

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

P.D.M

Draft Minimum Economic & Social Programme

This Minimum Economic and Social Programme consists of those things which we believe must at least be done in the various sectors of our economy and the society as a whole if all our people are to enjoy a decent standard of living. It is no more than a mere listing of those things, without the details.

From this Minimum Programme we will produce a much more comprehensive plan for National Development. That plan will identify goals, objectives, targets, action-plans and tasks for the country as a whole. And there will be detailed plans for each individual sector, whether energy, agriculture, finance, eco-tourism, small business, health, education, mobilization and so on.

The Minimum Programme is founded on P.D.M's belief that people, rather than things, are the beginning and end of the development process. Projects like the Roseau Stadium or the Financial Center have meaning only insofar as they improve the quality of life of our people. Otherwise, we consider them to be a waste of money, time and energy.

Hence, our Minimum Programme is presented in two parts. We call the first, Minimum Goals. And the second is called Sector Strategies.

Under the head, Minimum Goals, we identify the least that we think should be done if life is to be made better for the various sections of the population.

Under the head, Sector Strategies, are set out what P.D.M will do in the various economic and social sectors to achieve the stated Minimum goals.

MINIMUM GOALS

Wage-Workers and Unemployed

1. Provide jobs to the unemployed through the establishment of emergency work projects.
2. Increase the statutory minimum wage.
3. Promote through education a new worker-employer relation that brings about an increase in the productivity of labour.

Small Farmers

1. Lower the cost of fertilizer.
2. Construct feeder roads.
3. Facilitate shipping of agricultural produce.
4. Agrarian reform.

The Business Community

1. Provide job creation incentives and concessions to the private sector.
2. Create an investor friendly business climate.
3. Set up a Special Fund for Micro and Small Business development.
4. Provide concessions and incentives to persuade businessmen to move in the direction of production rather than merely buying goods overseas and selling them locally.

Senior Citizens

1. Extend the number of destitute persons on pension.
2. Increase the stipend.

Youth

1. Set up a Youth Employment Fund of \$20 million to assist in job creation and self-employment for graduate school leavers.
2. Promote the development of a music industry.
3. Provide a playing field where practicable within walking distance of each town and village.

Children

1. Completely remove the legal stigma attached to illegitimacy.
2. Assist parents who are financially unable to send their children to school.

Women

1. Provide for the implementation of gender equality laws.

Consumers

1. Review V.A.T with a view to reducing it or removing it totally.
2. Ensure that the prices of basic commodities are kept within the reasonable reach of consumers.

The Kalinago People

1. Set up job-creating projects in the Territory so as to drastically reduce the abnormally high incidence of poverty.
2. Allocate to the Council a tract of land to be registered for use as collateral by residents seeking loans for farming.
3. Immediately commence reconstruction of the Health Center.

SECTOR STRATEGIES

We in PDM believe that these minimum goals can be achieved on the basis of economic and social sector strategies

- (a) which make poverty eradication (not mere alleviation) an integral component of the country's national economic strategy;
- (b) which expand production and, at the same time, increase the productivity of workers; and
- (c) which promote our domestic savings by reducing the outflow of our wealth as, for example, by DOMLEC.

ECONOMIC SECTORS

Research & Planning

1. Establish a National Center for Scientific & Economic Research.
2. Conduct research into new agro products.

Energy

1. Remove V.A.T and the Fuel Surcharge from electricity costs.
2. Aggressively pursue the development of a mini-hydro sub-sector.

Agriculture & Agro Industry

1. Review the state of the Banana Industry with a view to making it as profitable as possible for the national good.
2. Aggressively pursue the development of a herbal industry.
3. Link Tourism to Agriculture.
4. Establish a fruit-canning factory.

Marine Resources

1. Establish a yacht marina at Portsmouth.
2. Develop the dive resources at Soufriere/Scottshead and Tantan/Toucarie/Cottage.

Manufacturing

1. Provide concessions and incentives so as to drive the private sector into production activity.

Mining

1. Review existing contracts for the mining and exportation of pumice.
2. Set up a cement plant.

Trade

1. Grow what we eat, so as to considerably reduce our import bill.
2. Look at the possibilities of engaging with new trading partners.

Finance & Investment

1. Establish a micro and small business facility at the AID Bank to provide loans free of collateral.
2. Provide a legislative framework which invites local and foreign investment.

Tourism

1. Shift focus from big-hotel tourism to eco-tourism based on small hotels, villas, eco-lodges and guest houses.
2. Partner tourism to agriculture.

3. Construct an international jet airport.
4. Aggressively seek to attract stay over visitors.

The Physical Environment

1. Conduct an environmental impact assessment prior to the establishment of any project likely to affect our physical environment.
2. Introduce a programme of mass education on the subject, Caring for the Environment.

SOCIAL SECTORS

Health and Social Security

1. Provide adequate amounts of medicines and medical facilities at all health institutions.
2. Review the conditions of work, particularly of nurses.
3. Halt any further increase in Social Security contributions paid by employees.
4. Review the Social Security Act as it applies to Police Officers.

Housing

1. Adopt a policy that caters to those in need rather than to favored supporters of the ruling Party.

Education and the Arts

1. Review the Universal Secondary Education Scheme.
2. Review the recent abolition of the Junior Secondary School Programme.
3. Build a partnership between the State College and the Business Sector.
4. Tailor the school curriculum much more closely to the human resource needs of our economy and society.
5. Introduce African history, Kalinago history, Business Studies and Caring for the Environment at every level of the school curriculum.
6. Review the status of non-appointed long-serving teachers.
7. Review the salary structure of teachers and nurses.

Sports and Culture

1. Provide a playing field within walking distance of every community.

2. Establish training academies in cricket and soccer.
3. Construct an athletic facility of international standards.
4. Assist in the establishment of a music industry.

Law & National Security

1. Promote and expand community policing.
2. Repeal outmoded legislation.
3. Secure another Resident High Court Judge specifically to adjudicate on civil matters.
4. Attract magistrates by improving the terms of their employment, including salaries.
5. Establish full consultation with the electorate prior to the passage of critical legislation.
6. Immediately free inmate, Eric Joseph, from further incarceration.

Governance

1. Amend the existing Electoral List to exclude those not qualified to vote, including persons deceased.
2. Reform the electoral system so as to:-

- (a) Limit the amount of money spent on election campaigning.
 - (b) Declare the source of any and all such money.
 - (c) Allow for the monitoring of elections by international agencies.
3. Review the question of overseas-based nationals voting in local elections.
 4. Establish full consultation with the people prior to the formulation of critical national policies.
 5. Enshrine local government in our nation's Constitution, so as to devolve upon local institutions power and responsibility for the management of community affairs.
 6. Institute pensions or gratuity benefits to eligible Clerks of local government bodies.

Regional Relations

1. Pursue the establishment of the Development Fund for the lesser endowed members of CARICOM.
2. Protect our citizens against discrimination in other CARICOM member states.

Foreign Policy

1. Not to interfere in the internal affairs of any sovereign country.
2. Not to tolerate or condone any interference at all in our internal affairs by any country whatsoever.
3. Offer solidarity to and seek fraternal assistance particularly from countries with which we share a common or similar history and experience.
4. Review the issue of sovereignty over Bird Island.

Sisters and Brothers, this is a preliminary vision as to what needs to be done to remove our country from the crisis it is now in, and takes it forward into the 21st century. Discussion of this Draft has scarcely begun. So, until full discussion takes place within the Party's branches it cannot be said to be a Party document. What this means is that you will not be called upon to ratify it today. All we ask is that as soon as discussion on it begins you will get into it as deeply as you can. And at the appropriate time we shall get back to you for ratification. Thank you.

15th April 2007