



Address to the Nation

By the Honourable Joseph W. Parry

Premier of Nevis

November 8, 2012

Fellow Nevisians, residents of Nevis, friends and well wishers....I consider it an honour and my duty to address you this evening on matters of paramount importance to all who have a vested interest and stake in the future of our island home.

I especially welcome at this time, hundreds of Nevisians living abroad as well as our brothers and sisters on St. Kitts, whom I am aware have been following developments on Nevis with very keen interest; in the hope that political stability, which we hold so very dear, can be returned to Nevis at the earliest opportunity.

My dear people of Nevis, you are all fully aware of the events and circumstances that have led to our reaching the stage where fresh elections will be held on Nevis in the not too distant future. I wish to stress from the outset that I view this as a very positive development in our still evolving democracy.

Elections were held on 11th July, 2011. The Nevis Reformation Party was declared winner in three of the five seats contested, and therefore formed the new government, for a second consecutive term. The Party conducted itself in an exemplary manner during the campaign leading up to that Election, and on polling day itself.

The losing Candidate for Nevis 2 challenged the results on matters of process and procedure and took his case to Court. The Court ruled the election result in that seat null and void; triggering a return to the polls.

My contention is, and has always been, that since that seat held the balance of power in the Nevis Island Administration, any consequent election of what in effect would be a new government, should involve all eligible Nevisian voters. An election in the constituency of St. John's at this time would not only elect a new representative, it would also determine the formation of the government...and therefore, it is my considered opinion that if a new government is to be elected, then all eligible Nevisian voters should be given an opportunity to participate in the process.

I have **signaled** my intention to call fresh elections, because I am confident of the fair-mindedness of Nevisians. The Nevis Reformation Party was returned to office in July, 2011 with

a clear mandate by the majority of those who voted to continue the rescue and rebuild operation started four years prior.

So proud was the party of its achievements back then, that it built its re-election campaign on the strength of its performance in government. We argued then and we insist now, that in evaluating the work of a party in government, performance matters. After-all, you are elected on the basis of your promises and how you deliver on those promises should be the determining factor in whether you should be re-engaged or not. The last CCM administration effectively abandoned its promises to the people, failed to perform, did not deliver and was therefore rejected six years ago.

So the Nevis Reformation Party contested the last elections on the strength of its performance in government. It received the majority of votes cast and was awarded the majority of seats in the Legislature. Immediately, upon being sworn into office, it went back to work. It did not bask in the glory of past achievements, neither did it rest on its laurels. My ministers and I went back to work and have not let up, to this day. Indeed, even with the court decision, our momentum as a weakened government, did not lessen in the least.

Of top priority, was the continued diversification of our economy. We sought in the last year and a half to **minimize** our reliance on the Four Seasons Resort, through the development of cruise tourism and the expansion and upgrade of our hotel plant to include the AMAN Hotel, Ocean Reef, the development of Pinney's, the restoration of Villa Paradiso, construction of the Marina at Cades Bay and Nelson Spring Phase 2.

Additionally, as part of the economic expansion drive, Government pursued the establishment of a Cosmetology Centre in New River to employ 100 persons as well as the oil storage facility, that, at its peak, will employ in excess of 200 persons. Further growth was also pursued and achieved in the Financial Services Industry.

During the 16 month period under review, your Nevis Reformation Party administration worked with the Four Seasons Resort Estates to encourage and facilitate their expansion of home construction in the Four Seasons area. Not only did we help the well off, but also, we reached out to single parents, young couples and others, who under the previous administration, had seen their hopes of owning the roof over their heads severely dashed. Credit in this regard must be shared with the Federal Government for its generous incentives on the importation of building materials and the low income rate offered by the St. Kitts Sugar Industry Diversification Foundation (SIDF)

Today in Nevis, as a result of the efforts of your government, we have witnessed construction springing back to life. Brown Hill Communications, Deon Daniel of Nelson Spring Projects, Greg Hardtman and Villa Paradiso, currently in a state of restoration, are but some of the projects that have generated meaningful employment on the island of Nevis. Today, therefore, despite the closure of the Four Seasons from 2008 to 2010 and the ongoing global economic recession, Nevis is in full employment and the economy is stabilizing.

Socially, we have brought the vexing issue of crime and other antisocial behaviour under relative control. We have not, as a result of the recession, had to cut social services; thereby ensuring our seniors in particular, continued quality in a dignified atmosphere and environment.

So Ladies and Gentlemen, the last 16 months have been challenging, but we persisted and progress and prosperity for the vast majority, prevailed. There are still a few whose lot is of worry and concern to us as a government, and we are working assiduously to lighten their load. That is one of the reasons why, as Premier, I need Hensley Daniel back in the Nevis Island Assembly and in Cabinet to assist with the forward movement of our social programmes. It is also why I continue to laud the work of Patrice Nisbett as Attorney General in the Federal Government. Some amongst us would seek to undermine and create confusion over Patrice's involvement at the federal level, but I wish to state this evening that he is doing a phenomenal job for his country, and the island of Nevis is **benefiting** immensely from his service and the keen attention he pays to things Nevisian. But, again, that is why I am seeking his presence in the Nevis Island Legislature, because I believe that we too can benefit from his hard work and insightful thought, not only as it relates to the drafting of laws, but also the structuring of programmes and procedures.

So, Fellow Nevisians and friends, we have a perfect opportunity in these forthcoming elections, to continue the progress and accelerate the performance of government in the social and economic sectors. As was demonstrated in the United States of America two days ago, the thinking now is that you cannot and should not tinker with a system that is working. Yes, we may not have positively touched the lives of every citizen in a personal way....but which government, the world over, has, in recent years? We know what in Nevis is broken...we know what it will take to fix it! We have the knowledge, expertise and determination to effect the policies that are required. What we need is opportunity, understanding and a little patience. The forthcoming election is therefore about you providing the opportunity.

I wish to have this election period concluded as early as possible. The people of Nevis are a disciplined, mature and responsible people. I see no reason why there should be any major dislocation, socially, economically or otherwise, during this absolutely necessary exercise.

Accordingly, I have instructed His Excellency, the Governor General, to dissolve the Nevis Island Assembly effective today. In due course, and certainly within the constitutionally stipulated period, I shall advise further on the issuance of a writ for the calling of fresh elections and will also on that occasion reveal the recommended date for the nomination of candidates and voting in fresh elections.

In the meantime, I urge all Nevisians to continue going about your business in a normal manner, as the eyes of the world are upon us and we must demonstrate on this occasion our pride and maturity as a people, and portray Nevis as one of the best places on earth to live.

I take this opportunity to thank you for your prayers and other expressions of support and well wishes, as we continue to work to make Nevis the best, the very best, that it can be in these economically challenging times.

May God continue to bless you all. May God continue to bless Nevis and our beautiful Federation. Thank you....and a pleasant evening to all.

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