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The NDP, caught in the slips again

Introduction

The recent furor about the operations of Cambridge Analytica and the use of Facebook accounts for political campaigns in the United States, has captured the imagination of social commentators in the State. Cambridge Analytica is a UK-based company that combines data mining and analysis, with strategic communication activities, aimed at influencing electoral process. It was created in 2013, as an offshoot of its parent company, Strategic Communications Laboratories, SCL.

We are familiar with SCL, the “mind-bending company” who has been operating in the Vincentian political circles for a number of years. They were engaged by the opposition New Democratic Party, in the attempt to influence the Vincentian voters. They were successful in the 2009 referendum campaign, which resulted in the defeat of the proposed 2009 Constitution. But one year later, they could not persuade the Vincentian voters to elect the NDP, despite a dastardly campaign, aimed primarily at the leader of the ULP, Dr. Ralph Gonsalves.

All this is old news for some of our readers. But the recent revelations in the UK-based magazine, The Spectator, throws a different light on the activities of SCL, as they relate to elections in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the opposition New Democratic Party.

The Kalin Interview

The Spectator tells the story of the political activities of Dr. Christian Kalin of Henley and Partners, the world leaders in passports and citizenship and the parent company of SCL. The Spectator reports that “the same year, SCL and Kalin worked on another election campaign, this time in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. There they worked with Arnhim Eustace, the leader of the opposition. SCL billed Eustace’s New Democratic Party, more than US\$4 million, including US\$100,000 for ‘counter operations’”. No one knows whether or not this money was paid.

The Spectator goes on to state that Kalin went on to suggest to Eustace things he might want to say in his campaign. For example Kalin lists various investments that Eustace could count on, if he won the elections. These include “a large residential and hotel development company, a new chain of retail banks from an important international banking group, a construction group to invest in major infrastructure projects as well as input from a global player in private aircraft services”.

Readers will remember December 2010, when the NDP called an impromptu media conference, to announce certain so-called important plans. It is no secret that the information provided by SCL, and mentioned by Kalin in his interview with the Spectator, is the same information that Eustace provided at the media conference. It must be remembered that the NDP had to adjust their manifesto in 2010, to include this information from SCL. In fact during the media conference, Eustace was seen reading from a manuscript, clearly provided by SCL.

So where did all this information come from? Eustace clearly states that he was involved in talks with all these investors, but he cannot provide concrete information as to who the investors are. All this of course was a farce, perpetuated on the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, all in the vain effort to sell the citizenship of the country. As we now know, and as Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves has said, Eustace was being directed by the SCL who had their own agenda. Let him now come out and deny this.

The Gaston Browne Call

On top of all this was the information which surfaced last month, about the telephone conversation between Prime Minister Gaston Browne of Antigua and Barbuda, and the leader of the NDP, Godwin Friday. During a call to Gaston Browne, an excited Friday was trying to seek the identity of the strategist who masterminded the election victory for Gaston Browne, obviously thinking that that individual was from the USA, or the UK. Clearly, Friday did not like the answer, which indicated that Browne was his own strategist!!!

To crown it all off, Friday was prepared to hire a strategist at all cost, because “money was no problem”, since the NDP needed to win. Well this shows how desperate the NDP is, in their drive to capture the treasury of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. His statement that the NDP needs to win in St. Vincent and the Grenadines contradicts his party’s position, that the ULP stole the 2015 general elections. And naturally, Friday has no defense for these admissions, except to say that his comments were taken out of context.

All this is embarrassing for the opposition NDP, and their propagandists on Nice Radio are striving to put a good face on all this. Needless to say, the internet crazies, most of whom are based in the United States and Canada, do not know what to make of this situation, and it seems as though they have decided to go underground.

Conclusion

While the NDP is trying to explain away its troubles, the ULP is basking in seventeen years of remarkable progress in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Truly, this is the best period of governance in the history of the country, with huge success stories from the Education Revolution, the corner stone of the “people-centered development strategy”.

Vincentians are indeed proud of the long record of achievements by the Unity Labour Party. The party and its broad base will flock to the Calliaqua Playing Field for a rally to mark the record seventeen years in office. Long live the ULP and Comrade Ralph.