

*The Vision
for A Better
Tomorrow*



BLP Manifesto 2013
A Blueprint for The Future

**A BETTER
TOMORROW**
BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY

The Team for A Better Tomorrow



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**A BETTER
TOMORROW**
BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY

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WE OFFER YOU LEADERSHIP



Strong Leadership, Strong Economy.

These are difficult economic times. Too many Barbadians are hurting. All across our nation, people are struggling to pay their ever increasing electricity and water bills. More families than ever before are feeling the strain of ever increasing costs to keep a roof over their head, gas in the tank and food on the table. Regrettably, too many of our people are unable to find satisfying, good paying jobs.

**While our families are suffering,
our current leadership is doing
nothing!**

This failed and weak government has offered no ideas and no solutions to fix the economic crisis. Weak, they wait for the international community to fix our economic problems for us. That's not the Barbadian spirit. That's not the Barbados I know. The Barbados I know is full of intelligent, capable and skilled people who, over the course of several generations, transformed our beloved island into the jewel of the Caribbean. We are awash in potential, but at the current time we are vexed with poor leadership.

**WHEN IT COMES TO FIXING
OUR ECONOMY AND PUTTING
OUR COUNTRY BACK ON THE
RIGHT TRACK, LEADERSHIP
MATTERS MOST!**



The Barbados Labour Party features a team of strong and effective leaders with a proven record of creating jobs and uplifting our people. When the BLP left office, Barbados enjoyed the lowest unemployment rate in our history. We created over 30,000 new jobs. Our economy grew by nearly 12% in the last three years of our administration. Back then, things weren't perfect – no one is perfect but Almighty God – but under the BLP people felt deep in their bones that things in Barbados were good and getting better.

That's leadership – leadership that delivers jobs and opportunities for all Barbadians.

My fellow citizens, the current unelected captain of the SS Barbados is asleep at the wheel. He has offered no ideas and no solutions to the jobs crisis. He has sat idly by while the cost of living skyrocketed. He has presided over the largest increase in debt in our country's history. And, when the international community deemed our bonds junk, he did nothing.

THAT'S NOT LEADERSHIP, IT IS WEAKNESS.

AT THE ROOT OF THIS ECONOMIC CRISIS IS A FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP.

Today, more than ever, we need strong leadership that understands how to get Barbados working again, shining again, growing again.

A Better Tomorrow for a Better Barbados – this is our promise, this is our pledge. Under the steady and capable leadership of the Barbados Labour Party, our beloved country will once again shine in the warmth of the rising sun.

On February 21st we ask you to vote for the Barbados Labour Party, vote to end the suffering of our families, vote for the competence and leadership that will make our country better.

HOLD ON BARBADOS - NIGHT IS BREAKING, DAWN IS COMING.



The Rt. Hon. Owen Arthur
Leader- Barbados Labour Party

From STABILITY to CALAMITY - the DLP Legacy

Insurance unease

Calls for quick Government takeover of CLICO to stave off problems

by ALBERT BRANDFORD

SOME KEY LOCAL INSURANCE PLAYERS are concerned that Government's apparent delay in taking action to resolve the crisis on the troubled CLICO Life Insurance Company could jeopardise the future of the entire industry here.

And, there is growing calling on Prime Minister David Thompson to ignore his friendship with CLICO boss Leroy Parris and effect a Government takeover of the company to safeguard the interests of stakeholders and prevent further damage and confidence in the sector.

"We are concerned about the problems at CLICO, and it is affecting some of other major players in the industry," one insurance executive said.

"Some of our colleagues, and others in other companies, have to be answering questions that some of them can't answer



LEROY PARRIS (FPP)
of CLICO and the Supervisor
of Finance and the Supervisor
of Insurance have done
nothing whatsoever."

DAVID THOMPSON (FPP)
of Investments. For example:
"What will happen to my
policy?" And it is creating
a lot of doubt."

"In my opinion, I think

Concern to staffers

"That is a concern to those staffers," one source said. "Because, if anyone you can't march a company you're in trouble. Whenever an insurance company is losing more than half of its premium income, that is a cause for concern."

A company thrives on new business, and premium can also be significant outflows."

"There can be no joy in such a company, or the industry as a whole, if the best thing would be for there to be

products to the middle class, failing them to target the lower income people who were traditionally less informed and usually have a lot of disposable income, particularly in light of the continually rising cost of living."

In its just released Article IV Consultation, the IMF and Government should develop a contingency plan.

"We should the current approach of selling the subsidiary of CLICO to another private investor prove unacceptable."

This, the IMF added,

was needed to reduce

the impact on Government's

finances as well as protect

the financial system and

investor confidence.

In response, Thompson said

the IMF's conclusions

were not new and had not

taken his administration

by surprise as efforts to sell

the CLICO assets were

near conclusion.

"We have already come up



Today we stand at a most dangerous cross-roads in our national journey.

The elections of 2008 will forever be remembered as an occasion when two roads diverged in our journey to development.

Then, the country was on a stable and successful path to national development.

We were on our way to achieving the enviable goal of becoming the world's smallest developed country on the strength of the quality of life of our people. A very human face had been put on our success at national development by the achievement of a rate of unemployment that was tantamount to full employment.

Fourteen years of strong and almost unbroken growth of almost 3% per year had endowed Barbados with a healthy economy. Ours was an economy that really worked. Savings and investments were at record levels. Our enter-

prises were strong and expanding. Our foreign exchange reserves were at levels that put any thought of devaluation firmly behind us. Inflation, at 4%, was being tamed.

Government's fiscal house was in good order, with the realisation of current account surpluses, and overall fiscal deficits that were well within international standards of prudence.

Successful policies were being employed to reform the tax system; to secure our NIS for future generations; to liberalise telecommunications; and to stimulate strong capital inflows. The social partnership was in full force and held up as a model internationally. The economy was capable of bearing and giving decent wage increases.

Internationally, Barbados had successfully staved off an OECD challenge to its International Business Sector, and was the only developing country on the white list of offshore centres.

Barbados was also giving effective leadership in the regional effort to create a Caribbean Single Market and Economy.

An active programme to eradicate poverty was in force. New initiatives in respect of Alternative Energy Development and the creation of a Green Economy were unveiled in 2007.

The further development of tertiary education, as expressed in the goal of one graduate per household, was set as a strategic means by which to sustain the development of our nation.

The fight against HIV/AIDS was receiving leadership at the highest level. Initiatives to take Information Technology (IT) to the grassroots, to address the needs of the boys on the block, the physically challenged and our children were fully in force. A world class society that was being chosen as the venue for the staging of global events was the country's lot.

Crime and violence had significantly been reduced. Good order and a general environment of stable, orderly and prosperous development prevailed.

Since 2008, under the DLP, Barbados has been made to follow the road least travelled on our journey since independence. It is the road that has taken us from stable, successful development to calamitous and catastrophic failure.

The fortunes of the economy have been tragically reversed. The economy at the end of 2012 was smaller than it was in 2007. It will remain so in 2013 if the disastrous policies of the DLP continue to be pursued.

Over 16,000 private sector jobs have been lost. Government finances are in rampant disorder, and are incapable of being improved by the policies currently being employed. Our leading sector, Tourism, is in total disarray and declining while our neighbours are thriving.

The cost of living is out of control, with consumer prices in Barbados rising three times faster than the average rate in our region.

The crowning economic indignity inflicted upon Barbados by the DLP administration is that it has presided over the downgrading of Barbados' international credit rate to the status of Junk, reflecting this Government's horrible mismanagement of its finances and all aspects of the national economy.

A SIMILAR DISMAL TALE OF WOE HAS ATTENDED BARBADOS' SOCIAL AFFAIRS.

The level of poverty in Barbados has risen from 12% to almost 20% of the population.

Disorder is now rampant in the administration of the education system, as evidenced by the Alexandra School debacle. The DLP has put tertiary education, a bulwark of Barbados' progress, in peril.

Draconian adjustments to the drug service, and total disorder in the management of the Q.E.H have opened a new dismal chapter in this vital area of national life.

Compounding the widespread economic and social disorder across the land has been the extraordinary deterioration in the quality of governance practices by the DLP.

A new lawlessness has been brought to our governance as, in instance after instance, Government has been prepared to flout the law. The practice of collective responsibility by Cabinet, essential for stable governance, has been undermined by disorder and conflict among Ministers at the centre of this Cabinet.

The Government has been accused of inertia by its own members. Indeed the failure to make timely decisions virtually brought the International Business Sector to a standstill and has left 35,000 investors in CLICO in a dangerous limbo.



Agencies of state, not least the CBC and constituency councils have been used for tribal, partisan purposes. The finances of the State have been heavily used to support the partisan political programme of the ruling party.

A new, dangerous consolidation of activity in the country has been promoted by the disturbing allocation of projects to a select few. The Judiciary and the Royal Barbados Police Force have been made victims of political in-

terference never before seen in our nation.

The DLP stands guilty of undermining the tradition of stability which has mattered so much in creating the climate for orderly and successful development in Barbados.

Under the DLP the combination of economic ruin, widespread social disorder and lawless maladministration of the worst kind, has transformed Barbados from a shining example of stable development to a disastrous calamity.



The full restoration of the country's economy, the rebuilding of our social system, and the bringing to bear of a new enlightened mode of Governance are the three imperatives that await the next BLP administration.



A BETTER TOMORROW

Our Pledge. Our Goal.



The challenges which now face our nation are undoubtedly the most imposing since independence.

The strategies, policies and programmes contained in this Manifesto reflect the philosophy and the spirit of the Barbados Labour Party which, for almost 75 years, has served our nation.

WE MAKE THE DOING OF EXTRAORDINARY THINGS OUR ORDINARY BUSINESS.

We stand ready to once again do extraordinary things in Barbados' best interest.

We are not daunted by the challenges that must be confronted.



We view our nation as being no less capable than other small, middle income countries, which face the same global conditions as Barbados, of finding innovative and successful ways of meeting today's challenges in a manner that will afford our people a better standard of living.

We also believe that this generation of Barbadians is no less capable than any generation of the past of attending to Barbados' affairs in a manner that will assure us of successful and civilised national development.

Barbados is a good nation, of good people regrettably afflicted with a bad government.

We offer the promise and prospect of A BETTER TOMORROW.

We do not look to the rest of the world to solve our problems for us.

We put our trust in the character, the resourcefulness and the resilience of the people of Barbados.

We believe that once they are given the leadership, inspiration and the material means and incentives, they will provide the energy and driving force to successfully carry out the transformation of our society.

The transformation of which our nation is capable and which will lead to **A BETTER TOMORROW** must begin with the rescue, the recovery and the revitalisation of our economy. Our people, their talents, their ingenuity and the deployment of their income and their wealth, must be at the centre of the successful transformation on which we must embark.

Barbados must now be made to regain its historic nature as an economy which works, is capable of affording its people decent and rising incomes; can pay its way at home and in the world; can attend to the needs of its poor and the vulnerable; and can embrace the change required to succeed in today's world with confidence rather than with despair.

Barbados must once again be made to appear to be a shining city on a hill for the excellent quality of its governance; a strong, stable democracy resting on the rule of law. That is part of our pledge and promise of **A BETTER TOMORROW**.

Barbados must once again be made a society which cares; a society whose progress derives from its investment in the education, training and health care of its people above all else.

Our goal is to make Barbados a successful society; a just society; a society of steadily rising income and wealth, fairly enjoyed by all.

Our goal is to make Barbados once again a society of social and economic opportunity. Above all, we believe that we must create a future for our children that is better and brighter than that of past generations.

This is our Promise. This is our Pledge.



A VISION FOR BARBADOS

In our 2008 manifesto, we offered the people the Vision for Barbados: our strategic vision to transform Barbados by 2025. In 2013, we are more committed than ever before to build a fully developed society that is prosperous, socially just and globally competitive.

The fully developed Barbados that we envision by 2025 will be:

- *A society that places people at the centre of development and, through economic enfranchisement offers each and every individual the freedom and opportunity to develop their talents to their full potential.*
- *A sustainable society that co-exists in harmony with a beautiful, clean and healthy physical environment and physical infrastructure, and whose people enjoy good health and high life expectancy.*
- *A society driven primarily by a services economy fuelled by a steady rate of export growth, with a state-of-the-art information and communications technology infrastructure, a high savings rate, widespread material prosperity, full employment, an equitable distribution of income and wealth and enhanced quality of life.*
- *A premier world tourism destination and a centre for high quality financial, information and other services augmented by reinvigorated manufacturing and agricultural sectors.*
- *A society symbolized by creativity, innovation, industry, productivity, entrepreneurship and intellectual excellence, in which all enjoy a rich cultural, social and economic life.*
- *A society that is an integral part of the Caribbean family of nations.*
- *A truly literate society whose people are*

educated, well rounded human beings, possessed of sophisticated skills and so imbued with social justice and equity that no one is left by the wayside.

- *A society of religious and enduring moral values, diversity and tolerance, imbued with a strong sense of public spiritedness and an abiding sense of trust and community.*
- *A fully democratic society with enhanced freedoms and rights for all and governed by the rule of law, in which citizens participate in self governance and enjoy a rewarding public life.*
- *A society of order, self-discipline and respect for law, relatively free from the scourges of illegal drugs, corruption, crime and violence.*



THE RESCUE & RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ECONOMY

STRATEGIES FOR GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT



Barbados is caught in a dangerous downward economic spiral which must be checked and reversed as a matter of urgency. This task must be attended to before the country can be placed on a path to growth and development. It will require measures that go beyond the ordinary.

There must be an extraordinary effort that simultaneously stimulates exports and domestic demand. Our foreign reserves are above the levels required for safety. Barbados' economic salvation requires that part of those reserves, set aside for a rainy day, must be utilized in our nation's hour of greatest need without putting the value of the Barbados dollar in peril.

We are satisfied that breaking the downward spiral must be achieved by a judicious mix of measures to get us out of the calamity.

The core policies, the new pillars of growth and development, our sectoral policies and

initiatives as further outlined in this manifesto are intended to be the means by which we will give effect to this strategy.

We attach strategic significance to the measures that put money back in people's pockets to stimulate domestic economic activity.

We attach special significance to the measures intended to alleviate the burden of the cost of living.

We attach great significance to measures to build a more competitive economy that earns more foreign exchange.

We attach great significance to growing an economy that opens new avenues especially for the youth.

We cannot overemphasize the urgency of reversing the policies – now shown to be totally counterproductive – that have placed Barbados in this peril.



COST OF LIVING

It has been the tradition that the cost of living in Barbados rises in line with that of the rest of the world; so it was under the BLP government. The DLP promised to make the reduction of the cost of living its numbers one, two and three priority. The admission that it did not reduce the cost of living is the most catastrophic failure of the DLP administration.

In fact, consumer prices have risen by over 30% under the DLP. In recent times, the rise in prices has been three times faster in Barbados than in the rest of the region.

The galloping pace of the price increases has been accompanied by frozen incomes across a large section of workers.

The fact that our cost of living has been rising three times faster than the rest of the region means that the sources of this increase have been domestic and driven in large measure by the policies of this failed government.

It is of special significance that the prices of energy and electricity have been the items that have shown the greatest increase (over 65%), followed by food, where the impact of the counterproductive measures of the government have been their most severe.

The BLP accepts that restraining the growth in prices relative to the rest of region must be



the focus of our policies. The policies must begin with and centre around the impact of domestic policies on the people's pockets.

AS OUR FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS, AN ELECTED BLP GOVERNMENT WILL BRING RELIEF TO EVERY CONSUMER, EVERY HOUSEHOLD AND EVERY BUSINESS IN BARBADOS BY CHANGING THE POLICIES PERTAINING TO THE SALE OF FUEL OIL BY THE BARBADOS NATIONAL OIL COMPANY TO BARBADOS LIGHT & POWER THAT HAS LED TO THE RECENT ESCALATION IN THE COST OF ELECTRICITY.

In addition to this first action, the Barbados Labour Party will sustain the fight to control the cost of living.

We Will:

- Restore the VAT to 15%. When the DLP increased the VAT from 15 to 17.5%, it promised that it would be a temporary measure. We commit to take it back from 17.5% to 15% immediately on electricity and food.*
- Undertake as part of the fight to control the cost of living to systematically phase down the bound rates, especially on food products, where there is no competing domestic production to be protected.*
- Advance negotiations with our CARICOM partners to continue to reduce the common external tariff where there is no local or re-*

gional production being protected.

- *Immediately upon taking office, reduce and eventually remove the cess placed on gasoline and diesel.*
- *Pass on the benefit of the reduction in duties as contained in new trade agreements especially with Europe.*
- *Strengthen the price monitoring mechanism that was put in place prior to 2008 and allow it to become an important part of the effort to control the cost of living.*
- **FACILITATE THE DEEPENING OF COMPETITION AMONG ENTERPRISES IN THE DISTRIBUTIVE SECTOR PROVIDED THAT ALL ENTERPRISES ARE ENABLED TO CARRY OUT THEIR INVESTMENTS, SALE AND OPERATIONS FACING THE SAME CONDITIONS.**

THE RESTORATION OF **FISCAL ORDER & PRUDENCE**

The complete mismanagement of our public finances is another disastrous part of the record of the DLP. Reckless expenditure on political programmes, and ill-conceived tax policies are responsible for the disaster. The Medium Term Fiscal Strategy efforts to correct the fiscal disorder FAILED, which contributed to the attainment of junk status for Barbados' credit rating. The restoration of fiscal order and prudence must be pursued in its own right, and to help to establish the conditions for orderly and stable development. The following initiatives will be given priority:

- *The DLP's Medium Term Fiscal Strategy must be abandoned and replaced by a new strategy that restores balance to the current account and allows for small overall fiscal deficits in order to support the government's capital development programme.*
- *In respect of revenue and taxation the counter productivity of the policies of the DLP are borne out by the fact that receipts from the VAT have fallen by 2% and the revenue from income tax has fallen by 10% despite the increase in the rates. This supports the case for the complete reversal of the current taxation policies and for the application of a new policy that allows for the growth of revenues to come from the growth and expansion of the economy at large rather than the increasing of tax rates.*
- *A pro-growth tax reform programme, as spelt out in this Manifesto, must replace the current policies of the DLP.*
- *The DLP proposed that the increase in the value added tax from 15% to 17.5% should be temporary. We believe that this pledge should be honoured. We propose to allow the VAT to go back to 15% on a phased basis, beginning with electricity, food and tourism. Hotel accommodation will revert to 7.5%.*
- *The BLP acknowledges that an important aspect of the restoration of fiscal order and prudence must entail the proper management of public expenditure.*

- **AS A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE, ANY PROGRAMME OF EXPENDITURE MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE THAT THE POOR, SENIOR CITIZENS AND THOSE WITH DISABILITIES AND THOSE HAVING SPECIAL NEEDS MUST AND WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE FREE ACCESS TO CRITICAL PUBLIC SERVICES.**

- *We will seek to manage the public expenditures by introducing administrative reforms and improving the use of information technology by government departments as a means of reducing the cost of delivery of public services.*

• **THE BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY RECOGNIZES THAT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF STATE ENTERPRISES THAT ARE PROVIDING CRITICAL SOCIAL SERVICES. THESE INCLUDE THE TRANSPORT BOARD, HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS AND OUR PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM. THE BLP WILL NOT SELL ANY SUCH INSTITUTIONS.**

- *We acknowledge, however, that such enterprises can be run in a more efficient way in order to reduce the extent to which they rely on state subsidies.*
- *The Barbados Labour Party will assume office with a DLP programme of privatization planned and announced, and already in place to sell government's commercial enterprises.*
- *The BLP successfully used Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to finance capital programmes that have historically been done by the state. We will make increasing use of PPPs in capital programmes to support economic growth in a manner that does not add to the size of Government's debt.*

als to grow. Over the last five years, the DLP administration has discouraged growth and transformation with excessive taxation that virtually wrecked our economy, and created a new class of poverty – the working poor.

A comprehensive programme of tax relief and incentives is now necessary to help restore economic growth, improve people's income and wealth, and open new opportunities for development and transformation. Growth cannot be restored to our economy in the absence of a programme of domestic stimulation, which means improving the purchasing power of every Barbadian. **WE MUST PUT MONEY IN PEOPLE'S POCKETS.**

Over the next five year period, a BLP Government proposes a properly structured and phased programme of tax relief and reform.

We will:

- *Restore the tax exemption on entertainment and travelling allowances.*
- *Increase the land tax exemption threshold to \$200,000 which will remove 18,000 property owners from the payment of the tax.*
- *Allow home owners liable to land tax to pay on 50% of the improved value. This benefit is now available to pensioners.*
- *Introduce a middle-income tax band that applies a 25% marginal tax rate to taxable income between 35,001 and 50,000.*
- *Increase the reverse tax credit to \$1,500 for persons earning \$20,000 or less.*
- *Increase personal income tax allowance for pensioners to \$50,000.*
- **UNDER THE EXISTING TAX SYSTEM, INDIVIDUALS ARE PROVIDED WITH A BASIC ALLOWANCE OF \$25,000, A HOME**

PUTTING MONEY IN PEOPLE'S POCKETS



Historically, tax incentives have been a powerful way to encourage enterprises and individu-

ALLOWANCE, ALLOWANCES FOR SAVINGS AND ALLOWANCES TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO INVEST. WE BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD ADD TO THIS BY PROVIDING ALLOWANCES TO PEOPLE TO BETTER PROVIDE FOR THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN AND THEIR HEALTH-CARE.

- *Introduce a Health Allowance of \$10,000 which can be used for care of the elderly, medical and drug bills, health insurance, registered health plans and membership at qualifying gyms.*
- *Allow the full contribution to a registered savings plan up to a limit of \$10,000 per year as an allowance; only the withholding tax on interest is currently allowed.*
- *Introduce a regime where earning foreign exchange will attract the same rate of taxes as International Business Companies in such areas as sports, culture, entertainment, among others – as we seek to build an economy for our young people.*

AN INCOMES POLICY

The punitive fiscal policies of the current DLP government have contributed to a significant increase in payroll costs, which has negatively affected the future viability of the private sector.

An admirable restraint exhibited by all concerned, during the height of the crisis to virtually freeze wages, is however unsustainable.

IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR, THERE HAS BEEN NO WAGE SETTLEMENT SINCE 2008. THE BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY COMMITS TO A PUBLIC SECTOR WAGE SETTLEMENT, AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE.

It will give the larger percentage increase to those at the bottom, with the understanding that those who pay income tax will benefit both from a wage increase and the tax relief contained in this manifesto.

In the PRIVATE SECTOR, there is a need to devise and implement sector-specific incomes policies which relate future changes in wages to levels of productivity in the respective sectors. This approach should be supplemented by Employee Share Ownership Options and other such instruments that can help to spur efficiency while at the same time supplementing the income and wealth of employees.

Energy Pricing Policy – A New Deal

Over the past five years, we have witnessed the destructive effects of an unwise energy pricing policy that fuelled high inflation, increased the cost of doing business and retarded economic growth.

We will:

- *Immediately upon attaining office, reduce and eventually remove the cess placed on gasoline and diesel.*
- *Reduce the Value Added Tax on electricity bills.*
- *Mandate the Barbados National Oil Company Limited to charge the Barbados Light and Power Co. Ltd fuel oil at production cost or purchase price plus a small mark-up from both locally produced or imported product.*
- *As soon as practical reduce the excise tax on gasoline to carry it back to its former level.*
- *Amend the Transport Board Act to allow it to legally sell diesel to Public Service vehicles at special rates.*

NEW PILLARS OF **GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT**

A New ICT Platform

The global economy is being transformed by the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Barbados too has an opportunity to become a major business hub, by improving its competitiveness through innovation and increased business efficiency. But critical policies drafted since 2008 such as the 'Data Protection Bill' and 'Number Portability' needed to take advantage of ICT have stalled because of the inertia of the DLP government.

As a consequence, our regional counterparts are capitalising on the latest technology and are expanding business opportunities and attracting new foreign direct investment.

Between 1998 and 2008, the BLP Government began the liberalization of the telecommunication sector to provide our people and businesses with greater choice, lower cost and a better quality of service.

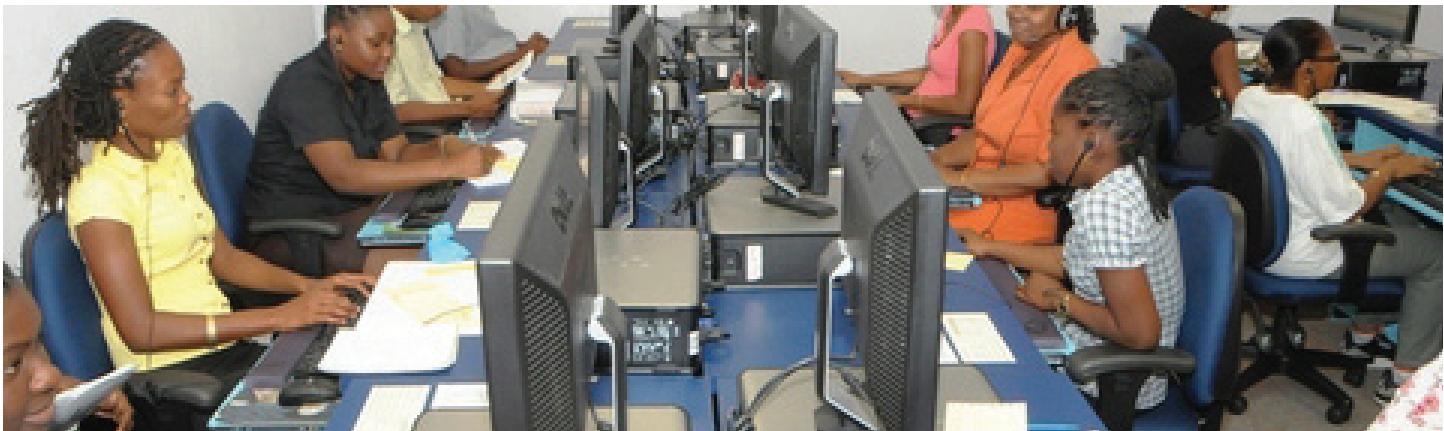
We need a fresh set of initiatives in this field to jump start the Barbados economy.

We will:

- *Facilitate the provision of affordable broadband and high speed internet access across the length and breadth of Barbados.*



- *Work with the banking community to expand the scope for e-Commerce and mobile commerce.*
- *Centralise the various fragmented ICT related departments into one responsible authority.*
- *Expand the current portal connecting all government agencies and Ministries and create alternative ways to access Government services using ICT including mobile networks.*
- *Encourage the installation of Internet Exchange Points (IXP) to create data transfer points in an effort to reduce the delivery costs of Internet services to the consumer, reduce foreign exchange loss and provide a more robust and reliable local and regional network.*
- *Fully support private sector initiatives, such as the Barbados Entrepreneurship Foundation in facilitating the provision of free Wi-Fi access across the island.*
- *Create an appropriate national Cyber Security Strategy including government and civil society so we are able to truly protect our digital borders.*
- *Establish a Computer Emergency Response Team, now a common practice across the world to ensure the continuity of our country's operation.*
- *Create an Innovation Park to accommodate software development, advanced*



research, specialised training initiatives, and local-global partnerships that provide new opportunities for local entrepreneurs.

- *Establish training facilities as 'ICT Centres of Excellence' that partner with international ICT institutions to prepare our citizens for a new digital workforce.*

constraints to doing business in Barbados.

- *Provide a facilitating environment in all regulatory agencies dealing with domestic and international business.*
- *Establish, within 6 months, a full interactive IT platform for the corporate registry.*
- *Streamline the incorporation process (electronically) with the Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office (CAIPO) to allow for the complete incorporation of a company within 24 hours*
- *Reduce the cost of incorporation to 100 dollars to encourage more Barbadian business to incorporate and receive benefits from the formal economy.*
- *Streamline the issuance of the international business licence from the Ministry of International Business to within 3 days.*

NEW APPROACHES TO BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT FACILITATION

A concerted programme to facilitate business and investment is the path to future growth and development of the Barbados economy. The programme must be user friendly, while removing the deficiencies in the processes, services, policy and legal framework, that affect the formation and operation of business.

This is the way to achieve international best practice in respect of business and investment in building a stronger and more competitive economy.

We will:

- *Devise in consultation with the Social Partners a National programme to remove the*

FLEXIBLE LAND USE POLICY

A PHYSICAL PLANNING SYSTEM THAT IS EFFECTIVE AND SEEN TO OPERATE IN A WAY THAT IS FAIR, OPEN AND ACCOUNTABLE TO ALL BARBADIANS IS A MUST. SUCH A SYSTEM CAN BALANCE THE NEEDS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT WITH THE NEED TO PROTECT OUR NATURAL AND HISTORIC CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT. THE SYSTEM MUST HAVE THE PUBLIC'S CONFIDENCE.

Resources will be provided to finish preparation of an updated Physical Development Plan that will receive parliamentary approval within two years.

The new plan will look forward to 2020. Once approved, progress will be monitored through an annual report to Parliament. A process for five-yearly review and roll-forward will be put in place.

We will make the development control process open and accountable:

- *All applications will be advertised on the internet and issued to the press*
- *Neighbours and other interested parties will be able to comment on applications*
- *All decisions will be published on the internet and made available to the press*
- *Hearings on major applications and appeals will be open to the public*
- *Ministerial decisions will be published and reasons given for both approvals and refusals.*

Much of this can be introduced quickly with amendments to the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Act and comprehensive reform of TCP Regulations to facilitate our development in sustainable manner.

STIMULATING PRIVATE CAPITAL INFLOWS

Robust old and new sources of private capital inflows are needed to rejuvenate the economy. This requires finding a combination of policies to create an environment in which Barbados can once again attract capital inflows, especially to fund projects such as the Four Seasons project.

Chief among these policies will be:

- *The use of business and investment facilitation measures that draw upon international best practices and help boost investor confidence in the national economy.*
- *Making prudent amendments to the regime governing the attraction of high-net-worth individuals to remove the unnecessary hindrances and constraints which are currently built into that regime.*
- *To carry out a programme to aggressively remove exchange controls from all capital transactions.*
- *Implementing a sensitive immigration policy that creates a more welcoming environment for persons investing in Barbados and removes the hiatuses that currently plague the process.*
- *Creating new arrangements whereby persons investing in Barbados can have clarity regarding their access to high-quality social services in our country.*





A NEW ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE

Barbados' future development will rest heavily upon the fostering of an **entrepreneurial culture**. To this end, the **Government of Barbados** has partnered with the **Barbados Entrepreneurship Foundation** to achieve the goal of making Barbados the **#1 entrepreneurial hub in the world by 2020**. We will work across all sectors to play our role in attaining this goal.

We will focus on three main areas of action reflecting the charter of the Barbados Entrepreneurship Foundation. These are: **1) Finance and Investment, 2) Education and Training and 3) Business Facilitation.**

We are committed to reducing the burden of red tape by reviewing regulations to ensure that they are appropriate to serve the purposes for which they were passed without creating additional costs and bureaucracy. We accept that the government must play a major role in the mobilization of capital. It is critical that our educational system plays its part in reinforcing the basics of entrepreneurship so that our students enter adulthood with the skills needed to successfully start their own businesses.

Across this manifesto, we have addressed key initiatives that will create this platform of partnership so that we work together as a nation to achieve this noble objective.

VENDING

The BLP recognises that the entrepreneurial spirit has perhaps best been exhibited through the decades from our vending class. Vending has been the bedrock for thousands of Barbadian families. It is as noble a profession as any other.

Unfortunately, many vendors are stigmatized and harassed while only trying to earn an honest living to provide for their families.

THE BLP WILL AMEND OUR LAWS SO AS TO STOP UNREGULATED VENDING FROM BEING A CRIMINAL ACTIVITY.

We accept that there must be regulation, but this is an appropriate area for civil regulation – not a criminal conviction. The BLP will work with the vending community to identify additional locations where the vending and craft communities may ply their trades.

FINANCIAL INNOVATION

There is no shortage of savings and money in the Barbadian economy.

The financial sector has high levels of excess liquidity. This along with the large and growing surpluses of the NIS constitute a pool of capital that must be used responsibly to accelerate the country's development.

We feel that the following initiatives are essential:

INTEREST RATE DEREGULATION

As part of A Better Tomorrow, we must better mobilise the billions of dollars idly sitting on deposits at banks earning scant interest. This will require deregulating the minimum deposit rate and using the treasury-bill rate as a signal.

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION FUND

The Barbados Labour Party recognizes the need to ensure that there is access to capital for businesses and for the Government to lead the reconstruction of this economy and the return to growth.

The BLP will establish a National Reconstruction Fund to be managed by the Enterprise Growth Fund, Ltd. This Fund will not lend where commercial banks are already lending.

The National Infrastructure Fund's areas of focus will be:

- *Our mature tourism product and under-capitalized locally owned hotels.*
- *Private sector green projects – solar and wind.*

- *Transformation of Enterprises through the installation of Information Communication Technology (ICT).*
- *The establishment of a cyber park.*
- *Transformational capital projects undertaken by the Government of Barbados.*

FINANCE FOR THE NEW ECONOMY

Many of the non traditional areas that Barbados must concentrate to restructure and grow the economy face the constraint that there is insufficient capital. Indeed many of the persons with capacity in these areas are young people with limited financial resources. This is especially so in the area of IT, gaming, software development, animation and film and other areas of the creative economy. These are high risk endeavours and very often are not considered favourably by the traditional commercial banking sector.

There is a need for loans to be granted on a contingency recovery basis given these high risks.

We will:

- *Recapitalise the Innovation Fund with \$20 million to be managed by the Enterprise Growth Fund Limited.*

BROADENING ACCESS BY ENLIVENING OUR SECONDARY MARKETS

As a result of neglect since 2008 there has been no major programme to deepen the capital markets in Barbados.

The BLP will introduce measures to create a junior stock exchange to raise capital for investment in small companies.

MICRO LEASING

Micro and Small businesses can improve their



cash flow by leasing rather than purchasing equipment.

The BLP will introduce a regime of micro leasing where micro and small businesses may be able to access at affordable rates (through lease) equipment that is critical to their operations for the period of time needed.

STRENGTHENING OUR CREDIT UNIONS

We want to take the development of the credit union movement to a higher level. The surplus of funds should be used to rebuild of enterprises as we move to restore growth to this economy.

We will:

- Encourage and Facilitate credit unions establishing mutual investment funds to broaden their investment capability to invest in local commercial enterprises with the benefit of diversifying their risks.*

CREDIT CARD AND BANK CHARGES

There has been an outcry from consumers over the fees charged by Banks. In addition, interest rates on credit cards are high. There is a need to ensure greater equity in the relationship.

A BLP government will:

- Ensure that there is greater oversight by the Central Bank and Financial Services Commission (FSC) over the charges from banks and other financial institutions to their customers.*
- Regulate interest rate charges for credit card to ensure they are not excessive.*

REVERSE MORTGAGES

The BLP will introduce the legal and regulatory framework for the introduction of reverse mortgages, which will allow pensioners to raise a lump sum on the basis of the property owned by them and to allow them to live out their days in dignity. The sum lent will be secured by the property.



SECTORAL **POLICIES & PROGRAMMES**

TOURISM - **THE DRIVING FORCE**

The last five years represent a sordid chapter in the life of our tourism and hospitality sector.

After achieving record levels of long-stay arrivals and earnings from the sector in 2007, the total lack of leadership for the sector and the punitive policies of the DLP administration have so devastated the industry that last year, once again, saw less tourists coming to Barbados than came in the year 2000.

Perhaps the most startling revelation is to be found in the latest published data of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation which places Barbados in the 22nd position, third from the bottom, of the 24 countries in the region.

These countries all face largely the same market conditions as Barbados does but many of them, perhaps for the very first time in history, are outperforming us and seeing positive growth in their tourist arrivals at a time when activity in our sector has plunged by six (6) per cent.

THE MARKETING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY ARE SO IMPORTANT WITHIN THE OVERALL SCHEME OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT THEY MUST ENJOY FIRST CLAIM ON THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE STATE.



Yet, as the country's number one industry lurches perilously close to the edge, the DLP government has so ordered its priorities as to allocate millions of dollars to non-developmental political programmes and failed experiments (including the badly planned and executed attempt at diversifying our tourism into the Brazilian market) while the Barbados Tourism Authority has remained constantly cash-strapped, starved of funds and suffering the indignity of being unable to pay its creditors even after being forced to borrow millions from the National Insurance Scheme.

To be sure, the high operating costs which already had to be incurred by those making capital investment in the accommodation sector in Barbados have been made worse by the fiscal and other macroeconomic policies that have been employed over the last five years, especially the increases in VAT and energy costs that were imposed on the sector.

It is also regrettable that, at a time when the industry as a mature industry needed capacity improvement and product diversification, almost all of the new investments that were on stream or planned to refresh or expand the productive capacity of the sector have not been realized.

Because of such adverse developments, the Barbados tourism industry under the DLP is rapidly moving from the status of a mature industry to that of an aging and decrepit sector, with dire consequences for its future.

Never before has our tourism and hospitality industry been in such a perilous and calamitous state. The situation is aggravated by the fact that all the other major productive sectors are facing conditions that have weakened and restrained their ability to contribute to Barbados' economic recovery.

To reverse this troubling trend, the performance of the sector must exceed the historical average, to allow activity in this one area where our economic potential is greatest to compensate for deficiencies in other sectors, and in so doing to drag the entire economy out of its present doldrums.

To this end we must revive the Five Star Tourism Industry we once had. We must encourage the influx of luxury brands, and private long term capital inflows in general, to support capacity development in the sector.

At the same time, assistance must be rendered to small and medium-sized businesses in the sector, most of whom find it a challenge to access financing on terms and conditions conducive to the viability of projects even at a time when there is excess liquidity in the local financial sector.

THE MAIDS, WAITERS, TAXI DRIVERS, SMALL FARMERS AND MANY OTHERS WHO SERVICE THE INDUSTRY AND WHO NOW FIND THEMSELVES ON THE BREADLINE OR ON "ONE-DAY AND TWO-DAY WEEKS" DESERVE TO BENEFIT FROM POLICIES THAT PUT THEM BACK IN FULL TIME AND REWARDING EMPLOYMENT.

As such, only a series of extraordinary measures will suffice to enable the sector to ade-

quately perform the usual lead-role in relation to its contribution to output, employment and foreign exchange generation. In order for Tourism to lead us out of this morass, there must a clear commitment that this sector must have first claim on government financial resources as the principle driver of the Barbados economy. This vital sector must never be starved of funds nor can there ever be a deficit relating to the implementation of policy regarding this sector's success.

Accordingly, a BLP administration commits itself to reversing the punitive measures imposed on the sector over the last five years and will undertake the following activities in a number of key tourism areas as part of the strategy for the development of the sector.

Financing, Investment & Incentives

We will:

- *Provide the sector with the first claim on Government's revenues, and fully fund the marketing programme of the BTA.*
- *Review and adjust the tariff and tax structures, including the Value Added Tax regime, as well as the legislative regime governing the sector to make them more conducive to attracting and facilitating private sector investment for the development of the sector.*
- *Immediately decrease the amount of VAT paid on accommodation from the present 8.75 per cent to the original 7.5 per cent thereby removing the cloud of uncertainty that looms over the accommodation sub-sector in relation to the increase in VAT levied on them "until further notice.*
- *Alleviate the recent stiff increases in utility and energy costs imposed on the accommodation sector by the DLP administration*

- and reduce the amounts paid by the sub-sector for utilities.*
- Reduce the bound rates on commodities used by the hospitality industry and entirely phase out the very high bound rates where there is no local production being protected.*
 - Support the Staycation programme by granting a Staycation Tax Rebate, as a temporary measure, until the sector regains its external vibrancy. This will encourage foreign exchange retention by the economy at large and improve the financial position of the industry.*
 - Float a special Tourism Development Bond to be managed within the National Reconstruction Fund, by tapping into non-traditional funding from regional and international bodies, to assist with the development of Barbados' guest room capacity, including the small hotel sub-sector.*
 - Work with existing national financial institutions to create more merchant banking and venture capital solutions to amplify funding opportunities for all segments of the sector.*
 - Partner with the private sector to develop new investment projects and further improve facilities and the general ambiance of key tourism areas, including the City, The Needhams Point area, St. Lawrence Gap, Oistins, Speightstown and non-traditional areas, including Bathsheba and the North and North Eastern areas of Barbados generally.*
 - Encourage, promote and facilitate tourism development that is fully accessible to physically challenged users.*
 - Create and fully develop alternative tourism niches and products including Health*

and Wellness, Retirement and Education tourism and diversify other existing market segments.

- Revise the schedule to the Tourism Development Act to encourage greater investment and reinvestment in accommodation and attractions.*

Marketing & Product Development

We will:

- Restructure the Barbados Tourism Authority in such a way as to facilitate and benefit from the full involvement of the private sector in all aspects of the promotion and marketing of Barbados' tourism industry.*
- Give product development the same importance and attention as marketing.*
- Ensure that Barbados is once again promoted and marketed as a high quality destination;*
- Develop a joint venture public-private partnership for the development of a digital online strategy. This will enable the tourism industry to identify, communicate, and close online sales with potential visitors and achieve wider distribution of Barbados' tourism product.*

Community Tourism

We will:

- Encourage the registration of approved community tourism business ventures with a view to providing assistance in areas of training, technical assistance and incentives.*

Cruise Tourism

We will:

- Initiate discussions with our regional partners with a view to having the region take a*

stake in the ownership of the cruise sector and thereby maximize the benefits of the sub-sector to the region.

- Maintain and strengthen Barbados' position as a leading homeport and port of call in the Caribbean by developing links between Barbados and other emerging markets.
- Redevelop the Princess Alice Highway and surrounding areas to create additional opportunities for employment, to increase revenue and expand the range of amenities available to visitors.

Aviation

We will:

- Initiate discussions on the review of the CARICOM Multilateral Air Services Agreement to encourage the growth of air services in the region and a more competitive airline industry.
- Implement an air services development strategy and a blueprint for the opening and development of new routes from existing and emerging markets, including the implementation of marketing and promotional support to secure viable air services opportunities.
- Develop a new modern air cargo facility and implement a 24-hour customs cargo operation to improve the airport clearance of merchandise and operational efficiencies.
- Develop a new cruise centre at GAIA to facilitate the growth of the fly/cruise programme and to alleviate congestion in the main terminal.
- Conduct continuous monitoring of service quality at GAIA to improve delivery of ser-

vices to passengers.

- Implement the necessary consumer protection regulations to ensure that the travelling public is protected against unfair commercial behaviour by airlines.
- Further diversify existing source markets and market segments for visitors while engaging in prudent joint marketing with airlines and other travel partners to boost arrivals to the island.
- When possible, review existing agreements with carriers, particularly in relation to revenue guarantee agreements, and institute new transport arrangements with airlines with regard to air services agreements. The current policy has been a burden and embarrassment to Barbados. Our nation deserves better.

The International Business Sector - Realising the Potential

Our most underutilised potential to create strong growth is our International Business and Financial Services Industry.

THE INERTIA, INEPTITUDE, INDECISION AND INCOMPETENT MANAGEMENT OF THE SECTOR UNDER THE DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY HAS RESULTED IN THE LOSS OF \$1 BILLION DOLLARS IN INVESTMENT INCOME AND 2,700 POTENTIAL JOBS FOR BARBADIANS.

The sector itself has been assaulted by a variety of external challenges which required nimble, assertive, and meaningful responses from the Barbados Government but which have not been forthcoming.

Among the challenges we have faced, were changes by the Revenue Authorities in Canada to their tax structures, so as to extend the

same status and benefits to Countries with whom no double taxation agreement existed as were previously extended to Barbados exclusively.

Additionally, the amendment of the China Barbados Double Taxation Agreement compromised many of the benefits we previously enjoyed while doing business with that jurisdiction.

Finally, the OECDs negative listing of Barbados tarnished our reputation as a jurisdiction with whom it was possible to conduct transparent business.

Any sector as important as international business must clearly be rescued and a plan must be implemented to take advantage of the revenue and employment potential it offers. The time is now upon us to transform the fortunes of the international business sector and to mount a mission to rescue it from the downward spiral into which it has slipped. To achieve this mission, a new BLP administration will aggressively implement policies concentrated in the following areas:

- 1. Diversification of our product mix and our promotion and marketing.**
- 2. Reducing the cost and increasing the ease of doing business in Barbados.**
- 3. Strengthening of our Treaty network and Treaty negotiating capacity in the areas of Double Taxation Agreements and Bilateral Investment Treaties.**
- 4. Develop a Programme to make indigenous service providers to become an increasingly large component of international business in Barbados.**

DIVERSIFYING OUR **PRODUCT MIX**

We believe that diversifying our product mix is an indispensable component of any effort to realise the fullest potential of the International Business Sector. This enhances country's offerings to potential investors.

To this end, we propose that a fresh suite of products and services be created in previously under exploited and under developed areas of commercial opportunity. In this regard emphasis will be placed on bio-sciences, medical transcription, corporate headquartering, communications technology, the creative industry and trade in international securities.

The new generation of Trade and Economic Agreements which arose when we negotiated a trade and economic partnership with Europe potentially allows us to both increase and diversify our trade in services with that continent. That we have not enjoyed the benefits of such expanded and diversified trade with Europe and our other major trading partners is testimony to the extent to which the DLP government has failed us.

The rescue of the International Business sector will therefore require the strategic leveraging of the new advantages presented to us in the network of trade and economic partnership agreements to which Barbados is party.

We will:

- Aggressively exploit the programme of development cooperation built into the Economic Partnership Agreement with Europe.*
- Establish Barbados as a centre of Excel-*



lence/Premier location for the conduct of International Business, Financial Services and Wealth Management.

- *Devise a creative range of investment products and services geared towards increasing the trading activity and improving the financial liquidity of our resident enterprises.*
- *Prioritise the creation of an International Securities Market, in Barbados.*
- *Establish the research capacity to identify opportunities, continuously monitor global trends and disseminate timely cost benefit analysis on products to stakeholders.*

COST AND EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

The Barbados Labour Party believes that efficiency, accessibility, affordability, and transparency of services must lie at the core of Barbados' reputation as an international business sector.

In 2007, the Barbados Labour Party amended the International Business Act CAP 77 to protect the public interest where we facilitate the expedited approval of licenses to international business companies. This was achieved by empowering the Minister to revoke any license where the applicant failed to provide full and frank disclosure to regulatory authorities. Regrettably, the ineptitude and sloth of the current DLP administration has resulted in the underutilisation of this enabling envi-

ronment which was intended to expedite the procedures for application and approval. This state of affairs is a hindrance to the conduct of business in Barbados and must be arrested and urgently reversed.

We will:

- *Provide a facilitating environment in all regulatory agencies dealing with domestic and information technology business.*
- *Establish a business facilitation unit within the office of Prime Minister.*
- *Establish a fully interactive information technology platform for the Corporate Registry.*
- *Streamline the incorporation process electronically with the office of Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property to complete the incorporation of a company within twenty-four hours.*
- *Streamline the issuance of the international business license from the Financial Services Commission within a period of three days.*
- *Remove the requirement to issue an annual physical renewal to an International Business Company (IBC) or Society with Restricted Liability (SRL).*
- *Ensure the fullest use of IC Technology platforms by government departments/regulatory agencies so as to better facilitate business by electronic filings of applications and electronic receipt of approvals.*
- *Identify and remove bottlenecks and obstacles in order to accelerate timelines for action by regulatory authorities.*
- *Undertake further investment to enhance the capacity and efficiency of the Corporate Registry and Immigration Department.*

STRENGTHENING OUR TREATY NETWORK

Prior to being ravaged by the misdirection of the Democratic Labour Party, the Barbados International Business Sector contributed over 62% of the revenues collected from this Island's corporation tax and employed approximately 3,000 people. That success was built largely on the conclusion of Tax Treaties with a number of countries.

It is necessary to build upon those achievements by forming new strategic alliances in key target markets and expanding the Barbados plaques and investment negotiating team.

We will:

- Establish a standing committee of legal advisors to review the entire suite of legislation that governs the operations of the International Business sector specifically, and the body of commercial law generally, in order to ensure that we are nimble enough to maintain the provision of exciting products which meet the needs of the International Market Place while also ensuring that our legislation remains compatible with globally accepted regulatory standards.



- Substantially increase and broaden Barbados' Treaty network on Trade and Economic Development Agreements, International Tax and Bilateral Investment Treaties.

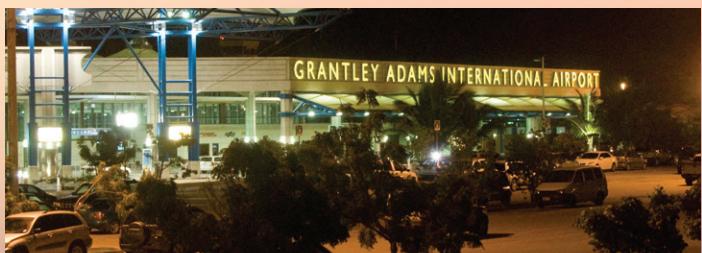
- Establish Barbados as a domicile of choice for the widest possible cross-section of countries across the globe. In so doing, we shall create a dedicated presence in the capitals of high growth countries with whom we have not traditionally sought to build partnerships. Additionally, a special focus will be placed on targeting the Middle East and Africa as a potential market for Barbados in the medium term through the initial strengthening of our diplomatic relations.

- Reposition Barbados as a business gateway of choice to the Latin America & Chinese markets.

- Foster a culture of close collaboration and mutual understanding on key issues affecting the sector by inviting stakeholders to sit on inter-departmental committees. Such levels of participation and cooperation will become increasingly important as Barbados prepares to undergo phase II of the **OECD GLOBAL FORUM ASSESSMENT**.

- Strengthen institutions such as Invest Barbados in order to better equip them to market Barbados and its DTA and BIT Treaty network.

- Leverage Barbados' reputation as a jurisdiction based on the rule of law with a view to having our strong traditions and legal reputation be the foundation for establishing Barbados as a reputable Centre for International Commercial Arbitration given the International Arbitration Act that the BLP passed in 2007.



INDIGENOUS SERVICES DEVELOPMENT



Diversifying Developing and Fostering the International Competitiveness of Barbados' Services Sector

The BLP is satisfied that any mission to rescue the International Business Sector and bring about a transformation of its fortunes must involve solutions that centre around what Barbados has to offer to the world and what needs to be done during this recessionary period to make strategic changes which can effect positive growth in the sector.

The answer to these challenges lies in our ability to maximise the production and export of higher quality, better priced and more competitive modern services.

We will:

- *Support the UWI and Barbados Community College in establishing and providing programmes which support the International Financial Services and Export Sectors.*
- *Support and fully fund the Redevelopment*

Programme of the Barbados Coalition of Service Industries.

- ***ENSURE THAT REGISTERED SERVICE PROVIDERS SELLING SERVICES ABROAD ARE TAXED AT THE RATE OF 1½% IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE EXISTING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SECTOR.***

Agricultural Development - A New Remit

Recovery from the devastation which the Democratic Labour Party has inflicted on Barbados requires an immediate economic programme to ensure steps be taken to rescue Agriculture and to ensure that all sectors of the economy are "firing on all cylinders".

The most recent report of the Central Bank clearly shows that the decline of the agricultural sector continues and that in 2012 its output had declined by 2%.

There must be a new remit for Agriculture and measures must be put in place to reverse that downward spiral and to increase its contribution to the growth and development of the country.

On the domestic side, the country is faced with an increasing food import bill. It is now in excess of \$600M and will continue to rise unless a serious effort is made to bring an end to that unacceptable situation.

Since 2006, the farming community in collaboration with the Barbados Labour Administration, developed a food security plan which, when fully implemented, will see Barbados self-sufficient in most commodities and producing much more in the few cases where it cannot be self-sufficient.

The attainment of food security and food safety will therefore be the principle objective for Barbados of a new Barbados Labour Party government.

There is also still the opportunity for Barbados to expand its exports by addressing standards and supply capacity issues.

The Barbados Labour Party commits itself to the following: FOOD SECURITY

- *All evidence shows that the single greatest threat to a successful agricultural sector is "PRAEDIAL LARCENY".*
- *We will update our legislation on Praedial larceny to ensure that it satisfies the requirements of our agricultural sector, including providing for stiffer penalties.*
- *Assured access to land must be a key component of an agricultural resuscitation policy*
- *The Physical Development Plan will continue to be the guide for the use of agricultural land and the Private Sector will be expected to assist Government in making sure that such land is not alienated from agriculture.*
- *Since economic activity thrives best in an atmosphere where there is legislative certainty, a new Agricultural Development Act will be put in place, as has been done for tourism and manufacturing. Within the context of this Act, we will expand the greater use of incentives to spur the utilisation of technology in this sector.*
- *The NEW AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ACT will make provision for the appoint-*



ment of a Revitalisation Agricultural Commission, to develop and oversee the implementation of a rescue plan for agriculture.

- *We will seek to provide a guaranteed market for local produce by ensuring that Government agencies purchase at least 60% of local produce.*
- *The Agricultural Development Fund (ADF) will be recapitalised in order to assist farmers who need finance for various ventures.*
- *We will provide financing opportunities for the smaller farmers who do not have access to the ADF.*
- *The Scotland District Authority will be allowed to function in order to ensure that the area is made for persons to live and for agricultural and other economic activity to take place*
- *We will implement the proposal to establish a Milk Board in light of the present impasse.*
- **THE PROGRAMME 'LAND FOR THE LANDLESS' WHICH THE BLP STARTED DURING ITS LAST TERM WILL BE EXPANDED IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN FARMING BUT HAVE NO ACCESS TO LAND.**

AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

- *The Barbados Labour Party will complete the work which it started on the establishment of the Agricultural Health and Food Safety Authority.*
- *We had negotiated a project with the IADB to upgrade all government laboratories.*

Unfortunately that project was allowed by the current DLP administration to lapse. We give our commitment to restarting and completing that work which will provide the capacity to determine the quality of both imports and exports.

Youth in Agriculture

- Initiatives which started under the previous BLP administration to train the youth in the utilisation of modern agricultural technologies will be re-started.*
- Appropriate technical and marketing intelligence will be provided to all farmers but particularly the smaller farmers.*

Resuscitation of the Sugar Industry

The sugar industry continues to decline every year and has now reached the stage where this year's crop is expected to be the lowest in our history. We are prepared to rescue it because of its importance in several ways.

However, some changes have to be made:

- 1. We no longer have enough canes to support the continuation of two factories. We will rationalise the structure of the industry by having one factory.*
- 2. We will increase the yield per acre by planting new varieties of canes.*
- 3. We must go back to the project which was designed to produce branded sugar only for domestic uses and exports, the generation of electricity, ethanol, high grade molasses for the rum industry and syrup for use in the local drinks and food industry.*

Support for the Rum Industry

A new Barbados Labour Party Government will

provide leadership to the efforts to protect the regional rum industry from the unfair competition which is resulting from the granting of subsidies by the USA to certain of our competitors.

Fisheries

The work which started under the previous BLP administration on the upgrade of our fish markets and landing sites will be resumed in order to bring them to the stage where they can meet international standards to enable us to export to the EU and other jurisdictions.

Fairchild Street Market

We will continue with our original plans to build a new market at Fairchild Street and to upgrade the other markets.

Development of The Scotland District

The Barbados Labour Party was committed to spending \$35,000,000.00 on stabilizing the Scotland District and established by statute, a new Scotland District Authority in 2007. This plan has been abandoned by this DLP administration.

There are a number of irresistible arguments for the stabilization of the Scotland District. Firstly, it constitutes 1/7th of Barbados' land mass. It is an area that is ripe for sensible and innovative agriculture given its high annual rainfall. It is also a vital pillar in Barbados' tourism product. Stabilization of the Scotland District will therefore allow us to maximize our use of our scarce land resources.

Secondly, such stabilization will permit exist-



ing residents and land owners to continue to reside in the Scotland District, thereby reducing the pressure for even more housing in the other areas of Barbados that are already very heavily populated.

Thirdly, not to stabilize the Scotland District will see residents of this area moving to other parts of Barbados. Any such abandonment of the District would result in the death of these rural communities, with the resulting demise of churches, shops, and even our rural schools.

Fourthly, if the Scotland District is not stabilized the property values in the area will plummet while the cost of property insurance will rise. This will be a dis-incentive to individuals who would otherwise wish to build and live in the area as they will not realize the full value of their real estate investment.

Our rural network of roads and bridges is also under serious threat as the result of slippage. If this is not quickly addressed, access to this most picturesque part of Barbados by Barbadians and visitors will become problematic. We can ill afford to lose out on the opportunities of enjoying our greatest natural resource, our scenic vistas and wonderful rural living!

We will:

- *Bring into force the Scotland District Authority Act of 2007.*
- *Invest \$35 million over five years in stabilizing the Scotland District.*

lizing the Scotland District.

- *Provide incentives and support to persons engaging in sustainable agriculture in the Scotland District.*
- *Provide technical assistance and establishing a soft loan facility to house owners in the Scotland District for the purpose of mitigating the effect of slippage by installation of proper drainage, stabilization or retention works.*
- *Give the Scotland District Authority the remit and the resources to fully rehabilitate the road and bridge network in the Scotland District.*

Manufacturing Sector

Manufacturing in Barbados has faced significant challenges in the era of trade liberalisation. As a result, the BLP laid in Parliament a strategic plan in 2007 for "The Industrial Policy for Barbados' Manufacturing and Related Services Sector."

This DLP Government has failed to take any action to implement this Plan even though the initiatives remain relevant and critical to the restructuring of Barbados' industrial sector. The performance of both the manufacturing and the informatics sector has been absolutely dismal over the last 5 years.

The BLP believes that it is critical to further expand these exports given the favourable access provided to us under the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. Fifty-two percent of Barbados' exports are to the CARICOM region.

To resuscitate our manufacturing sector

We Will:

- *Implement the policies contained in The Industrial Policy for Barbados' Manufacturing and Related Services Sector.*

- Establish Export Barbados to provide a dedicated focus to the export of Barbados products to CARICOM and the rest of the world.
- Implement loan guarantee and financing arrangements with provision for delayed repayments to help new and qualifying projects get off the ground.
- Aggressively work to eliminate the illegal subsidies provided to US rum producers by the US Government.
- Reposition the Barbados rum industry to be our premier export sector by doubling its production.
- Work with the Fair Trading Commission to facilitate the introduction of reduced energy rates for off-peak usage by manufacturing and informatics businesses.
- Actively pursue and facilitate expressions of interest made by the International Community to establish Barbados as a centre for research and development in Bio-Sciences. Such an initiative would see Barbados partnering with start up companies in the field of bio-sciences and facilitating their access to laboratories, office space, administrative and corporate support services.
- Fund energy audits and retrofitting within the manufacturing and informatics sector to facilitate the most optimal and affordable mix of traditional and alternative energy. Expand training by providing custom design training modules to support enterprises both within the manufacturing and the informatics sector to ensure that our workforce meets the highest standards.
- The creation of an enabling environment for high value added manufacturing in areas such as pharmaceuticals and petroleum.
- Expand the Special Technical Assistance Programme to assist enterprises with export potential to restructure to comply with the highest relevant international standards.
- Designate the furniture, food and fashion industries as sectors appropriate for the development of clusters of small businesses cooperating in respect of production and marketing. Resuscitate and expand the informatics and medical transcription sectors to provide jobs and opportunities for Barbadians.
- Aggressively work with the Fair Trading Commission to enhance the service quality of licensed broad band and ICT providers and to reduce the cost of the same.



CULTURE & THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

Developing our Creative Industries

Young countries such as Barbados will only reach their full potential when they release the full energies and creative potential of their people. Culture is the platform upon which we can unleash this potential.

We must now build further on this foundation such that the Creative Economy will be fully recognised by all as one of the key productive sectors to provide jobs, business opportunities and wealth to Barbadians, especially our young people.

We will:

- Pass a Cultural and Creative Industries Bill Tax artists and musicians at the same

rate as International Business Companies (IBCs) for any foreign exchange earned outside of Barbados.

- Enhance existing facilities and provide new training facilities for the cultural and creative sector based on partnerships between the Government and reputable international schools in the Creative Industries.
- Establish a separate Government institution that will focus on the development of the creative industries as a critical part of the Barbados export economy.
- Establish the long awaited Film Commission and the appropriate legislative, infrastructural, training and fiscal incentives framework to both boost the local film industry and to position Barbados as a location of choice for international film shoots.
- Remove the bureaucratic constraints and the resulting high costs that stifle cultural and creative enterprises.
- Replenish the Innovation Fund to develop the products in the new media such as animation, gaming, software development and publishing.

- **WORK WITH THE TENANTS OF TEMPLE YARD AND CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS TO ENHANCE THEIR FACILITIES TO HAVE THEM PROVIDE A VIBRANT ARTS AND CULTURAL FACILITY FOR BARBADIANS AND TOURISTS.**

- Promote the purchase of more local artwork by Barbadian businesses and households and by Government.

Green Economy Policy in the Caribbean and one of the first in the World. A new BLP government will take all necessary steps to ensure the Green Economy policy is operationalised. Our national policies will be harmonised so as to anchor them on principles of sustainability and the full development of an integrated, green, low carbon economy to protect our natural resources increase our investment in human and social capital, ensure low carbon development and sustained social and economic growth.

We will:

- Implement special measures to equip those sectors which have been identified by United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) as critical to the transition – including Agriculture, Construction and Building, Energy, Fisheries, Forests, Manufacturing Tourism, Transport, Water and Waste Management – and support them through the global transition to the global green economy.
- Property owners will be given incentives to construct or retrofit green or GEED certified properties using low carbon equipment and technologies.
- Incentives will be given to property owners to produce energy from renewable resources for their own use or for sale to the BL&P for feed into the national grid and the appropriate initiatives, legislation and feed-in tariffs will be developed to facilitate these.
- The BNOC under the Barbados Labour Party imported and tested natural gas vehicles with excellent results. Companies with large vehicle fleets and public transport vehicles will be encouraged to convert to natural gas which is cheaper and cleaner than petroleum and diesel. We

The Environment and the Green Economy

The BLP in 2007 developed the first National

will conduct a pilot project to test alternatively fuelled vehicles on various routes to determine what fuels the Transport Board can use to function cost effectively and give high performance.

- Green standards will be developed and an incentive system used to encourage all new buildings to meet the green standards.*
- We will accelerate the programme to ensure that all street lighting will eventually be powered by solar or some other alternative source and that government will convert all incandescent lighting in its buildings to fluorescent. Water and energy saving devices and equipment will be used and phased in incrementally.*
- The hotel and restaurant sector will be given incentives to comprehensively green retrofit using solar water heaters, energy saving devices and equipment, recycling water for irrigation and secondary use and taking measures to reduce waste and green their facilities (including sensors to activate lighting and taps and other equipment).*
- The government will increasingly ensure that environmentally sustainable investments are taken into account as part of its procurement policies and practices.*
- Government will encourage recycling and promote waste reduction and the re-use and recycling of goods and materials wherever possible.*
- The BWA is the largest single customer of the BL&P. All of its extraction and production is done using electrical energy or fossil fuels. The BWA will incrementally be taken to a renewable energy platform for all its operations but the back up and redundant systems will be from hydrocarbons.*

The Coastal Environment

The Barbados Labour Party implemented strong environmental policies between 1994 and 2008. The greening of the highways, the construction of many new community parks and beach facilities, the construction of the popular South and West Coasts Boardwalks and the passage of legislation to protect the marine environment put us on a path to sustainable development while protecting plant and animal life. We are committed to protecting and preserving our natural and built environment.

We will:

- IDENTIFY, DEVELOP AND RETAIN A NUMBER OF NEW, WELL LANDSCAPED BEACH ACCESSES AND WINDOWS TO THE SEA SO AS TO PRESERVE ADEQUATE COASTAL RECREATION FOR USE BY NATIONALS. WHERE FEASIBLE, NEW BEACH FACILITIES WILL BE CONSTRUCTED.**
- UNDERTAKE COASTAL STABILISATION, REHABILITATION AND ENHANCEMENT AT A NUMBER OF SITES WHERE THE COASTLINE IS UNDER THREAT.**
- Establish a Marine Water Quality standard to ensure our beach water remains of high standard.*
- Establish a Marine Management Authority to balance the wider interest of all beach users so as to reduce conflict and promote beach protection.*
- Conduct coastal sensitivity mapping aimed at identifying risk hazards and vulnerable areas.*
- Develop a National Ocean Policy for the management of Barbados' marine territory, hydrocarbon and mineral resources.*
- Develop a Coral Reef Action Plan to evaluate, protect and, where necessary, transplant corals which are vital habitats for*

marine species and which are central to the protection of the coastline from intense wave action.

HARRISON'S CAVE

Harrison's Cave is Barbados' premier tourist attraction. The BLP had started work on its rehabilitation and redevelopment.

We will:

- Develop a sustainable agricultural project for the protection zone around the Cave and develop the area as a special heritage site. This will allow residents to earn revenue while protecting the Cave's Ecosystem.*

ENERGY PRODUCTION - **OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH**

The Barbados Labour Party has already addressed energy related issues in the context of cost of living in the manifesto. But there are two other important areas:



- 1. Energy is a critical input that affects the competitiveness of the productive sectors, and**
- 2. Energy is a sector of economic activity and Barbados can expand its capacity for growth and development by increasing production of both oil and gas and renewable energy.**

The recent energy policy of the DLP has undermined the productive sectors, especially tourism.

In the area of offshore exploration, a previous BLP administration had secured an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) with Trinidad and Tobago.

Prior to 2008, an exploratory well was drilled under a programme with an oil company. Under the DLP government, there has been a significant decline in the production of oil and gas despite the high international oil prices, which ought to have served as an incentive for increasing local production.

However, Barbados now faces an import bill for fuels of over \$800 million per year.

Energy as a sector comprises:

- 1. The production of oil and gas onshore and offshore.*
- 2. The distribution of both products onshore and*
- 3. Renewable energy products.*

There is tremendous potential for growth in these three areas, especially in renewable products. This growth has the potential to save foreign exchange, create hundreds of jobs and reduce the cost of living.

The strategic objective in the energy sector is to increase the mix of alternative renewable energy to 30% of total usage. While solar is not the only source of alternative energy, Barbados is a world leader in the use of solar water heating systems as a result of the policies of previous Barbados Labour Party administrations.

A similar effort is now required to develop other forms of alternative energy.

We will:

- *Significantly boost local production of oil and gas by drilling new wells, bringing on stream those already drilled and revisiting exhausted wells with new technology.*
- *Invite reputable foreign and local firms to assist in exploiting the hydro carbon reserves within the EEZ.*
- *Establish a Heritage and Stabilisation Fund using some of the windfall from the offshore sector.*
- *Ensure that any drilling takes place in an environmentally sensitive manner.*
- *Expand the use of natural gas in the Barbados energy sector.*
- **EXPAND THE NATURAL GAS NETWORK, ESPECIALLY TO HEAVILY POPULATED AREAS AND TO INDUSTRY.**

Notwithstanding our efforts in the area of oil and gas production and distribution, the future of the energy sector lies in addressing galloping energy costs, ensuring energy security and protecting the environment.

This requires a strategy of developing renewable energy sources, encouraging energy efficiency and energy conservation. The major sources include solar photovoltaic, solar water heating and wind.

The IADB recognised that "to date, the most successful story of RE [renewable energy] in Barbados has been that of solar water heating" it is therefore fitting that the incentive model used to develop the sector be used to

encourage other forms of renewable energy.

We will:

- Remove any obstacles in accessing the IADB Smart Fund.
- Remove all import duties on raw materials for the manufacturing of renewable energy products/systems.
- Give income tax deductions for specified renewable energy products/systems under the home allowance.

Energy Conservation

There is an urgent need for all Barbadians to use energy products wisely.

We will:

1. *Develop a National Energy Conservation Programme for both domestic and commercial users.*
2. *Ensure that over the next five years, all public buildings will be retrofitted in order to use energy more efficiently.*
3. *Continue to offer incentives to promote the further use of energy efficient appliances.*
4. *Reinforce and expand the sustainable energy programme.*
5. *Facilitate entities in the agricultural, manufacturing and tourism sectors to use a mix of renewable energy products.*



BUILDING A 21st CENTURY **ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE**



A robust and well developed infrastructure has always been a critical component in building Barbados. It must be further strengthened to better serve the economy in the 21st century.

We will:

- *Commence a new phase in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc.'s Tourism Product Enhancement Programme that has previously seen the transformation of St. Lawrence Gap, the building of boardwalks, and infrastructure enhancement in Speightown and Bridgetown.*



- *Create a Tourism Industry that can drive the economy allowing Barbados to be developed and promoted as a premium destination in every respect.*
- *Revive and accelerate the programme started by a previous BLP administration to invest heavily in new attractions and amenities in the country that can make Barbados a 5 Star Destination.*
- *A strong ICT and Tourism platform constitutes the most important infrastructure needed for building a 21st century economy. Where the infrastructure of the past included roads and ports and highways, the economic infrastructure of Barbados' future will be largely based on information technology. Indeed, sustained investment in a world-class ICT platform must become the foundation of any future Barbadian economic model.*

We will:

- *Modernise national telecommunication policy to facilitate the implementation of a National WiFi/Broadband Programme throughout the length and breadth of Barbados and provide universal access for all our citizens.*
- *Encourage the creation of a Centre of Excellence to promote the research and development of Information and Communications Technologies and the full integration of these technologies into all aspects of the national economy.*
- *Fill the significant gap in our economic infrastructure by supporting the cost effective building of a marina at Bridgetown so as to position Barbados, the first stop across the Atlantic, as a premier yachting destination.*
- *Develop a capital programme associated with the sensitive, environmentally*

friendly rehabilitation of the Scotland District allowing it to become part of the building of a new economic infrastructure for Barbados.

- **THE SCOTLAND DISTRICT REPRESENTS 1/7TH OF THE AREA OF BARBADOS AND IS WELL SUITED FOR NOVEL FORMS OF NON-TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE AND OTHER INNOVATIVE ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES. WE WILL ENSURE THAT THIS IS CAREFULLY POLISHED.**
- *Actively pursue the building-out of 2 new areas of physical development – South-eastern Barbados and the North. To this end we enact the requisite legislation to designate the Southeastern and Northern portions of Barbados as corridors of special development so as to transform those areas and expand the range of inputs flowing into the national economy.*
- *Put policies in place to facilitate the establishment of a township in St. Lucy, recognizing that the creation of affordable housing communities will necessarily be a key component in any strategy to develop the North.*
- *Bring about a further decentralization of economic activity to address issues of housing, gridlock, congestion and stagnant economic performance, through the creation of multiple nodes of economic activity across Barbados. To ensure an equitable distribution of economic benefits and a balanced approach to national economic development.*

AN ECONOMY FOR THE YOUTH



The Barbados Labour Party believes that government cannot just design an economy and hope that young people will fit into it. Rather we must deliberately design our economic policies and structures with our young people in mind, and allow more of our growth and the earning of foreign exchange to come from occupations that young people want to pursue and from which they can begin the process of accumulating wealth.

THIS GOVERNMENT HAS FAILED TO HARNESSE THE CREATIVE OUTPUTS OF YOUNG BARBADIANS MEN AND WOMEN AND HAS MISSED THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONVERT THOSE OUTPUTS INTO TANGIBLE EXPORTS, EMPLOYMENT GENERATION, SECTORAL DEVELOPMENT AND NOVEL AVENUES OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE GENERATION.

We believe that our national economy is strengthened when the potential of our youth to develop new and innovative ideas is harnessed. Indeed, a fundamental aspect of any future transformation of the Barbados economy must entail the deliberate design of an economic system that can specifically accommodate the aspirations of our youth and help them to tap into the vast market areas where



their services are in great demand and fetch extraordinary high prices.

These dynamic market areas include the international sports market, digital and social media, the field of entertainment and cultural activities and the vast array of service activities that draw upon the creative imagination of young people.

We will:

- Commit \$20 million to further capitalise the innovation fund and enable young people, through access to concessionary financing, to become entrepreneurs involved in areas of economic activity within the creative economy.*
- Create a supportive framework to equip more young Barbadians to tap into the international sports market as professionals, especially in the area of football.*

Thanks to the previous BLP administration, sporting organizations now draw over \$13 million per year from the lotteries.

- Make provision for those organizations Arrangements to have access to at least \$25 million per year, in the first instance, so that they can give more professional contracts to national sportsmen, and support development programmes to take our young people to the stage where they can secure rewarding professional contracts in the global sports market.*
- Encourage the development of professional sports in Barbados by converting three existing Sporting facilities into mini stadia in the North, Centre and South of*

Barbados, while working in partnership with the Barbados Olympic Association to rebuild a modern National Stadium. We will also work to reduce the costs and bureaucratic constraints faced by sporting organizations and promoters in the hosting of sporting events.

- Work collaboratively with the National Sports Council to encourage a number of interested charitable entities to assist in the development of Barbadian sportsmen through the provision of funding and expertise.*
- Strengthen and fully support the Barbados Coalition of Service Industries and make it one of our leading national economic organizations. For our young service providers, selling their services in the new evolving global economy is in many ways made possible by the revolution in Information and Communications Technology and represents the best hope for a dramatic transformation of our national economy.*

- BARBADOS IS DEVELOPING A VERY DIVERSE CLASS OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS. THE FEES PAYABLE BY PROFESSIONALS, HOWEVER, ARE NOT DIFFERENTIATED ACCORDING TO EXPERIENCE WHICH MEANS THAT YOUNG PROFESSIONALS ARE REQUIRED TO PAY THE SAME FEES AS THEIR MORE EXPERIENCED COUNTERPARTS.**
- A BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY GOVERNMENT WILL ADDRESS THE BURDENS OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A GRADUATED FEE STRUCTURE TARGETED SPECIFICALLY AT YOUNG BARBadian MEN AND WOMEN NEWLY EMBARKING IN THEIR PROFESSIONAL FIELDS.**

- *Encourage growth in the sector will make provision for sportsmen, entertainers and other professionals registered with the Barbados Coalition of Service Providers whose services allow them to earn foreign exchange to pay tax on their income at the international business rate of 1.5%.*

A BRIGHTER TOMORROW FOR THE ELDERLY



VALUING OUR ELDERLY

Barbados has a large and growing elderly population. Our senior citizens have sacrificed much to build our nation and ensure a good quality of life for younger generations.

We will:

- *Enact a Seniors Protection Act the provisions of which will seek to prohibit the wilful exploitation of seniors 65 and over by heavily penalising those who physically, sexually or psychologically abuse seniors, or steal money or property from them.*
- *Apply the provisions of the Act to people under 65 who suffer with dementia or Alzheimer's or are physically or mentally challenged.*
- *Provide Enhanced Home Care Services through an expanded programme of Community Nurses, including a cadre as-*

signed to respond to the medical needs of the elderly. This approach will lessen the burden on Polyclinics and Geriatric Facilities, while promoting community health-care and living for our elderly.

- *Give incentives to recognised NGOs, Trade Unions, BARP, and private investors to establish nursing homes and other facilities for the day, short and long term care of seniors as well as those providing rehabilitation, or recreational services for the elderly*

Income Tax allowance for Pensioners

- *Increase the income tax allowance from the current \$40,000 to \$50,000. This will ensure that any Barbadian living on an NIS Pension will effectively be receiving that pension tax free.*

Retirement Villages

- *Provide medical and nursing care for seniors who may be ambulatory with no serious illnesses, but who may need the assurance of health care should it be necessary.*
- *Provide a regime of tax incentives and other concessions to facilitate the establishment and operation of assisted living facilities for older persons in Barbados including:*
 1. *Assisted Living and Nursing Home Care Facilities, with special provision for residents with dementia.*
 2. *An Adult Day Care Facility.*
 3. *Apartment type Independent Living Facilities.*
 4. *Rehabilitation Centre.*
 5. *Provision for professional health care services.*

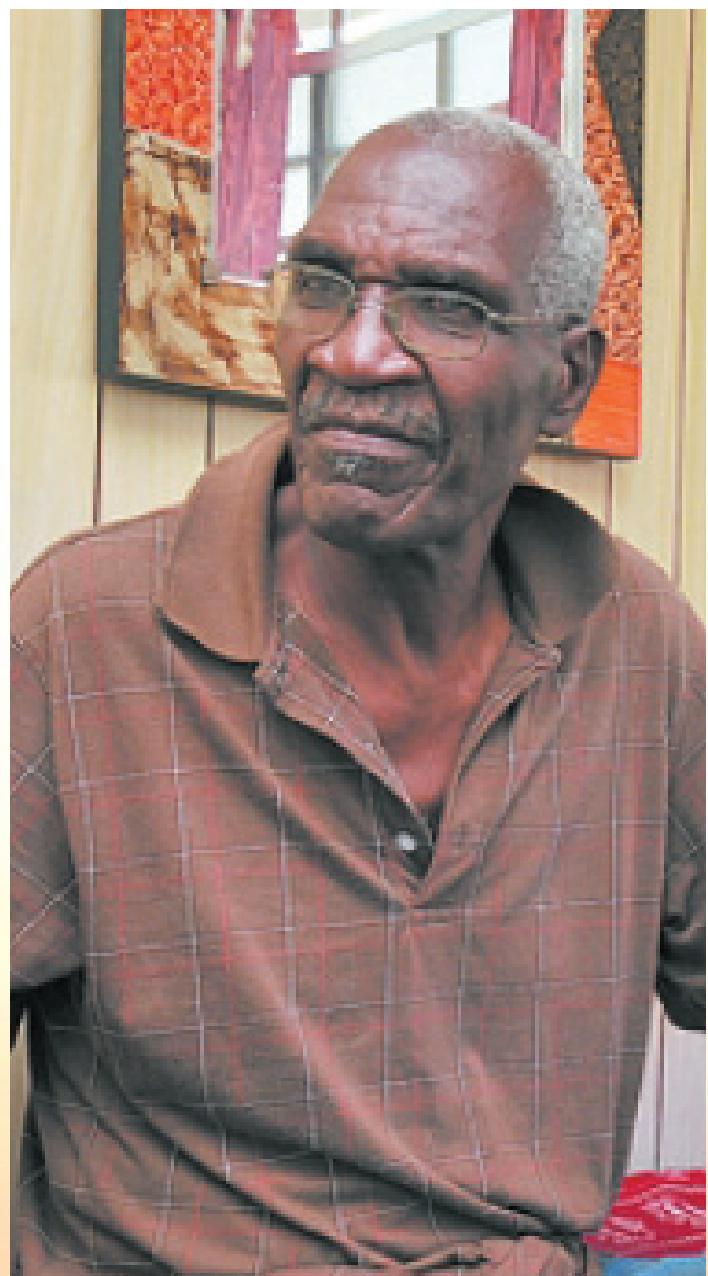


Reverse Mortgages

In Barbados there are now large numbers of elderly property owners who for various reasons can be categorised as "asset rich" but "cash poor." This is evidenced by the number of both occupied and unoccupied properties which have fallen into a state of serious disrepair.

We will:

- *Encourage commercial banks, mortgage companies, insurance houses and other lenders to respond to this situation by accepting the provision of reverse mortgages as an important product of housing.*
- *Seek to provide the transparent legislative and regulatory framework for reverse mortgages that offers protection to both the lender and borrower, and minimises any potential for or perception of discrimination.*



FIXING THE CLICO DEBACLE

Some 35,000 Barbadian policy holders of CLICO and BAICO, acting in good faith, bought policies worth approximately \$364.8 Million, which have now become a \$76.7 million dollar problem given that the two companies have assets with a current market value of \$288.1 million. The policy holders currently face the possibility of losing around 50% of their money, having been promised the full 100% restoration of money by two DLP Prime Ministers, a DLP Minister of Finance and the Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados. For too long, these unfortunate citizens have been left in anguish and frustration because of slow decision making.

The CLICO/BAICO matter MUST be resolved without further delay to secure the welfare of the affected individuals, families, households, corporate entities and the Barbados economy in general.

A NEW BLP GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE PLENTY OF ACTION TO PROVIDE A DEFINITIVE AND SATISFACTORY SOLUTION TO THE CLICO AND BAICO FIASCO, FIRST IN BARBADOS AND IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER IN THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN.

We will:

- Honour our commitment to return to ALL

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\$128M SUITS

By DAVID PARRY



individuals and Non-Profit entities that are CLICO and BAICO policy holders in Barbados, the FULL value of policies as at the date at which payments of interest to them ceased. Settlement will be made by a combination of cash, short term marketable investment instruments and tax relief where applicable.

- Honour our commitment to return to corporate entities that are CLICO and BAICO policyholders in Barbados the FULL value of policies as at the date on which payments of interest to them ceased. Settlement will be made by a combination of medium and long-term investment instruments and tax relief, where applicable.
- Meet with the OECS governments and their policy holders in CLICO in an effort to work towards an equitable settlement of all outstanding liabilities arising outside of Barbados.
- Commission a wider and far-reaching forensic audit to ensure full accountability and transparency, and to mitigate the exposure of the Barbadian tax payers, we will. Thereafter we will take ALL appropriate legal action to trace and recover all assets based on the outcome of that audit.

By taking early action to review and strengthen, as necessary, all regulations and laws pertaining to this sector to ensure that such a catastrophe can never again be visited upon our citizens and our economy.

NEW DEAL FOR SMALL BUSINESS CLASS

Between 1994 and 2007 the BLP led government presented a new deal and legacy for Barbados' small business development with the creation of the Small Business Development Act and subsequently reduced the corporate tax for small businesses from 40% to 15%.

The BLP government was also instrumental in expanding the role and operation of the small business secretariat through the decentralisation of their operations to allow small businesses to access administrative support and technical services in St. Peter in the North and St. Philip in the South.

Understanding the financial constraints that many small entrepreneurs faced, a caring BLP government introduced new opportunities for financing including Fund Access for micro financing and the Enterprise Growth Fund Limited (EGFL) for financing small and medium size businesses.

In a new BLP administration a further set of measures will be implemented to take Small Business to a higher level.

We will:

- *Revamp the Small Business Development Act to provide for further incentives to micro businesses.*



- *Transfer the administration of the factoring programme from the Ministry responsible for Small Business directly to Fund Access, the Enterprise Growth Fund and qualifying credit unions.*
- *Provide facilities to the Small Business Association to create an incubator park for technology, software development, innovation and creativity.*
- *Launch the Barbados ITC Cluster Initiative; a program aimed at fostering small business integration in ITC sector where SMBS can increase export opportunities by leveraging the strengths of their respective companies.*
- *Encourage the jumpstart of new businesses by making the first 3 years of registered small businesses exempt from taxation.*
- *Provide tax incentives for the development of an 'Angel Investment Network' that supplements the existing government funded institutions by driving private sector involvement and mentorship.*
- *Provide the legislative framework and platform for 'Crowd Funding' as a citizen-empowering micro business program to drive alternative funding for micro-business.*



JOB #1 IS STILL JOBS

The record of the Barbados Labour Party administration between 1994-2008 in reducing unemployment from 24% to 6.7% is the single most impressive achievement by any government in the history of Barbados. We said job #1 was going to be jobs. We were tested, tried and proven. Our commitment to making economic progress ultimately take the form of jobs remains undiminished.

Our approach to job creation is based on the principle that new jobs come from two sources:

1. *The expansion of existing enterprises and;*
2. *The creation of new ones.*

The policies and programmes for the development and diversification of our productive sectors to bring to bear a new means of stimulating enterprise as outlined in this manifesto are all intended to create such an environment. We especially believe that employment and job creation at this juncture must be based more than in the past on the deployment of new information and communication technology and business and investment facilitation

programmes.

It has been shown around the world that most new jobs come from small and micro enterprises. The cutting edge that we propose to add to our new job creation programme is centred on financial innovation aimed at bringing those who have ideas, but who have not historically had access to the financial sector, into the mainstream of entrepreneurship.

We intend to make financial innovation programmes reach those in the informal sectors and our youth, where the marginalisation has been greatest.

Job #1 will *still* be Jobs.

NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR **ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP**

A New Development Council

The present set of economic circumstances facing Barbados, and the trajectory along which, without substantial change, our national economy is evolving, go way beyond the dimensions of any economic crisis with which the country has had to grapple since Independence.

The Barbados Labour Party strongly believes that urgent changes must be made to create conditions conducive to strong private sector led growth and that such growth in the final analysis will require that detailed attention be paid to devising new arrangements for the country's economic governance.

Accordingly a BLP Government will constitute a new Development Council, drawing upon expertise in the public and private sectors, the labour movement and civil society, under the leadership of the Prime Minister's Office.

Business Facilitation Unit, Office of the Prime Minister

It continues to be conclusively shown that the biggest drag on Barbados' competitiveness and growth is the welter of outdated bureaucratic practices which have unnecessarily retarded decision making, increased costs and reduced



efficiency over a wide range of potential economic activities.

The Barbados Labour Party is committed to addressing this matter by the articulation of a national Business Facilitation Programme under which new benchmarks of efficiency will have to be attained in carrying out essential processes that effect investment and production. A special new unit in the Prime Minister's Office will be set up to oversee the implementation of such a programme to ensure that all Government Ministries and Agencies fully comply with their obligations.

The rehabilitation of the various business sectors across this country will require proactive economic leadership at the highest levels. As such, the Business Facilitation Unit will promote a multifaceted growth and development strategy for Barbados that can restore vibrancy and vitality to the national economy. It will also engage in the coherent and harmonious co-ordination of programmes such as ICT development, the reform of the financial sector, new sectoral policies and programmes, the modernizing and streamlining of rules and regulations in the Public Sector to expedite prompt decision-making initiatives to spur private capital inflows, while allowing the pursuit of appropriate human development policies.

SOCIAL SECTORS & **SOCIAL POLICIES -**

Looking after the People.

EDUCATION & HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



young Barbadians of the necessary preparation for the information age.

Education has been a potent force of transformation for countless Barbadians and has been a major factor in Barbados' rise to the forefront of developing countries on the UNDP's Human Development Index. The BLP's philosophy is that the purpose of education is to enable individuals to reach their full human potential, both individually and as members of the society.

IF LEFT UNCHECKED THE CURRENT STATE OF CHAOS IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF BARBADOS, PRESIDED OVER BY THE DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY, WILL, SEVERELY HAMPER OUR COUNTRY'S ABILITY TO RECOVER FROM THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES IT FACES.

The devastating policies of the Democratic Labour Party have resulted in:

- *The UWI being left adrift and in financial peril because of under-funding by the DLP.*
- *Barbados losing ground to competitors in meeting tertiary education needs because of our "tertiary education deficit" caused by the shelving of the BLP's plans for the University College of Barbados.*
- *The total mess at Alexandra.*
- *Evidence of an expanded vocational training deficit.*
- *The slow pace of implementation of universal early childhood education.*
- *Virtual abandonment of the EDUTECH program which has robbed thousands of*

To reverse these policies the first task of a re-elected BLP Government will be to restore good order, a sound structure and a sense of purpose to the education sector in Barbados.

Institutional Reform

The recent problems at the Alexandra School have highlighted the need for institutional reform at the Ministry of Education and at the level of the schools.

We will:

- *A Teaching Services Commission.*
- *A School Leadership Program as a key component of training and development for Principals and members of the senior management teams in the school system.*
- A far reaching institutional reform of the education system. This will include a comprehensive revision of the Education Act and Regulations to clarify the roles of all stakeholders and to reflect modern approaches to education management and administration.
- *A dedicated Schools' Inspectorate, within the Ministry of Education, that undertakes school inspections as its primary responsibility.*
- *Opportunities for the continuing professional development of teachers including mandatory training every five years for all teachers.*
- *Master Teachers within the Primary and Secondary school system.*
- *Education standards, performance targets and guidelines for best practice.*

Science and Technology

Enhanced national capability in the area of

science and technology is fundamental to the future development of Barbados.

To safeguard that future there must be an increase in the number of students at all levels who choose to pursue studies in science and technology.

We will:

- Establish a national innovation programme that provides the opportunity for young Barbadians to create and showcase digital technology.
- Build teacher capability in the area of science and technology by providing scholarships and other incentives for teachers to develop specific pedagogical competence in science and technology.

Lifelong Learning

In today's world it is increasingly unlikely that an individual could contemplate one career for life. Rapid changes in markets and technology can cause old skills, trades and professions to disappear and new job skills to come into demand.

The ability of the education system to provide ongoing opportunities for training and retraining is critical given this reality.

We will:

- Restructure the mode of delivery of course content at the Barbados Community College, Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, TVET Council, Barbados Vocational Training Board and all Government training institutions to make the fullest use of distance education, self paced learning,

and modular courses to make it easier for adults with family, work, or other responsibilities to take maximum advantage of all education and training opportunities.

Curriculum Reform

Sports and the Arts

The link between sports, the arts and development is very well documented. In Barbados, outside of Interschool Sports and NIFCA, there are too few opportunities for developing and showcasing the talent of our youth

WE WILL ESTABLISH AN ACADEMY OF SPORTS AND THE ARTS TO DEVELOP OUR SPORTING AND ARTISTIC TALENT.

Entrepreneurship

We will forge close collaboration between the Barbados Entrepreneurship Foundation and the Ministry of Education towards the goal of making "Barbados the #1 Entrepreneurial Hub in the World by 2020".

Special Needs Education

An education system, just like a society, can only be considered successful if it makes adequate provision for persons with special needs. The Barbados Labour Party will pursue a two pronged strategy involving:

- The incorporation of children with a range of physical challenges into regular schools by making such physical, technological, and pedagogical adjustments as needed to allow them to function at their fullest potential.
- Provision of support for special schools for those children who may require a higher level of specialist care and instruction not available in regular schools.

ICTs in Schools

The EDUTECH program that was intended to

prepare our students for the ICT revolution has faltered under the Democratic Labour Party. It will be revitalized and built upon to ensure that its objectives are met.

We will:

- *Continue the further integration of ICTs into the teaching-learning process.*
- *Introduce a programme of Initiatives for Strengthening Teachers and Resources for Ultimate Quality (INSTRUQ) in order to gain maximum benefit from the investment we have made in technology.*

Early Childhood Education

There continues to be a deficit in the provision of early childhood education. The BLP remains committed to its goal of universal access to pre-school education.

We will:

- *Complete the programme started by the BLP for the provision of universal access to Early Childhood Education for children 3-5 years old.*

Primary Education

We will:

- *Formalise a system of community organisations to support primary schools.*
- *Provide support for tutorial programmes administered by community groups.*
- *Upgrade the resources and facilities at under-performing schools to equalise the performance in and the demand for schools across Barbados.*
- *Expand the national reading programme.*
- *Expand diagnostic testing for 3 and 5 year olds in hearing, speech and sight.*

- *Expand such testing in emotional, physiological and educational areas.*

Secondary Education

We will:

- *Construct at least one new secondary school to bring the enrolment per school to more manageable levels.*
- *Expand the programme at the Edna Nicholls Centre.*
- *Establish in partnership with the civil society after-school programmes across Barbados to provide care, support and mentorship for children whose parents are still at work.*
- *Expand the school to work programme.*
- *Utilise the facilities at secondary schools after hours to provide community oriented training in technical skills and trades.*

Tertiary Education

There is a very strong correlation between the levels of social and economic development and the availability and quality of tertiary education.

The failure of the DLP to provide funding for the UWI has become both an educational and a financial threat to the future viability of that important institution. The issue of funding for the UWI must be placed on a sound footing.

We will:

- *Create a special Task Force to develop an optimal financing plan for the tertiary education within three years.*
- *The BLP will ensure that there is a vibrant tertiary education sector which satisfies the education needs of Barbadians as well as providing scope to export education services to the rest of the world.*

IN THE INTERIM WE WILL, AS A TEMPORARY MEASURE, REDUCE THE EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION RATE OF NATIONAL INSURANCE AND CONVERT THE EQUIVALENT TO A HIGHER EDUCATION LEVY TO FUND THE UWI.

- *Support the programme for tertiary education as outlined in the REPORT OF THE BECKLES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION 2012.*
- *Support the development of the Cave Hill Campus area as a township because of its profound economic impact on the surrounding urban communities.*
- *Support the development of a science park which will serve as strong link with the business and technological community.*
- *Establish Barbados as a location for international high quality tertiary education and create a suitable regime to encourage major reputable universities to establish specialist units in Barbados to educate students from around the world.*
- *Develop programmes to increase the enrolment of males in tertiary education.*

We will:

ALLOW A TAX CREDIT TO INDIVIDUALS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS MADE TO REGISTERED EDUCATION SAVINGS PLANS.

The dismal record of the DLP includes:

- *The inhumane, uncaring and draconian measures introduced in relation to the Barbados Drug Service.*
- *The lack of clarity of purpose in relation to the role and function of the QEH Board and the concomitant mismanagement of the QEH.*
- *The rampant use of dishonourable procurement practices at the QEH.*
- *The recurrent shortages of vital equipment resulting in deleterious consequences to the care of infants and adult patients at the QEH.*
- *The absence of any new major initiative in health by the DLP.*
- *The attempts at manipulation of the Medical and Dental Councils by the DLP.*

The BLP is committed to reversing this deteriorating state of affairs and to restoring a humane face to the delivery of healthcare in this country.

The BLP is unwavering in the belief that healthcare should be funded principally through public finances. We recognise however that there is a role for the private sector and insurance companies in its provision.

THE BLP HAS COMMITTED TO THE INTRODUCTION OF A HEALTH CARE TAX CREDIT IN THIS MANIFESTO TO ENSURE THAT MORE PEOPLE HAVE OPTIONS FOR THE PROVISION OF THEIR OWN HEALTHCARE.

There will however always be a category of persons who will not be able to avail themselves of these options. The BLP is firmly of the view that the Government of Barbados MUST always provide for these persons. Given the astronomical rate of growth in health expen-

HEALTH



Based on its record alone in the provision of healthcare, the DLP should be rejected by Barbadians.

diture and the difficult economic challenges that we face, it will be critical to do so in an efficient manner.

Accordingly, we will create a regime that will encourage their participation and will make it possible for every employed person to have access to health insurance.

Barbados Drug Service (BDS)

A FUNDAMENTAL TENET OF BLP POLICY IN RELATION TO THE PROVISION OF HEALTH-CARE IS THAT THE POOR, THE ELDERLY, THE DISABLED AND PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, SHOULD HAVE ACCEPTABLE HEALTH CARE PROVIDED TO THEM BY THE STATE FREE OF COST.

Under the current DLP regime there has been a movement away from the BLP's policy position, especially as it relates to the BDS. Under a new BLP administration, there will be a more humane reform of the BDS, allowing it to better serve its client base and to meet their needs in a cost effective manner.

We will:

- *Amend the draconian measures introduced by the DLP government.*
- *Ensure that all pensioners receive their medication free of charge at the pharmacy of their choice.*

Health and Wellness Programme

There is abundant evidence showing that the non-communicable diseases (diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, obesity and cancer) constitute the five(5) leading causes of death



in Barbados and result in high levels of illness and disability.

A major definitive action of the BLP, in this regard, was the establishment of the Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases Commission in January 2007. The promotion of healthy lifestyles and the reduction of the incidence of these diseases forms the remit of this commission.

We will:

- *Allow health and wellness expenses to be claimed as part of the new health care tax credit.*
- *Remove import duty and VAT from a basket of goods which support healthy eating, to include diabetic supplements, low sugar and low fat snacks, sugar substitutes, cereals, peas/beans, food supplements, multivitamins, and vegetarian burgers, tofu, etc*
- *Make it mandatory for all new housing developments to provide safe recreational spaces, e.g. playing fields, walking tracks, bicycle paths or gym facilities.*

Tertiary Care - The QEH

The BLP is committed to building a new state of the art Hospital, outfitted with the latest medical technology. However, we recognise that in this harsh economic climate we may be unable to do so immediately. In the interim, the QEH will be provided with adequate funding, to allow recapitalization and efficient



functioning.

In this regard, a priority for the BLP will be the procurement and implementation of a Hospital Integrated Information System (HIIS). The HIIS will be a key vehicle in helping the QEH to make a quantum leap in the development of quality, efficiency, management and delivery of health care.

Where we cannot be the physical provider, the BLP Government will become the facilitator of access to specialist treatment and advances in medical technology.

We will:

- *Introduce a Medical Services Development Act (similar to the Tourism Development Act which we previously introduced)*
- *Expand the partnerships with the private sector (purchaser/provider split) that exists within the BDS and the alternate care of the elderly programme, another BLP initiative, into other areas of healthcare provision.*
- *Utilise available EU funds to establish a cardiac unit and a stroke management unit at the QEH.*

Polyclinics

Under the last BLP Administration, the opening

hours of the Randall Phillips and Maurice Byer Polyclinics were extended to 8:30 p.m. We will extend these opening hours to all other polyclinics.

We will:

- *Continue the development and refurbishment of our polyclinics.*
- *Provide a modern ICT system so that the Polyclinics will be effectively integrated with the proposed HIIS at the QEH.*
- *Provide X-ray and Ultra- Sound facilities and asthma bays at all polyclinics.*
- *Construct a polyclinic at Tamarind Hall, St. Joseph as previously planned.*

Care Of The Elderly

We recognise the role played by our seniors in building our Nation. To properly reward their contribution:

We will:

- *Expand the Alternative Care of the Elderly programme, which is a cost effective way of providing care to the builders of our society.*

PROVIDE A TAX ALLOWANCE TO PERSONS TO OFFSET THE COST OF PROVIDING CARE FOR THEIR ELDERLY AND PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED RELATIVES.

- *Enhance the present geriatric facilities.*

Rehabilitation Services

In response to the growing numbers of amputees as a result of diabetes and peripheral

vascular disease (poor circulation), rising numbers of stroke victims and increasing numbers of persons suffering as a result of vehicular accidents and other trauma.

We will:

- Establish a National Rehabilitation Centre in partnership with interested philanthropic organisations.*

Mental Health

Recognising that Mental Health illness is now classified by some as a chronic disease and may be affecting as much as 20%-25% of our population, the BLP remains committed to mental health reform.

We will:

WORK WITH PHILANTHROPIC ORGANISATIONS TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND THE DRUG REHABILITATION PROGRAMME TO INCLUDE A SPECIAL UNIT FOR WOMEN.

- Modernise our Mental Health Legislation.*
- Strengthen the Community-based mental health services.*

Emergency Ambulance Service (EAS)

The EAS continues to provide good service, with its medical director, trained paramedics (first in the Eastern Caribbean), EMT's and dispatchers; all introduced by the previous BLP Administration.

The BLP will continue the decentralisation of this service and provide on-going training of staff to the level of paramedic.

We will:

- Provide adequate and appropriate accommodation for the staff of the EAS.*

- Ensure that an adequate number of ambulances are available as the expansion of the services continues.*

Nursing

The BLP is mindful of the extremely important role which the members of the nursing profession have played in the provision of healthcare to Barbadians over the years. The BLP will ensure the implementation of the Nursing Strategic Plan, which was developed during the last BLP Administration.

We will:

- Place greater focus on the specialist training of nurses.*
- Review the conditions of service of nursing staff in the public sector, with a view to improving their remuneration and reducing the very high number of resignations.*
- Establish a Continuing Nursing Education Policy.*

Medical and Dental Profession

The BLP is mindful of the burden imposed on many of our young professionals by the high registration fees which they are now asked to pay.

We will:

- Review the current professional fee structure with a view to introducing a scale of fees based on years of practice.*



Environmental Health

We will:

COMPLETE OUR PROGRAMME TO ERADICATE ALL PIT-TOILETS IN BARBADOS AND REPLACE THEM WITH SANITARY WATER TOILETS

- *A new animal control centre will be constructed along with expanded regulations governing the care and protection of animals.*

HIV/AIDS

The BLP will provide continued support to the HIV/AIDS programme, which we started in 2002, as we see HIV/AIDS as a developmental issue.

We will:

- *Strengthen our surveillance and counselling programmes*
- *Strengthen our Information, Education and Communication (IEC) programme.*

Solid Waste Management

We will:

- *Complete the implementation of the Integrated Solid Waste Management programme which we commenced at Vaucluse and of which recycling is a major component.*
- *Construct an in-vessel composting facility and a chemical waste storage facility at Vaucluse.*
- *Enact appropriate legislation to encourage and regulate recycling and the management of solid waste.*

Sanitation Services Authority (SSA)

We will:

- *Ensure an efficient and modern collection system whereby 90% of the public will get a twice weekly collection.*
- *Actively promote the sorting of garbage, enlisting the cooperation of householders to separate organics, plastics, paper, metal and glass.*
- *Encourage recycling by giving incentives to entities involved in this process, i.e. recycling of paper, plastics, glass and building and demolition debris.*
- *Introduce legislation and an enforcement programme along with public education for littering and illegal dumping.*

Barbados Water Authority (BWA)

We will:

- *Continue to provide a safe water supply to all Barbadians; in this regard water treatment plants will be established at the Belle and Ashton Hall.*

REACTIVATE THE "WATER AUGMENTATION PROJECT" THAT WAS PLANNED TO RESOLVE THE PERSISTENT WATER SHORTAGES IN ST JOSEPH, ST ANDREW, ST THOMAS, ST PETER, ST LUCY, ST. JOHN AND ST PHILIP.

- *Fully capitalise the mains replacement programme which forms the main plank of the BWA's water augmentation plan.*
- *Facilitate the construction of a desalination plant on the south east of the island as a public/private sector project.*
- *Facilitate the construction of the long overdue West Coast Sewerage Treatment Plant as a public/private sector partnership.*
- *Provide the Belle area with a sewerage system.*
- *Use cutting-edge technology to provide for waste water re-use for agricultural and other similar purposes.*



HOUSING

The **Barbados Labour Party** has a proud history of providing housing for thousands of Barbadians. The **BLP** revolutionized housing policy in Barbados, empowered thousands of Barbadians and transformed countless communities dotted across the landscape of this country, when it passed the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act.

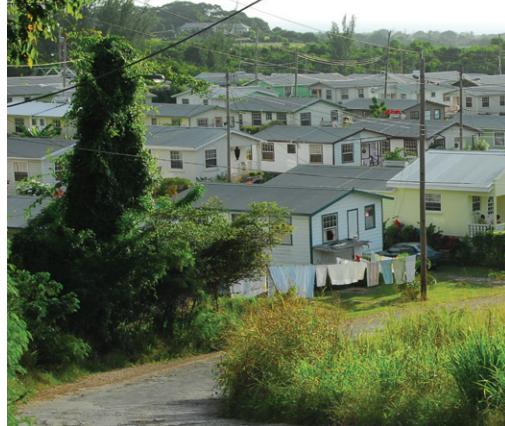
During our last term in office, the programme of empowerment continued through the Urban Tenantries Programme which saw many Barbadians owning their house spots for only \$2.50 per square foot. Additionally, hundreds of houses were constructed and concessional financing provided through the General Workers Loan Fund to help Barbadians repair and maintain their homes.

A Housing policy, if it is to be successful, must be in harmony with the culture of the people. "Owning a piece of the rock," self-help, and strong community ties are aspects of Barbadian culture which must be reflected in our national housing policy. In addition, housing as a major component of the construction sector has great potential for economic growth and economic empowerment.

The Democratic Labour Party has converted the housing programme into an opportunity for just a chosen few. Where it has constructed houses, it has been so narrowly focused on playing a numbers game that it has failed to develop communities. The failure of the DLP housing policy is clearly demonstrated in the fact that its signature housing project, the Villages at Coverley, has come to a screeching halt.

The BLP has always treated to the housing sector as a key component of the construction sector and one which also provided many small and medium sized construction businesses the opportunity to participate meaningfully in the economy.

THE BLP HAD SOUGHT TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS OF POOR HOUSING, SANITATION, LAND TENURE, AND OTHER PROBLEMS IN NEIGHBOURHOODS ACROSS BARBADOS BY CONCEIVING AND NEGOTIATING FUNDING OF US\$60MIL, FROM THE IDB, FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD UPGRADING PROGRAMME.



Under DLP mismanagement this project has stalled. Similarly the pre-existing programme of urban renewal which was to be executed under the Urban Development Commission has been badly botched by the DLP. Nowhere is this more evident than in the programme, started by the BLP, for the transfer of land title in urban tenancies at \$2.50 per sq. ft. which the DLP has also stalled.

On the grounds of accessibility, availability and affordability the DLP housing policy has been a miserable failure.

A re-elected BLP will place renewed emphasis on policies to ensure the affordability and accessibility of house spots, as well as houses of different types, sizes and price ranges to meet the needs of current and future generations.

Specifically we will Increase home ownership opportunities:

- The Physical Development Plan has identified land in locations all over Barbados which is suitable for housing. There is at present a tremendous imbalance in housing settlements with areas in the south of the island trending towards over population and areas in the north under popu-*

lated. The availability of large areas suitable for housing in the St. Lucy along with the need to ensure the continued viability of Barbados' second town, Speightstown, will be our focus in bringing major housing developments to the north of the island.

We will:

- Support the approval of the subdivision of those lands to meet the housing needs of the nation.*
- Streamline the processes of the Town Planning Department and the Land Registry to reduce the time it takes to develop and convey land. This will include the use of special development orders to fast track residential developments.*
- Introduce the Aided-Self Help Housing Programme where, in the finest Barbadian tradition of incremental building, future homeowners can through their efforts and those of their community, complete and expand their houses as time and resources allow.*
- Encourage the construction of multi-storey homes which for the same living space will occupy a smaller footprint on the land. This will result in the ability to construct more houses per acre and in a reduction in the cost of each house spot, thus improving affordability.*
- Fully utilise the Housing Incentives Act*

introduced by the BLP in 2007, to provide fiscal incentives to encourage private developers to construct affordable housing.

- *Also re-introduce the policy of the BLP, as reflected in the 2007 amendments to the Town Planning Act, which provides that housing developments by private developers of 40 or more units or lots will be required to dedicate 25% of the lots or the equivalent financing for affordable housing.*



high rise complexes to small duplex units as in-fill in existing communities.

- *Provide for the needs of the physically-challenged by following best practice related to fully accessible housing.*
- *Make provision for the care of children and the elderly in new rental residential developments.*
- *Re-capitalise the General Workers Loan Fund at the NHC to provide hassle-free affordable financing for repairs and maintenance of their homes.*
- *Make the National Building Code mandatory.*

Rental Programmes

The rental sector is a key part of the housing sector and must be seen as complementary to the policy of home ownership and not as a competing policy.

We will:

- *Implement the programme which now exists for the transfer of NHC units to qualified tenants free of cost. WE WILL HOWEVER REDUCE THE QUALIFYING PERIOD FROM 20 TO 15 YEARS TO ALLOW TENANTS WHO WERE TENANTS OF THE NHC FOR 15 YEARS TO BE ENTITLED TO OWN THEIR UNITS.*
- *Build units for rent with the option to own in several housing developments. These will cover the entire range of scale, from*

Renewable Energy in the Housing Sector

The BLP has left a proud legacy of support and incentives which have resulted in the use of solar water in thousands of houses as well as hotels, restaurants, etc. It is our intention during the next term in office to provide an enabling framework of legislation and incentives which will result in the widespread use of photovoltaic cells to generate electricity in our households.

We will:

- *Increase the level of the income tax deduction available as a home allowance and extend its applicability to include photovoltaic, wind and other renewable energy sources.*



A RE-FOCUSED **NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION**

The National Housing Corporation has been made virtually bankrupt by the Democratic Labour Party Government. When last in office the BLP restructured the finances of the NHC by eliminating its debt and placed it in a solid financial position.

We will restructure the NHC to enable it to:

- *Carry out proper and timely maintenance of its rental units and estates.*
- *Undertake more of its own direct construction activities.*
- *Speedily and fairly administer the allocation of land and houses whether for rent or for sale.*
- *Support the formation of Tenants Associations in all NHC housing communities to be the voice of the tenants.*

Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrade Programme

The BLP secured funding from the IDB to finance a grant of \$10,000 to low income householders unable to access regular mortgage and other loan financing to acquire or upgrade their homes. Unfortunately the DLP has stalled the programme. The BLP will systematically remove the constraints which have hindered access to the funds by the intended recipients.

Urban Tenancies

The BLP will re-energize the program for the sale of land in urban tenancies to the tenants at the subsidized price of \$2.50 per sq. ft.

Vacant /Derelict Urban Lots

The eighteen hundred vacant lots and derelict structures in the urban area represent untapped potential for the provision of housing and for improving physical conditions in urban neighbourhoods. The BLP will formalise arrangements with the land owners on possibilities for joint development and sale of these properties to the benefit of the land owner while meeting the housing needs of hundreds of Barbadians.

Catastrophe Fund

THE BLP WILL AMEND THE LAW TO ENSURE THAT THE CATASTROPHE FUND, WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE BLP IN 2007 TO PROVIDE FUNDING, WAS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST LOWER INCOME PERSONS WITH HOUSE DAMAGE AFTER A NATURAL DISASTER, IS RESTORED TO ITS ORIGINAL INTENT. WE WILL ENSURE THAT THE VICTIMS OF HURRICANE TOMAS ARE FAIRLY TREATED AND ALL OUTSTANDING CLAIMS SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED.

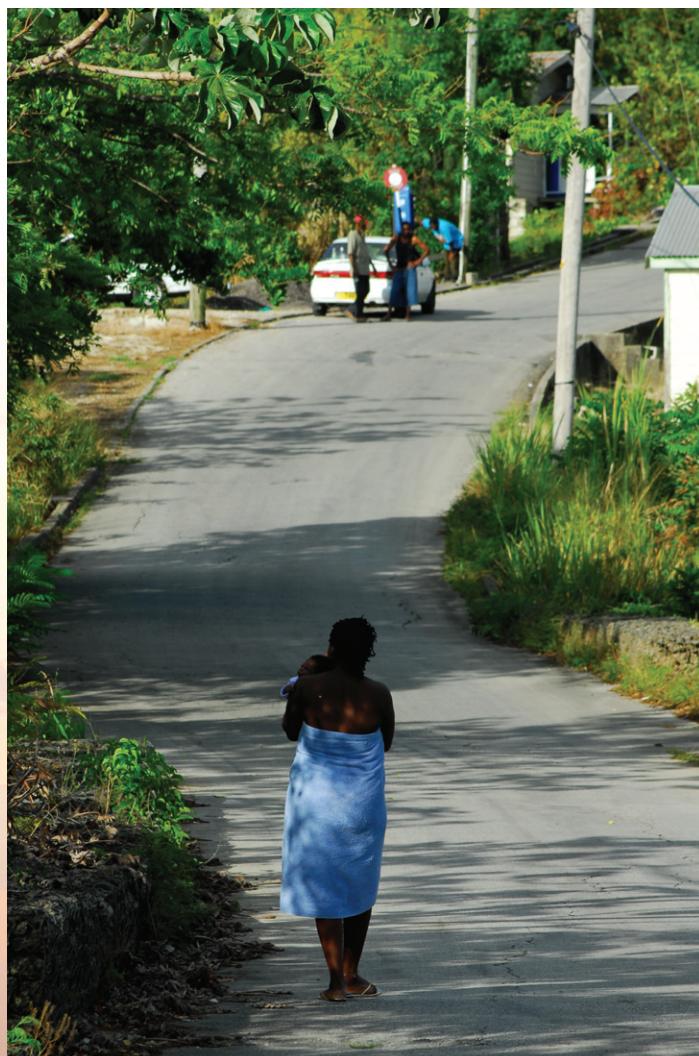


Building Community Spirit

Housing developments must be designed with the aim of building communities rather than merely constructing houses.

We will:

- *Ensure that all housing developments contain facilities for community interactions, including sports, meetings, and social activities.*
- *Reinvigorate the Community Development Department which will spearhead targeted programmes and interventions to help to build a sense of community.*



TRANSPORT & WORKS



Public transportation plays a major role in national development. Regrettably, over the past five years, the current DLP government has failed to address the problem of traffic congestion. Equally, the state of our road network continues to decline and will require immediate attention.

The last BLP Government committed to a programme to provide paved roads in all communities in Barbados by 2010. That programme was abandoned by the DLP especially in St. Lucy, St. Peter, St. Thomas, St. Andrew and St. Joseph.

In addition, far too many residential and tenancies roads are in need of urgent refurbishment.

We will:

- *Restore its programme to provide all major communities in barbados with paved roads as soon as practicable;*
- *Rescue the flyover project from the grip of reckless partisanship and bring sensible relief to the grid-locked citizens of barbados by constructing flyovers at strategic points on the ABC Highway through the mechanism of Public-Private sector partnerships.*
- *Open up a new express highway linking hothersal turning roundabout to the harmony hall globe roundabout.*
- *Provide sidewalks to accommodate all physically challenged individuals especially within the city centres.*

- Fully upgrade and repave Highway 1 from Speightstown to the UWI junction.
- Provide roundabouts at the Combermere/Waterford junction; Combermere Stadium junction; Sweet Bottom junction; Dash Valley Junction, Windsor and Newton on the ABC Highway.
- Undertake a major road widening & upgrade programme that includes the following areas:

1. *Andrews Factory to Combermere School via Market Hill and Hothersal Turning (Highway 3).*
2. *St. Thomas Parish Church to Holetown, St. James.*
3. *Highway 5 from Six Roads to Bussa.*
4. *Widening the ABC Highway to 4 lanes from the Graeme Hall roundabout to the Grantley Adams Airport (ABC Highway).*
5. *Pursue a comprehensive road development and rehabilitation programme as part of the remit of the Scotland district authority.*

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

A new BLP Government is committed to a more efficient and effective Transport Board as the principal transport body of the country.

We will:

- Continue to provide a subsidy to the Transport Board, which will be capped to efficiently manage the cost to the public.
- Implement measures to reduce costs which will include using solar energy, natural gas and other energy saving options.
- Provide at least 30 new buses per year

through a lease arrangement with the private sector.

- Require the Transport Authority to fulfill and execute its mandate of regulating and organizing the public transport sector to ensure greater efficiency and reliability.
- Significantly refurbish and modernise the Speightstown, River, Fairchild Street and Lower Green Bus Terminals.
- Amend the current legislation to permit the sale of diesel by the Transport Board.

The Government Electrical Engineering Department

A BLP government will radically transform the Government Electrical Engineering Department to enable it to respond in a more timely manner to the growing needs of householders and businesses without compromising its important health and safety responsibilities.

ROAD TAXES

We will immediately:

- REDUCE THE DLP'S DRACONIAN ROAD TAXES ON VEHICLES TO THE 2007 LEVELS.
- Reduce the duty free replacement period from 5 years to 4 years for new taxis to assist owners in maintaining a more efficient rolling stock.
- Make the necessary provisions to enable an individual who sells a vehicle before the expiry of his annual road tax to receive a refund for the unused portion of that tax.



A Renewed Focus on Poverty Eradication

PUTTING PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE OF DEVELOPMENT



The DLP administration which promised to give much prominence to the 'building of a society' as distinct from an economy has demonstrated its inability to address the issue of poverty and dependency. Under the current DLP administration, poverty has reached its highest point in modern history with 19.3% of Barbadians – almost one in five – living under the poverty line and many more on the brink of going into poverty. It has contributed significantly to the social deterioration in Barbados over the last five years by a regime of ill-advised taxation. Additionally, the absence of strategic social policy initiatives has served to reinforce dependency and increase poverty levels.

Furthermore, community and private initiative and ingenuity have been significantly stifled and replaced by a reliance on state sponsored activities, resulting also in the dis-empowerment of community actors.

THE BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY, UNDERSTANDS THAT POVERTY IS A MATERIAL CONDITION THAT REQUIRES A MATERIAL RESPONSE.

This party which has championed the cause of democracy in this country since the 1930s has had Social Transformation at the heart of its social policy agenda.

A Barbados Labour Party government will launch a renewed attack on poverty, tackle marginalisation and strategically address particular vulnerabilities which keep people back, exclude them, and promote inequalities and inequities.

We will build on our legacy of providing resources to eradicate all elements of poverty from our landscape through institutional arrangements that are free of Ministerial interference and without the element of political partisanship. We recognise that the fight against poverty must have that significant material dimension that every Barbadian seeks towards the fulfilment of a decent standard of living.

We will:

- *Restore the Poverty Eradication Fund of \$10 million to be replenished annually.*
- *Restore the Social Investment Fund.*
- *Establish a Poverty Eradication and Social Investment Commission with qualified persons from Civil Society with a clear remit to oversee resources allocated under the Poverty and Social Investment Fund, in a non-partisan way, to address poverty,*

marginalization and social decay at all levels of society.

- *Expand the Reverse Tax Credit as referenced elsewhere in the Manifesto.*

Increasing Citizens Participation

The Barbados Labour Party is committed to furthering the process of popular democracy as a critical part of Barbadian development. This will entail the wider participation of our citizens in meaningful ways in critical aspects of our governance and development.

We will:

- *Facilitate the formation and functioning of effective Citizens' Panels to give fuller meaning to the practice of Democracy and to enhance accountability in public service delivery.*
- *Recapitalise the Social Enterprise and Innovation Fund.*
- *Establish an Innovation and Resource Mobilisation Team.*
- *Work with our social partners to facilitate a percentage return from profits from the private sector to targeted community development in the context of a tax regime.*

The Modernised and Restructured UDC and RDC

The Community Development Department and the Urban and Rural Development Commissions must have an enhanced relevance in the delivery of community services – both infrastructural and social.

We will:

- *Modernise and restructure the Community Development Department and the Urban and Rural Development Commissions*



and establish an oversight mechanism that allows them to have a holistic working relationship.

- *Commit to the contracting out of services to community organizations while ensuring that such services are delivered efficiently and in accordance with established legislation and policy.*
- *Without losing sight of their role in building physical facilities in communities, to move these agencies also in the direction of creating enterprises at the level of the community thereby stimulating economic activity.*

Community Governance

A BLP Government will seek to enhance the use of valuable assets within our communities through facilitating arrangements with Churches, Community and Non-Governmental Organizations to assist in the provision of social services and the crafting of sound and equitable economic arrangements for vulnerable persons.

We will:

- *Transfer management of community facilities to community entities on a phased basis.*
- *Fund innovative community driven projects that seek to empower individuals and families through credible CBOs and NGOs.*
- *Encourage the formation of new CBOs/*



NGOs

- *Rationalize the arms of government which deal with CBO/NGO matters into a single entity to oversee their legal status and to establish protocols for accountability and transparency.*
- *Support a 'Block by Block' initiative where employment and business training and support will be available to our young men on every 'Block' in Barbados, ensuring that all have a chance to earn a decent living.*

A National Youth Service

We will introduce a National Youth Service Programme which will initiate youth-led educational service projects in partnership with non-profit agencies that strengthen communities, and teach the youth about the importance of being active members of their communities through service and volunteerism.

National Youth Commission

A Barbados Labour Party government will introduce a National Youth Commission to ensure the full participation of our youth in the formulation of national development strategies and to provide a mechanism for incorporating their views, interests and concerns within all national policies and initiatives.

Strategic Interventions for Specific Vulnerabilities

The social policy agenda of the Barbados Labour Party will seek to respond to the needs and interests of our most vulnerable. Additionally a Barbados Labour Party administration will intensify its efforts to be fully compliant with the obligations of International Conventions and other globally accepted instruments which speak to the creation of an equitable and just society for all citizens.

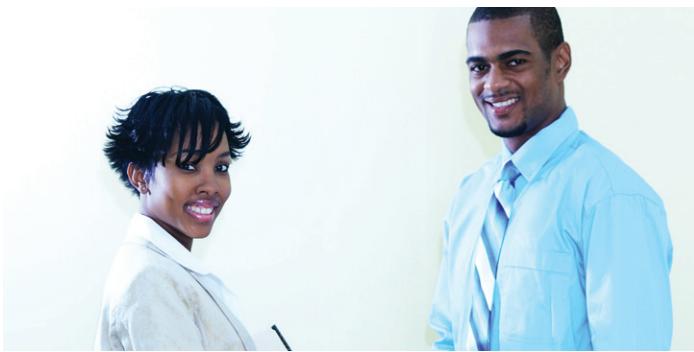
The Physically and otherwise Challenged

A Barbados Labour Party Government is committed to the provision of equal opportunities for the physically and otherwise challenged in our national development. We will therefore provide for the full integration of the challenged community into the labour market, educational system and social activities. We will further empower persons with disabilities by promoting meaningful opportunities for self employment.

We Will:

- *Open access to economic development*
- *opportunities for persons with disabilities.*
- *Provide training and business counselors.*
- *Ensure easy access to finance for viable business activities.*
- *Ensure that the creative talents of the disabled are harnessed and developed through music, poetry and all aspects of the performing arts.*
- *Provide scholarships to persons with disabilities to attend Galludet University to maximize their academic and professional potential.*
- *Provide tax relief on vehicles that have*

been specially designed for the use solely by the physically challenged.



Gender and Development

We will:

- Conduct a further review of legislation to correct any remaining gender imbalances so as to foster greater harmony among the sexes and create a more equitable and just society.*
- Ensure that in the development of all policies and programmes consideration is given to the differential impact on men and women and that there are equal and/or equitable opportunities and benefits for both sexes.*

The Homeless

We will:

- Continue to provide transitional accommodation, counseling and social assistance to persons displaced by fire, flood or any other kind of disaster.*
- Enter lease arrangements with owners of unused lots for the purpose of providing housing solutions to very low income earners.*

Restoring Strong Families

Families are the bedrock of our society and the life-blood of our communities. Many families are now bearing the brunt of harsh economic

times, leading to difficulties and tensions in the home as evidenced by the growing numbers of domestic disputes reported to police and played out in the Courts, cases before the Welfare Department Reconciliation Programme, divorces, separations, and the incidents of homelessness and destitution among young adults and the elderly.

In an effort to address this breakdown a BLP Government will:

- Introduce a sustained Family Intervention Programme as a strategy to stabilize families, reduce homelessness and squatting, improve outcomes for children, change lives and build safer homes and communities.*
- WORK WITH THE SOCIAL PARTNERS TO IMPLEMENT PATERNITY LEAVE FOR FATHERS.**
- Establish a programme in partnership with the private sector and civil society that targets households in which no one is employed and prioritises their access to new employment opportunities.*

Community Mediation

The Barbados Labour Party administration will introduce mechanisms to facilitate community mediation as part of its response to conflict at the family and community level.

We will:

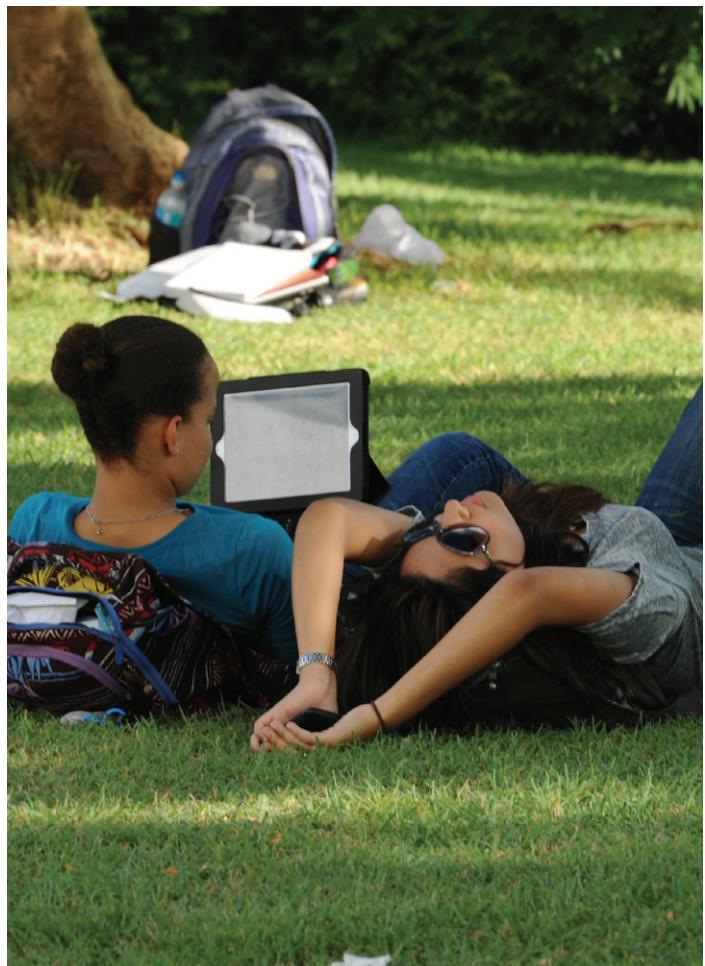
- Establish community based conflict mediation centres to be run by skilled volunteers but financed by public private sector partnerships on a matching funds basis.*
- Partner with churches and other such entities already involved in providing family counseling services.*

Community Technology Programme

Access to affordable, available and quality internet connectivity and usage still remains an issue among many Barbadians

We will:

- *Bridge the 'Digital Divide' that still exists through an enhanced and expanded Community Technology Programme to ensure that Barbadians of all walks of life have access to computers and the internet.*
- *Explore all the opportunities presented by Information and Communications Technology to create opportunities in entrepreneurship, employment and continuing education for at-risk YOUTH and vulnerable persons within communities.*
- *Expand and reorient the Community Technology Programme to make it a more income-generating initiative by broadening the subject content offered.*



CIVIL, LABOUR & GOVERNANCE **ISSUES**



INFORMATION & **BROADCASTING**

Broadcast & New Media

Television remains one of the most powerful media in Barbados. Yet, Barbados remains the last country in the English speaking Caribbean with a state owned television station, Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, enjoying a monopoly. This must come to an end.

Further, the convergence of telecommunications and broadcast, and the advent of new social and digital media have significantly altered the landscape within which information is communicated by and to our people.

We will:

- URGENTLY AND IMMEDIATELY ISSUE ADDITIONAL TELEVISION LICENCES TO ENSURE THAT OUR CITIZENS ARE GIVEN CHOICE WITH RESPECT TO THEIR ACCESS TO NEWS, INFORMATION AND ENTERTAINMENT ON FREE TO AIR TELEVISION.**
- Establish a Public Service Broadcast Channel to provide access for programming focused on reinforcing our sovereignty and national and regional identity and development.*
- Establish a local Programming Fund to support the development of local programmes for radio, television, film and new media.*

- Reform the Broadcast Commission to allow for greater transparency.*
- Legislate to allow for co-location for the purposes of transmission sites, rather than this being left to the discretion of the existing owners of sites as is presently the case.*
- Address urgently the need for a framework to govern the relationship between traditional broadcasters and telecommunications providers engaged in Cable broadcasting and new media.*

LABOUR



The Barbados Labour Party has always been committed to maintaining good and stable industrial relations, which is an important element to the development of Barbados, and critical to national productivity and competitiveness.

We will:

- Strengthen and enhance the Social Partnership as an instrument for civic engagement, productivity improvement and for building social cohesion.*
- Compile a comprehensive and consolidated framework of Laws and Labour standards to govern industrial relations practices, and to improve and protect workers' rights where necessary.*
- Promote labour/management cooperation between employers and workers in industry.*
- Strengthen the capacity of the Labour Department to ensure the effective delivery of core functions such as conciliation, inspections and complaints investigation.*



Setting Standards for Training

In today's emerging competitive labour market environment, it is essential that our labour force is equipped to meet the challenges of competition. Mindful of these ongoing requirements.

We will:

- Provide better alignment of the BVTB and the TVET Council and promote greater collaboration to ensure that training is geared towards fully preparing participants for the requirements of the job market.*
- Promote and set standards for TVET Training.*
- Establish and implement procedures for the training and certification of artisans in Barbados to enable them to meet the requirements for registration with the Barbados Building Authority.*
- Implement a policy to integrate persons with disabilities into the Skills Training Programme.*

Vocational Training

The Barbados Vocational Training Board continues to make a significant contribution to the development of the human capital of our country through implementation of vocational training programmes, aimed primarily at the youth.

We will:

- Continue to review the quality assurance system that underpins the vocational training programmes so that they are relevant and meet national standards.*
- Develop and update occupational standards and National Vocational Qualifications to meet identified needs in the sectors of tourism and hospitality, customer service, information and communications technology, and construction and building related services.*
- Ensure that training is geared towards developing a competent workforce that can reposition Barbados to meet the new and emerging labour market requirements.*
- Ensure that the Employment Training Fund is better utilised to help build a new cadre of entrepreneurs and strengthen existing small businesses.*

OUR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



Barbados has traditionally enjoyed an outstanding reputation in the international arena. Our foreign policy has been steadfast and visionary, giving rise to what is known as the "Barbados model" of development. Regrettably much of the hardwork that went into building that reputation has been squandered under a DLP administration.

Despite the challenges of recent years, the Barbados Labour party is committed to re-energizing our foreign relations and foreign trade, through strong diplomacy. These efforts would achieve for us exciting new economic, social and cultural opportunities.

We are resolved that our small nation must once again be held in highest regard in the international community.

We will:

- *Market a principled foreign policy.*
- *Ensure the full exercise of our jurisdiction over the fisheries and mineral resources within the extensive marine space that has been awarded to us by international arbitration in the southern and eastern sectors.*
- *Introduce a modern legislative and strategic policy framework for integrated oceans management*

Enlarge Barbados' Regional Economic Space:

The initiative for creating the Caribbean Single Market and Economy has faltered disastrously because of the failure of the DLP to provide leadership. The Caribbean region is the largest single market for Barbadian goods and our non-traditional services. It is also the largest source market for our tourism sector.

We therefore still consider that the creation of the single market and economy is in Barbados' best strategic interests and it must be pursued with renewed vigour. Our economy depends on a successful creation of the CSME.



Conversely, the success of the CSME depends on the active and committed participation of Barbados at all levels of the Social Partnership.

We will:

- *Restore leadership to the Caribbean Single Market and Economy so as to aggressively pursue all available commercial opportunities within the CSME for Barbadian entrepreneurs, service providers and skilled nationals.*
- *Support the initiative to deepen and enhance regional security co-operation beyond the Regional Security System as a vital pillar of the regional integration effort.*
- *Resuscitate and renew the programme to promote enhanced functional co-operation and the provision of common services as an important aspect of regional integration among the members and associate members of the Caribbean Community to bring the benefits of integration to all of our citizens.*
- *Continue our advocacy and leadership of*

the initiatives which Barbados pioneered in respect of a CARICOM Common Fisheries Regime and the recognition by the international Community of the Caribbean Sea as a Special Area in the context of Sustainable Development.

- *Continue to pursue the stalled negotiations for bilateral fisheries agreements with Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.*
- *Re-energise the negotiation and implementation of a new and improved hemispheric trade and economic arrangement in which Barbados' goods and services have relatively free access to all markets in the hemisphere.*
- *Actively participate in the design and implementation of new and enhanced trade and economic partnerships between CARICOM and the USA and CARICOM and Canada to replace the CBI and CARIBCAN arrangements respectively.*



rangements for the small economies of the Caribbean.

- *Partner with the UWI (Cave Hill) to provide institutional strengthening and human resource development in international trade policy.*
- *Establish a Trade Investigations and Compliance Unit and enact anti-dumping, subsidies, countervailing and safeguards legislation.*

Establish and Preserve harmonious relations with foreign governments

We will:

- *Pursue a regional approach to bilateral arrangements with other non-CARICOM Countries and extra-regional entities.*
- *Ensure active and beneficial participation in a fully functioning Regional Economic Partnership Agreement (REPA) with the European Union in which Barbados' goods and services enjoy duty free treatment in the EU market.*
- *Continue the integration of Barbados into the emerging global economy on terms of trade that provide special and differential treatment and adequate transitional ar-*

- *Continue to reposition Barbados globally, through the expansion of our diplomatic coverage and by rationalizing our relationship with the European Union and maximize our opportunities.*
- *Give priority to the early opening of a full consulate in Georgetown Guyana to service our growing bilateral commercial and consular interests.*
- *Enhance the international competitiveness of Barbados' goods and services through an expanded and well structured capacity for the setting, observance and management of Standards, and of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) rules.*

Promote the political economic and cultural interests of Barbados in other countries and in international organisations

We will:

- *Create a strategic alliance within the United Nations, the International Financial Institutions and the Development Agencies for Millennium Developed Goals and Middle Income Developing Countries*
- *Maintain strong leadership in international negotiations to influence policies supportive of the Caribbean's vital interests on issues of fundamental importance such as the response to climate change and global warming, and the HIV/ AIDS pandemic.*

Promote and protect the interests of Barbadians abroad

We will:

- *Formalise channels to engage the Barbadian diaspora and to encourage their active participation in the Barbados' development efforts through investment, the transfer of skills and through advocacy in their countries of residence for policies favourable to Caribbean interests*
- *Further expand the network of Honorary Consuls in the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia and Africa.*

Promote Barbados as a Centre for Business and Diplomacy

We will:

- *Rationalise and update the regime of*

privileges and immunities governing the operation of regional and international agencies in Barbados; ensuring that Barbados remains the preferred choice for the regional Headquarters of such Agencies;

- *Establish in partnership with a recognised academic institution, a residential centre for research, dialogue and advocacy on the issues of security, economic development and governance of small states, utilising Barbados' internationally recognised attributes.*

Restructure, modernise and strengthen the Barbados Foreign Service

We will:

- *Revise the 1972 External Service Orders to reflect the realities of a modern Foreign Service and to harmonize its provisions with the New Public Service Act*
- *Complete the implementation of the recommendations of the Inspection Team on the Conditions of Service of diplomatic and local staff overseas*
- *Through an alliance with UWI (Cave Hill) establish a Foreign Service Institute or Diplomatic Training Academy for the orientation and training of our Foreign Service personnel at all levels, and for the training of the wider public service in those aspects of bilateral and multilateral diplomacy relevant to their portfolios.*
- *Complete the stalled project to construct a new Headquarters building for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.*



STRENGTHENING THE PUBLIC SECTOR

New Public Service Ethos

In 2007, the Barbados Labour Party Government took a major step in reforming the Barbados Public Service with the passage of the Public Service Act. This legislation was aimed at modernising the administration of the public service for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

Unfortunately, given the manner in which the Act has been administered by the Democratic Labour Party Government, it has failed to live up to expectations as may be seen by the many problems that still plague this sector including:

- *The late payment of salaries;*
- *Officers working without appointment for extraordinarily long periods;*
- *Failure to fill vacancies within the one year limit established by the Act;*
- *The failure to create an ethos of discipline within the Service as may be seen in poor work attitudes, high absenteeism, rampant malingering; and*
- *The failure to complete in a timely manner disciplinary cases again offenders – that small minority that give the Service a bad name.*

We will:

- *Establish a special unit to address and eliminate the chronic problem of late payment of salaries to substitute public officers.*
- *Review and re-evaluate the programme of Public Sector reform to determine its appropriateness and wherever necessary refocus and redirect it to meet the many technological and other changes that have occurred since its beginning.*
- *Implement a training programme for new entrants to the Service to ensure that they are equipped with the right attitudes and skills to serve their publics with the professionalism and empathy required.*
- *Create means by which retired, experienced and qualified public servants can provide training for junior officers.*
- *Re-engage, wherever possible on a short-term basis, the services and talents of the several highly experienced and trained public servants who have left the Service.*
- *Reposition the Public Service to ensure that it continues to play its pivotal and requisite role in a diversified Barbadian economy, including through the establishment of a Business Facilitation Unit in the office of the Prime Minister to enhance Barbados' appeal and competitiveness in attracting foreign investment and maintaining business competitiveness.*

- Establish without delay an accessible inventory of the talents, qualifications and experience of each civil servant.
- Set up a Public Service Institute for the continuous training of public officers.
- Re-write in conjunction with the unions new regulations for the public service (including an accepted qualification by experience (QBE)).
- Strengthen significantly the office of the Chief Personnel Officer to improve efficiency.
- Improve and enlarge the categories of public servants entitled to car and travel allowances, overseas leave and study abroad.
- Maximise the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in all public sector decision-making and for delivery of all services.



LAW & ORDER

Strengthening Law Enforcement

The last Barbados Labour Party administration made the largest investment in policing in this nation's history to make the job of policing safer.

We must pay attention to the recruitment of new officers and the retention of serving policemen and women and do all that is necessary to increase the numbers of the Royal

Barbados Police Force. Equally, a caring government must pay careful attention to the health and well-being of police officers.

A new BLP administration will tackle these issues by introducing innovative policies which will enhance the recruitment and career conditions and prestige of the Force, making the profession a career of choice.

We will:

- Improve salaries of police constables at the entry-level including the payment of competency based increments for Constables and Sergeants.
- Introduce a hazard allowance on a graduated scale which will reflect the level of risks to which members of the Force are exposed.
- Give the members of the Force the option to take early retirement at age 55 or at age 60 or upon completion of 26 years of service.
- Provide adequate resources for the continual upgrading of the skills and competencies of members of the Force
- Intensify the focus on training and re-training at the technical and managerial levels of the force. Particular attention will be paid to further enhancement of the problem-solving and intelligence-led approaches to policing currently being used.
- Construct new stations at Hastings, in Christ Church, Six Roads St. Philip, Belleplaine, St. Andrew, Cane Garden, St. Thomas and Black Rock, St. Michael.
- Construct an ultra modern Headquarters at Central Police Station.
- Provide adequate resources to allow the intensification of community policing and the empowerment of communities,



including the strengthening of the Neighbourhood Watch groups.

- *Use more technology to allow all police officers to better protect themselves and the community.*
- *Revamp the Complaints Authority and the Office of Professional Responsibility of the RBPF to support ethical policing.*

Expanding Access to Justice

Our system of justice should be fair, swift and accessible. Such a justice system ensures the safe-guarding of citizens' rights, and preserves Barbados as a safe haven and a place where its citizens as well as non-citizens would wish to conduct business and make investments.

In our last BLP Administration, we built a new Supreme Court complex and substantially improved the efficiency of the justice system. We made significant progress in the restructuring and modernization of the Courts, the Registration Department and the Court Process office, including the Civil Procedure Rules.

We will:

- *Intensify the integration of the Justice System so that law enforcement, the Courts and the Penal Institutions are fully functionally connected, *inter alia*, through greater sharing of information.*
- *Establish a Commercial Law Reform Commission.*

- *Establish a dedicated Commercial Court and a dedicated Criminal Court.*
- *Improve the administration of justice by ensuring that the Supreme Court and its Registry are adequately staffed at all levels including expanding the size of the Judiciary.*
- *Establish a Drug Court to deal primarily with first time substance abusers who are capable of being rehabilitated through a supervised drug treatment programme.*
- *Implement a ticketing system to deal with traffic offences which can be disposed of through the payment of fines.*
- *Establish a small claims court, a less formal court, where individuals can go to deal with claims up to a value of \$5,000.*
- *Construct new Magistrates' courts at Belleplaine, St. Andrew, Cane Garden, St. Thomas, and Coleridge Street, Bridgetown.*
- *Modernise the maintenance laws to provide new arrangements for maintenance actions and payments, including the attachment of salaries, thereby rescuing mothers from enduring demeaning conditions in order to collect maintenance payments due under court orders.*

Early Intervention and Crime Prevention

While law enforcement and rehabilitative efforts are key elements to securing law and order, we must place equal emphasis on ef-

forts to ensure that our young people do not go down the wrong path. We need to adopt firm, no-nonsense approaches to save our "at risk" youth, and prevent them from getting involved in crime in the first place.

We Will:

- Establish teams of youth leaders alongside vetted ex-offenders to reach out to dis-affected youth and at-risk youth.
- Increase the access to and use of many community and other civic centres by our youth by establishing creative and challenging programs that will capture their imagination.
- Establish youth facilities to reach "at risk" youth as well as teaching young people to be responsible citizens.

Juvenile Justice

For those young persons who come into contact with the formal justice system, we must develop a sufficient range of remedial options which will make them more responsible and accountable for their actions and will foster an understanding of the impact of crime on victims, and on society in general.

We Will:

- Enact a new Young Offenders Act providing a range of custodial and non-custo-

dial sentences which will emphasise the concept of restorative justice, allowing the victim, the offender and the affected community to take an active part in repairing the harm done.

- Construct a new Young Offenders Institution.
- Establish a Crisis Intervention Centre which will offer a range of treatment and training interventions designed to address the underlying problems of its clients.
- Provide a wider range of support services for families of affected youth as well as the youth themselves.

Barbados Prison Service

Barbados now has a state of the art prison facility which meets many of the international standards for the housing of persons deprived of their liberty. However, while our Prison must keep society safe from criminals, it must also achieve behavioural change in the inmates so that re-offending is significantly reduced. This will require programmes that promote literacy, equip inmates with skills while addressing mental health issues, substance abuse and antisocial behavior.

We will:

- Intensify training and skills development programmes and opportunities for the





members of the Barbados Prison Service;

- *Develop and implement well structured rehabilitation, educational and skills training programmes for inmates.*
- *Upgrade the range of counselling services offered.*
- *Reconstitute the After Care Committee given the vital role that it will play in supporting inmates' transition and reintegration into society. An offender who is not successfully reintegrated into our society will likely commit criminal acts again and create more victims.*
- *Work with the private sector to develop and implement pilot programmes aimed at providing gainful employment for former inmates.*

Barbados Fire Service

We will:

- *Construct a new station at Six Roads, St. Philip to meet the needs of South Eastern Barbados.*
- *Give Officers the option of taking early retirement at age 55 or retire at age 60 or upon completion of 26 years of service.*
- *Continue to upgrade the skills and competencies of members of the Barbados Fire Service through training and development opportunities.*

Barbados Postal Service

We will:

- *Construct new Post Offices at Belleplaine, St. Andrew and Six Roads, St. Philip.*
- *Relocate the Post Office from Bentham's, St. Lucy to Nesfield as part of the proposed new town centre.*
- *Intensify action on the conversion of the Postal Service into a corporate entity.*

Emergency Management Services

The new Department of Emergency Management came into being on April 1, 2007 with an expanded mandate. However, our recent experience with Tropical Storm Tomas has exposed weaknesses in our ability to bring prompt relief to victims. Over two years later, many of the homes that were affected by Tomas remain unrepairs. Better must be done!

We will:

- *Conduct continuous national vulnerability assessment which will inform the designation of specially vulnerable areas, buildings and communities.*
- *Develop national mitigation strategies that will allow the effective and appropriate use of the Catastrophe Fund.*
- *Provide training opportunities for the volunteers and much needed equipment and supplies for the District Emergency Or-*

ganisations, community based organisations.

- *Develop a programme of temporary accommodation for persons displaced by disaster.*

The Barbados Defence Force

From its inception in 1979, the Barbados Defence Force (BDF) has made a significant contribution in several areas of national life.

The BLP remains committed to the strengthening and modernisation of the BDF as a critical part of our national security. This process was started by the last BLP Administration with the construction of a new Coast Guard Base and the acquisition of new Coast Guard vessels.

We will:

- *Continue the modernisation of the BDF.*

GOVERNANCE



A Better Governance

Forty-six years ago, Barbadians assumed full responsibility for the running of our own affairs. Through the fortitude and determination of generations of ordinary citizens we have earned our way in the world and are recognised as a leading developing country which enjoys global admiration and respect. Our commitment to the values of hard work, integrity, discipline and respect has helped to establish Barbados as a well-ordered Parliamentary democracy.

To build on this reputation, we must now enhance our governance system to ensure that services are not poorly delivered or not delivered at all; that straightforward decisions are not tied up in red tape; that vital economic opportunities are not lost through inefficiency and incompetence.

A Barbados Labour Party Government will quickly modernise our structure and systems of governance to make the transformation to a new and better governance a reality.



We will forge a spirit of partnership between the Government and the people it is elected to serve to bring about transformational change. Government is strengthened when citizens are confident, self-reliant and dedicated to serving the best interests of their families, their communities and ultimately their country.

Barbados is not only about what more Government can do, but about what we can do together. We must all work together to move our country forward.



We will:

- Present an Annual Prime Ministerial Statement to a Joint Sitting of Parliament wherein the Government's main policies and its legislative agenda are laid out for both Houses and for the Community as part of the exercise to strengthen governance.
- Afford ordinary Barbadians greater influence on the Parliamentary Process through the establishment of Standing

Committees of Parliament taking oral and written evidence on key national issues.

- *Consult fully with the Social Partners, the Electoral and Boundaries Commission and the Public on legislation to regulate the funding of political parties and campaign finance.*
- *Reform the Estimates of revenue and expenditure, and the entire Budgetary process to facilitate greater scrutiny of Government's proposed Budgets and accountability for the details of proposed revenue and expenditure.*
- *Prioritise the reform of systems, rules and procedures to enhance and modernise*



service delivery across those Government departments on which the public and the business community most heavily depend.

- *Reconceptualise our statutory corporations and the economic and societal interests which they secure and ensure that there is a greater level of participation by partners in the private sector and civil society.*
- *Include representatives of civil society in the composition of the Social Partnership.*
- *Enact Freedom of Information legisla-*



A BETTER TOMORROW

BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY

- *Enact Freedom of Information legislation thereby increasing transparency and the ability to hold the Government to account.*
- *Strengthen the human rights entitlements of our citizens and the entrenchment of those rights in the Constitution, modernising them both in wording and content.*
- *Rebalance power between Parliament and the Executive to enable Parliament better to hold the Executive accountable.*
- *Strengthen the Standing Orders of Parliament to ensure timely, responsible and effective transaction of the people's business.*
- *Issue additional broadcast licenses to facilitate an open environment for the flow of information.*
- *Engage in a programme of community empowerment to allow communities to assist in better managing community centres and sporting facilities.*
- *Reform the system of Government procurement of goods and services to provide greater access to and participation by larger numbers of Barbadians.*
- *Involve young people in a wide spectrum of endeavours and nation building activities in a meaningful and rewarding manner.*



The Team for A Better Tomorrow



**Hudson E.
GRIFFITH**
St. John

**Edmund
HINKSON**
St. James North

**Arthur
HOLDER**
St. Michael Central

**Sandra
HUSBANDS**
St. James South

**Noel
LYNCH**
St. Michael South



**Gregory
NICHOLLS**
St. Michael
North West

**George
PAYNE**
St. Andrew

**Peter
PHILLIPS**
St. Lucy

**Trevor
PRESCOD**
St. Michael East

**Desmond
SANDS**
Christ Church
East Central



**Dwight
SUTHERLAND**
St. George South

**Kerrie
SYMONDS**
St. James Central

**Ronald
TOPPIN**
St. Michael North

**Indar
WEIR**
St. Philip North

**Anthony
WOOD**
St. Philip South

