

**PRESS STATEMENT FROM SHADOW ATTORNEY GENERAL
DALE MARSHALL Q.C., M.P.**

While the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) does not intend to cause undue public alarm, as a responsible Opposition we consider it our national duty to urgently draw to Government's attention the rising sense of deep concern steadily enveloping our country over the almost daily incidents of violent crime being experienced.

We do so in the wake of the latest shocking crime reports including yesterday's/Wednesday night's daring armed robbery at the Speightstown, St Peter outlet of KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken); and the latest homicide using fire arms, which took place in St. Joseph earlier today.

As a result, Barbadians in their homes and businesses are now, more than ever, under siege by the brazen elements in their country. We as a caring and law-abiding society cannot therefore ignore the callousness with which the lives of fellow Barbadians are being taken, the frequency and boldness with which firearms are being illegally used and the rising levels of violence among our youth. All of these are unmistakeable signs of a society that is falling apart.

At the same time, the Barbados Labour Party gives great credit to the Royal Barbados Police Force for its continued fine crime fighting work in these trying and demanding times, with stretched and limited resources available to its valiant personnel.

While the ongoing professionalism of the RBPF is undoubtedly of some comfort, Barbadians at home and at work are not fully reassured and are demanding more of their government. For there has also now emerged the frightening element of Barbadians being preyed upon in their homes by confidence tricksters and other elements, using various guises to gain access to people's houses and property. We in the BLP are happy that through social media, Barbadians are seeking to protect themselves and their neighbours through being able to spread the word about these kinds of criminal activity, thereby raising the level of public awareness and aiding the fight against these criminals.

The Barbados Labour Party demands that the government takes every step to provide the RBPF with the increased resources needed to bring an end to this unprecedented state of affairs that is threatening to destroy our way of life to which we have become accustomed over many generations. We also call on all members of the public to play their part by supporting and cooperating with the RBPF, and adopting what measures they can to keep themselves safe.

The reality is that where combatting crime is concerned, Barbados cannot afford for government to exhibit towards it the same kind of insensitivity and slowness

of reaction it has shown towards our economic difficulties. For as difficult as our economic conditions might be, there are some things that are simply not optional or negotiable, such as the state of crime. The Barbados Labour Party is convinced that there can be no fallback or second best position on the crucial matters of public safety and security. Public safety is one of the fundamental pillars on which a society rests and grows. Without this, no efforts by the government to promote growth and development will have any possibility of success.

Dale Marshall Q.C., M.P.

April 16, 2015