

SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

From Grenada to St. Vincent

ANESIA O. BAPTISTE

Revised Edition 2010

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PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My heart's prayer and hope is that the philosophical revolution which begun in Vincentians' minds during the referendum election of November, 2009, will last for a long time; that we will never take our freedoms for granted and will always hold governments, present and future, accountable for the way they treat our God-given rights and freedoms.

Thanks to God for His love and wisdom in guiding me to begin and complete this work. To Bro. Nyron Medina, my long time friend, confidant and spiritual mentor, for listening to my concerns and burdens on this subject and inspiring me to write about it-a big thank you. Thanks also to former Prime Minister of Jamaica- Edward Seaga- for willingly granting me permission to use material from his book. To Mr. Ken Dyer for the cover design - thank you for your kind assistance in technically capturing the elements I desired.

My heart is especially filled with gratitude for you, my supporters, who encouraged me on my journey and truly spurred me on. I wish to also thank my dear husband who patiently supported my effort on this project and helped me see it through to the end. I love you Calvert.

I love you all and may God bless us with a golden age of respect and protection of rights and freedoms, justice and social and economic development. Amen!

For inalienable rights and freedoms the struggle goes on!

Mrs. Anesia O. Baptiste

Dedication

To my Vincentian brothers and sisters,

whose cries have gone up to heaven for the preservation of our inalienable rights and freedoms. I love you all and wish you God's blessings of enlightenment as you read this book.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ALBA– Bolivarian Alliance of the Peoples of our Americas

CRC- Constitution Review Commission

NJM- New Jewel Movement

PM- Prime Minister

PRG- People’s Revolutionary Government

SVG- St. Vincent and the Grenadines

TIRL- Thusian Institute for Religious Liberty

ULP- Unity Labour Party

INTRODUCTION

What did Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr. the Hon. Ralph Gonsalves mean when he declared on an election platform in 2005 that “Ralph Gonsalves remains to do the work of Maurice Bishop”? This book will explore the essence of this statement as we consider recent happenings which show a clear attempt to bring the 1979-1983 socialist revolution of Grenada to St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG)

The Constitution Bill 2009 that was proposed in a referendum election on November 25, 2009 was instrumental in beginning the move to the socialist revolution of Dr. Gonsalves. This was being attempted through policy-legislation and is a type of socialist revolution effort known as Gramscism, named after Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci. It is however the same socialism of Communist fathers such as Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin whose ideologies of governance were fundamentally anti-inalienable rights and freedoms.

The similarities of Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop’s socialist revolution and the efforts made by Dr. Gonsalves in SVG are also seen in threats and abuses of fundamental human rights, namely freedom of expression and the press and other forms of political victimization of “local reactionaries” and those

who are described as “counter-revolution”. Dr. Gonsalves’ alliance of the political, economic and social position of SVG with socialist/communist nations in the region such as Venezuela and Cuba through the Bolivarian Alliance of the Peoples of our America (ALBA) also mirrors the friends chosen by Bishop in the late 20th century Grenada.

The failure of the constitution bill to become law through its rejection by 56% of the populace represented a firm denunciation of the socialist path advocated by Dr. Gonsalves and his Unity Labor Party (ULP) administration. It marked a historical show of a philosophical revolution that had begun in the minds of Vincentians regarding our rights and freedoms and the role of government in political office. Additionally, it forever declared Vincentians’ determination to hold governments accountable as our servants, while we make full exercise of our right to self-determination as the true rulers of our destiny.

CHAPTER ONE

Socialism Exposed

Whether it is called Communism, Fabianism, Leninism, Stalinism, Gramscism, Socialism, Social Democracy, and Democratic Socialism - it's all one and the same fundamentally. These ideologies and practices of governance all usually result in anti-rights and freedoms behavior by governments to people because they do not believe that the rights and freedoms of the people are inalienable or come from God. Rather, they believe that human rights and freedoms come from man, nature, the legislature, a majority and this forms the basis of their politics or science of governance. As for Communism, it is the outcome of Socialism. In other words, Communism is the complete realization of the policies and practices of Socialism. It is best described in the simple words attributed to the first Socialist leader of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) Vladimir Lenin-“The goal of Socialism is Communism”¹

Socialism attacks the right to private property, by encouraging state control of the means of production in a Country, in a way that discourages the flourishing of private enterprises which is true to original Communist teaching. As declared in the Communist Manifesto, written by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels:

“In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of

1. <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/v/vladimirle136421.html>

private property. We communists have been reproached with the desire of abolishing the right of personally acquiring property as the fruit of a man's own labor, which property is alleged to be the ground work of all personal freedom, activity and independence.”²

Those who are in favor of Socialism often try to put a difference between it and Communism. They say it is not the same as Communism taught by known founding fathers Karl Marx, Frederick Engels and by hardcore communist leaders of the USSR such as Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin. These defenders of Socialism use labels like “democratic socialism” and “social democracy”, claiming that socialism is democratic and therefore, good for the people. History has however shown otherwise. We must consider two terms: **Fabianism and Gramscism.**

FABIANISM

Fabianism is a thinking and practice of governance formed by the establishment of the Fabian Socialist Society which was founded in England in 1884. It is named after a Roman General called Quintus Fabius Maximus, particularly known for his war strategy employed during battle against general Hannibal of Carthage in southern Italy during the Second Punic War (218-202 BC).

Fabius would use delay to frustrate and wear down his enemies on the battlefield, and then rush upon them when they least expected it and were tired from delay. As a result he was nicknamed “Cunctator” meaning, in Latin, the “delayer”.

It was no wonder the 1844 society named itself in Fabius’ honor since they believed that the revolutionary style of original Marxism and Leninism was not successful. On the contrary, the Fabians advocate that socialism could be achieved through gradual, non-revolutionary means, in harmony with Fabius’ motto of “slow and sure”. Instead of head-on confrontation with those who opposed it, they would drag along over time by infiltrating institutions. Through democratic methods, they would get their socialist believers into governmental, educational, religious and other institutions and gradually transform the system into a socialist one.

GRAMSCISM

In the March 1993 edition of the International Gramsci Society Newsletter, former dictator in the South American nation of Chile, Augusto Pinochet, is reported to have advised the Russian leaders that despite the collapse of Marxism-Leninism in Russia, Communism was alive in sheep’s clothing, thus making it harder to detect. Pinochet defined communism in sheep’s clothing as “GRAMSCISM” saying, “*The doctrine of the communist Antonio Gramsci is Marxism in a new dress. And it is dangerous because it penetrates the consciousness¹ of the people and above all the consciousness of the intellectuals.*”³

Antonio Gramsci was an Italian Communist whose writings are best known for its promotion of the idea of “cultural hegemony”. Essentially, he believed that hegemony or control could not only be attained through revolutionary physical force but also via the people’s consent to control. Sporting Leninist shoes on the importance of coming to power, Gramsci’s writings on hegemony reveal the idea that in order to come to power or control, the socialists must make strategic unions with other groups, in order to be accepted and have a broad base of support. Gramsci said: “*For the proletariat to become the ruling, the dominant class, it must succeed in creating a system of class alliances which allows it to mobilize the majority of the working population against capitalism and the bourgeois State.*”⁴

Strategic associations with influential groupings within various sectors of society is therefore a part of Gramsci-style of operation in achieving the socialist revolution. Undoubtedly this is a deceitful way of realizing the aims of the socialist agenda in the lives of the people and we must watch out for it at work.

3. http://www.internationalgramscisociety.org/igsn/editorials/e02_1.shtml

4. Litowitz, Douglas. Gramsci, Hegemony and the Law pg. 7

The Fabian Socialist Society stained glass window is installed at Beatrice Webb House in Surrey, England.



Turn your head slightly to the right and observe the Fabian coat of arms in the background:

A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.

The wolf is in dark shadow and the sheep in white over it.

Do you see it?



Joseph Stalin -

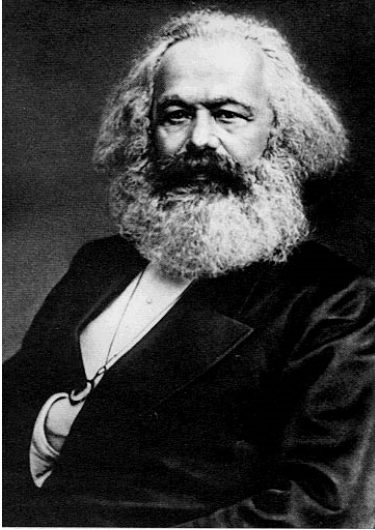
1879-1953

(His real name was Losif Vissarionovich Dzhughashvili

2nd Leader of the Soviet Union

A statue of Roman General **Quintus Fabius Maximus** -280 BC– 203 BC



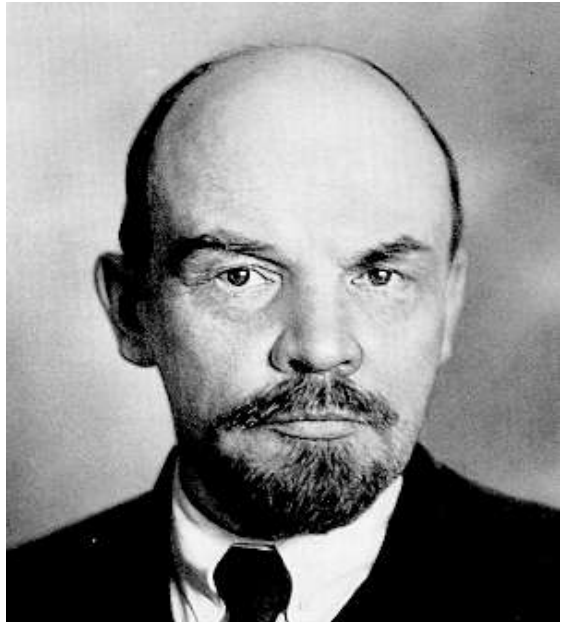


Karl Heinrich Marx-1818-1883

Author of the Communist Manifesto

Vladimir Illyich Lenin -1870-1924

1st Leader of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)





Italian Communist

Antonio Gramsci -1891-1937

It is clear that both Fabianism and Gramscism remained true to the socialist agenda although they pushed non-revolutionary ways of bringing it into effect. This is undoubtedly tricky and helps to explain the Democratic Socialism or Social Democracy often spoken of by 21st century advocates of Socialism, such as our very own Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves.

It is important to understand that the term ‘social democrats’ when it was first used did not represent a moderate type of socialism or anything of that sort. It was used synonymously with ‘socialist’. This explains why known communist political parties of the 19th Century and early 20th Century carried names such as Social Democratic Party of Germany and the Russian Social Democratic Workers/ Labor Party. Even Vladimir Lenin, who was hardcore communist leader of the Soviet Union, belonged, from about 1901, to the Social Democratic Labor party of Russia.

However, towards the end of the 19th century, there was an attempt to make Social Democracy appear different from Socialism. It took place at a time in history when Social Democrats faced the trouble of not being able to prove what founding father Karl Marx had prophesied would happen to Capitalism. According to Marx, capitalism was doomed to fail for one major reason: As it developed, capitalism would exploit workers more and more and workers would get poorer and poorer through exploitation by the capitalists, only concerned with more and more production. This, Marx argued, would inevitably lead to workers' rejection of capitalism through revolt, via violent overthrow. What Marx called the dictatorship of the proletariat (working class/workers) would result.

The opposite happened and Social Democrats' ideological father seemed bound to be declared a false prophet. What would be their response?

In a lecture given in 1997, David Gordon explained the role of Edward Bernstein, an influential Social Democratic writer who founded "*Evolutionary Socialism*" in 1881. Bernstein refuted Marx's prophecy on capitalism by claiming that while it was not doomed to fail, socialism was ethically better because it was more democratic. As David Gordon explained:

“Various reforms of socialist kinds are intrinsically desirable...that people could come to recognize this and could vote socialist members into the parliament and thus bring about socialism by peaceful

means, rather than depend on the proletariat becoming poorer and poorer and the overthrowing of the capitalist system”⁵

Marxists followers among Bernstein’s fellow social democrats opposed his views but Bernstein went on to form his own party called the **Independent Social Democratic Party**. It is his views on social democracy, as a gradual transformation from capitalism to socialism, which have influenced the ideas of 20th and 21st century defenders of socialism. This also helps us understand why some socialist defenders speak about the mixture of the two, that is, the co-existence of capitalism and socialism. It is simply based on the idea that socialism was to sneak upon the people over a long-drawn-out period. It would also use democratic methods to establish its presence and then carry out its aims through law and policies.

One thing is certain and it is this, whether it be Lenin’s strategy of coming to power by any means necessary, even through promises which according to him “are like pie-crusts that are made to be broken”, or Fabius’ “slow but sure” military tactic idea adopted by the Fabian socialist society, socialism is one thing- an anti-right and freedom system which harms the people ultimately.

As G. Edward Griffin accurately summarized in an interview,

“...all these people did was take off their hats that said ‘communist’, put that down and put another hat on that said ‘social democrats’ but you notice the heads didn’t change and their ideas didn’t really change...nothing really changed except the label” ⁶

This helps us to understand just what the Socialist Democratic rhetoric heard today in SVG, really means. The creeping tyranny of socialism was seen to begin raising its deceptive head in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in the text of the policy-legislation of the constitution bill 2009 but fortunately, it failed.

CHAPTER TWO

Socialist Revolution Attempt...Rejected!

It is clear now that the constitution bill 2009 was Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves' attempt to bring Maurice Bishop's Socialist Revolution upon Vincentians, albeit in true Fabian-Gramsci style. This revolution would not be made up of violent measures to force the submission of the people. Instead, it would make use of the democratic process of a referendum election. However its true nature was as against respect for freedoms of conscience, expression and other freedoms, as violent socialist revolutions can be.

There were various aspects of the bill which made it hostile to the enjoyment of human rights and freedoms. In some cases proposed additions did not require constitutional reform to be implemented and in other cases, they simply represented flowery appearances with no substantial improvement to our well being. There were, among them, three main points highlighted repeatedly by the Thusian Institute for Religious Liberty (TIRL) as sufficient enough to reject the bill, because they represented socialist thinking and leaning for our Country.

Firstly, the bill published for the public in May 2009 excluded a most important phrase from the preamble of the proposed constitution. This phrase was an improvement on the current constitution's preamble and investigation²⁰ proved that it had appeared in an earlier draft of the bill dated 30th April, 2009, as a recommen-

dition from Mr. Francis Alexis of Grenada— chairman of the drafting committee on the constitution bill 2009. Yet in the final version printed for the public it was nowhere to be found. The phrase read thus:

“Realize that the maintenance of human dignity requires a solemn appreciation that man is EN-DOWED BY GOD with certain INALIENABLE rights and freedoms as ideals, including the right to life, liberty and privacy; the right to have and raise a family; the right to own property; and the right to the pursuit of just economic rewards for labour which INALIENABLE rights are to be safeguarded” ⁷

Never before had our constitution described the rights of Vincen- tians as inalienable or God-given and as Associate Director of TIRL, I advocated strongly for its return to the bill. It is a justice- creating phrase, since it is pregnant with the philosophical and ideological view which would guide any constitution into ensur- ing there are provisions that hold sacred regard for the people’s rights. Inalienable rights mean they come from God; not from man, nature, government legislation or a majority. Therefore, governments must respect and protect these rights at all times for all peoples, even and especially minority groups. It advocates equality under law, since all are endowed by God with inalienable rights, regardless of social status, gender, race and creed.

Other groups in society shared ²¹our position and called for the

7. See Appendix B for picture of the Inalienable Rights Phrase Advertisement

phrase, including the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Teachers' Union (SVGTU). Justice Adrian Saunders, our own Vincentian judge on the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) also called for the reinsertion of the phrase, describing it as, "better" than the corresponding one in the current constitution. Our institute presented written documents in two parts entitled Concerns and Recommendations on the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Constitution Bill 2009, in which were given detailed explanation of the importance of the inalienable rights phrase. Our members published letters to the editor in local newspapers and also published an advertisement to educate Vincentians about its importance, so they could join with us in calling for the reinsertion of this phrase.

On July 23, 2009 I stood before the Select Committee of Parliament on the constitution bill to make a presentation of concerns and recommendations, on behalf of TIRL. This phrase took preeminence in my speech, made before the ministers and senators of both government and opposition members. I clearly recall how quiet the room was as I spoke and how encouraging it was to hear the Honorable leader of the Opposition-Arnhim Eustace and the Honorable Senator on the opposition-St. Clair Leacock, stand and declare their agreement with and support of my presentation. However, the reaction of the Honorable Prime Minister to my speech is what heightened my concern about the road which governance would take at the end of this constitutional reform exercise. Dr. Gonsalves trivialized the inalienable rights phrase by questioning its ability to make a difference. He pointed to the preamble of the existing 1979 constitution and said that there was

already an acknowledgement of God therein. In the short time I had to rebut, I begged the chairman's consideration of the fact that in the history of the American colonies of the 18th century, King George V was head of the Church of England and therefore believed in God. Still, it did not suffice, as he treated his subjects with the most horrible of human rights abuses, which are recorded for us in the declaration of independence of the United States of America. It was his failure to believe the self-evident truth about inalienable-God-endowed rights which was the cause. I could tell from the reaction that my point had been clearly made.

Our Prime Minister also argued against the phrase by claiming that there is only one right which comes from God-the right to life. The phrase lists the right to private property as also being inalienable or God-given but this, Dr. Gonsalves opposed, raising examples of periods in mankind's history of communal living and the absence of private property.

As I considered the words coming out of the Prime Minister's mouth I began to glean just what was happening to us. Our constitution reform process was being led by a head of government who did not believe in the self-existent truth that all men are created with inalienable rights (plural) which come from God and are to be protected by governments. He did not have a sacred regard for the right to private property and it would be by his insistence that the phrase would never be returned to the constitution bill draft, finally voted upon in the November 2009 referendum election. Furthermore, what manner of thinking would reject the

Almighty Creator God's role in endowing man with not only the right to life but also the right to private property? Does not mankind indeed possess a natural, innate desire to seek bread (food), clothing and shelter, pursuant to the preservation of his life? How could such reasoning forecast a future of strengthened and deepened democracy? This rational was in fact clearly in line with socialist and or communist ideology. Property was not private, according to communist father Karl Marx and the right to private property was to be abolished, far less the talk that it came from God. Communism abolished religion because it interfered with the communist plan.

Later, after much agitation on the subject, the committee decided to include the two words "inalienable rights" as a substitution for the phrase for which we lobbied. This would not have the same effect because unlike the earlier phrase, it did not list the rights which were being described as inalienable. Our institute went into high gear to explain the difference in newspaper advertisements and in part 2 of our document submitted to the committee in August 2009. Nevertheless, despite the people's call for this good phrase, the committee insisted on the terms of the draft upon which the people would be expected to vote. The socialist/communist turn of our affairs had begun.

It was no surprise that the second point of grave concern to Vincentians touched on the fundamental right to private property. In section 30 of the proposed constitution bill, unfinished work had been done regarding the provision for protection of the people's

freedom from deprivation of property. While the committee had addressed the problem of the vague “reasonable time” in which the person deprived of his property was to be compensated, it had failed to equally address the uncertainty of ‘adequate compensation’. This had been a thorn in the flesh of the people who cried out against it in the consultations held by the Constitution Review Commission (CRC) during 2002-2005. It was such a highpoint that the commission’s report presented it as one of its consensus requests from the people. It stated:

*“When compensation is assessed for compulsorily acquired property, such compensation should be assessed on the basis of the open market value of that property as at the date of the compulsory acquisition (emphasis supplied). Such compensation should carry interest at the commercial rate calculated from the date of acquisition of the property to the date of payment.”*⁸

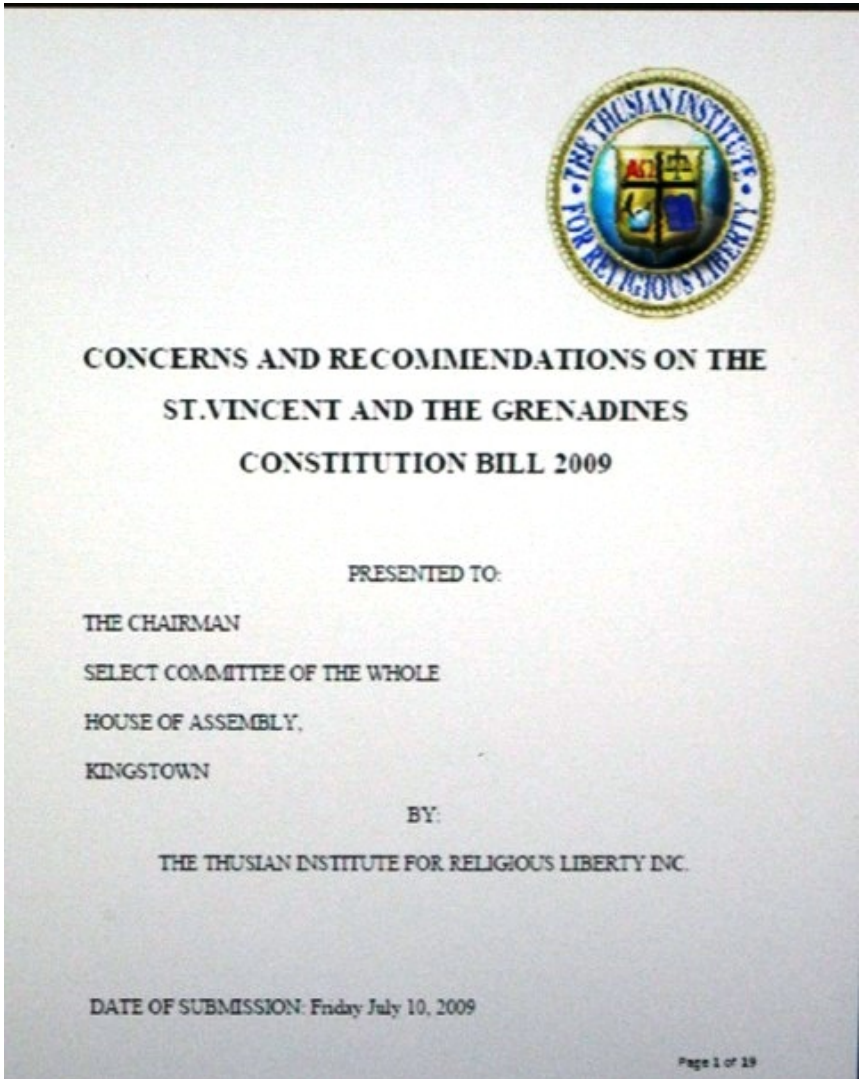
Yet the constitution bill 2009 stubbornly ignored the people’s wishes, retaining the vague “adequate compensation” which most felt did not guarantee market value at the time of the acquisition of their property. This issue was the subject of many radio and newspaper discussions on the Constitution bill 2009. One Sunday morning while discussing the point with Cerlian ‘Maff’ Russell of “Star Issues” on Star Fm, I suggested that the phrase should define adequate compensation to mean “compensation which includes current market value for₂₅ the property...” This formed the basis of TIRL’s formal position on the topic, clearly expressed in our document showing our concerns to the select committee.⁹

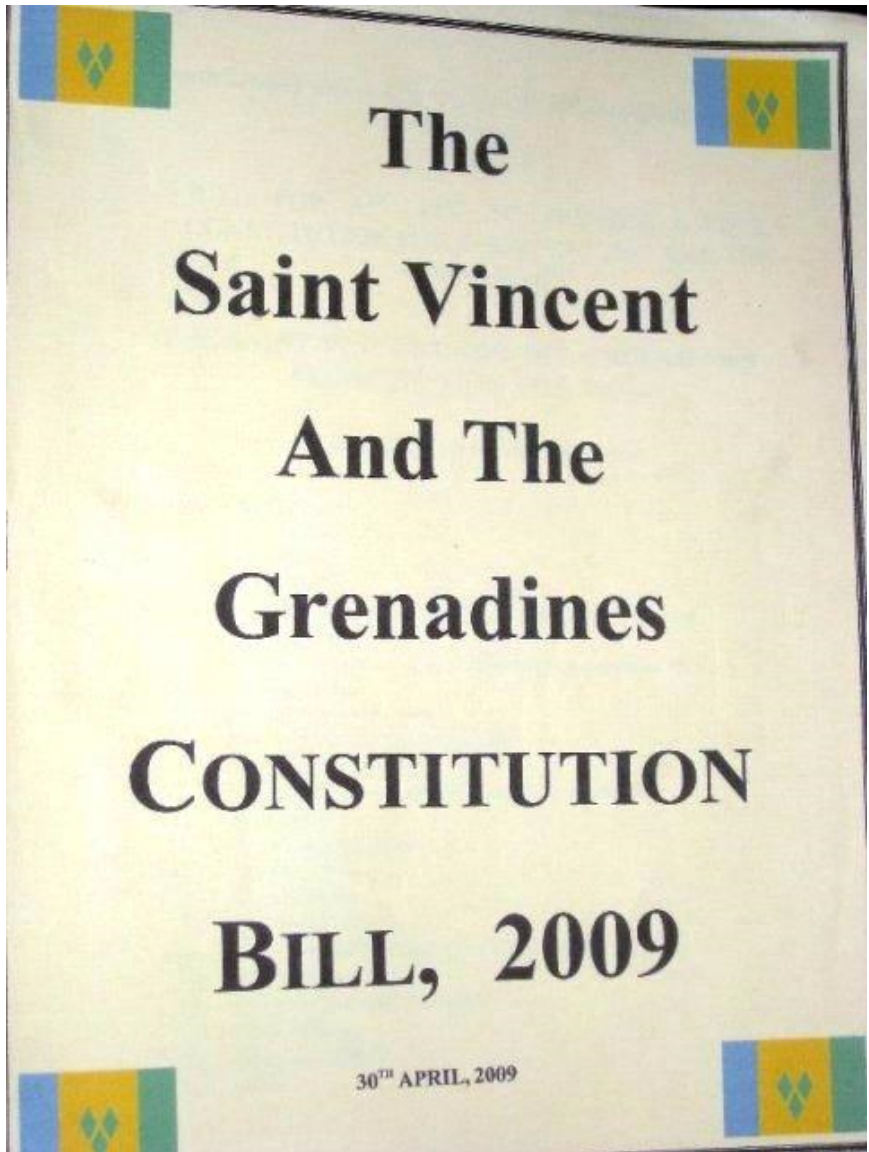
It would strengthen the protection of the freedom from deprivation of property, by providing, for the first time, a definition of adequate compensation. Still, nothing seemed to prick the select committee's conscience on the matter. Finally, they proposed a phrase which only served to further expose contempt for the people's voice. It also unearthed more socialist leaning by introducing the idea of protection of the state (really the government) into a freedom of the people.

8. CRC's Revised Final Report to the House of Assembly, 28th September 2006, Section 343 (c) page 92

9. See Appendix A for the entire text of my speech made to the Select Committee on July 23, 2009.

A look at the cover of part 1 of the document presented by our NGO, Thusian Institute for Religious Liberty INC. (TIRL)





A Picture of the cover of earlier draft of constitution bill 2009, dated April 30, 2009, containing the inalienable rights phrase on the following page.

Picture with paragraph (C) is the inalienable phrase that was found in earlier draft on the previous page.

(a) have affirmed that their Nation is founded on the belief in the supremacy of God and the freedom and dignity of man;

(b) desire that their society be so ordered as to express their recognition of the principles of democracy, free institutions, social justice and equality before the law;

(c) realize that the maintenance of human dignity requires solemn appreciation that man is endowed by God with certain inalienable rights and freedoms including the right to life, liberty and privacy; the right to have and raise a family; the right to own property; and the right to the pursuit of just economic rewards for labour, which said inalienable rights are to be safeguarded;

(d) desire that their Constitution should enshrine the above-mentioned freedoms, principles and ideals;

AND WHEREAS Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (which comprises the inhabited islands of Saint Vincent, Bequia, Union Island, Canouan, Mustique, Mayreau, Petite Saint Vincent, Prune Islands and all other inhabited or uninhabited islands, islets, cays or lands lying between latitudes 12° 31' 50"N and 13° 23' 30"N and longitudes 61° 07' 30" W and 61° 28' 00"W) is henceforth to be styled Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (or alternatively, St. Vincent and the Grenadines);



Above: A view of a newspaper copy of the proposed changes to the bill, published in the local newspapers, as an attempt to quell concerns that the bill was not readily available to persons for scrutiny.

The proposed phrase stated that adequate compensation should be reasonable to the person being compensated and **also to the state**. This outrageous drafting made many persons angry, since it displayed an unbelievable attempt to provide protection for the state although it was the people's freedom from deprivation of property which needed protection. It is not the state's property which is compulsorily acquired under acquisition exercises.

Yet, looking back, it was not surprising in the socialist scheme of things. Not only had the driver of the constitution reform process dismissed the right to private property as being a God-given right, but communist fathers of old had before taught that property belongs to the state and is only lent to people at its will. Their notion of acquisition of property naturally favors the government, to the disadvantage of the people. In fact, there is no such thing as 'private property' in the communist agenda and what better way to creep upon a democratic society with this notion, than by deemphasizing the sacredness of the right, through weakening the constitutional freedom from deprivation of property. The socialist revolution was no doubt underway through sneakiness and only an enlightened people could stop it.

The third but no less important way in which Dr. Gonsalves attempted to bring socialism covertly upon Vincentians was by tampering with the entrenchment provisions of the constitution. A case was made for the reduction of the number of days granted between the first and second reading of a bill to change any provision of the constitution, from not less than 90 days to not less than

60 days. Additionally, it was proposed that the number of votes required in a referendum to change provisions of the constitution should be reduced from not less than 67% or 2/3 to not less than 60%. In short, this proposal would make it easier to change the people's constitution in the future.

It also proposed to move with haste for future changes and to take away time from the people to adequately scrutinize proposed changes to the highest law of the land. This would have serious implications for the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed in the constitution, since any future proposal to make changes in this area, would also be subject to less time for scrutiny and less votes for passage. As if those things were not bad enough, there was no documented evidence that such changes in time and percentage votes represented consensus views (like the adequate compensation matter) of the people. Besides, even if it were a minority view, it could not be proven to be in the interest of strengthening protection for the people's rights and freedoms.

Once again, the cries of the people, described as "noise" one night on Cross Country Radio program "Let's Talk Constitution" by the Deputy Chairman of the CRC-Noel Jackson, were ignored, although in part. The 'gods to the people', among the select committee, decided to give us back the 90 days between the first and second reading of the bill but insisted on flexing their superhuman powers in dictating to the concerned populace that 60% votes would remain, whether we liked it or not.

De-entrenchment of the constitution removes a necessary check in the powers of government to interfere with this supreme law. However, it must be noted that such a proposal facilitates the creeping tyranny of socialism. With their already insensitive attitude towards sacred rights and freedoms, they would be happy to bring a quick end to discussions on any proposed bill to change the constitution and it would certainly suit them if they did not have to work so hard for 67% of the votes to get their change into law. For all they cared, the extra 7% could merely be “irritants”¹⁰ of a minority, holding up their socialist show.

There were other sore points in the bill and in the explanations given by those who sought to justify its drafting, even when shown to be in contradiction with the expressed wishes of the people. Worst of all was the fact that there was a rush to make a clump of all proposed amendments into one document which put the average person in a predicament. One had to either favor all of the amendments or none. We were being asked to say yes to all or No to all. We had no choice and despite all the arguments presented on why the process could not be done otherwise, Vincen-tians soon realized they would have to vote NO even if there was one point of disagreement. If that one point proved to be significant enough, to endanger their future lives, they had no other choice but to vote NO. The campaigning began for a vote yes and a vote no. The three points explained above were explained over and over in the campaigning process leading to the election and

history would prove that for many they were among the reasons, enough to make the constitution bill fail to pass.



Anesia Baptiste appealing for a vote No at a meeting in Market Square in Kingstown. (photo by Oris Robinson)

Preparing for an interview with Tonya Fraser on the constitution bill 2009 at IKTV-channel 45 on our local Karib Kable network.





Ex-

plaining reasons to vote no, in studio in Kingstown on a popular morning talk show with “2koolchris” on Hot 97.1 Fm.



Making notes during a Panel Discussion on the constitution Bill 2009 at the Hope For Life Restoration Ministries Church in Arnos Vale, in September, 2009

A cross section of the audience at the Vote No meeting at Market Square and Anesia Baptiste presenting three (3) salient reasons to vote No, in November, 2009. (photos by Oris Robinson)



Socialist Revolution Rejected!



Photo by Oris Robinson taken at a Candle Light March of the Vote No Campaign..

NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!! was the sound I heard coming through my office window on November 24, 2009, just one day before the referendum election that would determine if 67% of Vincentians would vote yes to the constitution bill. Curious onlookers moved to the windows to see what was going on. What we beheld was what seemed to be a parade of people coming from the area of the Ferry Terminal at the Kingstown port. It was not long before I learnt that these were workers from the Grenadine island of Mustique who had come up to mainland St. Vincent to cast their votes the next day. Estimates say they were about 200 and more in numbers and, looking back, their public and bold expression, which was long and sustained as they all

headed down town, was perhaps a preview of what was to come on election day. After many arguments, discussions via radio and television programs, and heated disputes across newspaper pages, the day had finally come for the people to decide. Would they accept this socialist leaning constitution or would they reject it?

I remember the day like it was yesterday for many reasons. Not only was it the first time I would vote in any national election but I would vote on a matter in whose process I had actively participated over the years; yes years- I had participated in consultation exercises back in 2004 and I had written and published articles on the subject matter during the time of the revised Final Report of the CRC published in 2006. Then, I began to incorporate pieces exposing the final draft of the bill, into my “Persistent Scrutiny” column appearing in the local newspaper- “THE NEWS” . While standing at the polling station where I voted, I saw the joy and pride of freedom. I recall bearing the heat and the wait, only to catch a view of an old lady arriving in wheelchair. Assisted by her companions, I could not help but notice the determination on her face-to vote.

This experience caused me to have a renewed appreciation for inalienable rights and freedoms and at the same time, a heightened righteous anger for those who attempted to use deceit, haste and downright contempt for the people, to push through the constitution bill 2009. These were ³⁹all socialist tactics and contradicted the spirit of what the constitution is all about -that is, protection for our inalienable rights and freedoms. How could an exer-

cise which bore so much importance for people's freedoms, be treated with such a rush? It is important for people to understand what they are voting on, for truthful education to be given on the matter so that their vote could be truly free. None should be condemned by their prime minister and leaders of the review process as "uninitiated in the law"¹¹, backward and unprogressive for merely expressing disagreement with proposals they do not like. Yet these are the things Vincentians had to bear. And these were also some of our reflections as almost 57% of us voted a resounding NO to the proposed constitution bill on November 25, 2009.

That night, as the counting of the votes came to an end, television commentators reflected on the surprise of the results. I suppose the millions spent as independence gifts to school children (\$200 to each child), to the elderly and such like only one month before referendum, the party thrown featuring Regional music star 'Busy Signal' and the prime minister's promise of another 'Busy Signal' party if the people would give him the 67% votes, were expected to convince the people to vote yes. On the contrary, as the votes clearly showed the defeat of the bill, Vincentians around the various constituencies rejoiced over the salvation which had come. The ULP administration in government which had led a vote Yes campaign had recorded loss in 13 of the 15 constituencies. We felt proud that we had stained our fingers with ink against a socialist leaning constitution which threatened our God-given rights. We had killed the bill and said a loud NO to socialism and

11. The Prime Minister Dr. the Honorable Ralph Gonsalves used this expression, during one sitting of parliament, to refer to persons who criticized the bill,.

YES to continued protection of inalienable rights and freedoms.

That the constitution bill 2009 was indeed a move towards socialism would be later gleaned from confessions of our Prime Minister's comrade, Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez and later developments in the Bolivarian Alliance of the Peoples of our Americas (ALBA). In March 2010, just 4 months after the referendum election, a story appeared in the regional press entitled Queen Elizabeth II should relinquish power over St. Vincent & the Grenadines. VHeadline news editor Patrick J. O'Donoghue reported that in a Sunday radio address President Chavez had, *"lamented the fact that a constitutional amendment proposed by Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves had been rejected in a referendum on November 25, 2009"* Why? What interest did Chavez have in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) having a new constitution?

The context was when SVG joined ALBA in 2009 and it was well known that Hugo Chavez and our Prime Minister shared the common affectionate term of "comrade". Furthermore Chavez himself reveals the socialist connection in his sorrow over the failure of the bill. Consider his words included in this quote from O'Donoghue's piece: *"Despite the referendum results, Chavez is of the opinion that Queen Elizabeth should grant full independence after Gonsalves attempted to **"light up the way forward"** for his country eliminating ⁴¹ "remnants of colonialism and in the interest of humanization."* ¹² What was this "way forward" which the constitution would have lit up, by removing the Queen as head of

state? Just one month after Chavez pronounced these words, the regional news reported that ALBA members had signed the Bicentennial Manifesto of Caracas. The manifesto, signed on April 19, 2010 has an introduction which says it is all about ALBA's "*...commitment to the task of consolidating the sovereignty of our peoples building the road to socialism.*" ¹³

Therefore, the road or path which the Prime Minister Gonsalves had tried to light up for us through the constitution bill 2009 is the same socialism road that Chavez says ALBA Countries, including SVG, will build. Interestingly, while in Venezuela that month attending independence celebrations, our own PM described ALBA as the way to "*leave our underdevelopment behind*" and news reports spoke about "*advancing on the road to socialism*".

What a revelation!

All along, this is what it meant. Not only had the bill been killed but the socialist agenda, through legislation, was halted. Chavez could not hold back his expressions of so called sorrow, while daring to accuse 57% of Vincentians who voted No, of presenting him as a "boogeyman". He was also "out-of-place", to ask the Queen to remove herself as our head of state, even after 56% of us voted that she would so remain. Indeed Vincentians had rejected Chavez and Gonsalves Socialist Revolution but more importantly a philosophical revolution had occurred in their minds,

12. Queen Elizabeth 11 should relinquish power over St. Vincent and the Grenadines. <http://www.vheadline.com/readnews.asp?id=89510>

13. Rulers of ALBA-TCP signed Bicentennial Manifesto of Caracas published April 21, 2010 at <http://www.rnv.gov.ve/noticias/index.php?act=ST&f=31&t=125424>

resulting in them holding fast for life to their inalienable rights. We would never be the same.

The Executive members of TIRL who worked to educate Vincentians on the consti-

bill

Left to

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Karima

Anesia

Baptiste and Shefflorn Ballantyne. (photo by Oris Robinson)

CHAPTER THREE

From Grenada to St. Vincent

There is premise for affirming that prime minister Ralph Gonsalves attempted to bring over to St. Vincent the 1979-1983 socialist revolution of former prime minister of Grenada Maurice Bishop. One difference was that his partner in this effort was Comrade Chavez, as shown already. To establish this, I will rely on the very own confessions of PM Gonsalves himself, mixed with historical information on Maurice Bishop primarily found in different literary works on the Grenada revolution. Please follow me carefully.

During the 2005 elections campaign in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Prime minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves declared, “***I want to say that Ralph Gonsalves remains to do the work of Maurice Bishop***”. (emphasis supplied) This pronouncement gives us insight into the socialism Dr. Gonsalves attempted to bring to SVG, since study of Bishop’s socialist revolution reveals strong similarities with Gonsalves’ methods. It also exposes fundamental truths about Gonsalves’ philosophy of governance and therefore helps us to understand what will characterize his behavior as a politician and a Prime Minister. We must never forget nor lose sight of these things for if we do, we will be deceived and will be doomed to suffer.

Renaming of Grenada's Airport-May 29th 2009



On May 29, 2009 Gonsalves, in his capacity as Prime minister of SVG, gave the feature address at the renaming of Grenada's Point Salines airport, after the late Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. His speech on that occasion revealed much about Bishop's influence on him. Firstly, he acknowledges that he shared the same revolutionary spirit with Bishop.

“I cannot recall when I first met Maurice Bishop. It was some time before the revolution but we had known each other in revolutionary spirit long before that. So we knew each other before we met each other. In the ten years prior to the revolution I had come to the attention of the se-

curity forces of the region and the hemisphere in the cold war era; not for the commission of any crime but on account of my anti-imperialist, revolutionary democratic and socialist oriented political activities... and I too old to change” (laughter from crowd).¹⁴

We must not be surprised at Gonsalves’ anti-imperialist and socialist talk heard today, since according to him he was like that for a very long time and he is “too old to change” or will forevermore remain that way.

Speaking of Grenada’s history and the manner in which he came to learn of the overthrow of the Eric Gairy’s administration, by Bishop’s coup, Gonsalves had exclaimed, “***Straightly thereafter I ascertained the truth. I was ecstatic. Weeping had endured for a long night but joy had come that morning.***” (Crowd applause).¹⁵ That he could rejoice over the unconstitutional overthrow of one government by a revolutionary party may be instructive. However it is his own confession of the influence of Bishop on his politics which is of even greater importance. He said: “***Within a week of the revolution, Maurice invited me to Grenada. I did so on the 2nd Saturday of the revolution and immediately immersed myself in political work under his direction, at his home where I was to get accommodated for a few days.***”

14. From Transcript of the Feature Address from Dr. the Honorable Ralph Gonsalves at the renaming of the Point Salines International Airport in Grenada.

15. Ibid

*There was so much to be done, sleep barely encroached”.*¹⁶
Since Gonsalves had worked in the politics of the socialist revolution of Bishop who had taken power by unconstitutional means, a look at Bishop’s politics would be helpful.

Maurice Bishop’s Politics

Maurice Bishop



Prime Minister of
Grenada 1979-
1983

I thank God Grenadian Journalist
Alister Hughes

lived post the Grenada Revolution to tell the truth. In his October 17, 1998 piece in the revived GRENADIAN VOICE newspaper (Bishop had suspended this publication under the revolution), Hughes exposes Bishop’s clear Marxist-Leninist agenda, evidence of which was unearthed after the intervention of the USA and the end of the revolution.

*“...full revelation of Bishop’s disgraceful betrayal of the Grenadian people was fully disclosed after the 1983 military intervention by the United States and Caribbean forces. That intervention unearthed many documents of the revolution, but the most revealing was text of Bishop’s speech made to an NJM¹⁷ meeting in 1982. Bishop disclosed then that while he publicly mouthed promises of a return to the constitution, he had absolutely no intention of doing so. Instead, his secret aim was creation of a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship. And he explained to the meeting that that dictatorship would be controlled carefully.”*¹⁸

This revelation is key to our understanding of the “work of Maurice Bishop”. We learn how Bishop intended to achieve his ultimate aims through deception and pretending to appear what he really was not. Hear him speak through Alister Hughes’ reporting:

“Consider our Zonal Councils and our Workers Councils”, he said, “The bourgeoisie is deliberately not invited so they don’t have the opportunity to try to confuse the people.” And Bishop was cunning. If the revolutionaries were to hold on to power, he felt, NJM needed an “alliance” with the same bourgeois excluded from the Zonal and

¹⁷. NJM-New Jewel Movement

¹⁸. Maurice Bishop was no hero, but a dictator by Alister Hughes, October 17, 1998

Workers' Councils. In the early stages of establishing that "dictatorship" and "defeating capitalism", he told the meeting, NJM needed to exploit the bourgeoisie because NJM did not have enough managers, capital, international contacts or markets. And there was another need for the "alliance", he said. It was the need to trick the world into believing the blatant lie that, having rid Grenada of Gairy, Bishop's promise of a return to democracy was valid."¹⁹

Thus, Bishop cunningly excluded the capitalist bourgeoisie whom his Marxist-Leninist policies hated but conveniently formed an alliance with them at the same time, in order to deceive the people. Alister tells us more.

"To work this trick, prominent persons were duped with invitations to join the PRG²⁰ ruling council. These included Dr. Bernard Gittens and Barrister Lloyd Noel, both described by Bishop as "professional middle strata", Palme Buxo and Norris Bain, labeled "middle capitalists" and Lyden Ramdhanny, "big capitalists". "All this was done deliberately" Bishop told the meeting, "so imperialism wouldn't get too excited and would say, 'well, they have some nice fellows in that thing; everything is alright." And, as a result wouldn't think about sending in troops". Bishop

19. Ibid

20. PRG-People's Revolutionary Government

*was clear also about the role of those sections of the community which the PRG was exploiting. “They are not part of our dictatorship”, he said, **“They are not part of our rule and control. We bring them in for what we want to bring them in for.”***²¹

Bishop would exploit the capitalists but keep them out of the control which he and his elite group would enjoy. This was the character of his socialist revolution. Alas! It was Marxism and Leninism in truth but covered up, later exposed after the dust settled on the Grenada revolution.

Behold the man, the policies, ideas and attitudes he espoused and consider Prime Minister Gonsalves’ promise to do his work and his own confession that he did political work under him. The revolutionaries also understood that Bishop was a Marxist-Leninist communist at heart. You see, while speaking about the revolution and friends thereof, they listed some fellow Caribbean partners, as it were. Consider this statement from page 96 of Gregory Sandford and Richard Vigilante’s book Grenada: The untold Story.

*“Among its non-socialist neighbors, the NJM cultivated close ties with leftists in Trinidad, particularly Michael Alves of the people’s progressive movement and Allan Alexander, an important source of legal advice to the PRG. **Ralph Gonsalves of the St. Vincent United People’s***

21. Maurice Bishop was no hero, but a dictator by Alister Hughes, October 17, 1998

Movement was, Richard Jacobs told the Soviets, “a clear, consistent and reliable Marxist-Leninist” who “can be helped at all levels without fear of compromise.”²²

The Russians of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) were told they could count on Gonsalves to carry out the Marxist-Leninist aims that Bishop had begun under his socialist revolution in Grenada. Gonsalves himself confessed to having these socialist policies since during the times when he was one with Maurice Bishop in revolutionary spirit, even before he met him. So their spirits clicked, no doubt, because they were the same-two Marxist-Leninists (communists) at heart, presenting themselves as so called harmless socialists. In like manner Gonsalves seeks to sell socialism as harmless to Vincentians but we know now that it is the same dangerous socialism of Grenada’s Maurice Bishop.

Let us also consider the evidence that exists which proves Bishop’s intention to spread his socialist revolution to other Countries in the region. Former Prime Minister of Jamaica Edward Seaga’s 2009 publication on the topic gives great insight into these facts by revealing significant documentation, kept secret until after the 1983 intervention into Grenada. In November 1983, just about one month after the intervention of US and Caribbean armed forces into Grenada, then Prime Minister Seaga laid before Jamaica’s parliament in a Ministry paper no. 42, “Documents captured in Grenada”. Consider the following ⁵¹ extract from Seaga’s book

22. Sandford, Gregory and Vigilante, Richard Grenada: The untold Story. Pg 96, Madison Books, 1984

which highlights the nature of the revolution being built in Grenada:

“A further set of documents reveals Military Assistance Treaties between Grenada and the Soviet Union, and the People’s Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea) for the supply of arms and war material- totaling US\$38 million (J\$68 million) as well as a Treaty with Cuba for Military Advisers details of which are in attached documents together with accompanying summaries. The highlights of these Treaties are as follows:

--The terms of three secret military assistance agreements between the People’s Revolutionary Government of Grenada and the Soviet Union note that the USSR was to provide 25.6 million in war material.

-- The Treaty with North Korea indicated the North Koreans would provide 12 million in war material.

-- The Treaties between Grenada and the Soviet Union promised the delivery of 4000 AK automatic rifles, 25 carbines, 7,000 mines, 15,000 grenades, 1,050 pistols, 293 sniper rifles (RPG) launchers, and pages of other military associated goods. North Korea promised 1,000 rifles, 80 ma-

chine guns, 50 RPGs etc. Shipments were to include full outfits of uniforms, armoured personnel carriers, radio stations, a field bakery etc.

-- These agreements—if fully implemented—would put in the hands of Grenada’s leaders enough equipment to outfit several army battalions with full offensive capability. The Grenadian army numbered only one battalion.

-- The Soviet Treaties called for deliveries of arms to take place through Cuba.

-- A great deal of weaponry had been delivered by the time of the coup from which a very large amount of arms, ammunition and equipment were captured...”²³

Seaga also underlines the fact that there were “27 permanent and 13 temporary Cuban military specialists” in Grenada whose identity and military activities were to be secret as established in Article X11 of the agreement to, “*take measures...to assure the secrecy of the military personnel in both states and the character of the activities*”²⁴ This general state of affairs led Seaga to conclude that the military preparations being made in Grenada represented an attempt to spread the revolution beyond the spice island’s shores. The evidence on the number of ammunition supplied and promised to be supplied was enough for Seaga to declare that, “*there was one round of ammunition for every person*

*in the entire English speaking Caribbean and enough weapons to arm the defense forces of all the countries”*²⁵ He further said:

“The intent was clearly to use Grenada as a central point for rallying the leftist forces of the other six small islands of the commonwealth Caribbean in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Most islands had small cells of Marxist leaders capable of expanding support with a potential of repeating the Grenada experience. Arms would be needed. The Grenadian stockpile that included used and surplus Soviet World War II weapons would be the source. This was the scenario that was emerging”²⁶

Clearly, Dr. Gonsalves would be one of the persons relied on to help spread the socialist or communist ideology and revolution in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, having been described by the Grenadians to the Soviet Union as a clear and dependable Marxist-Leninist. There were also others in our Vincentian society who equally shared Gonsalves’ vision in those times, who still today lament the fall of Maurice Bishop’s socialist revolution. Gonsalves, adamant that Bishop should remain alive in Vincentian politics, resurrected thought of him when he declared on a political platform in 2005 his promise to “do the work of Maurice Bishop”. It was surely his own confession that he had not forgot

23. Seaga, Edward: The Grenada Intervention⁵⁴-The Inside Story. Pg. 55, 2009

24. Ibid pg. 17.

25. Ibid. pg. 27

his political 'roots' and his essential purpose in political life was ever before him.

Although we did not experience a coup such as in Grenada, Gonsalves' administration attempted the same socialist revolution in Fabian and Gramsci fashion, through policy legislation of the constitution bill 2009. We are thankful to God that it failed!

CHAPTER FOUR

The Anti-Christianity of Socialism

Thomas Jefferson-3rd President of the United States of America once said, *“History by apprising [citizens] of the past will enable them to judge of the future; it will avail them of the experience of other times and other nations; it will qualify them as judges of the actions and designs of men; it will enable them to know ambition under every disguise it may assume; and knowing it, to defeat its views.”*²⁷ By their own pronouncements socialist leaders in history have clearly demonstrated how Socialism is against Christianity and religion generally. It has never been, is not and can never be “Christianity in action”²⁸ as some, including Vincentian prime minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, have publicly declared. Any such claim does not present the true idea of Socialism and is in fact an attempt to deceive people into accepting this anti-rights and anti-freedoms political doctrine of Socialism.

We remember first of all that socialism and communism are fundamentally the same. The USSR stood for **Union of Soviet Socialist Republics** yet it was well known as a union of communist nations. It is no wonder that Karl Marx, founding father of communism, Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin-both Socialist leaders of the USSR, all commonly espoused hatred of religion

27. Notes on the State of Virginia, Query 14, 1781. <http://www.revolutionary-war-and-beyond.com/thomas-jefferson-quotes-1.html>

28. Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves and other supporters of the ULP have described his socialism as “Christianity in action” in effort to answer Vincentians’ criticism of his socialist agenda.

and Christianity in particular. In fact, Lenin said “*Our program necessarily includes the propaganda of atheism*”.²⁹ It was impossible for the socialist/communist agenda to succeed without pushing atheism. Atheism is the belief that there is no God. Therefore it does not surprise that one of the public institutions created in the USSR under Joseph Stalin, ruler of the USSR for about 50 years, was called “**The Society of the godless**”. Joseph Stalin, like Lenin, made it clear that religion was like an obstacle in the road to the aims of Communism and that as such, it could not be allowed to flourish if Communism was to be successful. He believed religion to be an opiate that needed to be removed in order to construct the ideal communist society. An opiate is the narcotic (drug) derived from the opium poppy flower. Lenin uses this to describe the influence of religion over the people and says it must be removed in order to facilitate the achievement of communism. If one thought it could not get worse, consider the insults levied at Christians and at God, by Joseph Stalin and Karl Marx. **It is reported** that Stalin once said the following words, “*You know, they are fooling us, there is no God...all this talk about God is sheer nonsense*”³⁰. Are you shocked? How about sickened? I am! Does this sound like people who believed Socialism was Christianity in action? Of course not! What if I tell you there is an account where Stalin led a friend to desecrate a church icon by smashing it and urinating on it? Then he said to the friend, “***Not afraid of God? Good for you!***”³¹ Stalin’s own hatred for Christi-

29. Vladimir Lenin Quotes, http://thinkexist.com/quotation/our_program_necessarily_includes_the_propaganda/178554.html
30. E. Yaroslavsky, Landmarks in the Life of Stalin.

anity led to the murder of many Christians. In an article called Persecution of Christians in the Soviet Union, we are told:

“His government promoted atheism through special atheistic education in schools, massive amounts of anti-religious propaganda, the antireligious work of public institutions (especially the Society of the Godless), discriminatory laws, and also a terror campaign against the religious believers. By the late 1930’s it had become dangerous to be publicly associated with religion. Continuous persecution in the 1930’s resulted in its near extinction (the Russian Orthodox Church) as a public institution. By 1939, active parishes numbered in the low hundreds (down from 54,000 in 1917), many churches had been leveled and tens of thousands of priests, monks, and nuns were persecuted and killed. Over 100,000 were shot during the purges of 1937-1938. Just days before Stalin’s death, certain religious sects were outlawed and persecuted”. (Emphasis Supplied).

Karl Marx insulted Christians by claiming that their religion teaches them to degrade themselves to the status of a “canaille”- “a mob, the lowest class of people”, Marx said: **“The social prin-**

31. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Stalin citing Dimitry V. Pospelovsky. A History of Soviet Atheism in Theory and Practice, and the Believer, vol 2: Soviet Anti-Religious Campaigns and Persecutions, St Martin's Press, New York (1988) p. 89 and [Alexander N. Yakovlev](#); Austin, Anthony; Hollander, Paul (2004-04-10). [A Century of Violence in Soviet Russia](#). Yale University Press. pp. 165

*principles of Christianity preach cowardice, self-contempt, abasement, submission, humility, in a word the qualities of a canaille”*³²

As late as the 1980s Maurice Bishop in Grenada persecuted religious persons by denying their freedom of press, because he felt their acts were against his socialist revolution. The Roman Catholic Church published a weekly news sheet in the Torchlight newspaper but this paper was considered, “the anti-revolutionary newspaper”³³ by Bishop’s party and government. Also, Bishop suspected the head of the Catholic Church, Bishop Sydney Charles and his church of “a religious attack on the revolution” and as a result he suspended their publication. The socialist revolution in Grenada saw the church as a threat, just as in Soviet Union socialism, and religious liberty was threatened. This is true to original communist thinking. Communist founding fathers wrote “*Communism abolishes eternal truths, it abolishes all religion, and all morality*”.³⁴ This is the reason we are not surprised at the ULP government’s refusal to incorporate the inalienable rights phrase into the proposed constitution bill 2009- the phrase which acknowledged that the rights of man (including right to private property) comes from God. This behavior is in true fashion with their socialist stance. Therefore any insults and slanderous remarks hurled against religious groups in our society who dare to criticize their socialist agenda, is merely evidence of their social-

32. Karl Marx quotes, http://thinkexist.com/quotation/the_social_principles_of_christianity_preach/159245.html

33. O’Shaughnessy, Hugh: Grenada-revolution, Invasion and Aftermath, pg. 98, Sphere Books Ltd, 1984

34. The Communist Manifesto, pg. 103, cited in Nyron Medina’s COMMULIGION-THE ENEMY UNVEILED.

ism at work. I remember the remarks made by Prime Minister Gonsalves on November 24, 2009 (just one day before the referendum election) ,where in speaking of members of the Thusian Instiute for Religious Liberty, he made suggestive reference to us as having a “Jim Jones mentality”, like a Jim Jones cult. Vincen-tians know TIRL is not a cult and they also know that this NGO was foremost in criticizing ill provisions of the 2009 constitution bill.

It is a clear fact that Socialism is the enemy of Christianity. Christianity will always sound the alarm against socialism, exposing its anti-rights and freedoms characteristics because of conviction that rights and freedoms are inalienable or come from God. Many have vainly tried to prove a link between socialism and Christianity by pointing to the Christian welfare arrangements in the book of Acts of the Apostles in the bible. However, the religion of Jesus Christ teaches respect for man’s rights and freedoms and the self-denial practiced by early Christians, of selling their goods and sharing it with the poor was as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts mixed with their free choice. Note in the account of the rich young ruler and Christ in the biblical book of Mathew, chapter 19, that although the young man walked away sorrowful upon hearing Christ’s counsel to sell what he had and give to the poor, Christ did not force his surrender of his goods. The socialist policy of governance which purports to take from the rich and give to the poor to create so called equal classes, takes away freedoms of choice and the right to self-determination. It also encourages laziness by creating over dependence on the government in people. The bible does not advo-

cate this for it plainly teaches that a man must live by the things he has worked for. **“For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.”**³⁴ Marx, Lenin and Stalin, all socialists/communists leaders understood that Christianity had no place in the achievement of the final aims of their ideology. Any Christian groups which threatened their agenda felt the wrath of their persecution, whether by denial of rights and freedoms, including the right to life or slandering and spreading scandals in effort to discredit them. The public must not be deceived. Socialism is an enemy of Christianity, just as Satan is an enemy of God. It must be rejected with the whole heart and we must cling to God who gave us our inalienable rights and freedoms.

34. The Holy Bible: Old and New Testaments in the King James Version, 2 Thessalonians 3:10, pg. 252, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1972

CHAPTER 5

Principles of Good Governance

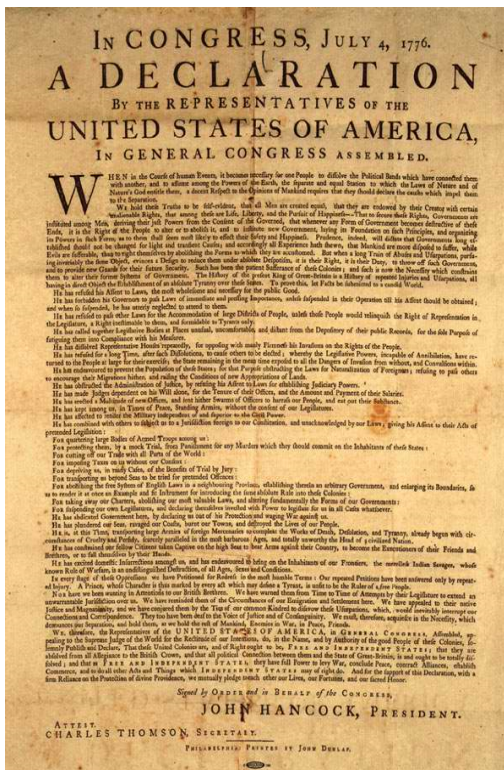
Any leader and government of a Country must have certain important principles of good governance. Central to good governance is the understanding expressed in the following lines of the declaration of independence of the United States of America;

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and happiness”³⁵

God has given humanity three fundamental rights; the right to religious liberty (right to serve God), the right to life and the right to private property. In order to exercise and enjoy those rights the Creator also endowed mankind with personal freedoms; private domain freedoms of thought, belief, con-

35. The Declaration of Independence, <http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/>

science, opinion and choice and public domain freedoms of expressions, speech and movement. It is important for governments to understand that these rights and freedoms come from God or are inalienable. They do not come from man, nature or human legislation. They are inalienable because they are a part of our natural human construction, by creation. While some of these rights and freedoms may be forfeited through wrong doing and due process of law, in the interest of protection of rights and freedoms of others, the right to religious liberty and private domain freedoms cannot be touched by human laws.



Picture of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America, signed July 4, 1776

It is only when governments and leaders hold these principles that there will be guaranteed equal treatment for all in protection of the rights and freedoms of ALL-not just of a majority or any influential minority group. Inalienable rights principles help to foster a sacred regard for human rights and freedoms which translate into greater respect for those said rights and freedoms. Problems of political victimization, inequality of treatment and discrimination, may all be solved through living principles of inalienable rights in the hearts and ways/behaviors of leaders in government and government departments. The opposite is equally true; that if a Prime Minister thinks himself a god or king with the absolute power to manage the rights and freedoms of the people at his will, contempt for the citizens would be the result.

Governments are servants of the people and the people are their employers and the true rulers of their own destiny. It is by the people's votes that they put governments into office and remove them likewise. Therefore their tenure is by the permission of the people and the people judge them on their behavior at the end of the term in office. People do not put governments in place by their votes, to trample upon their rights and freedoms. While government is elected by the will of the majority, they are to govern or serve by the duty to protect the inalienable rights and freedoms of **both the majority and the minority**. If this is not the case there would be the tyranny of the majority over the rights and freedoms of the minority.

Some advance the idea that provision of material things is the essence of government's role in the lives of the people. However, while governments must aid in making these things available

to the people, greater emphasis must be on protection of their rights and freedoms. For what is a man, though he has shelter, food and clothing but does not live in an environment where he is free? Free to think, initiate, invent and pursue his ideas; free to express his opinions, popular or not and to be critical of the things with which he disagrees, free to have self-determination.

The manner in which governments treat the people's criticisms is also indicative of whether they subscribe to good governance practices or not. As with any other person and group, governments are entitled to have 'critical intolerance' towards evils of the day. They too are free to be critical of the things around them. However, they must never descend into 'persecutive intolerance' towards the people because they disagree with their views. In other words, while a government is free to criticize its own people, it is not free to persecute them! Criticism is a natural dimension of free speech and expression, just as commendation is natural. Governments are not gods and thus are not infallible. They can make mistakes and the criticisms of the people are checks to curb corruption and ensure safeguarding of their rights and freedoms.

Many inventions and advancements in the different realms of human life (science, business and such like) have come about as a result of people's criticisms of traditional methods. Similarly, societies have been rescued from many evils due to the vigilance of watchmen on their walls, scrutinizing the performance of governments and leaders. **Therefore, politics is the policy operation of government to protect the rights and freedoms of the citizens in the economic, social and international realm of hu-**

man existence. The way in which governments treat human freedoms, especially freedom of expression, is often indicative of its true characteristic. Freedom of expression takes in the freedom to disagree and to criticize the policies of the government without any repercussions of political victimization and persecution.

It is not, as has been characteristic of the behavior of political parties in the Caribbean, engaging in slanderous drivel, suited for the pages of well known scandalous magazines. It is not about power hungry persons bent on slandering and vilifying anyone whom they are afraid to engage in intelligent and meaningful discussions. These animal principles of behavior are not suited for the governance of a Country and when politicians engage in such behavior they reveal that they are not fit to hold the reins of power over human beings, for whom they should have sympathy. Additionally, true statesmanship in politics shows respect and care, not only for supporters but also for opponents. One can judge the caring and gracious record of a government by how it treats its opponents and not so much its supporters. When it practices governance by blessing only its supporters but victimizing and persecuting its opponents, this is not genuine and good governance.

CONCLUSION

The defeat of the constitution bill 2009 put a blow in the socialist revolution agenda for SVG. The attempt was not through violent revolution but through covert means, via legislation which proposed to be good for the people, yet denied their very wishes. Vincentians must be proud and rejoice over the ‘people power’ they asserted for themselves, against the disrespectful musings of the leadership of the ULP. Yet, five months since that time, our prime minister signed the bicentennial manifesto of Caracas, declaring the decision to advance on the road to socialism. Now efforts are being made to dupe us into thinking we are safe but God who is wisdom has opened our eyes that we might see. Slander, scandal, name calling to denigrate our reputations and such like just makes the socialists’ image worse.

The revolution or change which was wrought in our hearts during the time leading up to the referendum election has made us become so conscientious now that we are not distracted. Insulting our intelligence is lame and merely shows us how unprofitable and contrary to brotherly love the socialist path is. We trust in the high and holy one, the unseen watcher whose eyes run to and fro in the earth, to deliver us and we know that Gonsalves and his Unity Labour Party’s Socialist Revolution attempt has lost, cannot live- not here, not in our blessed St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Maurice Bishop’s Grenada Socialist revolution will not rise in this beautiful land. Freedom loving Vincentians will ensure of

this! And history will not make us forget the brink on which we stood and how we avoided great danger by standing up for our inalienable rights and freedoms.

APPENDIX A

PRESENTATION TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE ON THE SVG CONSTITUTION BILL 2009

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Prime Minister and other Honourable Members of Parliament, Chairman and Members of the CRSC, members of the drafting committee, other invited guests, I greet you with grace and peace from the only great Creator, King, Legislator and Divine Judge of the universe, Yahweh God.

This God first made humanity everywhere with natural, equal and inalienable rights and freedoms. He subsequently established earthly governments for the sole purpose of ensuring the protection of those God-given rights and freedoms. Government derive their powers from the consent of the governed who elect them to office, not to define, give or manage their inalienable rights but to be the protectorate thereof. When in a period of a Country's history government moves to write or reform the Constitution, the people's voices are not sounded to rubber stamp what government has decided for them. Rather, they speak to instruct the government of their desires and when their wishes are good, it is the duty of the government to listen to their voices.

It is not the personal Constitution of the government or of a Prime Minister or of a Chairman of a ⁶⁹Constitution Reform body but it is the Constitution of the people primarily written to protect the

rights and freedoms of the people, defining the limits of governmental power in this interest. Government is not a king who owns the land and the people, having power to dictate to their consciences what should and should not be. They are but elected officers by the people to secure their God-given rights and freedoms.

For these reasons Constitution reform in SVG must firstly:

#1. Embrace the sacred value and guiding principle of the inalienable nature of the rights of humanity. This discussion dates back to 1776 when the great American Republic was founded as the United States of America declared Independence from the tyrannical Monarchical system of King George III of Great Britain. The declaration reads:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness; That to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed”

Such values were the answer to put in check the tide of tyranny. And today they are enshrined in preambles and other guiding principles statements of Constitutions throughout free, democratic and authentic republican Countries of the world. Mr. Chairman, right here in our region; Haiti, Antigua & Barbuda, St. Lucia, Grenada and Trinidad & Tobago all describe human rights as inalienable. These values provide Constitutional education that rights come from God and government stand as protectors and not

managers of them. It is therefore disturbing to our people to learn that the following phrase, embodying these principles, was removed from a previous draft of the SVG Constitutional bill 2009:

“Realize that the maintenance of human dignity requires a solemn appreciation that man is ENDOWED BY GOD with certain INALIENABLE rights and freedoms as ideals, including the right to life, liberty and privacy; the right to have and raise a family; the right to own property; and the right to the pursuit of just economic rewards for labour which INALIENABLE rights are to be safeguarded”

We the people demand that this justice-creating phrase be reinserted into the preamble of the Constitution bill 2009. It is an improvement on the existing Constitution’s preamble and the people want it. Inalienable means rights come from God and therefore cannot naturally be alienated or separated from us. They cannot be transferred from us or surrendered by us as they form our very humanity. Governmental powers need to be held in check by this holy principle for the protection of the people from any threat of tyranny and dictatorship.

#2. The fundamental freedom of protection from deprivation of property is another of the people’s concern.

The consensus voice of the people indicated in consultations that the phrase “adequate compensation” should be defined, when addressing compulsory acquisition of property for public purposes. On page 92 of the CRC’s revised final Report to the House of As-

sembly dated 28th September, 2006 we read:

“When compensation is assessed for compulsorily acquired property, such compensation should be assessed on the basis of the open market value of that property as at the date of the compulsory acquisition.”

The SVG Constitutional Bill 2009 does not reflect the voices from the belly of the people in this matter since while it appears to address the meaning of “reasonable time” it fails to define “adequate compensation”, as instructed by the people in the CRC’s report. TIRL recommends the insertion of the following in subsection 1 of clause 30 of the bill, just below the definition of “reasonable time”:

“Provided that adequate compensation includes current market value of the property at the date of the compulsory acquisition”.

This proposal:

- Reflects the wishes of the people expressed in consultations.
- Does not limit government from paying more than current market value if so desired.
- Strengthens the protection of the fundamental freedom of protection from deprivation of property-an extension of the inalienable right to private property with which God made us. The people’s parliament and government must follow the people’s good instructions, in this matter.

#3. The powers of Parliament to alter the constitution have been increased in the 2009 Constitution bill, at the expense of lessening the entrenchment of the people's rights and freedoms in the Constitution.

- The 2009 bill removes 30 days from the people between the 1st and 2nd reading of any bill to alter the Constitution in the future, requiring at least 60 days instead of 90 days in any future process.
- It will also demand fewer votes from the people to alter any future Constitution, requiring a smaller majority of 60% votes in a referendum rather than 66%, almost 67% or a 2/3 majority that we now enjoy.
- This is dangerous: If accepted it will give legal grounds for easy changes to the Constitution which can bring about the Chavezisation of our Country. Laws can be passed often which take away our rights easily because it will be now easier to adjust the Constitution in which those rights are legally protected.
- If there is not sufficient, Constitutional protection of rights and freedoms we will be in danger and the lessening of the entrenchment of the provisions to alter the Constitution exposes us to such danger.

We the people counsel you to let the entrenchment remain as is now!

Mr. Chairman I also hasten to note at this juncture that there is no record whatsoever that the people of this good and free Country ever requested such a modification to their Constitution, yet it

appears as a proposed change. At the same time, their voices on the issue of defining “adequate compensation” have been ignored and treated with contempt. Let governments be reminded that due regard for the people is of paramount significance to the fulfillment of their duty as representatives of the people. And due regard for the people means regard for minorities also. This characterizes a Republican state which Vincentians were advised we would have (page 18 of the CRC’s report says “We have therefore recommended a change to Republican status”). Therefore if for example the SVGTU desires a good thing, regard for them, though a minority group among the whole population is Republicanism.

The life and survival of SVG as a democratic and Republican society is at stake in this Constitution process and no government and leader must have contempt for the people’s voices. No government must hide behind the fact that they were elected by the people, to bring in legislation that is against the people. I speak that our Country might be safe and saved now and in the future and urge upon the Parliament to hear our voices. The measly 15 minutes given me have only afforded me the chance to speak on these three (3) main issues. If anyone would like copies of our document we have them to share. I now invite questions.

Anesia O. Baptiste

Associate Director

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Thusian Institute for Religious Liberty (T.I.R.L)

July 23, 2009

St. Vincent & the Grenadines

At



TIRL's 1st anniversary commemoration-October 12, 2009-
presenting the issues in the speech above.

ATTENTION PEOPLE OF SVG!!!

“REALISE THAT THE MAINTENANCE OF HUMAN DIGNITY REQUIRES SOLEMN APPRECIATION THAT MAN IS ENDOWED BY GOD WITH CERTAIN INALIENABLE RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS AS IDEALS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO LIFE, LIBERTY AND PRIVACY; THE RIGHT TO HAVE AND RAISE A FAMILY; THE RIGHT TO OWN PROPERTY; AND THE RIGHT TO THE PURSUIT OF JUST ECONOMIC REWARDS FOR LABOUR; WHICH INALIENABLE RIGHTS ARE TO BE SAFEGUARDED.”

Why was this important phrase removed from the preamble of the final draft Constitutional bill 2009?

- ✦ Inalienable means your rights come from God
- ✦ They cannot be alienated or separated from you
- ✦ They cannot be transferred from you
- ✦ They are not given by man, government or laws
- ✦ They are not to be managed or taken away by government
- ✦ They are God-endowed or God-given
- ✦ They are your rights; know them! Assert them! Protect them!, Defend them!, Respect them! And Enjoy them!

For they are the source of your freedoms, happiness, success, peace and security from government tyranny!

We call upon the government to reinstate this fundamental and important justice-creating phrase into the constitution before it is voted on.

Vincitians must demand that the government reinstate this phrase!

PREPARED ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF S.U.C.

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