

JOST VAN DYKE PUBLIC MEETING JULY 16 2014

In the wonderful name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I welcome each and everyone of you here this evening and trust that by us being here we can each learn from one another ways on how best to better the territory.

The Virgin Islands Party after a long absence is back to unite with you the people of Jost Van Dyke and let you know that we have not let go of you: **despite the obvious departure of someone close to you from our group**, because this Party has and always will have you at its heart.

Our relationship dates back decades to our founder, the late Hamilton Lavitty Stoutt, so as far as we are concerned, this Island is a VIP Island.

As Chairman of the Virgin Islands Party I am here to tell you that I am not perfect, and neither are you: **both of which you already know**. We have all seen things in ways that were not always perfect but yet we forged ahead, and the results have cost us dearly. Some have already been paid for, and those are the ones we must put behind us.

Three years ago the territory was deceived into believing that the Virgin Islands Party had failed it, and you the beloved people were encouraged to replace us in office, which was done on November 7th 2011.

Tonight I am here to say to you, it was a mistake to listen to that rubbish. But like I said, those are the things we must put behind us.

If there is one man in this room that can tell us that this territory is better off now than it was three years ago, **then we would have identified our problem**. **For it is him and the people he associates himself with that are responsible for having a 59 year old man: **who is a Virgin Islander** and in need of medication but can't buy it because he can't find work to support that basic need, and must place his life in danger as his ailment progresses.

For it is him and the people he associates himself with that has a mother of six: **who is a Virgin Islander, sleeping on the street, while Social Development has her children because she has been let go from the most menial of jobs without explanation. And a government who seems to think that none of this is their responsibility.

**For it is him and the people he associates himself with that has so many people from other Caribbean Islands, including the Dominican Republic loosing employment here and having to pack up and return home prematurely.

Deceptions and Distractions

What are the current issues of importance that are pressing on the minds of you the citizens as I speak?

Water

*Electricity

Sewage

*Crime

*Education

*Health Care

*The Economy

*Public Accounts Committee Report on Tortola Pier Park Project

But if you listen to the Government, none of those topics ever gets mentioned. They will prefer to repeat the same tired lies that won them the 2011 elections, *such as VIP reckless spending*, but yet when you ask for the figures to support their claim, they only produce another set of lies as evidence.

What's ironic about this ridiculous allegation is that this administration continues to indulge in the most egregious of wasteful spending: such as the \$3,816,607 spent on unnecessary globetrotting by ministers and public officers since taking office.

While at the same time failing to pay the small man his money for basic work done, together with having government issued checks bounce at the banks.

We are still waiting for an explanation of the benefits gained from that \$20,000 trip to China in concrete terms.

Do not let the NDP change the subject, they are the government, they must answer to you for their disregard for Good Governance, and their blatant violations of the Protocols for Effective Financial Management which they signed on April 23 2012 with the UK Government.

This NDP administration is using the fact that they are presently working on various high profile projects such as sewage: a project upon which they have fired the same contractor twice, only because they appear to be VIP. And never mind the fact that in this 21st century they are still dumping raw sewage in the waters off Slaney

Also The Tortola pier park project: *a project covered with the stench of corruption, and total disregard for transparency*, and was once priced a \$12 million, and is now up to \$32 million.

Everyone knows that the Auditor General has audited this project and written a scathing report confirming its questionable status, a status which was later confirmed by the Public Accounts Committee in their report that asks the governor for the appointment of a Commission of Enquiry.

Let me remind you that the VIP built this country not the NDP.

Things have never been this bad on the jobs front, especially for Virgin Islands youth.

The economy is in a rut: the gap between the 1% at the top and the rest is widening, case in point, people in serious mortgage debt losing homes, people having to work multiple jobs just to survive, job insecurity, and more.

But things have never been better for the 1% at the top of the pyramid- the majority suffers, while the tiny minority sits fat.

While the NDP insists on putting their socialite buddies, and big spenders, first- above the rest of the people in the country, and putting the interests of certain *platinum class residents* above that of the country, our children are suffering from lack of opportunity, and the local economy is in a mess

VIP spending policy alternatives-

I am here tonight to tell you, that Any VIP Government under a Fraser Premiership will assess all stimuli spending based on 6 crucial parameters:

1: Public spending must impact medium and long term economic growth positively, over short term political expediency.

2: Public spending must create real jobs, especially for Virgin Islands Youth: jobs that impact the social and economic infrastructure positively.

3: Public spending must impact social welfare and social cohesion in a positive manner.

4: public spending must positively impact public safety and public security.

5: Public spending must improve the basic infrastructure at the grassroots - before spending on outlandish projects such as an airport without feasibility study.

6: Public spending must first improve and impact the lot of those at the bottom of the economic pyramid. This is good economic policy with a strong foundation- as opposed to a top down economy built on sand. This spending at the grassroots is the only real avenue for economic growth, and is the best way to stimulate a slow economy

Jost Van Dyke: I know there are those among you who have been critical of me without even knowing the facts, but let me tell you. I was the minister who signed the contract with Ocean Conversion to produce the first gallon of water here on Jost Van Dyke.

I was also the minister who signed the contract extension with the same Ocean Conversion to expand the same water plant some four years later.

I was the minister who commissioned the consultant to design the bridge and culvert works on the main road to Little Harbor.

I was also the minister who went to Barbados to negotiate with the Caribbean Development Bank for the money to build that same bridge and culvert to Little Harbor.

As minister for Communications and Works, I made sure that every District Representative was given an equal share of money for infrastructural work in their districts. In the case of Jost Van Dyke an additional \$500,000 was given to the Representative.

I made it a point not to interfere in the operations within a District, it was the prerogative of the Representative to do as he saw fit within his District.

I know I got a lot of blame both here in Jost Van Dyke and in other Districts for everything that went wrong, but I am here to let you know that that was all out of convenience, and totally unfair.

Other Issues of Importance

I am aware of your denial to access to Water Ambulance services to Tortola, and I say this is wrong and will be addressed. Persons in Jost Van Dyke must be provided with access to the only public hospital in the territory as if they were living on Tortola.

You have been plagued with issues pertaining to electricity which makes no sense. Again, a basic necessity such as electricity in the 21st century is a right. I will ensure you of that right.

My people, our Party has work to do and we cannot be distracted by those who have failed the very people that we are preparing to save. Preparation for that struggle must be focused, it must be deliberate and with a purpose. One must be committed in order to succeed, and they must be genuine and sincere.

I make no secret of the fact that we are in a search for candidates to fill the 11 slots on our ticket that will become constitutionally vacant in order to contest a seat in the next general election.

In Closing: Jost Van Dyke: [The 2nd District], we are here tonight by design. You are the second stop on this journey because we want to tell you that you are foremost on our minds. And we are determined to ensure that the next Representative for this District comes from our camp, that is the VIP camp.

The 2nd District must have a strong Representative from a strong Party, one who will be fierce in their competition for resources, insightful in the development of the District, and useful when it comes to making decisions on the future of our country.

So you are on notice that we need your support, make sure you join the Virgin Islands Party, we still believe that you should be a District all to yourself with your own Representative, and not a part of a District.

Thank you, Good Night.