

Barbados - Agenda for the 21st Century

The Barbados Labour Party

Manifesto 1999



The Inclusion of All The Exclusion of None

The Right Honourable Owen Arthur, Prime Minister of Barbados, defined the politics of inclusion at the Barbados Labour Party's 60th Annual General Conference on November 1, 1998

I genuinely believe that the politics of party first and only, no longer has a sensible place in Barbados.

Our democracy will never be meaningful if citizens are expected to cast their votes and then withdraw from the process until the next five years because there is no system to capture their ongoing participation in decisions that affect how they live.

There is also something fundamentally flawed about a system of governance, based upon the first past the poll principle, in which the victor gets all the spoils, but in which all other than hard core party supporters and in fact almost half of the population at any time feel alienated from participating in what is taking place around them.

No country can ever truly develop unless it finds the means of engrossing everyone in the task of nation building, whatever their class, creed, colour or political persuasion.

I firmly believe that the best talents in Barbados must be brought together and harnessed in support of nation building if we are successfully to meet the many challenges, locally, regionally and internationally, which we must face very soon, and on which our future security rests.

I firmly believe that Barbados' future rests on the fullest participatory democracy that we can engender among all sectors, classes and creeds in this society, and that without this economic and social progress will not be lasting.

The politics of inclusion also require that we embrace causes and groups that have been forced to function on the fringes of this society and allow them to flourish at the centre in the interest of building a cohesive society that truly respects diversity.

To Build a Great Nation

Just over four years ago, I sought and received from the people of Barbados a mandate to implement a Charter for Change in our Nation.

It was a mandate to restore the self-confidence of our people and our nation.

It was a mandate to restore the economic fortunes of Barbados; to create jobs, to rebuild our battered sectors, to create opportunities for small business and for the economically marginalised; to create a new prosperity in which all would share.

Our mission is to move Barbados from strength to greater strength, with deeper unity and ever increasing prosperity for everyone, with none left behind.

It was a mandate to resolutely address longstanding deficiencies in our social services, to intensify the drive to eradicate poverty from our land.

It was a mandate to bring a new freshness and a new spirit of inclusion to the governance of our affairs; to make Barbados a shining example of a participatory democracy, in which all have both a stake and in which all have a say.

It was a mandate to reconnect the Government to the people whom it was elected to serve; to restore that spirit of trust that must always bond the Government and the people.

It was a mandate to release the energy and creativity of our youth; to better provide for the aged, those with special disabilities; those marginalised and left out of the mainstream.

It was a mandate to bring a fresh new leadership to a country demoralised by the callousness and indifference of what had gone before.

It was a mandate to make Barbados once again respected abroad and a land of expanding opportunities at home.

I am proud to be able to report to you that the past four years have been indeed one of the most exhilarating, productive and rewarding chapters in nation building in the history of Barbados.

We are building a great nation.

We have created a new economic prosperity, launched the most comprehensive programme of economic transformation ever carried out in this country.

We have infused every sphere of social, economic, political and cultural endeavour in this country with a new and boundless energy and purpose.

We have reached out and practised the politics of inclusion; we have reached up and set new goals of social and economic aspirations at which our people are to aim.

We have provided the leadership that the Barbadian people so devoutly wish to always be the hallmark of the Barbadian way of doing things.

All across our nation, through our region and in the corridors of the world, there is a shared and accurate view that The Barbados Labour Party has done an excellent job.

In all of it, I was merely the instrument of the will of the Barbadian people.

Our success has been rooted in the determination of every section of our society to make this nation succeed, once the appropriate motivation and framework are in place for the mobilisation of their capacities to contribute to the building of a great nation.

This election takes place on the eve of a new century, a new millennium.

I am excited by the prospect of leading this nation into that new century and in so doing to lay the foundations that will be so strong and unshakable that the next century will be one of wonderful accomplishment for our nation and our people.

In this Manifesto, we have set out the Agenda for the start of the new Millennium.

It is an ambitious agenda, an exciting agenda, and it is an achievable agenda.

It is an agenda that will ensure that no one is left behind.

Over the past four years, I have tried each and everyday to use the opportunity of my office to do something positive to advance the lot of my country and its people, in some measurable respect.

I have the particular good fortune to be a member of a team of Barbados Labour Party candidates that is truly and uniquely representative of our Society.

All across our nation, throughout our region and in the corridors of the world, there is a shared and accurate view that The Barbados Labour Party has done an excellent job.

The BLP team that now seeks your mandate includes the outstanding members of the Tom Adams team.

We number among the members of our Team, the Parliamentarians who represented the Barbadian people with such manifest effectiveness during the last term.

Our new candidates are men and women of the finest calibre and they are patriots of unquestioned commitment.

The Barbados Labour Party team is fully prepared for the task of leading our nation into a strong and special place in the 21st Century.

I ask you to renew, and strengthen, the mandate that you gave to the BLP in 1994.

In carrying out your mandate, we have kept faith with the people of Barbados.

In no way have we betrayed your trust.

We shall not betray your trust.

Our mission is to move Barbados from strength to greater strength, with deeper unity and ever increasing prosperity for everyone, with no one left behind.

In offering to continue this labour of love for my people and for our country, I ask you for your support for the BLP candidate in your constituency. And I would welcome your involvement and assistance in our campaign.

Let us continue to work together in building our Barbados, in fashioning A New Prosperity in which every Barbadian will be guaranteed a share.

Come, let us build one another, together.



OWEN ARTHUR

Leader,
The Barbados Labour Party
January, 1999

Social Transformation

Every Barbadian has the right to a decent standard of living.

The Barbados Labour Party will continue to work for strong families and communities, the eradication of poverty, the provision of an effective safety net for the most vulnerable in our society, the reform of the social sector to meet the challenges of the new millennium, and the creation of a caring society for all.

We will transform the Barbadian society to give meaning to the right of every citizen to a decent quality of life.

We will not offer charity when what the poor members of our society need is a chance to improve their economic and social wellbeing.

We therefore propose new institutional arrangements for the effective delivery of our social development programme.

NEW MINISTRY FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

This programme will be implemented under the aegis of a single ministry - the Ministry of Social Transformation. The rationalisation of existing social service and welfare agencies will form the core of this ministry. It will focus on the needs of the poor, the disadvantaged and the disabled in our society.

In the new Term, the BLP will:

- Appoint a panel of competent persons prior to the ministry's establishment to review social legislation from various jurisdictions and to make recommendations on an appropriate legislative framework.
- Amalgamate the Welfare Department, the National Assistance Board, Child Care Board, the Community Development Division and the Women's Affairs Bureau into a unified Family Services Agency.
- Decentralise these services so that Barbadians can visit any area office to get assistance for various problems and programmes.
- Eliminate the existing duplication of services and make access easier for the intended beneficiaries of the services.

THE SOCIAL PARTNERS

- Facilitate institutional arrangements with Trade Unions, Church and community groups, charity organisations and NGOs and the private sector to assist in the provision of social services.
- A new Ministry of Social Transformation will focus on the needs of the poor, the disadvantaged and the physically challenged.

- Provide family support services and community-based activities to help families to stay together and nurture their children, thereby reducing the need for institutional or residential placement of children.
- Promote individual and family self-sufficiency by job counseling and job placement.

We will:

- Provide assistance for vulnerable groups – the poor, children, the disabled and the elderly.

Community development services will incorporate the following:

- Community-based activities and
- Community care concepts.

To bring Government closer to the people, services will be decentralised with several offices staffed by multi-skilled social workers, supplying the full range of services from social work to job counseling at strategic locations across Barbados.

The Community Development Officers will play key roles at the decentralised social services offices and community centres. The Family Services Agency will be responsible for:

- Community level poverty eradication programmes;
- Assessment of communities to determine social and economic development needs;
- Skills assessment and registration of unemployed and unskilled persons at the community level.

We will introduce an integrated referral service to ensure optimum co-ordination of existing programmes across Ministries such as the Youth Affairs Department, the Barbados Youth Business Trust, the Young Entrepreneurship Scheme, the Rural and Urban Commissions; and the Ministry of Social Transformation.

FAMILY SERVICES BENEFITS

Family Service Benefits, formerly described as Welfare Grants, were recently increased to accommodate price rises due to VAT.

We will:

- Periodically review, and increase as necessary, family service benefits to cover the cost of the basic food basket as developed by the National Nutrition Centre.

- Assist existing welfare recipients to re-enter the workforce by providing the necessary skills training, job placement and counseling services.
- Give social assistance applicants the right of appeal to a reconstituted Appeals Body if their applications are turned down.
- Establish a Rapid Response Crisis Intervention Unit to swiftly respond to tragic vehicular accidents, house fires and incidents of domestic violence in the interest of the physical and psychological wellbeing of the victims of such tragedies.

CHILD CARE

The Barbados Labour Party will:

- Develop a programme for unskilled and unemployed fathers and mothers to help them become self-sufficient so they can provide financial support for their children and thus eliminate the need for costly government intervention.

The programme will also provide counseling to assist parents in maintaining positive relationships with their children.

- Increase foster care allowances.
- Establish a modern reception centre to facilitate the proper assessment and selection of young children prior to them being taken into care.
- Enact legislation to make it compulsory for the police, doctors, teachers, social workers and other professionals to report suspected cases of child abuse to the Child Care Board suspected cases of child abuse.
- Establish adolescent centres to prepare young adults in residential care for the transition to independent living in the community.
- Promote family preservation and support policies designed to shift the responsibility of child care from institutions to the family.

GENDER AFFAIRS

The Women's Bureau will be changed to a Bureau of Gender Affairs and will be integrated into the newly created Ministry of Social Transformation.

This new Bureau will:

- Change the traditional single focus of the old Women's Bureau to wider gender issues to ensure that problems facing certain sections of the male population are systematically resolved.
- Facilitate and encourage research in gender issues.

THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED

The newly established Disabilities Unit will be located in the new Ministry of Social Transformation and will work in partnership with NGOs to:

- Restructure and improve the range of all beneficiary payments to the elderly, the physically and mentally challenged, and other recipients, with a view to facilitating greater personal choice in the way these allowances are accessed.

We will:

- Develop policies for the disabled and provide referral services for the physically challenged.

We will improve the range of all beneficiary payments to the elderly, the physically and mentally challenged, and other recipients

- Provide rehabilitative services and training such as mobility training and life skills development.
- Provide the physically challenged with greater access to suitable services and benefits such as job searches, skills assessment, specialised equipment for vocational training and grants.
- Provide aids such as walkers and wheelchairs and make adjustments to homes.
- Develop mandatory codes for the provision of special facilities for the physically challenged in all public buildings and facilities.

The BLP will:

- Enact legislation to prohibit discrimination against persons who are physically challenged and to provide for equality of opportunity
- Ensure improved access to primary, secondary, tertiary and vocational educational training facilities to provide physically challenged persons with the opportunity for self development so that they will lead productive lives.
- Complete the national register for the physically challenged in order to determine the type and range of programmes and services they require.
- Provide the transportation for persons who are physically challenged and senior citizens with minimum inconvenience..

THE HOMELESS

The Barbados Labour Party government will:

- Construct a modern shelter for homeless women and provide suitable management and counseling facilities for such persons.
- Improve the management, services and support systems offered at the Sir Clyde Gollop Shelter for homeless men.

- Use the recommendations of the Task Force on vagrancy and homelessness to develop effective strategies to resolve this social problem.

A BETTER LIFE FOR OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

The success of Barbados' health care programmes has led to a sharp increase in the proportion of senior citizens in the population, as has been the case in the developed world.

The BLP will:

- Create opportunities to utilise the skills and energies of an increasingly healthy and active number of retirees.
- Progressively increase its concessions to all pensioners.
- Institute new special tax concessions to promote and make attractive the alternative care of the elderly.

The basic policy of the BLP will continue whereby pension contributions to retirement funds will be tax deductible.

Pensions when received will only be subject to tax if the amount of pension exceeds the special allowance that is granted to elderly citizens. This allowance will be reviewed periodically.

Pensions from overseas sources will not be taxable.

PENSION REFORM

Barbados is increasingly becoming an aging society.

- We will institute new measures to ensure that the Public Sector pensions schemes are fully funded and that the National Insurance Scheme is and always will be viable.
- As initiated by our Registered Retirement Savings Tax Concessions, we will progressively develop schemes to enable persons to save independently for their retirement while simultaneously having access to their savings as collateral for loans, and to assist in financing the construction and acquisition of their own homes.

CARE FOR THE ELDERLY

We will:

- Increase the capacity at district hospitals for the care and accommodation for senior citizens.

- Promote foster care for the elderly, and those living under assisted arrangements and respite care.
- Create incentives for Trade Unions, Cooperatives, NGOs, Churches and individuals to build residential facilities for the elderly and day and night care centres to satisfy the demand for flexible care and residential services for the elderly.
- Modernise the island's geriatric hospitals.
- Introduce a computer system for tracking the island's pensioners so that measures can be instituted to improve living conditions and prevent abandonment.
- Upgrade and/or convert disused children's homes to accommodate abandoned senior citizens.

Such care will be administered by private individuals or NGOs.

- Encourage partnerships between NGOs and the private sector to assist in the provision of social services on an annual basis.
- Expand the Home Care Service and introduce a five-day work week for employees.
- Strengthen the Housing Programme for elderly persons to ensure, in particular, that improved indoor water toilet facilities are provided in addition to house repairs.
- Assist Non-Profit and Non-Governmental Organisations to provide homes for the elderly.

COMMUNITY CENTRES

The BLP will ensure that:

- All communities have paved roads and access to recreational facilities and community centres.
- Community centres are seen and used as information centres for the social and educational development of Barbadian communities.
- Continue to erect Community centres in major population areas using the new facility at Gall Hill, Christ Church as a model. Centres will be built at Church Village, St. Philip and Jackson, St. Michael.

A New Education

Without losing sight of fundamental values, we must radically reform and restructure the system to facilitate the personal development of every child to address the social and economic needs of the country and to build the sense of responsibility of each individual to self, family, community and country.

Our present system of education, while adequate in many respects, caters to only 40 per cent of the needs of our children.

This is unacceptable.

Without losing sight of fundamental values, we must radically reform and restructure the system to facilitate the personal development of every child to address the social and economic needs of the country and to build the sense of responsibility of each individual to self, family, community and country.

We must ensure that no child is left behind as Barbados surges forward into the new millennium.

To this end, we have formulated an innovative and comprehensive programme of Education Reform, to be driven by creative strategies which will make Barbados a global leader in the development of human capital.

These strategies form the basis of EduTech 2000.

EDUTECH 2000

EduTech 2000 is a radical new approach to the delivery of education, structured so as to enhance the depth and range of learning experiences, and to ensure that the every child benefits from a sound and relevant education.

Its objective is to create a quality human resource that is readily employable, easily re-trainable and adaptable to the rapidly changing demands of society in general and the job market in particular.

EduTech 2000 has four key components

Modern physical facilities;

Use of information and multimedia technologies to enhance the learning experience in the classroom;

Enhanced teacher training to ensure teachers have the tools to deliver improved education; and

Institutional strengthening, namely Administrative Reform in the Ministry, Curriculum reform, a system of continuous testing and assessment for students, teachers and administrators.

MODERNISING OUR SCHOOLS

We will change the environment in which our children are taught.

Much of our school plant is old, inadequate, and generally suffering from a lack of systematic maintenance.

The infrastructural reforms that will take us into the new millennium, and which involve the widespread provision of computer laboratories, require extensive refurbishment and upgrading of both primary and secondary school plant, and the implementation of structured maintenance programmes.

We will spend \$100 million over the next seven years.

We will also build a new Carrington's Primary School.

CURRICULUM REFORM

We will change what we teach.

Curriculum development cannot now mean the same as it did when we sought to equip our children to function in an industrial society.

The challenge now is to equip children to function in a knowledge-based society and be sensitive to their responsibilities to self, family, community and country.

TEACHER TRAINING

We must change how we teach.

The system must be child-centred.

Teachers must be equipped with new tools to improve the quality of the learning process, to motivate children to want to learn more.

They will be trained in information technology and in special needs education.

Using these new tools they should be more effective in the classroom, and also be able to assess whether a child is experiencing learning difficulties or is gifted.

Every child must be treated as special.

In the new Term the BLP Government will spend an additional \$10 million on teacher training, an estimated 3,000 teachers over the next five years.

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

We will change the way business is done in the classroom.

Teachers will be equipped with the tools and strategies to endow students with the ability to adapt to the new society and the capacity both to use technology and to develop technology and thereby change society.

These aims will in the main be achieved by:

¥ Expanding available tools for the delivery of instruction;

¥ Modifying assessment tools and measurement strategies; and implementing independent programme evaluation instruments. We will:

Full employment in Barbados can be achieved, but only if we can provide trained individuals with relevant skills.

¥ Continuously assess student progress from early in primary school up to and including the Common Entrance Examination.

This examination will be reformed to comprise assessment by examination and by programme.

NATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

We will:

Formulate a competency-based national secondary school certificate for high school graduates to ensure that all students leave secondary school with acceptable certification applicable to all children.

This system will be modular so that persons can re-enter the system at any stage of their development.

We will:

- Introduce new methods of testing to include oral, written and project based assessment.
- Establish a Board of Certification, Accreditation and Articulation to inspect, regulate and set standards to ensure greater currency of training programmes.

- Expand the range of social services currently available to students in both primary and secondary schools, and where appropriate, provide school meals and social workers to facilitate access to the other social services needed in the child's home environment.
- Establish a Teachers Service Commission to oversee the professional certification of teachers and all other personnel matters.
- Introduce a comprehensive system of Teacher Appraisal for all teachers.

A NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR EDUCATION

All schools will be equipped with computers and the appropriate software in laboratories, subject rooms and classroom settings.

In this way, each student will be exposed to instruction which uses information in an interactive mode.

Each classroom will be equipped with a multimedia centre where other technologies will be integrated with the computer for delivery of instruction in ways that excite the interest of students.

We will encourage indigenous development of software for domestic use and for export with assistance from the Shell Software Review Centre.

We will start this programme in 15 schools with 8,200 children in the first year and expand it to all 83 primary and 23 secondary schools for the benefit of the nations' 50,000 school children.

There will be a modified programme available in private primary and secondary schools.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

During early childhood, parents and children must bond to develop positive socialisation for young children.

Caring parents in Barbados started the Parent Volunteer Support Programme (PVSP) to play a nurturing role in early childhood education. Government helped to fund this programme in 20 schools by a grant of \$100,000 to the National Council of Parent Teachers' Associations.

It has been so successful that there are an additional 10 schools where parents assist as volunteers having received the training.

The Barbados Labour Party will:

- Expand the PVSP support to all primary schools.

- Introduce Parent Education Programmes to equip parents to play a greater role in the teaching/learning process.
- Continue physical testing of children for eyesight, hearing and speech defects in all primary schools .
- Expand nursery education by creating partnerships with PAREDOS and the National Council of Parent Teachers' Association to facilitate expansion of nursery education and parent education with support of the Ministry of Education.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

We will continue to provide free access to post-secondary and tertiary level institutions in Barbados and the University of the West Indies

The Barbados Labour Party recognises that training and retraining are vital to human resource development in knowledge-based societies.

It is essential that we implement relevant programmes for training and re-training adequate numbers of young people.

Full employment in Barbados can be achieved, but only if we can provide trained individuals with relevant skills.

Consequently, enhancement of our human capital is inextricably bound up with the growth and development of our tertiary institutions, both in terms of the numbers being trained, and in the range and depth of programmes being offered.

The Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (SJPP), the Barbados Community College (BCC), Erdiston College and the University of the West Indies all have a special role to play in retooling our work force, and creating a knowledge-rich society.

During the last four years, the SJPP introduced new disciplines and expanded enrolment from 1,400 in 1994 to almost 2,500.

The BCC also expanded its programmes and its enrolment from 2,600 in 1994 to 3,400, as part of an integrated policy to intensify its role in improving our human capital.

We therefore aim to further increase SJPP and BCC enrolment.

We will:

- Continue to expand the enrolment of students and the range and depth of programmes offered by BCC and SJPP to ensure they meet the skills-needs and training requirements of the job market.

- Expand the role of the industry services unit in custom-designing training programmes to meet the needs of industry and services sectors.
- Continue to provide free access to post-secondary and tertiary level institutions in Barbados and the University of the West Indies.
- The BCC will expand programmes which can matriculate to the UWI beyond those now established.
- Continue to support programmes for the restructuring of the UWI to enable it to better meet the human resource development needs of Barbados, and to initiate relevant research and development to benefit the wider society.
- Expand access to post-secondary and tertiary institutions by further rationalisation of tertiary institutions.
- After full consultation with the social partners, alter the academic year to facilitate expansion of SJPP vocational training by using secondary schools as satellite campuses to provide plant and equipment.
- Establish a secondary school with an alternative curriculum in the south of the island catering to persons needing intensive remedial assistance.
- Establish an Academy of Excellence for Sports and Culture where students who excel may enter a 4-year programme at the senior level.
- Expand the programme for oral foreign language education in primary schools.
- Establish a School of International Services at the BCC for support personnel in the Services Economy.
- Expand the language laboratory at BCC.
- Introduce a new national scholarship for persons achieving excellence in the Associate Degree programme of the BCC.
- Continue to provide financial and technical assistance to both private primary and secondary institutions and to those who attend private secondary schools.
- Continue to finance the deficit of schools providing special education to the mentally and physically challenged children

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

We will:

- Revolutionise most areas of vocational training by removing practical training from the classroom to work-site operations.
- Establish three vocational training facilities, one in central Barbados and another in the north of the island, and a third one in St.Philip.
- Establish a pilot teaching complex at Bathsheba to focus on craft and tap the creativity of persons already involved in various craft activity. This facility will house a kiosk to be used as a sales outlet for the Barbados Vocational Training Board graduates and craft vendors in the community.
- Assist graduates of skills training programmes to find internships and apprenticeships in the private sector in order to gain practical work

experience that hopefully will lead to long term employment. Incentives will be provided to participating firms.

Youth Affairs

The revolution in technology whose applications have created the Information Age has ensured that the millennium on whose threshold we stand will represent one of the great defining periods of our history.

We bid goodbye to the Industrial Age and face the dawn of the knowledge-based society and economy, changing forever the old ways of doing business and offering unlimited opportunity to those with skills and the motivation to adapt to the demands of an ever-changing situation.

It is always true that the future belongs to the young. It is even more true that the quality of the challenge posed by the society of knowledge is peculiarly well directed to the optimism, the creativity, the imagination, the courage and the unbridled energy of young people.

They can confidently expect to make their way in a world where the only constant is change and the greatest challenge will be to manage that change. Our policies will be directed at educating and equipping our young people for the challenge.

Since its establishment in 1995, the Youth Affairs Department has moved to create both the resource capacity as well as the research-based information to respond to the diverse needs of young people in Barbados.

The Department is now at a stage where it seeks to expand the several dimensions of its programming which have been enhancing the development of young people as well as to diversify its programmes into areas of clearly identified need.

The BLP acknowledges that the building of trust is so critical to the success of the programme, that its activities should seek to start at a stage where the building of trust is easiest. Accordingly, the programme will shift to a strategy starting from 8 years old rather than from the previous age of 15 years.

The BLP will:

- Promote and encourage the performance of community service through a National Service Programme in which young people not in school, college or in a job will become involved in community service through activities sponsored by clubs, schools, youth groups, church groups and all other civic organisations.
- Expand mass-based training at the community level in sports and cultural-based activities.
- Expand the Barbados Youth Service from 250 to 1000 students through the establishment of a part-time, non-residential component catering to the personal and technical developmental needs of young people and the

- establishment of an annual exchange programme with South Africa and other countries.
- Extend the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES) particularly through the development of a community-based entrepreneurial development programme and the establishment of a YES Juniors programme catering to children between the ages of 9 and 16 years old.
 - Facilitate NGOs in the establishment of a Youth Village offering respite care to young people whose domestic environment is inimical to their personal development and providing temporary accommodation to facilitate the transition of young people from custodial or residential care to independent living arrangements.
 - Expand community programmes for resolution of conflict in communities and among groups.

Sports

The BLP will:

- Encourage persons involved in sports and its related industries to regard this area of activity as a productive and potentially profitable sector of the economy.
- Re-lay the athletic track and upgrade and expand the facilities and general infrastructure at the National Stadium.
- Encourage swimming by providing public swimming pools in the major zonal areas of the Island.
- Expand the multi-purpose mini-stadium programme in an effort to make these sporting facilities self-sufficient and profitable commercial activities.
- Give support and award scholarships to sports administrators' courses and coaching programmes at the University of the West Indies and other tertiary institutions.
- Enact crowd control legislation to protect patrons attending events at Kensington, the Gymnasium, the National Stadium and other similar venues.

Health

The protection of our citizens' health is central to guaranteeing national productivity and sustained social and economic development into the future.

The BLP Administration has taken a proactive approach to the challenge of health care delivery by increasing subventions to health care institutions, particularly the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), and have introduced a number of programmes and initiatives to resolve many long standing intractable problems in the health care system.

This approach resulted in Barbados' health care system being regarded as the most progressive in the Caribbean.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

The BLP will continue to institute measures to enable the QEH to deliver health care of the highest quality by using best practices, applying cost-effective measures, and making patient care its number one priority.

The BLP Government will:

- Implement a charter for the development of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to the year 2010, based on the recommendations of the Advisory Commission of Inquiry into the QEH.
- Develop management systems and a core of trained personnel to effectively deliver health care in a modern tertiary care institution.
- Upgrade the physical plant of the hospital and improve recently instituted maintenance programmes for plant and equipment.

We will:

- Develop a Patient's Rights Charter that establishes patient care and rights at the centre of care delivery and administration.
- Develop systems to reduce waste and inefficient management at the QEH, and at other health care institutions.
- Introduce a Quality Assurance Programme to set standards for the delivery of high quality care throughout the QEH and the health care system.
- Ensure that all support departments of the QEH, including the laundry, engineering, laboratory, kitchen and pharmacy, are operated on a shift basis, seven days a week, to satisfy the needs of the public.
- Implement new management systems geared to reducing long waiting times at the Accident and Emergency Department.
- Develop an autonomous management structure that urgently addresses and responds to staff and patient concerns.

- Embark on the first major physical expansion of the QEH in 40 years.
- Use the St Joseph Hospital as a centre for specialist services such as geriatric services, physical rehabilitation, convalescence, renal dialysis and Accident and Emergency cases.
- Review the role of the QEH as a teaching institution and remove the cap on training in keeping with our policies for the development of Barbados as a global centre of excellence in training.

NURSING

Nurses are the largest number of persons working in health care.

The BLP government established a Task Force on nursing to develop a strategic plan.

In pursuit of its recommendations a re-elected BLP Government will:

- Implement the Strategic Plan for nursing after consultation with nursing professionals and other stakeholders.
- Introduce a strong district/community-nursing service targeting in particular the most vulnerable groups in the society.
- Develop a career path for nurses, which includes enhanced remuneration of those with specialists' skills and an award scheme to recognise and reward excellence in nursing.
- Recognise and register sub-specialities in nursing.
- Introduce flexi-time for nurses.
- Introduce health aides throughout the entire health care system.
- Establish a full time Registrar for the General Nursing Council.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTORATE

The Public Health Inspectorate is one of our major lines of defense in Public Health.

The BLP will:

- Restructure the Public Health Inspectorate utilising the recommendations of the Public Health Inspectors.
- Update the Health Services Act and Regulations to strengthen the powers of Public Health Inspectors to deal with issues relating to food quality, derelict vehicles, abandoned houses and overgrown lots.
- Introduce the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points System to eliminate the risk of food-borne diseases.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

In order to ensure availability of, and rapid response by ambulances.

We will:

- Expand the fleet of ambulances, employ additional staff and re-organise the existing shift system to ensure ready availability of ambulances and trained personnel.
- We will provide a 911 service.
- Provide specially outfitted ambulances for cardiac intervention with appropriately trained Emergency Medical Technicians.
- Decentralise the ambulance service to shorten response time to all areas of Barbados.

POLYCLINICS

Polyclinics, established by a former BLP Administration, offer service until 7.00 pm.

The BLP will:

- Extend opening hours of polyclinics and guarantee that at least one polyclinic is opened on a 24-hour basis for urgent care service.
- Strengthen linkages for the transfer of patients and their records between the polyclinics, geriatric facilities and the QEH in the interest of better patient care.
- Expand the range of services offered by the polyclinics to include, chronic disease clinics and dermatology services.

PSYCHIATRIC CARE

The increase in mental illness at all social levels requires the prioritisation of psychiatric care.

We will:

- Introduce a comprehensive community mental health programme.
- Refurbish the physical plan of the Psychiatric Hospital.
- Modernise the Mental Health Act.
- Implement a system to follow up psychiatric patients and counsel their families to facilitate family acceptance and reintegration into the community.

CHRONIC DISEASES

Chronic diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, strokes and diabetes are the major causes of death and disability in Barbados.

We will:

- Encourage the promotion of healthy lifestyles as a principle in health care delivery and health policy development.
- Institute a comprehensive education programme to reduce deaths and disability caused by chronic diseases.
- Implement the Chronic Disease Prevention Policy being devised by the National Advisory Committee on Chronic Diseases.
- Encourage research into chronic diseases and conduct evaluations to determine how behavioural change can be influenced.

REHABILITATION CENTRE

There is a dire need for a Rehabilitation Centre since every year some 150 people lose a lower limb by amputation, 180 are injured in motor vehicle accidents and 300 suffer the debilitating effects of strokes.

In addition, many suffer physical injuries or repetitive stress injuries on the job.

We will establish a Rehabilitation Centre to assist with such injuries.

SANITATION SERVICE AUTHORITY

A re-organised and well-managed Sanitation Service Authority (SSA) is essential to the maintenance of our health standards. The BLP will:

- Commission a new fleet of vehicles to service our garbage collection needs. and restructure the SSA to allow for effective management and efficient delivery of the service.

NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

The contributions of a large number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have significantly enhanced the work of the Ministry of Health.

The BLP will:

- Foster closer relationships with Health NGOs and promote their involvement in health education and health care delivery.
- Establish a Desk for Health NGOs within the Ministry.

Labour

Barbados has long enjoyed a reputation for healthy and stable industrial relations.

This has been a distinct advantage in our quest to attract investment and create jobs.

Government, labour and capital have more recently come together and established a protocol in the interest of maintaining stability in our industrial relations.

The following measures are designed to further the cause of stability and enlightenment in our employer/employee relations by improving conditions in critical areas.

The BLP will:

- Implement a National Minimum Wage in an effort to ensure that all working Barbadians enjoy a satisfactory standard of living.
- Establish a tripartite tribunal for the resolution of industrial disputes.
- Create a Labour Market and manpower information system aimed at facilitating universal and public access to manpower, labour market and working conditions in Barbados.
- Improve the delivery systems of the National Employment Bureau to ensure that job seekers are properly prepared, counselled and informed in their efforts to obtain placement in the work force.
- Enact in the new Parliamentary term a Trade Union Recognition Bill, an Unfair Dismissal Bill and an Occupational Health and Safety at Work Bill.

Restoration of 8%

In recognition of the unique burden shouldered by the Public Servants in carrying the brunt of the economic adjustment in the early 1990's, we will fully restore the loss of earnings to all Public Servants on terms to be negotiated and agreed with the social partners.

Housing

The Barbados Labour Party is committed to providing access to affordable, good quality housing to every Barbadian family.

To date, our efforts have borne fruit as witnessed by the significant upsurge in activity in the housing market in the last four years.

The turnaround in the housing market is clearly the result of the BLP's successful economic policies that have restored prosperity to Barbados.

It is the intention of the BLP to ensure that the economic success of the last four years continues, and that sustained economic prosperity will be accompanied by access to affordable housing for all Barbadians.

The BLP will:

- Augment the land bank of the National Housing Corporation (NHC) by purchasing additional tracts of land at strategic points throughout Barbados.
- Intensify and expand the availability of starter homes, terraced units, house construction and serviced lots, programmes of the NHC, to satisfy the demands of those households with the greatest need for shelter.
- Promote the construction of town houses for all income groups so as to foster greater efficiency in land use.
- Implement measures designed to reduce building costs for all sectors of the community.
- Accelerate the sale of existing single, duplex and terraced units of the NHC. Pricing of the units will reflect the duration of the tenancy and the payment history of tenants.
- Provide 100 per cent mortgages for all purchases of housing and of serviced lots by low-income earners.
- Improve the housing conditions and infrastructure of all urban tenancies, and subsidise the purchase of lots in those tenancies by qualified tenants.
- Implement an urban renewal programme for the depressed districts in Bridgetown, particularly Cats Castle, Church Village, Greenfields, Nelson Street and New Orleans.
- Include recreational facilities and green spaces in all housing developments of the NHC.

TOWN CENTRES

The expansion of the Barbados economy with its spread of benefits across the whole country has had its effects on the decisions of our people as to where they should live and on their expectations as to the services that should be provided. The BLP Government will continue the development of town centres in areas of

population concentration across Barbados, e.g. Oistins, Six Roads, Belleplaine, and the Glebe, St. George

We will establish a new town centre at Deane Town in St. James.

The town centre will be a collaborative effort between the public and private sectors of Barbados.

Activities within the project include:

- Road widening, construction of side walks, improved street lighting and the provision of additional access roads and bridges to link adjoining villages with the area;
- Assisting needy residents with the repair of their homes.
- Improvement of the bus service in the area; and.
- An improved garbage collection service.
- Joint ventures between the public and private sectors in the provision of supermarket, health and banking facilities.
- Expansion of sporting and recreational facilities.
- Upgrading of educational and community service facilities.
- Construction of starter homes, terrace units and new wall-and-timber houses, and the provision of serviced lots by the NHC.
- The provision of low and middle income housing by the private sector.

NEW LIFE IN OUR URBAN AREAS

The Urban Development Commission, established in 1997, has been assigned a critical role in the Government's assault on urban poverty. Its focus is slum clearance and the improvement of social amenities in urban areas.

It has already made a substantial contribution to the improvement of living standards in rural tenancies.

It has identified some 3,000 qualified tenants, resident on a total of 200 tenancies comprising 225 acres of land.

We will :

- Subsidise the price of urban land so that low income groups will pay no more than \$2.50 per square foot for land irrespective of open market value.
- Provide funding to ensure that landlords receive the difference between the fair market value and the statutory price of \$2.50 per square foot.
- Acquire vacant lands across the urban landscape for the development of housing and sites and services programmes.

- Undertake a slum clearance project at Cats Castle, involving the re-development of the entire area to include the provision of a road network, improved amenities, upgraded housing and green areas and recreational facilities.
- Execute a housing project at Country Road, St. Michael, in conjunction with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport.
- Intensify its programme for the improvement of urban tenantry roads.
- Provide new houses for the poorest of the poor, repairs to the homes of the elderly and the provision and upgrading of bathroom facilities in the drive towards the eradication of poverty.
- Amend the Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act to give security of tenure to persons carrying on a business in a tenantry and to expand the definition of qualified tenants to include persons who have been renting house spots for a period of more than twenty-five years, and guardians and caretakers of the property of deceased tenants.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Rural Development Commission was established in 1996 as a dynamic instrument of Government's policies for rural communities of Barbados to ensure that they take their proper place in the social and economic development of Barbados.

The excellent performance of the Commission has been reported in our publication "***A Productive Partnership***". This work is on-going.

We will:

- Expand the programmes for road construction and improvement so that the residents of every rural community will be serviced with decent roads.
- Extend the street lighting programme until lights are installed in every rural community for the protection and safety of the residents of such communities.
- Continue to upgrade rural housing for the poor, and in particular to construct bathroom facilities and install water-borne toilet systems until all of the 1500 households in rural Barbados still without them.
- Intensify its programme of assistance to small farmers and the training of field officers by improving their communication and other skills and equip them to provide professional services for such farmers.
- Continue to provide loans from the Rural Enterprise Fund to assist small entrepreneurs in the development and expansion of their businesses with the objective of generating employment, earning foreign exchange and reducing the import bill.
- Undertake sustainable programmes to encourage young people into self-reliance.

- Act in concert with both governmental agencies and NGO's to carry out programmes for the social and economic development of disadvantaged persons and depressed areas.

We will act in concert with both government agencies and NGO's to carry out programmes for the social and economic development of disadvantaged persons and depressed areas.

Our Economic Programme

Over the past four years, we have more than established that Barbados can achieve and sustain very strong economic growth.

Plans in both the public and private sectors have been drawn and approved to support and ensure an investment driven, export-led continuation of this great economic surge.

In the first decade of the 21st century, the economic development of Barbados will take place against the background of an ever expanding horizon of opportunities within a new and radically transformed GLOBAL ECONOMY

It will take place in an environment characterised by the formation of large trading blocs and the dismantling of international business.

It will be electrified by continuing and dramatic revolutions in technology particularly in the fields of information and communications where the changes will alter for ever how business is conducted, how people live, and how societies are ordered.

It will also take place in a regional environment characterised by an effort to build a SINGLE CARIBBEAN MARKET AND ECONOMY.

These new global and regional arrangements and developments will usher in unprecedented challenges for small, vulnerable economies, particularly by stripping them of the special trade and taxation preferences and benefits which have traditionally protected so much of their domestic economic activity and industries.

We conceive of a robust and vibrant economy in which every mechanism to promote the enhancement and transmission of increased productivity is at work in all of its economic sectors; a vibrant economy with a clear competitive focus; an economy committed only to the best world class, high quality business and professional practices and ethos in every sphere of its economic endeavour.

We look forward therefore to bringing about a NEW AND UNPRECEDENTED PROSPERITY in Barbados, and to the achievement of our potential to be THE WORLD'S SMALLEST DEVELOPED ECONOMY.

Strategic Objective

Our immediate strategic objective will be to ensure that Barbados' economic momentum is sustained in the short term when international recessionary pressures are likely to be at their greatest.

The BLP has already proven its ability at economic management. It will continue to put Barbados first by putting in place prudent and appropriate measures, involving principally the control of Government's spending.

We look forward therefore to bringing about a **NEW AND UNPRECEDENTED PROSPERITY** in Barbados, and to the achievement of our potential to be **THE WORLD'S SMALLEST DEVELOPED ECONOMY**.

A NEW PROSPERITY

Ahead of us lies a decade of unprecedented and new prosperity.

Investment Driven Prosperity

There is at present a boom in Barbados' economic affairs driven by large investments in new tourism, housing and commercial activity, designed to spur on the development of Barbados as a principal international business and financial centre.

Our mission to bring about full employment in Barbados and to make Barbados a fully developed economy is based largely on bringing to fruition those major investments which are being implemented and on the drawing board.

These investments in both the public and private sectors, which will drive and energise Barbados' transformation into a full employment developed economy, will amount to about \$5 billion dollars of which over \$2 billion will take place in tourism and tourism related activity.

The Driving Forces

Over the next five years, our economic momentum will be sustained by our successful building of a world class, high quality export service economy, with a fully developed tourism and hospitality industry as its chief engine of growth.

We envision a Barbados flourishing as a Tourism economy, offering not only sea and sun leisure activities, but also encompassing all of the special attributes Barbados has to offer in heritage tourism, sports tourism, nature- based tourism. Our vision for tourism also involves making Barbados one of the principal centres for convention business and of transforming the island into one of the most attractive hospitality destinations to be found anywhere in this hemisphere.

In pursuit of our economic programme to make Barbados a premier International Financial and Business Centre of our hemisphere, we have recently introduced the legislation to broaden the range and attractiveness of the international financial and business services Barbados has to offer in the form of new

international trust and mutual funds activity, thus adding to those we inherited in 1994.

Related to this, we will actively promote Barbados as the investment beachhead for local and international business and for capital willing and anxious to do business in the emerging markets of the hemisphere so as to take advantage of the provisions of the LOME Convention and new trade pacts, tax treaties and investment treaties with partners in the hemisphere and beyond.

This will result in jobs and new economic activity.

We will actively promote Barbados as the location - first choice - for regional and international headquarters for both business and official organisations.

We will actively promote and develop Barbados as the premier regional location for the development of the film, music and all other cultural and craft industries, opening opportunities for the generation of lucrative new streams of income and jobs.

We recognise that the new international economic dispensation will create special new challenges for manufacturing and agriculture by exposing them to intensely new competitive regimes.

We are however convinced that commercial agriculture and manufacturing still have important roles to play as major poles of employment and foreign exchange earnings.

We will therefore afford these two strategic sectors new incentives and financial supports that will enable them to boost their capacity and strengthen their institutional arrangements so as to continue to be major players in the continued development of the Barbados economy.

Economic Empowerment

The Barbados Labour Party accepts the obligation to ensure that economic growth and development are immediately translated into opportunities for social and economic upliftment of all Barbadians. We will therefore:

- Support the orderly evolution and development of a vibrant and thriving class of small businesses in Barbados, functioning under a special tax regime that allows them a lower rate of corporation tax and no duties and taxes on their capital investments.
- Establish an Economic Affirmative Action Programme for Small Businesses to ensure that they get an expanding share of Government contracts.

- Systematically replenish the resources available to Fund Access and the Enterprise Growth Fund which will be the two major Funding Mechanisms for financing thousands of new business operations in Barbados, as the successors to the Barbados Development Bank.
- Sell minority interests in the Barbados National Bank, the Insurance Corporation of Barbados, the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, the Barbados National Oil Company, and the National Petroleum Corporation to the public and do so in a manner that the staff of these institutions, members of credit unions, trade unions, cooperatives and other Barbadians are presented with new attractive investment opportunities, and we will restructure the operations of the Grantley Adams International Airport, the Barbados Port Authority and the General Post Office.
- Support the transformation of the public vehicles sector, including minibuses, ZR's and other vehicles into an important part of the transportation network of Barbados, and as an area of economic activity for thriving small and family oriented business by providing financial support for the creation of their own insurance entities and by enabling them to take advantage of new special tax relief.

We will therefore provide special measures to encourage the continued development of our capital market with special provision for the protection of the interests of investors, especially small investors.

In this respect we will accelerate the initiatives now in progress, namely to:

- Introduce new Securities legislation and an independent Securities Commission to promote the development and regulation of the capital market in Barbados;
- Make the trading of commercial and Government paper attractive on the Securities Exchange; and
- Use the privatisation of Government entities to provide new companies for listing.

A new BLP administration will also replenish the Social Investment Fund, and use it as an instrument for the creation of new economic enterprises.

ECONOMIC GUIDELINES

The BLP administration has succeeded in stabilising the Barbados economy.

We recognise that we will have to continue to base our economic progress on the foundations of strong, stabilised, economic fundamentals. Hence:

- We will continue to pursue sound economic and financial policies that promote stable public finances.

- We will incur only modest fiscal deficits that will not require us to have to resort to ruinous dependence on the printing of money by the Central Bank.
- We will continue to rely on a low interest rate regime as a factor to bring about our stability and progress.
- We will engineer the lowest possible energy prices consistent with world market prices.
- We will pursue policies to systematically boost our foreign exchange reserves.
- We believe that our fixed exchange rate is the real anchor of our economic stability and progress.
- **WE WILL NOT DEVALUE THE BARBADOS DOLLAR**

INSTITUTIONAL REFORM

Social Contract

We have successfully introduced the Social Contract between the social partners of Barbados as a vital factor in our economic stability and progress.

We consider that it is still crucial that the best precepts of this social contract, designed to link income changes to productivity and to facilitate consultation on all crucial economic and social issues by labour, capital and the State, should continue to be one of the most crucial instruments of our social and economic engineering.

The BLP administration will therefore faithfully honour its existing obligations under the present Social Contract, and enter new Social Contracts that will deepen and enrich the environment for consultation and decision making involving all of the stake holders in Barbados' economic development

TAX RELIEF

Much has been accomplished to make our taxation system work to Barbados' best interest. The BLP will now do more.

Income Tax

- We will progressively expand the concessions for savings, mortgage interest, home improvements and for other household purposes.
- We will continue to give a subsidy by way of reverse tax credit to all those below the poverty line.
- We will progressively increase the income tax threshold from the present level of income at \$15,000 to \$25,000.
- We will also continue to make it attractive for Barbadians to save for, to invest in their own first homes, and to repair and to maintain their homes.

- We will continue to offer and expand special tax concessions to investments in equity in the hotel and hospitality industries, in mutual funds, for registered savings plans and will make payments of bonuses and the investment of bonuses in shares especially attractive.
- We will extend special tax relief measures for businesses to become public companies, offering shares to Barbadians and deepening the process of economic enfranchisement in our nation.
- We will continue to support Special Development Areas with concessions to promote activity in the Carlisle and Greater Bridgetown Areas, Speightstown, the St. Lawrence Gap, and the Scotland District to unlock the enormous economic potential of these areas.

VAT

It is not our intention that the VAT should work any hardship on any Barbadian, Barbadian household nor Barbadian enterprise. We will therefore continue to refine the administration and incidence of the VAT to ensure that it in fact achieves this objective.

Other Taxes

We will radically restructure taxes affecting land and other property in line with the report of the Special Parliamentary Sub-Committee established to consider and recommend on these matters.

We will also ensure that there is an abatement of tax on properties valued below \$200,000.

- We will reduce the rate of land tax generally, but especially in favour of income and property owners below the \$200,000 threshold.
- We will however restructure the land tax, stamp duty and property transfer tax to ensure that avoidance of tax payable on luxury properties is brought to an end.

Business Development

The ultimate goal of business development is an enhanced quality of life for all Barbadians.

A Barbados Labour Party Administration, working together with the social partners, will create a business environment in which Barbados can become a dynamic country thriving on tourism, internationally-traded business services, a vibrant small-business sector, and both locally and foreign-owned manufacturing which exports high quality products to targeted niche markets.

The Barbados Labour Party will establish a strategic business development think tank comprising public and private sector professionals to study global trends and to identify niche markets for Barbados in the global environment so that we can make use of our human capital to earn foreign exchange. Recommendations of this think tank will be implemented by the BIDC.

The BLP Government will continue to focus on creating job opportunities that will make full use of the human and intellectual capital of our people.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Rapidly expanding information technology is changing fundamentally the way we think, live, work, play and conduct business.

It creates new opportunities in small countries like Barbados, with a highly trained workforce and efficient telecommunications facilities, for small businesses to compete effectively in the international market place for services as we move Barbados forward to become a major player in the global information technology arena.

We will continue to shape an environment in which information technology will flourish and in which more business opportunities will be created for both local and foreign investors. The BLP Government will:

- Introduce initiatives to promote the continued development of Barbados as an internationally competitive location for information technology companies.
- Develop programmes to foster appropriate training for our young people and retraining for the more mature members of the work force to equip them to take advantage of emerging opportunities in this field.

THE INFORMATICS SECTOR

The many advantages, which stimulated rapid growth of this sector during the last 15 years, will be further exploited to create new and more technologically challenging jobs for Barbadians into the next century. The BLP Government will:

- Pursue opportunities such as software development, electronic publishing, digital video, multimedia services, graphic design and voice centre operations that require a higher skill level, with increased local value-added.
- Support a Centre for International Services to meet the skills needs of the Information Technology and Financial Services sectors.
- Renegotiate the existing contract with the telecommunications services provider to secure competitive rates and adequate capacity so as to facilitate the rapid expansion of the informatics sector.
- Encourage Barbadians to take full advantage of the amendments to the IBC Act to establish their own businesses.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The development of a thriving small business sector is crucial to the creation of a just and equitable society. Economic empowerment and enfranchisement of small businesses is a critical dimension of our strategy to create full employment and to eradicate persistent poverty. The Barbados Labour Party remains committed to the development of a vibrant small business sector.

We will implement an Economic Affirmation Action Programme for small businesses to ensure that they receive an expanded share of Government Business and are insured prompt payment for their goods and services.

Small business development can only take place within a framework of consistent and clearly articulated policies, and a legal and administrative regime in which small entrepreneurs can plan, initiate and operate their businesses. A BLP Government will:

- Enact a Small Business Development Act which incorporates the lower corporate tax rate and the other duty and tax relief incentives announced in the 1998 Budget.
- Fully operationalise the Small Business and New Enterprise Centre currently under construction at Fontabelle so as to provide a full range of professional and technical services to small businesses.
- Implement an Economic Affirmative Action Programme for small businesses to ensure that they receive an expanded share of government business and are ensured prompt payment for their goods and services.
- Expand the resources available to Fund Access and the Urban and Rural Enterprises Funds so that small entrepreneurs and self employed persons can continue to have access to funds for the development of community-based businesses.

- Provide technical assistance to Small Business Venture Capital Incorporated so that the organisation will be better placed to assist small entrepreneurs who demonstrate growth potential.
- Provide facilities at the new Pelican Craft Centre to facilitate the marketing of indigenous craft.
- Construct facilities to accommodate small business people operating in a residential setting and expanding their enterprises, e.g. in manufacturing and motor vehicle repair and maintenance.
- Improve the variety and quality of local craft by encouraging students of the Barbados Community College to create new craft designs.
- Provide technical assistance to small businesses to ensure that they achieve competitiveness through the adoption of international standards such as ISO and HACCP certification.
- Fully utilise the Innovation Fund to finance Research and Development and conduct feasibility studies to translate project ideas into investment opportunities.
- The BLP government will create additional Vending capacity in the public markets, and at strategic points along highways, on tour bus routes, on popular beaches and at other tourism sites.

MANUFACTURING

Our manufacturing sector will thrive only if it is export-oriented. As a result of globalisation, liberalisation and the attendant use of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to dismantle protectionist regimes, our manufacturers will have to become internationally competitive to survive in today's trading environment.

A BLP Government will:

- Identify those niche sectors with the capacity to shift focus from local to global manufacturing and facilitate this transition by local manufacturers.
- Use the BIDC to seek opportunities for manufacturing under licence, to create mutually beneficial strategic alliances with importers from target markets, and to set up manufacturing franchises.
- Build a new 23-acre industrial park in Christ Church.
- Provide a tax allowance of 120% of certified expenditure to those companies that attain ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 certification to improve quality and competitiveness in the global economy.
- Encourage strategic alliances between Barbadian and foreign companies so as to gain access to new processes, and to facilitate the introduction of higher skill levels and easier access to export markets.
- Encourage Barbadian companies and individuals to license their intellectual and cultural property to ensure that they retain access to their rights in the global economy.

- Facilitate the restructuring of viable local companies by providing equity capital.
- Encourage the distributive sector that consumes foreign exchange to take greater advantage of tax incentives to invest in the productive sectors in Barbados and in the region so as to meet their foreign exchange needs.

The BLP Government will create additional Vending capacity in the public markets, and at strategic points along highways, on tour bus routes, on popular beaches and at other tourism sites.

FAIR TRADING COMMISSION

The prices of utilities constitute a vital part of the cost of doing business in Barbados and represent a large claim on the financial resources of homeowners.

The Public Utilities Act, which came into existence in 1955, provides only for the setting of electricity and telephone rates and does not therefore adequately serve the needs of consumers or the productive sectors.

It does not provide for regulating service standards, monitoring compliance with standards and customer service issues and similar concerns that are widely accepted as best practices in the functioning of regulatory systems.

It provides for rates to be fixed only by reference to criteria that guarantee a fair return to the utility. This formula does not provide utilities with any reason or incentive to increase efficiency. The BLP will:

- Abolish the Public Utilities Board and replace it with a Fair Trading Commission.
- Extend the Commissions span to regulate Cable and Wireless BET, Barbados Water Authority, Transport Board, National Petroleum Corporation, in addition to the Barbados Light and Power and Cable and Wireless BARTEL.

Empower the Commission to:

- Regulate service standards.
- Monitor compliance with rates and standards.
- Respond to customer complaints and customer services issues.
- Determine rates by reference to new incentive-compatible regulatory mechanisms, such as price caps and profit sharing, that will allow the utilities to realise profits through efficiency gains, while requiring them to pass a share of these gains to customers in the form of lower prices.
- Institute a new procedure for public hearings, setting out clearly the establishment of criteria for decision-making in advance of the hearings.

- Create a position of Peoples Attorney to assist objectors at hearings and in related judicial proceedings.

The Commission will also be responsible for the administration of the Fair Trading and Consumer protection laws that are in the final stages of preparation.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

The International Business and Financial Services sector has the potential to contribute to the Barbados economy far and above the substantial contribution it has made in recent years.

The BLP will:

- Encourage deeper local ownership and participation in this sector to increase employment and the establishment of new local businesses.
- Re-position this industry through increased supervision and regulation, strengthening of its institutional framework, restructuring of the current regime and the adoption of a strategic approach to product and market development.
- Develop Barbados as a world class centre for international business and financial services and the premier domicile in this hemisphere.

The Barbados Labour Party will implement the following initiatives:

RESEARCH AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

The service products developed in Barbados are a result of the interplay of Barbados legislation, double taxation agreements, bilateral investment treaties and the domestic legislation of the investor. To maintain the attractiveness of Barbados, new opportunities for effective investment and the sale of services will be provided.

We will:

- Develop and implement a research programme that will identify new services products and new legislation to ensure the availability of those products to investors. Existing legislation will be reviewed and kept current.
- Devise and implement a convergence policy between the international business sector and the domestic sector with a focus on comparable incentives for all persons involved in the export of goods and services.
- Expand our current network of bilateral investment treaties and double taxation agreements to allow Barbados to be used as a centre for management and headquarters operations for multinational corporations

- investing in third countries and to facilitate greater access by locally owned companies to new markets.
- Establish a multimedia library with access to the rapidly evolving information on international taxation, trade negotiations, electronic commerce, intellectual property rights and telecommunications.
 - Develop legislation to facilitate the establishment and regulation of broadcasting companies located in Barbados that provide streaming services on the Internet and other similar networks.
 - Pursue policies to ensure that Barbados is served by robust, cost effective and internationally competitive telecommunications service providers.
 - Enact legislation to facilitate the healthy development of electronic commerce.

We will develop Barbados as a world class centre for international business and financial services and the premier domicile in this hemisphere.

SUPERVISION AND REGULATION

In order to ensure the good reputation of Barbados, appropriate regulations will be established and we will remove the encumbrances to doing business in this competitive field. We will:

- Review the administrative, regulatory and supervisory systems for the processing of applications and for the regulation of entities and service providers and implement recommendations for their improvement.
- Review all relevant legislation with the objective of improving its supervisory and regulatory provisions.
- Improve the information system at the Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office to offer additional services and to streamline the incorporation and fee payments processes.
- Take a leading role in international organisations that are concerned with the effective administration of international financial centres.
- Establish an information networking and communication system that shares investment information swiftly and seamlessly among Government agencies that are involved in the national investment process.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Given our heavy dependence on one market we will continue to diversify and intensify our marketing programmes in the USA and Europe and look for new markets in Latin America.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Competitiveness is the fundamental criterion for Barbados to effectively participate in the global trade and economic system. Our trade policy must

therefore facilitate our export-oriented strategy in the areas of manufacturing, agriculture and services. Our goal is to exploit the international trade and development opportunities available, and minimise the impact of any changes that may adversely affect the domestic economy. We will:

- Secure and maintain adequate access to the global market place for Barbados goods and services.
- Promote and defend Barbados interests at the regional and international levels.
- Contribute to the design of the Free Trade Area of the Americas, the negotiation of the new Lomé Convention with the European Union and the making of commitments within the World Trade Organisation.
- Promote beneficial bilateral trade arrangements between CARICOM states and third countries.
- Contribute to the deepening of the regional integration process especially in relation to the Single Market and Economy.

We will encourage the development of Barbados as a Conference Centre in the area of international business and financial services.

Foreign Policy

The next five years will involve the most far-reaching restructuring of the world economy since World War II, and in the view of some, the most far-reaching since the Industrial Revolution a century and a half ago.

The new Millennium will mean a new agenda and new rules particularly in terms of Foreign Policy and Trade. Barbados must not only reposition itself to function in this environment but must also give leadership to small states all over the world in bringing their problems to the table for international consideration, particularly in respect of the recognition of their small size as a consideration for concessional treatment.

This will have far-reaching implications for our Foreign Service that will require of its officers specialisation and new skills not hitherto envisaged and a different orientation in order to advance the country's interests.

While therefore our Foreign Policy must aim to strengthen our relations with the USA, Canada, the UK, Ireland and the Commonwealth, it will in the new millennium, be shaped mainly by the radical changes in the global environment and their impact, real or potential, on Barbados.

Barbados has, for example, no diplomatic representation in any of the African or Asian capitals. These are continents from which some of the major players in the international economy will undoubtedly come in the new millennium. In Latin America our sole diplomatic presence is in Caracas. There are other capitals in Africa, Asia and Latin America where our presence is urgently required as we seek to negotiate tax and investment treaties and air and sea links in furtherance of the development of the Services economy.

The BLP Government will treat as its first order of business the re-organisation and re-orientation of the Foreign Service and the rationalisation of our diplomatic representation.

CARICOM

The Barbados Labour Party remains committed to the deepening of Caribbean integration and to cooperation with other Caribbean countries presently outside of the integration movement in the interest of deriving benefits to our mutual economies.

The BLP will:

- Continue to promote the Single Market and Economy so as to offer the greatest possible opportunities for Barbadian entrepreneurs and workers in an expanded economic sphere.

The BLP Government will treat as its first order of business the reorganisation and reorientation of the foreign service and the rationalisation of our diplomatic representation.

- Develop a strategic political relationship with the OECS in order to expand our joint geographical space, create a new economic services zone centred in the sub-region, exploit the benefits of our Exclusive Economic Zone and to fashion a mutually beneficial relationship for representation in those capitals of Africa, Asia and Latin America where it is in our interest to have diplomatic representation.

We will:

- Co-operate with Caribbean states, including the non-English speaking states of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Suriname, to take advantage of mutually beneficial opportunities.
- Promote Barbados as a regional headquarters and conference centre for business, diplomatic missions and international organisations.
- Play a leading role in the Association of Caribbean States, particularly in having the Caribbean Sea recognised internationally as a Special Area for environmental protection.
- Lobby international organisations on global warming as it threatens to destroy our tourism and agriculture and creates strong Atlantic storms which have wreaked havoc on Caribbean economies. The Caribbean contributes little to global warming but is one of the first regions to be adversely impacted by its effects.

THE AMERICAS

We will continue to reaffirm our presence and advance our integration into the Americas by:

- Continuing to negotiate as a member of CARICOM for our entry into a Free Trade Area of the Americas.
- Promoting Barbados as a gateway for extra-regional investment into the region.
- Strengthening our Consulate General in Miami which is the headquarters for the FTAA. and south in the hemisphere.

EUROPE

We will consolidate our existing ties with Europe and expand our representation to tap the emerging markets of Central and Eastern Europe by:

- Negotiating, within the ACP framework, a new trade and economic relationship with the European Union for the next century.
- Establishing a consular presence in Berlin to promote investment, tourism and financial, shipping and cultural services in Central and Western Europe.

AFRICA

We will develop systematically cultural and economic links with Africa by:

- Promoting through trade missions, touristic and cultural exchanges.
- Using the Commission for African Affairs to promote people-to-people contacts.

ASIA-PACIFIC

Despite the present financial crisis in the region, Asia-Pacific will be a major area of economic growth by the next century. Accordingly we will develop highly focussed links with that region by mounting specialised trade missions.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The BLP Government will play a role in helping to shape the new international order in a way that reflects the interests of Barbados and CARICOM by:

- Helping to re-define the nature and purposes of the United Nations in a post-cold war world.
- Strengthening our mission in Geneva with the addition of legal and economic trade specialists in order to better track issues at the World Trade Organisation.
- Reviewing systematically our participation in, and benefits from, all international and regional organisations of which Barbados is a member.
- Monitoring in international and regional organisations the following priority issues as they impact on our own strategic interests: vulnerability of small states; drug trafficking and money laundering; aviation; tourism; trade in services; intellectual property rights; information technology; the regulation of the internet and electronic commerce; Law of the Sea; global warming; environment and sustainable development.

MODERNISING THE FOREIGN SERVICE

The role of the Foreign Service is to ensure that the security, prosperity, international standing and influence of Barbados are safeguarded through

effective diplomacy, and to promote, protect and advance the interests of Barbados and Barbadians abroad.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its overseas missions conduct the Government's business with other countries and their governments, and with regional and international organisations. We will therefore modernise and reform the Foreign Service to enable it to discharge its responsibilities to the citizens of Barbados with the utmost efficiency and effectiveness.

Public Sector Reform

Reform of the Public Sector will have the aim of placing the public at the centre of its operations while striving for greater efficiency, responsiveness, effectiveness and competitiveness. The BLP will:

- Create a customer-driven and focused public sector by implementing a Customer Charter Programme for agencies interacting daily with the public to improve quality of service, value for money and expand accountability.
- Expand customer service training to emphasise skills critical to delivering good customer service at all levels.
- Implement a reformed human resource development policy.
- Review recruitment, selection, appointment and performance appraisal procedures to create a service where merit is paramount.
- Focus on recognition, reward and incentive programmes to help motivate employees to improve job performance.
- Complete computerisation of the Public Sector and training of public servants in Information Technology.
- Implement orientation training programmes for recruits exposing them to the ethics and operating procedures of the Public Service.

Tourism

Travel and Tourism is the largest growth industry in the global economy. In Barbados Tourism is the driving force of the economy earning most of our foreign exchange and employing some 20,000 people.

The Barbados Labour Party remains committed to the economic enfranchisement of all Barbadians. We put in place a number of measures to strengthen the institutional framework for the further development of our tourism industry and to create the environment for our nationals to participate in its ownership.

The GEMS of Barbados programme and the Hotel Investment Fund, which will mobilise domestic savings, create opportunities for nationals to invest in tourism.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The BLP Government will:

- Enact a new Tourism Development Act to provide a new legal, fiscal and regulatory regime, and to establish world class standards to enhance Barbados' competitiveness.
- Over the next five years over \$2 billion of new investment by the private and public sectors will take place in the tourism industry in Barbados, creating thousands of new jobs.
- Establish a Hotel Equity Investment Fund to meet the needs of the small and medium-sized hotels for equity and long-term financing to fund refurbishment and expansion.
- Establish a Small Hoteliers' Business Co-operative.
- Establish a Small Hotels Investment Fund to support the Small Hoteliers' Business Co-operative by providing capital for the upgrade and expansion of their properties.

PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT

The BLP will promote:

- Heritage and Nature Tourism by developing Heritage and Nature Sites, Discovery Route Systems, Harrison's Caves, Carlisle Bay, Folkestone Park, Graeme Hall Swamp and the Groves Agriculture Station.
- The Barbados Tourism Awareness and Involvement Programme (BTAIP) for sensitising Barbadians to the importance of tourism to the well being of every Barbadian.
- The Barbados/Dominica Multi-Destination Initiative for developing closer relations between the public, private and NGO sectors of Barbados' and

Dominica's tourism industries with a view to marketing the two islands as an eco-based multi-destination.

- Community Tourism Programme for encouraging the involvement of communities.
- Indigenous Participation by providing incentives and opportunities for ownership and investment in every segment of tourism, in particular mass transport.
- Cruise Tourism by promoting Barbados as a home port and by developing appropriate programmes to convert cruise passengers to long stay visitors.
- Vendor Facilities by upgrading and expanding facilities on our beaches and by providing new facilities on tour routes and at tour sites.

NEW INVESTMENT

It is anticipated that over the next five years over \$2 billion of new investment by the private and public sectors will take place in the tourism industry in Barbados, creating thousands of new jobs. Most of this investment will be undertaken by the private sector and attests to the confidence that investors have in the future of tourism in Barbados.

The major projects to be implemented by the Public Sector are:

- The Grantley Adams International Airport Expansion Project to fulfil our needs for international airport services and facilities to the year 2015.
- Expansion of cargo and container activities for cruise and pleasure craft at the Bridgetown Harbour.
- The Urban Rehabilitation of Bridgetown, Speightstown and St Lawrence Gap.

PRIVATE SECTOR

A significant number of development planning applications from private sector investors have been approved or are currently being processed by the Town and Country Planning Department. Major private sector investments slated for the next five years include:

- Development of the Needhams Point Peninsular by Needhams Point Development Inc., a limited liability company presently solely owned by Government, but in which it is the intention to offer shares to the public of Barbados. The company will oversee the development of Needhams Point as a tourist resort area which will include a new 350-room Hilton Hotel with a 500/600 person capacity Ballroom, a state of the art Convention Centre, the construction of two new hotels and the provision of public recreational facilities.

- Pierhead Development Project which will include a mixed-use shopping and entertainment district making good use of the maritime and architectural heritage of the area.
- One thousand new and/or renovated rooms under the GEMS of Barbados programme will be developed by Hotels and Resorts Limited over time. The GEMS of Barbados programme is responsible for the rehabilitation, repositioning and expansion of small to medium sized hotels, primarily on the South Coast of Barbados, the development of brands for the small hotel sector in Barbados and the development of a central reservation system.
- Redevelopment of the Durants Golf Course as a dedicated public facility that includes a new club house and maintenance facility.

Needhams Point tourist resort area will include a new 350 -room Hilton Hotel with a 500/600 person capacity ballroom, a state of the art Convention Centre, the construction of two new hotels and the provision of public recreational facilities.

- The Sandy Lane Hotel Project which consists of the rebuilding of the hotel, villas, two 18-hole golf courses, club houses, tennis courts and other facilities.
- The Royal Westmoreland project which consists of the construction of 275 villas, a 27-hole golf course, a club house, restaurants and related facilities.
- Construction of an upmarket hotel at Mullins, St Peter.
- Development of a tourist resort, bar, restaurant, entertainment and fitness centre at Foul Bay Resort, St Philip.
- Development of a resort at Long Beach, Christ Church.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE URBAN REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

BRIDGETOWN

- Upgrading of berthing facilities in the inner and outer Careenage and the construction of a new breakwater at the mouth of the Careenage.
- Engineering improvements to the banks of the Constitution River, improvements to the drainage capacity of the river course, aeration of the water body and landscaping of the Constitution River corridors.
- Redevelopment of Independence Square as a civic park.
- A new Swing Bridge.
- Development of a landscaped car park and plaza and the designation of boat yard and space for the haul out and repair of boats on the reclaimed waterfront lands.
- Removal of the abattoir and the partial development of the site with an office development and a fish village with retail outlets for fish and processed fish products.
- Phased/partial pedestrianisation of Broad Street.

SPEIGHTSTOWN

- Rehabilitation of approximately 50 buildings in Speightstown.
- Partial restoration of the old Fort Ramparts and the development of Fort Denmark as a civic park.
- Construction of a landscape revetment and walkway from Fort Denmark to Central Speightstown beach.
- Major improvements to the Salt Pond drain including the reconstruction of the central span of Speightstown Bridge, the construction of a tidal flushing channel seaward of the Bridge and the development of a landscape corridor along the drain.
- Construction of a new northern fisheries complex and an adjoining boatyard facility.
- Development of a civic beachfront facility at Six Men's for the public.

ST LAWRENCE GAP

- Improved security through the establishment of a police post at St Lawrence Gap and new street lighting.
- Relocation of all wirescape underground.
- The environmental enhancement of the St Lawrence Swamp and Little Bay.
- Upgrading of facilities at Dover Beach
- Construction of a link road between Bath Village Road, Christ Church and Dover Terrace, Christ Church, north of the playing field.

THE BATHSHEBA PLAN

Employing the provisions of the Special Development Areas Act, the BLP will:

- Support the development of Bathsheba as a resort township on the East Coast of Barbados with a mix of facilities including restaurants, surfing, camping, motels, and hotels.
- Encourage the construction of vacation and residential dwellings on the land side.

WATER

Water is essential to life and to developmental activity. The Barbados Labour Party is committed to the maintenance of best conservation practices, the protection of our potable water supply from contamination and the provision of an adequate supply of clean water at all times to the public.

The BLP Government will:

- Complete the Desalination Plant at Spring Garden and augment the water supply by 6,000,000 gallons of water annually.
- Continue our Leak Detection Programme to identify and replace all faulty mains.
- Continue our Universal Metering Programme; all houses and businesses will be connected.
- Ensure that the underground water supply is not contaminated by drainage construction, pollutants emanating from disposal of hydrocarbons or any other source.

LAND USE

The objectives of our land use policy will be:

- To promote further diversification and expansion of the national economy while at the same time promoting the efficient use of land and the protection and conservation of significant natural and heritage features.
- To assist in the achievement of national economic development goals by ensuring that sufficient land is available to meet the needs of the various economic sectors.

In keeping with these goals the BLP will :

- Retain sufficient arable land in agricultural use to ensure food security and a level of production sufficient to fulfil our export obligations.
- Enhance existing access and views to the sea and create new opportunities during the development or re-development process.
- Continue a policy of zoning for protection of the potable water supply.
- Encourage the preservation of trees and the enhancement of tree cover in urban, rural and coastal areas.

Agriculture

Agricultural policy for Barbados is driven by five requirements of this sector.

Agriculture needs to be so structured as to:

- Generate financial returns per acre which can compare equitably with financial returns from other land use, ensure that persons employed in farming earn wages comparable to those in other sectors of the economy, and reduce the loss of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.
- Improve the ratio of persons employed to the number of acres of land in non-sugar agricultural use.
- Alter the structure of this sector so as to be less reliant on sugarcane, which has decreasing financial returns, and which must become even less labour intensive if it is to survive.

We will target the sugar industry to produce between 65,000 and 70,000 tons per year to take care of our export commitment and the local market.

- Diversify commercial agriculture by creating smaller, more labour intensive farms that concentrate on higher valued crops such as horticulture and animal husbandry, both of which yield higher financial returns.
- Retain enough land in agriculture to ensure food security.

THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

External competitive pressures, falling prices for sugar on the world market and the emergence of the World Trade Organisation, which is committed to removal of protected markets for commodities, dictate that the sugar industry must reduce costs if it is to survive. This industry is important to Barbados for a number of reasons:

- it is a part of our heritage as the oldest commercial activity in Barbados;
- sugar is ecologically suited to the soil of Barbados;
- it is still a significant earner of foreign exchange; and
- environmentally it requires less fertiliser per ton of cane than almost any of the alternative crops and is less damaging to our water supply

Barbados must ensure this industry survives.

The BLP will:

- Improve agronomic and production efficiencies in the entire process from field to factory.
- Target the industry to produce between 65,000 and 70,000 tons per year to take care of our export commitment and the local market.

- Manufacture and market special sugars in place of commodities.
- Actively seek more rewarding marketing arrangements for our producers.
- Gradually reduce the subsidy of the sugar industry to a sustainable level.

NON-SUGAR AGRICULTURE

The need for partial diversification away from sugar cane and for earning foreign exchange, limits the types of crops that are suitable to Barbados' environment. The most suitable agricultural activities are Sea Island cotton, animal husbandry - pig rearing, chickens, black belly sheep, and horticulture - vegetables, tropical blooms, herbs.

The BLP will:

- Revitalise the Sea Island cotton industry through a joint venture with a suitably qualified private company which will purchase yarn from the growers and process it to fabric and garments.
- Expand production of black belly sheep, pigs and chickens.
- Negotiate better prices of feed from the major feed producers, or seek alternative supplies
- Increase vegetable and horticultural production.

Special emphasis will be paid to horticulture given that it has special advantages, namely:

- the financial returns per acre are high;
- it is labour intensive and will yield greater employment opportunities;
- horticulture can be better exploited by creating linkages with the tourism; and
- it has the potential for earning foreign exchange through the export of tropical blooms.

FISHERIES

The Barbados Labour Party remains committed to a policy of upgrading fishing equipment and facilities and the application of modern technology to ensure that this sector plays a more vibrant role in the economy.

The BLP will:

- Continue to develop strategic aspects of the fisheries management and development schemes contained in the Fisheries Management Plan required under the Fisheries Act.
- Become party to international agreements to manage local and foreign fishing, e.g. UN Agreement on highly migratory and straddling stocks, FAO high seas fishing agreement.

- Pursue bilateral and regional fisheries access, boundary delimitation and management mechanisms, especially in relation to the OECS and Trinidad and Tobago.
- Promote inter-agency co-ordination and collaboration on a Barbados oceans policy.
- Research and promote inter-social linkages such as between tourism and fishing.
- Re-orient the Fisheries Division towards scientific and technical management as part of an institutional analysis and strengthening programme to meet industry needs.

EXPANDED SERVICES

The BLP will:

Finalise and implement draft local fishing vessel safety and inspection regulations to improve safety at sea for fishermen and reduce the numbers of vessels that go adrift.

- Strengthen technical capability in boat design, construction and inspection to better advise the industry on new technologies and approve standards for larger vessels.
- Strengthen the Division's training and extension service to offer more information on new technologies for fishing and fish processing particularly to new investors.
- Provide services to fish vendors and processors related to the proposed Fish Quality and Inspection Act to ensure the standards and competitiveness of increased seafood exports.

We will improve fish landing sites and fish markets islandwide, but particularly at Bridgetown, Oistins, Consett Bay, Skeete's Bay, Paynes Bay, Tent Bay, Speightstown and Six Men's Bay.

- Improve basic education on fisheries-related matters through the Fisheries Division Polytechnic, Community College, Youth Service, National Training Board and schools.
- Continue to assist the development of viable and effective fisherfolk organisations in order for fisherfolk to become more self-reliant and improve profitability of enterprises.
- Initiate research and development on local fish products to satisfy niche markets.
- Improve fish landing sites and fish markets island-wide, but particularly at Bridgetown, Oistins, Consett Bay, Skeete's Bay, Paynes Bay, Tent Bay, Speightstown and Six Men's Bay.

- Use the recently acquired research and training vessel to improve skills in the fishing industry and conduct research to increase fish production and quality.
- Expand boatyard areas available in Bridgetown and the north for fishing boats to be maintained and constructed in order to reduce the number of derelict or inactive vessels.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Implement the Fisheries Management Plan through regulations and public education - will especially affect reef fish, lobster, sea eggs, turtles, snapper and coastal pelagics.
- Pursue membership in the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) to ensure the future of our long- line fishery for tunas and swordfish.
- Improve the catch, effort, biological, economic and social data collection systems in order to facilitate policy and management decision-making to improve viability of industry. Develop legislation and improve technical capability to assist and monitor coastal and inland aquaculture especially related to the introduction of new species to Barbados.

RUM

The BLP Government will ensure an adequate supply of molasses for the continued expansion of the Rum industry.

We will also assist in its expansion by negotiations for new markets.

THE SCOTLAND DISTRICT

The Barbados Labour Party continues to regard the Scotland District as vital for the development of fruits, ground provisions and vegetable crops.

Special emphasis will however be placed on the growing of flowers Ð ginger lilies and heliconias, for example - by small farmers for both the local and export markets.

Technical, financial and marketing assistance will be provided.

Special efforts will also be made to develop this District as a National Park emphasising, among other things, the triple features of recreation, greenery and historic focus.

Sustained attention will also be paid to the integration of the Scotland District into our tourism product. Scenic walks would be developed from Hackleton Cliff to

Horse Hill via the Joes River forest. The forest should be protected and developed as an attraction for locals and tourists alike.

Energy

An expanding and increasingly sophisticated Barbadian economy requires safe, reliable, environmentally friendly energy products. The goal of our policy is to supply energy to Barbadians at affordable prices, to promote measures for the efficient use of energy and to increase the use of renewable energy in our energy mix.

PRODUCTION

Crude oil production is now 2,500 barrels per day, double that of 1994 and about 60 per cent of our needs. Natural gas production has also increased dramatically and we are now producing 120 barrels of Liquefied Petroleum gas (LPG) per day, 50 per cent of our needs. There has been significant increase in the number of jobs in the oilfields.

The BLP will:

- Continue production of local crude oil, natural gas and LPG.
- Restructure the Barbados National Oil Company and the National Petroleum Corporation to provide for the sale of shares to Barbadians.
- Make cheap and reliable fuel available to as many Barbadian households and businesses as possible by continuing the NPCO's expansion programme which since 1997 has brought natural gas to over 5000 more homes, as well as industries, hotels and restaurants.
- Facilitate increased use of natural gas as a cooking fuel in place of imported fuels.
- Support the introduction of attractive rates for large users to encourage commercial enterprises to switch to the use of natural gas.
- Examine the feasibility of using natural gas in the transport sector.

STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

The Barbadian consumer is entitled to a quality product, stored and sold in conditions that are clean and safe, and to the benefits that flow from genuine competition among the players in the industry. The gas station business should be left to small businessmen to operate.

We will:

- Establish standards for all petroleum products sold in Barbados.
- Bring all bulk storage of petroleum products under strict environmental control.

- Ensure that all retailers of lubricants and engine oils and all operators of garages and workshops have facilities for storage and disposal of used product.
- Restrict the operation of service stations to independent dealers.

ELECTRICITY

The interests of the public consumer require that an efficient and affordable supply of electricity be available at all times.

We will extend electricity to all areas without service and at the same time ensure that households receiving the service for the first time are not burdened with installation costs.

We will:

- Empower the new Fair Trading Commission to set standards for the generation and distribution of electricity.
- Encourage and facilitate measures for energy conservation, e.g. the revised building code will ensure energy efficiency is always taken into account.
- Commit financial and institutional resources to facilitate research in and promote the use of solar and other renewable energy resources.
- Ensure that energy audits are carried out in all major government buildings and encourage the private sector to do the same.
- Encourage and facilitate the hotel sector to be more energy efficient.
- Ensure that only energy efficient appliances are imported into the country.

Environment

The care of our physical environment is critical to Barbados' sustainable social and economic development as a Small Island Developing State.

The BLP Administration will:

- Introduce Beautify Barbados 2000 to enhance the island's highways and landscapes, mobilise communities to clean up and beautify their surroundings, and develop and rehabilitate our gullies as nature trails. NGOs, e.g. the Barbados National Trust and the Future Centre Trust, as well as youth and social groups will be asked to participate.
- Establish Harrison's Cave as a fully commercial enterprise managed by a company -Caves of Barbados. Government will maintain a majority shareholding and employees of the Cave will be offered a substantial portion of the shares.
- Implement public environmental education programmes.
- Ensure that vacant lots are kept clean.
- Ensure that beaches are accessible to all and never become the exclusive preserve of any sector of the community.
- Give incentives to wholesalers and retailers to introduce environmentally friendly products and packaging material.
- Encourage the use of Environmental Management Systems, such as ISO 14000, and other appropriate standards throughout the local private sector.
- Provide fiscal and other incentives to encourage recycling.
- Introduce programmes into primary and secondary schools to sensitise youth about the importance of environmental protection.
- Enact anti-litter, clean air and noise pollution legislation.
- Enact comprehensive Environmental Protection Legislation.
- Create special protection regimes and management practices for heritage areas such as Harrison's Cave, Folkestone Park, Turners Hall Woods, Graeme Hall Swamp and Carlisle Bay and our natural wetlands.
- Promote regional cooperation to limit trans-boundary shipment of nuclear and other hazardous wastes in the Caribbean Sea.
- Enforce existing penalties for illegal dumping, especially of commercial waste.

MARINE ENVIRONMENT

The BLP will:

- Facilitate the maintenance of beaches and coastal waters through national, community- based beach and underwater clean up campaigns.
- Implement a Coastal Zone Management Plan for the North and South coasts and implement the main proposals of the study of the East coast.

- Implement and enforce measures to control illegal groyning, mining of sand from the beaches, dumping at sea and other activities which result in coastal degradation.

We will create special protection regimes and management practices for heritage areas such as Harrison's Cave, Folkestone Park, Turners Hall Woods, Graeme Hall Swamp and Carlisle Bay and our natural wetlands.

Public Works and Transport

The Barbados Labour Party is committed to providing all Barbadians with good roads and to improving the public transport system. We recognise the importance of an efficient public transport system that could entice Barbadians to leave their cars at home and use public transport. To further improve the efficiency and functions of the Transport Board, we intend to acquire additional buses.

The BLP will seek to further improve the existing road network that has already undergone a major transformation during the past four years. In particular, we will:

- Rehabilitate our major roads and highways.
- Repair existing tenantry roads and construct new ones.
- Construct new highways, roads and bridges to improve the well being of Barbadians socially and economically.

The ABC Highway will be extended to four lanes, two on either side. Extension of this Highway is extremely important to meet current demand.

- Upgrade the public transport system.

Major Roads

Over 31 kilometres of main highways will be overlaid and improved. Along with this road rehabilitation programme, a BLP Government will expand and improve the sidewalks throughout the island, giving priority to those leading to primary and secondary schools and to those in the tourist belt.

Under this programme some 420 tenantry roads will be completed. The BLP will also ensure that this programme is extended to private tenancies under the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act that are not scheduled Plantation Tenancies.

New Highways

We will explore the possibility of building a highway from Pico Tenerife to the Crane by the Ermie Bourne Highway northward to Pico Tenerife and eastward into St John and St Philip.

The ABC Highway will be extended to four lanes, two on either side. Extension of this Highway is extremely important to meet the current demand for Highway access from the University to Grantley Adams International Airport.

The BLP will introduce overpasses on the ABC Highway beginning with the Belle-Lears Junction so as to improve the flow of traffic.

We will continue to utilise small contractors to maintain roads, culverts, pathways and drains, and bridges.

Bridges

Almost all the bridges in Barbados were built at a time when there was little traffic on our roads and hence some of them, in particular those in the Scotland District, have begun to collapse.

A BLP Government will systematically strengthen all the unstable bridges and will build new ones where appropriate.

The Roebuck Street bridge will be strengthened and widened, and an extra lane added to the Duncan O'Neale Bridge.

Public Transport System

An interim Public Transport Authority was appointed in July 1996 as the forerunner to an independent Transport Authority which will be responsible for regulating all public transport in Barbados.

The new Transport Authority will be established with the necessary legislative authority to oversee all aspects of this island's public transport system.

To improve the public transport system, a re-elected BLP Government will:

- Fully integrate the minibuses, route taxis and the Transport Board fleet so as to produce a fair and equitable system.
- Ensure that there is a proper redistribution of vehicles on all routes.
- Continue to enforce a strict dress code for drivers and conductors of Public Service vehicles.
- Provide as a matter of urgency adequate security on all Transport Board routes so as to ensure safety to commuters.
- Provide communication sets on all buses in case of accidents and other problems encountered from time to time.

ROAD SAFETY

Provisions of the Highway Code will include :

- All vehicles using public highways must be equipped with seat belts
- It will be mandatory for all drivers and front seat passengers to wear seat belts.
- Small children will not be allowed to sit in the front seat of a vehicle.

DRAINAGE

Flooding of low-lying districts in Barbados continues to be a cause of concern to our administration. The establishment of a drainage unit in 1995 was a first step in combatting the seasonal problems of flooding.

The BLP will implement corrective measures upstream of such flood-prone areas as Speightstown, Holetown, Weston, Headley's Land, Murphy Pasture, Barnes Land and Harts Gap.

Corrective measures will include the regular maintenance of existing wells and the sinking of new wells or constructing small dams to absorb run off water produced by heavy rains.

The Fight Against Crime

Government has tackled the high crime rates of the early 1990's and the structural and physical neglect of institutions, systematically reformed the criminal justice system and reduced the number of reported crimes by over 20 per cent.

This strategy included a scientific analysis of crime problems, ameliorating social and economic conditions, improving the functions of the police and the judicial system and reform of the penal system.

TASK FORCE

In 1995 Government established the first Task Force on Crime Prevention to determine causes of crime in Barbados.

In accordance with the recommendations of this Task Force, a re-elected BLP Government will:

- Expand the existing information programme on crime prevention to sensitise the society about ways to assist in crime prevention.
- Upgrade data collection to provide information to formulate policy and anti-crime strategies.
- Conduct literacy and numeracy projects within the prison.
- Launch the Enterprise Against Crime Programme to provide funding for skilled ex-prisoners to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into society with the aim of preventing a return to prison.

COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMMES

A BLP Government, committed to fighting the scourge of illegal drug trafficking, gang wars and the proliferation of unlicensed illegal firearms, will continue to improve social conditions with a view to reducing crime.

It will assist non-governmental organisations to fund and develop community-based programmes aimed at involving people, especially the youth, in lawful, productive activities.

ROYAL BARBADOS POLICE FORCE

Criminal activity in Barbados has become more sophisticated and better organised.

We are determined to stamp it out.

Barbados must be kept safe for residents and visitors alike.

We will therefore address as a matter of urgency those disabilities under which the Royal Barbados Police Force now labours, particularly as they relate to the gathering of evidence.

The BLP will proclaim the provisions of the Evidence Act that permit the electronic recording of confessions and in that way make evidence so obtained less susceptible to impeachment. We will also introduce new procedures for the identification of suspects in order to protect witnesses on whose co-operation much of police work depends.

Other measures must be adopted to create a modern, sophisticated and appropriately equipped Police Force and to improve the environment in which Officers have to function. The BLP will:

- Improve the terms and conditions of service of police officers, re-grade posts and increase the number of officers.
- Introduce more effective policies for recruitment and redeployment of Island Constables.
- Improve physical working conditions by completing renovations at Central Station, renovating District 'A', Belleplaine and Crab Hill Stations and constructing new stations at Cane Garden, Speightstown, Tamarind Hall, and Belleplaine.
- Promote community policing by establishing police outposts at the Glebe in St. George, St. Lawrence Gap, Haynesville and Pine Plantation Road.
- Expand the strategy of collaborative policing first introduced in the Northern Division to enable the Force to interact more closely with communities.
- Expand training opportunities and increase the use of the Regional Police Training Centre for training security personnel.
- Enact legislation to support an independent Police Complaints Authority.
- Refine the system of computerisation to link the courts, immigration department and the prison.
- Implement a scheme to compensate victims of violent crime.

THE PENAL SYSTEM

The BLP Government brought about a reform of the penal system of Barbados. The REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS ACT allows persons convicted of a minor offence to have their record cleaned. The PENAL SYSTEM REFORM ACT created new and expanded sentencing options for the courts based on the concept of community punishment. Prisoners at Glendairy were offered opportunities for rehabilitation through a variety of in-prison skills training programmes.

The BLP will:

- Support the Penal System Reform Act by creating a new department of Correctional Services incorporating an expanded Probation Service.
- Expand the anti-drug education programme in prison.
- Redevelop Glendairy and renovate Summervale and Dodds.

The NCSA has been carrying out integrated demand reduction strategies in six communities in Barbados and in schools across Barbados. Government has been able to reduce the supply of illegal drugs significantly.

- Develop a Young Offenders' Institution with the assistance of funding provided by international financial institutions.
- Intensify the training of prison officers, provide better facilities for female officers and enact new Promotion Rules for prison officers.

ILLEGAL NARCOTIC DRUGS

The B.L.P. enacted legislation to set up the National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) at Trents, St. James.

The NCSA has been carrying out integrated demand reduction strategies in six communities in Barbados and in schools across Barbados. Government has been able to reduce the supply of illegal drugs significantly.

The BLP will:

- Expand the work of the NCSA and strengthen its institutional capacity.
- Continue its multi-dimensional anti-drug strategy by:
- Intensifying educational programmes;
- Improving the detection capabilities of the Police and Customs Departments;
- Increasing regional and international cooperation; and
- Providing and contributing to rehabilitation facilities.
- Expand the D.A.R.E. programme in schools.
- Develop a new national plan against illegal drugs for 1999-2003.
- Continue to play a leading role in developing regional anti-drug and anti-crime strategies.

THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM

The BLP Administration increased the number of High Court Judges, improved the terms and conditions of service of the senior judiciary, renovated all of the High Courts and various Magistrates' Courts and constructed two additional courtrooms in the High Court.

The BLP will:

- Construct a new Judicial Centre at Whitepark Road.
- Strengthen the independence of the judiciary, including magistrates.
- Complete computerisation of the judicial system to facilitate judicial case management and to provide better access to justice.
- Continue its crusade for the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice.
- Enact new Rules of the Supreme Court to simplify Civil Procedure.
- Train new and existing court reporters in Information Technology to generate Computer-aided Transcriptions.
- Accelerate the computerisation of the Registration Office to speed up delivery of vital statistics and improve records' management.
- Enact a new Court Process Act to improve the conditions of service of Court Process Officers.
- Centralise the services of the Court Process Office, the Corporate Affairs Registry, the Land Registry and the Supreme Court Registry in the new Judicial Centre.

HOME AFFAIRS

THE POSTAL SERVICE

Working conditions of Postal workers were improved through the provision of duty free motorcycles and repairs were completed at several post offices and the General Post Office.

The BLP will:

- Restructure the Postal Service by creating an autonomous management structure that will develop the human resources and provide for better mobility of postal workers.
- Enact a new Post Office Act.
- Improve the security at post offices.
- Continue to refurbish existing post offices and construct new post offices at the Glebe in St. George, Speightstown, Warrens and Oistins.
- Create a hub for regional mail by expanding the airmail facility at the airport and improving information systems to support this expansion.

IMMIGRATION

In the last four years the activities of the Immigration Department's work were expanded, its operations were computerized and its headquarters building was refurbished.

The BLP will:

- Reform the Immigration Services.
- Enact new Immigration legislation to remove constitutional and other anomalies.
- Move the department to a more customer friendly environment.

THE FIRE SERVICE

Government has increased the number of Fire Officers, reduced the number of hours Officers work, upgraded equipment and the physical plant of several stations. The Headquarters Station is being renovated.

The BLP will:

- Complete the refurbishment of existing stations and construct new stations at Arch Hall, St. Thomas and Nesfield, St. Lucy.
- Provide additional equipment through new financing arrangements.

THE CENTRAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ORGANISATION (CERO)

CERO has provided national and regional relief services.

We will:

- Enact new legislation to transform CERO into a modern disaster management agency.
- Improve its organisational structure and strengthen its human resources base.

Constitution Reform

After the widest consultation with the Barbadian people The Constitution Review Commission has reported and early in 1999 the BLP Government will begin its consideration of the Commission's proposals.

Opportunity will also be afforded to relevant interests to give serious and detailed consideration to the Commission's recommendations before legislation is submitted to Parliament.

Among the objectives which the Barbados Labour Party readily endorses and commends to the electorate are:

- Patriation of the Constitution so that its provisions are an enactment of the people and Parliament of Barbados.
- Maintaining and safeguarding parliamentary democracy, with our Head of State being a citizen of Barbados by birth or descent
- Widening of participatory democracy.
- Extending and safeguarding of the basic rights of all our citizens, including the right to vote for the political party of their choice and to contest office on behalf of any organisation or political party they choose.
- Establishment of a charter of rights for the better functioning of civil society.
- Establishment of a Parliamentary Integrity Commission.

The reformed Barbados Constitution must be based on a legislative framework under which the new society of equal opportunity will thrive as we seek to achieve the highest possible standard of living for every citizen and excellence in all our people's endeavours.

One of the key recommendations of The Constitution Review Commission is that which implicitly calls for Barbados to become a Republic.

This proposal will receive the early attention of the BLP Government.

The findings of the Commission indicate that there is national consensus for Barbados' transformation to a Republic.

Barbados may well enjoy the distinction of being the newest Republic of the new Millenium.