

June 30th 2023

A STABLE PARTY MAKES FOR A STABLE GOVERNMENT

Introduction

The Unity Labour Party has been in office since March 28, 2001 which means that the party celebrated 22 years of unbroken governance in this country. This is by any index a remarkable accomplishment when one considers the fact that it's the citizens of this country that voted in 5 consecutive elections to elect the ULP as the party of governance. Prior to this, the current parliamentary opposition, the NDP has the longest unbroken streak of approximately 17 years, from winning 4 elections. The 17-year tenure of the NDP administration was marred by scandals and resignations of various Cabinet members, and the absence of any real structure in terms of leadership was evident. While on paper there may have existed a hierarchical structure of the party, this was not evident in reality and it lack the structure of leadership spilled over in government. One just had to remember the Ottley Hall project negotiation was conducted and the fallout that occurred because of the lack of oversight by a Parliament that didn't feel accountable to the people, especially since there was no opposition between 1989 and 1984. Imagine having a situation where multiple Attorney's Generals were forced to resign under clouds of scandals and controversy. The very famous "clipping of the wings" metaphorically of Billy Burton is also memorable to the point where he left the party and ran independent, subsequently publicly embarrassed himself in asking forgiveness of the former prime minister. The stewardship of the ULP, is the complete opposite to that which was just outlined under the NDP, with our tenure being one characterized by strong leadership, stability that have together resulted in the successful execution of the most ambitious development agenda at home and the raising of the profile of our country globally.

Stable Leadership Makes the Difference

After the 1998 elections where the ULP was defeated by a 7-8 margin even though they received more than 5000 votes over the NDP's total or 55% of the votes cast, there was a change in leadership of the ULP. Our now deceased Comrade Vincent

Beach decided that he had given all that he could have in terms of the top leadership position and decided to throw his support behind Comrade Ralph, and so did the majority of the delegates at the Convention in December of 1998. Comrade Ralph's election to leadership made a significant difference as along with other elected officers including Comrade Louis Straker as deputy political leader ushered in a new dawn for the ULP. The slate of candidates for that 2001 elections was rightfully referred to as a dream team, consisting of professionals from varying fields including law, medicine, education, and banking. Once elected, the team that formed the Cabinet settled down quickly and began the implementation of the very ambitious agenda that sparked a period of unprecedented development in this country. The leadership provided by Comrade Ralph as political leader and Prime Minister shows evidence of his experience, his wisdom, his ability to draw out the best of those with whom he works and very importantly, his ability to inspire others.

The leadership of Comrade Ralph of the ULP and of the government that it forms, stands out for its stability over the years and the very seamless way our government functions. Transitions have been managed quite well, as is evident with the way our party refreshes the slate of candidates at election cycles with elected members and caretakers making way for new ones to step forward and continue the work. There is always fierce competition with potential candidates coming forward expressing willingness to serve, but this process is never allowed to create contention and acrimony among comrades; instead wisdom, experience, and common sense are always allowed to prevail, making way for resolutions in the best interest of the party and the country. This stability of the ULP as an organization can be seen in the ULP in government, hence over the last 22 years, we have not seen a resignation of any cabinet member over corruption scandals or any of the issues of ill-discipline and misbehaviour in public office that once characterized governance under the NDP are truly a thing of the past. Our government is stable, working in the best interest of our country under the wise and experienced leadership of Comrade Ralph.

The Future in Safe Hands

Over the next two and a half years and into the 2025 General Elections, our party and our government will continue to be served with the stable leadership of Comrade Ralph at the helm. What has been happening within the party and

our government during our Comrade's tenure of leadership is the preparation of the new dispensation of leaders who will carry the work forward and ensure the continued development of SVG. Already we are bearing witness to the mature leadership provided in Agriculture, Fisheries, etc. by Comrade Saboto, in Education by Comrade Curtis, Finance and Economic Planning by Comrade Camillo, the excellent growth and developing leadership of Comrades Carlos and Orando, who are serving in Cabinet for just two and a half years, but are definitely standing out as their performances speak for themselves. The experience that our young Cabinet ministers are gaining, and the wisdom and leadership imparted by Comrade Ralph gives our nation the confidence that the future is in safe hands. No doubt, when the time comes for our party to decide on officers for party leadership, this process will be properly managed and will produce the best outcome for our party and our country and our Comrades will rally in support of those elected to positions of leadership. The ULP understands that a house divided will never stand, therefore we will remain united in purpose, in building a united stable organization, that will continue to lead SVG beyond 2025, within the mandate given by the citizens of this country. The ULP is a stable organization, with stable leadership and our country has benefitted from this stability over the last 22 years, with a stable government, performing the work of lifting SVG higher.