

NOVEMBER 20TH 2020

Lifting SVG Higher - From Promise to Reality

Introduction

The just concluded General Elections were extremely competitive, yet again confirming that our democracy though young, is an institution that functions efficaciously even if not absolutely flawless. After all, we live in the realm of humans and not gods. Our electorate displayed political maturity, sense and sensibility in putting the fate of the country ahead of party preference. Consequently, it returned the Unity Labour Party (ULP) to governance for an unprecedented fifth term with an increase in seats! We salute this wisdom. We are very grateful that the country has again reposed confidence in our stewardship which we shall continue, ever striving to improve, for we shall keep our promise to “Lift SVG higher!”

In keeping with this mantra, we have hit the ground running. PM Gonsalves has appointed a new cabinet brimming with youthful brilliance and energy, while stuffed with experience, demonstrated commitment and ability to guarantee efficiency and effectiveness as we proceed to administer the affairs of our beloved country. This very-well considered mixture is necessary for the future fulfilment of our promise as a nation.

The New Cabinet

The people were invited and came in large numbers to witness on Tuesday November 10, 2020 the swearing in of their new government, which took place at the Heritage Square in Kingstown. It was a beautiful, exciting, and uplifting affair. There was much anticipation as to what ministries would be assigned to first-time elected Curtis King, Carlos James and Orando Brewster, as well as who would be the new government senators. And with the exit of Sir Louis and Ces Mckie from the immediate-past cabinet, the people knew there were going to be new Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and Tourism, Sports and Culture.

In the end, Comrade Ralph, a veteran of more than half a century of serious, focused and committed political activism, and twenty years as Prime Minister presented his people a government clearly design to bring the best out of each and every member, with him and his senior colleagues, including our new Deputy Prime Minister , Hon. Montgomery Daniel, there to support the new inductees, when needed.

The Prime Minister showed foresight in naming two young, exciting, intelligent and highly qualified senators in Ashelle Morgan and Roshard Ballah. And the people now have a new junior Minister of Foreign Affairs via the appointment of the fourth senator, Ms. Keisal Peter, a young lawyer with a decade-long experience in private practice. Needless to say, the anchor of this impressive team, is the longest servicing democratically elected leader anywhere in the world! Comrade Ralph!! We will lift SVG higher!!

The road to higher ground

The Ministers all began their tasks with promptness, clearly determined to deliver to the people as promised in our manifesto and on the campaign trail. There are major projects to be implemented in this term and challenges to be met and overcome. The new Minister of Health, Wellness and Environment, the able Hon Jimmy Prince would be extremely busy as he, inter alia, gets action going for the construction of the acute referral hospital, which will be the centre-piece of the brand-new city at Arnos Vale. And the ever-capable Minister, Senator Julian Francis, while dealing with important matters such as Grenadines Affairs will tackle the construction of our US \$200 million seaport down at Rose Place. This project is among those that the ULP has designed to positively transform economic and social life of and in this country.

As a result of this port development the Ministry of Housing manned by the youthful, talented and energetic Hon. Orlando Brewster, is already on the ball making arrangements for the 40-plus families that would be relocated and provided homes in Lowmans Leeward area. Minister Brewster has also taken charge of the government's on-going amazing housing revolution and its extensive land reform, both of which are fundamentally people-centred.

And North Leeward's gift to the ULP, the intelligent and articulate Hon. Carlos James, has approximately 24-months of hotel construction to oversee as our new Tourism Minister. Oh, and let's not forget he will welcome our first direct

flights from the United Kingdom by Virgin Atlantic. Yes, at our international airport built by this government!

And there is just so much more. For example, one would not be wrong in claiming that Hon. Saboto Caesar is carrying out a major agricultural revolution to which he is about to add the medicinal cannabis industry, tremendous growth in our export of fish, and the consolidation of SVG as the food basket of the OECS. Yes, all this and more will lift SVG higher in this, the 5th consecutive term of the ULP.

Conclusion

The programme of the ULP going forward will continue to be focused on governance that delivers sustainable development and a better quality of life for our citizens. We will not be distracted from this mission. We are cognizant, that our nation has endured a very difficult year at the hands of the Covid-19 pandemic and other challenges including one of the worst droughts in decades, and a dengue outbreak that ended in tragedy for some families, to whom we offer sincere and profound condolences. We know the road ahead is one with many challenges, but this is SVG, where the creed is "*What e'er the future brings, our faith will see us through.*" This is the creed of the ULP. It is a belief that we have and will continue to manifest in practice, hence our conviction that we will "Lift SVG Higher."