

Dr. the Hon Timothy Harris
Prime Minister Harris
Government Headquarters
Church Street
Basseterre, St. Kitts

April 20th, 2022

Hon, Shawn K. Richards,
Deputy Prime Minister
Leader of the People's Action Movement
Water Dept. Building
Needsmust Estate
Basseterre

Hon Mark Brantley
Minister of Foreign Affairs
GOvernment of St. Kitts and Nevis
Premier of Nevis and Leader of
Concerned Citizens Movement
Social Security Building
Pinney's Commercial Site
Nevis

Dear Hon Deputy Prime Minister and Hon Minister:

I acknowledge receipt of your joint letter to me dated 16 April, 2022 following our recently concluded meetings at the Cabinet Room, Government Headquarters, on the 6th and 14th April. *(Copy attached for ease of reference.)*

These meetings were arranged to resolve what you both seem to indicate are deep-seated differences that have somehow emerged in January and February of this year and have been 'accorded' by you, an unprecedented sense of urgency. In your letter, you state that you "...will accord (me) until **Wednesday, 20th April, 2022,** to respond definitively to the issues that we have raised in our meetings and others (which you have now added) listed below:"

I am puzzled that these “deep-seated differences” are now being put forward following the December 2021 annual debate on the Appropriations Bill 2022, the Budget Debate, in which ALL members on the Government Benches spoke in glowing terms of (i) the outstanding performance of our Team Unity Administration during 2021 and (ii) the plans and programmes that our Government put forward for this year and beyond. ALL our members voted without reservation for this critical piece of legislation.

I must say that I am deeply saddened that your latest demand comes at a most unfortunate time when we mourn the passing of our Colleague and friend, His Excellency Ambassador Vance Amory, former Senior Minister in the Federal Cabinet, former Premier of the Island of Nevis. Ambassador Amory was a Founding Member and former Political Leader, for some 30 years, of the Concerned Citizens Movement, the political Party which Minister Brantley now has the honour to lead. Ambassador Amory was also a Founding father of Team Unity and his wise counsel and sterling leadership are sorely needed at this particular time.

You both would be aware that the Cabinet Secretary heads the Committee set up to make arrangements to honour the life of Ambassador Amory, and that the Committee includes members of the Nevis Island Administration. The Cabinet would have been on hand earlier today to receive the mortal remains of Ambassador Amory at RLB International Airport. You should already be aware that the remains will lie in State on both islands, and that Ambassador Amory will have a full State Funeral. It is a time of deep sorrow for all Kittitians and Nevisians, but in particular, all Nevisians, who will be reflecting on the contributions of their former leader to public welfare and public upliftment. The Nation was informed on April 18, 2022 that there is to be a period of official mourning for Ambassador Amory from Wednesday, 20th April to Saturday 30th April.

Gentlemen, your letter dated April 16, 2022, is in very poor taste. It is disrespectful, filled with contradictions, untruths, bad faith, and a naked lack of understanding of the very system of governance in which you have actively participated for the last seven years.

Your reference to fundamental documents conveniently ignores that the most critical document guiding the rule of law, good governance and government operations is the Constitution of the Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis. The Constitution is the supreme law of St. Christopher and Nevis and if any other law is inconsistent with the Constitution, the Constitution shall prevail and the other law shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be void. None of us in St. Christopher and Nevis is above the law, and I

Deputy Prime Minister Shawn Richards & Minister Mark Brantley
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expect that both of you, gentlemen, accept the supremacy of the Constitution as the guiding light of our democracy.

Certain positions advanced by your good selves regarding matters of recent vintage, however, strain the bounds of credulity. Take for example the matter of Trust. You, Hon Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the contrary, undermined the trust you asked the public to place in the Team Unity Government when you launched a power grab/palace coup to dislodge me as the Constitutionally appointed Prime Minister of St Kitts and Nevis after having pledged throughout the 2020 General Election campaign, how excellent has been my service as Prime Minister; how Nevis has had its best relationship with St. Kitts under my leadership; and how much you supported my leadership.

You both seem not to understand that appointments to the office of minister and the allocation of portfolios assigning responsibility for any business of the Government, are made, under the Constitution, by His Excellency the Governor General, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister.

I do not intend to address in this letter the absurd prevarications which you have cobbled together in your pages two and three. How can anybody take seriously your statement that you are writing as the political leaders of PAM and CCM when everybody knows that after our meeting of 14th April, 2022, one of you actually went on the radio and admitted publicly that he has to get instructions from his Caucus, thereby being understood to mean that your so-called “proposals” were made without the proper authority of the people you claim to speak for? I am left to wonder whether you have received the instructions you say you needed before you wrote this letter.

What is worse, how can two of you purport to speak for the Cabinet, when one of the two of you has stated on the record that he is not coming back to the Cabinet until the occurrence of an eventuality which I consider illegal?

I wonder if Minister Brantley agrees that the Commissioner of Police should tamper with a Police Statement?

As per your unfounded allegations of inequitable distribution of resources, you seem to forget that allocation of resources is determined through the Budgetary process including the Cabinet Estimates Committee Meeting of which you are a part. Those very allocations have been supported by you in every Budget debate.

What is this obsession with social media, when you, Minister Brantley, preside over a regular weekly radio show? You must appreciate that in a democracy social media provides a means for popular participation of citizens and residents. Regrettably, it is often times used irresponsibly by persons including you. I reject the request that I become involved in policing social media and fake profiles.

I invite you to lead by example to discourage your supporters and friends who spew vitriol on social media.

You both seem to be confused and frightened over the vibrancy of the People's Labour Party (PLP). For the record, we are and have been a vibrant people-centred national party with formal structures in all constituencies in St Kitts. These structures facilitated the victory of Team Unity of 2015 and again in 2020. Where the People's Action Movement (PAM) was weak, PLP working with them made them strong hence the revival of PAM after 20 years in the wilderness.

Your reference to undermining the Concerned Citizens Movement (CCM) is a figment of your imagination and requires no response except a denial.

There has never been any agreement by my Party to restrict itself to only two constituencies, No 3 and No 7, in St. Kitts. Many people will remember that you, Minister Richards, publicly endorsed and encouraged the build out of the People's Labour Party in the speech that you delivered, streamed live, at the 2nd Convention of the People Labour Party in 2018. In case you have forgotten, this is part of what you said:

"PLP Family..., PLP Family..., Good afternoon. Of course, I recognize the protocols

This afternoon, I bring greetings on behalf of the Peoples Action Movement. This afternoon, the Peoples Action Movement congratulates the PLP on its 2nd Annual Convention....

The fact is that when we look around the Caribbean region, most islands are dominated by 2 major political parties. During many elections, we see 3rd and 4th political parties coming into being but they come into being for a General Election and generally they do not last, disappearing after an election.

This afternoon, we are here witnessing the 2nd Convention of the PLP and that says to me that the PLP is growing and for that we must congratulate the PLP. The truth is that as individuals we all strive for growth in our lives whether financially, educationally, health-wise. We look at our children...we all want them to grow, and as we grow and develop personally, we are empowered to ensure that others are also able to grow and to develop.

The growth and development of the PLP is therefore significant because it means that the PLP is not only able to empower its own people, but more importantly, the growth and development of the PLP is significant to the growth and development of Team Unity. More importantly, as I said, the growth of PLP and Team Unity is important to the growth and development of you the people of St. Kitts and Nevis.”

It is unfortunate that you mentioned a delay in the hosting of the meeting on April 06, 2022. An explanation has been proffered for that: I was ill at the time. It was recommended to postpone the meeting, set for April 4th when on April 2nd our beloved colleague, His Excellency Vance Amory, unexpectedly succumbed to his illness. It was thought that these discussions could have been taken up after Ambassador Amory had been laid to rest in a much deserved State funeral. After all, the people of St. Kitts and Nevis ought to be afforded the opportunity to mourn the loss of this outstanding son of the soil without the distractions of this issue which is so much at odds with the stance you both presented to laud the visionary, no tax, surplus Budget to safe passage in December 2021.

Regrettably, you could not do this for the Hon Vance Amory, one of the founding leaders of Team Unity. You were both too much in a haste and insisted on a two-day postponement. This again is further evidence of your bad faith and attempt to manufacture grievances however petty.

What “quiet diplomacy” have you been pursuing, and how have you been “keeping our disagreements private and confidential”? This is a far cry from the truth. I wonder whose advice you are following when you are conducting this issue in the open, baring your very souls to a bemused public? Your harangues at the PAM Convention in February, followed by your town hall meetings, and radio programmes, seemed to come out of nowhere and have a puzzled public audience scratching their heads trying to figure out what is really behind this sudden outburst, especially when you go on the radio and tell people, in effect, that you do not have instructions to behave in this outlandish fashion.

I reserve the right to determine how portfolios should be assigned. This is the constitutional prerogative of the Prime Minister. I have made it clear to both of you that I will not participate in any proposals to diminish the prerogatives and authority of the Prime Minister as set out in the Constitution of St. Christopher and Nevis.

Nothing in your conduct and behaviour has been consistent with a commitment to good governance. You are not working in the spirit of Country Above Self.

I must caution you that this preference for giving arbitrary ultimatums starting in the recent Lenten and present Easter Seasons, and when our Country is mourning the loss of its illustrious son, Ambassador Vance Amory, is unhelpful, divisive, reflecting of bad faith,

and disrespectful for a founding leader of Team Unity. Ambassador Amory's memory should not be tarnished by his heirs and successors.

With respect to your demands enumerated at 1 through 18, I respond accordingly:

1. *That there be an urgent return to the Good Governance Agenda, that includes – Term Limits, Electoral Reform, activation of the Integrity in Public Life legislation, Freedom of Information, Freedom of the Press, as well as legislation that governs the awarding of government contracts.*

Response:

I am amazed that Deputy Prime Minister Richards should record Good Governance as the first issue for me to respond to. Minister Richards has been absent from the Cabinet for some 10 weeks since 14 February. Minister Brantley would recall that he left the Cabinet unceremoniously saying that he would not return until his name was removed from a Police Witness Statement. I reiterate that I will not be party to any activity which I consider to be illegal. Neither the Cabinet, the Prime Minister, nor Minister of National Security, can cause a Police Statement to be altered.

On Term Limits: a Bill, Constitution of Saint Christopher and Nevis (Tenure of Office of Prime Minister)(Amendment)Bill, 2019, was tabled in the Parliament to establish the limits of the tenure of the Prime Minister as was campaigned for by the Team Unity Movement. It was an amendment to the Constitution and required a two-thirds majority of members to gain passage. It was debated in Parliament on 29 November, 2019, and the Labour Opposition at the time voted against this Bill and it failed to pass as Team Unity did not have a two-thirds majority on the Government Benches. On February 4, 2022, the Cabinet gave approval for the same Bill to go back to Parliament, Have you forgotten this?

Electoral Reform: for many people, Electoral Reform principally means a residency requirement for voting in an election. A Bill along those lines, was drafted and was placed on the order paper of the Parliament but was withdrawn. We are still awaiting further input from the CCM on this matter.

The **Integrity in Public Life** Commission, headed by Justice Pearletta Lanns, has been actively pursuing the arrangements for the full implementation of the legislation. The Commission has been working closely with the Attorney General's Chambers to craft a number of Regulations and recommended amendments to the Act.

Freedom of Information: has seen significant strides being made for its full implementation. There is need for amendment to the legislation but it has not

impeded the wide access to, and dissemination of information, across Government. There has been a significant growth of radio and TV programmes by Government Agencies/Depts. that provide valuable information never seen before. The Prime Minister's Leadership Matters programme, Working For You by SKNIS, are but a few of the platforms such as Facebook and Internet/Web pages for giving information and interacting with the public in this digital age. While numerous Ministries have employed Information and Communications Officers, there is still need for the appointment of an Information Commissioner in each Ministry, as required by the Act.

You both must, or should be, aware that The Procurement Act and Contract (Administration) Act, Cap. 23:36, is the legislation that governs the awarding of Government contracts. It is Act No 28 of 2012 and came into force on 4th October 2012. It was amended by Act 14 of 2013. You were both Members of Parliament at the time. It is a very comprehensive piece of legislation which deals with procurement procedures, procurement board, review, sanctions etc. The Board is headed by the Financial Secretary and the Director of Public Works is the Procurement Officer for Works, etc. Given the nature of the Act, and the fact that you, Minister Richards have the portfolio for Public Works, one wonders about your clarity on your Ministry's role insofar as public procurement is concerned.

2. To avoid the continued misuse and inequitable distribution of government resources, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Sustainable Development should be immediately re-assigned

Response:

I reject the notion that there has been the misuse and inequitable distribution of government resources. You have failed to provide any evidence of such practices. The process which allocates the use of Government resources is the Budgetary Process which begins in the first half of every year. It is a process which involves meetings of Permanent Secretaries who are the Accounting Officers of each Ministry. They meet with the Budget Analysts of the Ministry of Finance, with the PSIP Team managed by the Ministry of Sustainable Development. The Team is one in which the technical people of your Ministry and every other Ministry put their case to the Team. The Cabinet meets late in the year in the Estimates Committee and the Team from each Ministry comes to this meeting to be questioned by the Cabinet members. All of us are aware of the matters discussed. How is this a "misuse" of an open Government process that each of you has been a part of for the past seven (7) years? Our Country will continue on the path of excellent fiscal management, growth and socio-economic development which has won us international acclaim.

3/4. Comprehensive overview of the true financial picture of the Government with monthly reports by the Financial Secretary to the Cabinet.

Review and streamline the process for the Budget Estimates to ensure that Cabinet Members and Ministers are aware of the final figures to be considered for the Annual Budget. Ministers are mostly unaware of the final figures to be allocated to their ministries and only become aware when the Estimates are already finalized for debate in parliament.

Response:

We should all be proud that the Federal Government, of which we are a part, has consistently returned surpluses each fiscal year. We have received commendations from reputable international organisations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. We have also received, each year, an unqualified report from the Director of Audit who is a certified forensic accountant. By law, the Director of Audit is an independent professional who functions as a watchdog over the Country's finances.

I am saddened that even after seven years both of you appear to be unaware of (a) the workings of Government and (b) the annual Budgetary process which begins around June each year with Pre-Estimates meetings, which are followed on by the Estimates meetings of the Cabinet which take place in October/early November. Every conscientious Cabinet member knows that these meetings are then followed by post-Estimates negotiations between the Ministry of Finance and individual Ministries, prior to the finalisation of the Budget. There is also a meeting of the Cabinet in December of each year when the Financial Secretary and her team update the Cabinet on the likely draft Estimates' outcomes, and also what the Budget would look like prior to the 2-volume publications being made ready for Parliament. I remain open for constructive recommendations as to how the Budgetary process can be further improved. This concern raised by you begs the question as to whether, as Ministers, you interface regularly with your Permanent Secretaries, Budget Analysts and Department Heads re: the Estimates' progressions from June to December of each year.

As recently as February 2022, the Financial Secretary came to Cabinet and made a presentation re the financial systems of Government. Recall also that the Financial Secretary mentioned that a weaknesses observed appears to be the lack of interface between Ministers and Permanent Secretaries in determining their Ministries' priorities among themselves. I recommend that you familiarize yourselves further with these imperatives and guidance of the Financial Secretary

so that there will be greater enlightenment on the broad subject of Government's finances.

It might be more practical for the report to be presented to the Cabinet quarterly. Some further guidance would be required to enable the Ministry of Finance to fulfill this request.

To meet this request, Cabinet members should ensure that the relevant Ministries are responsive in submitting the required information to the Ministry of Finance on time. The Estimates preparation process may need to start earlier with Estimates Committee convening in September instead of October/November as is the current practice. Ministries must also respect the cut-off dates set for submission of relevant information. The Ministry of Finance must maintain the credibility of the Budget.

5. The management of the CBI Program should be restructured and be administered through the Ministry of Finance, with quarterly reports of revenue earned, the number of applications and the number of persons granted citizenship

Response:

The work of the Citizenship by Investment Unit (CUI) has relevance for two major operational areas of the Government: Finance (Fiscal Agency) and National Security (Passport Processing). The mechanism for improving operations should be carefully studied in order to sustain smooth operations of the CBI programme.

I am disheartened that you both seem to forget the state of the CBI programme when we first came to Government as the Team Unity Administration in 2015. The CBI program has now become an outstanding success story for St. Kitts and Nevis. The results are published every year in the Annual Estimates tabled in the Parliament. These reports do not make a case for the restructuring of the programme.

You will recall that after serious mismanagement of the programme by the Denzil Douglas Administration when they took the 'Place of Birth' field out of our Passports, and after numerous warnings, the US Treasury Dept issued a FinCen Advisory against St. Kitts and Nevis. This was followed by the withdrawal of Visa-free access by Kittitians and Nevisians to Canada by the Canadian Government.

This restructuring involved a number of marketing strategies that have catapulted the programme to be the most sought after programme under CBI countries. The

CBI programme now has attained outstanding success, which continues to be lauded by reputable international experts.

As a mandate for managing the CBI, the Unit was assigned to the Office of the Prime Minister, with clear protocols for being at arms length from the Minister. This was often reconfirmed by visits from our International Partners and by having a head of the Unit with no political alliances. Members of the IMF and other international partners have commented on the sound governance of the programme and our adherence to strict Due Diligence (dd) protocols and decision making.

Through this approach and a marketing effort that emphasized the integrity of the programme, the SKN CBI was able to achieve the Platinum Brand status.

It is important to note that all strategies within the CBI were approved by submission to Cabinet. This ranged from the introduction of the Hurricane Fund, the changes in government fees, the addition of siblings, the splitting of shares to 200,000., the Limited Time Offers, the introduction of Escrow Bill and Payout schedules, the regulation of Escrow Agents, the introduction of the Alternative Investment Option and the inclusion of projects under this option. In addition, every real estate project approved by this government was submitted through SKIPA and reviewed accordingly.

Finally, all revenues from the programme go into the Consolidated Fund and are subject to the scrutiny of the Director of Audit.

6. There needs to be a clear policy that determines how social assistance is to be distributed to citizens and residents

Response:

After we took office in February 2015, every Cabinet member was asked to provide updates on the state in which they found each Ministry and portfolio that he or she had been assigned. In the case of Minister Hamilton and Senator Phipps a report would have been presented on the status of the National Household Registry (NHR) that had just been started prior to the change of Government. Ministers Hamilton and Phipps would have indicated that the investment to the Government in this national social services and assistance repository was priced at approximately EC\$570,000, based on (a) the most recent Country Poverty Assessment by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB); and (b) the World Bank, UNICEF and UN Women sponsored review in 2009 of the Social Safety Net Programmes already in existence.

The South American consulting firm, Ayala Consulting, would have undertaken the national assignment for the development of the NHR. The NHR then, and still today, is being used as national repository for all of Government’s social safety net programmes. It also provides for analytic, economic means testing to ascertain eligibility for social assistance. It also has inbuilt a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to track changes in the socio-economic status of beneficiaries so that their assistance scheme can be either amended, suspended or ended, as the case may be. An MOU would have been signed between the Ministry of Social Services and other ministries with social safety net programmes – e.g. Ministry of Education – so that these ministries can have access to the system to enter their data. As if that was not enough, our confirmed Cabinet Minutes of Monday, November 13, 2017 indicate that a delegation from Social Services would have made a presentation to Cabinet on the workings and status of the NHR. The delegation was comprised by PS Janelle Lewis-Tafari and Mrs Celia Christopher. Some four handouts were provided to each Cabinet member re: the presentations that were made. These were as follows: (1) an 18-slide powerpoint presentation on the St. Kitts and Nevis National Household Registry; (2) a two-page Word Document that outlined the data fields that would be collected from all applicants of Government social assistance, inclusive of demographics, income, gender, work history, geographic location, contact details, type of housing, etc.; (3) a single page screen shot of the service provider of the intended beneficiaries, which is meant to incorporate the support provided by state agencies, NGOs, etc.; and (4) a six-page print-out of the household assessment that identifies linkages and referrals that may be necessary for applicants re their domestic situation, job prospects, counselling needs, community-based health care outreach, access to public utilities, etc. Our Cabinet records indicate that you were both present at the time of that presentation.

Given the foregoing explanation, I am at a loss to understand why we would need to reinvent the wheel and waste valuable Government resources to develop yet another “... clear policy that determines how social assistance is to be distributed to citizens and residents.”

7. The STEP Program should be managed and operated from within the Ministry of Labour with the appropriate budget allocations

Response:

You both appear to be unaware of the decisions of the Cabinet on the STEP programme. While the Deputy Prime Minister has been absent from Cabinet for a long time, the Minister of Foreign Affairs must be aware that as of May 1st 2022 the first batch of STEP workers who are employed by Government would become Government Auxiliary Employees (GAEs). Once the full process of regularization of the Government assigned STEP workers is completed, all such workers would become permanent Government employees, attached to their respective Ministries. In light of the foregoing there is no justification for the transfer of the STEP programme to the Ministry of Labour.

8. The PAP program, which is budgeted under the Ministry of Social Development, should be managed and operated from with the Ministry of Social Development and not the Ministry of Sustainable Development. This program cannot continue to be operated by the Ministry of Sustainable Development when it is budgeted under the Ministry of Social Development

Response:

In answering this demand that the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) be placed completely under the Ministry of Social Development (where the Budget Head resides) it is necessary that context be provided in response. The PAP programme would have been informed, in considerable measure, by the results of the most recent Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) Country Poverty Assessment exercise that falls under the Ministry of Sustainable Development with support from Social Services. Following a Cabinet presentation in 2018 by former PS Beverly Harris of the Ministry of Sustainable Development on the intended data gathering exercise to set up the PAP programme it was determined, with Cabinet's approval, that the Statistical Unit in Sustainable Development would be the lead agency of this programme until it was well-established. This was so, given the shortage of qualified manpower at the Ministry of Social Services – whose staff size was, and still is small. Nevertheless, it was also agreed that the Ministry of Social Services would assist the Ministry of Sustainable Development with the project build-out. Once the programme had been fully developed, and the kinks worked out, there would have been a data sharing arrangement between the Ministry of Social Services and the Ministry of Sustainable Development. The Ministry of Social Services has already shared its database with Sustainable Development in order to facilitate this process. This ongoing exercise was meant to ensure that there

were no applicants double-dipping in terms of public assistance being provided by both Ministries to the same applicants. At the end of the review and assessment - that is now virtually completed by Sustainable Development - it is the intention of that Ministry to turn all applicant files over to Social Services for input in the same National Household Registry already discussed in exhaustive fashion at #6 above. I wish to state emphatically that it was never meant for there to be a permanent, administrative dichotomy in terms of the two Ministries with responsibility for the PAP programme. In other words, the PAP programme will be completely managed by the Ministry of Social Services as was originally intended.

9. All Members of Parliament should have equal access to resources, (eg land, houses, PAP, STEP, etc.) to assist constituents

Response:

In our system of Government, the system does not anticipate nor provide for an equal allocation of land parcels, or houses, or social assistance measures to each Member of Parliament for them to disburse same. Government programmes have to budgeted within the priorities set by the Cabinet and are managed by public servants who follow policy prescriptions made by the Cabinet.

The system expects all representatives of the people to assist their constituents in accessing Government services. This can be done in a variety of ways. It may require providing access to application forms, visiting constituents and informing them of the available services.

Each elected representative gets a constituency allowance which should be used to provide access, whether by establishing a Constituency Office, or arranging for assistants to work on their behalf, for the constituent to meet their elected representative, and raise their concerns.

A transparent process should not be politicized.

10. The Cabinet should be allowed to convene in the absence of the Prime Minister, with the Deputy acting as Chairman, or an assigned minister, when both are absent

Response:

You both know very well that this is a non-issue for you Deputy Prime Minister have on more than one occasion acted to Chair Cabinet Meetings at my direction in my absence. I cannot understand how this can be proposed at this time that the Deputy Prime Minister should act as Chairman of Cabinet when he has stopped coming to Cabinet and cannot very well chair Cabinet in his own absence. Since

he has stopped coming to Cabinet, Minister Eugene Hamilton has chaired Cabinet when I have had to be unavoidably absent.

11. All fake social media platforms that have been used to attack members of PAM and CCM, and those designed to attack PLP and other parties should be immediately and permanently deleted. Failure to do so should and would have serious implications for any settled agreement

Response:

You seem to be under the misguided opinion that I have control over social media platforms which could not be further from the truth. I neither use nor encourage my supporters to use these platforms to attack anyone. On the contrary, whenever it has been drawn to my attention that there are persons known to me who have been involved in irresponsible dissemination of information on social I have strongly discourages behaviour and will continue to do so.

I agree that every attempt must be used to tone down the rhetoric on social media.

12. It is our view that it is inappropriate for anyone representing the country as an ambassador, to be hosting or engaged in a radio or other media program, to attack members of the government that he or she serves, the opposition, or citizens of the country that they represent. It would have been more beneficial to the country if such programs were used to educate and sensitize the citizens about the diplomatic achievements of St. Kitts and Nevis, and how we are affected by world affairs.

Response:

I wish to stress that any citizen, including an ambassador, is free to exercise his or her democratic right to speak to issues affecting him or her or his or her Country. Free speech is an entitlement, and it does come with responsibilities for content, accuracy, intent, etc. It is also ironic, that both of you are not denied your individual rights to free speech, even as you have both launched scathing attacks on the Government of which you are a part. We are ALL called to lead by example.

13. *Therefore, any such ambassadors, including our current Ambassador to the United Nations, should be immediately recalled and all such attacks should be immediately ended.*

Response:

Ambassadors, like other citizens, who are accused of wrongdoing should be afforded the right to defend themselves and to answer their accusers. It goes against the grain of natural justice, fair play and due process if this is not done.

14. **Cease attempts, by PLP, to establish footholds in constituencies, other than Numbers 3, 6, and 7, and to bring an end to activities and support of agents working against PAM and CCM.**

Response:

I refer you to the preamble of The Constitution of St. Christopher and Nevis which states that:

“Whereas the People of St. Christopher and Nevis:-

(a) ...

(b) ...

(c) Believe in the concept of true democracy with free and fair elections;”

Why should PLP be excluded from this ideal? It cannot be free or fair if my party cannot take part in elections like other parties. The PLP has always leveraged its resources to assist all parties in Team Unity. That has allowed us to win General Elections on two occasions. Our growth is consistent with the urging of the Hon Shawn Richards at our 2018 Convention.

15. *In the spirit of the Good Governance Agenda and the recent Parliamentary efforts of the Team Unity Government to introduce Term Limits legislation in the National Assembly, and in the spirit of your own recent public commitments at a church service, not to seek a third term, that you make an unequivocal public statement not to seek a third term as Prime Minister*

Response:

How could you make the statement you make at item No 18 below that “if you are satisfied with what I say in my responses to you, --- We the undersigned [Brantley and Richards] would be willing to allow the continuation of your leadership, until December 31st, 2023”?

Your statement flies in the face of the Constitutional appointment to my office which, as it stands, is for a second 5 year term up to June 2025.

16. Also, to keep to the spirit of the TEAM Unity agreement, you make an unequivocal statement that the People's Labour Party (PLP), will not run candidates in any constituency where PAM and CCM are fielding candidates, (Constituencies 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11). Nor would PLP support candidates, individuals, or parties contesting against PAM and CCM. PAM and CCM commit to the same not to run candidates in 3, 6, and 7 and not to support any candidate, individuals or parties contesting against PLP.

Response:

Again, I am content to rely on the words of Deputy Prime Minister Richards and to take him at his word when at the 2nd PLP Convention in 2018 he said and I quote:

“..This afternoon, we are here witnessing the 2nd Convention of the PLP and that says to me that the PLP is growing and for that we must congratulate the PLP. The truth is that as individuals we all strive for growth in our lives whether financially, educationally, health-wise. We look at our children ... we all want them to grow, and as we grow and develop personally, we are empowered to ensure that others are also able to grow and to develop.

The growth and development of the PLP is therefore significant because it means that the PLP is not only able to empower its own people, but more importantly, the growth and development of the PLP is significant to the growth and development of Team Unity. More importantly, as I said, the growth of PLP and Team Unity is important to the growth and development of you the people of St. Kitts and Nevis.”

Deputy Prime Minister, I wish to draw to your attention your statements at the launch of your new candidate for Constituency #1. At that event, you boldly stated that PAM was prepared to field candidates in all eight constituents (on St. Kitts), if necessary.

17. Urgent accounting of CBI proceeds from the period of the SIDF until present day and to allocate and pay to Nevis its agreed pro rata population share of the net proceeds of CBI minus sums already paid to Nevis

Response:

A. As I have stated in my letter to the Hon Premier, the World Bank has already been contacted to do a comprehensive study of the revenue sharing arrangements between S. Kitts and Nevis. I am happy to restate that they have agreed to do so. Furthermore, as per the request of the Hon Premier, the Ministry of Finance has

already increased and remitted the monthly budgetary allocations to Nevis as per his request.

B. Any revenue sharing arrangement between St. Kitts and Nevis must be subject to Section 110 of the Constitution of St. Christopher and Nevis which takes into account (a) the deductions of the costs of common services; and (b) the contributions to the cost of meeting the debt charges for which the Government is responsible under Section 75.

C. The SIDF was brought into being under the former Labour Government in 2007, some 6 years prior to the formation of Team Unity.

18. If the above is agreed to, and in the spirit of political fairness, We, the undersigned would be willing to allow the continuation of your leadership, until December 31st, 2023, with the further understanding that you would keep to the commitment to facilitating a smooth transition to a new leader of the coalition thereafter.

Response:

The Constitution determines the manner in which I would demit office. I reject the notion that I be subjected to a date established by you. It goes against the grain of the prerogative of the Prime Minister as established in the Constitution of St. Christopher and Nevis.

Conclusion

I remain fully committed to the Unity concept and no action I take or decision I make, even if it displeases one or both of you will be intended to damage Unity.

I will not compromise by doing anything I think is unconstitutional, unlawful, or not in the best interests of the people of our beloved Federation, just to stay in power. I do not seek to have elections before they are constitutionally due, but if it becomes necessary, I am willing to abide by and support the will of the people as demonstrated by the election results, whatever they may be.

We should be guided by the thought that Unity belongs to the people, not to their leaders, and if we desert their expectations we should not be surprised if they remain with Unity even if their leaders do not.

I remain focused on delivering on the policies and programmes that would improve the standard and quality of life our people, including but not limited to the following:

Deputy Prime Minister Shawn Richards & Minister Mark Brantley
April 20th 2022

- Higher levels of employment so that our young people, mothers and fathers, and practically everyone who is able to be gainfully employed will have opportunities for decent work and the ability to provide for their families;
- Further enhancement of our education sector so that our citizens and residents can take advantage of the myriad of innovative employment opportunities that are required to power the ever-changing global economy;
- Boost our agricultural sector through increased crop production, in order to strengthen our food security index, facilitate exports of surplus agricultural goods and mitigate our vulnerabilities to the global supply chain shortages;
- Implement measures intended to address key consumer challenges such as the rising cost of living, high fuel costs, etc.;
- Focus our attention on economic diversification in order to build resilience in our domestic economy, while leveraging information and communication technologies (ICTs) to expedite the digitization of our economy;
- Incentivizing the build-out of financial and commercial enterprises in the rural areas in particular, in order to take jobs and opportunities to the people.

As always, I remain fully committed to the advancement of the people of St. Kitts and Nevis in every sphere of human endeavour.

Yours sincerely



Dr the Hon Timothy Harris
Prime Minister

Encs

pc *All Members of the Federal Cabinet*