

April 5<sup>th</sup> 2024

## **FACTS NOT FICTION AS ULP CELEBRATES**

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### **THE ISSUE**

Overwhelmingly, objective observers in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and abroad, conclude that the 23 years of governance, thus far, by successive Unity Labour Party (ULP) governments, have been undoubtedly the best years ever for our country. There have been unprecedented advances in the socio-economic and political conditions of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Massive improvements, in myriad cases transformative improvements of a revolutionary kind, have taken place in life, living, and production in St. Vincent and the Grenadines over the past 23 years.

These are evident in vital matrices: real economic growth; increased wealth at the national and individual levels; a sharp uplift in job creation; poverty reduction; slashing indigence; significant real increases in wages and salaries; huge revolutionary advances in health, education, housing, social protection, the delivery of electricity and water, public health and sanitation, telecommunications services, public transport on land and sea, roads and bridges, airports and seaports, sea and river defenses, disaster preparedness and management, sports and culture, good governance and democracy, public accountability and transparency, balanced development in urban and rural areas, sustainable development in the Grenadines; deepening regional integration; and an effective, principled foreign policy of the highest quality.

These are the facts, not fiction. The opposition New Democratic Party (NDP) and fellow-travellers with their lies, distortions, calumnies, falsehoods, malicious innuendos, and vile propaganda seek to paint a picture of St. Vincent and the Grenadines which is at odds with the reality of considerable achievements. To be sure, our small country

with its weaknesses and limitations, historically and in the contemporary circumstances, has its challenges. But St. Vincent and the Grenadines, under the ULP, has made the most of our country's possibilities and strengths to advance remarkably, for all. Our government has led the way in cleaning up the terrible mess which the NDP left in 2001 and has put SVG on a path of sustainable development for all. And the world has acknowledged all this. The opposition NDP, stuffed with emptiness, bile, anger, and a condition of being rudderless, proceed with pretended, self-proclaimed, make-belief virtues, personal malice, and disappointed ambitions. They have little or nothing to contribute meaningfully to the modern, uplifted SVG.

### **FACTS ARE STUBBORN THINGS**

John Adams, the second President of the United States of America, once remarked aptly that:

*“Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or dictates of passion, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence.”*

When confronted with facts, the NDP and its assorted metaphoric water-carriers resort to insults and angry, intolerant outbursts of vitriol. They abandon reason and truth and take refuge in their own make-belief world, their amplified echo chamber of falsehoods, and infantile chest-thumping of their self-proclaimed infallibilities and bogus certainties. As the celebrated 19<sup>th</sup> century literacy titan from America, Mark Tulin, once tellingly observed: “No amount of evidence will ever persuade an idiot.”

A cursory search on the Internet will reveal, from reputable sources regionally and globally, quite favourable reviews of the advances made by SVG and the ULP government. Among these are the following:

1. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Caribbean Development Bank all commend the government and the people of SVG on the economic progress of SVG over the last two decades. These institutions, and others, have praised the government's handling of the harsh impacts on SVG of the 2008-2012 global economic depression, the COVID pandemic of 2020-2021, the volcanic eruptions of 2021, Hurricane Elsa of 2021, and the challenges arising from the continuing global turmoil.
2. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), through its Human Development Index, has in its latest report (2023-2024) placed SVG in the category of "High Level of Human Development". The ULP met SVG at a "medium level of human development".
3. Transparency International in its many reports, including its latest in 2023, has commendably ranked SVG in its Perception of Corruption Index. SVG is ranked favourably in the top 20 percent (36<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries) of countries in this regard.
4. Freedom House, the international non-governmental body based in the USA, which assesses democracy and freedom globally, ranks SVG in its 2024 Report in the top 17 percent (35<sup>th</sup> out of 210 countries and territories) of democratic and free countries world-wide. SVG is actually ranked as "free" based on democratic criteria of political rights and civil liberties. SVG is one of five CARICOM countries with scores of 90 percent or above out of 100; SVG's score is 90; Barbados is 94; Dominica, Bahamas, and St. Lucia have scores ranging between 93 to 91. Interestingly the USA has a score of 83.

Yet, the NDP and their opportunistic fellow-travellers continue to prattle ridiculously, and falsely, about Ralph's supposed dictatorship, lack of accountability, and unspecified corruption.

They are truly a bunch of jokers; they are dwelling in a world divorced from facts.

The fact is that SVG is a more democratic and free society today than at anytime in its history. Political hygiene and political stability are also the hallmarks of ULP's governance.

### **PARADIGMS SHIFT**

In the last 23 years, SVG has undergone a paradigm shift in the structure of its economy. It is well-advanced in the process of transforming its hitherto relatively backwards, uncompetitive, colonial/amended colonial economy to a modern, competitive, many-sided, post-colonial economy which is at once national, regional, and global. The transformation is taking place before our very eyes. Other paradigms shift are occurring elsewhere in the country's political economy.

Underpinning the paradigm shift in the economy are, vitally, the Education, Health, Housing, and Infrastructure (Physical and Institutional) Revolutions. The people of SVG are increasingly seeing the realization the vision, and its accompanying, compelling developmental narrative, advanced, in practice, by the ULP. We are decidedly on the right track. All else is petty sophistry by partisan critics whose failed personal ambitions are stuck in their craw and enfeeble them in every material particular.

### **RETURN TO SENDER**

When the NDP and its malignant trolls swipe at the ULP with their falsehoods and inanities, return to sender the following, among other things:

1. The NDP opposed the construction of the Argyle International Airport, the building of the Rabacca Bridge, and the Modern Port Project in Kingstown.

2. The ND opposed the coming of Sandals Resorts to SVG and the construction of the Holiday Inn and Marriott Hotels.
3. The NDP opposed the Education Revolution, the building of the Modern Medical and Diagnostic Complex in Georgetown, and the proposed modern city at Arnos Vale, inclusive of the proposed construction of the Acute Referral Hospital at Arnos Vale.
4. The NDP opposed the valuable quarry at Richmond, to provide a sustainable basis for aggregate for construction of major capital projects.
5. The NDP opposed the construction of the Sir Vincent Beache Stadium at Diamond and the complete rehabilitation of the Arnos Vale Cricket Complex.
6. The NDP opposed various specially-targeted programmes such as SET, YES, ON-SITE, the Contingency Fund, and Zero Hunger Trust Fund.

### **SOME REMINDERS**

Equally, some reminders are in order, including:

1. SVG is the only CARICOM country in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which has never been on an IMF programme. We manage our business of government sensibly without recourse to the IMF and austerity.
2. SVG is the only OECS country in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which does NOT sell our passports and citizenship and which has never been late with the payment of salaries for its public employees.

3. SVG is the smallest country ever to sit on the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent member for 2 years, 2020-2021.
4. SVG is the only CARICOM country ever to hold the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC, a Latin American-Caribbean body of 33 countries and 650 million people.
5. SVG's prestige in the world stands higher today than at any time hitherto and is one of the most-respected developing countries in the world.

### **CELEBRATES 23 YEARS OF EXCELLENT GOVERNANCE**

On Sunday April 7, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., at Arnos Vale, the ULP holds its 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary celebrations. It's a celebration of Progress: Always ULP. See you there. Come and hear the Comrade, TeeJay, Marcia Griffiths, and others.

One last reflection while we celebrate 23 years of progress and good governance: Our accomplishments, our achievements, our tremendous progress can be reversed if the country flirts with the follies of the NDP. Do not for one moment think that reversals are not possible. Indeed, history is full of reversals: the Roman Empire fell and the British Empire declined into nothingness. Support for the NDP and its nonsensical stances is a vote to set-back SVG and its people. Remember, too, that arising from the NDP years in government (July 1984 to March 2001) SVG was placed in a dead-end; things fell apart. Life was very hard for most people: "The pot bin a boil, but di food wasn't nuff; and the rain bin a fall but di dutty was tuff, tuff, tuff.:

ULP is on the right track! Let's celebrate!