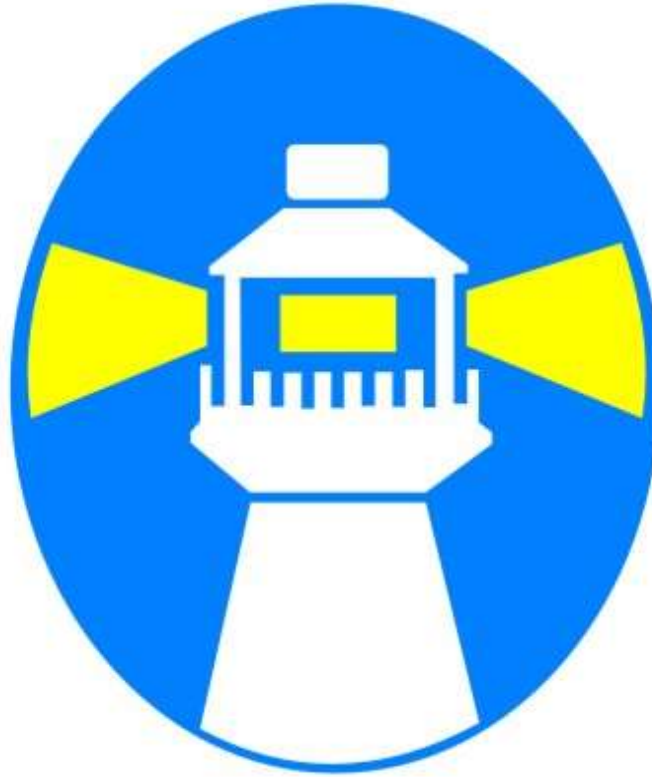


A FRAMEWORK FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE



NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

CORE VALUES AND POLICIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & PROSPERITY

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The National Democratic Movement, from our inception in October 1995, has been in the forefront in advocating for fundamental changes to Jamaica's political system to give our country the necessary breathing space to move forward.

We believe in the Jamaican people, in their inherent goodwill and in their capacity to achieve great things. We believe that the vast majority of Jamaicans yearn for a peaceful and stable society in which they can improve their lives through their own hard work. We believe that, with the appropriate changes, the Jamaican people are prepared to renew their faith in the institutions of government and those whom they entrust with the responsibilities of government.

Time is running out, but it is still not too late. We are a tough, resilient people but there is a limit to our endurance and we must act now before we reach a point of no return – a failed state.

We are still capable of great things. So often we have demonstrated our amazing prowess as a people. Our phenomenal success in sports and music and the outstanding achievements of Jamaicans all over the world are testimony to what we are capable of. **We are Jamaicans - Together, we can still work it out!**

Reclaiming our Country and Rebuilding Our Future

The NDM believes that the problems that plague our nation are rooted in the corrosive political culture which has evolved under the political system which we are currently governed by. We reject the notion that the management of our affairs should rely only on the reasonableness of men and women who so often demonstrate the propensity to be unreasonable. On the contrary, we believe that our political system should be so structured to demand and ensure good management by carefully balancing the powers of the State and by enforcing strict accountability on the part of those who exercise these powers on behalf of the people and the State.

The NDM offers the appropriate framework through which the Jamaican people can be mobilized to reclaim our country, restore our system of values, re-capture our sense of community and work together to achieve lasting peace and prosperity.

We seek the kind of constitutional reforms which will set create the framework and greatest opportunity to have a government of the best minds running the country.

We propose that we rebuild our hope, renew our dreams and re-chart our course within a new political framework in which power is restored to the people and those who exercise power on “behalf of the people be constantly and rigidly held accountable to the people. We must pursue a strategy which, within the context of a competitive politics, seeks consensus in defining long term goals and mobilizing national commitment toward their achievement.

The abused over-concentration of Power (an elected dictatorship)

The existing political system, the central feature of which is the enormous concentration of power in the hands of the Prime Minister, has led to abuse and corruption. Criminality (including the engagement of gangsters and creation of ‘garrison communities’) has been used to attain and maintain that enormous power which is wielded in the interests of politicians in power and their friends.

It has come to be characterized by one former Prime Minister as a “fight for scarce benefits and political spoils carried on by hostile tribes, perpetually at war, dividing rather than uniting the nation”.

It undermines the real purpose of Parliament and deprives the people of effective representation. It is a system which eschews consensus and militates against national unity since dissenting voices are easily ignored or ostracised.

Tribalism, Corruption, Dependency and lack of Investment

The “winner-take-all” system provides the basis for political tribalism, garrison politics, corruption and the plundering of public resources which must be employed to support it. It produces a social and political environment which is hostile to investment not only because of its inherent volatility but also because it precludes the stability of policy which is indispensable to long term investment. Politics, as we have—practiced it, fosters a culture of dependency through the extensive use of patronage. The virus of mendicancy which afflicts so many of our people is a direct consequence of this process.

POWER BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE

We are committed to the principle that the sovereignty of our nation resides in the PEOPLE and that it is the PEOPLE to whom power belongs and to the principle that the PEOPLE, as individuals, hold certain basic, fundamental and inalienable rights.

CORE VALUES & POLICIES

- 1. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE CITIZENS**
- 2. STRICT SEPARATION OF POWERS**
- 3. TERM LIMITATION**
- 4. FIXED ELECTION DATES**
- 5. DISMANTLING POLITICAL “GARRISONS”**
- 6. ESTABLISHING CONSTITUENCY ASSEMBLIES**
- 7. SECURING THE SAFETY OF THE PEOPLE AND AN EFFICIENT JUSTICE SYSTEM**
- 8. TAKING THE POLITICS OUT OF THE POLICE FORCE**
- 9. IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ENERGY POLICY TO MAXIMIZE SOLAR POWER**
- 10. ESTABLISHING REAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT (NOT CONTROLLED BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT)**
- 11. TRANSPARENCY FOR FUNDING OF POLITICAL PARTIES**
- 12. GREATER PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON DECISIONS ON SENSITIVE NATIONAL ISSUES.**

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE CITIZENS

The people, NOT Parliament, must be sovereign and their inalienable, fundamental rights enshrined and protected at all times.

STRICT SEPARATION OF POWERS (dismantling the one man rule system)

We must have a strict separation of powers with direct election of our Prime Minister who will head the Executive arm of government, with a cabinet comprising potentially the best minds and most qualified persons to be ministers of government, rather than Members of Parliament who:

1. May not be qualified for the post.
2. Already have too many responsibilities to serve their constituencies, law making and other parliamentary committee functions.

MPs must be elected on separate ballots from the Prime Minister to give them independence and empowerment to be the people's true representative rather than being mere rubber stamps for the Prime Minister or Party leaders. We need to get the best Jamaicans to work for us whether they are here at home or in the Diaspora. Put them to work for Jamaica!

Structure of Government

- THE PRESIDENT/GG (To be appointed by Parliament):

The President would be appointed for a term of 7 years on a resolution confirmed by a simple majority of Parliament (House of Representative), save and except for a rejection by a two thirds majority of the elected Members of Parliament.

- THE PRIME MINISTER (Should be directly elected by the people, nationally, on a separate ballot from MPs):

The Prime Minister would be responsible for the management and direction of policies through the Executive Management of State services which includes Budget preparation and implementation of manifesto as mandated by the people.

- THE LEGISLATURE/PARLIAMENT (MPs with real power and not mere rubber stamps for PM)

The Legislature, comprising the House of Representatives and the Senate, would be responsible for enacting legislation, approving budgetary expenditure and exercising oversight functions on the Executive. It would have final authority in matters pertaining to the imposition of taxes and any increase in the national debt beyond statutory limits. And MPs should live in the constituencies which they represent in Parliament.

- THE EXECUTIVE/CABINET (LET'S EMPLOY OUR BEST BRAINS)

The Cabinet consists of the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and not more than 12 other members nominated by the Prime Minister and confirmed by Parliament. Such nominations would be presented to Parliament for scrutiny but should only be rejected by a two—thirds majority of each House of Parliament.

- THE JUDICIARY (Should be appointed/elected by the people's MPs)

The Judiciary is responsible for running the Justice System which involves adjudicating questions of law and upholding the Constitution. All senior appointments should come before Parliament.

- THE SENATE

The Senate should be comprised of members elected on a proportional representation basis and from a slate of pre-determined nominees.

NB: Initially, and until we have completed Constitutional Reform, the NDM supports a modified approach regarding the appointment of Ministers of Government whereby they would be nominated from the senate. In this regard, the size of the Senate would be adjusted appropriately and proportionately to maintain the necessary balance of power while meeting the numerical requirement for Cabinet appointments.

- CREATING TRULY INDEPENDENT AUTHORITIES (REMOVING POLITICAL BIAS)

Sensitive areas of national life must be removed from political influence and control. Independent authorities whose appointment would require a simple majority save and except for a rejection by a two-thirds majority of each House of Parliament would be established for the following sensitive areas:

- * JUDICIAL SERVICES COMMISSION
- * POLICE SERVICES COMMISSION
- * PUBLIC SERVICES COMMISSION
- * ELECTORAL COMMISSION
- * INTEGRITY COMMISSION
- * CONTRACTOR GENERAL
- * PUBLIC DEFENDER
- * PROSECUTOR GENERAL
- * OMBUDSMAN
- * GOVERNOR OF THE CENTRAL BANK
- * BROADCASTING COMMISSION
- * PUBLIC BROADCASTING CORPORATION
- * ALL STATUARY CORPORATIONS & EXECUTIVE AGENCIES

Note:

(1) Control of Taxation (Limiting Cabinet's power)

We will abolish the Provisional Collection of Tax Act under which the Minister of Finance is able to raise taxes without prior notice to the public and without the approval of Parliament. No new taxes could be imposed without the approval of the House of Representatives.

(2) Putting a brake on the National Debt (Limiting Cabinet's power)

A constitutional limit to the amount of public debt that could be incurred, expressed as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product, would be established within that limit. Parliament would, by statute, prescribe the maximum amount of debt that may at any time be outstanding.

(3) Impeachment of public officials

Provisions would be established in the constitution for the impeachment of public officials who are found guilty of negligence, abuse of authority or subversion of the democratic process.

TERM LIMITATION (PROVIDING NEW SPACE FOR NEW THINKING)

The Prime Minister would be restricted to serve no more than two consecutive terms. Members of Parliament and Senators would not be allowed to serve more than four consecutive terms.

FIXED ELECTION DATE (REMOVING THE ADVANTAGE OF A GOVERNING PARTY)

Elections would be held on a fixed date or period every 5 years.

ESTABLISHING REAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT (NOT CONTROLLED BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT)

We will create a genuine local government system with complete autonomy from central government subject only to audit by the Auditor General. We will create a special structure for municipalities in which Mayors will be elected directly by all the people within each municipality not selected by any party bosses. The functions of local government authorities will be clearly defined and will be separate and distinct from those of central government. Local government services will be financed by the statutory remittance of 5% of recurrent revenue as well as by local rates and user charges.

Presented by: Peter Townsend, Chairman, June 6, 2013

The National Democratic Movement, Unit 9, The Trade Centre, 30-32 Red Hills Road, Kingston 10

Telephone: (876) 906-8485; e-mail: ndmjamaica@yahoo.com

THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

Jamaicans!...Rise n Shine!