

THE PEOPLES' MANIFESTO OF BARBADOS

On 31 October 1517, Martin Luther posted the ninety-five theses, which he had composed in Latin, on the door of All Saints' Church in Wittenberg, Austria. At the commencement he stated the following:

*“Out of **love for the truth and from desire to elucidate it**, the Reverend Father Martin Luther, Master of Arts and Sacred Theology, and ordinary lecturer therein at Wittenberg, intends to defend the following statements and to dispute on them in that place. Therefore he asks that those who cannot be present and dispute with him orally shall do so in their absence by letter. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”*

His manifesto was the catalyst for the Protestant Reformation. The aim of this manifesto is to be the catalyst for governance and political reformation in Barbados; to protest against political abuses, against mismanagement of the funds from the public purse, against corruption, against inequality, against burdensome taxation and against obstruction to free and fair elections.

We the people of Barbados have not only the ability to challenge the political structure but to change it. There must be a moral authority within government that leads by example regarding values of honesty, integrity, empathy, humility and then there is the issue of competence. We cannot continue to employ individuals who do not have a clue about the portfolio they will administer or far less the ability to be responsible for finances in that area.

No one is to be above the law. It is the breeding ground for corruption and questionable practices. There are some glaring examples that the present administration has presented which have all ultimately been enabled by the Prime Minister. We need a fresh start away from this corrupt mode of operation.

We are but guardians of our heritage and of our island. We must be the cornerstones for future generations of Barbadians, bequeathing to them a stellar example of political leadership, a system of government that is truly for the people and a place where growth and prosperity abound for all and an environment to cherish.

The Proposed Reformatations:

1. Constitution and Legislation Reform

Integrity in Public Life Legislation is to be enacted.

A complete reform of the constitution and enactment of legislation to add a proper system of checks and balances (REVIEW, RECALL, REDRESS), including a mechanism for MPs to report to their constituents on a yearly or quarterly basis on what they have done in the constituency and for the recall of MPs who are not doing their jobs to the satisfaction of their constituents.

There must be a review of the performance of the government on an annual basis to ensure that their manifesto promises are kept. The government should therefore have a time line for the implementation of each manifesto promise. If the promises are not kept the people must have the power of recall.

The Auditor General must be empowered to function effectively in that position.

Transparency is required in the process of awarding contracts and the people's voices must be heard to prevent schemes by which the tax payers of Barbados are disadvantaged.

Remove finder's fees from the statute books.

2. Manifestos

There must be consultation with the people by political parties before they create their manifestos to ensure that they incorporate the peoples' needs.

Laws to be enacted that if political parties break their manifesto promises the people can take them to court.

3. Electoral Reforms

Campaign funding should not be more than the legal maximum allowed.

Companies must make known their contributions to political campaigns.

Disqualification, fines jail sentences of persons involved in influencing, soliciting or paying in cash or kind in relation to voting for elections that obstructs free and fair elections.

The electoral and boundaries commission vigorously enforce the laws with regards to elections.

There is legislation by which the people can take the commissioner of the electoral boundaries commission to court for failure to carry out his duty to the people and Constitution of Barbados, ensuring accountability.

4. Communication

A Freedom of Information Act is to be legislated and implemented.

That there is a more effective and efficient communication system between the Government and citizenry including through social media. GIS is ineffectively used. Ministers who attend conferences and meetings at great cost to taxpayers must be mandated to report to the people the outcomes of such conferences.

5. Taxation

Remove VAT across the board on food.

Bring revision of the VAT on cellphone usage back to a realistic and justifiable percentage.

Reduce land taxes. The cost is now prohibitive to the poor.

That tax concessions not be awarded to companies at the expense of the tax payers of Barbados who have to pay the shortfall in taxes.

6. Education

Change the structure of our educational system to a new model that will give every child a chance to succeed.

Reinstate free access to tertiary education at the University of the West Indies, the Barbados Community College and the SJP Polytechnic.

That microbusiness development programmes be implemented with ambassadors who go out to communities guiding the youth into areas where they can start small businesses.

7. Housing

Allow the poor the option of rent to own for the houses that the government has on stockpile.

8. Water

There be sustainable access to running water for all by putting one of those studies that we have been informed are at the BWA into action by digging into the underground aquifers to supply the island. A water management strategy must be formulated and implemented to ensure all Barbadians are assured of this necessity not just the Heights, Terraces and the Tourist Industry.

9. Food Security

Offer support to small farmers to form cooperatives with the aim of reducing the imported food bill.

10. The Environment

Reforms that will create a sustainable environmental policy that focuses on reduce, reuse and recycle and that engages the people in any projects that affect the environment.

Harsher penalties for littering and dumping.

Remove the tipping fee that has led to rampant illegal dumping putting the health of all Barbados at risk.

Cancel the Cahill Waste to Energy Project.

That Legislation is implemented which makes it mandatory for ALL Barbadians, businesses alike to recycle and sort their garbage.

Lower import duties on the importation of environmentally friendly technologies such as “green” vehicles.

11. Health Care

Improve resources and equipment at the QEH and the Psychiatric Hospital to ensure adequate care of the residents and citizens of Barbados.

Retain the free delivery of health care at the QEH and polyclinics.

12. Transportation

That there be a proper functioning bus system to effectively respond to the thrust to lower emissions and towards a 24-hour society that allow commuters to monitor the scheduled arrival at their bus stop by GPS and that accommodate the elderly and disabled.

That smart cards are introduced to reduce the cost of printing tickets for traveling by bus.

The importation or building by the transport board of environmentally friendly buses. Longer or double decker buses for the longer routes.

A proper functioning bus system would help induce more people to take public transportation as opposed to using their private vehicles, with the benefit of less traffic congestion and emissions.

A road works programme which constructs our roads in such a way that flooding is minimal or non-existent with sidewalks so that ALL persons can have access without having to walk in the streets.

13. The Child Care Board

That the Child Care board be re organized and refocused to fit the needs and delivery of social services of Barbados in the 21st century, including increasing adequately trained staff and resources to be better equipped to do their job protecting our nation's children.

14. Law and Crime

That the entire legal system be reformed.

The Commissioner of Police must be equipped with the tools, resources and support in the execution of his duties to address the problem of growing crime in Barbados.

Marijuana must be decriminalized.

15. Areas of Revenue Generation

That government creates an enabling environment so that revenue is generated from new products. For example new products developed from sugar cane and the bi products of marijuana among other areas.

That the government finally utilizes Rihanna to brand the musical art forms of Barbadian music. Thereby doing what Bob Marley did for reggae music, making it internationally renowned, paving the way for generations of Barbadian artists.

The government provides an enabling environment for the creation of a national film Industry

16. Development Plan

A sustainable development plan that is realistic and achievable be put in place and followed, that has timelines and benchmarks for the achievement of predefined goals. One of the goals must be that Barbados becomes the technological hub of the Caribbean especially in the area of software development.

Questions to ask Politicians when they are Canvassing.

- What skill set do you possess that will enable you to function in this position?
- What has led you to pursue the job of politician? What is your educational background?
- How many years' experience do you have in the field of politics?
- If you are elected how do you see yourself serving the people of this country?
- What have been some of your achievements?
- Are you a people's person?
- Who or what has inspired you to become a servant of the people of Barbados?
- What have you done for this community?
- What are the needs of this community?
- How will you help this community?
- What is your vision for Barbados?
- Once elected will you routinely visit the community?
- What are your views of free and fair elections?
- Are you willing to incorporate the People's Manifesto in you Party's Manifesto?
- Will you provide us with timely updates about the work in Parliament as well the areas we have identified as our needs?

Contractual Agreements

Contractual Agreement with Representative of Party

Ion this ...day of20.....swear that I will advocate for requests of my constituent upon winning a seat in the constituency of on the issues set out in the above document.

That I will abide by the laws set out in the Constitution of Barbados, that I will up hold the integrity of my elected office and that any breech of this contract can result in legal action against me.

Representative

Constituent

.....

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Signature

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