

REMARKS BY L. RYAN PINDER MP

ELIZABETH

EASTERN REGION CONCLAVE

Thursday 21st July New Life Christian Centre

Prince Charles Drive

New Providence

Introduction

It is my honour to be here this evening to report to you on the work of the Progressive Liberal Party and me as the Member of Parliament in the Elizabeth constituency, and our first 15 months together. When I was campaigning last year I walked up to rallies with the same song as we heard tonight, We are a family. That was because as a boy, I grew up with many of you. Tonight I thought it appropriate again to play that song, over the course of the last year and a bit we have grown closer as a family, Elizabeth, you are my family. We have worked hard together to build this family, to build a stronger community, it is through the commitment and dedication of you, the constituents of Elizabeth, that we today can say, Elizabeth is a stronger community. And because of that, this evening we say to the Bahamian people, and to you, the residents of Elizabeth, this is all about you.

Elizabeth is a unique constituency, encompassing many different economic and sociological demographics. Different areas might require different demands, but we are one community, and this was the focus of our first year together.

Highs and Lows

Together, this past year we have had some challenges, and reasons to celebrate. Elizabeth was the only constituency to host a constituency

pageant, the Miss Elizabeth Beauty Pageant, where young ladies from all over the constituency participated. The event was not only to celebrate the beauty of the youth of Elizabeth, but it was also used as a community building exercise, encouraging participation from young ladies and families from every area of the constituency. I can say that this was a huge success, with the ladies who participated remaining close friends and active within our great party. This event was hosted by the Elizabeth Branch of the PLP and I commend them for a job well done.

We have also experienced great sorrow in Elizabeth this past year. We witnessed the tragic death of 4 young children because of a house fire. This shook the residents of Elizabeth to the core, and certainly had a significant impact on me personally. After experiencing this tragedy, I pledged that we in the Elizabeth community would do what we can to prevent this tragedy from re-occurring. We recently hosted a Disaster Preparedness seminar in Elizabeth. We had NEMA, the Red Cross and the Fire Department come to give talks about disaster preparedness. Of particular focus was the instruction of the Fire Department, and especially with the young children. There was a special and focused presentation just to the children of Elizabeth, to do what we can to inform our children what to do in the case of a fire. Knowledge is power, and I thank the respective agencies for committing themselves to the preparation of our residents, with the hope to save lives, and avoid the tragedy we recently experienced. We anticipate these types of symposiums and educational sessions to continue because if you can save a life, you save a community.

Youth of Elizabeth

As the youngest Member of Parliament for the Progressive Liberal Party I have a special concern for the youth of our country and especially the youth of Elizabeth. We have over the last year put in a number of youth development programs focused specifically on the youth of the community, providing positive direction and leadership. I believe that

the future of the Bahamas depends on the nurturing of our youth, the empowerment of our youth. I want to take this opportunity to recognize the Elizabeth branch of the Progressive Young Liberals, a dynamic group of young persons from the community dedicated to the advancement of the youth of Elizabeth. They have an ambitious plan that includes youth symposiums, the celebration of an “Elizabeth Day” and the involvement in creating an Elizabeth youth community center.

To the Elizabeth young liberals, you have my support in your endeavors, to promote, empower and prepare the youth of Elizabeth. Through you, our community of one has the foundation to excel.

National Concerns

But, as we work to promote the youth of Elizabeth, empower and prepare them, we here the common cry that is heard throughout the country. Bahamians, and particularly the youth of the country, and the youth in Elizabeth are yearning for jobs, but not only jobs, they desire the opportunity to establish a career and build that career to the ultimate goal, owning a business in that respective career. The young junior mason in Elizabeth says, I want an opportunity first and foremost to work and provide for my family, but then I want to have confidence that I can progress, to a full mason, to a foreman, to a contractor, in charge of a work crew, and ultimately owning my own construction company.

This is the concern of the youth, employment and career development. These are the concerns that are going unaddressed by this FNM Government, these are the concerns that will formulate the foundation of the next PLP Government.

National Plan

The preparation of the youth to succeed depends on providing the opportunities for them to succeed. We find ourselves in a scenario where our population is out-growing our economy, which results in fewer and fewer opportunities for Bahamians to succeed and build careers. We, as the next Government, will chart a course of economic expansion, a course to revitalize shrinking industries such as farming

and fisheries, with the goal to prepare Bahamians to take advantage of these opportunities, to find jobs, build careers and provide for their families. Through a focused national plan, we can have a focused education and training initiative, where each Bahamians is given the opportunity to thrive, the opportunity to excel, in new and expanding areas and industries. This is the work of a compassionate government, the work of a government who puts Bahamians first, the work of a Government that believes in all it does – it is all about you!!!!!!

Election

So, as we recognize that we are proceeding toward a general election, and the PLP prepares to be the next Government of the Bahamas, it is the philosophies that are established for the best interest of Bahamians that is important. Policies that will provide economic opportunity for Bahamians, policies that will prepare you to succeed, policies that will mitigate the increasing crime and your fear of crime. It is there issues that should form the basis of who you believe should be the next Government of the Bahamas. There is much work to do in this campaign, it has just started. We have every intention of being the next Government of the Bahamas, but we recognize that to do that a lot depends on you, after all, it is all about you.

So tonight, this conclave we take this opportunity as a region to bind together, to get to know each other, to ensure than when that bell is rung, the east will be going PLP.

Conclusion

Our job as the next Government is to provide opportunities for you to succeed, recognizing it's about you, it's about putting Bahamians first. My job as the Member of Parliament for Elizabeth is to build community, to ensure when we march on as a community, as one, putting in plans and programmes for your benefit. This is what good governance and good representation is about, this is what PLP representation is about, that I can commit to you.

So I thank all the organizers for this conclave, I thank you for your participation and interaction. Thank you for allowing me to share with you some of our work since just becoming your representative last year. Thank you for allowing me to share some of my vision for the country. Remember, I believe that it is in fact all about you, its all about being Bahamian. It's all about preparing the young people of country for success. It's all about you.

Thank you and good evening.