

**SPEECH DELIVERED TO POLITICAL MASS MEETING – HELD ON
OCTOBER 1, 2006 – WOTTON, CHRIST CHURCH**

THANK YOU MADAM CHAIRPERSON

GOODNIGHT TO ALL OF CHRIST CHURCH, IN PARTICULAR THE PEOPLE OF CHRIST CHURCH EAST CENTRAL AND OF COURSE MY CONSTITUENTS FROM CHRIST CHURCH WEST CENTRAL.

WE ARE LIVING IN VERY SERIOUS TIMES.

FOR A WHILE NOW THIS BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY ADOPTED A POLITICS OF INCLUSION THAT SIMPLY MEANT THAT IDENPENDENT PROFESSIONALS WERE TO BE TARGETED AND OFFERED SOMETHING IN RETURN FOR THEIR SILENCE ON NATIONAL ISSUES – WHETHER THIS BE A SEAT ON A BOARD OR SOME OTHER POST. PERSONS WHO HAVE BENEFFITED FROM FREE EDUCATION UNDER ERROL BARROW ARE NOT USING THEIR INTELLECT TO KEEP THIS GOVERNMENT IN CHECK. WHEN LAST HAVE YOU HEARD AN ECONOMIST EXPLAINING THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY TO THE PUBLIC, FOR EXAMPLE.

CBC

OUR DEMOCRACY IS UNDER THREAT WHEN THE VIEWS OF THE OPPOSITION CANNOT BE HEARD AND FELT ON CBC TV WHICH IS OWNED BY THE TAX-PAYERS OF THIS COUNTRY. MY CHARGE TONIGHT IS THE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF BARBADOS IS USING CBC TO SUBVERT AND CONTROL THE FLOW OF PUBLIC INFORMATION. DO YOU KNOW THAT WE LAUNCHED OUR SERIES OF

MEETINGS FIRST IN QUAKERS ROAD AND CBC FAILED TO COVER IT. ON THAT SAME NIGHT THE BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY HELD THE FIASCO IN ST. GEORGE TO SELECT A CANDIDATE. CBC GAVE THAT EVENT PRIME TIME COVERAGE (FULL VIDEO COVERAGE). THE ONLY THING CBC CARRIED ABOUT OUR LAUNCH MEETING WAS SCRIPTED FROM A STORY CARRIED IN THE DAILY NATION. UPON INVESTIGATION BY US, CBC NEWS EDITOR TOLD SAID THAT CBC DOES NOT COVER THOSE TYPE OF MASS POLITICAL MEETINGS. CBC ONLY COVERED THE ST. GEORGE MEETING AFTER A PUBLIC OUTCRY ON THE CALL-IN PROGRAMME.

BUT THAT IS NOT ALL. THIS PARTY HELD ITS ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN AUGUST AT WHICH OUR LEADER DAVID THOMPSON DELIVERED A DETAILED SPEECH ON HIS VISION FOR THE COUNTRY, THE DIRECTION TO BE TAKEN BY THE PARTY AND OUTLINING SOME KEY POLICIES. CBC TO THIS DAY HAS NOT CARRIED ANY OF IT. I RECALL LAST YEAR THAT CBC CARRIED THE FULL ADDRESS OF OWEN ARTHUR TO THE BLP'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND I AM WATCHING THIS YEAR TO SEE WHAT THEY WILL DO.

AND THE STORY CONTINUES ... CBC CARRIED IN FULL THE PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE WHERE THE CABINET RESHUFFLE WAS ANNOUNCED. IN FEBRUARY, WE HELD A SIMILAR PRESS CONFERENCE AND OUTLINED A RESHUFFLED SHADOW CABINET AND REQUESTED SIMILAR AIRTIME TO THAT ACCORDED THE PRIME MINISTER – INSTEAD CBC REFUSED OPTING TO BROADCAST OUR PRESS CONFERENCE AT 3PM A SUNDAY AFTERNOON ON CBC RADIO.

MOST RECENTLY, OUR GENERAL SECRETARY GEORGE PILGRIM DELIVERED THE LUNCHTIME LECTURE AT GEORGE STREET. LAST FRIDAY NIGHT, CBC CARRIED AN EXTRACT OF GEORGE PILGRIM OF

EXACTLY 30 SECONDS. THAT SAME NIGHT CBC GAVE MIA MOTTLEY TWO SPOTS IN THE NEWS - A FULL 3 MINS FOLLOWED BY AN INTERVIEW DONE AT THE SAME ASSIGNMENT. TONIGHT I AM SAYING IF WE HAVE TO PICKET CBC OR GOVERNMENT HEADQUARTERS ON BAY STREET TO ENSURE THAT DEMOCRACY IS UPHELD, THEN THAT WE MUST. WE WILL DO WHAT EVER IS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT CBC AND THE GOVERNMENT TREATS US WITH RESPECT. MIND YOU ALL OF THIS IS HAPPENING UNDER THE WATCH OF THE MAN RESPONSIBLE IN CABINET FOR CBC - THE PRIME MINISTER. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. SO THAT WHEN PEOPLE SAY THEY ARE NOT HEARING WHAT THE OPPOSITION'S ALTERNATIVE AGENDA IS - YOU KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING. THAT IS WHY IT IS SO CRUCIAL FOR YOU TO COME TO THSE MEETINGS AND HEAR FOR YOURSELF WHAT WE HAVE IN STORE FOR OUR COUNTRY.

ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSPARENCY

BY NOW I HOPE YOU KNOW THAT WHEN IT COMES TO ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY, THE BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY GOVERNMENT IS ALL ABOUT A GLOSSY MANIFESTO, PROMISES AND NO ACTION WHATSOEVER. IF THIS GOVERNMENT HAD FOLLOWED ITS OWN WORDS AND HAVE FULL ACCOUNTABILITY IN ITS OPERATIONS, OUR NATIONAL DEBT WOULD BE MANAGEABLE AND THE FULL TREASURY THAT OWEN ARTHUR INHERITED FROM THE DLP WOULD BE INTACT.

BUT WHAT HAS BEEN OUR EXPERIENCE? :

JUST WHEN WE THOUGHT THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD DO NO WORST THAN TO BLOW THE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IT HAS IN **GEMS** (\$250 MILLION WASTED), **EASTRY HOUSE, THE GREENLAND LAND-**

FILL – NOW WE THE TAX PAYERS ARE BURDENED WITH A 50 MILLION DOLLAR AWARD AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT BY **BARRACK CONSTRUCTION COMPANY** OVER THE PROBLEM-PLAGUED NHC GOVERNMENT BUILDING AT WARRENS. I BELIEVE THAT THE REVELATIONS ARE SO STARTLING THAT THE MINISTER SHOULD BE FIRED IMMEDIATELY.

WARRENS BUILDING

BUT THE PROBLEMS AT THIS PROJECT HAD TO DO WITH SLACKNESS OF THE HIGHEST ORDER, LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY. AND WHAT'S WORST BOTH THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTER OF HOUSING ARE NOW CLAIMING THEY ARE IN SHOCK AND IGNORANCE.

AND THEY HAVE NO EXCUSE WHATSOEVER – WE HAVE HAD REPEATED WARNINGS FROM THE AUDITOR GENERAL IN HIS REPORTS ABOUT THE LACK OF CONTROLS AND SERIOUS SHORT-COMINGS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF BUILDING CONTRACTS – ST. LEONARD'S BOYS SCHOOL BEING A PRIME EXAMPLE. AND I HOPE YOU REMEMBER ALSO THAT THE AUDITOR GENERAL AND HIS DEPARTMENT RECEIVED A GOOD TONGUE-LASHING FROM THE PRIME MINISTER FOR DOING THEIR JOB.

BUT ONE OF THEIR OWN – SIR RICHARD CHELTENHAM SAYS THERE IS NOTHING MYSTERIOUS ABOUT THE HIGHEST AWARD OF DAMAGES IN THE HISTORY OF BARBADOS. HE IS ON RECORD AS SAYING THAT THE NHC HAS NOT BEEN PAYING ANY ATTENTION TO WHAT WAS AND IS ONE OF ITS BIGGEST PROJECTS. MANY RULES HAVE BEEN BROKEN AND CONTRACTS VIOLATED.

DO YOU KNOW THAT OVER SEVEN MILLION DOLLARS OF BARRACK EQUIPMENT WAS DESTROYED AND NOW HAS TO BE REPLACED BY THE NHC. UNILATERAL ACTION WAS TAKEN BY THE NHC ON SEVERAL MATTERS – ONE OF WHICH WAS TO REMOVE EVERSON ELCOCK LIMITED AS A SUB-CONTRACTOR FOR ELECTRICAL WORK – UNILATERALLY TAKING AWAY THE ELECTRICAL COMPONENT OF THE WORK FROM BARRACK CONSTRUCTION AND AWARDING IT TO EVERSON ELCOCK AS AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR – IT WAS THE FINDING OF THE ARBITRATOR – RETIRED CHIEF JUSTICE SIT DENYS WILLIAMS THAT THIS ACT WAS A SERIOUS AND CONTINUING BREACH OF NHC’S CONTRACT WITH BARRACK. IN SHORT WHAT NHC DID WAS TO TAKE AWAY WORK FROM THE MAIN CONTRACTOR AND GAVE IT TO AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR.

NOW I READ IN THE SUNDAY SUN OF A PLAN TO APPEAL TO THE COURTS BY THE GOVERNMENT – ITSELF IN MY VIEW WOULD BE ANOTHER IRRESPONSIBLE ACT. THE PROCESS BY WHICH THIS HUGE AWARD WAS MADE WAS BY VOLUNTARY ARBITRATION UNDER WHICH BOTH PARTIES AGREED TO BE BOUND BY THE DECISION OF THE ARBITRATOR AND TREAT SUCH DECISION AS FINAL – AND I AGREE WITH THE VIEW THAT THE ONLY GROUND FOR APPEAL WOULD BE IF THE GOVERNMENT ALLEGES MISCONDUCT ON THE PART OF THE ARBITRATOR.

SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES PROCEED WITH AN APPEAL AND LOSES, BOTH THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND THE PRIME MINISTER SHOULD BE MADE TO PERSONALLY PAY THE COST OF THE APPEAL. WHY SHOULD TAX PAYERS BE BURDENED BY FURTHER INCOMPETENCE BY THIS GOVERNMENT?

WE ALSO HAVE THE SPECTACLE OF THE UDC MYSTERY HOUSE AT DAYRELLS ROAD, ST. MICHAEL. A 63-YEAR OLD WOMAN HANDING OVER HER LIFE'S SAVINGS OF \$30,000.00 TO THE UDC TWO YEARS AGO AND NO HOUSE DELIVERED. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE CHAIRMAN HAS ORDERED AN INVESTIGATION SINCE AUGUST. IT IS HIGH TIME THAT THE RESULTS OF THAT INVESTIGATION ARE MADE PUBLIC.

AND NOW WE HAVE THE SUDDEN AWARD OF A 23 MILLION DOLLAR CONTRACT TO A TRINIDADIAN COMPANY FOR THE CONSTITUTION RIVER REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT. WHAT'S WRONG WITH OUR BAJAN COMPANIES. HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE FLOW OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS INTO TRINIDAD WITHOUT ANY INDICATION AS TO WHETHER A TENDER PROCESS WAS FOLLOWED. AND TONIGHT I CALL ON THE GOVERNMENT TO SAY WHETHER THIS CONTRACT WAS TENDERED FOR, IN WHAT MANNER AND NAMES OF THE BIDDERS AND THE AMOUNTS THAT WERE TENDERED.

WE ARE ALSO VERY CONCERNED AND SCEPTICAL ABOUT GOVERNMENT'S PRE-OCCUPATION WITH B.O.L.T. PROJECTS – BUILD OPERATE LEASE AND TRANSFER. EVERYTHING NOW IS BEING DONE BY B.O.L.T AND THE ONLY PEOPLE WE CAN'T GET TO BOLT IS THE GOVERNMENT – WE WANT TO BOLT EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM, AND I WANT YOU TO PROMISE ME THAT YOU WILL DO THAT AT ELECTION TIME.

THESE B.O.L.T PROJECTS LACK TRANSPARENCY AND PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT AND I MAKE THE CALL TONIGHT FOR THAT PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT TO BE PUT IN PLACE WITH RESPECT TO THESE BOLT PROJECTS.

CONTRACTOR GENERAL

A DLP GOVERNMENT WILL ENSURE THAT THERE IS TRANSPARANCY WITH ALL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND THAT CONTRACTS OF ALL KIND, WHETHER THESE BE BUILDING CONTRACTS OR OTHERWISE, WILL BE PROPERLY AND EFFECTIVELY MANAGED. WE WILL APPOINT A CONTRACTOR GENERAL AND AFFORD THAT OFFICE THE NECESSARY SUPORT TO CURTAIL THE KIND OF WASTAGE AND CORRUPTION WE ARE SEEING. THE BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY'S WAY IS A LA REGINALD FARLEY – DRESS UP IN A TIE, LOOK SWEATY TO POSE FOR THE CAMERAS AND RUN AROUND A FEW BUILDING SITES WARNING CONTRACTORS TO HURRY UP – WE IN THE DLP BELIEVE THERE IS MUCH MORE TO IT THAN THAT.

EVERYTHING THAT WE HAVE AND ENJOY IS UNDER THREAT

OUR PUBLIC SERVICE IS ALSO UNDER THREAT. WE HAVE A GOVERNMENT THAT BOASTS OF PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM BUT HAS DONE NOTHING TO MOTIVATE AND CARE FOR ITS WORKERS. THE QEH IS IN FURTHER TURMOIL WITH THE UNDERMINING OF STAFF BY THIS GOVERNMENT. BOTH THE FORMER CEO AND HIS DEPUTY DECLINED TO ACCEPT APPOINTMENT UNDER THE QEH BOARD, OPTING TO RETAIN SECURITY OF TENURE UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION.

SINCE THEN THE HUMILIATION OF STAFF AT THE QEH HAS CONTINUED.

TWO SECRETARIES RECENTLY RESIGNED IN FRUSTRATION – THE SECRETARY OF THE CEO AND THE SECRETARY OF THE DIRECTOR OF NURSING.

NOW, MY INFORMATION IS THAT THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES HAS BEEN TOLD MOST UNCRIMINALLY AND IN EMBARRASSING CIRCUMSTANCES, IN THE PRESENCE OF SOME STAFF MEMBERS AND OTHERS, THAT HER CONTRACT WILL NOT BE RENEWED. SO THE ROT AT OUR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE FACILITY CONTINUES UNDER THE WATCH OF OWEN ARTHUR AND HIS GOVERNMENT. ARE YOU GOING TO SIT AND WATCH THEM GOVERN THIS COUNTRY FOR ANOTHER FIVE YEARS?

AND WE HAVE CONTINUING SUPERSESSION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE THAT IS DEMORALISING WORKERS. WE HAVE HAD THE SPECTACLE OF A PERMANENT SECRETARY BEING TRANSFERRED TO CLEAR THE WAY FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE WIFE OF A POLITICIAN TO A SENIOR POSITION WHICH REQUIRED A MASTERS DEGREE. ALTHOUGH PERSONS IN THE SERVICE HAD THE REQUISITE QUALIFICATION AT A TIME WHEN THE POLITICIAN'S WIFE DID NOT. THE POSITION WAS SIMPLY LEFT VACANT UNTIL THE WIFE GOT HER MASTERS DEGREE.

LEAVING OUR PEOPLE OUT OF THE PICTURE – GRAEME HALL WATER PARK

RIGHT HERE IN CHRIST CHURCH WE HAVE A GOOD EXAMPLE – A FOREIGN DEVELOPER WAS ENCOURAGED TO SPEND \$2 MILLION DOLLARS IN HIS QUEST TO SET UP A WATER PARK AT GRAEME HALL AFTER SECRETLY CONSIDERING AND DISCARDING 12 OTHER LOCATIONS. NO PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH THE RESIDENTS OF

ANY OF THE AFFECTED AREAS, NO SHARING WITH THEM OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDIES THAT THEY WOULD NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF THE PROJECT – WHEN THE RESIDENTS OF GRAEME HALL CONSULTED WITH ME I WAS AMAZED TO DISCOVER THAT THIS SECRET PROJECT WAS BEING CONSIDERED BY GOVERNMENT AS LONG AS A YEAR AGO, THAT THE PROJECT ENTAILED TAKING ACRES OF LAND OUT OF PRIME AGRICULTURE AND THREATENED THE SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS OF THE GRAEME HALL SWAMP AND BIRD SANCTUARY AREA – A WETLAND AREA PROTECTED BY INTERNATIONAL LAW. IT WAS SHEER MADNESS AND I TOOK A STAND WITH THE RESIDENTS AGAINST IT. WHAT EQUALLY AMAZED ME WAS THAT THIS PROJECT STOOD TO NEGATIVELY IMPACT THOUSANDS OF RESIDENTS WITHIN THE CONSTITUENCIES OF TWO SITTING GOVERNMENT MPs JOE EDGEHILL AND DUIGUID – WHO TOOK A HANDS-OFF APPROACH – IT WAS ONLY AFTER THE RESIDENTS AND MY CONCERNS OVERFLOWED INTO THE MEDIA, THAT THESE TWO ABSENTEE MPs PUBLICLY SAID THEY WOULD NOT SUPPORT THE PROJECT.

WE IN THE DLP ARE DETERMINED FROM A POLICY PERSPECTIVE TO ENSURE THAT DEVELOPMENT OCCURS WITH THE FULL INVOLVEMENT OF OUR PEOPLE. WE WILL NOT BE EXCLUDING YOU WHEN IT COMES TO PROJECTS THAT IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES AND WE WILL REVISE AND IMPROVE OUR TOWN & COUNTRY LEGISLATION TO ENSURE THAT PLANNING DECISIONS ARE TAKEN IN THE INTEREST OF OUR PEOPLE.

REPRESENTATION

REPRESENTATION FOR US DOES NOT MEAN MPs ISSUING DISCLAIMERS IN THE PRESS. OUR POLICY AS SET OUT BY OUR

LEADER IS STRAIGHT-FORWARD – BUT POWERFUL AND INNOVATIVE. **WE HAVE COMMITTED TO A POLICY OF BEING ACCESSABLE TO YOU, MEETING FREQUENTLY WITH YOU WITHIN THE CONSTITUENCY AND REPORTING TO YOU ON PROGRESS ON A REGULAR.**

AS I WALK THROUGH CHRIST CHURCH WEST CENTRAL THE ABSENCE OF PROPER PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION HAS BEEN A MAJOR COMPLAINT AND I ALONG WITH OUR TEAM WITHIN THE DLP WILL ADDRESS THIS MATTER WITH UTMOST URGENCY.

CONCLUSION

MY WARNING TO YOU AND TO ALL OF BARBADOS IS THAT WE CANNOT AFFORD TO GIVE THIS GOVERNMENT ANOTHER FIVE YEARS, GIVEN THEIR STEWARDSHIP AND THE MANY PROBLEMS WE FACE TODAY.

IF THERE IS ONE THING THAT WE NEED TO REMEMBER AND TO BE ON ALERT FOR - IS THE CALCULATED PLAN OF THE BLP EACH AND EVERY FIVE YEARS ONCE AN ELECTION IS DRAWING NEAR, IS TO GET YOU INTO THAT “FEEL-GOOD” MENTALITY BY OFFERING YOU A FEW GIVEAWAYS – AFTER WATCHING YOU SUFFER FOR THESE PAST 13 YEARS, IGNORING ALL YOUR PLEAS FOR RELIEF, CALLING YOU XENOPHOBIC, NEGROCRATS, INDENTURED SERVANTS AND MANY MORE INSULTING WORDS, FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF FOOLING YOU ONCE MORE, I PREDICT THAT ONCE MORE THIS GOVERNMENT WILL OFFER YOU ALL KIND OF BRIBES AND INDUCEMENTS TO VOTE FOR THEM. AS I SPEAK TO YOU MY INFORMATION IS THAT TONIGHT AT THEIR MEETING THEY WILL BE ANNOUNCING A REDUCTION IN

THE PRICE OF GAS – THEY HAVE A PLAN AND THAT PLAN IS TO GIVE YOU TEMPORARY RELIEF ONLY AS WE APPROACH AN ELECTION.

AFTER 13 YEARS OF A GOVERNMENT BLATANTLY REFUSING TO LISTEN TO OUR PEOPLE – TOTALLY DISREGARDING PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL VIEWS ON FLY-OVERS ON THE GREENLAND LANDFILL, ON THE COST OF LIVING, ON IMMIGRATION, ON UNREGULATED INFLUX OF LABOUR INTO BARBADOS – WE WOULD HAVE TO BE MAD TO THINK THAT THEY WOULD CHANGE AND RETURN THEM TO OFFICE FOR FIVE MORE YEARS.

WHAT WE PROMISE YOU

WE ARE PROMISING A RETURN TO DECENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT. WE WILL PRACTICE TRUE PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION. WE WILL NOT INSULT YOU WHEN YOU CRITICISE US. WE WILL NOT CALL ANYONE A NEGROCRAT. WE WILL NOT CURSE THE PUBLIC FROM THE SAFTY OF PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE IN PARLIAMENT. WE WILL WALK WITH YOU, INTERACT WITH AND PLACE YOU AT THE CENTRAL OF DECISION MAKING. WE WILL EMPOWER YOU RATHER THAN MAKE YOU BEGGARS. WE WANT TO RETURN THAT SMILE TO YOUR FACE. WE WANT TO ENSURE THE SURVIVAL OF OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM BY ENSURING THAT ‘THESE FIELDS AND HILLS’ REMAIN OUR VERY OWN.

THANK YOU AND GOOD NIGHT.

