

May 9th 2025

FRIDAY'S CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP IS AN INSULT TO VINCENTIANS

THE ISSUE

During the life of the current Parliament (2020-2025), Lorraine Friday, Leader of the Opposition New Democratic Party (NDP), under pressure from Comrade Ralph's stinging critiques, delivered himself this damning outburst: "*I have my Vincentian passport in my back pocket and my Canadian passport, proudly, in my front pocket."* Friday, desperate to become Prime Minister, saw, and still sees, nothing wrong holding at the same time, dishonorably and unacceptably, his voluntarily-acquired Canadian and his birth-citizenship of SVG. The profound conflict of loyalties to Canada and SVG in his ambitious, opportunistic, power-seeking breast, disturbs Friday not. His each-way bet on SVG and Canada does not repulse him. His declaration of being proud of his Canadian passport in his front pocket and his SVG passport merely in his back pocket (on which his seated bum rests) surely must be offensive to all patriotic and thoughtful Vincentians who constitute, by far, the bulk of our population. Friday seems oblivious to the fact that he is seeking the office of Prime Minister with his divided loyalties, but clearly preferential to Canada; he is not running for the office of prime dog-catcher, mongoose-chaser, or Bequia vagrant.

CITIZENSHIP IS THE HIGHEST OFFICE IN THE LAND

The highest office in this land, SVG, or of any other country is that of CITIZEN. When Friday voluntarily applied for, and was granted, Canadian citizenship, of his own free will, of his own act, he swore allegiance to Canada. When he was born in SVG he was not required to take an oath of allegiance for his citizenship of SVG or for his passport. In Parliament, as the representative of the Northern Grenadines, he took an oath of allegiance to the people of SVG. His oath of allegiance to Canada and his oath of allegiance to the people of SVG are self-evidently in conflict. A person cannot swear allegiance to Canada and the people of SVG at one and the same

time. Each of those oaths by Friday still subsists. He cannot, as a parliamentary representative or a wannabe Prime Minister, serve two masters at the same time!

We remember that in the wake of the destruction wrought by Hurricane Beryl on July 1, 2024, Lorraine Friday took off to his home in Canada for over three weeks. He left his constituents in the Northern Grenadines; he visited not the ravages and suffering in Union Island, Canouan, and Mayreau. He communicated not, in person, with the victims of Beryl anywhere on St. Vincent.

Contrast that with Comrade Ralph: He was everywhere. He even spent his birthday (August 8th) and his wedding anniversary (August 12th) in the Southern Grenadines with Eloise and others.

To adapt the words of the heroic Ruth of the Old Testament, Lorraine Friday cannot with any certainty, confidence, or truth say to the people of SVG: *“Where you go, I go; and where you live, I will live. You are my people, and your God is my God. And where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried.”* Canada is really Friday’s home; Canadians are really his people; and he intends to die and be buried there. That is the conclusion which reasonably arises from his conduct.

In SVG, the highest office, that of citizenship, cannot be compromised if you are seeking to be a parliamentary representative and, even more so, a Prime Minister. As such, loyalty to SVG must be absolute, unsullied, without conflict or compromise. It is an entirely different story if you are not seeking to become a representation, Minister, or Prime Minister; it is generally acceptable otherwise for someone to hold dual citizenship if you are not seeking a parliamentary office.

This matter is one of high political principle, political morality, political decency, and hygienic political representative, even if in some jurisdictions the law does not frown upon it. But in SVG the law does not only frown upon it; it is arguably, and compellingly so, unconstitutional.

WHAT DOES THE CONSTITUTION SAY?

Section 26(1)(a) of the Constitution of SVG states:

“No person shall be qualified to be elected or appointed as a Representative or Senator if he —

(a) Is by virtue of his own act, under any acknowledgement of allegiance, obedience or adherence to a foreign power or state.”

Friday swore allegiance, “by his own act”, to become a Canadian citizen; and Canada is a “foreign power or state.” This is absolutely clear. Section 26(1)(a) is located under the rubric in the Constitution titled “Disqualifications for Representatives and Senators.”

Some persons contend that “Commonwealth citizens” (Canadians and Vincentians are “Commonwealth Citizens”) are exempt from the disqualification constitutionally mandated in Section 26(v)(a). So, let us see what Section 25(1)(a) of the Constitution of SVG says about this issue under the rubric “Qualifications for Representatives or Senators”:

“(1) Subject to the provisions of Section 26 of this Constitution, a person shall be qualified to be elected as a Representative if, and shall not be so qualified, unless he —

(a) is a Commonwealth citizen of the age of twenty-one years or upwards.”

Clearly, Section 25 (1) (a) is subject to the provisions, of “the disqualifications” section, that is, Section 26(1)(a).

Across the English-speaking countries, this matter has been tested on identical or similar provisions in the Law Courts. Depending on the particular facts of each case, supported by admissible evidence, the Law Courts have adjudicated in this way or that way. In SVG this matter ought to be tested in the Law Courts. Friday ought not to be given an easy pass on this; on this Frank Da Silva appears to have been right.

POLITICAL DECENCY TRUMPS WHATEVER THE LAW IS ON THIS

On this matter, elemental political decency must, in any event, in a competitive democracy, take precedence over whatever the Law Courts may ultimately rule. It is plainly wrong for Lorraine Friday to voluntarily acquire Canadian citizenship and, at the same time, and be a representative or Prime Minister in SVG. On this there cannot be any argument to the contrary. He must either renounce his Canadian citizenship, or not seek parliamentary office.

It is no sufficient answer for anyone to say that in the past this or that representative, seeker of the office at an election, or Senator probably violated the Constitution in this regard. Clearly, in recent times, there is at least one person who was a Senator and who ran in general elections, and who was, “by his own act” had acquired an American citizenship; he is still an American citizen; he had actually commenced the process of renouncing his American citizenship, but did not go through with it; he misled, deceived, the Party of which he was then a member. More on this another time for this delusional wannabe Napoleon of no real merit or principle.

It is noteworthy that Camillo Gonsalves who was a birth-citizen of the USA (not acquired “by his own act”) renounced his American citizenship before he was appointed a Senator, prior to his election as a Representative, even though this was not required by the relevant constitutional provision. He did it because it was the morally right and politically decent thing to do: No divided loyalties. Friday has not done so and has refused to do so. Well, we will see how the cookie crumbles as this political season rolls on.

WHO CAN CHALLENGE FRIDAY?

A registered voter in the Northern Grenadines has “standing” to challenge Friday in the Law Courts prior to his nomination as a candidate in the next general elections; so, too, can Carlos Williams, the ULP’s candidate for the Northern Grenadines. Either such a registered voter or contesting candidate clearly has “a relevant interest” as is required to mount any such legal challenge under and by virtue of Section 96 of the Constitution. When ought that

challenge to be made? Law and political timing provide the appropriate answers. Interesting times are ahead. And Lorraine Friday is on tenterhooks; this article is likely to drive him nuts and put his would-be passport sellers, and Chinese cats, among the frightened pigeons.

WOULD COMRADE RALPH PROMOTE THE LEGAL CHALLENGE?

An important query: Would Comrade Ralph promote or encourage the legal challenge? A strong reason for doing so would be to highlight Lorraine Friday's lack of scruples, politically, on his dual citizenship while at the same time, seeking high political office in Parliament.

On the other side of the political ledger is this: Is it not in the interest of the ULP to have the weak, vacillating, lazy, vacuous, fake, unimpressive Friday lead the NDP in the next general elections?

There is at least one person in the NDP who would like Comrade Ralph to promote or support the legal challenge to Friday: That person is the ambitious but deeply-flawed and unsuitable St. Clair Leacock. He may then get a chance finally to pit himself against Ralph, a long-standing obsession of his; he and the NDP would be soundly defeated, but Leacock's ego would be stoked and that alone would satisfy him in his insecure twilight years of political activism. But none of the following would give Leacock an easy path forward: Daniel Cummings, who has oft-proclaimed that he could never support Leacock for any leadership because he is too "power hungry" and "mercurial"; Fitz Bramble, who has the crazy idea — an illusion in his ambitious head — of his own suitability for leadership and lies-in-waiting for any opportunity to be a metaphoric Brutus (without the actual dagger) slaying, politically, the wannabe Caesars (Friday, Leacock, Cummings). And so, the internal wrangles would erupt, spread, and consume the NDP. What, too, of Terrence Ollivierre or "Nature" Stephenson who embrace the ancient Greek notion that "any cook can govern", so long as they are the proverbial cooks?

MEANWHILE THE ULP WINS

Whichever way Comrade Ralph decides to go on a possible legal challenge to Lorraine Friday on the “dual citizenship” issue, the ULP wins. We await the Comrade’s leadership directions on this. He holds the cards; the NDP “key” cannot open the political lock; and the Comrade sees the stars and hears the rolling thunder of victory. A wonderful place for him to be in! And what of Friday? In any event, he is roasted toast; his political demise is assured.

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