

November 13<sup>th</sup> 2020

## **Thank You SVG for an Unprecedented and Historic Victory**

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### **Introduction**

The just concluded elections held on November 5, 2020 here in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, produced a result that has been correctly regarded as unprecedented and historic by historians, political and social activists as well as ordinary individuals with an interest in these events. The election of the Unity Labour Party (ULP) for a fifth consecutive term in government here, is something that has never been achieved before in any of the independent countries in CARICOM. The swearing-in of Dr. Hon Ralph E Gonsalves as the Prime Minister of this country for a 5th term, on Saturday November, 8 2020 marked the beginning of a new era in the politics of this region, and puts him in a group of one, the only Prime Minister living or dead to have achieved this. This result wasn't achieved without hard work, but even at his age, Dr Gonsalves displayed a level of energy absent in most of his age-group to lead a very vigorous campaign throughout the length and breadth of this country to ensure that the message of the ULP was delivered personally to the electorate. In the end, the wise and informed electorate chose to return the Dr Gonsalves ULP to office to continue its development agenda designed to lift SVG higher!

### **Rejection of the NDP and its Neo-colonialism**

The ULP put before the electorate, its report card and offered an agenda going forward that would see a continuation of its policies, building on the excellent work that was done over the last 19 plus years. The electorate was reminded of the strides this country has made in education, healthcare, agriculture, housing, infrastructure development, airport construction, poverty reduction, youth entrepreneurship and employment creation. The advancements made were many and the electorate was given a clear roadmap of how a re-elected ULP would build on those successes to create a more vibrant economy that would present opportunities to all Vincentians for wealth creation and advancement.

By contrast, the New Democratic Party offered the electorate a mishmash of watered down rhetoric, pieced together with the use of a few overused buzz words and phrases as adhesive in what was otherwise and incoherent platform of confused messengers and confusing messages. The lack of real substance and details in their plans was evident as they scrambled from issue to issue in the hope that one would stick and gain traction with the electorate. This never materialised! Their trump-card of selling passports and citizenship to the highest bidder, be they criminals or vagabonds in a veritable race to the bottom, was rejected by the electorate even with the best effort of the NDP to try and disguise this plan with the most fanciful references. The invitation of foreign mind-benders, intent on taking us to a new era of colonialism where Vincentians would become second class citizens in their own land, with the interest of foreign “lords” put before our own was not something the Vincentian populace was willing to allow.

The most telling moment of the campaign for the opposition NDP occurred when its leader Dr Godwin Friday addressed the students at the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Community College. During the question and answer segment, one student challenged the Leader of the Opposition to provide some hope to the youth as his party has so desperately tried to convince the electorate that it offers. She questioned “having listed a number of failings of this country, can you list just one thing we are good at”? The question caused an unprepared and “stumped” Godwin Friday to squirm and move about in his seat displaying clear and obvious discomfort. “We have done well in you” he responded, “done well in our students, our people...” Godwin Friday, had because of the preparedness of this community college student, given a solid endorsement of the education revolution and by extension the people-centred policies of this ULP government.

The NDP presented among its 15 candidates 6 new candidates to complement its 7 parliamentarians and 2 candidates who were facing the electorate for a second time. The voters of this country rejected 9 of them, choosing instead to elect with an increased parliamentary majority, 9 of the 15 candidates offered by the ULP. Vice President and a potential leader of the NDP, Roland Matthews, the incumbent in North Leeward, failed to defend his seat against Carlos James who is now the duly elected Member of Parliament for the constituency of North Leeward. This was not just a rejection of candidates, but also a rejection of the direction the NDP wanted to take this country, preferring instead to stick with the ULP, showing confidence in its policies presented and its proven ability as a government to implement their policies.

## **Conclusion**

The results of the last general elections, with the Unity Labour Party improving its parliamentary majors to 9-6 indicates a strengthening of the legislative position of the executive arm of government. The ULP can be pleased that in campaigning for a 5th term in government it didn't just see a return, but a return with strengthened majority. The party didn't just achieve something that was never achieved before, but it did so, making it look easy from the results. Dr Gonsalves asked the electorate for an increased majority from the one seat 8-7 majority that it held in the last parliament and they responded.

The ULP thanks all those voters who went out on election day and voted for the Star, giving the party a strengthened position from which it can now govern and creating history in the process. We give you the citizens of the country a solemn pledge that we would continue to work and govern this country for the benefit of all in our quest to "Lift SVG Higher".