

Zane Desilva - May 3, 2012

Good afternoon.....

Let me start with a quote from Colin Powell who once said, "A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work."

Today marks the continuation of a dream..... a dream that built in my heart from young that one day I would have the opportunity to serve my country and help make life better for all Bermudians!

Today making life better for all Bermudians means protecting jobs and creating jobs.

Today making life better for all Bermudians means keeping our streets safe from gang violence and ensuring that our schools produce not just the best students in Bermuda.....but students who are the equal of larger jurisdictions

Today, we face the greatest challenge that we as a people have ever faced. This global recession has changed the way we live..... and has even impacted our very way of life.

I know that many Bermudians have felt a sense of embarrassment and even shame..... and have felt alone in the face of unemployment and the ever rising costs of simple necessities.

I am here to tell you that you are not alone!

When you told us that there were people working illegally in our country taking jobs from capable, qualified Bermudians..... you weren't alone.

When you told us that you would be willing and thankful to work any job just to get by.....you weren't alone.

We are prepared to stand with you, fight for you and be there for you.....TOGETHER!

With the PLP you will NEVER be alone!!!!

Knowing that saving a few dollars could mean a lot to a struggling family.....we fought hard to force the prices of prescription drugs down for you.

Knowing that sickness can't always wait till payday, we eliminated upfront medical payments!

Knowing that qualified but physically challenged Bermudians are sometimes denied the opportunity to work because of their disability rather than their lack of ability.....we are fighting to eliminate discrimination against the physically challenged.

Knowing that our seniors are burdened by rising medical costs and lack of support from insurance companieswe fought to reduce the stress, uncertainty and cost of their healthcare through the introduction of FutureCare.

Knowing that for too long.....privilege rather than the people decided who wielded power in our municipalities we brought fairness and equality to municipal elections; one Bermudian, one vote of equal value!!

We have done all these things.....and yet so much remains to be done.

And whilst there are those who say they would rather have a suffering people and no debt and there are those who say “every man for himself,” they don’t know you, hear your pain or fight for you.

And whilst there are those who say that they would rather have no debt than protect the jobs of our home grown Bermudian civil service, we say they don’t know you, hear your pain or fight for you.

And whilst there are those who say that they would rather have no debt than spend \$15 million a month on financial assistance for our mothers, children, families and seniors like the PLP does, We say.....they don’t know you, hear your pain or fight for you.

And whilst there are those who say we would rather have no debt than spend \$100 million on health care subsidies, no debt rather than have free bus service for our children and seniors, no debt rather than increase pensions for seniors almost every year since 1998 under the PLP..... We say, they don’t know you, hear your pain or fight for you.

They believe in a Bermuda where the cries of the Bermudian are ignored.....where if we are lucky opportunity and success trickles down to the Bermudian from a privileged few and where we can expect to be second class citizens in our own country.

They don’t believe in the Bermuda that people like Mr. Eugene Phillips fought for.... A Bermuda where every Bermudian, regardless of race or privilege are entitled to affordable, quality healthcare. As the unheralded “Father of FutureCare,” Mr. Phillips fought for you..... and we will fight for you too.

They don’t believe in the Bermuda that people like Mr. Hughes fought for.....A Bermuda where opportunity exists for alland not just a select few.....A Bermuda where every Bermudian’s vote is worth the same.....regardless of how rich they are or how many businesses or houses they own.

They don’t believe in the Bermuda that the Hon. Stanley Lowe fought for over 40 years.

They don’t care about how he sacrificed during the years when it was not just unpopular but career threatening to support the PLP.

I and every Bermudian who believes in a Bermuda with opportunity for ALL should be thankful to Hon. Stanley Lowe.....our esteemed Speaker in the House of Assembly..... as well as his many years of sterling service to the people of Southampton East. He has fought for what is right and been a true and faithful servant to the people.

To Stanley Lowe I say Thank you on behalf of the people of Bermuda and the constituents of Southampton East.

In recent months I have had the opportunity to meet with the people of Southampton East.....hear their concerns.....address some of their challenges.....and been inspired to continue to fight for a better Bermuda for all our people

It won’t be easy.....it won’t always be pretty BUT sweat, determination and hard work will see us emerge from the challenges we face.....a stronger, tougher more unified people.

I hope that you will give me the opportunity to stand with you, fight for you and work hard for you to move Bermuda forward.

Thank you.