

Jan 10th 2020

The ULP, winning again for SVG

Introduction

This Sunday January 12th, 2020, the ruling Unity Labour Party will hold its annual Convention at the Campden Park Secondary School, at a time when the party is preparing for general elections, with a five in a row objective. The truth be told, the rank-and-file of the ULP expect the leadership of the ULP to call the elections early, but this is unlikely, given the massive work load of the ULP administration for 2020.

The political leader of the ULP, Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, the Prime Minister, will outline further, the key aspects of the socio development work load. Dr. Gonsalves has been speaking about some of the key elements of the work programme of the government. These include the development of the geothermal project, the work on the expansion of the port in Kingstown, the development of the new city at Arnos Vale, the construction work in the hotel sector, and the medicinal marijuana project.

New Candidates

Perhaps the highlight of the convention will be the ratification of the four new candidates who will be contesting the next general elections on the ULP slate. It is well known that Orande Brewster in Central Leeward, Dr. Mineva Glasgow in South Leeward, Dominic Sutherland in Central Kingstown, and Curtis King in West St. George, will be the new candidates.

By comparison, the NDP, the opposition party which has been in election mode since 2005, cannot find candidates for several constituencies. For example, they have not identified a candidate for the constituency of East Kingstown to replace Arnhim Eustace, and they have not identified a candidate for North Windward to replace Lorraine Baptiste. And, despite all the noise making, they have failed to ratify the candidacy of Israel Bruce, with sources claiming that they are waiting on Bretorn Horne to make up his mind, before ratifying Bruce.

But that is the business of the NDP. The ULP will be about the business of five in a row on Sunday, and the Convention will be dedicated to just that, the plans and programmes of the ULP, to continue the socio-economic development of the country, into 2020 and beyond.

The UN Security Council

Even as the ULP prepares for the 24th Convention, there is the business of the UN Security Council to attend to. The ULP administration spent the latter part of 2019, preparing for membership in this important body, in terms of the staffing, office space, roles and responsibilities, and budgeting. This week the Ambassador, Rhonda King presided over the flag-raising ceremony, to mark this important feat.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is the smallest State to become a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. International groups, intellectuals and countries are still trying to figure out the strategies used by this country, to secure the votes for the UN Security Council. Suffice it to say that 185 international countries, recognizing the importance of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, its principled positions on international issues, its adherence to international laws, and its enlightened leadership, cast their votes in favour of SVG. There can be no greater recognition than this.

To quote the Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves from his 2002 Budget Address “Our activist and principled foreign policy, formulated and implemented in the interest of our people’s humanization, has lifted this country’s profile overseas, and has brought it substantial material benefits. We are now truly a small nation with a great people; and a government of unquestioned stature, which stands tall as a magnificent example of our Caribbean Civilization.”

The people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines are justly proud of the principled foreign policy of the ULP administration, the material benefits derived, and the lofty stature that our small island enjoys regionally, and internationally.

Busy year ahead

When the political leader delivers his address at the 24th Annual Convention, he will talk about the busy agenda that is ahead for the ULP administration. And the list is long, from development in the hotel sector, to geothermal project, to the expansion of Port Kingstown.

We see all of the work of the ULP administration before our very eyes. Visitors who came home for the Christmas holidays were amazed at the tremendous progress that has taken place in the country. So, before our very eyes we can see the geothermal work in the La Soufriere area. Before our very eyes we can see the construction work on the Rain Forest project that will develop our fisheries sector. Before our very eyes we can see the construction of the Royal Mill hotel in the Calliaqua area. And the list goes on.

And this is not all. The government will continue the education revolution with more focus on specialist areas like information technology. All this is part of the

efforts to create a modern competitive post colonial economy, to put our country on a better footing to achieve more socio-development targets.

The government continues to meet its financial targets and salaries and other wages are being paid on time, including the salaries of the members of the opposition. In addition, the government is moving to correct certain deficiencies that exist among workers at the lower end of totem pole. For example, the government has honoured its pledge to pay the country's nurses who were due allowances of one kind or the other, all their outstanding money in the month of December, a total of one million dollars.

Conclusion

Sunday is going to be an important and exciting day for the members, supporters and well wishers of the Unity Labour Party. We encourage them to come out early to attend the 24th Annual Convention of the ULP, as we prepare for "five in a row".