



**PRINCIPLES & VISION OF THE
BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY
2016**





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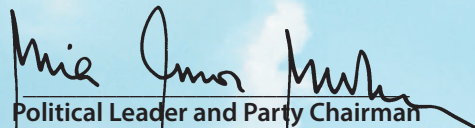


*“Strict
Guardians of
our Heritage”*



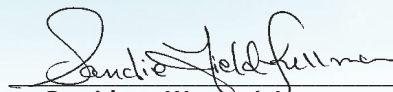
OUR PLEDGE

We pledge to serve the people of Barbados at all times, to remain committed to our values and to each other; to work together to keep our Party relevant; to build a better Barbados and a better life for our people.


Political Leader and Party Chairman


General Secretary on behalf of
the National Council


Secretary of the
Parliamentary Party


President, Women's League


President, League of Young
Socialists

Signed by all key organs of the Barbados Labour Party and our members.



A NEW COVENANT

"Covenant occurs when two individuals or groups, differing perhaps in power, but each acknowledging the integrity and sovereignty of the other, pledge themselves in mutual loyalty to achieve together what neither can achieve alone. "

Jonathan Sacks
The Dignity of Difference



EMPOWERING, REBUILDING & UNITING BARBADOS

**The Hon. Mia Amor Mottley, Q.C., M.P.
Political Leader & Chairman of the Barbados Labour Party**

Barbados is not working for the vast majority of Barbadians.

We need a Covenant of Hope – one that will allow for the healing of our nation. We must, all of us, agitate for more visionary, compassionate and responsible leadership from all who would govern. We must return to the values that sustained and distinguished us as Barbadians.

The time for a new politics is upon us.

Our Party must let Barbadians know who we are, what we stand for, and what we are prepared to fight for.

We must remain steadfast in our mission to build a better society, to forge a new national consciousness, to rebuild our economy – all guided by the best principles of good and transparent governance - while engaging the world.

Simply put, ours is a mission of Enfranchisement, Empowerment and Inclusion.

This Covenant, which was approved by our 2015 Annual Conference, sets out our values, our principles and our vision for a 21st Century Barbados and will inspire our policies. You shall always have the confidence of knowing how we will take decisions and how we will act in your name. It is a Covenant of Hope between us and you. We will come to you, parish by parish, to listen to you and elicit your ideas on how best to put our vision to work for you. And in return, we will ask for your patriotic and enthusiastic participation as together we seek to turn that vision into reality.

The Barbados Labour Party understands that you cannot build a nation unless you empower a people. We understand the need for continuous

conversations with those whom we serve about their hopes for the future. We understand that if even one person is not empowered, our nation is left the poorer. We understand that we cannot educate a people and then treat them as though they lack intelligence. We understand that family and community matter, that character matters, that trust matters, that hope must always be kept alive and that aspirations must become achievements. We understand that Barbados and the Caribbean need a new development vision, a new development path.

We remain convinced that our country and the wider Caribbean have much of value to share with the world. We have a story to tell that holds great relevance for such a time as this. Our story teaches the world how harmony exists alongside diversity. This is all the more apt, in today's reality, when religious extremism and class warfare appear to be at their worst.

I was born at the dawn of a new era. I witnessed the emergence of a sovereign state from the vestiges of a colonial past. And as an independent Barbados grew from infancy, I too progressed through the stages of life blessed to have been loved and nurtured by my family and encouraged and inspired by the men and women in my constituency and in our wider Barbados. I have also been fortunate to sit at the feet of some of the greatest statesmen and thinkers Barbados and the Caribbean have ever produced. From them all, I have learnt what it takes to love, to lead, and to shape a nation – to keep a people rooted in the best of our values and traditions while allowing us to aspire to become global citizens.

Today, many of us, as the "Children of Independence", come to full maturity alongside our nation. We are part of a Joshua generation, tasked with leading a remnant out of a wilderness and into a Land of Promise. I am humbled and honoured to have been chosen to guide the Barbados Labour Party at this most perilous, yet promising, moment in our history as a nation.

I, too, covenant with you that the team which I lead will always remember that we are servants of the people. We will be compassionate and accessible. We will be disciplined and always accountable to you.



With courage and resolve, I know that true transformation will be attained. Our journey is not over. By the grace of God, it continues.

Join with us in committing to this, Our Covenant of Hope, to build a new and better Barbados!

The Hon. Mia Amor Mottley, Q.C., M.P.



BLP Political Leader Mia Amor Mottley and Party Elders:
From left: Lindsay Bolden, O'Brien Trotman, Nigel Barrow,
Sir Louis Tull, DeLisle Bradshaw, Sir Henry Forde and Vic Johnson

MESSAGE FROM THE PARTY ELDERS

In 1938, the Barbados Labour Party was born out of a deep desire to bring freedom, political empowerment, economic and social justice to all Barbadians, ensuring we should never again be tenants in our own country. Barbados can only become what our fore parents dreamed of, if every organ and resource of Government exists to serve the people. Not the other way around. We have no nation without our people. We have no Government without your consent. You are the reason we are here.

The dream and ambition of the Barbados Labour Party has always been the creation of an equitable society in which all citizens can participate; built on the principles of hard work, courage, compassion, integrity and fairness.

The Barbados Labour Party must remain steadfast to its mission as long as poverty and injustice continue to exist in our nation, as long as people are deprived of opportunities to be

the best they can be, as long as our country's development potential remains unfulfilled. This is the dream and the promise that inspired the architects of Barbados' path to democracy, through every setback they endured from the 1930s, through the attainment of universal adult suffrage to the present. This dream and promise inspired our own efforts as we served in various capacities in successive Barbados Labour Party administrations. This vision must now guide us all through the next stage of our journey.

May we all work together in a spirit of unity to sustain the nation of which our fore parents dreamed, a thriving nation where compassion and fair play are ever at work, the kind of nation of which we can all be proud.

May we always build a better life for our people.

H. de B. Forde

**Sir Henry de B. Forde, K.A., Q.C. on behalf
of the Barbados Labour Party, Party Elders**



SECTION ONE **THE JOURNEY THUS FAR**

1938 - 2016



The opening of the first parliament under adult suffrage after the general election in December 1951. *From left: Sir Edwy Talma, Sir Grantley Adams, Sir Mencea Cox and Sir Ronald Mapp*

BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY

GRANTLEY ADAMS HOUSE
Barbados Labour Party



WHO WE ARE

We, the Barbados Labour Party, are the oldest political party in the English-speaking Caribbean. We have transformed this country into the modern, democratic and socially just society that is admired and respected worldwide.

We are the Party that delivered to all Barbadians, universal adult suffrage – the right to vote - which is the cornerstone of our democracy.

We are the Party that transformed Barbados from a society in which the majority enjoyed very limited rights, to the land owning democracy that our citizens so value today.

We are the Party that initiated mass-based access to high quality health care, education and access to housing and land.

We are the Party that laid the infrastructure of modern Barbados - with airport, seaport, major highways, improved road networks and international telecommunication systems - that allowed us, as a small country, to compete with the rest of the world.

We are the Party that has always protected the poor and vulnerable. We revolutionised Barbados' industrial relations by fighting to protect workers, founding the Barbados Workers Union (BWU) and enacting legislation which gave rights and benefits to all levels of workers .

We are the Party that created the social and economic environment that led to the expansion of the middle class, exemplified by the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act which gave tens of thousands of Barbadians the right to own land.

We are the Party that led the transformation of Barbados from an agrarian society to a modern services-driven economy, more recently exemplified with the establishment of the international business sector.

As a result of our vision and initiatives, Barbados reached the enviable position as one of the world's leading small island states, renowned for its political stability, progressive social policies, protected environment and high levels of human development.



Members of the J.M.G.M. 'Tom' Adams Cabinet.
From front left: Lindsay Bolden, Sir Henry Forde,
Dame Billie Miller, Nigel Barrow, Vic Johnson,
DeLisle Bradshaw, Sir Richard 'Johnny' Cheltenham

THE LEGACY OF THE BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY

Barbados entered a new and enlightened phase of its history in the 1930s, after an oppressive social and economic environment led to the 1937 riots and the eventual formation in 1938 of Barbados' first political organisation, the Barbados Labour Party, (BLP).

This was a transformative period marked by the formation of the Barbados Workers Union (BWU), by the BLP in 1941, to fight for the protection of workers' rights. The BLP set about social transformation through: laws to ameliorate the appalling working conditions of workers; adult suffrage, self-government and cabinet government, the pillars on which our democracy was established; critical infrastructure including

the air and seaports; free secondary schools and technical institutes; low and middle income housing; the establishment of polyclinics and the planning and commencement of the construction of the QEH.

The BLP moved the country from an agrarian society, primarily dominated by sugar production, to a more diversified economy. It established the Development Board, the forerunner to the BDC and the Tourist Board. This led to the development of the manufacturing and tourism sectors. Two major initiatives also transformed the fishing industry, namely the shift from sail to engines in the 1950s and the move to ice boats in the late 1970s onwards.

The emergence of these economic sectors was matched by the BLP's implementation of social legislation that is still transforming the lives of Barbadians to this day. These include the enactment of the Protection of Wages Act and the Holiday with Pay for Workers Act. Always mindful of the needs of the vulnerable, Unemployment Insurance, introduced in the early 1980s through the National Insurance Scheme, expanded the social safety net. These were signal achievements.

Recognising the need to further diversify the post-Independence economy, the BLP moved ahead in the 1970s with the development of the domestic financial sector – the creation of the Barbados National Bank (BNB) and the Insurance Corporation of Barbados (ICB) – and the international financial services sector. At the same time, the BLP's use of fiscal incentives led to the extremely successful growth of our credit union movement, that is now responsible for almost \$2 billion in savings.

During the 1990s, policies were also adopted for the encouragement of Barbadian investment in the domestic transport sector and the food and restaurant industry. Fiscal incentives were also used to propel our first real entry into the renewable energy sector with tax allowances being granted for solar water heaters, creating hundreds of jobs and significantly reducing our oil import bill, while saving foreign exchange. Subsequently, a comprehensive Green Economy Policy was prepared, forming the basis of much of the activity now taking place on Renewable Energy.

In more recent times, the establishment of the Fair Trading Commission in 2001, was another critical milestone in the modernization of our economy. This allowed for the protection of the rights of consumers, the protection against unfair competition and the independent regulation of our utilities.

The BLP implemented a watershed achievement in national social progress with the passage of the revolutionary Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, which enabled tens of thousands of Barbadians to become landowners and to significantly improve their housing across plantation tenancies. Subsequent amendments extended its reach through a modified subsidy applicable to urban and non-plantation tenancies in the late 1990s. Protection for families was similarly revolutionized





in 1979 through the passage of the Status of Children Reform Act and the establishment of the Commission on the Status of Women. This period saw bastardy becoming outlawed, equal social and inheritance rights for all Barbadian children and a new era of social rights and economic benefits for Barbadian women.

The Barbados Drug Service, an innovation in its time, was another remarkable achievement for a small island developing state and has made an appreciable difference in the quality and length of life of many Barbadians who would, otherwise, have been unable to afford critical medication.

The BLP's comprehensive national response to the advent of HIV/AIDS with an innovative programme addressing medical care, public awareness, education and infra-structural

support, won international recognition. Barbados was one of the first countries in the Caribbean to provide anti-retro-viral drug therapy free of cost to HIV+ pregnant women.

The BLP also established the Chronic Non-Communicable Disease Commission to fight the epidemic of diabetes, hypertension and obesity.

Improvement of the social and economic conditions for our citizens was accompanied by a corresponding strengthening of the mechanisms dedicated to the physical safety and security of the nation and its people. This included the creation of the Barbados Defence Force in 1979, the formation in 1982 of a collective defence capacity within the Eastern Caribbean, the Regional Security System (RSS), head-quartered in Barbados, and its upgrading to a treaty-based Organization in 1996.

Later on, in 2007, the Barbados Labour Party led the effort with regional partners to establish the Joint Regional Communications Centre (JRCC). This centre is also head-quartered in Barbados and has enhanced our regional border security significantly, in a post 9/11 world, by the provision of Advanced Passenger Information to our border security agencies. CARICOM became the first region in the world to access real time vetting of this information from Interpol.

Domestically, the progressive modernisation of the Royal Barbados Police Force and its high level of dedicated professionalism gave Barbados an enviable reputation within the Caribbean as a leader in the fight against crime and the preservation of law and order.

The process of Independence was further built upon by the termination of our relationship with the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and legislation was passed to make the Caribbean Court of Justice our final Court of Appeal. After decades of planning, a new Hall of Justice and a new prison at Dodds were constructed.

Bold steps towards modernisation were taken with infrastructural projects including a network of highways, rapid expansion of access to electricity and water services, allowing for universal access to these services and the significant expansion of Barbados' telecommunications (outside of the realm of a monopoly) providing access to the world in real time through attaining one of the highest internet penetration rates in the Americas.



New frontiers of social and economic development were ushered in with the formation of the National Sports Council (NSC) and the establishment of the National Cultural Foundation (NCF), providing outlets for the creative talents and energies of our citizens and demonstrating the link between sports, culture, income earning, revenue generation and foreign exchange earnings.

The BLP introduced Eductech as a revolutionary approach to the delivery of education to help change how and what we teach, while ensuring that the introduction of information and multimedia technologies enhanced learning in the classroom.

For the first time a Ministry of Youth Affairs was established by the Barbados Labour Party in 1994 to develop policy and programmes dedicated to our young people.

The BLP also focused on the strengthening of our communities through the extensive provision of sporting facilities (including flood lights for evening use) and community technology programmes providing training to all interested persons.

However, the BLP recognised that it was equally necessary to focus on national identity issues. In that vein, Emancipation Day was first formally celebrated as a National Holiday in 1997. By the next year, the BLP also introduced legislation to identify ten National Heroes. These Heroes exemplified courage, sacrifice, patriotism and the pursuit of excellence. To celebrate the contributions of these Heroes, National Portraits were commissioned; a hard cover book "For Love of Country" was published; a permanent exhibition was created in the Museum of Parliament; and, four statues were commissioned in honour of:

1. The Rt. Excellent Sir Grantley Adams
2. The Rt. Excellent Sir Gary Sobers
3. The Rt. Excellent Sir Frank Walcott
4. The Rt. Excellent Errol Walton Barrow

Rock Hall was also recognised as the first free village and a monument commemorating this historic achievement was constructed.

The BLP proclaimed and strictly enforced that our beaches would remain the patrimony of all Barbadians with the right of free access always and that no private beaches would be allowed.



From the mid-1990s, Barbados achieved unimagined heights characterised by unprecedented economic growth and development. The middle class expanded exponentially and thousands were lifted out of hardship through innovative Poverty Alleviation Programmes. Unemployment dropped to its lowest ever, while foreign direct investment rose to its highest ever. We achieved record levels in business expansion and entrepreneurship, assisted by access to low cost finance for small and micro businesses. We increased access to housing significantly with the introduction of 100% mortgages and the removal of land tax on property up to a value of \$250,000.

This was matched by a concerted effort to improve rural and urban communities through a process of social transformation with the establishment of the Rural Development Commission and the Urban Development Commission. These two entities brought new focus to the unique characteristics of rural and urban Barbados.

All of these achievements led to Barbados becoming the No.1 developing country in the world, according to the United Nations Human Development Index. It is no ordinary achievement that this was accomplished without compromising our nation's fiscal, macro-economic or monetary stability. Regrettably Barbados lost its status as the No. 1 Developing Country on the Human Development Index in 2011.

It is shocking and frightening how quickly this history of solid achievement and growth have been compromised by the absence of vision, competence and effort that has recently characterized our political climate.

Barbadians deserve better. Barbados can do better.

Building on our legacy of positive development, Barbados will be guided along the next stage of its journey. This period must be characterised by a renewed commitment to opening up our individual and collective creativity, enhancing our innovativeness and strengthening our commitment to the enfranchisement and empowerment of our citizens.

This is what the Barbados Labour Party stands ready to offer: returning to our beloved Barbados and all Barbadians the kind of political leadership that will lift our country up and transform our lives for the better, while making us proud as Barbadians yet again.





SECTION TWO
OUR PRINCIPLES
& VISION





OUR WALL OF VALUES

Courage **Love** Sincerity Justice
Trust Gratitude **Integrity** Security
Loyalty **Innovation** Accountability
Compassion **Confidence**
Excellence **Commitment** Respect Kindness
Graciousness Teamwork
Excellence Humility Tolerance
Transparency Partnership **Creativity**
Family **Dedication** Patience
Equality Civility Sacrifice **Fairplay**
Inclusiveness



WHAT WE STAND FOR

The Barbados Labour Party remains faithful to the following core principles which are essential to achieving a truly just, equitable and developed society in which all citizens can continue to flourish and realise their full potential.

OUR PRINCIPLES

1. The Barbados Labour Party stands for strengthening the spiritual and cultural psyche of Barbadians in a way that enhances honesty and integrity, raises self-awareness, builds confidence and pride, fosters a sense of industry, and responsibility, community and nationalism.
2. The Barbados Labour Party stands for an acceptable quality of life for all, including a standard of living below which no citizen must be allowed to fall.
3. The Barbados Labour Party stands for good and transparent governance.
4. The Barbados Labour Party stands for improving the livelihoods of all of our people and widening economic enfranchisement.
5. The Barbados Labour Party stands for fair treatment and just reward for all, workers and investors alike.
6. The Barbados Labour Party stands for the empowerment of people through continued access to quality universal free education.
7. The Barbados Labour Party stands for universal access to quality health care and access to affordable land and housing.
8. The Barbados Labour Party stands for development in a sustainable manner that protects our natural and built environments.
9. The Barbados Labour Party stands for fostering civility, inclusiveness and respect for diversity amongst our citizens.
10. The Barbados Labour Party stands for achieving and maintaining global excellence in all of our endeavours.



WHAT WE WILL FIGHT FOR

OUR VISION FOR A NEW BARBADOS

Barbados must embark on the next phase of our journey if we are to transform our nation such that it becomes a fully developed society that is safe, prosperous, socially just and globally competitive, in which our natural and built environments are protected for the peaceful enjoyment of all.

Enlightened social and economic governance that is inclusive and delivers an acceptable, sustainable quality of life and greater opportunities for economic enfranchisement and the empowerment of our people is the basis on which we will provide access to universal health care, free education for all and full protection for the most vulnerable.

Translating our broad transformative vision for a new Barbados into tangible achievements will require discipline and focus. We will concentrate our efforts on five priority themes, all essential and mutually reinforcing components of the overarching vision for our country. These themes all flow naturally and cohesively from our core Values and Principles:

1. OUR VISION FOR A NEW NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS
2. OUR VISION FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE
3. OUR VISION FOR A BETTER SOCIETY
4. OUR VISION FOR A NEW ECONOMY
5. OUR VISION FOR ENGAGING THE WORLD

We remain committed to creating an inclusive, equitable, healthy, educated, decent, polite and moral society.

These ideals of a new Barbados can be realized by championing individual empowerment and personal responsibility; valuing and enriching individuals, communities, and businesses through innovation and enfranchisement; and rooting our people through confidence building, inclusiveness and the assurance of enduring social justice.

The time has come, once again, for another profound transition, a bold new course in our development journey. We must work together across the society to transform the mindset of our people, our governance systems, our approaches to social justice, our economy, our politics and our relationships with the rest of the world. **WE MUST CHART A BOLD NEW COURSE.**

We will build upon the ideas that shaped the first stage of our development, responding proactively to new challenges, but never failing to put our people at the centre of development, as we have always done. As stated in our Call to Action issued on the 75th Anniversary of our Party, we will work with all who share our commitment on individual causes, without requiring of persons membership or loyalty to our party as a precondition to cooperation and support.

In committing to these Principles and Vision, we signal our seriousness as a Party and distance ourselves from those whose only interest in politics is power and the desire for personal enrichment, those who do not believe in working tirelessly to improve the country and the lot of all citizens; but, most of all, from those who see no need to communicate fully and frankly with the citizens who elected them and whom they are duty bound to serve.

This Covenant of Hope is the basis for our conversation with all Barbadians.

It will provide for the voice of the many, rather than the influence of the few and the powerful.

It will guide our internal discussions and our interactions with you, the people of Barbados, and will inform our policy positions designed to give life to each agreed vision.

Our positions will become approved policy ONLY if they pass a fundamental litmus test: they must reflect and be consistent with these Principles and Values.



ONE **OUR VISION FOR A NEW NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS**

A Barbadian who is confident, happy and conscious of moral, spiritual and cultural values: One who is compassionate and charitable towards fellow citizens, regional neighbours and visitors to our shores and who has a multicultural and multi-ethnic awareness.

Our principles which support this vision are:

PRINCIPLE 1

The Barbados Labour Party stands for strengthening the spiritual and cultural psyche of Barbadians in a way that enhances honesty and integrity, raises self-awareness, builds confidence and pride, fosters a sense of industry, and responsibility, community and nationalism.

PRINCIPLE 9

The Barbados Labour Party stands for fostering civility, inclusiveness and respect for diversity amongst our citizens.

WE, the people, are truly our greatest resource.

We must unify around values of family, community and country. To do so, we must redefine what it means to be a Barbadian.

We must nurture in our people an appreciation not only for the rights our country affords us, but also for the responsibilities it demands of us towards our families, each other, our communities and the entire nation.

Only then will we move forward united as one people.

We must always remind our people of the need to be compassionate and to have empathy towards each other. We must above all else care and look out for each other, especially those who are most vulnerable. We must value and promote our natural friendliness, showing civility to each other and to all who visit.

These are the hallmarks of a good and humane society.

We must address directly the issue of our national self-identity.

It affects our self- confidence;

It affects whether or not we respect ourselves and by extension, other people and how we care for each other, especially the vulnerable;

It affects how we treat our families, our communities and those with whom we interact in the workplace;

It affects our attitude to rendering professional service;

It affects our work ethic and our productivity as a nation – how much and how well we produce;

It affects our preparedness to take risks in investing at home and overseas and our willingness to fully engage with the rest of the world;

It affects our prosperity and its sustainability;

It affects our ability to transform our nation and to move forward as one people, taking our rightful place in the Caribbean and in our interdependent world.

Our Party stands for enabling Barbadians from every family and community to build confidence, as we each actively participate in shaping a happier, more empowered, just, transparent, inclusive and caring society.

Our Party stands for life-long learning linked to tangible opportunities for social innovation, including new possibilities for the greater participation of our communities in national policy formulation and open government.

Our Party stands for nurturing in every Barbadian family the spirit of patriotism and the ethic of national service that mirrors the very best qualities of our National Heroes.

Our Party stands for the pursuit of excellence as the guiding principle for our citizens as they go through life. Our people must engage the world without ever forgetting who we are and what we stand for.

Every Barbadian, whether by birth, descent or choice and whether living here or overseas, has a right and a duty to be involved in the transformation of our nation.



TWO **OUR VISION FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE**

The Barbados Labour Party believes that Barbados requires a new system of governance for the 21st century. Such a model must be designed and implemented to be more responsive to the need for the sustainable development of our country.

Our principle which supports this vision is:

PRINCIPLE 3

The Barbados Labour Party stands for good and transparent governance.

The Barbados Labour Party recognizes that HOW we do things, WITH and for WHOM we do things will be as important as WHAT we do.

Good governance demands sound decision-making and effective implementation.

Good governance:

- **permits everyone to have a voice in decision-making processes**
- **provides everyone with timely accurate information**
- **holds decision makers accountable for the choices they make**
- **is transparent and responsive**
- **follows the rule of law and respects the independence of the judiciary**
- **is effective and efficient**
- **is equitable and inclusive**
- **is the anchor for social, environmental and economic justice**

The Barbados Labour Party is committed to the principles of good governance which we believe are the foundation for the creation of a new Barbados. As a political party, ALL of our decisions and actions will be guided by these principles.

We believe that we must create a space for direct democracy through which our citizens can become more involved in the governance of our nation. This involvement will only be achieved through greater consultation and participation, in and out of Parliament.

We support the use of People's Initiatives, as well as the mechanism of Referenda, to ensure that our citizens may influence the work of our Parliament and our Executive. This permits our people, and not only Parliamentarians, to have an appropriate role in decision-making on fundamental issues affecting the stability and cohesion of our nation. This must always follow an intensive public education programme.

Our democracy will be strengthened by the reform of our Government. There must be the appropriate checks and balances between the

Parliament and the Executive. We must reform our Parliament to better serve the needs of our people. We must also address the issue of the financing of campaigns and fairness in our electoral system to protect the will and the choice of Barbadians to determine their destiny without manipulation. There is a cost to democracy and the State must accept this reality if we are to protect the will of the majority from the influence of the few and the powerful.

There must also be an expanded Social Partnership to include civil society and the Church to address GOVERNANCE issues in a holistic manner.

We will modernize our Constitution to allow it to address the role of Governance of our nation and not simply the role of Government. In addition, the Barbados Labour Party is committed to using legislation more pro-actively to simplify our bureaucracy and remove discriminatory provisions that negatively affect our people.

Similarly, Barbados must modernise the administration of justice. Justice delayed is justice denied. Whether in the criminal, civil, family or commercial courts, the Barbados Labour Party believes that Barbadians and foreign nationals alike must have the confidence that they can get in and out of court within a reasonable period and at reasonable cost and be treated fairly. This will allow us to better manage and maintain peace and stability and also to enhance our competitiveness as a nation.

Information is critical to development and growth in today's world. We make a commitment to transparent government and making accurate information available in a timely and easily accessible manner. Barbadians must not be held hostage to powerful or vested interests, whether from Government, the private sector or civil society. We are committed to creating an independent mechanism to protect the rights of Barbadians and to ensure their unfettered access to information within the rule of law.

We assert that all Barbadians must hold our leaders accountable.

We will have a clean Government rooted in integrity. The Barbados Labour Party is committed, through legislation and enforcement, to ensuring that there must be no space for corruption in our society. Similarly, corruption and greed must be

OUR PLEDGE TO OUR PUBLIC SERVANTS

Barbados' reputation globally as a well – ordered, progressive democracy has been earned in no small measure by dint of the fortitude, determination and hard work of generations of capable, professional and patriotic public servants. They are the unsung heroes of our project of nation-building.

Yet the structures, systems and decision-making processes which our public sector inherited half a century ago are no longer robust or nimble enough to sustain our nation's progress into the 21st century. Our public servants are demoralized and tired of struggling within inadequate and anachronistic rules and procedures, tired of being given no scope to advise or innovate, tired of being blamed for the inefficiencies caused by lack of resources and tools to do the job. Above all, they are tired of being bashed and ridiculed

at the highest levels of Government. Our teachers, nurses, police and other uniformed personnel, social workers, sanitation workers and, indeed, all public servants are close to breaking point.

The Barbados Labour Party pledges always to treat our public servants with dignity and respect. Our country cannot function without you, and you cannot function to the best of your ability in an atmosphere of acrimony and humiliation.

We will work with you and with the Unions, in a truly consultative process, to return our public service to the high levels of efficiency and productivity it once enjoyed, to help you to understand the critical role you must each play in building Barbados, and to empower you to fulfil your true potential. More than ever before, Barbados needs a strong, self-confident, highly motivated public service to deliver to all our citizens a better, faster, more responsive and more caring Government. Together, with commitment and restored trust, we can make it happen.





rooted out wherever it is found – in high and low places. This is the only way to make Government stand for something meaningful and allow our people to know that we are all on the same journey.

We will promote systems of regulation, licensing and procurement that minimise any opportunity for corruption. Further, legislation must be passed to prevent any Government from signing contracts once an election has been called so as to prevent the currying of patronage in ways inimical to the public interest.

We will ensure that Policy statements by a Government are always accompanied by effective implementation within a reasonable period if they are to enjoy credibility.

The Barbados Labour Party recognizes that many of our systems and laws in Government are dated

from the 19th and 20th century. We must have more modern systems and laws servicing our people in the 21st Century if our citizens are to retain confidence in the rule of law and the role of Government. We are steadfast in our belief that our Government must work for and with our people. It is a Government's duty to provide quality service for all of its people.

Our systems in Government must be redesigned to make them more user-friendly and to ensure access by persons most in need.

We must update and create new technology legislation and cyber-security policies to make better use of modern Information Communication Technologies to increase the efficiency and responsiveness of Government and public services to our people's needs and concerns.

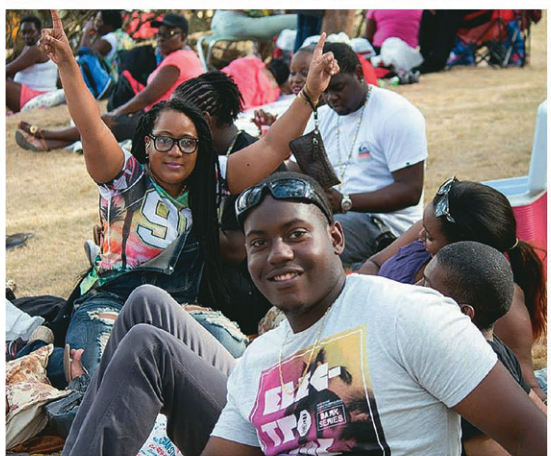
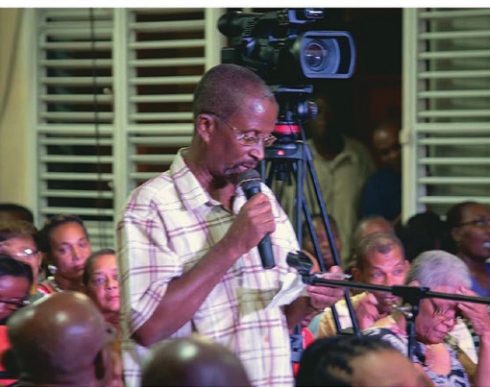


The Barbados Labour Party believes that if we are to preserve our stability, which is our country's major asset, and if we are to transform our nation, we MUST prioritise the demands on public expenditure, as follows:-

- 1. Maintain law and order, security and public safety.**
- 2. Protect public health and universal access to health care.**
- 3. Empower our people through free formal and non-formal education, ready access to information and the bolstering of our national identity while protecting and nurturing the most vulnerable among us.**
- 4. Preserve our public spaces, protect and enhance our land, marine and built environment in the national interest and ensure access to affordable land and housing.**
- 5. Protect consumers in the marketplace and our workers and create an environment within our productive sectors that is dedicated to creating opportunities, allowing for a fair return on investments to those investing and creating opportunities for the wider economic enfranchisement of our people.**
- 6. Safeguard our national identity at home and abroad and provide for our interaction with the rest of the world through diplomacy and trade.**

These must be the absolute priorities of a Government in a 21st Century Barbados.

This will inform how we as a Government will assess claims on public expenditure, without prejudice to the other powers of a Government to legislate, regulate, facilitate, invest and empower.





THREE **OUR VISION FOR A BETTER SOCIETY**

Barbados will distinguish itself by its commitment to a social covenant with our people that includes universal access to free tertiary education and training, and quality universal healthcare, access to affordable land and housing, the protection of public spaces, respect for diversity, fundamental freedoms, rights and responsibilities, and equality under the law.

Our principles which support this vision are:

PRINCIPLE 2

The Barbados Labour Party stands for an acceptable quality of life for all, including a standard of living below which no citizen must be allowed to fall.

PRINCIPLE 6

The Barbados Labour Party stands for the empowerment of people through continued access to quality universal free education.

PRINCIPLE 7

The Barbados Labour Party stands for universal access to quality health care and access to affordable land and housing.

PRINCIPLE 9

The Barbados Labour Party stands for fostering civility, inclusiveness and respect for diversity amongst our citizens.

The primary goals of the Barbados Labour Party will continue to be:-

- the alleviation of poverty;
- the empowerment of our young people, elderly and people with disabilities;
- the protection of our children and other vulnerable citizens; and
- the strengthening of our families and communities.

Poverty for the first time since Independence has increased in our land. Our middle class is at risk of pauperisation. Violence of all types, particularly gender-based violence, is scarring our society. We must urgently and aggressively reverse these unfortunate developments.

We pledge to preserve, expand and effectively integrate our social policy architecture such that our delivery of services become people-centred and NOT focussed on the Department from which they are delivered.

We also commit to relying on the full powers of a Government (namely legislating, regulating, investing, facilitating and empowering) as we chart a bold new course for education, health, housing, and other social services which will further transform Barbadian society.

In the past, the two primary areas in which Barbados scores highest in respect of the Global Competitiveness Index are education (among the top 20 countries) and health (in the top third of the countries of the world). We must build on this competitiveness, not squander it. We must use this comparative advantage to promote Barbados as a hemispheric hub for investment in the provision of educational and health services. These assets also make a critical contribution in our fight against poverty as well as preserving our social stability.

We must complete the quiet revolution started by our Party to expand land ownership with respect to both plantation and non-plantation tenancies. As a natural progression from these earlier initiatives, we will continue to develop creative policies to foster greater home ownership and access to land island wide.

The empowerment of people is also central to our mission. Greater responsibility must be passed on to our citizens and communities in ways which foster fairness and deepen democracy.

We pledge to create more opportunities for the participation of citizens in the governance of our communities, especially as it relates to public spaces. We will pursue a programme of local governance that will not be subject to the arbitrary dictates of politicians. Volunteerism and public service will be strongly promoted.

In addition, we will encourage the revitalization of Non-Governmental and Community Based Organisations by giving fiscal incentives for novel ideas that address needs at the community level to better promote social entrepreneurship. We will also deepen the requirement for transparency and accountability of these civil society organisations.

The Barbados Labour Party is committed to the right of our people to decent and rewarding work. Workers and their Unions must be treated fairly and with respect at all times. We will seek to negotiate for greater mobility of our workers, in and out of CARICOM, so as to continuously expand their opportunities.

We commit to expanding opportunities for all and creating greater equity in our society. The success of our people must NOT depend on who they know or where they were born BUT what they know and how hard, how creatively and how fairly they are prepared to work.





The Barbados Labour Party believes that Barbadians have a right to live in a strong and cohesive society which provides:

- **Access to quality, affordable land and housing.**
- **Decent livable wages.**
- **Access to affordable, wholesome food that allows Barbadians to eat a nutritionally balanced diet so they may pursue healthy lifestyles.**
- **Universal access to free quality education.**
- **Universal access to quality healthcare.**
- **Access to recreation and sports facilities in our communities.**
- **Access to cultural and arts training.**
- **Access to modern information and communications technology island-wide.**
- **Access to affordable and reliable transportation services island-wide.**
- **The preservation of our natural and built environments.**
- **Maintaining Barbados as a safe and socially just society with adequate supportive mechanisms to mitigate the economic hardship of those who find themselves without work.**

Achieving and maintaining these standards are essential to our long-term stability and well-being. They also establish a firm foundation for economic development and social justice, both of which are critical to our international competitiveness. This is the Barbadian way.

OUR PLEDGE TO OUR CHILDREN

Our children are precious to us. It is to them that we owe the greatest responsibility. At all costs, we must love, nurture, protect and propel them.

We will develop and place high priority on programmes to strengthen the family and provide formal parental education. Given the changes in our housing patterns that have diminished the immediate influence of the extended family, we will encourage our communities to retake responsibility for the general welfare and education of all of our children, for we accept that it truly does take a village to raise a child. That is why we must build and support strong community groups that have legitimacy in their communities and the trust and respect of parents.

We are concerned that current educational and social systems do not do enough to detect, protect and support youth at risk. Consequently, violence in schools, juvenile delinquency, criminal behaviour, wandering, and child sexual exploitation are all on the increase. We remain concerned that more human and financial resources are needed by schools, social systems and community organizations to create a seamless referral network that is responsive to how vulnerable adolescents access services. Youth friendly programs must seek to engage supportive parents and vulnerable families.

The ultimate gift that we give our children, however, is that of example. We, as adults must be fully sensitized and encouraged as to the need for all of us to live by our values and to “walk the walk” in how we speak and how we behave at all times if we are to lead our children on the right path to secure their future.



OUR PLEDGE TO OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Barbados Labour Party will create a safe and nurturing environment within which our young people can grow to their maximum potential.

We will provide for them the opportunities that will develop the character, competence and personal responsibility traits that they will need to become successful adults. Indeed, this includes mentorship programmes that allow for positive interaction and networking between young people and their peers but also facilitates learning from committed elders.

High intellectual and moral values, innovation and fearlessness, discipline, good habits and a strong sense of purpose should assure our youth a promising future. Yet the world they will grow up in is radically different from anything their parents have ever experienced or could even have imagined, and the generation gap is wider than ever before. Dynamic change can create limitless opportunities for those with the energy and the enthusiasm to seize them, but at the same time, it can breed confusion and uncertainty in those who are not properly equipped or empowered to take advantage.

Our task therefore as parents, teachers and mentors is to foster in young Barbadians a new generation of confident and capable, multilingual world citizens, who know they can make a living anywhere. They must be free to fly, not constrained by the shackles of "the good old days".

To empower our young people, we must show them love and understanding, communicate with them, and channel their hopes and aspirations in positive directions. We must give them the skills and opportunities to face this Brave New World, but we must also ground them in those enduring Barbadian values which have sustained our progress as a nation and a people.

Our young people must be given exposure wherever possible to travel to recognize that they are truly global citizens. This will help build bridges of understanding among our youth and expand their thinking as to possibilities.

The Barbados Labour Party will work every day to turn our positive vision for our young people into their reality, to help them achieve their full potential and play their part in taking our country forward.



OUR PLEDGE TO OUR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

It is the duty of all of us, Government, employers, teachers, and members of civil society to provide a supportive environment in which People with Disabilities (PWD) are fully empowered to live, learn, work and recreate, and to achieve their full potential in dignity and without discrimination.

Technological advances and best practice recommendations made by PWDs and their local advocates have greatly increased our capacity to integrate PWDs fully into Barbadian society - whether in our schools, our workplaces, our places of worship or our leisure settings.

We recognize that the caregivers of the PWDs invariably need financial support or occasional assistance as much care for PWDs is often unpaid with women bearing a disproportionate burden. Consequently, we will ensure that Government works with a revitalized and renewed civil society and the Church to ensure that Respite Care is available in Barbados to meet this critical need. We will examine how the Government and the society can best support PWDs and their caregivers.

The Barbados Labour Party pledges to use these recommendations and advances to maximum effect in devising and implementing comprehensive and sensitive policies in support of PWDs and to involve PWDs in shaping, implementation and evaluation of such policies.



OUR PLEDGE TO OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

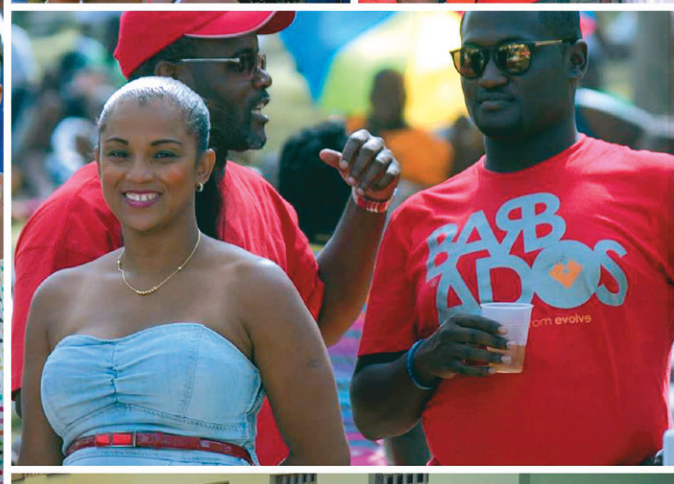
Barbados is an ageing society. Senior Citizens make up a sizeable and growing percentage of our total population. Today's generation of retirees has no intention of withdrawing to their armchairs. On average they are living longer, more productive and more active lives in their golden years. The phenomenon of grey power is clearly an important force to be reckoned with in shaping our national policies for the present and the future.

The Barbados Labour Party honours the dedicated and patriotic service that generations of our elders have rendered in the building of our nation. We cherish their presence among us, and greatly respect the wise counsel of their experience.

Our covenant with you, the senior citizens of Barbados, demands that we:

1. Commit to the devising of sensitive policies to empower and support Barbadians in their senior years, so as to enable them to maintain a decent quality of life in comfort and in dignity. In our enlightened society, no senior citizen should be left to exist in abject or genteel poverty. We will also ensure that a system of identifying and assisting every elderly person who lives alone is created and implemented with the help of the NGO sector and the Church.
2. Commit to an ongoing dialogue with this key stakeholder group and its advocates so that our policies will be informed by broad consultation on the issues that affect them most directly, including health and nursing care, pensions and taxation, housing and reverse mortgages.
3. Protect them by law from elder abuse and discrimination whether by relatives or external caregivers.
4. Find creative and mutually satisfying ways to value the unpaid work being done by our community of seniors (but which makes a significant contribution to our society) and to tap into the storehouse of wisdom and experience that resides among them and to the spirit of mentorship and volunteerism that gives them purpose and keeps them active and alert.
5. Promote active ageing in Barbados.
6. Create avenues for mentorship with the youth to foster exchange of ideas and transfer skills between generations.







FOUR **OUR VISION FOR A NEW ECONOMY**

Barbados' economy must be modern, innovative, diversified, globally competitive and productive, to achieve a level of commercial success that leads to a fair return on all investments, a widening of economic enfranchisement and the sustainable improvement in the livelihoods of all our citizens.

Our principles which support this vision are:

PRINCIPLE 4

The Barbados Labour Party stands for improving the livelihoods of all of our people and widening economic enfranchisement.

PRINCIPLE 5

The Barbados Labour Party stands for fair treatment and just reward for all, workers and investors alike.

PRINCIPLE 8

The Barbados Labour Party stands for development in a sustainable manner that protects our natural and built environments.

The Barbados Labour Party recognises that to be a successful nation and to meet the needs of our people, our nation must achieve economic security and prosperity.

We envision a Barbados in which high levels of economic well-being enable our people to choose the paths their lives will follow, with access to broad-based social welfare structures for those truly in need. We accept that a country will invariably face periods of economic adjustment and uncertainty. When this happens, the burden of adjustment must be shared fairly; but, equally, when times of plenty return, the bounty must be shared fairly among all of our citizens.

This vision embraces a new economy built upon a foundation of a fair share for workers and adequate returns on private investment; effective employment of new technologies across the public and private sectors; a credible and efficient court and legal system; and access to diverse energy resources and information and communication technologies at competitive prices. Additionally, food and water security, and the protection of our natural and built environments should support balanced economic growth and a secure future for generations to come.

For this vision to become reality, we must continuously refresh and add new industries and sectors to our country's existing economic mainstays, not just to strengthen the economy but also to widen its ownership base and provide decent work for all our citizens.

As the Government confronts challenges, the question that will inevitably confront us is how best can we build partnerships with our citizens through economic enfranchisement to ensure equitable access to critical public services and wealth creation for our people?

In addition to supporting traditional economic drivers, the Barbados Labour Party believes in a modern, innovative, resilient economy that employs new technologies:

1. To enable the investments in infrastructure and the policy, legislative and regulatory actions

that make it easier for Barbadians to establish new businesses and grow existing ones.

2. To develop a 'Digital Economy' (including digital payments and cyber security laws and infrastructure) on a platform that guarantees free universal access to broadband internet for all Barbadians, facilitating new industry and improving the efficiency and quality of the public and private sectors of the economy.
3. To create a 'Professionals' Economy' that supports the educational development of Barbadians to internationally accredited professional standards in medical, legal, financial, engineering, creative and other professions and the export of professional services to the world, but, in particular, to countries in which we have reached agreements that support trade in these services.
4. To facilitate a 'Youth and Creative Economy' that capitalises on the growing interconnections globally between sports, culture, entertainment and digital technology.
5. To build a 'Visitor Economy' that revitalises our traditional tourism sector by converting the Barbados brand into one that exceeds visitors' expectations and is highly competitive in attracting investment in a transparent manner for the continuous renewal of this sector.
6. To support an 'Educational and Health Economy' that discovers and develops new avenues of value creation in these areas to establish Barbados as a hemispheric hub.

7. To develop a 'Mature Economy' that utilises the wisdom, knowledge and experience of thousands of retired persons, domestically and within CARICOM and the Commonwealth, while allowing them to enhance their pensions.
8. To enhance an 'Energy Economy' that efficiently utilises new sources of clean, sustainable, renewable and non-renewable energy and provides new and better opportunities to workers and communities while protecting our environment.
9. To develop an 'Innovation Economy' that utilises and grows the skills and creativity of our people and the opportunities for social entrepreneurship; and that focuses on Research and Development.
10. To revolutionise our 'Agricultural Economy' (including our sugar cane industry) by better fusing access to technology, research and capital; promoting the consumption and export of viable agricultural products and better utilise our land towards ensuring greater food security, food sovereignty and export earnings.
11. To create a "Maritime Economy" that preserves the oceans around us, transforms our Fishing Industry and effectively and sustainably expands other areas of economic development related to our vast marine environment.
12. To build a "Green and Integrated Economy" anchored on the three pillars of sustainable development – society, economy and environment, in which our long term prospects are

not compromised or jeopardized by short term actions for unsustainable gains; and to invest in sustainable environmental practices and policies which reorganizes how we live, how we work, how we address waste and conservation and how we ensure the responsible use of renewable technologies

Underpinning various approaches to economic development is the need to foster the enhancement of our physical infrastructure to urgently develop our water security along with air, sea and road transportation systems. We have a new vision for comprehensive water and waste management and modernization of our transportation systems.

The process of economic transformation must begin at home to allow Barbadians to enjoy an assured quality of life. We do not subscribe to the pervasive view that we as a people lack entrepreneurial skills and drive. This view has been used to justify focus on traditional sectors and to deny small and micro-enterprises, vendors and farmers access to capital to grow their business. We call attention to the fact that within every community there are small business owners, food, fruit and clothing vendors, beauticians, shop and bar owners, farmers, electricians, landscapers, plumbers, mechanics and other entrepreneurs who take calculated risks every day.

This confidence in the small business sector allowed the BLP to create a number of mechanisms to finance micro-enterprises and to implement fiscal incentives to bolster Credit Unions and create over one hundred thousand Credit Union shareholders today. We stand by the important value of small and micro-enterprises at the community level and in growing the economy. We will continue to invest in training and capacity building, removing impediments to growth and expansion and in providing accessible financing for this sector.

To broaden access to financing, we will develop new, innovative, well-regulated instruments for mobilizing domestic and diaspora savings for domestic investment, such as crowd financing, local investment clubs and junior stock markets.

This will enhance the opportunities available to Barbadians for wealth creation.

To support new investment and economic growth, we must also ensure that our legal and licensing systems deliver just, predictable outcomes in a speedy and low cost manner, and where possible, electronically.

The Barbados Labour Party recognizes that growth in our productive sectors comes primarily from the private sector and that the focus of Government and its agencies ought to be to support, facilitate, regulate and partner with the traditional and non-traditional private sector, where necessary. We recognize also that there is therefore a greater role to be played by non-Government actors in the more efficient management and development of the state entities engaged in the productive sectors.

The process of transformation also requires a better management of our substantial public resources. Major public assets should be registered in the public domain and placed in a National Wealth Fund (NWF), the assets to be managed independently of Central Government. This will provide a transparent platform for co-

investing with the private sector, credit unions, local banks, pension funds and the National Insurance Scheme in developing these assets. This fund will also present opportunities for major international investment partnerships helping to provide greater economic and financial diversity to our domestic economy. This new model of economic transformation would be agreed through social dialogue and would place citizens at the centre of the new economy.

It is also imperative that Barbados participates in the global economy and takes full advantage of all opportunities for economic growth and development offered by our trade partners. We must build on the opportunities afforded to us by our international trade agreements.

Within CARICOM, Barbados has lead responsibility for the Single Market and Economy (CSME). Further, CARICOM countries are our largest export market, a major source of tourists and investment for us. Accordingly, CSME remains the critical platform for enhancing the domestic prosperity of our citizens and businesses. We must embrace the value of this opportunity to our services based economy and more aggressively undertake our leadership role in this project.





Fundamental to our national economic growth objectives will be the establishment of a high target rate of growth, which we will achieve within the following framework:

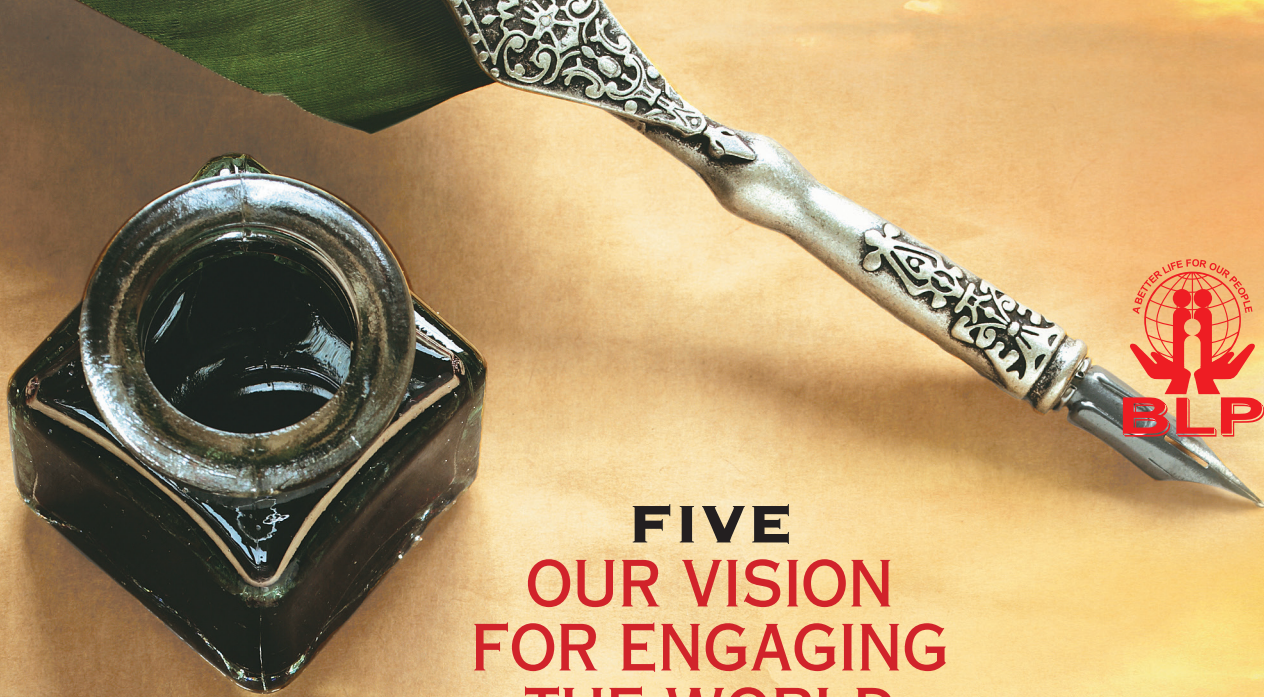
- **A responsible Macro Economic Strategy that targets export growth and foreign reserves accumulation; a simple, transparent and fair tax and expenditure strategy that is focused on fiscal stability, economic growth and national debt reduction.**
- **A Financial Strategy that helps the establishment of new private institutions and supports existing ones to better mobilise domestic savings for domestic investments while adequately addressing international challenges.**
- **An Asset Management Strategy that is focused on using public assets more productively and innovatively.**
- **A Digital Strategy that uses ICT to improve citizens' access to information; enhances the efficiency of our public and private economy and consumer choices; facilitates new industries; reduces and improves bureaucracy and the delivery of government services**

and decisions; and increases and enhances productivity nationally.

- **A Citizens Strategy that records and removes bureaucratic impediments to doing business and the delays in the court system and gives our Fair Trading Commission and other consumer bodies sharper teeth to protect consumers and support reduced costs.**
- **A Jobs and Investment Strategy that reflects the strategies above, along with a credible suite of fiscal, procurement and regulatory policies to support innovation and small business.**
- **An International Strategy which promotes Barbados as the convenient geographical launch platform for entry into the wider Caribbean and Latin America.**

Our economic vision will be the basis for the delivery of better livelihoods for all, the restoration of confidence by local and international investors and more equitable distribution of income, wealth, and opportunity in Barbados.





FIVE **OUR VISION** **FOR ENGAGING** **THE WORLD**

A Barbadian people fully equipped with the skills, boldness and confidence to compete in the dynamic, international economy of the 21st century, supported by a facilitative domestic and regional policy framework, based firmly on sovereignty, independent and principled positions executed by an enhanced, professionalised, refocused diplomatic and trade representation fully capable of defending our vital national and regional interests in all traditional and emerging centres of power and influence.

Our principle which supports this vision is:

PRINCIPLE 10

Barbados Labour Party stands for achieving and maintaining global excellence in all of our endeavours.

As we seek to engage the world, we must always do so from our own geographical, historical and spiritual centre of gravity – our Caribbean civilization. The Barbados Labour Party fully recognizes that our economic and social progress is inextricably linked to that of our brothers and sisters in the Caribbean Community.

Consequently our policies and approaches will remain sensitive to this fundamental truth and will reflect our clear understanding that we are always stronger and more successful when we work in concert as a unified region.

Within these parameters, it is imperative that Barbados participates effectively in the global economy. We must look outwardly, understand and appreciate how the external economic, physical and social environment affects us and determine how best we can position ourselves to take full advantage of the world we live in. We must also consider how our citizens can position themselves and our economy across the global society and in the new cyber marketplace where only our imagination, innovation and creativity can impede us. Our small size must never be a barrier to the success of our citizens and full development of our island.

Our aspirations must be global as well as local. The Barbados Labour Party will work with Barbadian professionals, companies and entrepreneurs to become globe trotters.

OUR PLEDGE TO OUR DIASPORA

Information and communications technologies have effectively blurred the lines between those Barbadians who live on our island and those who live abroad. Our Overseas Barbadians are now better informed and more up to date on developments in Barbados than ever before. In the Barbados Labour Party, we make no distinction between the two. Wherever you live you are, first and foremost, for us, Barbadians who love their country and want to see it prosper.

We have long recognized your tremendous contribution as a Diaspora to the development of Barbados, through your remittances, your investments and donations, your unpaid labour as Ambassadors for your country, your liberal sharing of skills, knowledge and experience in your fields of excellence and your abiding concern for our welfare.

Two decades ago, a BLP Government created a Special Facility to incentivise Barbadians who wanted to return home to resettle or to contribute. The project has evolved over the years, but we are conscious that much more can be done to engage you directly in social and economic development opportunities in Barbados, whether or not you chose formally to relocate. It is our covenant to you that we will engage you directly on ways this can best be achieved in the true sense of partnership and common cause.

Fundamental to achieving developed status as a nation state will be a new emphasis on international diplomacy, enhanced trade policy and a new investment strategy. We will seek to ensure that the right mix of skills are strategically located. We must return our international credit ratings to investment grade and our human development ranking to the premier spot it previously occupied. Doing so gives us greater power to determine our own position in the world. Barbados must be at the table in all of the major centres of international influence. If we are not, it will place our citizens and our country at increasing disadvantage.

A critical pillar in our economic growth and development will be our ability to take full advantage of the opportunities available for export and transfers of technologies, and to vigorously protect our existing exports from unfair competition however that may manifest itself.

We will craft new opportunities for our domestic industry to take advantage of existing international trade agreements. We cannot grow by seemingly offering the ordinary to the world. We must develop Barbadian designations and intellectual property so that products and services from Barbados can be better differentiated in the international marketplace as special, helping to turn them into powerful global brands. Our agencies focused on business and trade will have this as a strategic mandate.

The world economy is changing. New geopolitical alliances with emerging new powers, which are drastically different from our historical alliances and traditional world powers, are being formed. We must capitalize on these and seek to relocate Barbados in this redefined world order. We must forge international agreements with partners from the new world economic powers in order to attract additional and more varied capital to our shores and create new avenues for the export of goods, services and capital.

To implement these strategies, we must seek to consolidate the process begun by the last

BLP Administration by widening our diplomatic reach well beyond the traditional power centres on either side of the North Atlantic. This will require the deployment of dynamic, highly-skilled, professional diplomatic and trade representatives, capable of securing the best outcomes for Barbados in bilateral and international negotiations, and also of forging strategic alliances with like-minded countries on interests of shared priority concern.

As a small island developing state, we are particularly vulnerable to both external economic shocks and environmental threats such as climate change, unbalanced exploitation of the oceans and the degradation of the natural world. We must seek out new and non-traditional partnerships, externally as well as internally, to help support efforts to reverse or mitigate the effects of these developments. We must also pursue such policies, programmes and personal behaviours as will reduce the incidence of these events and mitigate their impact on our society, our economy and our environment.

We have in the past sided with the oppressed and disadvantaged people in the world, irrespective of race, creed or colour as a natural expression of our humanity. The high regard in which we are held in the international community derives largely from the fact that Barbados has consistently pursued a foreign policy based on principle, not expediency; a policy that has always been grounded in respect for human rights, democratic governance and social justice, and which has afforded us the freedom to organize against and speak truth to power in international fora whenever and wherever human rights, fairness, peace or international law are threatened. It is the strength of our conduct on the international stage which constitutes the best test of whether or not we can legitimately aspire to developed nation status.

We are confident that this new Barbados model which we are advocating and to which we are committing in this Covenant of Hope will capture the global imagination and once again establish our country and our people as global leaders.



CONCLUSION

CREATING A COVENANT OF HOPE

The Barbados Labour Party has been in the vanguard of Barbados' development since the 1930s. Our Principles and Vision as enshrined in this document are intended to inspire a new political discourse about the future that we can achieve together. We have drawn on our history as the party birthed and shaped by social revolution and seek to inspire a new era in Barbadian politics.

Our politics must restore authenticity to political discourse and not betray the trust of the citizenry by politically expedient promises.

Our politics must be less personal and more inspirational.

Our politics must continue to reflect that we truly care about our people.

Our politics must be about remaining rooted to our core philosophical moorings as the party of social revolution, integrity and service.

Our politics must be guided by commitment to participate more actively with the rest of the Caribbean as a means of attaining full socio-economic development for our country.

Our politics must be guided by the underlying belief that every citizen matters and deserves the right to become the best that they can be.

We are committed to nurturing a new Barbadian with a strong sense of personal, community and national responsibility, who will strive for global excellence while preserving the best of our Barbadian traditions and values.

This is our Covenant of Hope.

Let us as Barbadians bind together to make our nation a beacon in this world!

May 5th, 2016



"These fields and hills beyond recall are now our very own"