

**UWP DELEGATES CONFERENCE
CASTLE BRUCE**

SPEECH BY LENNOX LINTON

HIGHLIGHTED PARTS ARE PLAGIARIZED

Castle Bruce good afternoon; Colihaut good afternoon; Cottage good afternoon; Paix Bouche. Where is Portsmouth this afternoon? Vieille Case? St. Joe, good afternoon to you. Mahaut, Soufriere and where is Grand Bay this afternoon? Grand Bay, good afternoon; Petite Savanne, good afternoon; Grand Fond, Riviere Cyrique, good afternoon to you; Carib Territory good afternoon; Roseau Valley, Roseau North; Roseau South where are you? You have a man of integrity coming to get you, coming to take care of you. Roseau Central good afternoon; Salisbury; Marigot, Marigot, Marigot; La Plaine good afternoon.

Thirty-five years ago – where are my Wesley people? Okay, Wesley is here with us; La Plaine is here with us; Grand Fond, Riviere Cyrique, the Carib Territory is here, Roseau Valley, Roseau North, Roseau South, Roseau Central, Salisbury and Marigot; Soufriere is here as well.

My friends, thirty-five years ago this year we became an independent nation challenged to do justice to the human development spirit of our ancestors whose contributions to this unique piece of paradise on earth inspired our march towards an ideal society, an exemplary green economy in Dominica. Thirty-five years ago we pledged that through sacrifice, strategic planning, hard work, enlightened governance and the protection of the dignity of our people, we would earn a place as a worthwhile participant in the advancement of global civilization. For thirty-five years this year we have sung and recited the words of our

National Anthem, important words about our global positioning strategy that appeared to mean less and less to us as time goes by;

*“Isle of beauty, isle of splendor
Isle to all so sweet and fair
All must surely gaze in wonder
At thy gifts so rich and rare.
Rivers, valleys, hills and mountains
All these gifts we do extol
Healthy lands so like all fountains
Giving cheer that warms the soul.”*

In the past fourteen years an unrelenting criminal exercise masquerading as government has ravaged our beauty, scoffed at our splendor and severely devalued our gifts for personal multi-million dollar gain. With the solemn promise that all shall eat, they have shamelessly practiced a few shall eat all.

From the clear vision statement in our National Anthem, the task was to develop and implement specific policy initiatives that will secure Dominica’s emergence as the nature island capital and equal opportunity standard of the world community and our competitiveness in the international trade of goods and services. The clear expectation was to ... socio-economic independence for all the people of Dominica as we position our isle of beauty, our isle of splendor as a leader in food security, agriculture, agro-processing, livestock and fisheries. We have the healthy land, the pastures green, the clime benign and bright to feed ourselves, to feed our neighbours then feed the world.

The hope and dream was that our isle all so sweet and fair would cash in on opportunities for eco-tourism, renewal energy, information technology services, financial services, light manufacturing, wellness, sports, art, music and entertainment as viable offerings in our repertoire of services to the global community. We only needed to successfully integrate ourselves into a

worthwhile place in the international trade of goods and services by effectively aligning national resources to the national development strategy and discharging our national leadership and management responsibilities with honesty, integrity, purpose and commitment.

The last fourteen years, ladies and gentlemen, have been a dismal failure. We have been reeling under the weight of corrupt, incompetent regime, hobnobbing with international criminals and using government for the private benefit of Ministers instead of for the genuine advancement of people. There has been no equal opportunity; Dominicans are being condemned as second class and have to scrunt for jobs given to foreigners on major infrastructure projects. The economy has declined to the worst recession in three decades. The regime is blaming the atrocious result in implementing green projects, attracting foreign direct investments and starting of the economic growth engine on the global financial crisis. We are still waiting for the explanation why the same global financial crisis did absolutely nothing to slow down the aggressive advance of their own personal wealth creation machine.

Hundreds of you have journeyed here this afternoon to this historic occasion because you are aware that you have brothers and sisters in this country bawling murder under the whip of an ever-rising cost of living. Many can't find work but even those who work can't make ends meet from month to month; money is not meeting money; people are losing their possessions; banks, hire purchase and payday loan companies are reclaiming their houses, their cars, their household appliances at an increasingly alarming rate. Taxation is unconscionable; VAT on basic foods; VAT on health care; VAT on your babies; VAT on the dead that you have to bury. And you have the ceaseless rant of miss-educated advocates of a regime shouting day in and day out over qualifications for public office but offering no solutions for unemployment; no solutions for cost of living casualties; no solutions for rising poverty; no solutions for the economic decline that is besetting us.

While the people catch hell Ministers of Government continue to do exceptionally well with the milk and the cheese and the butter from the cow of public money and the growing millions of illicit enrichment. Businesses are closing down, victims of a punitive VAT; prohibitive energy bills; burdensome operating cost and declining consumer spending; jobs are disappearing and government is clueless about the kinds of targeted interventions that could facilitate a turnaround in this worsening crisis situation.

We have been forced to grin and bear the social injustice outrage of the century - \$27 million of the people's money to build a palace for the President while the champions of a State-financed housing revolution found their noses at the housing woes of long-standing, long-suffering Labour Party supporters in Chance, Lagon, Glanvillia and other pockets of poverty in the country. Our poor and working poor people have been imprisoned behind the jail bars of need by a regime emboldened with the belief that keeping Dominicans poor and dependent on handouts is the surest way to win elections and thereby opportunities to plunder the public purse.

Crime is out of control, no law, no Constitution has been able to constrain a leader who dutifully commandeers the institutions of State to protect those who facilitate fattening his pockets through the proceeds of crime. Freedom of the human spirit is under attack as the fear of evil, vindictive government deepens in this country.

This is the report card of the largest, most expensive Cabinet of Ministers in the OECS operating the smallest economy and delivering the worst economic performance results. We pay them to work for the betterment of Dominica. They took our money and they work for the benefit of themselves. They qualified themselves to lie; they qualified themselves to cheat; they qualified themselves to steal consequently, we are last in the green economic initiatives; we are last in national income generation; we are last in agriculture and tourism performance; last in foreign direct investment inflows; last in foreign

exchange earnings; last in job creating; and last in economic growth but we are first in the abuse of public office for the creation of millionaire Ministers and we are also first in the sale of passports and diplomatic immunity to some of the most wanted criminals around the world.

Today in Castle Bruce, we acknowledge the tremendous work to be done for God and country in order to reinstate the moral compass of enlightened leadership at the helm of our development efforts. Today we pledge together we will.

And so, on behalf of those who have stood with me, empathized with me, prayed with me and shared hopes and dreams with me, it is an honour and a privilege to accept the leadership of the United Workers Party.

Commented [AA1]: Taken from Chastenet's 2013 speech.

I thank my parents – my father left us earlier this year, my mother, Rachie, is in Marigot, very good afternoon to you, God bless you. I thank my brothers and sisters; my wife and family are here with me today, I ask them to stand, my wife's family also very dear to me. I thank my friends and co-workers; my teachers and mentors over the years and the people of Marigot where I grew up. The patriots of Dominica at home and abroad and the giants of this great political organisation like Hon. Edison James, Hon. Norris Prevost, Hon. Ron Green, Mr. and Mrs. Garnet Didier. It is on these shoulders I now stand. Together, the different players on my personal development team through time have prepared me for time like this, a time for climbing mountains and crossing stormy seas, a time of being more than I can be in the cause of putting Dominica first. I am humbled and grateful for the Party's vote of confidence in my ability to build and lead a governance team that will conscientiously nurture and protect the public interest in the advancement of Dominica for all Dominicans.

Commented [AA2]: Extracted from song by Josh Groban "You raised me up."

This was an exciting and at times tense leadership determination exercise but at the end of the day the value of honouring the collective will of the people

prevailed for the people. This exercise of our democratic privilege to let all ideas, talents and capabilities contend is indispensable in the practice of people-centered policy making in the free world. We are better this afternoon as we now look ahead to even greater unity of purpose for the common good. Let us, therefore, resolve to leave our differences and understandable disappointment behind in the contest that ended with the choice of the majority and prepare for the battle to lift Dominica out of the abyss of the gloom and doom into which it was so cruelly dumped by the Dominica Labour Party.

Fortunately for us, in its first term in Government, only four and a half years, our 25-year old political organisation effectively demonstrated its ability to modernize and grow the Dominican economy and to facilitate the evolution of social services that significantly improved the quality of life. Together we will do it again. And so at this time when Dominica cries out to be released from the stranglehold of a regime that has managed to turn the country upside down, inside out, back to front over the last fourteen years, we rise on the commitment that the United Workers Party will lead Dominica to the glory days of its full potential.

Commented [AA3]: Plagiarized from Chastenet!

Together we will do much more than secure enough votes to win the next election; together we will ensure that we that we vote with our ID cards; and together we will ensure that the voters list is cleaned and freed of dead and illegal people. Let us keep it simple. Together we will join our brothers and sisters of all political persuasions in a crusade to restore the beauty and radiance of the Dominican soul. Together we will rise not to curse the darkness but to bring the light of renewal; together we will renew the United Workers Party into a more effectively structured, integrated, visionary, caring, innovative and agile organisation committed to the good governance of Dominica. Together we will face the future with confidence mindful of the need to continuously improve party organisation, systems and procedures to secure

Commented [AA4]: Chastenet

Commented [AA5]: Plagiarized from the speech of John F Kennedy.

Commented [AA6]: Chastenet

relevant, enhanced participation, achieve consensus, and define the skills and competences required for the task at hand.

As representatives of our people, we must be committed, willing and able to stay the course as agents of the change our country urgently needs. We must communicate respectfully with all constituents; we must listen to them; learn from them and be guided by their fears, their anxieties, their emotions. We must empower ourselves to be effective facilitators of the worthwhile dreams and aspirations; we must rise up and live up to the highest standards of leadership and management excellence in the public interest.

Together we will ensure that change is a must and not an option because things cannot be allowed to get any worse than they are right now. Together will stand for the change that will ensure that never again will this "Isle to all so sweet and fair" be asked to accept 'beggar days as better days'.

Commented [AA7]: Chastenot

For our beloved Dominica, we are challenged to pursue an economic development strategy premised on sustainable innovation utilization of our natural resources to transform the economy from a state of helpless decline to a level of vibrancy and adequate diversification able to provide for the current and future needs of our people. To that end, we will create an enabling environment through leadership action that carefully connects our vision, our values, our business fundamentals, legislation and incentives to the economic growth strategy. In so doing, we will facilitate the emergence of a strong private sector that drives new investment and job growth, earns foreign exchange and increases disposable income.

To facilitate more productive engagement to the global community we will embark on a comprehensive air and sea action initiative to include the development of an international airport, a Dominica based airline and a high-speed ferry service. On the technology front, we will reposition Dominica to achieve technology leadership in the region by engaging highest speed wireless

broadband available in order to enable new cutting edge business development driven by video calling, streaming and data transfer.

In the strategic planning for a better Dominica we will prioritise the utilization of the tremendous human and financial resources of our sons and daughters in the diaspora whose anxiety to leverage the value of our gifts so rich and rare for significant international benefit patiently awaits the arrival of a government committed to putting the national interest ahead of personal interest.

Our foreign policy for productive engagement with the outside world in the enlightened self-interest of Dominica will be determined by us and not imposed on us. Let us be clear, foreign governments around the world are working hard to stamp out corruption. We do not expect their monies to be coming to Dominica for Ministers to be involved in corruption. It is as plain and simple as that.

Of paramount importance in this land of people strong and healthy full of Godly reverent fear, is the restoration of faith and confidence in the ability of institutions, offices and officers of State to function in the public interest without fear or favour, affection of ill will. We will create a Dominica first environment of caring, mutual respect, trust and commitment in which nationals at home and abroad especially traditionally disadvantaged groups can participate fully with their unique talents and background in achieving and sharing the fruits of our success.

We will strengthen democracy in government institutions and civil society organisations while purposefully reducing the size and the cost of government. We will not operate with the largest cabinet in the OECS delivering the poorest economic result and managing the smallest economy in the grouping.

We are firmly committed to a rules based social protection and poverty alleviation programme that is comprehensive and free of petty partisan politics. Consequently, we will work to provide complete health care and elderly care, housing support and social protection for those in need. To keep our nation safe, we will establish and implement an adequately resource national strategic plan for sustained reduction of crime and violence.

We wholeheartedly commit to a human capital development programme designed to build the discipline of lifelong learning and ensure the delivery of quality education strategically aligned to the long-term national development goals. This will mean moving speedily to achieve full literacy of the Dominican population; improve training for employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for the nation's youth in the growth engines of the economy.

In the bid to correct our human capital deficiency, we will strengthen youth development organisations and provide proper sporting facilities island-wide capable of helping young Dominicans to prepare effectively for international competitions.

Dominica, our isle of beauty, our isle of splendor, our isle to all so sweet and fair, can become the best place to live, work and enjoy life in the global community. We can become an exemplary globally recognised nature island democracy of the people, by the people, for the people standing tall as a beacon for the advancement of civility around the world.

Our call today is for everyone especially those who have lost confidence, those who are fearful of the future but whose heart yearn for something better.

Commented [AA8]: Chastenet

“Come ye forward, sons and daughters
Of this Gem beyond compare;
Strive for honour sons and daughters,
Do the right be firm be fair.

Toil with hearts and hands and voices,
We must prosper! Sound the call,
In which everyone rejoices,
All for each and each for all.”

Let us, once again, believe in our individual ability to make a difference and in our collective ability to let Dominica soar to the sublime heights of human achievement. It will not be easy but I know together we will get there because in the words of Julia Wardhouse –

“Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord
He’s trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored
He has loosed the faithful lightning of his terrible swift sword
His truth is marching on.”

And with his truth marching on together we will restore the pride and dignity of Dominica as a nation under God, committed to truth, righteousness, justice and the constitutional rule of law.

Together we will develop and grow a model green economy that puts our people to work for decent wages, gives a fair chance to all and secures our place in the evolution of global affairs. Together we will educate our sons and daughters to become successful global citizens capable of competing and winning in the varied fields of human endeavour. Together we will stamp out rampant corruption that illicitly enriches Ministers of government and their friends with public money syphoned away from securing the greatest good for the greatest number. Together we will eradicate poverty and restore the humanity of the poor and less fortunate whose dignity is trampled under the feet of politicians in disgraceful catch-a-vote advertisement of public assistance financed by the public purse. Together we will defeat gutter politics of *mépwí*, hate and prejudice.

This is the politics that the regime has embraced as its weapon of destruction against those who dare to do the right, to be firm and fair in presenting the case for a better Dominica. **Together we will ensure that wrong no longer rules the land; freedom no longer weeps; and justice no longer sleeps.** Together we the people, whatever our political persuasions, **whatever our occupation, whatever our station,** will rise up from this long night of pessimism and broken dreams to turn back the worst to put Dominica first. So that our children can be energized through national engagement once again by the stubbornness of hope and the indomitable expectation of love, joy and wonderful possibilities in a future we will no longer fear.

Commented [AA9]: From poem by Josiah Gilbert "God give us men."

Commented [AA10]: Extracted from the 25 points of Adolph Hitler's Nazi Party!

How long? Not long. I leave you this evening with the exciting news that on Sunday, September 29, 2013 we will meet again for the grand 25th Anniversary Reunion of the United Workers Party at Londonderry where the Party was launched in 1988. This rally of all rallies will feature presentations from the new UWP leadership team and political leaders from across the Caribbean region. It will be the defining event in the process of political change that has become a must for Dominica. Sunday, September 29, 2013 the Anniversary Reunion party of the United Workers Party at Londonderry, together we all will be there.

Thank you very much. God bless the United Workers Party and God bless the people of the Commonwealth of Dominica.