

Sept 29th 2023

TRUST YOUR EYES, IGNORE THEIR BIG LIES

Introduction

The book of John, the 3rd chapter and 11th verse tells us this “verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witnesses”. The context of the conversation is not the immediate focus of this week’s article, instead we focus on the importance of witnesses reporting on what they know, based on what they have seen. The track record of this government is there for all to see; hence every Vincentian can bear witness and speak confidently about what they have seen over the last 22 years under this progressive Unity Labour Party government lead by Comrade Ralph. There is currently a concerted effort targeted at the youth of this country, to try and convince them that the policies of the government that they continue to benefit from, do not exist. Assisting those peddling the BIG LIE, are foreign operatives, colluding with some local journalists who having benefitted from the policies of the ULP government, are now intent on kicking over the metaphoric bucket of milk, preventing others from benefitting the same way they have. In targeting the youth, they focus their messaging on employment, first claiming that the education revolution is irrelevant in preparing our youth for employment, and secondly falsely stating that our economy isn’t creating jobs. Both arguments form part of the BIG LIE strategy, crafted by the foreign operatives, who are desperate to get their hands on our passport to sell to the highest bidders, and the NDP has eagerly bought into this strategy. Our ULP administration however remains focused and committed to providing opportunities for our youth in training, education, entrepreneurship and employment.

Providing Opportunities for the Youth to Soar

During this period of governance by ULP, young people have soared unlike any other time in the history of this country, and they continue to take advantage of available opportunities made. Let’s examine three (3) areas of where the government’s policies continue to impact young people’s lives in positive ways allowing them to soar like eagles, taking their rightful place in our society.

In the area of Education and training, we can never speak too much nor excitedly about the education revolution that has improved access to secondary, post-secondary including technical-vocational training and university education for thousands of our children and youth. Universal access to secondary education guarantees every child of that age-group a space in a secondary institution. The expansion of the A'Level college to a community college with 4 divisions, has allowed for the increase in enrollment numbers of close to 400%. Our youth are trained in various technical-vocational fields, preparing them with the skills demanded by industry, as well as academic training as nurses and teachers to carry out our health and education revolutions and as well as in general studies. Upon successful completion of their post-secondary education, every student has the guarantee of this government that no one will be denied a university education on the basis of lack of funds. The availability of national scholarships, exhibitions and bursaries, government to government scholarships, tuition grants and disadvantaged student loans, are some of the avenues our students pursue their university education.

The on-the-job training and internship programs of the YES, SET and ON-SITE programs continue to be heavily oversubscribed yearly, offering hundreds of young people paid internship for a period of one year. The NDP consistently spoke ill of those programs referring to the Youth Empowerment Service, as the Youth Exploitation Service, and with that discouraged many young persons from getting involved. Today however, because of the popularity of the program, they have come full circle to try and claim credit for the program, offering to increase the amount paid as stipend. Maybe now they can openly encourage young people to register whenever the call is made.

Our government sector remains the single largest employer of Vincentians including our youths who are engaged in every productive sector. Our public service, teaching service, nurses, and police service all have significant numbers of youth, and the government continues to train more and more youth every year. The presence of young persons across the government sector can be seen at all levels, including middle management, upper management as well as in the cabinet of ministers of SVG that now has 3 female senators (2 ministers and 1 parliamentary secretary) under the age of 35.

Our growing economy sees new investments in tourism, agriculture and fisheries and entertainment, and our youth are at the forefront. One just needs to examine

the recruitment by Sandals, the employment offered by Rainforest Seafood and the musical production of our young soca and ragga soca artistes during carnival, and the involvement of our young people will become very evident.

Finally, our government is investing in the entrepreneurial pursuits of youth through the implementation of the PRYME program that provided individual grants of up to \$40,000 to young business owners as well as potential business owners. According to Comrade Camillo, the expectation was that approximately 500 persons may apply, and the program would award about 200 grants, but the program surpassed everyone's most extreme expectation with more than 5000 applicants and in excess of 1300 grants awarded at a total value of more than \$7,000,000. What a government! Our young people because of PRYME were able to start and grow businesses with many of them showcasing their products at the 2022 edition of the Everything Vincy Expo. We look forward to seeing more of those PRYME businesses at the expo this year.

Conclusion

The evidence of everything mentioned in this article is there for anyone with a discerning eye to see and bare witness. The opposition however continues to peddle big lie in an effort to sway the youth, telling them that nothing is happening in SVG and worst yet, that this government doesn't care about them. Nothing can be furthest from the truth. The NDP past has a terrible track record on youth development and the current makeup, is even more woeful. It is impossible that a party that never expressed faith in young people can now try and pass itself off as the hope of the youth. Our young people can speak what they know and testify of what they see daily, the ULP is the party of the youth. Trust your eyes, ignore their lies.