



NO BACK DOOR TO STATUS



PRC Loophole

Press Statement, July 11, 2014

On June 18th, the People's Campaign for Equality, Jobs and Justice issued a statement calling upon the government to take action regarding the loophole that gives PRC holders an unintended path to status through a "sleeping provision" in the Bermuda Immigration and Protection Act of 1956.

We urge the following actions be taken:

1. The government must suspend all grants of status based upon the "sleeping provision" loophole immediately.
2. The government must make a commitment to fix the loophole legislatively.
3. The government must undertake a review process with a view to establishing a path to status for PRC-qualified holders.

In doing so, the original intent of the law would be preserved. It would also go a long way toward restoring the people's confidence in the integrity of government. If the government wants to then have a review of the current pathway to citizenship, it should be undertaken on its own merit through the establishment of a formal review process. Such a review should be guided by a desire to develop pathways to citizenship that are fair and equitable and that strike a balance between the needs of a small country such as Bermuda and the rights of émigrés.

The People's Campaign affirms this position and calls upon all Bermudians to support the *No Back Door to Status* campaign which will be launched on Friday, the 18th of July. We ask all supporters to wear red on Friday, July 18th as a show of solidarity. Additionally, we will be distributing *No Back Door to Status* stickers and are asking them to be worn and displayed as another show of unity.

Alternatively, supporters can download our *No Back Door to Status* image from <http://bermudapeoplescampaign.com> and our Facebook page to post on their social networking profiles.

June 2014 Public Evaluation

During the month of June, The People's Campaign reviewed legislation, ministerial statements, statements from the Opposition, articles in the media, and public reports. We examined them with an aim to produce a summary of our elected officials' activities. This process will be used by the People's Campaign to keep the people of Bermuda aware of decisions that are being made and how they are aligned with the people's expectations.

This months topics include:

- Call for MPs to Raise the Level of Debate
- Healthcare
- Premier Dunkley on The People's Campaign
- Election and Parliamentary Reform
- Public Statements

Rev. Nicholas Tweed

Jason Hayward

Chris Furbert, JP

Public Evaluation

FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 2014



Public Evaluations

The People's Campaign will seek to assess the Government and the Opposition through public evaluations. Public evaluation will allow the People's Campaign to evaluate how effective those who sit in the House of Parliament are, in addressing the issues raised by the people. In the Month of June, we reviewed legislation, Ministerial statements, Opposition statements, articles in the media and public reports. We examined them with an aim to produce a summary of our elected officials' activities. This process will be used by the People's Campaign to keep the people of Bermuda conscious to the decisions that are being made and how they are aligned with the people's expectations.

Call for MPs to Raise The Level Of Debate



Former Premier Alex Scott: Political Language

June 7th, 2014

Commenting on the recent level of discord in the House of Assembly, Former Premier Alex Scott stated that while he was *"not speaking to any particular individual or debate.....I would think that honourable men and women would take a lesson from the historic origins of Parliamentary debate and realize that we may not use swords, but they can injure themselves and injure the tradition of the House."* He added: *"It also demeans the decorum of Parliament; under the decorum of Parliament, we refer to ourselves as honourable men and women."*

The People's Campaign call on all members of the House of Assembly to raise the level of debate when discussing the people's business.

HealthCare



The Consumer Price Index for April revealed that the cost of health insurance rose on average by 8.2% with some insurance policies rising as high as 10%. While BF&M Ltd recorded a net income of \$25.2 million for 2013, the amount of life and health policy benefits decreased by 22%. [CPI April 2014](#)

In response, Minister of Health, Seniors and Environment, Jeanne Atherden, stated that Government is **"commitment to containing health insurance costs while also meeting the healthcare needs of the Bermudian population."**

The Bermuda Health Council highlighted that while Bermuda spends more per person on healthcare, our life expectancy is lower than countries that spends less.

The People's Campaign implores the government to make the stabilization of Bermuda's healthcare costs one of their top priorities.

Premier Dunkley Speaks on the People's Campaign



Premier Dunkley speaks on the People's Campaign

Premier's National Address

June 9th, 2014

"The tremendous outpouring of public support for the People's Campaign, with its theme of equality, jobs and justice, demonstrated issues that matter to the lives of people – and that needs must be met. My colleagues and I are committed to doing just that.

My colleagues and I know Bermuda's recovery is not happening fast enough for people who struggle each day. To them, I say: *"Your fight is our fight. Everything we do is to help you support your families and build a future you can believe in."*

June 29th, 2014

"After extensively reviewing the document with my Cabinet colleagues, we ultimately agreed that there is no difference between the goals of equality, jobs and justice articulated in the Manifesto and those of the Government.

"To address the situation and make possible the ideals we share, the Government adopted a two-track strategy to grow the economy and to curtail and control government spending. Our aim has been to rebuild the economic foundation and stabilize public finances in ways that restore confidence, opportunity and hope – generating tangible benefits to the people. Despite the challenges we face as a Country, we are confident that we are moving Bermuda in the right direction, towards economic recovery, thus expanding opportunity and full employment for Bermudians. We appreciate that recovery is not happening fast enough for those Bermudians who are still facing hardship. And I shared with the members of the People's Campaign that this Government is pursuing priorities and applying available resources to bring relief to people as fast as possible."

Election & Parliamentary Reform

Following reports tabled in the House of Assembly by both the Election Reform Joint Select Committee and the Parliamentary Governance Joint Select Committee, there have been renewed calls for Government to make good on their election promises of reform.

John Barritt: *"reform that is long overdue. We continue to operate under legislation and rules that are almost 50 years old. The world of good governance has long since marched on... our system of governance requires reform, it's the key I believe to changing the political culture around here..... It is making sure that we have the right rules, that they are clearly understood, and that they are made clearer where they are not, and that they are being followed and adhered to by all. That's politics all right, the politics of transparency and accountability."*

Centre for Justice: pledged to submit a proposal on election reform by the end of the year.

Jonathan Starling: *"constituents have little recourse to hold their representatives accountable other than waiting until the next general election, which may be years away...The right of recall vote allows for power to go back to the voters, to empower them to hold their MPs – even in safe seats – to be held accountable."*

Public Statements

Premier Dunkley announced that working groups have been established for Public Service Reform Initiative (Justice)

June 5th, 2014

The People's Campaign supports government's efforts to improve efficiency, accountability and transparency within the civil service. However, we are fundamentally opposed to privatization of Government assets and services. We support the notion that the Government does not own public property but holds it in trust on behalf of the people and therefore should exercise proper stewardship that protects the assets of the people against privatization. And therefore find the objective of the asset rationalization working group as a complete violation of the People's Manifesto.

Premier Dunkley highlights movement to greater openness and transparency (People's Assets)

June 13th, 2014

The OBA announced that it would table an amendment to the Public Treasury (Administration and Payments Act) to all Government Departments and public authorities to ensure better transparency of financial information. The People's Campaign supports this legislation but believes this should extend to ALL entities that are funded using taxpayers' dollars. This would include the Bermuda Tourism Authority as it is currently receiving \$23.1 million to underwrite the

cost of operations.

People's Campaign on PRC Status Debate (Justice)

June 18th, 2014

In view of the recent debate regarding the loophole in the law that provides a pathway to citizenship for PRC holders, and the defeat of the effort to fix the law by the Government, the People's Campaign for Equality, Jobs, and Justice is hereby urging the Government to:-

1. immediately suspend applications for status based upon this loophole,
2. engage in proper bi-partisan legislation to close the loophole forthwith, and,
3. review the current pathway to citizenship with an aim to create a fair and equitable pathways, which should strike a balance between the needs of a small country such as Bermuda, and the rights of PRC holders.

Clarien Bank recently confirmed that they had met with representatives of the People's Movement and as a result, will offer Union members a premium increase of 1/8 of 1 percent [0.125%] interest over and above published interest rates on selected products.

The People's Campaign appreciate benefit to the unions and invite the Clarien Bank to extend these same terms to all Bermuda residents.

Minister Richards: Construction Payroll Tax Relief (Jobs & Equality)

June 27th, 2014

The People's Campaign calls on this concession to be extended to the entire construction industry and not just be afforded to those companies who are working on projects that the Government deems to be of "national importance". The People's Campaign also notes that this payroll tax relief is only granted to the employer while deducting the full recoverable rate of 5.25% from the employee as per normal. The People's Campaign implores Government to extend this relief to employees as well.

In response to this announcement, Deputy Opposition Leader Derrick Burgess noted that while "...seniors benefits and scholarships have been cut, Government continues to support wealthy businesses. All they have done is cut the benefits for the ordinary people and given gifts, tax exemptions to those that can afford it."

NO BACK DOOR TO STATUS



Clarien: Preferred Union Members CD Rates (Equality)

June 26th, 2014

The People's Manifesto

EQUALITY

Every Bermudian should have the opportunity for post secondary education and should not be prevented from attaining education due to lack of funding.

The Government must implement an equitable taxation system that would structure taxation based upon levels of total income and the value of assets and holdings.

Quality healthcare must be accessible and affordable to all.

All Bermudians must have equal treatment under the law: the criminal justice system and the civil legal system must be accessible irrespective of financial well-being and must be administered at all levels in a manner that truly demonstrates that justice is blind.

JOBS

Every person should be entitled to a livable wage in proportion to the cost of living. That is to say, a wage that permits its citizens to meet primary needs of food, shelter, clothing, healthcare and from a primary source of employment.

Full employment for Bermudians must be a national priority.

The Government must hold all employers accountable so that all workers will be respected and afforded the same standards and working conditions.

All workers must have the right to join Unions or form associations to defend their rights.

IUSTICE

The Government must implement a program specifically designed to provide true economic opportunities for persons who historically have been prevented access.

The Government must establish regulatory constraints over the market to ensure that the business community share the sacrifices and participate in practices that serve the common good recognizing that the economy must serve the people and not the other way around.

Equal rights must be the same for ALL citizens in Bermuda, as such age cannot be a barrier for access to services, capital, and employment.

The Government does not own public property but holds it in trust on behalf of the people and therefore should exercise proper stewardship that protects the assets of the people against privatization.

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