



**MANIFESTO OF THE
DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY
2008**

PATHWAYS TO PROGRESS

TRANSFORMING THE NATION TO MEET THE REAL NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE



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LEADER'S MESSAGE



My vision of Barbados is centered around the idea of our people enjoying a significant improvement in living standards here at home in Barbados.

Barbados must continue to move forward while keeping and promoting our cherished traditions. We can aspire to a higher level of development that is people-oriented, culturally specific and socially rooted in the basic spirituality of our ancestors. I am therefore committed to ensuring that the heritage, aspirations and goals of all of our National Heroes are not lost in the race for crude materialism while our fields and hills are being

reconfigured and citizens can no longer be guardians of our heritage or craftsmen of their fate.

I have a vision of Barbados in which our arts, architecture, industrial policy, economic policy and social policy promote the concept of island living that is socially empowering, highly productive and allows us to meet both our internal and external obligations.

I see a Barbados in which we use trademarks and inventions, which boast *'Made in Barbados'* as a guarantee of quality; and where we have a style of governance that is democratic in the true sense of the word. In short, I see a new Barbados that can show the world that the size of our island nation presents no barrier to the attainment of a superior quality of life.

I believe that there are five areas in which our Island should seek to be the very best:

- ***Information Technology Software Development***
- ***Solar Technology goods and services***
- ***Environmentally-friendly Building Materials (furniture, doors, fittings and frames)***
- ***The Arts (fashion design, music, dance and theatre)***
- ***Food and Beverages***

These aspirations have driven the great movement to this rendezvous with our destiny.

Indeed, the history of Barbados is a process of movement within a 200-year span, from slavery and the denial of all human rights to the present where this nation is ranked highest in the developing nations of the world.

These liberating forces have been *"movements of the people"* and are closely identified with our national heroes. Every single one of these leaders took this nation closer to the goals of freedom, justice and prosperity. Whether it was Bussa leading a rebellion against slavery up to his death during the 1816 uprising, or the many leaders of the civil disturbances in pursuit of better living conditions in the 1930's, or the campaign for the vote in the 1940's, or the struggle for social justice in the 1950's or the quest for independence in the 1960's, they were all movements of the people, for the people. They were mass movements that promised to bring tangible benefits to a downtrodden people within their lifetime, and so were unstoppable. Hence, every single one of them achieved their main objectives.

The gaining of Independence was a major achievement for the people of Barbados second only to the final abolition of slavery in 1838. The Democratic Labour Party, under the leadership of our National Hero the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow propelled this movement. In 1966, for the first time in our history we had a Government that was truly representative of the majority of the people and that also had the power, the authority and the commitment to improve the qual-

ity of life of the people of this proud young nation. These sentiments were admirably expressed in the chorus of the National Anthem.

Since then, several organizations and national leaders have made significant contributions to this odyssey. A few have left proud legacies. Others have tried to stop the movement for liberation and empowerment of the people of Barbados by pursuing the interests of the few. The old plantocracy, the modern monopolists, and the various enemies of the people, have at different times tried to frustrate the movement. They have relentlessly pursued twin visions of Barbados – one of privilege, affluence and freedom for the few, and the other of poverty, dependency and despair for the masses.

Leaders come and leaders go... but a great movement goes on forever. I therefore ask the people of Barbados to seriously consider the long-term implications of the elitist policies of the Owen Arthur Administration. I beg you to put aside personal differences and consider what is good for Barbados. I urge you to ignore the pompousness, the propaganda and the dangerous attack on the democratic traditions of Barbados coming from that side.

On behalf of the Democratic Labour Party, I humbly request your vote to enable us to resume our quest for a better Barbados. Let us build a just, industrious, prosperous, proud and united Nation.

Let us do it together.

David Thompson

Leader of the Democratic Labour Party



THE VISION REVISITED

It is beyond doubt that the Barbados Labour Party, after three terms in office has led this country astray. There is overwhelming evidence that BLP policies at best leave things to chance and at worst try to turn back the clock in pursuit of the interests of an entrenched minority. They have created a gulf between rich and poor in Barbados.

Over the past eighteen months the Democratic Labour Party has embarked on an intense dialogue with the People of Barbados. What have we discovered?

People are concerned about:-

- the growing culture of gated communities;
- the concentration of power in fewer and fewer hands;
- the heavy hand of big business with monopolistic powers;
- the erosion of wages by the ever increasing cost of living;
- the constriction of the social safety net through having to pay for everything including basic health care;
- the unraveling of the traditional family structure;

All this is directly opposed to what inspired the search for independence in 1966.

This has caused the DLP to reaffirm our relentless pursuit of a united, peaceful, progressive and prosperous Nation. In the preamble to the Constitution of 1966 the nation exulted in the fact that “we now have a country” and pledged to transform it into a “just society”. After 300 years of injustice the exciting challenge was to create a Barbados that is:

- **Just in freedom**
- **Just in the sight of the law**
- **Just in equal opportunity**
- **Just in social relations**

In his famous “Mirror Image” speech of May 1986, the R.E. Errol Walton Barrow defined this vision thus:

“What kind of mirror image do you have of yourself? Let me tell you what kind of mirror image I have of you, or what the Democratic Labour Party has of you. The DLP has an image that the people of Barbados would be able to run their own affairs, to pay for the cost of running their own country, to have an education system which is as good as what can be obtained in any industrialized country, anywhere in the world”.

The key to this transformation was education. Our National Hero knew that a country with little or no natural resources had to educate, train, motivate and mobilize **ALL its people**, to build the just society and a well governed Nation in Barbados. Human resource development was the key to national development, as it still is. Only enlightened and competent people can make a country truly independent. To participate meaningfully and productively in the major institutions of the society, people have to be empowered. It is the completion of this process of political, educational, social and economic empowerment that will enable “hewers of wood and drawers of water” to become the true craftsmen of their fate and real participants in the process of social economic progress.





PART 1: PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The Democratic Labour Party will continue to put people first by addressing their pressing needs. Meeting these needs is the proven pathway to national improvement. It involves resolute action in a number of critical areas. These have been identified as:

(1) LOWERING THE COST OF LIVING

The Barbados Labour Party administration is ultimately responsible for the fact that ordinary Barbadians cannot enjoy a comfortable living in this country. It is the job of the government and the role of the state to intervene in the market to correct failings of the system and re-balance inequities therein.

We have seen a gradual contraction and consolidation of the import, wholesale and retail distribution sectors in this country. The BLP administration sat idly by as small and medium size businesses, (including black businesses), were forced out of the sector by bigger players.

A new DLP administration will use the power and patronage of the government not to disadvantage existing participants in the distribution sector, but to allow for new and efficient players to come into the sector and through increased competition contribute to the creation of a fair market struc-

ture. We commit to internal liberalization of this sector to spread the options available to Barbadians.

A new DLP administration will commit to providing incentives to new and existing small and medium size players to come into the sector. We will honour a previous commitment to ensure that at least 40% of all government's procurement requests for goods and services are reserved for sourcing from small and medium size enterprises.

A new DLP administration will review the basket of goods on which VAT and other impositions have been removed. It is obvious that that basket is too limited and in light of the high incidence of chronic non-communicable diseases and the need for healthier eating among the population something must be done to ease the cost of foods that fall into these categories. We commit to expanding that basket significantly, following full consultation with sector stakeholders, consumer bodies, and nutritional experts. Equally we believe that the time has come for a more comprehensive review of the impact of price movements in basic food and other items in this country.

Energy costs have risen more often than they have fallen in the last 2 years and this has driven up

the cost of production. A new DLP administration will examine the feasibility of removing the VAT on utility bills for households and businesses alike.

We are mindful that workers are also consumers and as a net food importing country we have to be very careful how we balance the need to protect jobs in the local market, balance our trade accounts and at the same time provide food for Barbadians at a reasonable cost. We strongly feel that in line with our current negotiating strategy and mindful of existing external trade obligations the time has come for a complete review of our various regimes of protection for goods coming into Barbados. While in most cases defensive trade measures, whether tariff or non-tariff, are necessary, some need to be lowered and others completely removed.

Barbados can and should rest assured that a Democratic Labour Party administration will do something tangible and meaningful about this vexing issue of the cost of living because we are beholden to no one.





(2) IMPROVING ACCESS TO PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

Access to decent, affordable housing and land - “owning a piece of the rock” - remains one of the major concerns of Barbadians from all strata of society, especially those now starting out on life’s journey. The plight of pensioners in maintaining “a roof over their heads” is also of major concern. Any caring government must make housing a priority.

Indeed, we believe that decent housing is the key to good family life, educational success and productivity at work. Every citizen has the right to decent, affordable housing.

However, the housing problem cannot be addressed without first solving the problem of land.

Barbados is a small country with a limited supply of land. In recent years the activities of both local and expatriate speculators have pushed the price of land beyond the reach of persons who are seeking to build or purchase their first home. One just has to read the Sunday papers to see what prices little house spots are fetching. And yet certain developers seem to have a knack for acquiring land, obtaining change of use from agriculture, and getting planning permission to build large houses and condominiums all over Barbados. Only a few Barbadians can afford these mansions.

These hills and fields are being sold to the highest bidders and our homeland is being transformed beyond recognition.

The Democratic Labour Party believes that land ownership is too important to the Barbadian identity to be left totally to market forces. The time has come for Government to intervene to ensure that every Barbadian gets an opportunity to own a piece of the Rock. This can best be

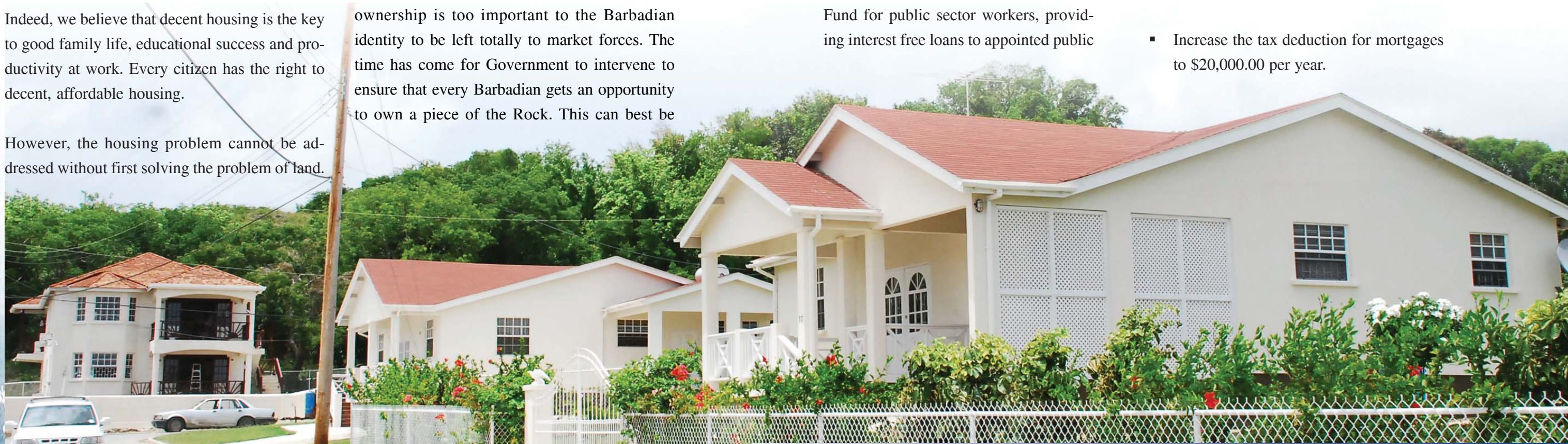
achieved through effective zoning. The East Coast should be zoned for private residence and “inland tourism” controlled by locals; and most central parishes zoned for farming. Many areas should be zoned for sale only to Barbadians.

The Democratic Labour Party is philosophically committed to ensuring that every Barbadian resident has access to comfortable shelter. We commit to Housing Every Last Person (HELP). Under such a programme the Democratic Labour Party Government will:

- In the first 100 days of the new DLP administration remove VAT from building materials on houses valued up to \$400,000.
- Establish a Home Ownership Revolving Fund for public sector workers, providing interest free loans to appointed public

servants with 5 years service who are first time homeowners. This fund will be capitalized with an initial injection of \$40 million.

- Provide 500 lots of land in five (5) months at \$5 per sq foot for first time homeowners. These lots have been identified and land will be acquired by private treaty where necessary to speed up the process.
- Provide 2,500 house spots for sale to low and middle income wage earners in the first term of a DLP government.
- Commit to building 2,000 housing solutions per year in the first term of a DLP government. These will include rental units, terrace units and starter homes.
- Increase the tax deduction for mortgages to \$20,000.00 per year.





- Commit to building and maintaining a pool of rent-to-purchase units for low-income earners, pensioners, and the disabled who may not qualify for mortgages and loans.
- Commit to realizing the concept of Housing Communities, for low income earners in which all the amenities – social, recreational and commercial - are provided e.g. day nursery, play area, laundry, mini-mart.
- Promote the concept of starter home projects and partner with private sector companies (through tax incentives) in promoting the concept of “build and live”, a long tradition in Barbados.
- Explore the concept of reverse mortgages with the financial institutions and give incentives where necessary, to provide for dignified standards of living for our elderly in their golden years.

(3) HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

It is an open secret that our health care facilities, especially the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, are in chaos. There is serious deterioration of the physical plant, and the management systems are failing. These could be rectified by a government that is committed to providing decent health services to the average Barbadian. However, what is of most concern is the poor service that is meted out by some caregivers.

The DLP shares the concerns of the National Union of Public Workers and the members of the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners over the parlous state of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Something needs to be done and done quickly at the premier health institution of the country. On the issue of health alone a change of political administration in Barbados would be fully justified.



On a wider canvas, the biggest challenge facing Barbadians is the development of healthy lifestyles. Recent research has shown that lifestyle diseases such as HIV/AIDS and chronic non-communicable diseases are the major causes of death in Barbados. They have the capacity to wipe out all the gains made since Independence. To reverse this trend will require an on-going massive public education programme, heavy investment in plant and management systems, as well as changes in the attitude of health care providers towards patients.

The DLP believes that there is no point in building a 21st century facility with 19th century attitudes. To rectify this situation the new DLP Government will introduce a Patients’ Charter to defend the human rights of patients.

Under a new DLP Government, health will once again be at the top of the national priorities list.

- A new DLP Government will immediately embark on a health promotion campaign to sensitize the public to the dangers of unhealthy lifestyles;
- We will intensify the campaign to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS;
- There will be no user-fees for public patients at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital;
- We will implement a “*Rescue the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Plan*” which will include:
 - Increasing the number of trained medical personnel.
 - Moving swiftly to effect change, including reduced waiting times, at the Accident & Emergency Department of the QEH.
 - Constructing a new Accident & Emergency wing and providing more beds and equipment.
 - Expanding the Asthma Bay.



- Setting up a General Practitioner service as an adjunct to the A&E unit to streamline patients entering it, thereby alleviating the long waits.
- Upgrading the geriatric hospitals to treat the elderly for emergencies thereby taking the strain off of the A&E unit and freeing beds.
- Upgrading and opening selected polyclinics on 24 hr/7days a week basis.
- Making the latest treatment options available to ordinary Barbadians at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

(4) EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The Democratic Labour Party re-commits Barbados to high-quality, free education for all from pre-school to tertiary level.

Education is the vehicle on which we have relied to improve our economic and social development. More than 20% of our national budget is spent on education but the return from this expenditure is becoming less and less satisfactory. The system is producing too many persons lacking the skills for the job market or for effective living. A DLP government will make Barbados' education system more relevant to the country's development needs.

The DLP attaches the highest priority to the reform of the education system and intends to utilize all available expertise and resources to effect the necessary changes. To this end and within the first 100 days of our administration the Democratic Labour Party government will convene a National Consultation on Education with a view to formulating a plan to:

- Address the relevance of our present education system
- Ensure adequate and affordable educational opportunities for every Barbadian
- Make school a rewarding experience for every child
- Ensure that every school child benefits fully from the educational system
- Help every child to realize his/her potential through education

The major issues which will be addressed include:

- Co-education
- The School-leaving age
- The promotion of non-academic subjects
- The duplication of efforts (subject offerings) at schools
- Inter school transfers, between primary and secondary and between secondary and secondary
- The treatment of slow learners
- School attendance and drop outs
- Teacher recruitment, deployment, training and rewards
- Transporting school children
- Discipline in schools
- The interaction between parents and the school

- The public interaction with schools
- The use of school property for community and other activities
- School security

In particular, a DLP government is committed to:

- Establishing new, state-of-the-art pre-school learning centres in close proximity to existing industrial complexes such as Wildey, Newton, Grazettes, Six Roads and within large communities across the country.
- Extending the Textbook Loan Scheme to include Primary Schools.
- Revising the Secondary School Curriculum to meet the needs of modern Barbadian children. It is anticipated that new subjects like Family Life Education, Ethics, Civics, Life Skills, Information Technology, Art, Music, Drama and Sports will feature more prominently in the curriculum.
- Designating certain "non-traditional grammar schools" as centres of excellence in these disciplines.
- Raising the school leaving age to 18 years.
- Establishing a new "Community University" to continue to study, research and teach these subjects at a higher level.
- Subsidizing the Amenities Fee for Students at the UWI.
- Infusing a problem solving approach and a pursuit of excellence in one's chosen discipline into our education system.
- Teaching the subject of Enterprise at every educational institution and at all levels.





(5) FAMILIES FIRST

The BLP government's response to the plight of families is to provide handouts and create a culture of dependency. The DLP is committed to developing a Barbados based on families that are independent, hardworking, socially responsible and well rewarded for their contribution. Families need to live in comfortable and secure accommodation and to be able to enjoy all the facilities, amenities and support necessary for wholesome and useful lives.

The Democratic Labour Party believes that families should come first because they are the building blocks of nations. It believes that education begins at home. It believes that man is a social animal who needs to be involved in community life. It believes that this country has lost its way by adopting an alien life style that militates against family life, community life and shared experiences.

A DLP government will....

- Establish a Ministry of Family, Social Care and Community Empowerment to bring together under one umbrella all departments that deal with family matters.
- Give maximum support to parents in raising their children.

- Ensure adequate resources to provide counseling to families and guidance to parents in executing their responsibilities.
- Provide education for young people so that roles within marriages and other relationships could be better understood and more rationally allocated.
- Facilitate and provide a more humane system for the collection of maintenance from delinquent fathers.
- Provide counseling and rehabilitation for delinquent parents.
- Develop programmes and policies to eliminate the serious issue of domestic violence.
- Supplement the income of families to ensure that it does not fall below an acceptable minimum.

(6) EMPOWERING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

We cannot improve as a society if a significant portion of our population opts out of our political and economic systems. At present there are a number of Barbadians living on the fringe not realizing their potential to contribute to the country's development. These drop-outs, while not contributing, cost the country considerable sums of social expenditure. To ensure that all citizens participate fully and positively in this country's activities it will be necessary to emphasize the development of certain life skills for our total population.

Under the BLP government, as the outgoing Prime Minister has recognized, Barbados has developed

a "bashment" culture. Many of our young people are emulating mores borrowed from alien cultures. This value system is based on what is convenient, pleasurable but socially undesirable. The country needs to return to the values and standards that made us the envy of the Caribbean. Some of descriptions which we would want to be associated with the Barbadian personality are productive, thrifty, reliable, environmentally conscious, respectful, law abiding, fair, and supportive.

A DLP administration will

- Put special emphasis on skills training for children whom the present education system is failing
- Broaden the scope and availability of adult education opportunities
- Promote programmes to foster and support strong family units and relationships
- Provide training and support in skills such as parenting, dispute resolution, effective communication
- Develop and inculcate a relevant system of values at all levels of society
- Eliminate the emergence of loutish behaviour in various neighbourhoods
- Eradicate the scourge of illegal drugs wrecking our communities
- Protect minors against indecency, vulgarity, illegal activity, and corrupt practices
- Restore Barbados' reputation of respect for authority, property, traditions, icons and symbols
- Devise and foster a value system, in consultation with community leaders, to in





fluence the country's outlook and behaviour.

The Democratic Labour Party will review the Barbados Youth Service with a view to introducing a comprehensive National Youth Service Programme to ensure that all young people are exposed to opportunities for empowerment and make a smooth transition to adulthood.

(7) ENHANCING THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Women of the Caribbean, by force of circumstances, have had great responsibility for raising children and earning a living thrust upon

them. Yet the perception of women as subordinate to men persists. In Caribbean society a major contradiction emerges when highly educated and well trained women holding senior positions in the public domain, have to succumb to the wishes and expectations of chauvinistic men in the domestic arena. This tension often finds expression in domestic violence, which makes gender relations a serious issue in Barbados.

The Democratic Labour Party believes that women have been the backbone of Caribbean society and that they need to be recognized for the role they have played and continue to play in holding families and societies together. It fully appreciates the dual responsibility women have in producing goods and services as well as reproducing the population.

The new DLP Government will address these issues by:

- Working towards having 50% of the DLP slate female by 2016.
- Monitoring female representation in all the major institutions of Barbados.
- Working closely with organizations like the Bureau of Gender Affairs and the University of the West Indies to remove the 'glass ceiling' that Barbadian women still experience at work.

(8) TREASURING OUR SENIORS IN THEIR GOLDEN YEARS

The Democratic Labour Party is committed to caring for all Barbadians in their senior years. A new Democratic Labour Party government will:

- Introduce a minimum pension threshold for all Barbadians. No Barbadian citizen

will receive less than BD\$500 a month on reaching pensionable age.

- Maintain the differential between contributory and non-contributory pensions.
- Ensure that old age pensioners receive a non-contributory pension of \$6,032 per year which is \$502.66 per month and contributory pensioners will receive \$7,384.00 per year or \$615.33 per month.
- Increase the tax-free exemption threshold for pensioners receiving \$3,000.00 per month or less.
- Repeal the legislation that discriminates between government pensioners retiring before 1975 and those after in relation to their government pension and NIS pension.
- Reduce the drivers licence fee for drivers over 70 years of age.
- Introduce a deductible allowance for nursing home fees and expenses.
- Encourage Senior citizens to use the Community Resource Centres for training and recreation.





(9) SPORTS FOR ALL

It is ironic that Sports have become a major industry at a time when Barbados has become a weak sporting nation. The Barbados Labour Party administration has presided over the decline in our sporting prowess. This has coincided with a growing sense of despair among young people, the increase in crime and violence among our youth, the increase in chronic non-communicable diseases among citizens and the disdain for rules among children and young people.

The Democratic Labour Party is convinced that Sports have the capacity to prevent these maladies among young people. It is therefore commit-

ted to supporting the 57 and more sporting disciplines that are practiced in Barbados as a means of bringing health, social, psychological and economic benefits to the people of Barbados.

Consistent with its principles of putting people first, it will invest heavily in programmes that will make Sports available to all, instead of running up huge overspends on white elephants like Kensington Oval. It will enhance Barbadian sporting might by building sporting organizations from the base up.

As a matter of urgency, the new DLP Government will:

- Reorganize the National Sports Council to reach out more effectively to schools and communities
- Establish Secretariats for all the major mass sports

- Create a Sports Administration Centre for all sports without a home
- Construct a National Sports Hostel for athletes from home and abroad
- Upgrade the facilities at North Stars to produce an international standards stadium
- Build an international stadium in the East to cater to soccer and other sports
- Work with the various associations and clubs to improve sporting facilities
- Develop centres of sporting excellence in schools and communities
- Provide community-based coaches
- Offer Certificate and Diploma Courses for athletes and sports organizers
- Offer National Development Scholarships to budding athletes
- Offer paid leave to athletes in the public service and encourage the private sector to do the same

- Waive duties and Value Added Taxes for training and sports equipment
- Waive duties on transport facilities for sporting organizations
- Offer tax deductions for businesses which sponsor sports
- Make grants to successful sporting organizations
- Work closely with the Barbados Olympic Association
- Set up a national Elite Sportsperson Benefit Scheme
- Complete the National Sports Policy and draw up a Sports Development and Strategic Plan
- Support training for sports administrators at national organization and club levels
- Assist in the promotion of sports as a worthwhile activity for Barbadians.





(10) SOCIAL SECURITY: THE LAST SAFETY NET

A caring government puts in place a final safety net to ensure that no citizen, for whatever reason, falls through the cracks into abject poverty and despair. One of the first measures introduced by the Democratic Labour Party after Independence in 1966 was a National Insurance Scheme. Since then a considerable amount of resources and structures have been put in place to support the most vulnerable members of society and those who through misfortune cannot earn a living.

Today, Barbados can boast of a number of government organizations to give assistance to the elderly, young children in need of protection and care, the disabled, unemployed single parents, and the poor. These include:

- The Poverty Alleviation Bureau
- The Community Development Department
- The Welfare Department
- The National Assistance Board
- The Child Care Board
- The National Disabilities Unit
- The Urban Development Commission
- The Bureau of Gender Affairs

All these agencies were brought under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Transformation, which was established in 1999. By that time, after five years of BLP rule, the true nature of the elitist ideology of the Barbados Labour Party began to manifest itself in an unmistakable way. Only Party faithfuls gained easy access to benefits, while others were frustrated in getting what were theirs by virtue of being citizens of Barbados. The politicization and corruption of the work of these organizations have resulted in the unnecessary suffering of many Barbadians.

In addition to this the conditions under which needy Barbadians get assistance from government, has resulted in transforming a resilient people into long-term welfare recipients, who have become increasingly dependent on the state. This rot must stop.

A DLP administration will ensure that benefits will be given to eligible welfare recipients as a human right and not as patronizing handouts by the rich and powerful who consider themselves superior to the masses of Barbadians.

(11) MAKING OUR CULTURE WORK FOR US

The BLP Government's conception of culture seems to be something that comes out for Crop Over and the National Independence Celebrations. It seems divorced from what people do on a daily basis in order to survive and prosper. It appears

to be far removed from what people need to improve the quality of their lives.

On the other hand the Democratic Labour Party defines culture as a way of life. It is based on unique sustainable values and ways of behaving that are shared and transmitted from generation to generation to help people overcome the challenges of life. Barbadian culture includes a conception of God, an appreciation of the family, a belief that things will always get better even after death, a constant striving to be a decent person, enduring values such as respect for the law, a positive attitude to work, a hunger for education and a love of song and dance. It is about how we learn, work, relax, eat, relate to each other and survive.

These are the bedrocks of Barbadian culture and the DLP will make this culture work for us by creating the conditions for the full expression of this authentic way of life. Barbadians will be empowered to draw on this culture in a creative way, in order to improve the quality of our lives and enhance the tourism products that generate the bulk of the income on which the nation lives. For the first time in 300 years Barbadians will have the confidence and the resources to make their unique contribution to the emerging Caribbean civilization.

(12) HASSLE-FREE SERVICE

People enjoy their lives better when the hassles of going about their normal business are removed. Despite living in a small country Barbadians spend several hours of frustration getting from place to place and in dealing with various agencies both in the public and private sectors. This includes time spent on our congested road systems and is a cause of stress and other related illnesses.

The Democratic Labour Party is convinced that it is necessary that services, including employment, be located where they can be conveniently accessed by the public. To this end a DLP government will:

- **Make access to government services more convenient to the public by:**
 - **Increasing access locations, e.g. the use of multi service departments,**
 - **The use of technology, e.g. telephone, internet, credit cards**
- **Facilitate commercial and industrial development in country areas**
- **Increase the availability of government services in places outside Bridgetown**
- **Facilitate and support the development of town centres in major residential areas**
- **Review the country's traffic management systems with a view to improving the flow on major highways**
- **Improve public transportation with a view to encouraging its wider use**
- **Encourage the use of flexi-time by businesses and in the public service**



PART II: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The development of a country is essentially a partnership between capital, labour and the government.

The Democratic Labour Party has always been committed to a partnership with the private sector to promote the development of Barbados. It will continue to provide appropriate support for private sector initiatives but will, in turn expect the private sector to respond with a sense of corporate social responsibility.

(13) THE NEW MACRO-ECONOMIC POLICY PARADIGM

By any standard, the Barbados Economy is small, open and vulnerable. While emphasis is usually placed on the disadvantages attendant on smallness, limited spatial parameters affords a degree of flexibility in the management of our economic fundamentals. We need, however to recognize that the rapidly changing global economic environment of the Twenty-first Century presents particular challenges to small

economies. The impending cessation of preferential market access; the move towards full reciprocity through the accelerated liberalization of domestic markets; and the removal of all remaining barriers to the movement of finance and investment capital are all conspiring to narrow the scope of our policy responses.

Against these realities, a Democratic Labour Party Barbados government will give maximum priority to the creation of a macro-economic environment that stresses the following:

- Fiscal prudence in the allocation of expenditure and the absorption of revenues;
- Protection of the fixed exchange rate regime through careful management of the fiscal and external current account deficits;

- A tightly managed debt accumulation strategy targeted at the reduction in both domestic and foreign components of the national debt;
- The attainment of full employment through the private sector's response to new domestic entrepreneurial and investment opportunities in traditional and more importantly new industrial, cultural and knowledge sectors.

RESTORING BALANCE IN MONETARY POLICY

Fiscal prudence will be the hallmark of a DLP government. A DLP government will restore fiscal stability to the management of the affairs of government. This objective is a central plank of good and responsible governance; it





is absolutely essential to the credibility and maintenance of the fixed exchange rate regime. In light of this, new DLP government will:

- Give priority to achieving and maintaining a balanced budget while allowing for small manageable fiscal deficits where necessary to facilitate the development objectives of the country.
- Implement taxation policies that reduce fiscal drag on the economy. We shall avoid taxation policies that act as disincentives to investment and productivity;
- require that public expenditure be kept under continuing review to promote efficiency and economy in the use of fiscal resources;
- Seek any domestic financing from the capital markets in preference to the heavy reliance on national insurance funds;
- Undertake a comprehensive review of the proliferation of government owned companies created by the BLP administration to ensure that they promote economic goals and/or meet genuine social needs. Companies such as Hotel and Resorts Limited (GEMS) and the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. (BTII), which receive public funding will now be required to have such financial support

debated and approved by parliament, and will be required to consistently adhere to existing and new legal requirements for reporting to parliament in a timely fashion.

CAUTION WITH CAPITAL ACCOUNT LIBERALIZATION

Given the commitment to a fixed exchange rate, a DLP government will adopt a measured, systematic and selective approach to liberalization of the capital account. It is generally accepted that maintaining a fixed exchange rate regime, while pursuing a process of capital account liberalization can be beset by major difficulties.

Indeed, in a recent public lecture in Barbados, Nobel Prize winning economist Professor Joseph Stiglitz, made the pithy observation that *“the more committed a country is to a fixed exchange rate regime, the less willing it should be to relax capital controls.”*

The BLP has committed Barbados to relaxing capital controls in relation to other CARICOM countries by 31st December 2007, as part of the process of the implementation of the Caribbean Single Market, and with the rest of the world as soon as practicable thereafter. This effectively compromises the scope of action of a successor DLP government.

A new DLP government will, to the extent possible, adopt a sequenced approach to capital account liberalization within the CSME consonant with the soundness of the macro-economic environment and the

vulnerability of Barbados to external shocks. This will be highlighted by the following key policy interventions:

- (i) Immediately review the current Central Bank procedures for approving capital account transactions with a view to simplifying and speeding up the approval (or denial) process for restricted transactions.
- (ii) Capital controls will be maintained on short-term capital outflows. This will serve to mitigate the risk of outflows of capital by the resident sector as well as protect against de-stabilization from “hot money flows”.
- (iii) Capital controls on the ability of local financial institutions to acquire foreign investments will be relaxed from 25% to 50% over a five-year period. This will allow these institutions to diversify their total portfolio investments as well as improve their capacity to offer wealth management services to non-residents.

While the Democratic Labour Party remains fully committed to the regional integration movement, such commitment must reflect the essential national interests of Barbados.

In light of this, a DLP government will upon assuming office pursue the following policies:

- a) **Exchange controls will be removed on non-residents.** This will remove one impediment to the high net worth individuals accessing financial services in Barbados.

Sustainable Tourism development - Respect for youth and youth concerns

Revamped QEH - Fully staffed and equipped A&E - New health and pension deal for seniors

500 homes in 500 days - Land for the landless - 2500 lots in 1st five years

We are Ready to SERVE



David Thompson
St. John
Leader of the DLP



Dr. David Estwick
St. Philip West



George Hutson
St. James Central



Christopher Sinckler
St. Michael North West



Haynesley Benn
St. Peter



Randall Rouse
St. Joseph



John Boyce
Christ Church South



James Paul
St. Michael West Central



Donville Inniss
St. James South




Freundel Stuart
St. Michael South



Adriel Brathwaite
St. Philip South



Denis Kellman
St. Lucy



Austin Husbands
St. James North



Haldene Dottin
St. Thomas



Ronald Jones
Christ Church East Central



Dr. Denis Lowe
Christ Church East




Patrick Todd
City of Bridgetown



Undene Whittaker
St. Michael South East



Irene Sandiford-Garner
St. Andrew



Stephen Lashley
Christ Church West Central



Francis Depeiza
St. Michael North



Richard Sealy
St. Michael South Central



Patricia Inniss
St. Michael North East



Dr. Esther Byer-Suckoo
St. George South



Michael Carrington
St. Michael West



Michael Lashley
St. Philip North



Colin Spencer
St. George North



Taan Abed
Christ Church West



Steve Blackett
St. Michael Central



Kenneth Best
St. Michael East

Zero tolerance for Crime and Violence - Meaningful support for farmers



- b) Residents and non-residents will be able to hold bank accounts in **US Dollars, Euros, Canadian dollars and Sterling in unrestricted amounts provided these are not funded from Barbados dollar sources.** The holding of different currencies will eventually help to diversify the financial services industry.
- c) **A 5% rate of income tax will be applied to interest earned on these balances in order to encourage their repatriation from foreign banks where they remain undeclared.** These deposits will be subject to the existing foreign currency reserve requirements.
- d) Persons who are in Barbados on work permits will be deemed non-resident and free of all exchange controls, and if working for a company registered under any of the international business legislation, may be paid externally in a foreign currency and only their remittances to Barbados declared for income tax purposes.
- e) Exchange controls will be removed on property transactions between non-residents including those who are on work permits who should be designated as non-resident for exchange control purposes.

- f) Restrictions will be removed on amounts up to BDS\$10,000 for amounts remitted for the purposes of supporting children, parents or siblings who are resident abroad. This will be monitored by the Commercial banks and the Central Bank to ensure the system is not abused.

VIBRANT AND DYNAMIC CAPITAL MARKETS

A DLP government will implement a program to promote further development of the capital markets. The best available research suggests that Barbados has a modern, stable and well-developed financial sector. However, the evidence suggests that the non-bank segment within the financial sector is rather underdeveloped and the DLP's platform will be focused on further development of this sector.

There are limited options for investors in terms of the range of instruments available. The stock and bond markets remain underdeveloped, plagued by a lack of liquidity and a number of Barbadian companies remain dangerously undervalued and vulnerable to hostile take-over bids. Share ownership also remains highly concentrated and economic democracy appears a long way off.

The DLP's capital market programme aims to foster the development of the domestic capital markets by increasing the range and scope of domestic financial instruments and promoting increased liquidity in the stock and bond markets. This will serve to increase savings and investment

opportunities, improve the pricing of financial instruments, enhance foreign exchange reserves by providing attractive investment instruments to keep capital at home and attract capital from abroad and of course create jobs for Barbadians.

In this regard a new DLP government will:

- Develop an incentive package to encourage local financial institutions to develop an active **secondary mortgage market, along with the securitization of mortgage portfolios and the securitization of consumer and credit card loans.** Development of these markets would provide the resident sector with alternative domestic investment opportunities and serve to dampen the potential outflow of capital by the resident sector.
- Upgrade and spearhead the central depository for stocks to include bonds and other debt securities. The creation of a paperless environment for trading bonds will serve to stimulate the trading of bonds and spur further development in the bond market. **This is a critical first step in the development of a vibrant capital market.**
- Invite bids **from financial institutions to serve as primary dealers in government securities.** In return for this, the successful applicants will be required to serve as market makers for securities traded on the

Barbados stock exchange. Primary dealers in government securities will enhance trading in these securities and further spur the development of the bond market.

- Assist the Barbados stock exchange in developing aggressive programmes to further develop the junior market. The junior market with its less stringent listing requirements may well be the best vehicle for increasing the number of firms listed on the stock exchange, as well as providing smaller and more entrepreneurial ventures with access to the public capital markets.





[14]
TRANSPORTATION &
INFRASTRUCTURE

Another major responsibility of Government is the establishment of an efficient infrastructure for the development of the economy. Barbados is fortunate in having a comparatively good network of roads, transport systems, telephones systems, internet services, financial services, utilities and related resources. However, there are serious problems of worsening traffic congestion on our roads and poor communication within the region.

Barbadians have been complaining for years that traffic jams are becoming unbearable. Parents tak-

ing their children to school have been lamenting the hours spent in traffic jams and the time needed to recover from the stress when they finally get to work. Businesspersons and workers traveling within the country and to neighbouring countries complain of the monumental wastage of time and frustration going from one point to another.

The Barbados Labour Party has failed to address these problems effectively. The Democratic Labour Party believes that a possible solution to the problem of traffic congestion is to decentralize the provision of services. A concomitant of this is the decentralization of government to constituencies. The DLP envisions a constellation of towns across the country, that are the seats of Constituency Councils, each of which would be chaired by the Parliamentary Representative.

Each Constituency Council would have at its disposal a budget that would enable it to deal with local problems at the level at which they emerge. Provision would be made for both the Parliamen-

tary Representative and the Local Councillors to show their accountability to the people of Barbados on a regular basis.

This arrangement would take the pressure off Bridgetown and ensure a more even development across the country.

The new DLP Government will, with a sense of urgency:

- Explore the feasibility of using ferries to take passengers and goods from secure berthing points around the island to and from Bridgetown and other towns. A modern efficient ferry service could link places such as Six Men’s Bay, Speightstown, Holetown, Bridgetown, St. Lawrence Gap, Oistins, Silversands, Foul Bay, Martins Bay, Bathsheba and River Bay, thereby taking the pressure off the roads.
- Invest heavily in modern information technology with the appropriate training

of people to facilitate e-commerce and the growth of the informatics industry.

In addition to this, a DLP government will:

- Facilitate commercial and industrial development in country areas
- Facilitate and support the development of town centres in major residential areas
- Complete the East Coast Road
- Improve the major roads in rural areas and complete all outstanding tenantry roads
- Introduce a programme to resurface roads on a regular basis e.g. Major roads and highways every ten years, other roads every fifteen years
- Improve the visibility and traffic flow at several dangerous junctions
- Improve signage and road markings
- Put emphasis on improving road drainage, sidewalks and gutters
- Ensure road works are done with minimum inconvenience to road users.





(15) FACILITATING MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND GOODS WITHIN CARICOM

It is a truism that regional integration will not flourish without the implementation of mechanisms that facilitate the free movement of goods and people. With respect to regional travel, it is useful to remember that 46% of our trade is with CARICOM countries and that the third largest source of visitors to our country, which depends on tourism, is the same CARICOM. Yet communication between these countries, many of which are less than 500 miles away, is embarrassingly poor. To fly from Barbados to Trinidad, which is 40 minutes away, it is now costing in excess of \$750 on a good day and up to \$1,000 if you book late. To fly on the regional airline LIAT



takes at least one day, not because of the distance, but because of the inefficiencies that emanate from a near monopoly. Accordingly, a DLP administration will spearhead negotiations with CARICOM countries to invest in maritime transport to move large numbers of passengers and goods between the countries of the region.

(16) NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION POLICY

A new DLP administration will highly prioritize the creation of a new and genuine production enterprise culture in Barbados. This will be marketed behind a holistic policy that will include but not be limited to the following:

- The creation and prioritization of a new industrial enterprise culture which seeks to aggressively enhance and promote the country's potential to be an export leader in the areas in which it clearly has some comparative advantage.
- The location of its new industrial policy within the context of the opportunities for new market access both in the CSME and further afield in global markets.
- The reallocation of national resources to areas of private sector investment that push capitalist industrialization and manufacturing. This will be done to reorient the

basis of private sector investment more towards the production of goods and services primarily for export but equally to serve the domestic market.

- Consolidation of the various venture capital windows in Barbados into one agency geared towards "incentivizing" production through providing real and targeted support to big and small businesses, which either have or come up with innovative ideas to push industrial engagement in Barbados.
- Creation of a policy nexus between the Ministries of Finance, Economic Development, Foreign Trade and International Business to develop a clear and coordinated export development thrust that ties internal production initiatives with export promotion strategies and market seeking activities.
- Removal of burdensome fiscal impositions on the targeted areas for exports development particularly on such variables as energy, intermediate inputs and marketing paraphernalia. This will be done in order to reduce operating and production costs.
- Creation of a new industrial development and innovation fund through partnerships with UWI to vigorously promote research and development activities in this area.

- Offer appropriate tax credits to companies that pursue research and development of innovative projects targeted towards manufacturing or agro-processing activities.

Additionally a new DLP administration will:

- ❖ Re-examine the Port charges with a view to significantly reducing these to manufacturers. Tonnage dues are charged twice - on raw materials when imported and again on finished products when being exported. This needs to be addressed immediately since it is a burdensome cost. Free along side charges (FAS) continue to be out of proportion with our competitors.
- ❖ Reduce Port **delays which** are of concern as cruise liners are almost always given priority over cargo ships.

Moreover a new DLP administration will:

- Introduce policies that will encourage commercial banks to work with local manufacturers to allow them greater access to, and a freer flow of, finance.
- Introduce a two-year write-off for investments in new manufacturing, processing, and associated information and communication, energy, and environmental technologies.



(17) EMPLOYMENT AND ENTERPRISE: OPPORTUNITIES AND RIGHTS FOR ALL

Barbadian workers face competition in the labour market from foreign workers. For the most part, these workers come from other CARICOM countries, attracted by employment opportunities and the improved standard of living that Barbados offers. These workers may initially accept lower wages and less agreeable working conditions than their Barbadian counterparts, thereby affording some employers the opportunity to bypass the Barbadian worker. The potential for the erosion of employment opportunities of the local labour force is obvious.

It is for this reason that the Democratic Labour Party will:

- Introduce policies to manage immigration in the interest of the local labour force and the foreign worker who may otherwise be subject to exploitation.
- Increase investment in educational and training to improve the productivity of the Barbadian labour force, and make our workers more competitive.

But above all we will foster the enterprise culture to enable Barbadians to identify niches in the market and take advantage of them.

The new DLP Government will therefore put in place the legislation, institutional structures and resources to increase the number of self-employed entrepreneurs from about 10% of the working population to 20% by 2016.

We will assist in the creation of new enterprises through training, direct subsidies and easier access to capital for investment. To facilitate this process, the new DLP administration will:

- Establish a Ministry of Innovation and Economic Empowerment
- Provide training and mentorship for potential entrepreneurs
- Enable entrepreneurs to access capital through the Credit Unions and other government supported institutions
- Help entrepreneurs with market research and the marketing of their goods and services
- Set aside 40% of all Government procurement requests for small and medium-sized enterprises
- Find investment funds and encourage the University of the West Indies and other entrepreneurial organizations to intensify research and development on solar power and other alternative sources of energy.

SECURING THE RIGHTS AND DIGNITY OF WORKERS

The Democratic Labour Party, over the years, has been a strong ally of the cause of workers in Barbados. We believe that given the evolving economic climate across the world, including globalization and economic liberalization, many of the gains made by workers in Barbados are increasingly coming under threat. Job security now seems a thing of the past as contract work takes pre-eminence, wages are under pressure as workers are called upon to work harder while earning less, and conditions of work continue to decline even in the public services of Barbados.

In 1994 the DLP forged an alliance with the private sector and workers representatives as an instrument for promoting national economic stability. This created what is today hailed as the Barbados Social Partnership. While this institution has served as a very useful instrument of economic and social policy in the country, it cannot be denied that workers' concerns have continued to be side-lined by a BLP government more interested in paying lip service to the concept of tripartism than pushing through contemporary labour and industrial relations policy initiatives.

In this regard, a new DLP government will as a matter of priority expedite the implementation of a "Worker Protection And Workplace Conditions Of Service Security Policy" aimed at guaranteeing high quality work for all Barbadian and invited immigrant workers alike.





Conversely, a new DLP government will move to immediately enact a comprehensive national Labour Rights legislative compendium which will include the following:

- A Full Employment Rights Act
- An Alternative Disputes Settlement and Arbitration Committee
- A Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Act
- National minimum wages legislation
- Legislation fully recognizing Trade Unions.

Additionally a new DLP government will:

- Pass companion legislation providing clarity to employment relations between workers and employees in contracts for service and contracts of service.
- Mandate the National Productivity Council to develop employee share option schemes and train workers in understanding and participating in such schemes.
- Develop and fund a national Public Services Training Institute incorporating the current Training Division to provide training for all levels of public officers including members of statutory corporations.
- Revise the Holiday with Pay Act to reflect the following:

- Payment by cheque and into bank accounts will be legitimized.
- Holidays with pay shall include monies earned through incentive schemes, commissions, and productivity schemes for those on contracts of service.
- Additional days granted for Bank Holidays shall be with pay.
- The Social Partnership will be expanded to embrace other significant civil society actors and will be provided with a fully functional and staffed secretariat.
- The Social Partnership will have as part of its mandate a regular examination of prices and incomes and their impact on workers and employers.

(18) MAKING TOURISM EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

The importance of Tourism to the growth and diversification of the Barbadian economy is part of the success story of Barbados. The tourism industry has allowed Barbados as a country to take advantage of the few natural resources with which it was blessed - fine beaches and a warm equable climate.

The development of the hotel sector provided the opportunity for this country to attract foreign investment capital for the development of tourism





facilities and foreign exchange from tourist expenditure, which stimulated economic expansion in other sectors of the economy.

We have also always understood tourism as a labour intensive, quality driven service industry and recognized that ultimate success relied heavily on the skill level and professionalism of the tourism workforce. Hence the establishment of the Hotel Training School and the subsequent extension of that effort with the opening of the Hospitality Institute as part of the Barbados Community College. All of these were deliberate initiatives of the Democratic Labour Party.

But the question that must be asked is whether this growth has led to the sustainable development of Barbados? There are several critical issues, which must be addressed urgently:

- The perennial problem of leakages in the industry.
- Dominance by expatriate investors.
- Repatriated earnings.
- Failure to benefit fully from the multiplier effect when earnings from the sector are repatriated.
- Attractiveness and diversity of the tourism product.

- Competition from low cost destinations in the region like the Dominican Republic and Cuba.
- An increasing number of more discerning tourists who are interested in cultural tourism, sports tourism, eco-tourism and other exotic products.
- Neglect of the CARICOM market.
- Alienation of too many Barbadians from the nation's flagship industry.
- Most people in Barbados do not consider themselves stakeholders in tourism.

The Democratic Labour Party believes that the time has come for us to address in our tourism planning, critical issues such as:

- ❖ Manpower and human resource development
- ❖ The carrying capacity of the destination and
- ❖ Improving the economic yield of tourism.

The new DLP Administration will therefore:

- Draw up a Tourism Master Plan.
- Diversify and enhance the tourism products of Barbados by linking tourism to culture, sports, the arts and the environment.
- Develop the concept of Community Tourism by training and motivating local people to provide accommodation and other services to visitors in their communities.
- Restructure and strengthen the Barbados Tourism Authority to include more local people as stakeholders in tourism.

- Link tourism to agriculture.
- Target the CARICOM market more effectively and address the needs of this important segment of the market.
- Carry out a feasibility study on the development of maritime transport facilities

such as fast ferries to link CARICOM countries.

- Develop a national destination e-commerce platform for the tourism sector.





(19) LAND USE PLANNING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Establishing priorities in land use planning is of critical importance in a small island faced with competing demands on its limited land resources. Sadly, failure to make correct decisions condemns future generations to suffer the consequences of misguided policies. The current Barbados Labour Party administration has set in train a process of alienation of land from agricultural activity by changing well-established zoning guidelines, and making it easier for wealthy non-nationals to acquire prime holdings.

A crude economism reflected in the dictum that “land must fetch its highest economic value” is serving to thoughtlessly transfer large tracts of land in Barbados into hotel/condominium development projected on the South and West coasts. The developments proposed for Bathsheba, and Brown’s Beach, the recently announced upscale condominium and private villa development in St Philip, and presumably others not yet unveiled, show that under Prime Minister

Arthur, nothing is safe from this scourge. Cove Bay, Archers Bay, River Bay, Bath - all spots that Barbadians have traditionally used as escapes from the rigours of life - will be put on the “auction block” to be sold to the highest bidder. The BLP argument that land sales to foreigners generates foreign exchange makes no sense if that income is used to finance unprofitable projects.

These policies are putting considerable pressure on agriculture and the natural environment.

AGRICULTURE

When the DLP demitted office it left behind a carefully crafted and financed programme for the rationalization of the sugar industry. Its primary target was to increase sugar output from the current level of around 50,000 tonnes up to 75,000 tonnes. This target was based on the availability of the European Union preferential market and domestic demand. It envisaged bringing land back into sugar production through price support and other incentives for farmers. Sadly, this programme was abandoned and the now trumpeted BLP alternative to rescue the industry involves a mishmash of elements – energy and ethanol production from “fuel cane”, coupled with 30,000 tonnes of raw sugar at an investment cost of \$400 million.

Clearly, a DLP administration must revisit the current plans for the sugar sector, and determine their viability in the light of the continuing loss of sugar lands, the high costs of production in Barbados, and the need to obtain firm commitments

from farmers to participate in any project for a sugar cane industry that may materialize. The Democratic Labour Party is convinced that sugar cane production is essential to environmental and ecological sustainability in Barbados, and will apply its best efforts to ensure that the maximum benefit is derived from the production of all the products and byproducts of the sugar cane plant.

The DLP is committed to provide continuing support of viable agricultural production, when viewed not from a narrow focus of financial profitability, but from a broader perspective of national resource use. Agricultural output contributes vitally to food security in the context of the possibilities in a small island economy. It continues to provide income, employment and output for rural communities. Indeed, the growing demand for

healthy food to combat obesity and related lifestyle diseases provides welcome opportunities for efficient production. The Democratic Labour Party is totally committed to the cultivation of healthy lifestyles among Barbadians as part of its thrust to improve the health of its citizens. Thus, the DLP will provide support for agricultural organization and will assist in the upgrading of agricultural production technologies.

Likewise a DLP administration will encourage the orderly development of the fisheries subsector, which continues to be an important part of our economy, through the provision of necessary infrastructure. It is to be noted that fishing enterprises have significantly increased their output in recent years despite the problems of access to fishery resources in the Southern Caribbean.





THE ENVIRONMENT

On a larger Canvas, the land use policies of the DLP, and the need to save agriculture, are part of the commitment to **preserve the natural environment**. The Democratic Labour Party has a philosophical and almost religious obligation to preserve Barbados in its natural state. Ordinary Barbadians cringe at the thought of selling off places like Cove Bay, Archers Bay, River Bay, Bath and Bathsheba to private developers. Barbadians would die to ensure that they have ac-



cess to our beaches. The Democratic Labour Party believes that in a densely populated country like Barbados, there is a need to preserve the environment as breathing spaces for ordinary people, at whatever cost.

The Democratic Labour Party is committed to changing this and creating a new Land Use Policy for Barbados. The DLP Government will therefore:

- In the first 100 days introduce the **Agriculture Protection Act** that will require a 2/3 majority of both houses of parliament for a change of use of land from agriculture. We will reserve 30, 000 acres for agricultural use.

- Introduce legislation, programmes and facilities like mechanization to get young people into agriculture.
- Introduce legislation that makes it mandatory that any change of zoning of land be approved by Parliament.
- Introduce amendments to the **Land Acquisition Act** that will require government to pay compensation on the **replacement value** rather than the **market value** of properties being acquired.
- Provide a subsidy of \$2.50 per sq ft to first time landowners with lots up to 5000 sq ft throughout urban and rural Barbados. This policy will go beyond the tenantry land transfer scheme.
- Require all land transactions be registered with the **Land Registry Department**. This will speed up transfer of titles and compilation of the land register.
- Make it compulsory that all land for sale in major developments be advertised with prices on the local market prior to promotion and sale on the international market to non-Barbadians. Proof of advertising must be supplied when applying for transfer to non-Barbadian interests.
- Give maximum support to all organizations committed to environmental preservation.

(20) A CREATIVE ENERGY POLICY

In some ways the single biggest challenge of our generation is the drain on foreign exchange created by the high cost of oil. This concern is amplified by recent increases in the price of crude oil that finds it consistently hovers around \$100 per barrel. Reliable forecasts suggest that oil prices are likely to remain in this range for the foreseeable future.

Responsible governments around the world are therefore moving to change long held and cherished consumption patterns. This has not been the case in Barbados, where the BLP has gone for a number of cosmetic measures. Despite a “green budget” in 2006, we are yet to see any real change in the energy consumption habits in Barbados.





We are all understandably addicted to our current lifestyles and are reluctant to change. However, today's consumption patterns are simply not sustainable and Barbados must begin to take decisive action in the area of energy consumption.

The next DLP government is prepared to be bold and move aggressively in the area of energy conservation, reducing the oil import bill and preserving our delicate environment for the future.

A DLP government will:

- Provide significant incentives to encourage ownership of fuel-efficient vehicles, particularly motor cars.
- Provide incentives for greater use of solar energy in providing the electricity needs of consumers and businesses. The goal is to implement a package of incentives to cover up to 50% of the cost of installing solar electric systems. Barbados is already a leader on solar hot water systems and we are well placed to become a leader in solar electricity as well.
- Create a SMART ENERGY FUND of \$10 million to provide low interest loans to households seeking to purchase solar panels to power their homes.
- Introduce a tax rebate for the cost of installing a solar electric system.

- Ensure all new government or government related facilities will be fully fitted with solar electric systems.
- Phase out the use of incandescent light bulbs from all government buildings by 2010 and private households by 2012.

(21) A MODERN CIVIL SERVICE

Many of the world's nation states are engaged in serious efforts to reform their governments and inject a culture of innovation and heightened efficiency in their public services. A government close to society is always ready to listen to the people. Governments that are respectful of legality, honesty, transparency, accountability and efficiency are governments conscious of their mission of promoting human and social development as the basis for attaining a more just and prosperous society.

In 1999 the BLP promised to reform the public sector to make it more responsive to the needs of the public. It has failed to do so. In fact the BLP has presided over a public sector whose numbers have grown even as its morale declined. Nepotism, supersession, victimization and political interference are rampant.

The recently completed job classification exercise served to increase the salaries of a few senior civil servants, consequently inflating what Ministers are being paid. This is clearly unacceptable!

Government is the single largest employer in Barbados. The Democratic Labour Party will

spare no effort to establish a well-trained and impartial public service, free from political interference, which is essential for good governance. Thereby the public service will be empowered to operate in a professional manner. To achieve this, the DLP will:

- a. Formulate and implement a Human Resource Development Policy for the public service;
- b. Implement a service-wide public service training policy which will see among other things:
 - The establishment of a Public Service Training College offering programmes which will meet the qualification requirements for public officers
 - The introduction of Induction Training (orientation) for all new public officers
 - Management and leadership training being provided at various points in a public officer's career
- c. Review the results of the last job classification exercise;
- d. Establish a full-time Chairman of the Public Service Commission to play an effective role in the management of the Public Service. The Commission will have a Legal Officer and a Human Resource Officer attached on a full-time basis to provide it with appropriate advice;
- e. Re-organize, retrain, rename and retool the Data Processing Department to become the Central Information Technology

Agency responsible for a new focus on information technology in the public service with a goal of having all Ministries and Departments fully computerized and connected by 2016;

- f. Strengthen the office of Public Sector Reform by:
 - Relocating it in a Ministry under the portfolio of the Prime Minister
 - Providing the required staff and other resources necessary to carry out its functions efficiently
 - Providing it with statutory powers to ensure implementation of agreed reform initiatives
 - Implementing customer charters in all government Ministries and Departments to develop a truly customer-focused, customer-driven public service
- g. Provide new options within the pension plan for public servants which will allow better provision to be made for the surviving spouse of a public servant who dies either before or after retirement;
- h. Improve the physical and environmental conditions under which many public servants work;
- i. Introduce a pilot project providing day care facilities for the children of public officers;
- j. Increase the no-interest vehicle loan facility to \$60,000 for those who qualify;
- k. Provide access to duty free motorcars for personal use for designated public servants.



(22) GOOD GOVERNANCE

One of the most startling phenomena in Caribbean societies is the increasing alienation of people, particularly young people, from the political process. The turnout at elections in some countries is rapidly approaching less than 50% of the electorate. In some jurisdictions there is the danger that governments could be elected by a minority of the eligible voters.

At the moment too many Barbadians perceive voting as a waste of time since many Parliamentarians have made promises during the election campaigns, which they have not delivered. They have subsequently made themselves inaccessible and become unresponsive to the needs of their constituents. Very few people outside political cliques want to pursue a career in politics, for a variety of unflattering reasons.

There is therefore a need to clean up politics in Barbados. The Democratic Labour Party has selected a team of clean, caring, competent and committed politicians who have signed on to a code of conduct, that promises Good Governance.

Good Governance has 8 major characteristics. It is:

- a) Participatory

- b) Consensus oriented
- c) Accountable to the electorate
- d) Transparent in all its decision-making
- e) Responsive to the needs of voters
- f) Effective and efficient
- g) Equitable and inclusive and
- h) Follows the rule of law.

Good Governance assures that corruption is minimized, the views of the people are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable members of society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society. Barbados needs Good Governance now like it never has before.

The DLP envisages a Barbados in which the word democracy is given a life beyond the partisan electoral structures. It sees a Barbados where people can take a larger responsibility for the management of their own communities and can be empowered with the requisite resources from central government to produce real solutions to real problems.

It envisages a decentralizing of governmental structures that allows for real participatory democracy in Barbados where public policy is not imposed from the top but results from the full involvement of a wider society.

A Democratic Labour Party administration will put systems in place to reverse the trend of concentrating power into fewer and fewer hands, as

well as attempt to rekindle trust and confidence in the system of parliamentary elections and constituency representation. A major failing of government under the BLP over the past thirteen years has been its reluctance to take the people of Barbados into its confidence and explain to them what it has been doing on their behalf. There has been an absence of informative Press Conferences and releases which inform Barbados about government activities and its dealing. Parliamentary questions raised by the people's representatives are ignored. Reports from the Auditor General are disregarded.

The DLP administration's attitude to accountability will be based on the understanding that as servants and representatives of the people there can be no secrets or matters to be hidden from the population. Consequently, a DLP administration

will be accountable for its actions and policies and take the public into its confidence.

Under a DLP government, the people will be kept informed of what the government is doing on their behalf through:

- Regular press briefings following meetings of the Cabinet of Barbados
- Press briefings by Ministries/Departments to inform Barbadians of major developments and changes
- The publication of details of agreements and contracts involving the government and its agencies
- Formal Ministerial statements at regular intervals on the progress of ongoing programmes and projects
- A revision of and adherence to the rules regarding Parliamentary questions





- A policy of formal reporting by parliamentarians to constituents on stewardship and issues affecting the constituencies.

The Democratic Labour Party will also:

- ❖ Establish state-funded Constituency Councils to execute community enhancement and development projects. These Councils will comprise representatives of the church, civil society, and the political administration. In this way, perennial problems of street lighting, sporting and recreational facilities, drainage, poverty alleviation and the like can be administered and resolved at the constituency level. An initial budget of \$100,000 will be granted to each Council. After a needs assessment is done an annual budget will be provided.
- ❖ Make these Constituency Councils accountable to the constituents and the country. Each Council will be mandated to hold a half yearly review consultation meeting to report on their activities and spending and respond to concerns from the public.
- ❖ Mandate each DLP representative to present a “State of the Constituency Report” at the time of the Constituency

Councils’ consultation meeting. These meetings will be broadcast live on radio and television.

- ❖ Stipulate that in order to qualify for state funding of constituency offices, each Member of Parliament must identify one day per week as Constituency Affairs Day, where the member is physically present at the office or visibly involved in constituency related activities.
- ❖ Immediately introduce integrity legislation requiring
 - a declaration of assets by public officials,
 - a Code of Conduct for Ministers,
 - a new Freedom of Information law,
 - amendments to the Defamation laws and
 - new constitutional provisions to rationalise the powers of the Prime Minister.

In this way the Democratic Labour Party intends giving power back to the people. It will facilitate the development of towns in each constituency to provide goods and services to people close to where they live. This decentralization of both power and facilities should not only improve the quality of people’s lives within communities but also reduce traffic congestion in and around Bridgetown.

(23) LAW AND ORDER

Eight years ago, the Democratic Labour Party, as part of its on-going consultation with the people of Barbados, collected enough evidence to sound the alarm about the rapid increase in crime and violence. These warnings were publicly derided by the Barbados Labour Party. Within five years, the same BLP Government made a typical knee-jerk response to the escalating crime and violence by setting up a National Commission on Law and Order. As usual the recommendations of this excellent Report were ignored.

In 2006 crime increased by 5.3%. Many of these crimes were poverty-related. The most spectacular increase was crime against visitors, which shot up by over 55%.

During the same period, police officers were being publicly humiliated by representatives of the BLP Government, ranging from the Prime Minister to Security Officers at the Kensington Oval during International Cricket Council World Cup 2007.



The DLP believes that law enforcement needs to be stepped up in order to restore law and order in Barbados. It also believes that greater protection should be offered to the source of our income, captive tourists.

As a matter of urgency, the new DLP Government will:

- ❖ Provide better remuneration for Police Officers
- ❖ Improve and/or build new police stations in designated areas
- ❖ Increase the ranks in the police force creating more promotion opportunities
- ❖ Upgrade the Government Forensic Sciences Centre to help solve outstanding crimes and restore confidence in law enforcement agencies
- ❖ Permit the police force to function free of political interference
- ❖ Convert Glendairy Prison into a publicly-funded modern drug treatment and rehabilitation centre.



(24) NATIONAL SECURITY

One of the primary obligations of government is to protect its people and safeguard its economic and political interests. Foreign policy, customs services, international crime detection, immigration policies, trade and economic policies all combine to contribute to a nation's sustainable development and security. Government must also address issues such as the trade in illegal drugs, escalating crime and violence, the threat of terrorism and preparations for, and appropriate response to natural disasters.

In addition to the existing security systems, the **Barbados Defence Force** (BDF) should be part of our national identity to reflect the way we see ourselves, the kind of country we are and the role we seek to play in the world. The incoming DLP government will seek to ensure that the BDF becomes more involved in the march towards First World status, more innovative, more strategically focused and more proactive.

The DLP Government will, as a matter of urgency, carry out a comprehensive Organizational Review of the BDF and develop a strategic plan for the Force. This will include a complete analysis of its structure, size and management of resources.

In addition to this, the DLP Government will:

- a. Expand the career prospects, training opportunities and counselling and welfare services available to all ranks;

- b. Develop a scheme of resettlement training for persons leaving the force;
- c. Review and simplify the procedures dealing with pension;
- d. Provide new options within the pension plan for soldiers, which would allow better provision to be made for the surviving spouse of a soldier who dies after retirement;
- e. Improve the intelligence and security information-gathering capabilities of the Barbados Defence Force and forge closer ties with the Royal Barbados Police Force;
- f. Introduce performance indicators;
- g. Implement a building maintenance programme to restore and maintain the current facilities;
- h. Build multi-purpose disaster management facilities, which may be used during normal times by youth groups and sporting organizations. These facilities will also house areas for skills training as well as for coaches in various sporting activities.

(25) FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE: SUCCEEDING ABROAD, WINNING AT HOME

There is little doubt that Barbados now operates in a rapidly changing and increasingly more challenging international economic environment. The convergence of global forces are leading to new trade, development and governance paradigms that place undue burdens on most developing economies to meet new international standards and rules while maintaining domestic economic growth and stability.

Small vulnerable states such as ours will have to navigate the requirements of coping with major shifts in

international production patterns, new schemes of corporate expansionism and a plethora of extra-judicial obligations enforceable in international law.

Any government desirous of moving Barbados forward in this new international economic environment must re-engineer the country's external trade policy to securing and increasing market share abroad; and winning the battle to maintain dominance in our domestic markets.

With this in mind a new Democratic Labour Party government will:

- To the extent permitted by our regional and international commitments, negotiate and secure expanded foreign market access for Barbados' goods and services.
- Build a competitive productive sector that produces world-class goods and services capable of increasing our market share across the world.
- Allow for managed entry of goods and services from abroad so as to protect our most vulnerable sectors, and enhance our food security profile while satisfying the need for healthy levels of external competition in the domestic market.
- Increase the foreign exchange earning capacity of the country and thereby attract higher levels of investment.

In pursuit of these objectives a new DLP government will prioritize the negotiation of bilateral, regional and multilateral trade and economic development agreements.

Our strategy in this regard will be predicated on a policy that promotes greater investment in tourism,

finance and other critical traditional and non-traditional export services. The expansion of new investment opportunities in new and critical technologies such as solar energy and hydroponics; the creation and implementation of a new national industrial innovation policy that highlights increasing investment in research and development, market specialization, intellectual property rights; agro-processing; and a vibrant re-export platform aimed at turning Barbados into a regional and international transshipment point for highly valuable goods produced outside but serviced in Barbados and moved to other destinations.

In the final analysis, Barbados will continue to pursue its long-standing policy to be "*friends of all and satellites of none*". It will continue to defend the interests of its citizens at home and abroad. We will respect those treaties entered into by predecessor Governments and seek new alliances conducive to the achievement of our goals.

The new DLP Government will work towards the realization of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. However, it will embark on a major public education programme to sensitize the masses of Barbadians to the challenges and opportunities that the free movement of labour, goods and services will bring. It will then prepare Barbadians for taking a leading role in the development of the wider Caribbean Community.

The DLP Government will target South America as a potential market for its goods and services and increase its presence there. At least one other Embassy (in addition to the one in Brazil) will be established.

It will also maintain its good relationships with the members of the European Union and with the United States. It will, as a matter of priority, improve its relationship with the developing countries of Africa.



TOWARDS OUR PLACE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Fifty years are but a moment in history. It is a short time in the life of a nation. But it is a long time in the life of an individual. Despite this obvious relativity in the perception of time, the Democratic Labour Party owes it to the people of Barbados to demonstrate what a resourceful people can do within 50 years of achieving their Independence. We can create a First World Island Nation.

In 1966 the DLP promised the people of Barbados that it would find a way of using their collective wisdom and energy to create a Better Barbados. It promised better goods and services, better food, better education, better health, better housing, better employment, better family life, better transport, better community life, better governance and a better quality of life.

Forty-one years later we have made much progress towards this dream. However, the old enemies of progress have regrouped and now

threaten to take this country back to a pre-Independence state of elitism, poverty and dependency. A fourth term of government by the Barbados Labour Party would put the finishing touches to the two Barbadoses towards which they have been working for several years.

Barbadians have suffered enough. We must march on to the Better Barbados of which we have dreamt and for which we have prayed and toiled.

On 15th January 2008, you will be asked to make one of the most important decisions in your life. You will have a choice between progress and regression. Even if you are among the elite few who could benefit from another term of BLP rule, think of your children and your children's children.

The Democratic Labour Party humbly asks the electorate of Barbados for their vote.

Let us put Barbados back on its proper course.

Thank you for your support.
God Bless Barbados.



PATHWAYS TO PROGRESS



- 500 homes in 500 days
- 2500 lots in 1st five years
- Meaningful support for farmers
- Respect for youth and youth concerns
- Zero tolerance for Crime and Violence
- Revamped QEH - Fully staffed and equipped A&E
- New health and pension deal for seniors