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# VIP TO HOLD CONGRESS MEETING APRIL 23, 2014 TO ELECT OFFICERS

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March 28th, 2014 | Tags: Virgin Islands Party Ralph T. O'Neal OBE Congress Meeting H. Lavity Stoutt development prosperous times

**ROAD TOWN, Tortola, VI - While many including this news site have read the eulogy on the Opposition Virgin Islands Party (VIP), its Leader and Chairman Honourable Ralph T. O'Neal OBE, has dropped a bombshell on the public.**

Information obtained by this news site from its sources close to the Opposition Virgin Islands Party is that a congress meeting will be called by Chairman O'Neal for the purpose of election including that of party Chairman, the post held by Hon. O'Neal, President of the Party which is vacant, Secretary, Treasurer and all other posts of the Executive Committee according to the party constitution.

Honorable O'Neal is expected to issue a statement on the meeting within the coming days according to the source. However, as of post time he could not be reached for a comment or any of the other two Virgin Islands Party members Honorable Julian Fraser RA, (R3) and Andrew A. Fahie (R1).

The Honorable J. Alvin Christopher has left the Virgin Islands Party and will launch his own political group this Saturday March 29, 2014.

It remains unclear if the 80-year old Leader Hon. O'Neal who continues to be at the helm of the VIP since 1995 will seek reelection as the party boss. Hon. O'Neal took over from one of the party founders and longest serving Chief Minister the late Hamilton Lavitty Stoutt.

It is important to note that if Mr. O'Neal does not retain his post as VIP Chairman, he can still contest his seat to

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represent the Ninth District in the next general elections, a position he has held since 1975. Whoever is voted next month as VIP Chairman will become the Premier and Leader of Government Business if the VIP wins the next general election and the person holds on to their seat.

**Ralph T. O'Neal OBE the legacy**

Honorable Ralph T. O'Neal OBE, has already made political history in the Virgin Islands (VI) and the Caribbean



It was under the VIP that the Territory witnessed its most development and prosperous times. The VIP is credited with building the Terrence B. Lettsome International Airport, the Cruise Ship Dock, the Queen Elizabeth Bridge, the H. L Stoutt Community College, the Central Administration Complex, and all the community centers from Anegada to Virgin Gorda and Jost van Dyke to Tortola.



The H. L Stoutt Community College was built by the VIP Administration.

Region. In the VI he has been the longest serving member of Parliament [House of Assembly] outlasting his closest rival the late H. Lavity Stoutt who only served 38 years (1957-1995). Hon. O’Neal has served in elective office for 39 years (1975-current).

Mr. O’Neal has also been the longest serving member of Parliament in the English Speaking Caribbean and has outlast in elective office other great regional political stalwarts like Trinidad and Tobago’s Sir Eric E. Williams 25 years (1956-1981) Antigua and Barbuda Sir Vere Cornwall Bird Sr., 34 years (1960-1994). Hon O’Neal told this news site in an exclusive interview in 2012 that Mr. Bird was his political hero.

The son of Virgin Gorda Hon. O’Neal also outlasted in elective office St. Kitts and Nevis Robert Llewellyn Bradshaw’s 32 years (1946-1978) and Barbados’ Errol Walton Barrow, QC, 36 years (1951-1987) and Jamaican’s Michael Normal Manley 25 years in elective office (1967-1992), Guyana’s Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham 32 years (1953-1985) and also St. Vincent and the Grenadines’ Sir James Fitz-Allen Mitchell 34 years (1966-2000).

Hon. O’Neal who started his career as a school teacher has served in almost every senior post in government from School teacher to Principal, Clerk of the Legislative Council, Chief Education Officer and Permanent Secretary, at the time called Administrative Secretary.

He also served as a government Minister and held many portfolios e.g.; Minister for Heath, Welfare, Education, Natural Resources and Labour, Finance, Deputy Chief Minister, Chief Minister and is the VI first Premier.

Hon. O’Neal told Virgin Islands News Online last year that he has started writing a book that will chronicle his life and work.

**The Virgin Islands Party**

Founded on March 2, 1971 the VIP has dominated much of the political landscape for the last 30 plus years and has built almost all the infrastructure for the modern Virgin Islands. There is no question that the Virgin Islands Party has build the Virgin Islands despite what some of the ‘Johnny come lately’ or paid spin doctors may try to tell the public.



**The VIP is credited with bringing electricity to the Virgin Islands.**



**Another project completed by the VIP Administration - The Cruise Ship Dock.**



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The VIP has built all schools both primary and secondary from Virgin Gorda to Anegada, Jost van Dyke and Tortola, along with all government docks, and the senior citizens home.

It was always under a Virgin Islands Party Government according to research that residents experienced their greatest wealth generation and prosperity. The VIP has build the Iris O’Neal Clinic on Virgin Gorda, the Peebles Hospital first expansion and laid the ground work for the start of the new Hospital, cut 100% of all Primary and Secondary roads in the Virgin Islands, is responsible for bringing electricity to the VI, potable water and built the first sewerage system in Road Town.

It is the VIP that built the Commercial Court, the Tourism and Financial sectors (late Chief Minister Cyril B. Romney must also be credited for his role in the Financial Service sector), and commissioned the now popular BVI London House in the United Kingdom to name just a few.

The VIP has educated via government scholarships some 80% of all nationals from 1980 to current under both the scholarship programme and the Civil Service Training Division. This has produced local Teachers, Doctors, Attorneys, Engineers, Hairstylists, Accountants, Nurses, Entrepreneurs, Chefs, Mechanics, Architects, and a number of specialists in many fields including persons with Masters and PhDs.

From its founding in 1971 to current, some 42 plus years, only two men have led the party, H. Lavity Stoutt and Ralph T. O’Neal. It is left to be seen who will emerge as the party’s new leader if one is chosen to reform and modernize the party and recruit new candidates and if they could be competitive to contest the next general elections constitutionally due by 2015 in the British colony.



**The Commercial Court built under the VIP Administration.**



**The VIP is credited with bringing potable water to the Virgin Islands.**

**The VIP is credited with commissioning the now popular BVI London House in the United Kingdom**

