

# **THE CANADIAN LORRAINE FRIDAY DANCES ON THE HEAD OF HIS CITIZENSHIP PIN**

**By**

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## **THE ISSUES**

Two issues arise: First, the unacceptable, untenable, incurable, and unpatriotic position of Lorraine Friday, President of the opposition New Democratic Party (NDP) not to renounce his voluntarily-acquired Canadian citizenship while at the same time seeking the highest political office in SVG — that of Prime Minister. Clearly, a person with divided loyalties by virtue of his allegiance, obedience, and adherence to two nations — SVG, he was born in Bequia, and Canada, a foreign power, a foreign State— cannot plausibly or reasonably be fit, on this account, to offer himself to lead SVG. His twisting, turning, and dancing on the head of metaphoric pin to the tune of a doubtful legality cannot aid him; this is fundamentally a political question enveloped in the large requisites of high public morality.

The second issue is of a legal nature: We will explore for him, and for others possessed of a supercharged hypocrisy who for example maintained through their voluntarily-acquired foreign citizenship (American citizenship in at least one case) in their candidacy at general elections and their occupancy of membership of the House of Assembly in an elected or nominated capacity. Let's address this legal question first.

## **DISQUALIFICATIONS FOR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES, SENATORS, AND SPEAKERS**

The Constitution of SVG and the Representation of the People Act (RPA), make explicit provisions regarding disqualifications for membership of the House of Assembly for elected Representatives, Senators, or Speakers.

Section 26(1)(a) of the Constitution provides as follows on the relevant issue at hand:

*“No person shall be qualified to be elected or appointed as Representative or Senator if he is by virtue of his own act, under the acknowledgement of allegiance, obedience or adherence to a foreign state or power.”*

This provision in the Constitution is repeated, word-for-word, in Section 35 of the Representation of the People act, 1982 [Chapter 9 of the Laws of SVG].

Section 30(2), in its proviso, is relevant to the Office of Speaker. The proviso states as follows:

*“A person who is not a member of the House shall not be elected as Speaker if —  
(a) he is not a Commonwealth citizen or  
(b) he is a person disqualified to be elected or appointed as a Representative or Senator by virtue of Section 26(1) or this Constitution ----.”*

Section 26 (1) addresses disqualifications, one of which relates to citizenship of a foreign state voluntarily-acquired. This Section is quoted above.

So, if a person, though born in SVG and acquired, by his/her own act, American citizenship, he or she is disqualified from holding such office. There can be no dance on this by an abiding hypocrite!

## **QUALIFICATIONS FOR REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATORS**

Section 25 of the Constitution provides for the qualifications of Representatives and Senators, subject to the disqualifications in Section 26 — one of which disqualifications has been highlighted above. These disqualifications are reproduced in the RPA.

Section 25 of the Constitutions states:

*“(1) Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, a person shall be qualified to be elected as a Representative if, and shall not be so qualified unless, he —*

*(a) is a Commonwealth citizen of the age of twenty-one years or upwards;*

*(b) has resided in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for a period of twelve months immediately before the date of nomination for election or is domiciled and resident in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines at that date; and*

*(c) is able to speak and, unless incapacitated by blindness or other physical cause, to read the English language with a degree of proficiency sufficient to enable him to take an active part in the proceedings of the House.*

*“(2) Subject to the provisions of Section 26 if this Constitution, a person shall be qualified to be elected or appointed as a Senator if, and shall not be so qualified unless, he is a Commonwealth citizen of the age of twenty-one years or upwards.”*

## **THE JURISPRUDENCE**

The Law Courts in the Anglo-Caribbean have established in the plain reading of the constitutional and statutory provisions outlined above that someone with a voluntarily-acquired citizenship of a foreign country such as the USA is not qualified to be a candidate in general elections and is not qualified to sit in the House as an elected Representative, Senator, or Speaker.

The Law Courts in the Anglo-Caribbean have been inconsistent in their rulings in the legal cases of those nationals who acquired, voluntarily, citizenship in, or allegiance to, another Commonwealth country, regarding disqualification for membership in the House. Recent cases in Jamaica and St. Kitts-Nevis however point to a real jeopardy for the Canadian Lorraine Friday, though born in Bequia. It is perhaps high time that this issue be settled once and for all, legally, authoritatively.

## **DISHONESTY OF THE HIGHEST ORDER**

It is undoubtedly an act of dishonesty, and a criminal offence, for someone seeking nomination as a candidate in an election to know that he is disqualified; for example, a Vincentian-born who voluntarily-acquired American citizenship, and at the date of nomination has not renounced this American citizenship.

It is important to note that a person who is being nominated as a candidate in a constituency for an election has, among other things, to swear to a Statutory Declaration as to his/her qualification to be so nominated. This Statutory Declaration is set out as Form 3 [Rule 6], provided for in the House of Assembly Election Rules, made pursuant to, and under, the Representation of the People Act.

The Statutory Declaration states:

*“I John Brown/ Mary Jones [or other name] in the constituency of Northern Grenadines/ South Leeward [or other constituency] of the State of St. Vincent and the Grenadines do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:*

*1. I am a Commonwealth citizen of the age of twenty-one years or upwards ----*

*4. I am not by virtue of my own act, under any acknowledgement of allegiance, obedience or adherence to a foreign power or state.*

How can one honestly swear to this declaration as a candidate, if by your own act you have sworn allegiance, obedience or adherence to a foreign power or state, be it the USA, Canada, or elsewhere and cling to the passport of that foreign power or state? You do this and you are in big trouble with the law in SVG! You are in even bigger trouble, politically, with all right-thinking persons who constitute, by far, the majority of Vincentians!

## **POLITICAL HYPOCRISY OF NDP**

In November 2009, the NDP campaigned against the Reform Constitution in the referendum. The NDP called for a “NO” vote. The people voted against the Reform Constitution by a substantial majority.

One of the reform provisions was to allow Vincentian citizens who acquired a foreign citizenship, voluntarily, not to be disqualified to serve in the House of Assembly as Representative, Senator, or Speaker. The NDP claimed that Ralph wanted this reform to enable Camillo to enter the House. But, Camillo was born in America; he never acquired his American citizenship by some voluntary act on his part, and he never swore allegiance to the USA in any form or fashion. So, there was no obligation on him to renounce his American citizenship but he nevertheless did renounce that citizenship voluntarily, as a matter of principle, before entering the House first as a Senator, and as an elected Representative.

Now, the Canadian Lorraine Friday, born in Bequia, and his fellow-travelers (including a handful of hypocrites who want to cover their dishonest tracks and those of their friends) want to pretend a holier-than-thou sanctimony. Patriotic Vincentians want to puke, to vomit, at all the evasions, dishonesty, dancing on the head of a pin, and THE sanctimony of the hypocrites who have no true commitment to St. Vincent and the Grenadines and its people. They have personal ambition, a personal quest for status and power, but no commitment to SVG and no love for the people.

## **SUMMATION**

The issues herein will not go away. So, stay tuned. The Canadian Friday is big trouble on this matter. And the people continue to say: “Always ULP for SVG!”