicial and Legal Services Commission and the Attorney General, reported that the Chief Personnel Officer had agreed to appoint Watts to the post of Senior Crown Counsel.

The matter was heard in chambers and Watts was represented by Queen's Counsel Ralph Thorne.

Watts had filed an injunction in late August asking the court to block the appointment of Alison Burke, who was set to take up the permanent appointment of Crown Counsel on September 1.

Reports indicate that Burke, who was attached to the Ministry of Health, as a staff nurse prior to her appointment, had no experience in court proceedings.

Burke's appointment to the post would have made Watts her junior. Watts' main contention was that he was not given the opportunity to apply for the post for which he was qualified, because it was never advertised.

A legal source told the **WEEKEND NATION** that Watts who was prosecuting a case in one of the criminal courts downstairs asked to be excused yesterday morning and made his way to the Civil Court upstairs where he was given the news of his appointment.

"This case has significant legal implications. It means that under the legislation Government is under obligation to advertise a post before it is filled," said a legal source close to the unprecedented case.

When contacted, Dennis Clarke, general secretary of the National Union of Public Workers, pointed out that the **Public Service Act** mandated that all vacancies be advertised.

"The word 'all' must be respected in the true sense of the word," he stated.

Asked how a situation like this could have occurred within the Judicial and Legal Services Commission which was made up of legal officers, Clarke said while he could not speak on behalf of the commission he suspected that the officers may have believed that the process had been followed.



**AIDAN CHARLES** (left) and **Ebba Larsson** fascinated by the coffee beans. (Picture by Nigel Browne.)

## Students get chance to smell the coffee

**ELEVEN CODRINGTON SCHOOL STUDENTS** who will be sitting the Common Entrance Exam next year had the opportunity to tour Redland Plantation yesterday as part of one of their courses of study.

Form teacher Stacy Cooke said the tour of the St George facility was one of a number scheduled for her social studies class.

"They are studying fair trade in developing countries and so we have come here to show them how

important it is to have different crops and the impact it would have on helping the country to become more developed.

"We are also looking at touring **UN House** and some other companies in Barbados. We are studying the unit **Developing Nations**," she said.

One of the focuses of the tour was the process involved in the production of coffee, from reaping to processing and selling. The students were allowed to pick the

fruits as well as remove the husk from some dried ones.

Head of the secondary section of Codrington School and geography teacher Piers Tainish said: "We are looking at trade and the problems that Barbados had relying on sugar cane. So they get the idea of how trade affects somewhere like Barbados with the drop in sugar cane prices and how they really have to think about it. We also look at coffee and the slump in coffee prices." (MM)

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