

Green Party Economic Charter

- Reduce electricity prices by 50% to all households over a five-year period.
- Provide free pre-school to every child in SVG.
- Provide free school meals, uniforms and textbooks to every child in SVG.
- Provide free education and skills training for all, from preschool to university and hence eradicate poverty and illiteracy once and for all.
- Provide free electricity and piped water to the poor and disadvantaged in our society and abolish the tax on kerosene and the water meter charge.
- Fund a policy of inclusion for all children with special needs to enable them to attend mainstream schools.
- Increase pensions and double the poor relief given to the less fortunate.
- Introduce Participatory Budgets for a transparent, corruption-free, true democracy that gives power to the population.
- Provide exemptions from payments on prescription and other medical charges for persons over 60 and the poor and disadvantaged.
- Provide free dental and eyesight examinations for all.
- Build a university in SVG and make it free to all Vincentians.
- Provide greater small business support, and radically reduce unemployment by increasing the service and manufacturing sectors.
- Cut ties with Taiwan as they have made millions of dollars from us and not helped our country's trade and economy. Create ties with China.
- Boost the economy by moving from an agriculturally led economy to a service led economy.
- Assist the agriculture sector by boosting exports of agro-products and organic foodstuffs.
- Reduce our reliance on oil and move towards alternative energy sources that are pollution-free and renewable.
- Promote equal opportunities, gender equality and end discrimination.
- Be firm with crime and the causes of crime and make our society safer.
- Create legislation to strengthen the protection of the environment and reduce the pollution to our land, drinking water sources, seas and air.
- Provide exemption from airport departure tax for people over 60.
- Increase the ratio of employees with disabilities in public and private sectors work place.
- Increase the amount of scholarships to children of poor families to go university

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Introductory message from Ivan O'Neal

I am a patriot and I am honoured to lead St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) Green Party. More importantly, though, I am highly-qualified, competent, disciplined person and I am determined to bring our country into the twenty-first century.

SVG Green Party's policies are based on the need for long-term food, economic and social security of our country and environmental sustainability. We aim to encourage the development of an inclusive, safe society for all, eradicate illiteracy and poverty, empower the vulnerable, improve the health of the nation, create a fully employable workforce and reduce unemployment to single figures

We need to leave behind last century's politics of short-term party policies, created mainly to get people re-elected, but which are detrimental to our economy and society. We need to leave behind 'party jobs', where people are given jobs based on who they voted for. We need a society in which people gain jobs based on ability and are free to vote for the party of their choice without fear of losing their job. SVG Green Party aims to bring SVG's economy and society in to the twenty-first century with policies that are exciting, achievable, realistic, but also necessary to achieve a thriving, sustainable, democratic society.



In 1996, I said to the people of SVG that the Cable & Wireless telecoms monopoly was bad for the SVG economy. Almost everyone said I was wrong and that our country was too small for more than one telecom company. People thought that the introduction of competition would result in the loss of jobs in the telecom industry. I begged to differ. I conducted a relentless, one-man protest to abolish the Cable & Wireless telecom monopoly. As we all know now, I was successful and it was abolished. Today, SVG has three telecom companies, competition has reduced prices significantly, quality has improved, and more importantly, the poor and low-income groups are now able to enter the telecom market.

Today in 2005, I have a humble message. We need to cut loose from the New Democratic Party (NDP) and Unity Labour Party (ULP) regimes, which by design and inability, have almost destroyed the economy of SVG. There is a component that is critically flawed in the management of the SVG economy. Other political parties have put all their energy and resources into winning power at the expense of moving the country forward. The parties beg, borrow and squander public money and scarce resources.

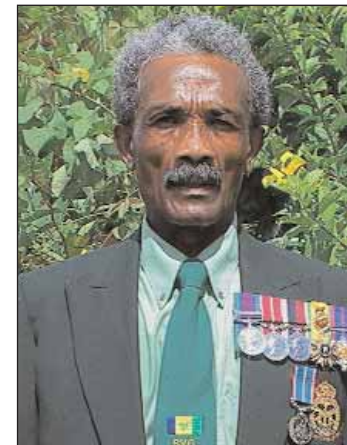
The implications of this negative mind-set have been a significant cluster of capital expenditure on non-tradeables, a high rate of national debt, high unemployment, the perpetuation of poverty and illiteracy, and a society polarized by party affiliation. More seriously, this negative mind-set has been trying to deal with the symptoms of our failing economy rather than the causes.

No country can truly develop under such a negative mind-set. SVG Green Party will adopt a strategy of wealth creation, sustainable job creation, high-quality human capital development and prudent management of the economy.

SVG Green Party's philosophy and aims for SVG are outlined in this manifesto. We believe that firmness and fairness is a good approach in dealing with matters. Our mission is to substantially restructure the economy of SVG as a going concern and protect and preserve the fragile environment of SVG.

We believe that power emanates from the people and we intend to empower citizens so that they play a greater part in the way our country is governed. Through our policies citizens will be significantly more able to participate in the decisions of how we manage the national budget, and more importantly, their community.

Our era has been marked by an increasing disbelief in politics. It is necessary to overcome the distance between governors and the governed, for citizens to stop being treated as passive recipients of policy and instead become active subjects of political decision-making, and to build a new kind of democracy.



We need to address the way the society is going, whereby the rich get richer and the poor get much poorer. The struggle against social exclusion demands public policies that change the distribution of income and power in SVG, including forms of direct participation by the population in the administration of public affairs. SVG Green Party's vision of

social inclusion is centred on the idea that people have the ability to organise themselves to generate jobs and income without depending on the whims of capital.

Finally, let us work together in building our country. I ask you to give SVG Green Party a mandate. I demonstrated to the nation my courage, strength and duty to SVG by taking on the transnational company Cable & Wireless, and will utilise the same strength and courage to empower and enrich our great country and all its citizens.

**Ivan O'Neal BSc (Hons), MSc, MBA.
Leader and co-founder
of SVG Green Party**

SVG Green Party's Economic Vision

Since Independence in October 1979, The Labour Party, The New Democratic Party and The Unity Labour Party have had a regrettably high propensity to spend large sums of revenue on non-tradeables as a means of providing jobs for their respective party supporters. This economic strategy has had a profound negative impact on the economy, in that it has pushed up National Debt at an astronomical rate. National Debt in the 2005 budget was 814 million dollars.

Non-Tradeables such as the erection of traffic lights in Kingstown do not bring in income or revenue to SVG treasury.

SVG Green Party strongly believes that in order to successfully manage the affairs of SVG, we must first successfully manage the economy. When elected, SVG Green Party will positively stimulate the economy by focusing on increasing exports and significantly reducing the present high-capital expenditure on non-tradeables.

The economy will be built on seven pillars:

- 1) High-quality **fish** industry;
- 2) A fully developed **tourism** industry;
- 3) Voluntary export of **human capital**;
- 4) The **control** of government **spending** on non-tradeables;
- 5) New value-added, high-quality **agricultural trade**;
- 6) Profiling strategy of **small business creation**; and
- 7) Protection and preservation of the **environment**.

There will be a comprehensive and coherent economic transformation, which will be export-led.

Deep-sea fishing industry

SVG's right to fish in the Atlantic Ocean provides an excellent opportunity to earn over a billion dollars in revenue annually. SVG Green Party will cancel all fish licences given to 'flag of convenience' foreign vessels, and replace these licences with joint-venture agreements. Under the SVG Green Party government, 50 per cent of all crew members of deep-sea fishing ships would be Vincentian, crew and there would be the potential of transfer technology in deep-sea fishing techniques.

Trade with the People's Republic of China and Taiwan

Taiwan and SVG's relationship of twenty-four years standing has shown no significant benefit to the overall development of our country. Taiwan gets more from us than we get from Taiwan. In government, SVG Green Party will cut ties with Taiwan and create ties with The People's Republic of China. SVG will be better-off financially and economically in forming relations with China and will benefit from a much larger potential market. All Caribbean countries that have cut ties with Taiwan in favour of China have received far greater support as a result - much more, notably, than we have ever received from Taiwan. The NDP and ULP are unable to cut ties with Taiwan.

According to the CIA World fact book, "Taiwan's trade surplus is substantial; its foreign reserves are the world's third largest at US\$ 207 billion." Taiwan imports approximately US\$ 2 billion a year of vegetable products.

During the years of the decline of SVG agriculture sector, particularly the banana industry, Taiwan has shown how much it cares for SVG's citizens. Of its US\$ 2 billion annual total of imported vegetable products, not one carrot or banana has come from SVG - there has been no help for our agriculture industry whatsoever. (Source: <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0108020.html>)

Instead, Taiwan has made hundreds of millions of dollars a year since 1987, from fishing in the Atlantic Ocean under SVG's tuna fishing licence and contributed to the destruction of SVG by funding the cross-country road. The cross-country project threatens our source of fresh drinking water, will significantly damage our primary rainforest - the habitat of the national bird of SVG and other endemic biodiversity - and opens the rainforest up to logging companies.



More importantly, half the revenue earned by each ship will come to the SVG treasury. SVG Green Party will also encourage local companies to invest in deep-sea fishing. This has been a missed opportunity under the NDP and ULP to earn billions of dollars to stimulate the economy.

No to cross-country road

After careful consideration and deliberation, SVG Green Party concluded that it cannot support the building of the cross-country road for environmental and economic reasons. As stated earlier, this road threatens our source of fresh drinking water, our primary rainforest and opens the rainforest up to logging companies. Extensive research has been carried out by the international NGO Birdlife International and we share their concerns. (see www.birdlife.org/news/pr/2004/12/st_vincent.html).

We will take court action to stop the construction of the middle section of the cross-country road.



Tourism

SVG Green Party will develop additional components to the tourism industry, namely sport fishing, sustainable tourism, and a niche holiday market for people with disabilities. Tourism should not be done to the detriment of the long-term economic, social and environmental welfare of our country. To encourage this sector of the economy and simultaneously sustain the well-being of the citizens of SVG we will:

- ensure tourism is initiated with the help of broad-based community inputs and that the community maintains control of tourism development;
- ensure tourism provides quality employment to its community residents and that a linkage between the local businesses and tourism is established;
- ensure a code of practice is established for tourism at all levels - national, regional, and local, based on internationally accepted standards. Guidelines for tourism operations, impact assessment, monitoring of cumulative impacts, and limits to acceptable change should be established;

Green Party Economic Charter

We have critically analysed the economy in depth. We will make substantial adjustments to the annual budget and provide the following:

- Reduce electricity prices by 50% to all households over a five-year period.
- Provide free pre-school to every child in SVG.
- Provide free school meals, uniforms and textbooks to every child in SVG.
- Provide free education and skills training for all, from preschool to university and hence eradicate poverty and illiteracy once and for all.
- Provide free electricity and piped water to the poor and disadvantaged in our society and abolish the tax on kerosene and the water meter charge.
- Fund a policy of inclusion for all children with special needs to enable them to attend mainstream schools.
- ensure new infrastructure uses renewable, non-polluting energies as much as possible;
- seek to make SVG accessible to disabled people;
- develop training programs to improve and manage heritage and natural resources.

- Increase pensions and double the poor relief given to the less fortunate.
- Introduce Participatory Budgets, for a transparent, corruption-free, true democracy that gives power to the population.
- Provide exemptions from payments on prescription and other medical charges for persons over 60 and the poor and disadvantaged.
- Provide free dental and eyesight examinations for all.
- Build a university in SVG and make it free to all Vincentians.
- Provide greater small business support, and radically reduce unemployment by increasing the service and manufacturing sectors.
- Cut ties with Taiwan to prevent vastly unfavourable terms for our country's trade and economy. Create ties with China.
- Boost the economy by moving from an agriculturally-led economy to a service-led economy.
- Assist the agriculture sector by boosting exports of agro-products and organic foodstuffs.
- Reduce our reliance on oil and move towards alternative energy sources that are pollution-free and renewable.
- Promote equal opportunities, gender equality and end discrimination.
- Be firm with crime and the causes of crime and make our society safer.
- Create legislation to strengthen the protection of the environment and reduce the pollution to our land, drinking water sources, seas and air.
- Provide exemption from airport departure tax for people over 60.
- Increase the ratio of employees with disabilities in public and private sectors work place.
- Increase the amount of scholarships to children of poor families to go university

We will cut all perks allowances in the present budget by EC\$ 10m to help offset the cost of electricity to poor and low-income families - for example, the EC\$14,000 paid to the Prime Minister annually as a barbecue entertainment allowance.

Free education and skills training for all, from preschool to university, so as to eradicate poverty and illiteracy once and for all and give power to the population.

Agriculture

For many decades of the twentieth century, agriculture was the mainstay of the SVG economy with an income of about EC\$ 94m per annum.



Photo: Fairtrade Foundation

In October 2004, income from bananas dived to ECS\$30m per annum. The banana trade now has to rely on government subsidies as the full impact of the ruling from the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on the industry becomes all too apparent. Previous governments have not assisted farmers in developing a plan to ensure that they receive a decent income from their toils in the field. Instead of developing a clear, coherent strategy, these governments merely told these farmers to diversify and ignored the hardship that followed. An important priority of SVG Green Party's agricultural policy is to consult with farmers and provide them with a clear way forward.

Developing new trade relations

The program of agricultural diversification has proved wholly inadequate and many people who used to farm bananas are now much poorer or out of work. Their quality of life has been severely reduced and there has been a significant impact on their families.

SVG Green Party will:

- hold consultations to see the extent of the loss of banana revenue and discuss with farmers options of going forward;
- look at the feasibility of small, local farming co-ops supplying their local shops, hotels, supermarkets and schools;
- provide incentives to increase local buying and reduce imports of goods that can be made nationally;
- discuss with local schools, hotels and shops the importance of buying local food;
- provide support and technological aid to farmers so that they can increase their ability to diversify their farming products;
- divert government contracts for foodstuffs from foreign suppliers to local farmers;
- encourage more regional farmers' markets.



Organic farming

In this day and age of increased awareness of the dangers of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and of pesticides and other chemicals used in farming, it is only prudent and right that we readdress our farming methods. This is both for the safety of farmers and their families, and the general public that consumes the fruit and vegetables grown locally.

In terms of exporting food, more and more of our trade partners, such as Britain, are demanding that foodstuffs are GMO-free and organic. If we are to keep up with supplying foodstuffs to foreign countries then we need to react and predict the market demands.

SVG Green Party will:

- establish an organic farmers' agency and give free licences to organic farmers;
- assist farmers in the transition to becoming organic farmers;
- reduce the level of chemicals needed by introducing new farming techniques that help keep pests away;
- establish more foreign markets for the increased organic output;
- ensure that all food served to children in schools is free from chemicals and GMOs and is organic, and thus provide a ready market for organic foodstuffs.

Hemp industry

As part of the process to develop new agricultural trade relations and reduce crime, we will encourage the production of hemp in order to play a significant role in the already established worldwide hemp industry.

Hemp is not a drug and cannot be used to get 'high' as it lacks the relevant chemical found in marijuana. Hemp has been grown for decades in many countries and is a thriving industry in some. Hemp is a foodstuff and also a highly versatile manufacturing raw material.



SVG has the natural resources to grow hemp and make products from it. The farming and production stages will create many long-term jobs and enhance peoples' skills in agro-production and also business and cooperative management. Hemp production will help reduce the production of marijuana. The nutritional composition of hemp is exceptional.

SVG Green Party will:

- carry out a feasibility study to assess the best method of farming and agro-production to use that suits our country;
- train farmers in the methods of hemp production;
- set up a hemp co-operative so that the industry can be run by the people who work in it and their communities gain the maximum benefit;
- set up a factory to process hemp products such as body lotion, shampoo, sun block, after-sun lotion, shower gel, bubble bath, massage oil, soap, hemp oil for salads, moisturising cream, lip salve, snack bars, t-shirts, bags, rucksacks, paper, mattresses, sails, tarpaulin, ropes, netting, paints, varnishes, plastics, biomass gas production for electricity, fuel for cars, cement, roofing, plywood, door panels, flooring, non-toxic cleaning products;
- work with farmers involved in the marijuana trade to get them involved in hemp production instead.

Agro-processing

There are a number of commodities that are not being utilised that could bring in revenue for the country. As well as the many things we will process from a revived coconut industry, we could process aloe vera, fruit juices, peanut butter and herbal teas. Manufacturing goods in the country will provide added value, thereby increasing export income.

A more competent and planned approach in utilising STABEX (Stabilising of Export Earnings from Agricultural Commodities) will be taken. In the past we have been losing out on money from this source, because the NDP and ULP regimes have not applied for it within time. We will set up also regional branches of the SVG marketing corporation in order to support local farmers.

Manufacturing

SVG Green Party will provide support and facilities to re-ignite the manufacturing sector.



We will promote and encourage industries that are compatible with the local community and that contribute to the economic and social welfare of SVG. As part of the 'green' goal to make SVG a zero-waste society, there will be stimulation of industries for pollution-control devices, fuel efficiency and energy-saving technology.

The increase in the manufacturing sector that SVG Green Party's policies will create will help reduce unemployment and crime. We will:

- upgrade the technology used in this sector and ensure technology transfer in joint ventures;
- set up a standards and quality board to ensure goods are made to safe and decent standards;

- ensure the purchase of goods made in SVG by promoting the manufacturing sector at trade fairs locally and abroad;
- assist producers in obtaining raw materials;

- set up information databases to help increase awareness of materials and technologies abroad;
- provide incentives to encourage banks to invest in local industries;
- provide incentives for more joint-venture companies between Vincentians and foreign nationals;
- provide incentives for foreign investment in SVG;
- restructure the corporate tax system so that less money is repatriated out of SVG;
- provide training grants for people to gain manufacturing skills and technical assistance;
- provide incentives to encourage Vincentians abroad to return with their business or set up a branch in SVG;
- make it easier for producers to export their goods.

Small business development

In the last two decades the NDP and the ULP have been particularly weak in small business creation, and this has had a negative impact on the economy.

SVG Green Party will adopt the 'profiling approach' in small business creation. We will write a profile for three hundred small businesses needed in SVG and offer these small businesses to suitable persons who are willing and able to successfully operate them. SVG Green Party strongly believes that small businesses can play a pivotal role in job creation and stimulating the economy. The financial and service sectors have to play a major role in our economy in the future to enable us to be a regional and world leader. SVG Green Party will:

- facilitate business parks and symbiotic relationships for small businesses that can provide for growth through mutual trade;
- have a continual promotion of local businesses to encourage the public to support local trade. This will save on foreign exchange, keep more money circulating within the country and strengthen the economy, create jobs and reduce crime;



- provides incentives for people to start up small businesses;
- provide internet and website support to small businesses to help them advertise and get on with running the business, worry less about admin and finance;
- introduce a staggered level of corporate tax with an initial floor of EC\$ 20,000 earnings;
 - redirect government business to local businesses;
 - encourage joint-owned businesses - local and foreign partnerships - so that half the profits stay in the country and there is a transfer of technology;
 - actively work with cruise companies for more cruise ships;
- establish more SVG consulates in foreign countries to promote trade relations;
- build up our international finance centres to encourage more investment in SVG;
- set up a duty-free zone for Chinese products and supply other Caribbean countries;
- set up a salt refinery and desalination plant in the southern Grenadines;
- set up a sand mining operation in Central Leeward;
- seek greater trade relations with South American countries and the world's largest emerging market, China.

The Environment

Our environment is extremely precious and needs to be respected and treated with care. The protection and preservation of our physical environment is critical to our survival and lifestyle.

We are blessed in SVG by having a good source of water, clean air in most places, lush fertile land and beautiful coastlines. SVG Green Party believes it is necessary that we all care for our environment and look after our ecosystem and biodiversity. We need to reduce our carbon dioxide emissions as a country and actively participate in the global struggle against climate change.

Air

The extent of air pollution in Kingstown is unacceptable. If the pollution levels continue to rise we will see an increase in respiratory illnesses and an increase in childhood asthma. SVG Green Party will install air pollution monitors in the capital, to measure high and low periods and extent of air pollution. We will use the findings to create policies to provide Kingstown's residents, workers and visitors with good-quality air at acceptable levels as agreed by the World Health Organisation.



Water

The protection and preservation of the watersheds is paramount to the long-term health of the environment, our people and our future generations. Our watercourses are vulnerable to pollution via construction upstream and by pesticides that are washed into the rivers from agricultural lands. We will cancel the cross-country road project when in government.



Land, recycling and waste

We cannot afford to keep dumping so much of our waste in landfill sites. There will be leaching and pollution of water courses and we will run out of sites to bury the rubbish. Where will the next landfill or dumpsite be? Would you want it next to your house? Much of our waste can be recycled and we should start doing so immediately.



Countries such as Holland have been recycling household waste for 35 years. If you take out items such as glass, paper, tins, plastics, batteries and compostable foodstuffs from your bin, you will find that your 'real' amount of waste is severely reduced.



We must move towards a strategy of zero waste - stopping the use landfill and incineration and focus on reducing, reusing and recycling. This could be achieved in SVG within 20-30 years with the development of new technology and a committed approach. We will put in place legislative, educative and other measures to achieve zero-waste by 2025. SVG Green Party will:

- ensure the use of the three 'R's, reduce the amount of rubbish we create; recycle what we don't need; and reuse items rather than continually buying new ones;
- revise the disposal of white goods so they are not buried;
- say no to any incineration of rubbish for health reasons;
- start a door-to-door collection of recyclable waste such as paper, plastics, glass, tins, and batteries;
- ensure more composting.

Marine environment

Pollution dumped into our watercourses end up the marine environment as it flows downstream. A serious concern is pesticide residue leaking into the coastal environment. Pesticides ingested or absorbed by fish end up in the human food chain when we consume fish from our local waters. Also, much rubbish is simply dumped in coastal areas. SVG Green Party will:

- ensure maintenance of beaches and coastal waters through national community clean-up campaigns;
- strengthen legislation and enforce measures to control illegal mining of sand from our beaches and other areas that result in damage and pollution to the coastline;
- oppose the privatisation of the Tobago Cays;
- mobilise a public campaign to stop further pollution of the marine environment.



The Economics of a Healthy Environment

The price of electricity in SVG is too high. As electricity prices increase there is a directly proportional increase in the number of people who 'drop-out' of using electricity and turn to kerosene as a source of fuel. As the January 2005 high tax on kerosene begins to bite, it will push more and more poor people to cut down trees to use the wood as fuel for cooking.

Since it is the roots of trees and plants that hold together the soil of hillsides in heavy rainfall, heavy landslides and flooding are a direct consequence of deforestation. This has been seen on many occasions in places such as Haiti, causing substantial damage and loss of life. Equally, in the long-term, deforestation damages the delicate watersheds in dry seasons, causing serious shortages of drinking water.

Disaster response and relief

SVG Green Party would implement a pro-active stance, carrying out annual live exercises to simulate our response in dealing effectively with air, land and sea disasters. We will produce flyers about what to do and not do in an emergency and include a list of emergency phone numbers.

SVG Green Party will strengthen laws to protect and preserve the nation's environment. We will:

- introduce anti-litter, clean air and noise pollution legislation;



- strengthen the protection and preservation of our heritage sites;
- tax environmentally damaging activities;
- designate parts of the country protected areas;
- undertake an extensive reforestation program to stop

landslides, as recently seen in California and Mexico;

- make Environmental Impact Assessments a feature of all future development projects.

Social policy

It is unfortunate that in these modern times the gap between the rich and the poor is still widening in SVG.

Many families are without basic utilities and adequate shelter, whilst at the other end of the scale, richer families exhibit more wealth. There is no need for generation after generation of families to grow up in poverty and their children to be exposed to a deficit of food, health and education as compared to their better-off peers. SVG Green Party is offering the nation better standards of living and long-term protection to the children of our country. Social transformation is therefore critical in order to allow the majority of the population, which historically has been excluded, to integrate into society and exercise their rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

- make electricity free to poor families;
- make water free to poor families;
- abolish the water meter rental charge;
- provide support for people to find jobs;
- provide support for poor communities to form self-reliance groups;
- actively encourage poor communities to be involved in community works consultations;
- encourage and support poor communities to bid for works carried out in their communities.

The family

The family is an important social unit and the best sphere in which children should be raised. We all recognise that sometimes issues arise that can affect a family's cohesion and stability. In order to provide support families to continue living together, SVG Green Party will:

- provide counselling services to troubled parents and children;
- provide family support services;
- provide mediation services so families have a neutral place and facilitator to work through issues;
- provide crèches for working parents to ease the strain.



Poverty alleviation

Poverty alleviation will be a significant focus of social policy. It is necessary to make life easier for poor and low-income families in order to enable to take an active part in society. To this end the SVG Green Party will:

- make all education free;
- provide free schoolbooks, meals and uniforms;

Housing

The level of housing in SVG is good, but major improvements are needed for the houses of poorer people. Housing and shelter is one of our basic needs and we, as a society, should make sure that all are sheltered from the elements. SVG Green Party will:

- work to ensure that all housing has piped water and electricity;
- work to make all housing hurricane-proof;
- reduce the environmental and health hazards in residential areas by improving sanitation and drainage systems;
- provide incentives for all future housing to install solar panels so individual houses can still have electricity during times of power cuts and reduce the demand from a national grid system;
- abolish import tax on solar energy panels and other energy-saving equipment;
- offer free technical advice on do-it-yourself in house building;
- make land available for low-income housing projects.



Employment

Unemployment stands unacceptably high at approximately 48%. With the new initiatives mentioned in agriculture, manufacturing and the business sector, under an SVG Green Party government, there will be a substantial increase in job creation.

In the 1940s there was informal immigration to Aruba and Curacao. In the 1960s and 1970s there was informal immigration to England, Canada and the USA. This informal export of human capital (labour) helped the SVG economy - especially the construction industry - through remittances. The SVG Green Party supports the policy of export of qualified human capital, for which there is a big global demand. SVG Green Party will improve the education and training facilities to provide the necessary skills to persons who wish to work abroad. We will create incentives for these persons to return and to put their knowledge and experience back into the economy.

Human Capital Development

SVG Green Party puts priority on empowerment of civil society through human capital development, we recognise that high quality training and retraining are crucial to the overall development of our country. Almost full employment is our goal, but to achieve this no one individual must be left behind in the training program.

We aim to increase the number of youths entering university ten fold. We will build a university in St Vincent and the Grenadines. We will ensure that young, old and the physically challenged are given the opportunity to university education. We recognise the fact that the number of male students entering university is unacceptable low and will create policies to correct it.



There will be a significant shift in the structure of the economy towards services and human capital development, and recognise that young people do not want to dig arrowroot or farm bananas. Since 79 % of the population is under 30 years of age we have to be realistic in our economic strategy. There is a higher financial return from service-based industries than from agriculture. We will:

- create regional jobs centres where people can register job skills and employers can advertise employment opportunities. Applicants will be given help to apply for work;
- create links with colleges and organisations abroad while seeking accreditation for courses taken in SVG. Our courses will then be recognised abroad and people will have greater opportunities for foreign employment;



· seek to increase the number of foreign-based organisations who are able to run training courses in SVG and then offer graduates work in the organisations' country of origin;

- plan to locate in SVG branches of foreign colleges and organisations for trades such as plumbers and nannies, which are in great demand in England.

Labour relations

SVG Green Party believes that good labour relations promote efficiency and productivity. We will:

- appoint a Senator in the House of Assembly to promote the affairs of good labour relations;
- do a tri-annual review of wage regulations;
- promote good relations between employers and employees;
- support trades unions and workers' rights initiatives;
- do an annual review of health and safety in the workplace;
- ensure equal pay for all regardless of gender, disability, etc.

Community development

Good communities need good structures and good support mechanisms. Without good community support, the breakdown in neighbourhood relations is more frequent. Development includes activities such as training human rights monitors; promoting participation and leadership of women; empowerment of vulnerable groups; and breaking the silence about HIV/AIDS. To this end SVG Green Party will:

- review the national lottery with a view to putting more in to community groups;
- promote regional offices of the main credit unions, to keep money in the community and in the country, and encourage banks who use our money to invest in SVG rather than abroad;
- involve local people in local planning issues;
- encourage more community groups and cohesion so that the public can be involved in deciding what the priorities are for their community and how money should be spent in their community;
- offer parents training on family issues;
- strengthen community-based organisations, professional associations and women's groups;
- encourage integrated community development to increase levels of participation, equity, dignity and social justice.



Gender issues

It is important to promote the value of women's role in society. Gender and gender relations are critical aspects of social policy. We must accept the fact that to even talk about development one must include gender. There is a growing consensus that development needs women if any kind of positive process of social change is going to take place. We will:

- set up a consultation service for parents who need help with children who may become difficult for one reason or another;
- encourage more women to occupy positions in government and other elected leadership positions in institutions and provide role models for young women;
- conduct analysis of households and gender relations within the household, with an approach that draws on bargaining-power models;
 - break down gender barriers that women face in trade and wealth creation / business;
 - run programs addressing teenage pregnancy, including sexual health and family planning;
- clamp down on violence against women and domestic violence;
- strengthen women's groups;
- introduce policies to reduce the number of males dropping out of schools and training institutions;
- research what makes girls do well and stay in education and training.



Elderly people

The Caribbean region has one of the highest percentages of elderly people in its population, yet few policy makers here cater for the elderly in their development strategies. We need to analyse ageing and development with a view towards enabling older people to continue to be productive members of society. Elderly people play a significant role in SVG's society and are valued citizens with much to offer. We need to be ready to meet all their needs, especially health-related ones. We will:

- create elderly support units to assist with welfare and enable people to continue to live in their own home when they are unable to cope on their own;
- assess the living, education and employment needs of elderly people;



- provide free electricity and water to elderly people living on their own or with their spouse;
- create a minister for responsibilities for elderly people's needs;
- provide assistance so that elderly people can purchase disability aids and adaptations;
- monitor institutions for elderly people to ascertain the level of support needed;
- ensure protection from loneliness, malnutrition, and chronic diseases;
- encourage a network of volunteers to visit and assist elderly people living alone;
- support families looking after elderly relatives;
- fund a public health research to identify threats to the health of older adults;
- promote healthy behaviors and environments for older people;
- define standards of appropriate geriatric health services and monitor access for the elderly to essential health services;
- develop national geriatric training plans for health care workers;
- provide exemption from airport departure tax for persons aged 60 and over.

Vote Green for

Save our heritage
Save Tobago Cays
Don't let the ULP
sell our country



real progress

'Our policies are based on the need for long-term food, economic and social security of our country and environmental sustainability.'



*Ivan O'Neal
Leader &
co-founder
of SVG
Green Party*

Green priorities for the SVG environment:

Protect the reefs

New inspections and monitoring of coral reefs, in partnership with international marine experts.

Zero waste strategy

Door-to-door collection of recyclable rubbish such as paper, plastics, glass, tins and batteries.

Drinking water:

Cancel the cross-country road

It threatens to pollute our source of drinking water.

Green education:

New SVG University

Free to all Vincentians - let's skill the workforce.

Free Preschools

Every child will get a better start.

Green plans for health:

Free checkups for all

And exemptions from medical charges for persons over 60 and the poor and disadvantaged.

AIDS awareness

We will improve health education.

Get involved in the new SVG Green Party - contact:

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Green Party

P.O. Box 1707
St. Vincent
Tel / Fax: 4569579
Email: svgreenparty@yahoo.com



www.svggreenparty.org

Vision for a sustainable future

Young people

It is unfortunate that the present and previous governments have done little to stimulate the economy to bring opportunities to young people.



Much money has been wasted on big projects, but the effects have not trickled down to the majority of the population, especially our youth. This government has not created income, but has just relied upon loans and grants. There is no coherent economic strategy in place, therefore the long-term prognosis for the economy is more debt, and the long-term prognosis for our youth is greater unemployment and poverty. SVG Green Party will introduce strategic economic planning and change the economy so it is export-led. Change for individuals will be noticeably stimulated by change at the national level. SVG Green Party will:

- set up community training units so people can gain skills or retake secondary school exams in evening classes if necessary. We intend to work with young people to help them understand the value of education and the potential it harnesses. We want to help them understand the significant opportunities that become available through education;
- provide access to careers advice so young people are better placed to choose the appropriate skills training and education needed to pursue their careers.

We intend to establish links with foreign colleges, so young people have greater prospects to work and study abroad. Long-term, we expect there to be an increased movement of labour, especially within CARICOM;

- implement a programme of regular sport activity to develop and harness the talent of our young people. Young people will be supported to compete abroad and play in foreign sports leagues;
- support the establishment of a youth parliament and strive to provide a knowledge-based society and an economy for the youth;
- encourage young people to operate their own small business. Our policies will deliberately target empowerment of the youth with the provision of high levels of education and skills training. We believe that more support is needed for young entrepreneurs. Many of our young people have the skills to run their own business, but need advice and support to start their own business and be guided through the processes of business management;
- look at expanding the arts culture with the introduction of a national theatre and support young people to export their skills. They will be assisted to perform and teach abroad;

- establish a youth exchange programme within the Caribbean, USA, Canada and the United Kingdom. This is an important feature and will help develop young people's understanding of national and global issues. It will greatly help anyone running their own business as experience of foreign places can stimulate innovation at home;
- promote participation in Boy Scouts, Sea Scouts, Cadets Corps and sports in primary school. Taking part in activities such as these will enable children to develop a multitude of skills at an early age and increase their confidence and self-esteem;
- put on seminars about teenage pregnancy to reduce the level of teenage pregnancy and the rate of HIV and AIDS infection in young people. In the long-term the results will be a sharp reduction in teenage pregnancies as young women become empowered to take more control of their lives.

Throughout the process of implementing structures to help young people, it is important to remember that as well as working 'for' young people, we need to work 'with' young people. We believe that the experts on young people and the issues that affect them are the young people themselves.

In order to get a greater understanding of the issues faced by young people and refine our policies further, we intend to carry out research of the young by young people.

That is, in using Participatory Appraisal (PA), we will conduct interviews and surveys with young people to look in-depth at issues affecting them.

We want to train young people in PA methods and techniques and let them carry out the research. Throughout the process they will learn and develop many skills. Whilst doing a Participatory Appraisal, it is important to carry out a gender needs assessment as the needs of young men and women

Our young people are our future - we need to invest in them today.

may not necessarily be similar. A gendered analysis will enable solutions to be tailored better for all young people. A gender analysis explores and highlights the inequalities in gender relations by asking who does what, who has what, who decides and who benefits.

We want to create socio-economic snapshot of young people - what they do, how they survive from day to day, what they want to do and what is preventing them from achieving what they want to achieve. We need to look at what personal aspects in their life influence or determine decisions they make about taking up or refusing training and employment opportunities in and outside of St. Vincent. We need as a nation to be aware of what young people see as barriers to 'getting on' - such as self image, confidence levels, education levels, childcare issues - and develop, with young people, ways for them to overcome these barriers.

Disabled people

The days of neglect to the needs of disabled people are long gone. We live in a new world where equal rights and human rights are major components of a democracy. Disabled people have

a valuable part to play in society like all other citizens and we will support policies that empower and enable them to do so. The country's way of addressing disability issues needs to be based upon the Social Model of

Disability which stipulates that one should see the person first and the disability second.

SVG Green Party will:

- pass legislation to provide unimpeded access to public buildings and encourage access in businesses in the private sector that provide a service;
- create designated car parking spaces in Kingstown for vehicles driven by or carrying disabled people;
- to assess the living, education and employment needs of disabled people;
- ensure mainstream education through an inclusion policy. Where necessary build special education facilities on the site of mainstream schools so that integration takes place at break and meal times;
- create a minister with responsibilities for disabled people's needs;



- set up a disability rights commission;
- provide assistance so that disabled people can live independently and purchase disability aids and adaptations;
- create independent monitors of institutions for people with mental illnesses and health problems to ascertain the level of treatment and support needed and given.

Health system

Health is one of the most significant factors affecting a person's ability to contribute to society and take an active role in citizenship. Access to health care, therefore, is one of the most important issues facing our country. SVG Green Party will promote community public health care, and our approach will be based upon preventative health systems. We will:

- consult with the medical profession as to the best practice to promote health care issues;
- increase resources for early screening of breast cancer, hypertension and prostate cancer;
- reduce the pollution of the air in Kingstown to avoid asthma and other respiratory health problems;
- reduce the long waiting times at the accident and emergency units;

- encourage more training of nurses and encourage more males to train as nurses;
- put into place structures that can address the concerns of staff and patients;
- conduct a study of the local environment in which HIV and AIDS are most prevalent;
- improve the training and practices of health sanitation workers to upgrade inspections of potential health hazards;
- increase the resources of hospitals to enable us to treat a greater range of illnesses;
- provide better regional medical facilities based on what is needed for particular communities;
- upgrade Georgetown hospital and build a hospital in Barrouallie;
- set up programs to inform people about preventative health, such as not smoking, dangers of excessive alcohol use, eating healthy food as opposed to junk food;
- provide community health care visitors;
- increase the number of doctors by more training and importing them from other countries;
- look at greater use of preventative and alternative medicines;

- introduce measures to increase road safety and reduce the number of deaths on our roads;
- update the ambulance and fire service to reduce loss of life in times of emergencies.

HIV and AIDS

The continued increase in the number of those infected by HIV and AIDS is a serious concern to the SVG Green Party. We believe that the wrong variables are being concentrated on in the present research. Focus should be on the living conditions and socio-economic factors of the people in areas where the increase is most rampant, rather than the haphazard method used at present. After conducting research of this nature, we will fine-tune our policies to reduce the rate of infection and provide better support for infected people. We believe that the present policy implemented by the World Health Organisation does not prevent the spread of the disease effectively. We will provide free six monthly check-ups / blood tests to people who consider themselves to be at risk of having HIV and AIDS.



Food and nutrition

Eating a balanced diet is key to sustaining good health and preventing illnesses such as diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure and various forms of cancer. Diet can impact upon one's chances of getting and fighting all chronic illnesses. We need a long-term approach to the solution of nutrition issues that affect our country. It is important for us to attain food security and ensure that everyone has access to healthy food.



SVG Green party will:

- consult with doctors about well-being programs;
- create a Foods Agency to check food standards and enforce proper labelling;
- stop the import of any Genetically Modified Foods (GMO) and make sure all schools provide meals that are free from GMOs;
- stop the selling of foods past their expiry and use-by dates;
- raise awareness about the dangers of 'junk' and processed food;
- provide incentives to encourage use of local foods rather than imported foods from thousands of miles away. As a country we need to do our bit in the global campaign to reduce food miles - that is, stop the waste of energy in transporting food from foreign countries when it can be produced in the country in which it will be consumed.

Sports and leisure

Sport and its related industries are a productive and potentially profitable sector of the economy. Sport has a tremendous therapeutic value, teaches discipline and teamwork, and studies in young peoples' participation in sport shows that it lessens the risk of teenage pregnancy, as well as the risk of involvement in crime and drugs. Unfortunately, many people are unable to enjoy as much sport as they would like as most of the sporting infrastructure is still localised in the Kingstown area, and many rural areas lack quality sports facilities. We will:

- provide more sports equipment for people in areas outside of Kingstown;
- create opportunities for people to compete in inter-island school sports;
- provide scholarships to up-and-coming sports people;

- provide living allowances to prominent sports people representing the country to allow them time to train, travel abroad and compete more effectively;
- put more resources into athletics and provide more coaches and inter-schools competitions;
- provide better track and field facilities;
- upgrade school sports facilities and make them available to the public after school hours;
- encourage the private sector to get involved with maintaining sports facilities and sponsoring sports people and events;
- upgrade all national grounds to international standards;
- look at ways of extending the capacity of the national stadium that is being constructed to bring it up to international standards so that it can host international events;



- increase leisure facilities in parks;
- allow sports facilities to be used for non sports events such as music concerts and conferences. These will bring in revenue and promote SVG and its facilities abroad.

Culture and heritage

The protection and preservation of our culture and heritage is important. Culture and heritage are vital components in nation building and a good sense of history provides the foundation necessary for future progress. Our culture can be a source of income to individuals and our country. We will:

- put into place mechanisms whereby older people can pass on their knowledge to young people;
- have an annual cultural showcase to expose our young talent;



- promote cultural exchange within the region and Africa;
- give support to the expansion of businesses in cultural goods and services;
- build museums, galleries and theatres so that our talented artists and performers can exhibit their works and perform cultural productions;
- encourage school trips to museums, galleries and theatres so that young people can learn more about their culture;
- seek scholarships abroad and other training for talented artists and performers;
- export the skills of talented artists and performers to other countries;
- develop protective legislation for cultural sites.



Music and drama

Music is an integral part of our way of life in the Caribbean. We have in our country many talented artists and young people who are keen to learn and perform. We will:

- encourage children and young people to get involved in our nation's music, such as steel pan music, drums, flute and string bands;
- build a national theatre of international standard;
- support drama societies in schools and the community;
- encourage the private sector to promote and strengthen national drama;
- support drama groups to perform abroad.



Education - the driving force of the economy

SVG Green Party genuinely believes that an educated society is a skilled society. We believe that education is the means to eradicating poverty, creating employment and reducing crime.

Education empowers the individual and society as a whole. Our present education system is inadequate, failing for instance, the 55 per cent of our children who do not receive the full complement of primary school education. This is totally unacceptable. It is the children in poor and low-income families that miss out most and that are caught in a cycle of poverty as a result. We will introduce compulsory education in school at all levels. We will work closely with teachers to reform the education system to facilitate the development of every child to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in the modern world. In so doing, we will deal with the social and economic issues that SVG faces and help create a thriving economy. Education is a universal right - we mustn't fail the children of the poor any longer!

Pre-school

Research shows that the early years of education are crucial to the long-term development of a child. In government, SVG Green Party will:

- provide free pre-school education to every child;
- expand pre-school education and significantly upgrade the pre-school learning environment, with standards for pre-school buildings and compulsory training for all pre-school teachers.

Primary

We will:

- provide free schools meals, textbooks and uniforms;
- put into operation parent education training to equip parents to be more proactive in the learning process of their children;
- introduce a program of early examination of children for eyesight, hearing, speech and learning problems in all schools;
- provide educational support and additional tuition for children struggling at school;
- set up community homework groups to encourage and help children to do their homework;
- provide more and better equipment to schools including computers;
- introduce the learning of a second language in primary school.



Secondary

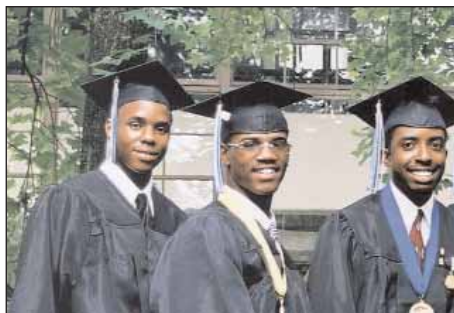
We will:

- provide free textbooks, uniforms and meals;
- provide careers advice in schools so children know what skills they need for specific jobs;
- provide mediation services in schools to sort out problems between students, teachers and parents;
- research a modular system so students who missed out on education will be able to come back to school, earn credits, and still complete secondary education;
- improve the learning environment by reducing the level of ambient noise between classrooms;
- put a computer laboratory in every school;
- encourage parents to attend school parents' evenings to discuss their children's progress;
- provide proper maintenance of school buildings and lands.

Post-16 education

We will:

- increase the number of courses available;
- make all examinations free;
- provide free textbooks, meals and uniforms;
- provide free transport to school;
- build two new sixth form facilities in Georgetown and Barrouallie;
- at the technical college, provide free meals and transport, and upgrade the training facilities.



University

SVG Green Party aims to develop education as a service industry, as in developed countries. We will build a national university of international standards as part of the new economic drive to earn revenue and equip our workforce with skills. For the first time in our history we will lead most of the Caribbean in education and training. We will offer places in the university to fee-paying foreign students.

The long-term national benefit of having a university is significant. Experience has shown in countries such as Singapore, Brunei and Malaysia, that a national university produces a highly educated and skilled workforce that is adaptable and easily trainable. This in itself encourages and attracts direct foreign investment, which enhances the nation's service sector and increases GDP.

Fees from foreign students for courses and accommodation will form part of the income for the university. Research grants received by the SVG university, will also form part of the funds required to run the university.

SVG Green Party will:

- provide university places free to Vincentian nationals with the pre-requisite qualifications;
- provide bursaries to poor students to cover costs of books;
- set up a scholarship database of universities in England, Canada and the USA.

The knock-on effects of a university will be great. The economic, social and financial benefits for North Windward (NW), North Central Windward (NCW) and South Central Windward (SCW) and beyond will be substantial. It is projected that the university will encourage the establishment of many small businesses and that a huge amount of employment will be created during the construction and the running of the university. We project knock-on effects such as:

- a) the need for much more rented accommodation providing a steady, sustainable income for those that can provide it;

- b) the need for many more rental vehicles, providing a steady, sustainable income for that industry;
- c) the need for more shops and restaurants;
- d) a big demand for agricultural products to supply the university, the student accommodation facilities, shops, restaurants and hotels. This will be a big boost to farmers who have suffered greatly with the decline of the banana industry;
- e) financial opportunities for street vendors;
- f) the value of the house or land of all land-owners and house-owners, will appreciate considerably in value. This will give them extra equity should they want to move house or take out a bank loan. They will also have more collateral with increased land and property value;

Continued overleaf...



g) at present in the constituencies of NW, NCW and SCW, the unemployment rate is 60 per cent in some areas. Such high unemployment in this modern era is totally unacceptable and unnecessary. The university is projected to reduce the rate of unemployment to less than 15 per cent;

h) the social effect of having this university would be to lift the spirits of the communities in the NW, NCW and SCW constituencies in particular, as it is projected that with the above knock-on effects, there will be a reduced level of crime, poverty and illiteracy and an increase in the level of disposable income for the families in these constituencies;

i) on a national level, the university will increase GDP, reduce national debt and boost the tourism industry.

Only a green government can deliver this university - 'green gold' - to the areas of NW, NCW and SCW as it is an integral part of our economic, sustainable program to uplift the economy of SVG. Since the last election, neither the ULP nor the NDP has put forward a coherent economic strategy to create revenue for our country, and national debt has increased considerably. They cannot fund a university or bring about its advantages. SVG Green Party hopes that all voters, not just ones in NW, NCW and SCW, will support this unique opportunity for jobs and prosperity for the families of our nation, and for the economic and social good of the nation.

Utilities

Access to water and electricity is a basic need for all. There is no coherent reason why every household does not already have access to water and electricity.

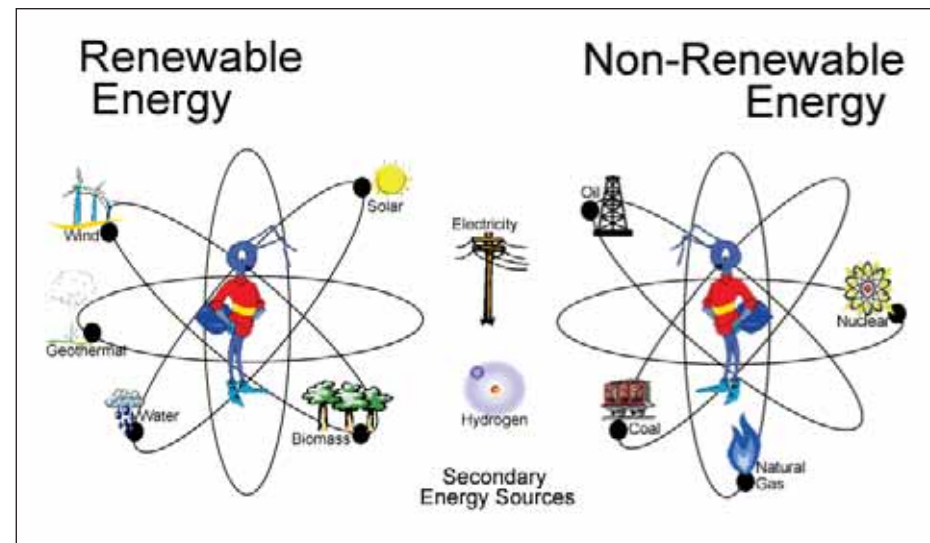
SVG Green Party believes that past governments have failed poor people by not making the needs of poor and low-income families a priority. SVG Green Party will address this issue.



Water

SVG Green Party will:

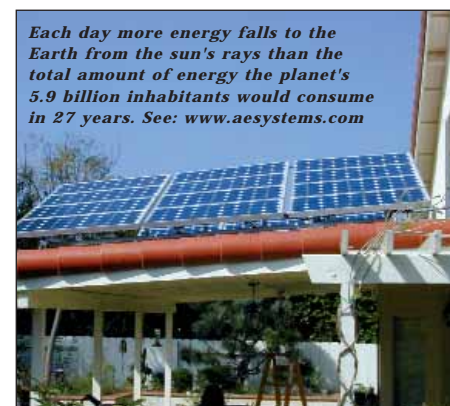
- abolish the water meter rental charge;
- offer free water to poor families;
- offer free water to people over 60 living on their own or with their spouse;
- upgrade the present water system to provide more reservoirs;
- strengthen the laws to protect and preserve the watersheds;
- provide piped water to all households;
- stop the practice of water disconnection to families unable to pay;
- carry out frequent checks of water quality at the watersheds;
- upgrade the water system to include fire hydrants so the fire service can fight fires more effectively and save more lives.



Electricity

SVG Green Party will focus on alternative sources of energy to oil, such as wind, biomass, water and solar. We need to reduce our dependence on oil as it is expensive and not an everlasting source of energy. History has shown that the price of oil will only ever increase and not decrease. People also need have greater control over the production of electricity. We will:

- reduce the price of electricity by 50 per cent over five years;
- abolish VINLEC's electricity monopoly and fuel surcharge;
- set up a National Grid to sell electricity at affordable prices;
- contract all producers of electricity to sell to the national grid and the national grid will sell to the nation;
- provide incentives for people to use solar panels for domestic water and lights;
- offer free electricity to people over 60 living on their own or with their spouse;
- introduce renewable energy supplies;
- encourage efficient use of electricity and energy conservation;
- encourage community co-op electricity generation programs that run from renewable sources and input to the national grid, providing an income for the co-op.



Policing and security

The children of our nation rely upon adults for many things, including a safe and clean environment in which they can live and play. As a nation we have to live up to this duty and provide effective policing and security so all citizens can live without fear of harm. We need to optimise the ability of the police force in its effectiveness of dealing with crime.

Police

We will:

- review the police workload, its working environment, pay and pensions and upgrade police operations, pay and pensions according to the findings of the review;
- provide more technology and training in fighting crime;
- provide loans and scholarships for officers to gain a university education;
- provide opportunities for officers to gain civil qualifications;
- ensure more community policing and higher police visibility on the streets;
- provide more police officers on foot patrol as a deterrent to crime;
- offer incentives to reduce the high exit rate from the police force;



- enable officers to respond more quickly to incidents by tracking where and when incidents occur and placing officers around these locations at the appropriate times;
- encourage community and neighbourhood watch schemes.

National Security

In today's world there is a greater need to have national security under control. We will:

- review present policies on national security;
- introduce policies to protect and preserve the national security of SVG based on the above review;
- increase the abilities of national response teams;
- research the type of national security issues SVG may face;
- co-ordinate agencies that make up the various parts of the national security team;
- improve the customs departments to reduce the number of guns coming into our country and reaching the streets, and eradicate gun crime.

Drugs and crime

Recent governments have been re-active rather pro-active in fighting crime. SVG Green Party believes in the pro-active approach. SVG Green Party believes that inequalities in society are a significant factor in the causes of crime. Aspects of SVG Green Party's Social Policy will help reduce crime. In addition, SVG Green Party will:

- set up free mediation services to resolve neighbourhood disputes before they get violent;
- conduct an analysis of crime problems in SVG and use the findings to formulate a strategy to stamp out crime;
- set up community-based programmes to stamp out crime in their community;
- work with offenders to find out why they choose crime and help them not re-offend;
- set up anti-drugs and crime programs;
- work with marijuana farmers to enable them to find alternatives sources of income such as hemp farming;
- set up a Youth Offending Scheme to deal with offending youths or youths at risk of



offending.

Public works and transport

There is a need to reduce the inefficiency in public works and make systems of transport better and safer. In recent times Kingstown become congested and we need to make traffic flow through Kingstown more easily. We will:

- review the efficiency and value for money of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport to assess its strengths and weaknesses;
- put out to tender all public works to private companies and GESCO to make these works more efficient and receive better value for money;
- work to get a fleet of accessible buses for people with disabilities;
- research the idea of providing a renewed boat service from Kingstown to Barrouallie and Layou;
- improve the life of the roads and reduce the cost of maintenance by improving water drainage;
- improve road safety;
- increase the number of

Good Governance, Participation and Inclusion



SVG Green Party believes that power emanates from people and wishes to give people more control within the democratic processes in the country.

To this end, SVG Green Party advocates participatory democracy and participatory budgets. Within this more democratic system of governance, people are not governed by their MPs and do not relinquish so much power to their MPs.

Within a participatory democratic system, people are more involved in decision-making and have control over the regional budget particular to the area in which they live.

Through a series of local assemblies and community meetings, the people decide what the priorities are in their area and what gets done. The budgets, regional and national, are on public display so people can see exactly where and how money is being spent. Through this system, not only is the government more transparent and the possibilities of corruption severely reduced, but local community groups get a chance to bid for works. Support will be given by government to help community groups and co-ops bid for tenders and realise their skills.

This way, more wealth is gained by poorer people, rather than just by rich owners of companies.

This system works in Brazil and other countries. Poor communities are being empowered and obtaining better infrastructure such as better sanitation and drains, better schools and hospitals. There are reduced rates of corruption and substantially increased levels of participation in elections and local decision making.

Direct citizen participation paves the way for building a new kind of political system and a new relationship between people and the government. SVG Green Party will:

- introduce legislation to establish a freedom of information act;
- promote civil service reform through consultation;
- foster public discussion on policy before it is adopted;
- set up the participatory budget system and the public assemblies needed for the mass consultations to take place;
- increase the number of members of parliament from 15 to 19 in consultation with the boundaries commission;
- support the constitutional reform for proportional representation in general elections.

Concern for improved standards of governance, transparency and accountability is now spreading across the globe. In many countries citizens groups are holding their governments to account.

Transparency

The signing in December 2003 of the UN Convention against Corruption, the result of a three-year effort by 129 countries, reflects a global consensus on the need for an international legal system to fight corruption. Concern for improved standards of governance, transparency, and accountability is now spreading across the globe. In many countries citizens groups are holding their governments to account. In Bangladesh, Transparency International's national chapter has initiated the formation of Committees of Concerned Citizens, which rate services and lobby for reform where service delivery is perceived to be failing.

SVG Green Party advocates a greater system of transparency within government in SVG and will introduce a policy of disclosure of income and assets for members of government and people in senior public jobs. A Disclosure Act will show the income and changes in wealth of individuals while they hold public office.

The purpose of introducing legislation for disclosure of income and assets for public office bearers are to:

- provide the basis for monitoring the wealth of individuals in public office;
- increase accountability of the actions of public office bearers and reduce the chances of involvement in, or encouragement to, corrupt practices in the public offices they manage.

Information gathering and disclosure

The following principles are important in seeking and securing effective disclosure of income and assets:

- information requested should be not only for the office holder, but also for members
- of his or her immediate family;
- there should be sanctions for deliberate failure to provide accurate information;
- resources should be allocated and an office established within the government to monitor the disclosures and to pursue anomalies that are observed;
- availability of this information to the public is a key aspect of such disclosure.



While there may be no universally agreed definition of corruption, we can take it to mean something along the lines of: 'misuse of office for private gain'. The office is a position of trust, where one receives authority in order to act on behalf of an institution, be it private, public, or non-profit.

SVG Green Party will increase transparency and prevent corruption by:

- ensuring there is no discrimination in the allocation of jobs in private and public sectors;
- working to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor;
- being firm and fair in dealing with national issues such as appointments of government officials.

Foreign policy

It is important for SVG to take an active role in the world forums of economic, social and environmental development. Institutions such as the United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation make decisions that affect our lives.

It is necessary that we are proactive in helping the further development of these institutions and the global economy so that our rights and lives are not adversely affected.



We will:

- create ties with mainland China and cut ties with Taiwan;
- strengthen our relations with the USA, the UK,

Canada, the Commonwealth, and the European Union;

- commit to a single market and economy of the Caribbean;
- support the policy for a single passport for Caricom;
- seek close ties with Africa in trade, sport and cultural areas;
- work closely with other Caribbean countries to fight World Trade Organisation (WTO) rulings that impact negatively on the people and economy of SVG and other Caribbean countries;
- join other developing countries and other Green parties to campaign at future WTO negotiation rounds against policies that impoverish and reduce rights of developing countries;
- support policies to stop corporate control of the world economy and rulings that render national governments powerless to protect their citizens and environment;
- set up SVG consulates in Asian, African and Latin American countries to boost trade and cultural relations;
- revise the foreign service so that it is more proactive in creating more trade for SVG;
- support the World Social Forums as these meetings seek to improve the lives of poorer people.

Get involved in the St. Vincent & the Grenadines

We would welcome any spare time you may have to help with our bold campaign. Tasks include: media-work, leafleting, canvassing, answering the phone, organising local meetings etc.

Support SVG Green Party

Please consider making a donation to help pay for further SVG campaigns. Send a cheque made payable to 'SVG Green Party'. Thanks.

Green Party

P.O. Box 1707, St. Vincent
Tel / fax: 4569579
Email: svggreenparty@yahoo.com

Membership

...is FREE - call, email or visit us.

Global Greens

See: www.globalgreens.info/

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SVG Green Party - 21st century vision

Philosophy

We, in the SVG Green Party, believe:

- that all people are equal and in the supremacy of God
- in the right of everyone to shelter, water, food and education
- in freedom of speech and movement in a democratic society
- that people should not live in fear or under oppression
- that the environment in which we live is not just for us, but for future generations too, and that it should be conserved, so that they can enjoy it as we do today
- in equal opportunities and access to good health and education for all
- that we need to protect the biodiversity of our precious ecosystem

Objectives

Our objectives to improve the nation are to:

- eradicate poverty and illiteracy
- empower our people
- create a just and peaceful society
- successfully manage the SVG economy to create wealth and provide the nation with a sustainable income
- create employment and better quality of life for all
- protect the poor and vulnerable in our society
- protect and preserve the environment in which we live
- move away from the old mind-set of nepotism and ensure that people gain employment by ability not by who they know
- create a mind-set of positive self-esteem, mutual respect and faith in oneself

- end SVG's economic dependency and become a net giver rather than a net receiver of aid
- for SVG to be a leader and not a follower in regional affairs



Aims

In order to put our objectives in to practice we will:

- provide equal opportunities and eradicate discrimination
- be firm with crime and the causes of crime
- create legislation to strengthen the protection of the environment by making it a critical consideration for all future proposed developments
- provide free education and skills training for all, from pre-school to university
- provide the poor with free piped water and free electricity
- move from an agriculturally-led economy to a service-led economy
- provide free dental and eyesight examinations for all