

# **A GREAT DAY FOR ULP IN PARLIAMENT; BAD DAY FOR NDP**

**BY**

**UNITY LABOUR PARTY**

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## **PARLIAMENT ON MONDAY SEPTEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>**

On Monday September, 2025, the Unity Labour Party (ULP) again demonstrated in Parliament that it is a well-oiled political/governance machine of the highest quality. Yet again, too, the opposition New Democratic Party (NDP) showed itself to be the worst political party in the Caribbean and the one most ill-prepared for government. Indeed, the ULP was brilliant; and the NDP was absolutely pathetic in every material particular.

The ULP turned up to do serious developmental work on behalf of the people; the NDP appeared as though they would rather be somewhere else. In fact, by 7:00 p.m. only one-half of the six elected NDP parliamentarians were in the House of Assembly; by 10:08 p.m., only two of the six were present; and the parliamentary session went on until after 11:30 p.m. meanwhile, every single elected ULP parliamentarian was in the House; in fact, at closing time only Senator Ashelle Morgan was absent; she had to leave at 5:00 p.m. to go to Venezuela on official business.

## **A DAY OF ULP ACCOMPLISHMENT**

The ULP ministers of government answered fully and exceedingly well the questions on the Order Paper posed by the opposition NDP for oral answer; there were 21 such questions but the NDP's increasingly volatile, mercurial, and temperamental St. Clair Leacock, for some unknown reason, did not ask the three questions that were in his name. Metaphorically, the NDP questioners did not lay a glove on the ULP ministers of government who were all at the top of their game. And Keisal Peters was masterly in her ministerial statement about persons with disabilities, many of whom were in the strangers' gallery.

The six Bills, all of great importance, on the Order Paper for consideration were all passed. By any measure, nationally, regionally, or globally, this was an extraordinary achievement; clearly, the ULP is not weary yet! Two of the Bills addressed enhanced freedom of movement in CARICOM, namely: (i) Protocol on Contingent Rights to the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas Establishing the Caribbean Community Including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy Bill; and (ii) the Immigration (Restriction) (Amendment) Bill. Two other Bills addressed the strengthening of the financial system, a requisite for a stable, developing economy: (i) The Payment Systems and Services Bill; and (ii) The

Eastern Caribbean Deposit Insurance Corporation Agreement Bill. The fifth and sixth Bills dealt with large macro-economic matters: (a) The SVG Port Authority (Restructuring) Bill which prepares the way for the management of the modern port, and the huge development of the foreshore area of the “old” Kingstown port, and the regulation of ports generally; and (b) the Beach Vending Bill, to regulate vending on 17 identified beaches across SVG to the benefit of all concerned.

## **THE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT BILLS**

As a result of these two “freedom of movement” Bills, Vincentians and other OECS and CARICOM nationals can move in, and out, of SVG and other CARICOM/OECS countries with bundles of contingent and other rights, as follows: (i) Nationals of a member-states of the OECS (Antigua-Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, and SVG) can move and work in each other’s country without the requirement for a work permit or residency permit; (ii) Associate member-states of the OECS (Anguilla, BVI, Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Martin) can move for up to six months within the OECS without the requirement for a residency permit but they would require work permit to work; (iii) All CARICOM nationals (including from the OECS) can move into other CARICOM states for the six-month stay, but with a requisite of a work permit; (iv) All CARICOM nationals with a CARICOM Skilled National Certificate (very wide groups of workers are eligible for such certificates) can travel freely to other CARICOM states and work without work permits; and (v) As of October 1, 2025, within the context of enhanced cooperation, four CARICOM countries (Barbados, Belize, Dominica, and SVG) have signed on to full freedom of movement, and no work permit requirements, as is the case for the OECS member countries between themselves as in (i) above.

The ULP government under Comrade Ralph’s leadership has been at the forefront of advancing “freedom of movement” in the OECS and CARICOM. Young Vincentians stand to benefit particularly!

## **THE PORT RESTRUCTURING BILL**

The NDP parliamentarians, for all intents and purposes, were completely absent in the debate on the Port Restructuring Bill. Not one of them uttered a word on the Bill; they did not vote “yes”, “no”, or “abstain”; they were mute. It was a complete dereliction of duty, a failure of leadership of humungous proportions. Minister of Ports, Benarva Browne, the youngest member of the House, made her presentation in piloting the Bill; she was absolutely brilliant. The NDP leader, the Canadian resident in Bequia, Lorraine Friday, huddled with a few of his colleagues; we all awaited their joinder of the debate, but there was complete monastic silence as though immobilized by a visitation from God, or malice against the people, or just simple fear of “putting dey foot in dey mouth”.

Remember these facts: (i) The modern port is costing some EC\$700 million, the second largest in the country's history after the Argyle International Airport; (ii) the NDP (especially Friday, Cummings, and Leacock) have been bad-mouthing this necessary and desirable project from day-one, with a mountain of falsehoods, bile, and anger; but now they had gone silent; (iii) the Modern Port is scheduled for opening on October 25, 2025; (iv) the Port Restructuring Bill paves the way for the setting up of: (a) a state-owned company to own and manage the modern port and to manage the other ports; (b) a second state-owned company to lead, and manage, the foreshore development of the existing site of "old" Port Kingstown; and (c) the revamping of the existing SVG Port Authority Act to make for the regulation as distinct from ownership of the Port; (v) the equipping of the Modern Port and the transition to it are going well; and (vi) the human resource aspect for the operations of the Modern Port has been proceeding well, including a one-year back pay (October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2025) amounting to nearly \$2 million or an increase of some 25 percent.

Silence on all this, and more, from the NDP. They are an absolute waste of time.

### **LAZY FRIDAY, LAZY NDP; MEANWHILE A SOARING ULP**

People across SVG are right in saying: Lazy Friday, lazy NDP; they are weak and indecisive; they have nothing to offer the people.

Meanwhile, the ULP is soaring with energy and will, vision and skill, plus the X-factor in leading SVG to become a "first world nation".

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