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PREMIER'S NEW YEARS MESSAGE

I bring New Year's greetings to the people of Nevis at home and overseas.

This year we are fortunate to have visiting Nevis, family members, some of whom left these shores more than 50 years ago to better their quality of life for themselves and their parents. Again welcome home, I am told that you have fully enjoyed your visit, the progress and the new developments of your country.

The old year is now behind us. It had its challenges, anxieties, its' ups and downs. And, yet, there is much to thank God for... we were spared violent storms and any major disaster of any sort.



2010 was the year when Nevis became the first OECS country to utilize wind energy to supply power to our homes.

It was the year that witnessed the commissioning of the Agro-processing Plant at Prospect. It was the year when we all accepted the outstanding quality of the homes at Cherry Gardens, confirmed by the showering of many praises on the Nevis Housing Corporation, on the Government of Nevis for its vision and foresight by visitors to Nevis including politicians from other OECS and CARICOM countries.

Senior citizens took centre stage in the eyes of all Nevisians in their outstanding steel pan performances and the many programs highlighting their activities island-wide. I am especially pleased because we have always been a people to care for the elderly. The Minister of Social Affairs, Hon Hensley Daniel focused effectively the minds of all of us, young and old, on the importance of the seniors in our society, and of the need to encourage and support them to live constructive and



meaningful lives to enable them and even at their age, to continue to contribute to nation building.

The year 2010 witnessed a surge in our consciousness of the importance of education. Parents, teachers and children demonstrated a new sense of urgency in a determination to excel -

Cheslin Maloney, Yvado Simmonds, Nekhalia Tyson, Ryani Ferguson, Tione Grant, Marcus Morton, Nyeka Martin, Ashleigh Thomas, Azhar Lake, Varissa Webbe , averaged between 87% and 95% in the Test of Standards.

Joanne Flemming and Urnesia Pemberton topped the nation at CAPE and CXC level respectively and parents were present in every forum supporting their children.

It was with pride and a sense of change, a sense of renewal that I applauded all those fathers who marched with their children in the Early Childhood Parade. For the first time over 100 fathers marched through the streets of Charlestown. Fathers joined mothers at graduation and



other activities celebrating their children. It was a privilege to be part of that expression of change and maturity.

Congratulations to fathers and mothers and may this movement of embracing Fatherhood and the responsibility of parenthood continue to grow in our community. May we be ever conscious that children need love and attention. They deserve it and our country will be all the better for it.

2010 marked a major historic moment in our lives. Nevis for the first time in history has the full right to collect all Corporate Taxes earned on the island. Which other Government in the world that is not the central Government has that exclusive power? It is a demonstration of growth and maturity not only of Nevisians, but Kittitians as well. Here is the significance.

1. It was achieved out of serious negotiations by Nevisian and Kittitian political representatives in the best interest of St Kitts and Nevis.
2. There was no acrimony.



3. It was the first change, administrative or constitutional since Independence of 1983 and the purpose was to enhance relations between the two islands and financially help to secure the financial soundness of the Nevis Island Administration.

The Nevis Reformation Party Government is to be congratulated by every Nevisian for this singularly major achievement.

Finally, in regard to the highlights of the year, Four Seasons re-opened its doors to the public on the 15th December, 2010. Four Seasons is the single most important investment in Nevis. Its significance, according to IMF Reports, impacts considerably on the economy of St Kitts as well. The act of the re-opening reverberated throughout Nevis and St Kitts. Every man, woman, boy and girl was touched in a positive way. The mood of the country shifted from doubt to a resounding positive outlook for the future.

As if freed from an excessive burden of responsibility the younger ones among us flocked to Jouvert on St Kitts in unprecedented numbers. It was a celebration of renewal, an understanding that the dark clouds of the recession had lifted and the light and sunshine of progress was with us again.



Let me state simply and clearly that this Government has done all in its power to do battle with crime. There is a battery of programs associated with the Ministry of Social Affairs to take our people away from crime. They are long and medium-term and short-term and address the children of school age. And, indeed we have met with considerable success. The anger management programs have led to less confrontation in the schools. The re-focus on learning has led to a fall-off in weapons in the schools, the Parent/children Reading Program has helped to build a greater interest in school work by parents and a more positive attitude to teachers.

The Police have become more visible in our communities. They have strategic patrols and daily monitor the activities in certain communities. Through Town Hall meetings they are building a new bond with each community around the island. Consequently, the crime solution rate has jumped from 36% to 46% on Nevis. Better security and surveillance measures have been introduced on the inter-island ferries thus the rate of robberies is down.



The major problem continues to be the rivalry of the so-called gangs on the island. They have used gun violence to solve problems that are minute and ridiculous.

In bringing this gang behavior and mentality to an end the Police need help. The problems originate in the communities therefore the leaders of the communities must join with the Police, parents, schools and Government to bring about change.

It is clear that the major factor is our value system. First we must determine what it is and re-establish it at all levels of the community.

I am to congratulate a number of churches which have pursued initiatives to reach out to young people. Several Pastors and Priests have established groups, Scouts and training organizations to steer our youth to more constructive behavior. Individuals in some communities have also taken the lead as well and are building healthy relationships with the youth of their communities.



The Government, through the Premier's Ministry organized a Seminar on crime with the Police, the churches and the teaching body and parents to assist in the effort. In January 2011, that group will meet again to report on its activities.

A commentary on the performance of the Government and the state of the country according to a recent survey reads thus: The people of Nevis rate the NRP Government between 'A' to A+ on Road Maintenance, Housing, Health care, Education, Scholarships, Leadership, Sports, Garbage collection, General upkeep of Nevis, Street lighting, Water, Electricity and Telephones. The two major concerns are jobs and crime.

The job problem is well under control. We therefore need now to continue the focus on Crime Solution.

It is easy to conclude then that the performance of your Government is outstanding. With confident and steady leadership we have taken this country out of the shoals of recession into an open and steady sea that will lead to prosperity.

So what of the New Year?



We approach the New Year with the confidence that we have overcome the major hurdles of the old year. Government and people together, have overcome great odds and have emerged with a sense of direction, renewed vigor and a determination to take Nevis forward into a new era of growth and prosperity.

The performance of the old year in so many areas lays the foundation for the hope and promise of things to come in the New Year. If we are to make comparisons, we must conclude that hope and promise is definitely warranted. Nevis is one of the first countries to emerge from the recession.

Our main industry is Tourism. While others continue to struggle every major hotel on Nevis reports positive projections for the New Year. Nisbett Plantation, recognized internationally as one of the leading hotels in the Caribbean experienced a 9% jump in occupancy for December, 2010 over December, 2009. The trend continues into the first quarter of 2011. The Oualie Beach Hotel will be up by 20% in



January and February, 2011 according to present bookings. Montpelier and Nelson Spring Condominiums are all projecting a vigorous season.

Four Seasons Hotel advised a strong season for February, March and April.

This means not only the availability of jobs at the hotels, but our taxis, restaurants and shops will be busy as well. Farmers, fishermen and tour operators will have work to do.

In Easter 2011, we are preparing for an invasion of some 500 triathlon athletes in a major international event that will occupy the island for at least one week. I have had a serious planning meeting with our Tourism personnel to alert them of the possibility of some 1000 persons visiting Nevis during this period and the need to house, entertain and host them at a level that they must remember for a long, long time.

In addition, 2011 will see the construction of a shopping centre in Charlestown, the Cosmetic Centre at New River and a Marina in the Cades Bay area.



The major addition to the Tourism plant will be the commencement of the construction of the Aman Hotel. This is massive. On completion in 2012 over 200 persons will be employed permanently. Hanley's Road would be reconstructed to a trunk road and the road from Zion via Hickman and Hanley's Road would become a priority.

The contributions of the Four Seasons and the Aman Hotel would place Nevis among the crème de la crème of tourism destinations.

The stimulus package of the Government, planned two years ago, for this very moment continues with the construction of community centers in Jessups, Cotton Ground, Fountain and Combermere. Work continues at the Charlestown Primary School and the Charlestown Market. These activities have created employment and on completion, will be centers of activity for training, provision of a School Meals Program for Charlestown and a brand new market for the people of Nevis.



Brown Hill Communications Centre is expanding. 100 new jobs will be created there in 2011.

Jobs will also be created as NEVLEC and the Water Department continue to expand and improve their services with the help of the Caribbean Development Bank. These efforts would meet the growing needs of the people of Nevis. Major road construction will occur in the Hamilton area; the road through Brown Hill will be overlaid; so will the by-pass road at Brown Pasture.

In the parishes of St John's and St James', several village roads will be repaired or be constructed.

The Housing and land Corporation will begin projects in every parish on the island. Agriculture will also continue to hold a prominent position in our thrust for growth. From 52 farms in 2006 they moved to 71 farms in 2009. The acreage rose from 132 to 158 acres in 2009 and farm output jumped from 148,000 pounds of produce to 372,000 pounds of produce.



This is an excellent testimony of the changes taking place in Agriculture under this Government. The concessionary packages of this Government are credited with the rapid change in growth in Agriculture.

In 2011, the emphasis will be on the following:

1. The continued development of Agro-processing products
2. The development of irrigation facilities at New River and Indian Castle supported by major investment in water development, sponsored by the Government of Taiwan.
3. An injection of EC\$22,000,000(US\$8,000,0000) into Fisheries development sponsored by the Japan Cooperation Agency and the Government of St Kitts and Nevis. On completion in 2012 it will rival the Nevis abattoir as the show-piece of the Ministry of Agriculture.

In 2010, the Government highlighted the re-opening of the Four Seasons and the Bill to ensure our Corporate Taxes are collected on Nevis among its outstanding achievements. In 2011, the construction of the Aman and the development of Geothermal Energy will match and outpace these earlier developments.



The Renova Capital partners from Denver, Colorado are taking over the major equity position of the operation. They will be funding the development of the first production well from their Renewable Energy Funds. The Exim Bank of which we have heard much will be sponsoring the long-term funding of the project.

The drilling rig for this project will be on island by February and drilling will commence shortly after.

The project has support regionally and internationally and Mr. Joe Lafluer, Chief Geologist of West Indies Power, has received an Award for the Best presentation of Geothermal exploration from the Geothermal Resource Council of Davis, California, the oldest and largest Geothermal Association in the world.

The production of Geothermal Energy on Nevis would be another first in the English speaking Caribbean. It has the potential to provide new jobs, cheaper energy, and the attraction of further development for St Kitts and Nevis because of the low energy cost and because it offers green



clean energy in a world which is becoming increasingly conscious of the negative effect of global contamination of the atmosphere. The Environmental Impact Study is already lodged with the Government of Nevis and West Indies Power plans to hold public hearings in the last week of January.

This year 2011 will see a return to full employment. It will happen because of the wise choices of the past year, because our Corporate Taxes will be paid in the Treasury in Nevis, because of the VAT arrangements and the re-opening of the Four Seasons. Your Government will be in a position to stabilize its finances, meet its obligations to Government workers; pensioners, pay and begin to reduce the Nevis debt.

It is a year, when in keeping with the People's Agenda the NRP Government will continue to maintain a human face. Priority continues in the field of Education and Training, Health Services and Sports. In 2011, we will complete and open the Performing Arts centre for all Nevisians to enjoy. True development expresses itself not only in economic terms of job creation and the accumulation of wealth, but in



personal development, in exposure to aesthetic things like the performing arts and other expressions of a dynamic culture. This is the role that the NRP has given for itself in its representation of the People of Nevis and we have certainly delivered.

I conclude in this manner.

1. Under the NRP Government, we were the first to use Wind Energy. We were lauded by officials from CARICOM, the University of the West Indies, the Organization of American States under Starret Greene, the OECS and other international figures for courage, creativity and vision.
2. By the process of negotiation we were able to have corporate taxes paid on Nevis. Again we were lauded by the Prime Minister and others for this major achievement.
3. Nevis has received regional and international acclaim for advances in green Geothermal Energy. In fact the name of Nevis is known for this world-wide.
4. In a world that is suffering from the effects of recession, where hotels are closing, your Government and other stake-holders are



credited again with strength, determination, foresight and wisdom in achieving the major feat of the re-opening of the Four Seasons Resort.

We all conclude that Performance Matters. And this Government is second to none in its record of performance in these OECS islands.

2011 is the year of the Nevis Election.

When we go to the Polls what say you? As you are asked to decide who will lead Nevis for the next five years?

Would you say performance matters? For if you do you will vote for the Performance Team of the Nevis Reformation Party.

To each and everyone especially Nevisians at home and throughout the Diaspora, I wish you a prosperous and healthy New Year.

From all of us in Government and from my family, I wish you well.

May God bless us all!

Thank you

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