



## General Manifesto 2015

**Manifesto of the Trinidad Humanity Campaign (T.H.C.)**

## **Introduction.**

We will begin by stating that we are contesting this seat for two main reasons- firstly, to demonstrate to the people of Trinidad and Tobago that each of us, if dissatisfied with the choices put before us, can branch out and put ourselves in a place to make a positive difference; and secondly, to be able to keep these points put forward in this manifesto as well as other issues and suggested positive solutions in the public eye from an official standpoint. Therein will only be discussed pertinent points that can be implemented within the next seven months. There will be nothing fancy since we believe that the words of the candidate are most important.

We should also state that it is not our intention to 'swing the vote' in any way; We seek the votes of those registered voters who agree with the points made in this manifesto. If elected, we intend to fight for the following:

## **Truth and Transparency.**

We firmly stand for the highest ideals of truth. It has been a constant in our lives and we believe it needs to be extended to ourselves, our leaders and our children. Truth and transparency has been missing in many elements of our society for a long time. Starting with leadership and working down we will fight to ensure a level of accountability to the public for the expenditure of state funds on various state projects. Accountability, on the level of publishing figures, such as materials and labor costs- giving our people a genuine idea as to the actual cost of such projects and in doing so, breaking down opportunities for corruption.

## **CRIME and LAW.**

Crime in Trinidad and Tobago has risen to an outrageous level in past years. We believe certain policies must be immediately reviewed and modified to make positive change in this issue.

1. We believe it is necessary to deploy officers in mobile units to various parts of the country thereby creating a heavier police presence and eliminating the ability for criminals to escape after committing crimes by drastically reducing the response time to distress. We have seen this method work with great effectiveness through the various

summits held, so that strategy must now be re-coordinated and utilized.

2. We believe we must review and change some of the laws in our present system that has proved to be archaic.

3. We believe it is necessary to standardize our system of sentencing convicted offenders since we have seen too many instances of 'same crime different time'.

4. We believe there is the need to modify our system for felony crimes which would carry a criminal record and misdemeanor crimes which would not.

5. We recommend a separation of violent and non-violent offenders across the board. Depending on the nature of the crime violent offenders should not be granted bail but should be given a swift trial and just sentencing. Non-violent offenders should be granted bail and be given opportunities for rehabilitation through counseling and community service.

This separation should continue through the prison system with much greater opportunities on both sides for rehabilitation.

6. We believe that when crime is committed by officers of the law, that these crimes should be dealt with as speedily and publicly as possible to ensure citizens keep their trust in the system that secures them.

7. Violent and serious crimes must be treated with greater respect than in the past. Changes must be made. Too many times we see the man who stole a loaf of bread sitting in jail while the man on an illegal firearm charge is free on bail.

## **Health.**

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. This is the definition of health set out by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Going by this definition it is clear to see that achieving a healthy Trinidad and Tobago cannot simply mean the addition of hospital beds or the implementation of new machines, granted that these are also necessary.

Improvement in the health of our country means dealing with all the facets of health as put forward by its very definition. Before we can say we live in a healthy environment, we ALL must be able to feel that physical, mental and social well-being.

1. We agree that there is a need more beds and more up to date machinery both in our general hospitals and our healthcare centers. We also need vast improvement to the case response time and the quality of treatment delivery. Medicines must also be kept

up to date and readily available.

2. We believe our mental institutions must be completely revamped and updated.

Mental health issues ranging from simple depression to schizophrenia and dementia are rampant in our society on every level. Our modified system must be able to deal with all these issues with much importance being put into correct diagnosis and most suitable treatments, as well as providing proper counseling methods and efforts placed into the de-stigmatization of being mentally ill.

3. We must create more homeless shelters that include rehabilitation and skill learning programs as well as mental health diagnosis and heavy emphasis placed on counseling.

We believe these three points take the highest precedence for the moment in creating a truly healthy Trinidad and Tobago and must be immediately pursued.

We also intend to have properly certified degree and certificate alternative medicine curriculums and programs introduced in our tertiary education system.

## **Cannabis.**

The issue of cannabis has been highly controversial in first world countries over the last fifteen years. Countless accredited medical research has been done and cannabis has been proven without a shadow of a doubt to be highly beneficial in the effective treatment of a wide range of ailments. In countries and states where medicinal cannabis laws have been passed, this plant is more frequently chosen where applicable, over allopathic medicines, due to the pharmaceuticals risky side effects.

Cannabis has also been medically proven to kill cancer cells while leaving normal cells alone. Although proven, this treatment option for cancer is not widely accepted, used or even investigated by leaders.

In the U.S.A., twenty three States have approved medicinal cannabis law and these States proceed to tax privately owned medical cannabis dispensaries, bringing in substantial revenue to the State.

We believe now is the time to reform our cannabis laws bringing Trinidad and Tobago closer to first world standard, while keeping within the bounds of U.N. laws. We suggest any of the following-

1. The De-criminalization of cannabis for medical use within the home and the introduction of a state approved medical identification card.

2. The opening of State approved medical dispensaries with state approved growers. It

is clear to see, just from looking at the amounts of cannabis seizures in this country, that the revenue from this system alone should be able to reduce V.A.T. to 12.5%.

3. That we should entertain and follow on the research and aim to be the first country within the Caribbean Community to offer cannabis as a viable medicinal option.

Another important issue is the crowding of our jails with non violent cannabis users as well as the laying of criminal charges on so many of our young people for the use of this plant, thereby permanently debilitating that young person's life by branding them a criminal and so preventing them from following through with tertiary education, both home or abroad, from obtaining good work and therefore keeping them in a position of rut.

We therefore also suggest the De-criminalization of the possession of cannabis to a finable offense without a criminal record.

Finally, drawing on the experience of The U.S.A. and Holland, we are sure that the possibility exists to bringing in enough revenue to greatly reduce V.A.T., lower the crime rate, open new avenues of tourism, increase of job opportunities, as well as providing enough to keep our economy strong is the de-criminalization of cannabis.

## **Environment.**

Due to the number of fires in past dry seasons, we are left with huge deforested areas which can lead to erosion, landslides and flooding in this rainy season. Foremost in our environmental plan, therefore, is the immediate reforestation of these areas.

We are a small island with a large number of vehicles. Pollution has risen exponentially in our country in the last ten years. It has now become necessary to place more emphasis on more renewable energy resources and heavily on the issue of recycling. Investigations should be done into the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing systems for electric powered cars and public transport service vehicles; for implementing wind and water driven energy systems; and implementation of proper recycling facilities.

## **Education.**

The level of negativity displayed by our young people in both primary and secondary

schools has become intolerable. We must institute programs to make changes in this mental cycle of our youth. We again suggest that levels of counseling are necessary to achieve these changes. Guidance counselors should be placed within the school system with mandatory regular sessions with students.

More youth community programs must be created and encouraged, encompassing athletics, academics, trade programs and arts.

There is a need for career guidance counseling in all our secondary schools.

There is a need to increase the number and variety of accredited degree study options at our tertiary level institutions.

We must ensure that the infrastructure and ground conditions at our primary and secondary schools are kept up to high standard to assure good health and safety to students and faculty.

### **Governance.**

We need to aim towards a more democratic society where citizens have a say in public matters by being able to vote on the issue through ballot or signed petition.

We need to refresh our constitution slightly to deal with life in our present society, while making sure to preserve the independence of the Judiciary and the Elections Control Board.

In conclusion we would like to state that we already agree with and adhere to the truly positive ideals of the parties involved in this election and intend to strive for the continuance of all working policies and strive for changes to be made for those policies that have proved not to work positively in our society.

We thank you for your time and consideration.