

Power to the People

In the second term, the UPP will propel a quantum leap to economic democracy by divesting to the broad masses of Antiguans & Barbudans, those activities of the state that are best operated as private sector entities.

The Antiguan and Barbudan people will have the opportunity to share in the ownership of important, productive, profitable enterprises; and to derive income from such enterprises.

The UPP Administration will create a number of **Public Companies**, from which government will divest its ownership of certain key and potentially very profitable State Corporations.

The entities earmarked for divestment to the people to foster broad-based ownership of national assets are:

- The Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority
- The Antigua and Barbuda Port Authority
- The State Insurance Corporation
- The Electricity Department of the APUA, and
- The Telecoms Department of the APUA
- The UPP Government will divest a portion of its 25% equity holding in the Eastern Caribbean Amalgamated Financial Company Limited (Bank of Antigua)
- West Indies Oil Company:

The Government is now in negotiations to acquire the West Indies Oil Company with the intention of divesting all equity in that company to the Antiguan and Barbudan people



THE UPP HAS

People First BRIGHTENING THE LIVES OF ALL

The core philosophy of the United Progressive Party is that the principal purpose of government is to improve the lives of its citizens, to put people first in all planning and policies and to prudently and equitably use the resources available to the government to do the greatest good for the greatest number of our citizens.

To this end, in its first year in office, a UPP Government will implement a number of measures that will brighten the lives of all of our citizens.

SCHOOL UNIFORM GRANTS TO STUDENTS



- The UPP will provide a **\$350.00 school uniform grant** every year to every child in the **primary school system**, starting in July, this year.

The UPP will provide a **\$500.00 school uniform grant** every year to every child in the **secondary school system**, starting in July, this year.

NATIONAL SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM



The UPP will introduce a **National School Meals Programme** that will provide nutritious lunch meals to children attending Primary School.

The **National School Meals Programme** will be expanded on a phased basis to include Secondary School students.

100% TAX EXEMPTION ON BABY ITEMS



The UPP will remove the **Duty and Consumption Tax** on:

- Baby Food
- Disposable Diapers
- Baby Powder
- Baby Oil
- Baby Medicines
- Baby Toiletries
- Feeding Bottles and Nipples



A DOLLAR-A-BARREL EVERY CHRISTMAS

Recognising that many families depend on **Food and Clothes Barrels** from relatives abroad for their Christmas cheer, the UPP will remove the duties, fees and consumption tax on these items during November and December, and recipients of these Christmas Barrels will pay only \$1.00 to clear each Christmas Barrel.

UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF



To ease the squeeze on laid-off workers, the UPP will introduce an **Unemployment Relief Programme** in which laid-off workers who are citizens will be paid 60% of their last wage or salary for up to a period of three months.

DELIVERED!



INCREASED PENSIONS FOR ALL SENIOR CITIZENS

With a UPP Government, all citizens over 60 years of age will receive a \$1,000 monthly pension.

This pension payment will be introduced in three tranches, with every citizen receiving a pension on reaching the age of 60 years.

All persons 60 years and over will receive a minimum pension of \$750.00 per month from January 1, 2004.

All persons 60 years and over will receive a minimum pension of \$900.00 a month from January 1, 2005.

All persons 60 years and over will receive a minimum pension of \$1,000.00 a month from January 1, 2006.

NO PROPERTY TAX ON \$100,000 HOMES



The UPP will exempt all dwelling homes valued under \$100,000 from paying any property tax.



SMALL BUSINESS TO SHARE IN ALL GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

FOOD VOUCHERS FOR LOW INCOME FAMILIES



To ease the squeeze on poor people, the UPP will provide **food vouchers** to poor families that may be used to purchase a monthly basket of food staples that will include rice, sugar, flour, corn meal, condensed milk, evaporated milk, cheddar cheese, cooking oil, margarine, sardines, corned beef, pickled meat, dried peas and beans, bread, and macaroni.



EXEMPTION FROM DEPARTURE TAX FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

The UPP will exempt all citizens and residents over 60 years of age from the airport Departure Tax.



REMOVAL OF CONSUMPTION TAX ON ELECTRICITY BILLS

To enable families to keep more of the money they earn, and to reduce the cost of doing business, the UPP will **remove the Consumption Tax** from Electricity Bills.



\$2,500 ANNUAL HOME IMPROVEMENT GRANT FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

To assist our senior citizens to carry out necessary repairs to their homes, and to preserve their dignity, the UPP will provide an annual \$2,500 Home Improvement Grant to citizens over 60 years whose incomes do not permit them to maintain their properties, provided that the unit value of such properties is less than \$100,000.

REMOVAL OF CUSTOM DUTIES FOR TAXI, BUS AND TOUR OPERATORS



We will remove the Custom Duties and Consumption Tax on Tires, Batteries and Shock Absorbers for Vehicles used by Taxi, Bus and Tour Operators.





**Prime Minister
The Hon. Baldwin Spencer
Leader, United Progressive Party**

***I thank the Antiguan and
Barbudan people, and
our Caribbean brothers
and sisters, for the
overwhelming warmth and
support you have given
the UPP in this election
campaign***

In 2004, the mission of the United Progressive Party was to rescue the nation from the condition of a failed state and a nation in the hands of the Bird dynasty.

Mission accomplished.

The mission of the UPP this year is to defend the nation and all we have achieved together.

This General Election falls due in a period of crisis; as did the 2004 General Election.

This election takes place in a period of crisis triggered by ongoing global economic convulsions, by the sustained trauma of skyrocketing oil prices prior to the current slump, by escalating food prices around the world last year, and by the Stanford catastrophe, which immediately hit home hard in Antigua and Barbuda.

In March 2004, Antigua and Barbuda was also in deep crisis.

This country had long attracted global notoriety as a preeminent kleptocracy, in which the dominant characteristic of governance was the enrichment of members of the ruling dynasty and favoured insiders; with the state of the nation and the needs of the people of minor consequence to the ALP power brokers.

Except for the five year period, 1971 to 1976, the Bird dynasty had ruled Antigua and Barbuda for some fifty years, with inconsistent degrees of efficiency; diminishing levels of benevolence; and in the post Independence period, a runaway propensity for plundering the people's patrimony.

On March 23, 2004, in a General Election driven by a call for justice, the Antiguan and Barbudan people used the power of their votes to remove

Defending The Nation

The mission of the UPP this year is to defend the nation and all we have achieved together.

a scandal-ridden regime whose greed had shamed the country for decades.

The legacy of the ousted regime was a collapsing economy, ostracism by international agencies, stagnant tourism, and deeply disaffected youth.

The first crisis the UPP administration faced on taking office was that of meeting the public service payroll, with no provision in place for that commitment.

That state of affairs defines the character of the governance of the ALP.

The other initial imperative was the need to win the respect of the international community, which had been completely eroded by the misdeeds of the Bird regime.

The UPP's quick turnaround of our battered economy was hailed around the region.

It is clear to the Antiguan and Barbudan people that there is need to defend the nation from the enemies within and from the external threats that can plunge our economy into free fall and our society into chaos.

No one, however, should test the will of my government.

I never have and I never will shirk my duty to defend the nation.

I had no hesitation advising the Governor General to reconvene

Parliament two weeks before the General Election to legitimate the measures necessary to enable the Government to defend the Stanford workers.

The United Progressive Party is a different proposition.

We came to office with a legitimacy the previous administration could not claim.

The results of general elections prior to 2004 did not always reflect the will of the electorate.

Commonwealth observer missions and other election monitors found significant incidence of election fraud; and election rigging, generally, in prior elections.

This prompted a call from the Commonwealth observer mission after the 1999 General Election for genuine electoral reform, with personal voter identification embedded.

Not surprisingly, the Antiguan and Barbudan people's overwhelming support for the United Progressive Party was faithfully rendered in a decisive mandate for the UPP in the 2004 election.

The people's mandate places the United Progressive Party under continuing obligation to defend the nation against such enemies as ignorance, poverty, injustice and exploitation and intimidation of our immigrant communities.

I particularly appeal to first time voters to engage fully in the process. Our youth, after all, will inherit the nation. Make sure you keep it in good hands. Make sure that we keep our beloved Antigua and Barbuda in God's hands



GOVERNMENT
IN THE
SUNSHINE

***I say to our
Hispanic,
Jamaican,
Guyanese, St.
Lucian, Dominican
and Vincentian
brothers and
sisters, that I
stand by my
statement that
there will be
no second class
citizens in Antigua
and Barbuda***

I say to our Hispanic, Jamaican, Guyanese, St. Lucian, Dominican and Vincentian brothers and sisters, that I stand by my statement that there will be no second class citizens in Antigua and Barbuda.

No one will be left out; no one will be left behind.

I invite all within our shores to work to build one another, together.

I remind all voters that persons convicted for certain crimes can face disbarment from sitting in the Senate or in the House of Representatives.

It is my duty to point out that nowhere has a political party gone into a General Election with so large a number of its frontline leadership as defendants in matters involving ethics and integrity in public office, as is now the case with the ALP.

I urge all to use their votes in defense of our nation.

I thank the Antiguan and Barbudan people, and our Caribbean brothers and sisters, for the overwhelming warmth and support you have given the UPP in this election campaign.

I urge you to use your vote to move our nation forward.

When the nation goes to the polls on March 12, 2009, you, the voter, will have the power.

Use it to defend our nation.

Use it to protect what you have.

Choice does not mean chance.

Sanity, sobriety and decency are to be demanded of those to whom you would entrust the leadership of our country.

The United progressive Party has worked hard to serve you.

We might have made mistakes.

We have, however, delivered meaningfully on our campaign promises.

We present in this Manifesto a report on our stewardship and a roadmap to a future you can believe in.

We confirm in this Manifesto, Agenda for Change for the Second Term, the United Progressive Party's decision to place the Antiguan and Barbudan people at the commanding heights of the country's economy by making them shareholders, as well as stakeholders, in the major assets owned by the Government and those organizations in which the Government owns substantial equity.

We proclaim this on the first page of this Manifesto, under the heading Power To The People.

In this unprecedented development, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda will divest to the people, a number of entities with manifest potential to generate significant profit to shareholders.

Those organizations are the Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority; the Port Authority; the State Insurance Corporation; the Electricity Department of APUA; and the Telecoms Department of APUA.

The Government will also divest to the people, a portion of its 25% equity holding in the company which has replaced The Bank of Antigua..

The Government is now in negotiations to acquire West Indies Oil Company, with the intention of

divesting its equity in that company to the Antiguan and Barbudan people.

This divestment programme represents the single most profound demonstration of empowering the people in the history of Antigua and Barbuda, and the wider Caribbean region.

As I return their government to the people, I again appeal to all in the society to participate fully and peacefully in the electoral process.

Whatever happens on Election Day, we will all have to live, pray and work together to overcome the daunting challenges facing our beloved country.

The future of our country and the future of generations yet unborn are in our hands.

We have no option but to put aside political differences and to cast aside political extremists.

This is the framework in which we must elect our next government.

I particularly appeal to first time voters to engage fully in the process.

Our youth, after all, will inherit the nation.

Make sure you keep it in good hands.

Make sure that we keep our beloved Antigua and Barbuda in God's hands.

The UPP government is the first administration in the Caribbean Community that will institutionalize a system of Unemployment Relief. This is indeed a very important measure for a small nation like ours to adopt and underscores the sincerity of the UPP administration as a "People First" movement

TWO FIRSTS IN PEOPLE FIRST

UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF

While working diligently to ensure the full employment of the country's workforce, there will be times when certain individuals will find themselves temporarily out of employment.

The UPP government is the first administration in the Caribbean Community that will institutionalize a system of Unemployment Relief. This is indeed a very important measure for a small nation like ours to adopt and underscores the sincerity of the UPP administration as a "People First" movement.

The procedure for persons who have lost their jobs to access unemployment relief will be simple and unbureaucratic. The programme will be administered by the Social Security Board. All eligible

persons will apply to the Board and on verifying their claims, the Board will disburse to those persons, every month for a three month period, 60% of the income they last received.



Under the Public Safety Communications Network, hundreds of radios have been deployed across key public safety and national security agencies. In 2009, Government will continue to equip policemen and women and the police stations with the latest in computerized and telecommunications equipment

National Commission on Law and Order

There is no quick – fix for the pervasive problem of crime in any country. The Police, no matter how effective, cannot by themselves win the war against crime

In Antigua & Barbuda, as in all other CARICOM countries, and indeed in most countries around the world, escalating crime and violence threaten the welfare and safety of citizens and the stability of the state.

There is no quick – fix for the pervasive problem of crime in any country. The Police, no matter how effective, cannot by themselves win the war against crime.

There are unique dimensions to the problem of crime in Antigua & Barbuda, since this is perhaps one of the few countries where crime might well be a “top-down” phenomenon, denoted by a culture of lawlessness in the highest offices in the land.

For decades there have been scandals in the Bird Dynasty in which no public official has been known to suffer any punishment.

Together with this, our Police Force had been politicised and demoralized over the years. The UPP could not have corrected all the wrongs attached to law enforcement in one term. However, our police officers today are better trained, better equipped, better motivated, better paid, and more effective.

With all of this, the reality is that it will take a national effort to combat crime.

To this end, the UPP will establish a National Commission on Law

and Order that will include representatives of all sectors of civil society, together with members of the Protective Services.

The National Commission on Law and Order will assist the Government in achieving civil peace and harmony, cultural renewal and social cohesion.

The National Commission on Law and Order will include representatives from the churches, the volunteer sector, the media, business, youth, political parties, alternative cultures, calypsonians, education and health.

The National Commission on Law and Order will assist in the development and implementation of a holistic plan for reducing crime and providing positive alternatives for youth at risk.

Among the causal factors for crime are:

- The breakdown in extended families
- Children having to fend for themselves without parental guidance
- The negative influence of foreign media programming
- Radio stations that use the media as weapons of mass destruction
- Marginalization of sections of the community

The National Commission on Law and Order will include representatives from the churches, the volunteer sector, the media, business, youth, political parties, alternative cultures, calypsonians, education and health

- Breakdown in informal social control
- Easy access to guns
- The infiltration of narcotrafficking syndicates.

The solutions must include:

- A holistic national effort
- More emphasis on prevention rather than cure
- An efficient, modern justice system
- Rehabilitation in the Penal System
- The renewal of cultural values
- Focus on youth at risk
- Inclusion of those who feel marginalized

At the core of the police response to any surge in criminal activity must be Community Policing, with the police

working within our communities as change agents, leading community coalitions to take back our neighbourhoods and our streets.

Parallel with all of this, will be the expansion of the police force with an emphasis on Community-oriented problem solving. Given Antigua & Barbuda's open borders, criminals deported from the United States, Britain and other Caribbean islands can easily enter and remain here.

As a critical component in a national law and order effort, the United Progressive Party will introduce a national Identification Card in the next term.

The National Identification Card will be issued to all citizens and residents and will be of inestimable value in protecting the rights of the individual and facilitating access to public services.

The United Progressive Party will introduce a Victims of Crime Bill of Rights as a component of an overall platform for justice, peace and public safety

Victims of Crime Bill of Rights

It is an unacceptable aberration that after being victimised by perpetrators of crime, victims are virtually marginalized by the investigative and justice apparatus.

The United Progressive Party will introduce a Victims of Crime Bill of Rights as a component of an overall platform for justice, peace and public safety.

The objective of the Victims of Crime Bill of Rights will be to preserve and protect victims of crime rights to justice and due process, and will mandate that a victim of crime has a right:

- To be treated with fairness, respect, and dignity, and to be free from intimidation, harassment, or abuse, throughout the criminal justice process.
- To be informed, upon request, when the accused or convicted person is released from custody or has escaped.
- To receive prompt restitution from the person or persons convicted of the criminal conduct that caused the victim's loss or injury; or from a Victims of Crimes Relief Fund when the perpetrators of the crime are impecunious.



The UPP Administration recognizes the prevalence of international cyber crime. Viruses, hacker attacks and other cyber threats are now a part of daily life. Malware spreading throughout the Internet, hackers stealing confidential data and mailboxes flooded with spam are the price that the World is paying for computing convenience

Smarter Solutions to Public Safety

The UPP Administration will equip a fleet of police and other public safety agency vehicles with high-speed rugged computers and cameras that will provide real time forensic and other data to prevent crime and solve crime

The UPP Government is leveraging on advances in technology to enhance the safety of citizens, residents and visitors. From enhanced immigration border control to providing cutting edge technology to public safety agencies, the UPP Administration is investing in smart solutions to enhance public safety and public well-being.

Public Safety Communications Network (PSCN)

The UPP Administration successfully commissioned a modern, electronic communications platform that has significantly enhanced the response time of public safety agencies to emergency situations. Two distinct components have already been commissioned:

Digital Radio Trunking System - two-way radios have been installed in police stations, and police vehicles. In addition, over two hundred fifty (250) hand-held radios have been deployed to the Royal Antigua & Barbuda Police Force, the Defense Force, the Coast Guard, the Office of National Drug Control and Money Laundering Policy (ONDCP), the Emergency Medical Services and Her Majesty's Prison.

Modern E-911 Center – a modern emergency 911 response and dispatch center utilizing computer

assisted call handling technology provides residents and visitors with a rapid and efficient 911 service. The center features multiple emergency and administrative lines, automated telephone searches, instant call replay and the ability to conference call multiple agencies. The new Emergency Room at the Mount St. John's Medical Centre has already been equipped with a two-way radio system that enables prompt communication with the Emergency Medical Services.

Smart Vehicles

The UPP Administration will equip a fleet of police and other public safety agency vehicles with high-speed rugged computers and cameras that will provide real time forensic and other data to prevent crime and solve crime.

Smart Police Officers in Smart Police Stations

Using cutting edge computer hardware technology, the UPP Administration will equip every police and fire station with a high-speed wide area network (WAN) to enhance the operational efficiency of the Police and Fire Brigade as well as strengthen crime prevention and crime detection capabilities.

The UPP administration will re-tool



every police officer for working in Smart Police Stations by providing specialized training in software modules that will ensure that the Police spend more time in protecting and serving.

The UPP Administration will also:

- Expand the PSCN to ensure two way radio communication coverage in every police station and in every fire station as well as in every police vehicle and police motorcycle
- Ensure that every police man and woman is equipped with a two way radio
- Strengthen the PSCN platform to meet the full operational requirements of the Defense Force, the Coast Guard, the ONDCP and the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS)
- Equip every ambulance in the EMS fleet with a two way radio
- Develop a modern PSCN sub-platform in Barbuda to provide public safety agencies with services that are parallel to those in Antigua
- Make the PSCN platform available to other agencies that could benefit from rapid two way communication including the Port Authority at the Deep Water Harbour , APUA, the Antigua & Barbuda Airport Authority and the Lands Division.

Immigration Management Control System (IMCS)

In collaboration with regional and extra-regional agencies, the UPP Administration has modernized the control checks at points of entry at the Airport and at seaports at Heritage Quay, the Deep Water Harbour, English Harbour, Jolly Beach and Urlings.

The processing of arrivals and departures has been digitally automated to international standards. To further protect our borders, the UPP administration will:

- Deploy enhanced security features and interfaces to include biometric modules for capturing digital photographs and digital fingerprints at the points of entry
- Deploy special software to automate and digitally archive the processing of immigration time renewals and the issuance of work permits and link these databases directly to the IMCS platform for verification at the point of entry into the State
- Introduce the electronic issuance of visas (e-visas) at all overseas missions and consulates where Antigua and Barbuda visas are currently issued and link the e-visa database directly to the IMCS platform for verification at the point of entry into Antigua and Barbuda.

Deploy special software to automate and digitally archive the processing of immigration time renewals and the issuance of work permits and link these databases directly to the IMCS platform for verification at the point of entry into the State



A new policy regarding use of the nation's land as an economic resource will be promoted. The delivery of state lands for speculation will cease. State lands will be used to develop agriculture and for residential housing development. When required for tourism projects such lands will be made available leasehold or as state equity in the particular project

The UPP Administration has already engaged high level officials from the United States of America for the development of a Cyber Lab in Antigua to serve Antigua and Barbuda and the Northern OECS countries

CYBER LAB FOR ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

The UPP Administration recognizes the prevalence of international cyber crime. Viruses, hacker attacks and other cyber threats are now a part of daily life. Malware spreading throughout the Internet, hackers stealing confidential data and mailboxes flooded with spam are the price that the World is paying for computing convenience.

The UPP Administration has already engaged high level officials from the United States of America for the development of a Cyber Lab in Antigua to serve Antigua and Barbuda and the Northern OECS countries. Discussions are well-advanced for the establishment of this lab by mid 2009.



The UPP Administration will:

- *Facilitate cyber crime investigation training among Police officers to standardize investigation procedures and evidence collection techniques*
- *Empanel a Security Incident Response Team (SIRT) composed of two Police officers, two network security professionals and one forensic expert*
- *Promote collaboration among the Police, information technology industry personnel, academia and concerned citizens to address cyber crime and its related issues*
- *Develop cyber forensic tools for criminal investigation including forensic analysis tools for the analysis of digital data on computers, cell phones and sim cards*
- *Promote Antigua as a Resource Centre for other Police organizations in the Caribbean Region*
- *Fund a mobile forensic work station*
- *Train judicial officers, public prosecutors and judges in the methodology of cyber criminals and in the acquisition of digital evidence*
- *Enact appropriate laws depending upon the trends in cyber crime*
- *Improve awareness of cyber crime among computer users and enhance Information Security.*



Economic Charter for True Independence

The unique circumstances of the island nation of Antigua and Barbuda, a country where the state owns vast tracts of flat, fertile land; where the population is creative, fairly well-educated; and where the culture of democracy is entrenched, allow for a modern, diversified economy based on a set of high value added activities.

In fostering the development of this modern economy, the UPP will promote a New Economic Charter based on the following key principles and elements:

- The people of the nation are its most valuable resource. Accordingly, education and training in modern knowledge, skills, and creative talents will be given priority.
- A new policy regarding use of the nation's land as an economic resource will be promoted. The delivery of state lands for speculation will cease. State lands will be used to develop agriculture and for residential housing development. When required for tourism projects such lands will be made available leasehold or as state equity in the particular project.
- An economic sector based on the creative industries of song, dance, music, film, performing arts, new media and textile design will be encouraged through incentives and training opportunities.

- Enterprises driven by ICT will be promoted and encouraged.
- A Co-operative Sector will be encouraged as a means of nationals pooling their labour and resources for their own economic development. Both Consumer and Producer Co-operatives will be encouraged.
- Nationals will be given preferential treatment in every aspect of economic life in the nation. The state will foster options for locals, as individual entrepreneurs or as companies or co-operatives, to benefit and prosper from economic opportunities.
- The state will use its network of international contacts to foster economic growth and development and bring business opportunities to national enterprises.

The principal objective of the New Economic Charter, based on our own interests and the sustainability of our people's livelihoods and welfare, will be to change the model of economic dependence bequeathed to us by our colonial and imperialist heritage and replace it with a model that guarantees material self sufficiency, food security, national financial stability, and protection from the uncertainties of big power and big business rivalries.

A New Economic Charter will be a charter for true independence.

An economic sector based on the creative industries of song, dance, music, film, performing arts, new media and textile design will be encouraged through incentives, training and marketing support



We have raised the standards of Government Performance and Achievement. The integrity, trust and character that are the distinguishing marks of our first term have raised the standards of governance in Antigua and Barbuda to the extent that we are an acknowledged leader in the Caribbean in respect of best practices in governance

Business Environment

Under a Tax Amnesty Programme, the UPP will write-off the sanctions and penalties associated with unpaid taxes owed for a stipulated period

When the UPP Administration assumed office, it approached the task of promoting national economic development by pursuing specific policies to encourage private sector investment. These policies included reducing the corporate income tax rate, simplifying the tax system, implementing legislation to support small business development, and establishing the Antigua Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA). Through ABIA fiscal incentives and tax concessions to local and foreign investors are streamlined. This facilitates and promotes private sector development and positions the private business sector to be the main engine of national economic development.

The result of all this is that under the UPP Antigua & Barbuda has become a premier place to do business, ranking second in the OECS and forty-second internationally out of 181 countries.

During its second term in Government the UPP will:

- Intensify its efforts to make Antigua & Barbuda a more attractive place to do business. Before the end of the term

Antigua & Barbuda will become, by the International Finance Corporation's ranking, the best country to do business in the OECS and be among the top 35 countries globally. The UPP Administration will therefore:

- Intensify the Customs renewal program to allow for online processing of customs clearance documents, electronic payment of customs charges and duties, and clearing of goods within 48 hours of their arrival in Antigua.
- Before the end of the term, implement electronic filing and payment of payroll taxes (social security, medical benefits, education levy, personal income tax), corporate income tax, and ABST.
- Expand the technical and vocational training programs offered at ABICE so that enterprises will find it easier to hire skilled workers.
- Enhance the capabilities of the Labour Department so that industrial relations matters can be dealt with more expeditiously.



Managing the Economy

The UPP Government has as its mission the facilitation of efficient and equitable use of public revenue to foster stability, growth and equilibrium in the economy, while maintaining the fiscal planning and management as well as the debt management system of government.

Under the UPP, economic activity will expand, mainly fuelled by new and ongoing projects in the construction industry and supported by the other service sectors. Given the ongoing global economic crisis, the tourism sector especially will continue to see highs and lows if the slowdown in the US and European economies persists. With this in mind, a UPP Government has taken proactive steps to develop programmes that will allow Antigua & Barbuda to respond effectively.

Corporate Income Tax

A UPP government recognizes that the development and expansion of the private sector is vital for the long-term economic viability of Antigua & Barbuda. In keeping with this view, the UPP will continue to create an enabling environment for private sector development by maintaining the corporate income tax rate which was recently lowered to 25 percent. A UPP government will continue to

encourage private sector activity through the recently implemented Customs Renewal Programme and the Antigua & Barbuda Investment Authority.

Personal Income Tax

A UPP Government will make amendments to the structure of the PIT if and when the current global economic downturn creates excessive hardship for Antiguan & Barbudans. Individuals who pay personal income tax can claim income tax deductions in respect of

- Interest paid on residential mortgages
- Contributions paid into approved pensions schemes
- Health insurance premiums
- Tuition payments on behalf of children pursuing university studies

Tax Credits

The upper limit of the tax credit offered to businesses which make financial contributions to the development of culture, education or sports will be increased from \$250,000 to \$500,000.

A UPP Government will continue to provide targeted relief to property owners across Antigua & Barbuda under the new property tax system which would allow owner-occupied residential properties a \$150,000 residential allowance



At the end of our first term, we have achieved full employment, investment is pouring into the country, government finances are stable, and there is hope for continued progress and advancement in rebuilding our national economy

The Sunshine Government which has a proven track record of Putting People First will continue to provide meaningful relief from the financial burden on families

Cost Of Living

The Sunshine Government has a proven track record of Putting People First and will continue to provide meaningful relief from the financial burden on families. These are some of the programmes which the UPP Government will continue to fund:

- The School Uniform Grant under which the schoolchildren of the nation would continue to receive school uniforms for attendance to the nation's school.
- The National School Meals Programme. Through this Programme a UPP Government will continue to provide hot meals to our school children on a daily basis.
- The Dollar Barrel Programme introduced by this UPP Government in 2004, continues to allow households to import food items, clothing and toiletries at a nominal fee of \$1 during the Christmas Season. The number of households which will benefit from this Programme is expected to grow as it becomes more popular.

Basket of Essential Goods

To help Antiguans & Barbudans cope with rising international prices, the UPP Government will continue to offer its Basket of Essential Goods which remains the widest in the region. All goods in the basket have attracted a reduction in the Customs Service Tax from 10 percent to 0 percent, and are zero-rated in relation to the ABST. A UPP Government will continue to expand this Basket of Essential Goods and maintain a zero rating on all items.

Bus, Taxi & Tour Operators

To prevent the operating costs of taxi and bus drivers and tour operators from escalating, a UPP Government will continue to grant:

- 50% reduction in duty on parts for bus, taxi and tour operators
- Concessions on batteries, windscreens, brake pads, tires and shock absorbers



Small Business Development

During our first term we have fulfilled our promise to create a vibrant enabling environment for the successful operation of micro, small and medium size enterprises.

- We have set up an Enterprise Development Agency within the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority catering specially to the needs of the Small Business Sector.
- We have set up a Credit Guarantee System to assist small businesses to secure capital in a hassle-free way.
- We have reserved 25% of government's contracts for procurement of goods and services for the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises sector.
- We have passed legislation, such as the Small business Development Act, that create the right legal environment for small businesses to play a formal role in the country's economic development and contribute to the national goal of decent jobs for all.

During our second term, we will expand this ongoing programme of support and assistance for small businesses and provide every opportunity for them to function as an integral and important part of the private sector. Accordingly, we will:

- Expand the Credit Guarantee Scheme by increasing the ceiling of the loan guarantee to \$200,000.
- Stimulate the development of the micro and small business sector from the demand side of the equation by the establishment of a Business Buildup Compliance Unit to ensure that all Government Departments, Statutory Corporations and State Enterprises develop and implement policies and programs to procure 25% of their goods and services from small businesses.
- Designate the Manufacturing and Small Industry Sectors as strategic economic sectors to be empowered to play a more significant role in job creation and economic diversification.

***Expand
the Credit
Guarantee
Scheme by
increasing
the ceiling
of the loan
guarantee to
\$200,000***



The Naturalization and Facilitation Unit will assist in the timely and compassionate processing of applications for work permits and residency for bona fide applicants. The Unit will also assist in integrating new residents and work permit holders into the country's education and social services network

Building a Healthy Nation and Providing Avenues for Youth Development

The National Sports Policy

The second UPP administration will, within the first 6 months of a second term in Government, enact a National Sports Policy for Antigua and Barbuda

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Putting Sports in the Heart of Our Communities

We intend to achieve continued growth in sports by creating management systems that work to empower community-based groups.

- The UPP will create Zonal Management Teams to manage sporting facilities.
- Each management team will be provided with an office at a selected sporting facility within that zone, staffed by a facility manager paid by the Ministry of Sports.
- The Facility Managers along with the Zonal Management Teams will collaborate with the Ministry to ensure facility maintenance, continuous assessment of community project and equipment needs as well as to provide ongoing technical and educational assistance to community groups and sporting clubs.

The National Executive Council for Sports (NECS)

This initiative will promote the partnering of key stakeholders in sports. It will stimulate growth and development in sports through sponsorship of community sporting clubs and will provide financing for national sporting events and programmes.

- The NECS will comprise representatives from the Ministry of Sports, sporting associations and corporate representatives.
- This body will have the primary purpose of overseeing and managing contributions to sports in Antigua and Barbuda with the necessary checks and balances in place.
- The NECS will be directly responsible for attracting new and additional corporate contributions to sports at both the community and national levels.

Superior Training Achieves Results (STAR) Programme

- This program seeks to identify high performing athletes in various disciplines.
- We will invest in the training of coaches to spearhead the implementation of this program.
- STAR athletes will be enrolled in a training program designed to produce maximum results.





Successes Of UPP's ICT Revolution

● **Connect Antigua & Barbuda Initiative**

Under this initiative, several distinct programmes are forming the basis for the rapid usage of computerized technology by all Antiguans and Barbudans. These programs include:

- **Community Computer Access Centers and Empowerment Centers** - hundreds of computers and high-speed Internet via broadband technology have been deployed in ten primary schools and nine empowerment centers. Each week, fifty-five IT classes are conducted.
- **Mobile IT Classrooms** - five Toyota Coaster buses have each been fitted out with seventeen touch-screen computers with high-speed Internet access. This component's revolutionary nature achieved regional acclaim with the awarding of 2008 Connect the Caribbean Project of the Year.
- **Community Technology Officers and Zone Coordinators** - dozens of secure jobs have been created to service the Centers in all public primary schools.
- **Multi-Lingual Studies Programme** - the UPP Administration is promoting

multilingualism as a goal for the entire Nation. Using the world acclaimed Berlitz software series, several centers offer English, Spanish, French, and German as second languages.

- **Technology for Physically, Visually and Otherwise Challenged** - the Adele School, the School for the Blind, and the School for the Hearing Impaired have all benefitted from new technologies as hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of new hardware and software have ensured that no one is left behind in the ICT revolution.
- **Technology for Institutes of Higher Education** - laptops on loan, as well as high-speed Internet are now available to every student at the Antigua State College, the Antigua & Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute (ABHTI) and the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education (ABICE). The UPP Administration is already providing high-speed Internet at the College and at the Institutes and is committed to partnering with the private sector to provide high-speed Internet at the homes of each of the students.

In this era of globalization, access to technology is like access to education; it is a catalyst for the empowerment of people. The UPP recognizes that technology is a tool for, not just a reward of growth and development



With the opening of the Mount Saint John's Hospital and the modernization of our health services, together with an excellent cadre of health practitioners, our country's therapeutic climate and good flight connections will make it possible for us to aggressively market our country as a Health Tourism destination

The Ministry of Tourism and the new Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority will be encouraged to explore further business opportunities in adventure, nature, culture, sport, heritage and health and wellness tourism packages

Tourism Rising Signs of Your Success

Record investment in the Tourism Industry.

According to World Investment Report, in 2007 Antigua and Barbuda received approximately US\$391 Million in foreign investment making the country the fourth highest recipient of FDI in the Caribbean.

25% increase in our room stock.

Antigua and Barbuda's room stock increased from 3,000 in 2004 to 4,154 in 2008, an increase of approximately 25%. This represents more than US\$2.0 billion of investment, unmatched in the history of the country.

Aggressive destination marketing of the destination and success in winning awards, including the Adrian Award for Tourism campaign in January 2008; "The Best Sailing and Yachting Island of the Year 2007",

the Best Wedding Island Award in 2006 and 2007; the Best Beach Break destination in 2007.

Record hotel construction and renovation.

This includes Hodges Bay Club, Sugar Ridge, Natocha Ltd. Sandals Grande Antigua Resort, South Point at Falmouth Harbor, Verandah and NonSuch Bay Development, among others.

The introduction of the Romantic Rhythms International Music Festival, as a signature event to continues to position Antigua and Barbuda as the Events Capital of the Eastern Caribbean.

Record stay-over and cruise ship visits and cruise passengers.

In 2007 Antigua recorded over 384 cruise arrivals and 672,788 cruise passengers. Our stay over visitors were approximately 261,786.

Our tourism development programme for our second term will include:

- Commissioning of a Tourism Master Plan
- Giving highest priority to environmental sustainability





- Continuous improvement in product quality to enhance visitor experience
- Diversifying and enhancing the tourism products by linking tourism to culture, sports, the arts and the environment
- Developing the concept of Community Tourism by training and motivating local people to provide accommodation and other services to visitors in their communities

To optimize the potential of the tourism industry, we will launch the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority.

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority will:

- Promote, assist and facilitate efficient policies for the development of tourism
- Design and implement marketing strategies for the effective promotion of the tourism industry
- Advise the government and the private sector on matters relating to these strategies
- Make provision for adequate and suitable air and sea passenger transport services to and from the destination
- Provide improved Tourism Incentives to industry participants

Small Hotels

- A UPP Government will implement a special incentives regime for small hotels.
- We will, through the Antigua and Barbuda Development Bank, provide grants and concessionary loans for the upgrading of small hotels and villas and assist them in developing a special programme for advertising and marketing.

More Money for Tourism Marketing

A UPP Government will:

- Continue to increase the budgetary allocation for tourism marketing
- Allocate additional funding for the maintenance and protection of the environment. Work with Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority, the Community Development Division, of the Ministry of Social Transformation to develop a portfolio of tourism related projects to be undertaken exclusively by locals.
- Establish a Product Enhancement Fund to facilitate the overall development and expansion of our product.

The construction of the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Ground has already made a positive impact in the area of sports tourism. The use of the facility as a sport attraction will result in unprecedented worldwide publicity for our country as a world-class sports tourism destination



Deliver a range of financial incentives to food exporters and processors using local produce, seafood, poultry and livestock inputs



Incentives To Propel Growth In Agriculture

In 2004, the UPP launched a rescue mission for agriculture, marine resources and food production. After the destruction of our country's agricultural sector by 28 years of the ALP's neglect and lack of vision, it was a major challenge to harness the significant potential and competitive advantage that Antigua and Barbuda possesses.

We cannot be daunted by this challenge inasmuch as the world food situation in respect of rising prices and diminishing supplies presents a threat to our people's right to be properly nourished and to have food supplies readily available at affordable prices.

To boldly confront this challenge and ensure measurable success in the next term, a UPP Government will:

- Complete the National Land Use Policy and implement it aggressively
- Expand the Program of Secure Land Tenure for our nation's farmers to provide for leases ranging from 25 to 40 years
- Establish the National Agricultural Training and Research Institute (NATRI) which will offer short- and medium-term training courses

- Build a number of regional Producer Service Centres to decentralize the Ministry and realize greater efficiencies
- Establish an Agro Industry Incubator Unit to facilitate the development of a food-processing industry
- Build on the successes in Home based production (formerly known as backyard gardening) realized during our first term and which were highlighted in a feature article in the Miami Herald newspaper
- Support the development and application of all forms of irrigation technology through a system of tax and duty exemptions on the importation of related equipment and supplies
- Support and facilitate the organization of a National Farmers Union
- Provide funding, technical and material support to new farmers; and
- Deliver a range of financial incentives to food exporters and processors using local produce, seafood, poultry and livestock inputs.



Life-long Learning For All

"Next in importance to freedom and justice is popular education, without which neither freedom nor justice can be permanently maintained."

James A. Garfield

The UPP sees life-long learning for all as the critical path to a successful future in the knowledge-driven twenty-first century.

Among the elements of the UPP's agenda for life-long learning are:

- Early Childhood Education Centres, to be funded by the Caribbean Development Bank
- A nationwide network of preschool/childcare facilities such as the one recently established at the Simon Bolivar Park
- Modern high schools equipped to teach both academic and technical/vocational subjects
- The promotion and inculcation of the values, traditions and practices associated with Antigua and Barbuda norms and ways of life in the classroom, in order to ensure that the educational system produces good citizens and not just students who have been trained to sit exams
- CXC-based CVQ Examinations which will assess the competencies of our

tradesmen and make them more competitive nationally and regionally

- The National Training Agency which will be an incubator for developing professionals and skilled persons
- Additional tertiary scholarships geared towards further augmentation of the growing cadre of young, bi- and multi-lingual professionals
- Expansion of the recently established Student Loan facility through the Antigua and Barbuda Development Bank, which will offer access to education loans at attractive rates
- A fully functional public library
- A University of Antigua & Barbuda operating in collaboration with the University of the West Indies; with existing tertiary-level institutions providing the initial platform
- Unfettered, free access to the Internet

Even as we invest in the education of the nation's human resources, the UPP will pursue the creation of knowledge-based employment opportunities. This pursuit will build on the past success evidenced by the creation of the Medical Transcription Industry.

Even as we invest in the education of the nation's human resources, the UPP will pursue the creation of knowledge-based employment opportunities



To date, 15 government schools participate in the National School Meals Programme; with an additional nine schools planned to begin participation this year. Eventually, the programme will be extended to all government schools

Strengthening the Arms of Labour **Our Human Capital, our Greatest Resource**

Under the watch of the Antigua Labor Party, the working class people of this country had a minimum wage that was not adjusted for years, a Labor Code that stood unchanged for over a generation, a Labor Department that was understaffed and under equipped and an Industrial Court that was largely forgotten and neglected

Under the watch of the Antigua Labor Party, the working class people of this country had a minimum wage that was not adjusted for years, a Labor Code that stood unchanged for over a generation, a Labor Department that was understaffed and under equipped and an Industrial Court that was largely forgotten and neglected. The ALP was actively involved in union busting tactics throughout their administration and passed laws to impede trade union development. It is a fallacy to believe that the regime that worked to stifle the true representatives of the working class would have the capacity to deliver the said working class from oppression.

In contrast, it took a UPP Administration a mere four years to:

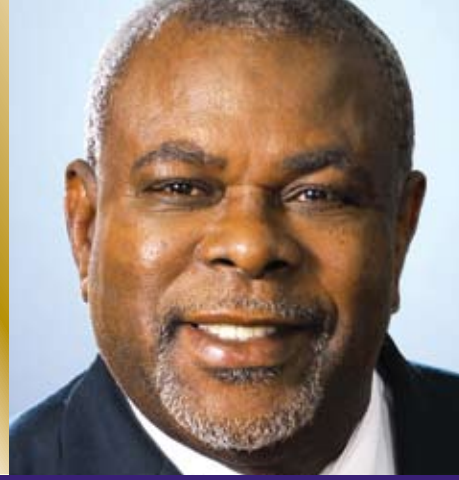
- Increase the minimum wage
- Enact laws to secure and safeguard the viability of Trade Unions
- Appoint a committee of stakeholders to revise and amend the Labor Code, allowing it to reflect advances made in labor practices and industrial relations.
- Provide the Trade Union Congress with annual grant of \$25,000
- Pass laws to safeguard the compensation due to workers where their employers have declared bankruptcy or have closed operations
- Complete the mechanism for an unemployment grant

The Labor Department

- The new UPP Administration will ensure the computerization of the Labor Department in order to improve efficiency in record keeping and procedural productivity.
- We will recruit suitably trained labor relation officers and inspectors.
- We will settle the outstanding monies owed to the International Labor Organization of over EC \$686,000 – a debt left by the failed ALP regime.
- By regularizing our status with the ILO, we can supplement our training and educational efforts for staff by once again accessing the resources of the ILO.
- As part of our efforts to focus on our human capital, the UPP will revisit the wage scales at the Labor Department with consideration for upward adjustment.

The Industrial Court

The backlog of cases and the lack of technical and procedural advances at the Industrial Court have been the cause of great disappointment and frustration for both employers and employees. The second UPP Administration will secure the technological and human resources required to achieve greater procedural efficiency thereby enhancing the professionalism of the Industrial Court and speeding up the adjudication of disputes.



Transforming our Capital City

During its first term, the UPP was challenged to repair the decades of neglect inflicted on our Capital City by a wanton and callous ALP regime that had no appreciation for the importance of inspiring pride and self-esteem in our nationals through our identification with an orderly, clean, and well organized Capital City. The UPP's record in building, repairing and maintaining the Capital's infrastructure, its public spaces and cultural facilities is widely applauded.

Building on the first term successes in raising capital locally, regionally and internationally as a result of its fiscal prudence and effective management of the economy, the UPP will seek to source international financing for various infrastructure development projects required to complete the transformation of the city of St. John's.

Specific initiatives in this transformation process will include:

- A planned rationalization of the movement of traffic through the city, to include a number of no-parking and pedestrian-only areas.
- Ensuring the early commissioning of the multi-storey car park to lessen the traffic load on the city and as a convenience for motorists visiting the city.
- Enhancing security within the city, especially in the commercial areas, by increasing the police presence on a 24-hour basis and strategically placing CCTV units throughout the city.
- Providing incentives for city property owners to maintain their structures in good repair and assisting the owners of derelict properties to demolish and remove those that detract from the aesthetics of the city.
- Increasing designated areas for establishing Vendors' Kiosks, as a means of boosting the opportunities for micro and small businesses in the Capital.
- A methodical approach to upgrading the physical and infrastructural conditions of the City's suburbs and residential areas, including public beautification and tree-planting drives. Among the specific initiatives will be the construction of public restrooms and the installation of a sewage system.
- Encouraging a programme of Urban Beautification where unused land in the City and suburbs will be converted into flower gardens and small parks.
- Paying special attention to the Waterfront and Port areas for development of facilities for recreation and small business activities.
- Strengthening the oversight of building, design construction and maintenance
- Identifying and protecting historic structures through the establishment of a National Trust for heritage sites and buildings.

Identifying and protecting historic structures through the establishment of a National Trust for heritage sites and buildings



IMPROVED AND NEW FACILITIES

New Terminal For Regional Aviation Hub

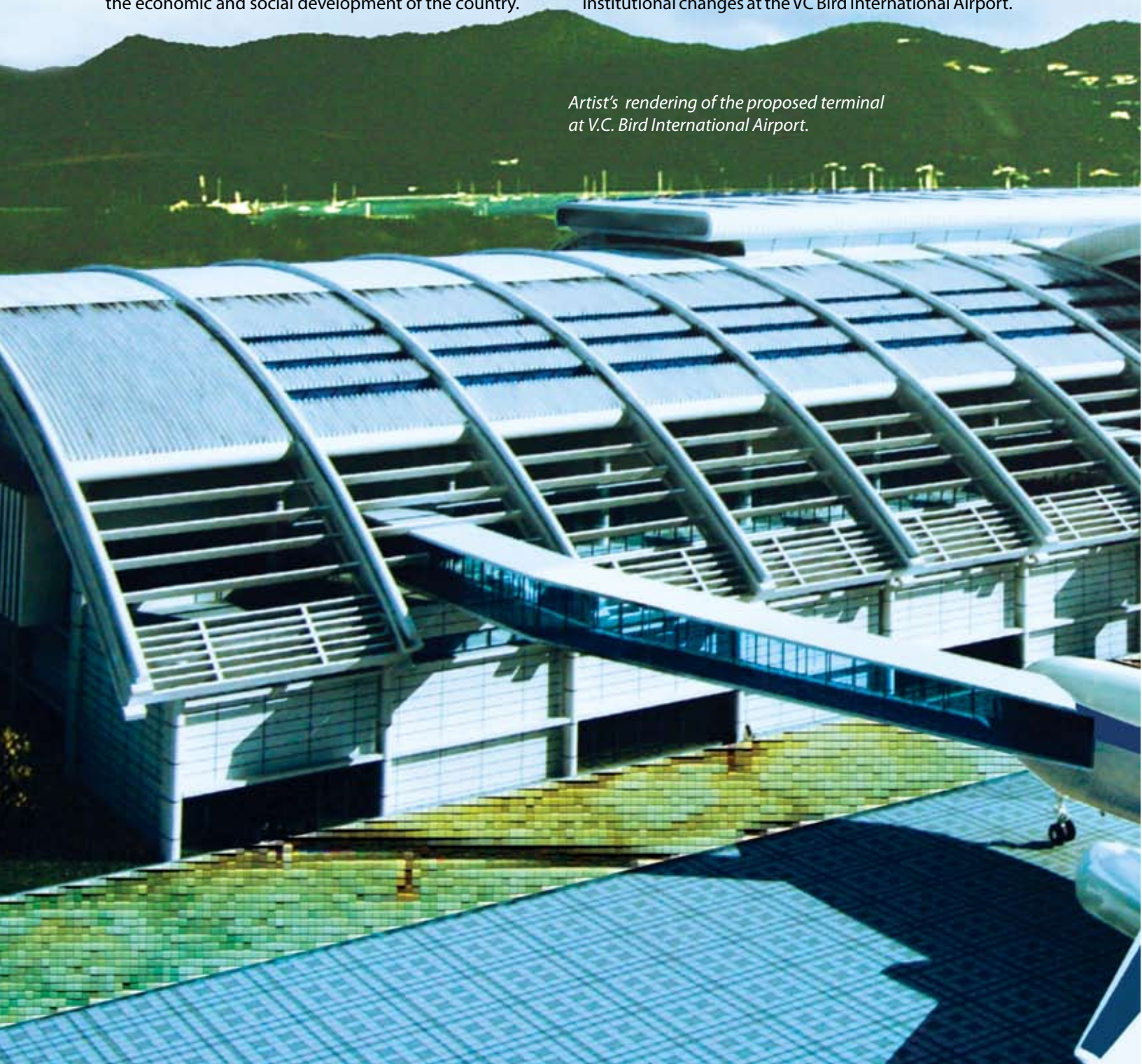
The United Progressive Party attaches strategic value to airline traffic in the country's development, and will continue to collaborate with its aviation partners and stakeholders – nationally, regionally and internationally – to increase and expand air services into and through Antigua and Barbuda.

This includes continued development of freight, charter, and private jet markets. The expansion work now underway at the VC Bird International Airport, and planned additional works, can be expected to further propel Antigua and Barbuda forward as a major centre for aviation in the Caribbean, as well as to contribute to the economic and social development of the country.

The UPP's 2009 programme for aviation builds on a history of achievement over the last five years that has seen tourist arrivals into Antigua and Barbuda climb steadily from **423,000 arrivals in 2004 to 934,574 in 2007**. This achievement has been all the more impressive given the general world-wide crisis that has faced much of the aviation industry during this time. New services have included direct flights from New York, Miami, Atlanta, and Manchester – opening our country as a gateway to an even greater range of travellers.

To help in achieving these impressive gains, the UPP administration has embarked upon major physical and institutional changes at the VC Bird International Airport.

Artist's rendering of the proposed terminal at V.C. Bird International Airport.



These changes have included:

- **Upgrades to the Arrival Hall**, including complete refurbishment and installation of computerized systems and controls;
- Complete refurbishment of the **VIP Lounge**;
- Expansion and upgrade of the **Departure Lounge**;
- An ongoing US\$50m expansion and upgrade of the **runway and adjacent areas**;
- Establishment of the **Airport Authority**.

At the regional level, the UPP Government has been a major investor in the Antigua-based airline LIAT, securing the jobs of hundreds of Antiguan and Barbudan, as well as ensuring interregional travel throughout the Caribbean.

The UPP administration has also worked vigorously to ensure safe, affordable and reliable air transport for the people of Barbuda, working with Carib Aviation, then WINAIR, to achieve this goal.

Going forward, a UPP administration will be continuing its programme for the upgrading of facilities at the country's airports. This involves continuing to work with our regional and international partners to secure financing for a new terminal facility to replace the existing structure. This transformation can be expected to further strengthen Antigua and Barbuda's role as a premier hub for regional and transatlantic air travel. Barbuda has not been forgotten and plans are well advanced for the complete upgrade of the Codrington airport facilities.

The new Terminal at V.C. Bird International will be equipped with four Jet Bridges, making V.C. Bird International the only airport so equipped in the Eastern islands of CARICOM, apart from Trinidad and Tobago.



The Mount St John Medical Centre is equipped to provide health care to every Antiguan and Barbudan; and also to patients from elsewhere in the region

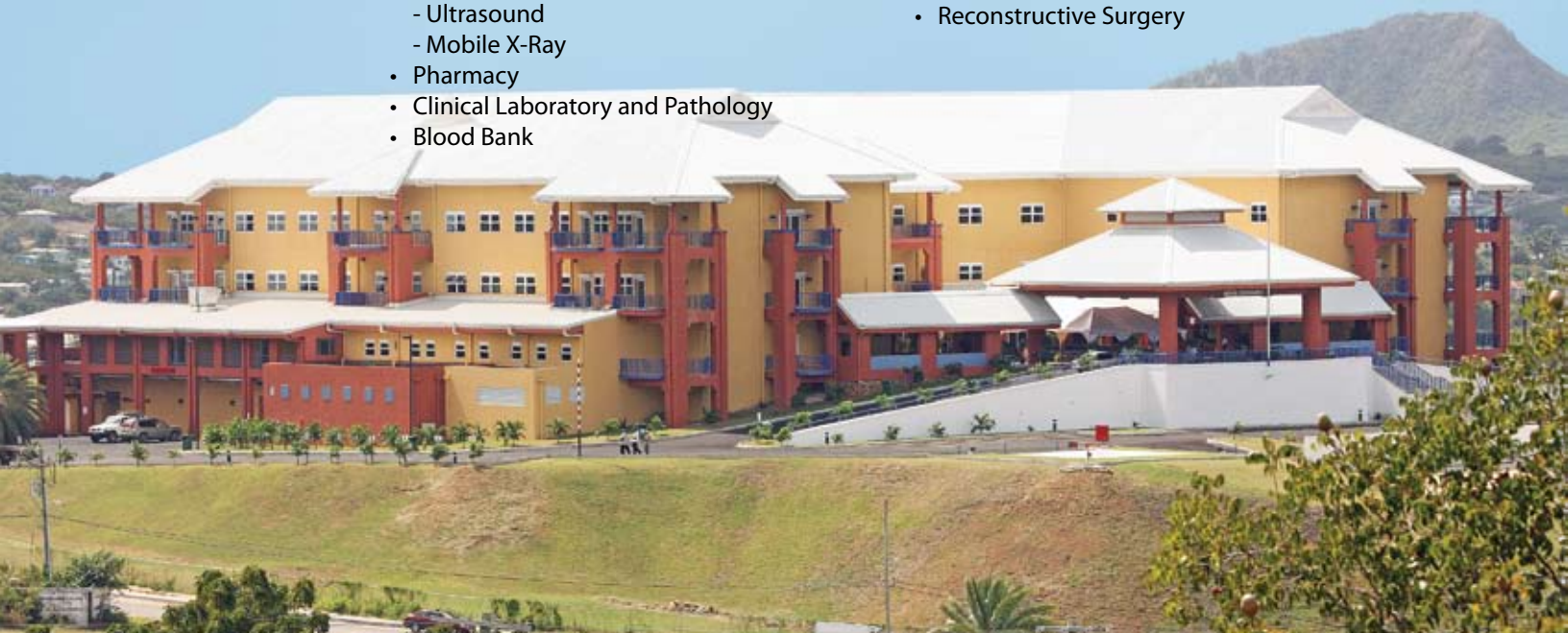
MOUNT ST. JOHN MEDICAL CENTRE The UPP Has Delivered

After inheriting a construction site that had been painted on the outside to conceal the internal evidence of the dismal ALP failure over the course of eight years to complete what was originally a fully-funded twenty-month project,

the UPP Administration has delivered to the people of Antigua & Barbuda a 185-bed modern medical complex which will be providing full inpatient, diagnostic and physician services to meet international standards.

Mount St. John Medical Centre will provide the following services:

- Health Promotion and Prevention Programs: Hypertension, Diabetes, Antenatal Care
- Outpatient Clinic
- ICU
- NICU
- Radiology with world class digital technology
 - MRI
 - CT Scan (16 slice)
 - Fluoroscopy
 - Mammography
 - Routine X-Rays
 - Ultrasound
 - Mobile X-Ray
- Pharmacy
- Clinical Laboratory and Pathology
- Blood Bank
- Surgery
- In-Patient Services
- Emergency Services
- Dialysis
- Nephrology
- Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation
- Oncology
- Orthopaedics
- Non-Invasive Cardiology
- Endocrinology
- Ophthalmology
- Telemedicine
- Reconstructive Surgery





Quality Health Care For All

The Mount St John's Medical Centre takes health care to a new level in Antigua & Barbuda. Long in gestation under the ALP, the UPP completed the hospital in our first term.

In the second term the Sunshine Government will:

- Effectively move public health to a comprehensive wellness model rather than solely or primarily a treatment and care approach and place a greater emphasis on prevention to promote long-term health benefits and health care savings
- Undertake a drive towards wellness for women by promoting and supporting screening services for diseases such as breast and uterine cancer, hypertension and diabetes
- Recommit to primary healthcare delivery in conjunction with our other PAHO and WHO commitments
- Pay special attention to chronic, non-communicable diseases and the harmful effects of poor lifestyle choices that are known to have a detrimental impact on the health and wellness of West Indians
- Make a firm commitment to place far greater emphasis on comprehensive mental health care

- Bolster and expand all health care workforce training programmes across all specialties to ensure that highly trained professionals are available to meet the health care needs of the nation
- Modernize our nation's health system infrastructure not only to ensure healthy outcomes, but also to ensure judicious and effective use of health care resources to boost positive returns on health care investments
- Meet all our international health commitments including the national response to HIV/AIDS for prevention, care and treatment by 2010
- Revitalize the oral/dental health programme, focusing on a comprehensive prevention plan that includes children as a priority.

Recognizing the pivotal role played by the nation's nurses in the delivery of health care, the UPP has made a firm commitment to providing:

- An increase in the number of students entering the School of Nursing
- An increase in nurses attaining Bachelors and Masters Degrees and
- A continuous upgrading of the nursing curriculum.

Even as we invest in the education of the nation's human resources, the UPP will pursue the creation of knowledge-based employment opportunities



We have constructed and institutionalized a broad range of social programmes that guarantee a dignified and decent life for everyone, both citizens and residents alike. This achievement is another fulfillment of the promises of our Agenda for Change Manifesto

Social Transformation

This special monetary allowance provides maximum financing of \$2,500 to low-income, elderly citizens, to maintain their properties in good condition. Since the launch in March 2007, some 80 persons have received assistance

Winning The War Against Poverty

The legacy of our colonial past was pervasive poverty and its ugly and disastrous consequences. The mandate of the people in electing governments to represent their interests has been a directive to their representatives to wage war on poverty and establish a new social and economic order that offered opportunities for Antiguans and Barbudans to develop themselves and their communities to the highest level possible in the context of their island location and environment.

Successive ALP Administrations repeatedly betrayed the people's mandate, fostering policies that concentrated the nation's wealth in the hands of the political elite and their cronies and flatterers, while fooling the masses into believing that the crumbs that fell to them from the elites' tables were enough to give them the good life.

Thus, during the ALP's misrule, large numbers of Antiguans and Barbudans, whose ambitions made it impossible for them to live in the narrow corridors prescribed by the ALP rulers, voted with their feet and fled to greener pastures. The indigenous population of the country declined steadily since Independence in 1981, and the ALP cynics encouraged a replacement of this indigenous population by vulnerable immigrants from the Caribbean and further afield, aggravating the situation of poverty and exclusion that confronted the country.

The UPP has laid the basis, through a set of policies and institutions, to tackle this legacy

of poverty and social exclusion and thereby foster a new social order based on cohesion, respect for the right of every citizen to a decent life, and progress in achieving a consistently higher standard of living and quality of life for the nation as a whole.

Some initiatives already begun by the UPP in our drive to eradicate poverty, and which we are committed to strengthen during our second term, include:

Establishment of the Social Policy Unit:

This is the main technical arm of the Ministry of Social Transformation and, in addition to other functions, manages the interaction and cooperation among key international, regional and local social partners and civil society in the fight against poverty.

Home Improvement Grant: This special monetary allowance provides maximum financing of \$2,500 to low-income, elderly citizens, to maintain their properties in good condition. Since the launch in March 2007, some 80 persons have received assistance. In the upcoming term, the programme will be expanded to include indigent members of society and other persons who meet specified eligibility criteria.

Poverty Alleviation Grant: When the UPP took office after the 2004 general elections, it was appalled at the paucity of the assistance given to needy persons in the society. In fulfilling its mission of making the wrongs right a thorough investigation was mounted where several irregularities were discovered including a severely padded list of grantees. In addition to rectifying such abuses the UPP Administration established a new Board of Guardians and increased the fortnightly benefits as follows:

Chester HUGHES

All Saints East / St. Luke



- **Elderly, mentally challenged and destitute from \$45 to \$100;**
- **Children from \$30 to \$100; and**
- **Visually impaired from \$55 to \$110**

Vagrancy Control Programme: This project is designed to tackle the problem of homelessness in our society. A facility catering for vagrants in a holistic manner is to be established where the programme will offer housing, counseling and other treatment, as well as nutrition and hygiene needs in a safe and secure environment.

GRACE (Government's Residential Assistance and Care for the Elderly and Eligible): This programme which is managed and coordinated by a nurse Manager serves to protect our elderly from abuse and hardship and ensure that they maintain their dignity by providing a number of social workers, known as Elder Care Assistants, to attend to the elderly in their homes.

Strengthening Communities Through "Ownership"

The UPP has spent its first term fighting to reclaim what was taken from the people of this country. In its second term, its focus will be on making sure that rip-offs of our assets are a thing of the past by inculcating a sense of ownership of institutions, communities and, ultimately, country.

The UPP administration will exert every effort to make communities responsible for their own quality of life. For instance, sporting organizations will be encouraged and assisted to assume oversight of their playing facilities through the identification of liaison officers who will monitor the use

of lights, discourage littering, and deter antisocial behaviours such as vandalism, defacing public property, and the playing of loud music at unreasonable hours.

Churches will be expected to extend their ministries beyond their four walls and, in particular, to preach the gospel of "cleanliness being next to godliness" by adopting stretches of roadways and beaches in their communities. They will be expected, as well, to be their "brother's keeper" by referring those in need of elder, care, child protection, drug rehabilitation, and similar interventions to social-service providers.

Strengthening Families Through Gender Empowerment and Healthcare

The UPP recognizes that while many of the nation's children are being reared in single-parent households, all children deserve the support of both parents. Accordingly, this administration will ensure that the policies and measures identified in the Access to and Maintenance of Children Act, 2008, are speedily implemented.

To this end, the Ministries of Justice, Legal Affairs and Social Transformation will collaborate to streamline the collection of child-support payments and to ensure that both parents are afforded access in the best interests of their children.

We will also ensure that legal matters that affect the welfare and wellbeing of minor children are dealt with expeditiously and justly by continuing our move towards the establishment of a dedicated Family Court that is strongly linked with the providers of social services.

The UPP has spent its first term fighting to reclaim what was taken from the people of this country. In its second term, its focus will be on making sure that rip-offs of our assets are a thing of the past by inculcating a sense of ownership of institutions, communities and, ultimately, country



The Botanical Gardens Revitalization Project will develop the Botanical Gardens as a national tourism site, with a museum of plant collections; an area of entertainment, and an area offering opportunities in horticulture and plant science

Critical Infrastructure

Expand the Community Pride Programme to year 'round activity that will be a component of all festivals and special events in Antigua & Barbuda

The collapse of this country's infrastructure under the incompetent rule of the ALP presented the United Progressive Party with formidable challenges in 2004. The UPP's repair and rebuilding of our collapsing economy and infrastructure have been widely applauded.

We are committed to maintenance, upgrade and expansion of essential infrastructure through:

- Continuing the **Road Construction Programme** in urban and rural areas. The entire national road network will be modernized.
- Major reconstruction of the **V C Bird International Airport**
- The **upgrade and expansion of the main seaport** to increase capacity and enhance efficiency in the processing and delivery of imports
- **Restructuring APUA** to bring it in line with modern best practices as a utilities authority, organized as an innovative and efficient business enterprise
- Introduction of a system of **renewable and sustainable energy-generation** in Barbuda to provide the entire island-community with clean, renewable energy sources, such as wind turbines and solar cells
- Completion of a US\$8 million **water infrastructure development** programme which will include the replacement and expansion of water mains, the construction of new storage tanks and the installation of reverse osmosis plants in Ffryes Estate and in Barbuda
- Equipping APUA with the capacity to meet the country's current **electricity needs** when the new equipment acquired through collaboration with the People's Republic of China is commissioned.





Uplifting Our Communities

A focus of national life and culture on urban to the exclusion of rural areas is unfortunate and shortsighted. The UPP will ensure balanced development across the county.

In our second term, the UPP will:

- Establish Administrative and Cultural Centres in each parish. These will be the centres for administrative, local government and cultural activities for villages and communities within the parish
- Enhance and institutionalize the annual Home and Gardens Festival to encourage pride in keeping homes, gardens and the local environment clean and beautiful
- Ensure that the standard of public safety and security in the villages and rural communities is maintained at a high level through adequate police presence
- Establish a number of special Economic Activity Zones at strategic

rural locations like Parham, All Saints, English Harbour and Bolans. This will decentralize economic activity and job creation away from the city and create opportunities for employment in rural areas

- Continue and intensify the rural infrastructure program by building and repairing more roads, drains, sports complexes and public squares and parks
- Develop two major, new, rural highways: One connecting Old Road to English Harbour, and the other connecting Bendals to John Hughes via Break Nock. These new highways will open up many new opportunities for development of agriculture, housing and tourism enterprises in the respective rural areas
- Expand the Community Pride Programme to year 'round activity that will be a component of all festivals and special events in Antigua & Barbuda

During this year, Government will begin the process of equitable distribution of land for residential purposes



This year, Government will begin construction of two new secondary schools in Five Islands and Tomlinson's, and expansion of the Sir McChesney George High School in Barbuda

BARBUDA

The UPP has enshrined in law, the collective ownership of all land in Barbuda by Barbudans

Ensuring an Equal Partnership in a Unitary State

During our first term, the status of the sister island of Barbuda as an equal partner with Antigua in a stable, unitary state has been consolidated. For the first time in our country's history the Barbuda Member of Parliament received a Cabinet appointment. Never again will Barbuda be seen as a neglected backwoods to the metropolitan Antigua, as it was in the bygone days of ALP misrule.

Today Barbuda is a respected and integral part of the national community, with its own elected Barbuda Council having full authority to plan and manage the affairs of the island. UPP has made sure that as part of the unitary state, the Central Government gives equal attention and priority to the development of Barbuda's facilities and its people to the same high standard as those of Antigua.

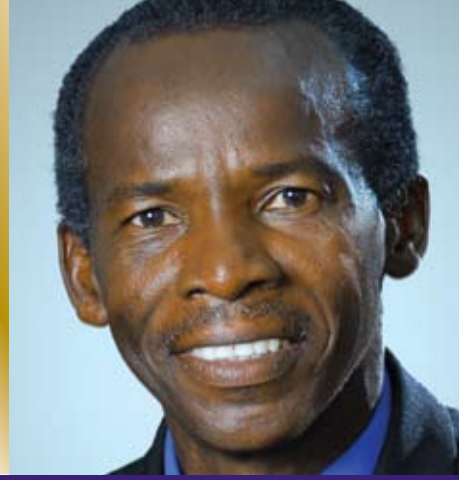
During our first term, our promises to Barbuda were fulfilled. There was an emergence of focused direction and shared vision as the UPP administration worked to put Barbuda on a path for enhanced development. Working with the Barbuda Council we were able to achieve:

- Improved infrastructure, including new road construction and enhanced provision of water and electricity services, and
- Upgrading and improving both the primary and secondary schools.
- Providing scholarships for over 40 Barbudan young people to attend university in various countries around the world.
- A greater integration of Barbudans in the administration of the country. Under our UPP administration several Barbudans have been appointed members of the various statutory boards, and the Chairman of the Barbuda Council and other officials are invited to attend regional conferences held in Antigua.

During our second term in our programme to develop Barbuda, in cooperation with the Barbuda Council, a UPP Government will focus on:

Fisheries Complex

The construction of a modern Fisheries Complex, to be undertaken in collaboration with the Government of Japan.



Wind Turbine Energy

Transforming and revolutionizing the energy sector by installing a wind farm to generate electricity by wind turbines, and a bank of Solar Voltaic Cells to transform sunlight into electricity. Barbuda will become the only significant island community that derives all its required energy from renewable environmentally friendly methods. Discussions have already begun to secure Cuba's technical assistance for this project.

Rebuilding the agricultural sector

Already discussions are underway for Cuban technical support for this initiative.

Joint Consultative Committee

The UPP administration will ensure a higher profile for the Joint Consultative Committee. This will be a standing committee of senior Antiguan and Barbudan leaders, chaired by the Prime Minister, that will work in partnership with the Barbuda Council. The primary role of the JCC will be supervising and monitoring development plans and projects for Barbuda.

The UPP administration will ensure a higher profile for the Joint Consultative Committee. This will be a standing committee of senior Antiguan and Barbudan leaders, chaired by the Prime Minister, that will work in partnership with the Barbuda Council

Upgrading Disaster Management

Following the devastation which resulted from the passage of Hurricane Omar, the UPP Government has resolved to improve the capacity of the **National Office of Disaster Services** to enable it to enhance disaster management and mitigation, and to allow it to respond promptly when citizens and residents are struck by natural disasters.

A UPP Government will:

- Work to ensure that standard operating procedures are enforced across the board – Ministries, departments, statutory bodies and the private sector

- Support the **National Emergency Operations Centre** in a systematic retrofitting of existing facilities to reduce the impact of natural and man-made disasters on the economy, infrastructure, job security, etc.
- Construct a **National Disaster Office**
- Construct hurricane shelters in Bolans and Pigotts
- Recruit **Disaster Relief Officers** charged with identifying and assisting disaster victims and
- Enhance community resilience in Antigua & Barbuda in the face of adverse effects of climate change and disaster



Today, in Antigua and Barbuda, among other benefits, young people enjoy free health care, nutritious school meals, free school uniforms, and free education including scholarships for all young people who have the qualifications and ambition to go to university

Youth: The Strength and Future of the Nation Fostering Opportunities for Achieving Success in Life and Career

For the first time, the government has defined a clear National Youth Policy, with a Ministry of Youth Affairs to implement it and a Director of Youth Affairs to manage the many initiatives for Youth Development

During our first term in office, the affairs of the youth of our nation were a high priority for the government.

For the first time, the government has defined a clear National Youth Policy, with a Ministry of Youth Affairs to implement it and a Director of Youth Affairs to manage the many initiatives for Youth Development.

Through the Board of Education and the Foreign Service's emphasis on securing international academic opportunities, there has been an increase in the number of university-level scholarships awarded to youth. Currently, over 1,000 Antiguan and Barbudans are pursuing higher degrees in many countries around the world.

Youth who require financing to assist with higher education benefitted when the UPP Government established a National Education Grant fund to offer educational loans of up to \$50,000 at a nominal 3% interest.

Opportunities for training and education for youth have multiplied at the various departments of the Antigua State College, the Police Training School, the Antigua Barbuda International Institute of Technology, the Antigua & Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute and other institutions throughout the country.

Through the many Computer Access Centres throughout the country, access to computers, and training to use them, are available to every young person at no

cost. Training in foreign languages is also provided at these Centres.

Youth are provided with free school uniforms and receive nutritious meals at school at minimal cost.

In view of the significant gains realized during the first five years of a UPP Administration, the youth of Antigua & Barbuda have a vested interest in ensuring the re-election of the UPP.

During our second term, these are some of the projects we will embark on to consolidate our programme for youth development and advancement:

We will create the **Antigua and Barbuda Youth Business Trust**. In helping young people to build successful businesses, the ABYBT will offer:

- Business start-up capital subject to appropriate vetting and project oversight requirements;
- Business mentoring;
- Business-affiliated grants; and
- Business support, including training and skills development, and opportunities for marketing and promotion and networking.

The **Single Mothers Cottage Industry Programme** will help increase employment opportunities for young single mothers with limited or no skills. Training will be offered in Agricultural Production and Elder Care.

Jacqui QUINN-LEANDRO St. George



The **Youth Apprenticeship Programme in Agriculture** will provide youth aged 17 to 25 years with an opportunity to become involved in farming as a business.

Youth Development and Apprenticeship Centres will cater to youth aged 15 to 25 years who have not yet acquired enough education. They will pursue two years of

training in a number of vocational and occupational skills.

The **Youth Development Programme** will offer youth opportunities for a variety of training within their communities, using the school plants in the afternoons and evenings.

The National Youth Service Creating More Opportunities for Youth Development

During its first term the UPP created many opportunities for the development and advancement of the nation's youth. This commitment to our youth will continue during our second term with a number of youth oriented initiatives, one of which will be the creation of the National Youth Service.

The NYS will be aimed at young people 16 years and over, those who are still at school and those who have left school.

Upon enlistment in the NYS, young people will be guided to join one of the Activity Groups, according to their interest or aptitude. These Activity Groups will include National Parks and Environment, Social Work (including care of the elderly), Community Building, Arts and Culture, Military Support (Coast Guard and the ABDF), among others. In the case of school students the Activity Groups will operate for six-week periods during the summer vacations and for school

leavers for a one-year period after leaving school.

The Youth Service will be a volunteer organization, with strong incentives to attract a large number of the nation's youth. All members will receive a monetary stipend, and each member of the NYS will earn "education credits", that is, a guarantee of a financial contribution by government to any tertiary educational institution selected by the member after satisfactory completion of their period in the Youth Service. This financial contribution will be based on the "points" gained by each member during the period of their enlistment and will reflect such measures as attendance at the Activity Group's programs, punctuality, discipline, deportment, work ethic, efficiency and productivity.

The National Youth Service will be developed and managed by a dedicated unit in the Ministry of Youth Affairs.

Government will place emphasis on youth leadership and development, with a focus on values and attitude education as a means of promoting a culture of peace



Government policy will ensure the deployment of a personal computer and broadband internet in every home in Antigua and Barbuda by the year 2012

New Homes and Communities for a Better Quality of Life

During its first term of office, the UPP has laid the foundation for extensive and modern housing developments to be completed during its second term

During the dark days of ALP rule, building a house was exclusively an individual initiative. The ALP Administration almost never developed any community housing projects, where decent, modern houses could be purchased by our people with attractive and affordable mortgage arrangements. So, as construction costs have soared, the standard of housing has deteriorated as people turned to building small plywood structures, sometimes unfit to withstand the rigours of hurricanes and inadequate to house growing families in decent conditions.

During its first term of office, the UPP has laid the foundation for extensive and modern housing developments to be completed during its second term. Specific initiatives will include:

- Finalization of arrangements with financial institutions for very reasonable **mortgage facilities**
- Moving to balanced national development by directing **new housing developments to rural areas** of the country, including Pares, North Sound and All Saints
- Implementing an integrated approach to the development of a number of **New Residential Communities** comprising durable, aesthetically pleasing homes, community and leisure centres, playing and sports fields for children and youths and parks and green areas
- Providing a package of **incentives to private developers** of residential communities, and
- **Establish partnerships to satisfy the demand for some 6,000** new housing units by the end of the term.





Respecting The Rights And Dignity Of Persons With Disabilities

Putting People First is all embracing. No group is more deserving of special assistance than persons with disabilities.

In the second term, the UPP will enact enabling legislation to mandate equal rights in living and at the workplace for persons with disabilities.

This is in keeping with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to which Antigua & Barbuda became a signatory on March 30, 2007.

Senior Care

The UPP Government's commitment to "Putting People First" is of particular relevance to our seniors who built our nation. We have programmes in place to ensure our elderly are protected and cared for in their golden years.

A UPP Government will:

- Build a **Senior Citizens Centre** in the St. Phillip's North constituency
- Create a **Senior's Recreation Area** with the provision of nutritious meals at the Empowerment Centre in All Saints
- Provide a **monthly stipend of \$350** to non-pensionable seniors 70 years and older
- Ensure that our seniors continue to benefit from the **exemption from the departure tax** which we introduced in the first term

A UPP Government will:

- Continue the annual grant of \$25,000 to the Association of Persons with Disabilities
- Continue the \$200 monthly payment to purchase food and personal items under the People's Benefit Programme
- Maintain the Special Fund of \$250,000 to finance the various activities, equipment and services of the Antigua & Barbuda Association of Persons with Disabilities.



- Continue to provide relief via the **Senior Citizens Utility Subsidy** under the PetroCaribe Agreement
- Place emphasis on the **Government's Residential Assistance and Care** programme for the **Elderly and Eligible**
- Provide **home care** for our Elderly
- Retain the **exemptions and reductions in property tax** which were introduced in the first term and
- Continue the **Home Improvement Grant** for our Elderly

*In 2009,
Government will
provide every
certified visually
challenged
citizen with life-
enhancing
technology,
including the
provision of
appropriate
software
and appropriate
training*



The Ministry of Tourism Beach Enhancement Project will see the construction of beach parks, equipped with picnicking, recreational, and entertainment facilities; as well as emergency medical services on nine beaches



The Caribbean Festival Park Celebrating Our Diversity

The Caribbean Festival Park is conceived as a tourist mecca that will attract regional visitors, as well as tourists from around the world

The UPP is committed to its undertaking to establish a Caribbean theme park in the Perry Bay/Donavan's foreshore area.

The Caribbean Festival Park is conceived as a permanent year 'round showcase for the mosaic of cultures that our communities from other lands have brought to Antigua & Barbuda.

Persons from other Caribbean countries who have made Antigua & Barbuda their home will have a central role in the Caribbean Festival Park.

The cuisine, music, art, craft, song and dance of our Caribbean sisters and brothers, will be offered at the Caribbean Festival Park, together with Antigua and Barbuda's cultural heritage.

The Caribbean Festival Park is conceived as a tourist mecca that will attract regional visitors, as well as tourists from around the world. This will make it a major integrated resort, recreational, entertainment and shopping complex that will create hundreds of jobs in construction and in full-time operation.

The project covers approximately 18 acres of prime waterfront land owned by the Government, and will stretch from the Multi-Purpose Centre to Keeling Point.

A part of the Perry Bay Development is the design and construction of a Fisheries Complex. It is for fishermen to secure boats in times of hurricanes; storage of equipment and maintenance; and for families of fishermen to sell traditional sea foods. Approximately three acres of land is allocated to the Fisheries Complex.

The Grays-Green Community lies in proximity to the site of the Caribbean Festival Park. It is therefore appropriate to consider the opportunity for residents to be a source of labour, skills, entertainment, small business operators, security and management, etc.

The Board of Directors of Caribbean Festival Park selected OBM International from among local and regional consultants to prepare the Master Plan for the Caribbean theme park.

The Caribbean Festival Park Master Plan includes:

- Caribbean shops and restaurants
- A museum to depict skills and traditions of national and regional culture
- Commercial section for banking, body care, offices, pharmacy, other services
- Hotel, conference centre, marina
- A performing arts theatre
- A Fisheries Complex to include dry dock for sheltering boats in times of storm; work shops and units for storage of equipment; specially designed area for sale of fish delicacies by fisher folk.



Improved Public Services

The level of economic and social progress that Antiguan and Barbudans will enjoy in the coming years will depend to a great extent on the quality services the Government and its agencies deliver to the taxpayers of this country. Upon coming to office in 2004, the UPP inherited a public sector that could best be described as an institution that was characterized by bureaucracy, inertia and ineffectiveness.

A comprehensive programme of public sector reform is required to get government workers and contractors to embrace the national culture of excellence that the UPP will continue to promote. During its second term, the UPP will broaden and deepen the public-sector reform efforts started in its first term.

The UPP Administration will therefore:

- Rationalize the number and size of ministries and redeploy human capital to traditionally understaffed functions such as health care and education, as well as small business development
- Promote optimal productivity by enhancing the work environments for public and quasi-public sector workers
- Provide competitive merit-based compensation so that the nation's tax payers can be confident that they are receiving value for their tax dollars
- Facilitate continuing education, training, professional development and personal advancement for public and quasi-public sector workers
- Explore the introduction of employee

assistance programmes to provide confidential, professional counseling services on a voluntary basis to assist public sector employees who are experiencing difficult personal, family or work-related problems

- Revamp human resources management policies and plans in which promotions, transfers and secondments are driven by merit, competence and other related performance criteria.

The UPP Administration will:

- Fast-track and intensify the renewal and modernization programme currently underway in the Customs & Excise Department.
- Craft and install a renewal and modernization programme at the Inland Revenue Department.
- Conduct organization and management analyses of key product and service delivery departments and undertake required departmental restructuring to improve the level and quality of service offered to the public
- Provide ongoing training in service excellence to front-line public sector employees
- Designate and publicize product and service-excellence "champions" in all government departments and get the "champions" to evangelize their workplaces
- Introduce the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in the delivery of public services

Government pledges to repeal and replace the fragmented Immigration and Passport Act to expand the categories of persons who can obtain Temporary Residence status



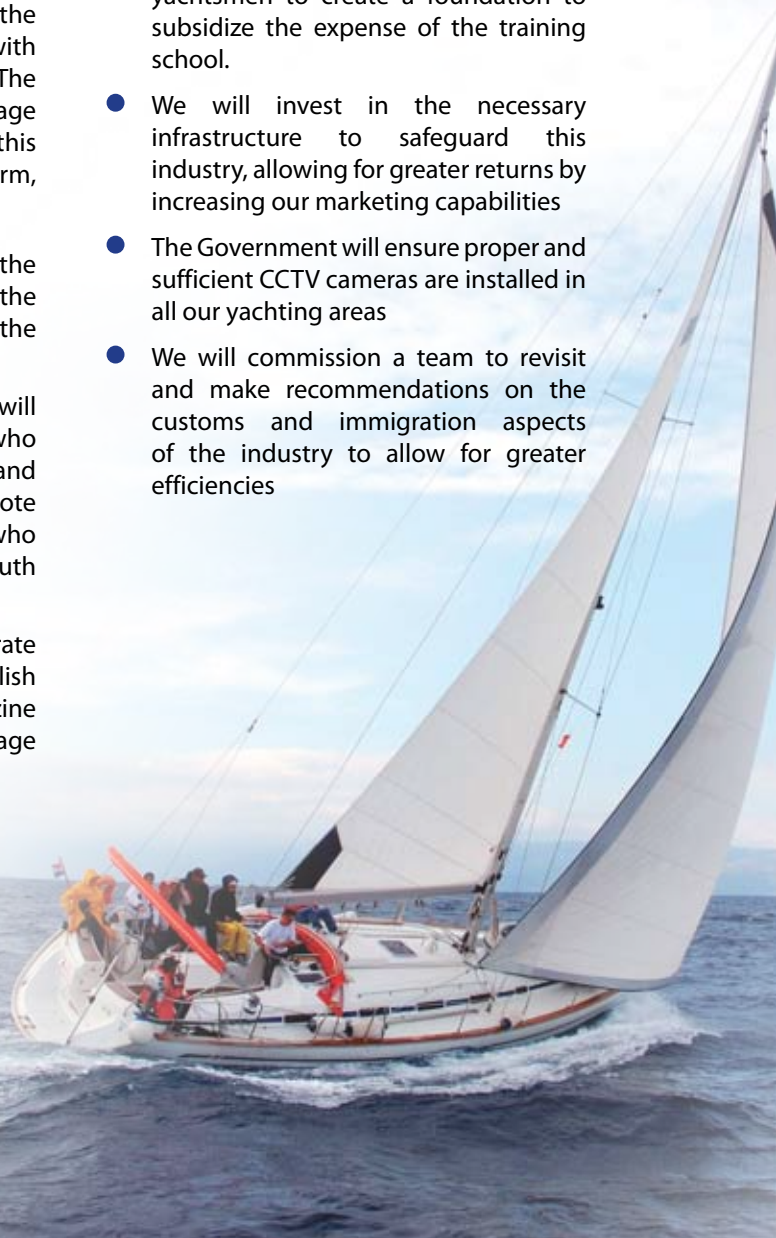
This year, Government will equip 12 additional public primary schools with state of the art computer labs. Government will also refurbish and modernize the computer labs in all public secondary schools

Antigua Yachting Mecca

The Ministry of Sports will collaborate with the Ministry of Tourism to publish a media guide and yachting magazine to allow for better and more coverage of events in the industry

The need for a structural approach to the Yachting industry begins when we first see it as a national sport, and not as a foreign investment with foreign interest. Our Yachting product is arguably the best worldwide and this knowledge and the pride which should be associated with it, needs to resonate among all of us. The potential for our people to take advantage of the many opportunities available in this sector is long over due. In the second term, the UPP will:

- We will create a Yachting desk at the Ministry of Sports with linkages to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Environment
 - The Ministry of Youth and Sports will employ a Yachting Liaison Officer who has full knowledge of the industry and can design programmes to promote the industry and the island and who will explore opportunities for youth participation and apprenticeships
 - The Ministry of Sports will collaborate with the Ministry of Tourism to publish a media guide and yachting magazine to allow for better and more coverage of events in the industry
- The UPP will invest in the formation of a yachting school offering courses covering all aspects of the industry
 - The Government will work with the yachtsmen to create a foundation to subsidize the expense of the training school.
 - We will invest in the necessary infrastructure to safeguard this industry, allowing for greater returns by increasing our marketing capabilities
 - The Government will ensure proper and sufficient CCTV cameras are installed in all our yachting areas
 - We will commission a team to revisit and make recommendations on the customs and immigration aspects of the industry to allow for greater efficiencies





Environment

Antigua and Barbuda like other Small Island Developing States face a number of environmental challenges, many of which are influenced by global changes. It is an absolute necessity to protect our environmental resources for future generations of Antiguans and Barbudans.

In order to ensure the sustainable use of our resources the UPP will:

- Conclude environmental legislation to ensure management and control of the use of our natural resources.
- Continue to ensure that our beaches are accessible to locals and visitors alike.
- Continue the national beautification programme, ensuring that our beaches are kept clean, the road-sides are landscaped and planted with trees, creating vistas for our people to enjoy.
- Ensure that a sustainable resource management approach is adopted for assessing all projects to help stabilize and maintain ecosystem functions, thereby providing the platform for continued sustainable economic development.
- Establish a rigorous coastal water quality monitoring programme to guarantee that a high standard is maintained at all times.
- Establish a partnership with communities across Antigua and Barbuda to develop an Eye On My Community Programme, which will be responsible for monitoring the various resources in their proximity, to help reduce illegal dumping in mangroves and sand-mining and the maintenance of beaches.
- Require Environment Impact assessments on all construction projects

Government is committed to the need to introduce renewable energy into the nation's electricity energy supply mix. In this regard, efforts are underway to start a pilot study in 2009 using wind turbine generators in Barbuda



We are now recognized as a model of an efficiently run and well managed small state, and held up as an example to inspire other small states throughout the world

International Relations as a Catalyst for Development

In our second term, the UPP will build on our first term successes and will continue to carry the standard of excellence in diplomacy and international representation that currently identifies Antigua & Barbuda on the international stage

During its first term, the UPP Administration achieved its Foreign Policy objective of making Antigua and Barbuda a **Confident and Respected Member** of the Caribbean region and the world.

During 28 years of misrule, the ALP had established an image of Antigua and Barbuda as a rogue state governed by a corrupt and greedy political cabal. Repairing this pervasive negative image of our homeland was a critical undertaking and called for skilled diplomacy and dynamic representation of our nation in international fora and congresses in which members of the international community function.

In our second term, the UPP will build on our first term successes and will continue to carry the **standard of excellence in diplomacy and international representation** that currently identifies Antigua & Barbuda on the international stage.

To this end, the following initiatives will be fundamental to our International Relations during our second term:

- Major emphasis will be on strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to develop, implement and manage

a progressive Foreign Policy worthy of a small, dynamic and influential Caribbean State. The organization of the Ministry will be rationalized and enhanced to give effective support to the nation's missions overseas, enabling them to optimize their functions and deliver even better results.

- To continue to empower our youth to be counted amongst the most educated and best trained young people in the world, our Foreign Policy initiatives will be aligned even more closely to our Domestic Policy objectives. For example, our quest for academic scholarship opportunities in many countries will be intensified. The UPP's extensive programme of international scholarships will also deliver on another promise to create a truly multi-lingual society.
- Our Foreign Missions and Diplomatic Envoys will be mandated to continue their efforts to develop partnerships with our many friends in the international arena that will assist in upgrading our national infrastructure, enhancing our human resource development, encouraging foreign direct

The UPP's prudent and responsible approach to the management of our nation's business contrasts sharply with that of the failed ALP regime, which left to every man, woman and child in Antigua and Barbuda an individual debt of over \$40,000

investment in our economy and strengthening our presence in the diplomatic capitals of the world.

- To rationalize our diplomatic effort and improve its cost-effectiveness, we will explore the options of establishing joint diplomatic representations with our OECS and CARICOM sister-nations in certain parts of the world.
- We will continue to deepen our bonds of friendship and cooperation with those nations where we currently have Diplomatic Missions, namely, the UK, the USA, Canada, China, and Cuba. Our highly beneficial relationship with Venezuela will be deepened.
- We will continue our engagement with Africa, and during our second

term we will establish diplomatic relations with a number of key African nations and appoint Honorary Consular Agents in these nations to establish and develop profitable partnerships on the African continent.

- We will continue our vigorous advocacy of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy and of deeper integration of the OECS.
- We will continue to use our membership in international organizations and multilateral agreements like the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the World Trade Organization, the Commonwealth, and the European Partnership Agreement to bring tangible benefits and assistance to Antigua and Barbuda and other small states.



Prime Minister Spencer as Chairman of G77 and China.



Prime Minister Spencer and the Prime Minister of India.



GOVERNMENT
IN THE SUNSHINE

Through our valiant efforts in diplomacy and international relations, we have successfully repositioned our country to a place of respect and high standing among the nations of the world

The Cuban Connection: A Success Story

In its relationship with Cuba during the past five years, the UPP has demonstrated how a small, independent nation like Antigua and Barbuda can enhance its domestic conditions

The UPP's Foreign Policy is geared to enhancing social and economic progress at home through cooperation with friendly nations here in the Caribbean and throughout the world. The New Relationship for Cooperation and Development established with Cuba provides an excellent model of the success of our Foreign Policy.

Antigua and Barbuda established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba in 1994. Until 2004, when the UPP replaced the moribund ALP regime, very little had been made of that relationship. Indeed, the ALP regime seemed reluctant to explore the benefits that could be derived from cooperation with Cuba.

In its relationship with Cuba during the past five years, the UPP has demonstrated how a small, independent nation like Antigua and Barbuda can enhance its domestic conditions and its international standing through positive, proactive diplomacy.

Our relationship with Cuba rests on a mutually beneficial structure of cooperation

that has assisted Antigua and Barbuda to build capacity in its Health Care System, Education, Sports, Culture, Agriculture and Fisheries, Energy, and Infrastructure. Some highlights of the benefits derived from this programme of cooperation are:

47 Cuban **health care specialists**, including doctors, nurses, and technicians, are currently providing services to our people through our hospital and clinics

203 Antiguan and Barbudan young people are **pursuing higher education** at Cuban universities, 25% in medicine.

Antiguans and Barbudans are being trained in Sports Management and Administration in Cuba; and Cuban coaches, working with our athletes in Antigua, are helping them enhance their abilities.

Cuban experts are helping us improve our food production systems and tackle the problem of fish poisoning.

APUA has saved millions of dollars through the more **rational use of energy** by households and businesses through Cuban assistance.

Cuban technical experts have given valuable assistance to the **Road Construction and Rehabilitation Programme**.



\$5 million allocated for the People's Benefit Programme – a \$200 per month subsidy provided to disabled persons and qualified economically disadvantaged persons

The Bolivarian Alliance: Partnership for Social Improvement

The relations between Antigua and Barbuda and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela have experienced unprecedented growth during the past four years. The primary platform for the increased collaboration was the PetroCaribe Initiative.

On June 29th, 2005 Deputy Prime Minister Wilmoth Daniel joined Venezuela and twelve other Caribbean Countries in signing the PetroCaribe Energy Cooperation Agreement. This paved the way for Antiguan and Barbudans to benefit from a number of social and infrastructure development programmes which included:

- \$3 million donated to the Public Library project
- \$6.7 million per year allocated for the Senior Citizens Utility Subsidy which provides eligible seniors with \$100 per month to offset electricity, water or telephone land line bills
- Access to 10 megawatts generating capacity for APUA
- \$5.5 million for the construction of the Grays Green Community Complex
- \$27 million loan for the North Sound Housing Project
- \$52,000 grant to the GARD Centre to purchase agro solar dryers – a project which to date has benefitted some 30 small business owners
- \$21.6 million grant for a major water infrastructure improvement and expansion project

- \$20.25 million grant to refurbish the VC Bird International Airport in preparation for Cricket World Cup
- \$5 million allocated for the People's Benefit Programme – a \$200 per month subsidy provided to disabled persons and qualified economically disadvantaged persons

Even as the UPP provided these benefits, provisions were made to settle the financed portion of the fuel purchased under the PetroCaribe Initiative. In so doing, the People First government has ensured that



Prime Minister Spencer and President Hugo Chavez

future generations will not be saddled with the debt associated with the purchase of fuel. The UPP's prudent and responsible approach to the management of our nation's business contrasts sharply with that of the failed ALP regime, which left to every man, woman and child in Antigua and Barbuda an individual debt of over \$40,000.



**GOVERNMENT
IN THE SUNSHINE**

Prime Minister Spencer's leadership received international acclaim when he was elected Chairman of the G77

South-South Partnerships: Development Through Diplomacy

During its first term, the UPP Administration solidified the country's pre-existing diplomatic relations with three of the four BRIC countries as Prime Minister Spencer personally visited Brazil, India and China and held intense discussions geared to advancing specific areas of collaboration

The distribution of power in the global context has shifted since the beginning of the 21st century. In 2001 it was predicted that by 2050 the fast growing economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) would overtake the combined economies of the ten richest countries in the world.

During its first term, the UPP Administration solidified the country's pre-existing diplomatic relations with three of the four BRIC countries as Prime Minister Spencer personally visited Brazil, India and China and held intense discussions geared to advancing specific areas of collaboration. Tangible evidence of the success of UPP's international diplomacy includes:

Brazil

- Establishment of a Consular office in São Paulo, the commercial capital of Brazil
- Brazilian firm Andrade Gutierrez retained to complete the refurbishment and expansion work at VC Bird International Airport
- Donation of an anesthesia machine to the Adelin Medical Centre by a Brazilian investor
- Donation of a computer lab to the Boys Training School by a Brazilian investor
- Decision by President Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva to establish a Brazilian embassy in St. John's in 2009

India

- Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh committed to send technicians from the Ministries of Health and Education to visit schools and health institutions in Antigua & Barbuda with a view to providing assistance
- Technical assistance for the establishment of Antigua and Barbuda's Community Access Centres
- Agreement to carry out a feasibility study on a National Sewage Plan
- Agreement to provide assistance to the Defence Force
- Expansion of relations between the American University of Antigua School of Medicine and Manipal University in India; Antiguan and Barbudans now have access to 12 scholarships each year
- Commitment by India to provide assistance for the establishment of a Forensic Laboratory
- Commitment by India to provide training for the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda and the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force officers at India's National Police Academy
- Five scholarships per year for five years commencing September 2007
- Training in Network and JAVA studies in India for three young nationals from our IT Centre.

During its first term, the UPP Administration solidified the country's pre-existing diplomatic relations with three of the four BRIC countries as Prime Minister Spencer personally visited Brazil, India and China and held intense discussions geared to advancing specific areas of collaboration

China

- Grant funding for the stadium at the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Grounds
- Sponsorship of the government's street lighting project programme
- Scholarships
- Assistance with the completion of Mount St. John Medical Centre
- Covering of Gray's Hill Reservoir
- Renovation of the Gray's Green Gutter
- Construction of a Community Centre in Barbuda
- Financing for the new airport terminal
- Financing for the renovation of the St. John's Deep Water Harbour

In addition to these tremendous accomplishments, Prime Minister Spencer's leadership received international acclaim

when he was elected Chairman of the G77 & China, making Antigua and Barbuda only the third Caribbean country to hold that distinguished office. This accomplishment is tangible evidence that the leadership of Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer transcends national and regional boundaries. The measure of Prime Minister Spencer's leadership qualities include his:

- tried and proven ability to exert positive influence
- demonstrated ability to promote the harmonious resolution of conflict
- personal integrity that is above reproach
- unwavering commitment to the rule of law
- dedicated service to championing the rights of the disadvantaged.

The leadership of Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer transcends national and regional boundaries



Prime Minister Spencer and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao



The Legislative Agenda

During its first term the UPP Administration executed an extensive legislative agenda. In stark contrast to the inertia and abuses that characterized successive ALP Administrations

During its first term the UPP Administration executed an extensive legislative agenda. In stark contrast to the inertia and abuses that characterized successive ALP Administrations, the UPP diligently spearheaded the following legislation which served to improve the administration and delivery of criminal justice:

The Magistrate's Code of Procedure (Amendment) Act 2004

The Misuse of Drugs (Amendment) Act 2008

The Evidence Act 2009 which allows for DNA evidence, witness anonymity, and electronic eavesdropping to combat serious crime; and

The Jury Act 2009 which modernizes the jury selection process and provides for alternate jurors in trials of capital offences.

Accountability and transparency were also high on the legislative agenda. Whereas the failed ALP regime had long promised but never delivered integrity legislation, it was a young UPP Administration that delivered the following to the people of Antigua & Barbuda:

The Freedom of Information Act 2004

The Integrity in Public Life Act 2004 and

The Prevention of Corruption Act 2004

In a determined effort to correct the abuse, neglect and misuse that defined the ALP's reign the UPP also delivered:

The Barbuda Land Act 2007

The Registered Land (Amendment) Act 2007

The Stamp (Amendment) Act 2006 which reduced the stamp duty liability on the transfer of properties between parents and children while **The Stamp (Amendment) Act 2008** reduced that liability on transfers between husbands and wives.

The Maintenance of and Access to Children Act 2008 which provides for the equal maintenance of and access to children of both parents and allows for orders to be enforced by attachment to parents' salaries and financial assets.

The Millennium Naturalization Act 2004

The Caribbean Community Skilled Nationals (Amendment) Act 2007 which increased the category of skilled CARICOM nationals who were entitled to emigrate and work in Antigua and Barbuda without a work permit.

The Small Business Development Act 2007 which allows for a broadening of the base of business ownership by providing a regulatory framework to facilitate the growth of small business entrepreneurs with incentive concessions and tax exemptions and a mandatory right to 25% of government contract expenditure on purchases.

The Investment Authority Act 2006 which established an investment authority for the purpose of promoting investment opportunities by granting in a one-stop shop incentives and concessions to assist investors in establishing business enterprises.

One of the many shortcomings of the ALP was an absolute failure to update the nation's laws. As a result, many of the country's statutes are woefully outdated. This deficiency is perhaps most apparent with the country's health oriented legislation which

effectively serves to frustrate young, gifted Antiguan and Barbudans desirous of making a contribution and to erect unnecessary barriers for patients seeking to access effective healthcare.

The following trilogy of health orientated legislation will revolutionize future health care services:

The Medical Practitioners Act 2009 which replaces the 1937 regulatory scheme and allows for a broadening of the academic qualification requirements for medical practitioners and provides for provisional registration pending practical on-the-job training;

The Caribbean Accreditation Authority (Medicine and Other Health Professions) Act 2009 provides for the adoption of regional academic and professional standards and the accreditation of University courses to provide the necessary qualifications for our emerging physicians; and

The Mount St. John's Medical Centre Act 2009 which will operationalize the newly built medical facility to provide improved health care in a much improved environment.

The New Agenda

While much has been accomplished in the first term, much remains to be done. Among the priorities for the UPP's new legislative agenda are:

Island-wide consultations on the **Constitutional Review Report** submitted in February 2002 towards the implementation of accepted recommendations. Issues like barring Antiguan-born citizens from membership in Parliament if they hold another citizenship, the anomalies between the appointments of the Supervisor of Elections and the Electoral

Commission, the representative qualification of Senators away from purely political appointments, the establishment of a distinct Teaching Service Commission, and whether to establish the Caribbean Court of Justice as our final court of appeal, need to be addressed as we approach 30 years of independence.

The introduction of a new **Adoption of Children Act**

A new **Juvenile Justice Act** which would introduce supervised community service in place of custodial sentences as we seek to rehabilitate and reform rather than exposing them to the counter-productive system of confining our youth with hardened criminals.

Legislation to address the issue of administrative supervision of deportees entering the State, and the mandatory deportation of non-citizens convicted of serious crimes.

The repeal and replacement of the fragmented **Immigration and Passport Act**

A **Small Craft Control Act** to control water sports on our various hotel beaches and provide a measure of safety to our beach users. In a related initiative, **The Vendors Act** will be amended to provide a measure of security and reduce the incidents of visitor harassment, offensive behaviour, and drug trafficking for a better visitor experience worthy of repeat.

The **licensing of premises which sell liquor** by retail needs to be rationalized to allow for different licenses with different time frames for different establishments given the nature of their business.

Introduction of a **Charities Act** to provide for the incorporation and administration of organizations with charitable objects.

The Investment Authority Act 2006 which established an investment authority for the purpose of promoting investment opportunities by granting in a one-stop shop incentives and concessions to assist investors in establishing business enterprises



One Good Term Deserves Another

In surprisingly short order, the UPP was able to stop the slide; win investor confidence; transform tourism; turn around the economy; introduce a new culture of governance; ignite a surge of pride in the hearts of the people; give hope to our nation's youth; ease the economic squeeze on the middle class and the vulnerable; unleash the entrepreneurial spirit and enterprise of the Antiguan and Barbudan people; and generate sustained growth, with full employment.

