

Remarks

By

The Rt. Hon. Perry G. Christie
Leader of the Progressive Liberal
Party

Hatchet Bay, Eleuthera

19th April 2012

GOOD EVENING NORTH
ELEUTHERA!

I CAN FEEL YOUR ENERGY!

I CAN FEEL THAT YOU'RE READY
FOR A NEW DAY!

I CAN FEEL THAT YOU'RE READY
TO GO IN A NEW DIRECTION!

SO LET ME ASK YOU : ARE YOU
READY TO ROLL WITH CLAY IN THE
NORTH AND DAMIEN IN THE
SOUTH!

ARE YOU READY, SPANISH WELLS!

ARE YOU READY, HARBOUR
ISLAND!

ARE YOU READY NORTH
ELEUTHERA!

I know you're ready, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for supporting me, and for supporting the PLP, so enthusiastically!

I want you to know that it means a lot to me. As you know, I have deep family ties to Eleuthera on my mother's side – the Allens and the Careys – so it's always a very special pleasure for me to come back to my ancestral home. I'm family! And I think you know how much

I love you, and care about you. So thank you for receiving me so warmly as you always do.

It's an even greater pleasure for me to be here at this particular moment in time because of two very special individuals: Clay Sweeting and Damien Gomez. They are young men of the most exceptional quality: smart, talented, dedicated, courageous and patriotic. They want to give back. They want to serve. They want to play their

part in helping to raise our nation higher, and in helping to rescue Eleuthera and its islands from the great, big mess that this no-good FNM Government of Hubert Ingraham has created for you.

I've said it before and I say it again tonight. Hubert Ingraham is the worst Prime Minister in the history of our country – by far the worst! That's the bad news. The good news is that we only have 18 more days to put up with

him. Come May 7th, Ingraham will be gone, gone, gone!

He and the FNM will be out and the PLP will be in! And we'll be ready from day one to get on with the business of restoring our economy and securing our borders.

All across our nation, our people are in full stride towards a PLP victory. We are winning on every front, from Inagua in the South to Bimini in North. As for

New Providence and Grand Bahama, we are surging as never before. Our momentum is simply unbelievable. It is exceeding all my expectations – so much so that I am now firmly convinced, based on what I am seeing and feeling, that we are not only going to win on May 7th, we're going to win BIG! You tell Hubert Ingraham, Perry Christie told you so!

Eleuthera, both North and South, are poised to be a big part of that big win

too! I know it! I can feel it! And I know you do too.

And believe me when I tell you that both Damian and Clay will have important roles to play in my next government. They are going to be able to play a direct part in helping to shape a new day and a brighter future for you here in Eleuthera. They will be active players not bystanders. We have a magnificent team, not a one-man band, and Clay and Damien will be important

members of the PLP team. You can count on that!

And while I'm on that, I want to publicly thank Oswald Ingraham for having given such distinguished service to you and to our country, both as an MP and as Speaker of the House of Assembly. Thank you, Oswald, and thank you for being such a wonderful guide and mentor to Damien. We are forever in your debt.

Fellow PLPs : there's so much that needs to be done! So much work that awaits our urgent attention. There are so many FNM failures we have to correct.

Did you hear the Prime Minister speaking in North Eleuthera last night? Did you hear him say that he had to make a confession? He actually confessed that he had failed to do enough to deal with the illegal poaching problem.

We in the PLP, however, have a comprehensive plan to secure our borders and to deal with illegal poaching. We have to implement this plan and we will, starting as soon as we take office. We have to do it because it's the only way we can ensure that our fisheries resources and the livelihood of our fishermen are protected and secured now and for future generations of Bahamians.

And while I'm on this, let me ask you :
who do think you can best trust to

understand, and represent, and look after the interests of Spanish Wells fishermen : Clay Sweeting or the other fella? Clay is a fisherman himself. He knows what needs to be done! Clay's the man!

But we have a bold and viable plan to deal with this problem.

- We will recruit an additional 350 persons as officers and marines for the Royal Bahamas Defence Force over the next five years.

- We will give renewed focus on deepening and expanding the technical and engineering skills of our marines through training and education.
- We will acquire 5 additional medium size patrol craft; 1 multi-purpose support craft in the range of 150-200 feet; and six additional smaller multi-purpose vessels with rapid response capabilities.
- We will also acquire a long-range maritime patrol aircraft to provide aerial reconnaissance and real-time

information to surface units and bases; and two general purpose aircraft for patrols and transport support.

- We will also decentralize the operations of the RBDF with satellite bases in the North and South, to promote quicker response time and to serve as forward-operating bases. These bases will be adequately equipped with personnel, ships, aircraft, and supplies.

These are just some of the steps that

we will be taking to not only deal with our illegal immigration problem but to better police our waters against foreign poachers. We simply have to do a better job of protecting our nation's fishing industry, and we will!

And while I'm on the subject of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force, let me just say that the Prime Minister, as usual, had it all wrong when he spoke last night. When we appointed the Commodore of the Defence Force, it was based on the most thorough and

proper search process ever conducted. It was done with the assistance of the Canadian Armed Forces. And the final selection was the best there was. The Canadian Government thought so. And we in the Bahamian Government thought so too. And so we appointed him. And you all know who that was don't you – the big man from Hatchet Bay, Butch Scavella, one of the best native sons to ever come out of Eleuthera. So, we made the right choice because we followed the right process. It led us to the right man.

But, fellow PLPS, illegal poaching is not the only problem you face. In Harbour Island, you have some of the worst infrastructure problems to be found anywhere. This outgoing FNM government has simply failed to deal with the unreliability and insufficiency of the utility services and the other infrastructure you need to have. You can't go on like this. Resort owners and business operators can't go on like this. Homeowners can go on like this either.

Be assured, therefore, that the next PLP Government is going to be giving urgent attention to remedying this problem. We will put the infrastructure of Harbour Island in a state that will allow you to maintain the standard of living to which you aspire; and in a state that will sustain economic development.

But there's even more than that we need to fix.

The agricultural economy of North Eleuthera needs to receive concentrated and sustained attention. Farmers need better access to markets, and they also need better access to funding, especially for start-up agricultural enterprises. The PLP is committed to creating the institutional support that will make that kind of assistance possible. We are also committed to providing the kind of training and technical assistance that young farmers need to ensure the viability of their agro-businesses.

Even more broadly, the tourism and resort development industries of Eleuthera are desperately in need of new life. We are committed to providing that new life!

We have put together a comprehensive package of policy initiatives aimed at reviving the tourism and resort development industry throughout Eleuthera. In particular, we will amend the Hotels Encouragement Act, secure

funding, offer tax rebates and provide marketing support for developers of boutique hotels, “Bed and Breakfast” Resorts and Fishing Lodges. These represent ideal tourism business opportunities for Bahamians and groups of Bahamians. Why shouldn't native Eleutherans be empowered to own a big piece of this industry right here where you live? We're committed to realizing that dream.

So, fellow PLP's we have the pumps all primed and are rearing to go to work to help make things better for you and for your children.

So join with us as we put ourselves in readiness to serve you.

Join us, then, and help us make all of Eleuthera gold, North and South. Vote for Sweeting and Gomez!

PLP! PLP! PLP!

