

**March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023**

**COME TOGETHER, STAY TOGETHER, WORK TOGETHER**

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### **Introduction**

The celebration by our Unity Labour Party of twenty-two (22) years in office as government of SVG was marked by a massive rally on the tarmac at the decommissioned ET Joshua airport site in Arnos Vale on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2023. It was by all accounts a massive success as thousands of comrades came out to show their support and to celebrate with the rank and file and leaders of their great party. The speeches were targeted at reminding attendees and those watching on social media of the transformational agenda of the government and the development SVG has seen as a result and at the same time, pointing ahead to the plans and programs that will continue the transformation in the future. Our comrade Prime minister was as dynamic as we could remember him, addressing the national issues large and small that are of importance to the citizens of this country. He spoke directly to the citizens of SVG, both the supporters of the ULP as well as those who may not be supporters of this great party, outlining the agenda that is all encompassing and far reaching, impacting positively the lives of all Vincentians. Of equal importance was Comrade Ralph's very forthright comments regarding the attitudes of our people, especially supporters among whom frustrations to set in and who allow that frustration to turn to anger. Moving forward we are encouraged as a party to embrace others, spread the message and work together, each doing his/her part to ensure the continued growth and success of the party, and by extension the continued development of SVG.

### **We Seek to Make Converts**

Present at our massive celebration rally on Sunday March 26, 2023, were individuals who may have previously supported the Parliamentary opposition, but who tired, of the constant hate, anger and destructive rhetoric constantly flowing from that party, are in search of something better. They journeyed to the tarmac to listen to the leaders of our party and country and fellowship with our comrades in a pure and loving atmosphere celebrating SVG. As would be expected, their presence drew the ire of the supporters who hurled abuse at them referring to them as heretics and sell-outs and condemning them to a bitter end, simply because of their presence. Comrade Ralph spoke directly to those who came in search of better, and welcomed them to the celebration, encouraging our comrades to be similarly welcoming to our fellow Vincentians and embracing them in our efforts to make disciples of all men. Our goal as a mass political party is to seek converts, to welcome others to this party and work together to build a better nation. The reference is always made of the traveler on the dangerous road to Jericho and the call for all of

us to be the metaphoric “good Samaritans” doing good regardless of the circumstances, always ready to lend a helping hand reflecting our humanity. Our party has shown that it can be relied on in the toughest times, during disasters of the worst kind and Vincentians have come to trust our leadership, fully convinced that in the worst times, Comrade Ralph and the ULP remains SVG’s safest bet. It is therefore no wonder that the parliamentary opposition continues to lose support among their base, and they move towards the ULP in recognition of the good work being done to improve their lives and livelihoods.

### **We Must Stay and Work Together**

The story of the prodigal son provides an example of the type of attitudes our comrades should embody regarding the embrace of Vincentians who come to the ULP looking for a safe place and family as well as those family members who grow cold. While the focus of the story is on the son who left, we look at the son who stayed and was reluctant to embrace his returning brother and celebrate the occasion with the father. Comrade Ralph encouraged our comrades to temper whatever frustration they may be experiencing and focus on the big picture recognizing that we must work together to keep our party strong and vibrant. Our party is as strong as our comrades make it and it is important that we recognize the work that must be done at the constituency level, both internally as well as growing the party through the recruitment of new members. This move towards recruitment would be less effective if our comrades are always grumbling and making contentious issues where none exist, and it reduces the impact of our work when we are not united in our effort. Our successful resurgence from the disasters that wreaked havoc on our country over the last few years, should serve as an example of what being united can do and how strong we are when we work together. Our encouragement to our comrades is not to be like the brother of the prodigal son, but instead embrace our brothers and sisters who come home, and welcome those who reject the anti-progressive opposition for the progressive and positive agenda of our ULP. The more united we are, the more we would accomplish as a party and as a country building on the great work done over the last 22 years.

### **Conclusion**

The message from our leaders at the 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary celebration rally was one of togetherness, embrace and unity, and it set an excellent tone moving forward. Our comrades left the rally excited and those who came in search of something new, went away feeling justified in their decision to attend. As we move forward as a great party, let us be ever mindful of Comrade Ralph’s encouragement to “come together, stay together and work together”.