

March 3, 2023

IMPORTANT MILESTONES FOR COMRADE RALPH AND THE ULP

Introduction

The months of February and March are of great significance to the Comrade, the Unity Labour Party, and our entire nation, as several notable events happened during those months over the years. Just a few weeks ago, on February 14, 2023, our nation celebrated 6 years since the opening of the Argyle International Airport and this event, now etched in history is the latest milestone to be celebrated in that month. Part of celebrating milestones is the recognizing of the significance of the event and appreciating the transformative, life-altering nature impacts they have and continue to have on our society. It is not just about the expressions of joy and the offering of congratulations, in a mere act of recognizing for the sake of recognition the date on which an event occurred. Absolutely not! This is different. Here we call to attention and remind ourselves that these events having occurred have changed the course of history in ways unimaginable and for them we are better off. The celebration of the bridge over the Rabacca dry river, a project previously said to be impossible, is in recognition of the way it has improved access between communities of both sides of the river since its completion. In very much the same way, the previously mention AIA is celebrated and discussed for the impact it has had on our tourism, with increased visitor arrivals through the added direct international flights and increase in investments in that sector as well as others. This week, the article will focus on two milestones, the first being the recognition of 29 years of active, unbroken service as the Member of Parliament representing the constituency of North Central Windward by Prime Minister Dr. Hon Ralph Gonsalves, and the 15th year of broadcasting of the ULP's radio station, Star FM.

Comrade Celebrates 29 Years of Unbroken Representation of NW

On February 20, 1994, the voters of North Central Windward made the wise choice to elect Dr. Ralph Gonsalves to Parliament to represent their interests, being their voice and fighting for their cause instead of the cause of a party and its leader. The election of Comrade Ralph in February of 1994 would be the start of something even more special as our country would come to experience years later but at the time, the change was very special. Comrade Ralph had been an activist many years before his election and up to that time had competed in all previous elections since independence; 1979, 1984 and 1989. The results of the elections prior to 1994 didn't produce the result the Comrade was hoping for, but his drive and desire to serve was never daunted, he kept taking his vision for this country to the people. Following the defeat of the ULP in the 1998 General Elections, and with Comrade Ralph being re-elected as MP for NCW, he was then elected as political leader of the ULP and this ushered in the new leadership of the party supported fully by the

executive and the rank and file. The ULP was ready to rally behind our new leader Comrade Ralph and he displayed the readiness and wiliness to lead that would take the party forward. Between 1998 and 2001, the ULP lead by Comrade Ralph conducted a vigorous campaign to highlight the deficits of the then NDP administration designed to show the Vincentian public why the ULP was better to govern by exposing the fact that our country was going nowhere fast while presenting the party's vision. It was therefore no surprise that the ULP won the 2001 General Elections by a 12-3 margin with approximately 55% of the votes and Comrade Ralph elected for his 3rd term as MP for NCW and appointed the country's 4th Prime Minister.

We can discuss the many revolutionary policies of the Comrade Ralph lead ULP over the years; the education revolution, the housing revolution, the expansion of healthcare, completing the impossible tasks of constructing the bridge over Rabacca and constructing the international airport and many other transformative national policies. On the foreign policy front, the vision of the Comrade Ralph lead government, did fantastic work strengthening and deepening existing diplomatic relations while exploring new ones that have offered tangible benefits to our country. In this regard, the crowning moment must be the election of SVG as the smallest nation ever to serve a 2-year term as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. In 2023, some 29 years later, the Comrade is as committed and driven in his desire to serve the people of NCW specifically and SVG more broadly. He continues to deliver on his promises to the people and he continues to enjoy the support of most Vincentians as shown by polls conducted. It is no wonder that we celebrate his long-standing service country and congratulate him on 29 years of unbroken service to the people of NCW and this country. Congratulations Comrade Ralph!

Star FM Turns 15

One very significant investment made by the ULP back in February 2008, was that made in owning a radio station to take the party's message directly to the people. Following the ULP's victory in 2001, there was a concerted effort by the disposed NDP now in opposition to insist on a daily campaign of misinformation, flat out lies, slander topped with a shameless dose of hatred and venom towards the Comrade, the ULP and anyone who supported the government. In recognition of this, the party launched its very own station in February 2008 and since then, Star FM continues to be the main information organ of the ULP, bringing the message of the party and information on the program of the government to listeners at home and abroad. Thanks to Star FM, there is a constituent counter to the misinformation spread on the NDP on its daily programs as well as by those who have decided to go along with the destructive program of the opposition. We celebrate with Star FM that has carved out its very own niche in a very crowded space and is a force to be reckoned with in the information space. It is difficult to think what it would have been like without the presence of Star to bring information to the people and give our party officers a safe space to engage the listeners. Congratulations Star FM, keep on shining through for the people of SVG.