

ULP ASCENDANT, NDP IN TOTAL DISARRAY

ANOTHER GOOD WEEK OF ULP SUCCESSES

Last week (May 18th to May 24th) has been yet another good week for the public to assess the high quality, in practice, of the ULP government's public policies and correspondingly the utter disarray of the opposition New Democratic Party (NDP). The public are talking about the continuing successes of the ULP government and the awful mess, that engulfs the NDP. Every week this is the same story. Look, read, listen!

Some highlights, last week are, as always, an admixture of government and politics — two wings of the metaphoric bird of governance in majestic flight. Those governmental include:

1. The week of thanksgiving and celebration of the Freedom Day (May 21st) for the Spiritual Baptists' Right to Practice Their Religion, the consummation of the ULP government's legislative initiative in the declaration of a public holiday, annually, for this righteous liberation purpose.
2. The continued manifestation of the ULP government's tripartite economic approach of an efficacious partnership, in the people's interest, of the private, cooperative, and State sectors in at least five initiatives put in the public domain: (i) The 40th anniversary of the successful St. Vincent Brewery Limited; (ii) the announcement by the Minister of Finance of a US \$375 million investment for the construction of a 375-room family family-oriented hotel at Mt. Wynne, and the imminent start-up of the 250-room Marriot International Hotel; (iii) extensive discussion between the owners of Palm Island Resort and the government on the significant investment to rebuild the Palm Island Resort and the Anchorage Hotel on Union Island, both destroyed by Hurricane Beryl; (iv) the continued background work for the prospective start-up of the Kingstown Cooperation Credit Union's construction of a substantial regional headquarters at Georgetown on lands purchased from the government; (v) the roll-out by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries on a bundle of initiatives in the agriculture and fisheries sectors.
3. The public acknowledgement by the people, including those severely affected in the Southern Grenadines, that the government has been doing a good job in rebuilding after the devastation of Hurricane Beryl.

4. The fruitful dialogue between the Prime Minister and his team (inclusive of officials from the Ministry of National Mobilisation) on the one hand, and the leaders of Our Lady of Guadelupe Home for Girls (on May 19th), and the core leaders of Esther's Promise, a local initiative to house challenged teenaged girls/young adult women (May 23rd), on the other hand. This social partnership (State and NGOs) mirrors that of the tripartite economic partnership.
5. The hosting by the Prime Minister and Comrade Saboto of the Kindergarten Students and Teachers of the Lowmans Windward Anglican School on May 23rd, reflecting the joinder always between the Ministers of Government, and students, teachers, of all grades/levels.
6. The formal opening on May 23rd of the buildings of the University of the West Indies Global Campus in Kingstown, magnificent joint venture between UWI and the government for the enhanced access of tertiary education for Vincentians.
7. The hosting, on May 22nd, by the Office of the Cabinet Secretary of a one-day seminar/retreat of Permanent Secretaries and Senior Public Servants at the Holiday Inn in a quest to strengthen public administration and the delivery of public services to our nation.
8. The publication and presentation to Parliament, in accordance with law, of: (i) the Report of the Director of Audit on the Public Accounts of the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines for 2022, and (ii) the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2020, of the Medicinal Cannabis Authority by the SVG Audit Office — modernized, far better-staffed, equipped, and housed than ever before by the ULP government.
9. The preparation for Parliament for May 29, 2025, likely to be postponed because of the very late submission of questions by the NDP parliamentarians for oral answers by ministers.
10. The continued roll-out of the massive capital programmes of the government, including the modern port, the hospital at Arnos Vale, the sea defences at Sandy Bay, and the roads all over SVG.

During that week, Comrade Ralph delivered five speeches. Three at three events involving the Spiritual Baptists (including a substantive speech at Victoria Park on May 21st); one at the 40th anniversary celebration of the St. Vincent Brewery; and a major speech on tertiary education at the opening of the UWI Global Campus Buildings. Other Ministers including Gomery, Saboto, Orlando, Curtis,

Carlos, and Camillo made public interventions on matters touching on their respective portfolios. Camillo was on WE FM for two hours on May 25th.

Meanwhile, Jimmy Prince was overseas in Geneva at the World Health Organisation Conference; Keisal Peters was in New York at the Invest SVG Diaspora Forum; and Gustus was on regional duties.

As another week started (May 25th), Comrade Ralph and Luke Browne were at Sion Hill at an African Liberation Day activity organised by a local committee. From there Comrade Ralph went to the CDC's "Ivory Soiree", a festival of pan, at Victoria Park; the ULP's policies on the steelband have been central to the upswing of pan.

ULP ACTIVISM

On the strictly political party front, the ULP was, as always, the centre of activism on the ground. The highlights last week were "the Red Limes" at Calliaqua and Mt. Bentinck, on the night of Friday May 23rd. Both were very well attended; an air of anticipated electoral victory was palpable at these two gatherings. Both Comrade Ralph and Comrade Chevonne Stewart left "the lime" at Calliaqua, which Camillo held the fort, to join Comrades Grace Walters and Montgomery Daniel at Mt. Bentinck.

ULP's activism is focused currently on ensuring that the rebuilding efforts after Beryl are proceeding apace for all the people, and putting things in place, preparatory, for pre-elections ramp-up.

NDP'S DISARRAY AND NEAR USELESSNESS

The NDP must be the laziest, weakest, most disorganized, silly, and ineffective opposition in the entire Caribbean, barring perhaps the hapless Democratic Labour Party in Barbados. The NDP's weaknesses and current problems are systemic and incurable. Day-by-day the NDP is becoming more frustrated and divided. Even strong supporters like "Cruise Ship" Harry and "Turn-Coat" Thomas are despairing publicly. Nobody listens to the NDP outside of their rabid base (which is getting smaller and smaller), the internet crazies overseas (those who hanker for status and position), and the wannabe local agents (some greedy lawyers, accountants, and assorted high-ups in the NDP) salivating to sell our citizenship and passports as much as they can as fast as they can to overseas vagabonds. They make some political noise, searching in vain for relevance.

The NDP has no coherent philosophy, no comprehensive developmental narrative, no plans, no credible policies, no viable or sustainable programmes for development. The NDP leaders are engrossed in the hyping of "a politics of grievance", hoping in vain that something may stick for their opportunistic

benefit. The NDP is led by grumpy old men, and supported by some vacuous, underwhelming younger types.

In the absence of vision, philosophy, plans, policies, and programmes, the NDP has resorted, inevitably, to vulgar abuse of the ULP leaders, especially Comrade Ralph. For example, St. Clair Leacock calls Ralph an “an ugly crapaud”; the shallow one from North Leeward labels the Comrade “an old fool, an old clown”. Ralph cleverly turns these names inside out with humour, dissects and demolishes them, and turns them against the vulgar abusers. They then run away like cowards, running from their own silly name-calling like “jumbie running way from holy water”.

The entire NDP knows that their leader, Lorraine Friday, is lazy, intellectually vacuous and vacillating, and weak; they know that he is a fake, catapulted into leadership, after Arnhim Eustace’s departure, because the party cannot stomach Leacock and Daniel Cummings; the rest are also a waste of time. So, the shallow one entered opportunistically with ambition more than substance. But the more people see and hear him, they knock the shine off his ball.

The people have long recognised that the old, grumpy NDP leadership are into retribution against their presumed “enemies”, that is their private reason to get into public politics; they have nothing to offer the people. And that younger NDP folks are interested in one thing: Quick money. Watch out for those who hunger and thirst to use the state apparatus for their enrichment.

The NDP is running scared; so scared that they are going crazy about Chevonne Stewart’s phenomenal positive impact for the ULP in the Southern Grenadines. Their panic is showing in the number of planted, unsigned articles against her in the newspapers and online. A political earthquake is in the making against the NDP in Union Island, Canouan, and Mayreau.

The NDP’s laziness and disarray are evident, for example, in this parliamentary work. On April 28th 2025, parliament was adjourned to May 29th, one month hence. Questions for ministers are to be submitted ten days before the sitting; yet the questions were submitted so late that the ministers got the questions, after the requisite vetting by the Speaker, on Friday afternoon/evening of May 23rd. The questions have to be sent by the ministers to the public servants for the answers. How can Parliament be held on May 29th? The public servants need more than three days to submit answers to the ministers for their preparation.

Please bear in mind that every opposition Parliamentarian is permitted to submit questions for both oral answers and written answers at every sitting. In 24 years of opposition, no NDP member has ever submitted a question for a written answer.

With eight parliamentarians currently (6 elected representatives and two appointed Senators), 56 questions are permitted to be submitted, 24 for oral answers and 32 for written answers. On the Order Paper for Parliament scheduled for May 29th, only 21 questions for oral answers have been tabled; there is none for written answers. Lazy, near-useless as an Opposition!

LABOUR IS WORKING

Meanwhile, Labour is working for SVG. Immense economic and social progress is being made through good governance and political stability under the ULP government. More and better jobs are available today than ever before. More Vincentians are working today in SVG, absolutely and proportionately, than ever before; taxes are lower than ever before; the economy is stronger and more diversified than ever. Housing, Education, Health, Social Protection, Sports, Culture, Water, Electricity, Telecoms are far better and more accessible than ever before. Good governance, democracy, freedom and political stability are in far better shape than ever.

Our big internal challenge is in the criminal behaviour of a tiny group of persons (mainly a tiny sub-set of young males) who have a love for guns and a propensity to criminal violence born out of, among other things: A breakdown in family structures and parenting; a dissolution in requisite authority structures through a contradictory complex of pristine individualism and yet hyper inter-connectedness, engendered by modern information technology; and the lure/greed of earning “easy” money through selling illegal drugs, especially cocaine. Correctives demand an all-of-society attention, not opportunistic posturing; and it demands, too, regional and global collaboration. The attendant tasks-at-hand in this regard demand, among other things, commitment by right-thinking persons and patient, detailed work in accord with a cohesive plan carried out by all relevant stake-holders, including the families and the communities. The ULP has devised and is implementing such a plan.

Article for week of May 30, 2025