

**PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL PARTY**  
**YAMACRAW BRANCH**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Majority Rule: Where to From Here?**



On Monday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the Yamacraw Branch of the Progressive Liberal Party decided to commemorate and celebrate the 44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Majority Rule at its monthly meeting by holding a panel discussion on the topic, "Majority Rule: Where to From Here? The distinguished panel comprised Dame Marguerite Pindling, former Senator Telator Strachan and the Deputy Chairman of the Party, Mr. Alexander Storr. This special blend of persons was chosen to give a generational perspective on the topic and what the events leading up to January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1967 meant for the Country then and now. The Panel was chaired by the Member of Parliament for Yamacraw, Mrs. Melanie Griffin and the Rt. Hon. Perry Gladstone Christie, Leader of the PLP, climaxed the evening with closing remarks.

The capacity crowd was thrilled by what turned out to be a most educational and inspirational evening and hung on every word and experience shared by the panellists. Mr.

Alexander Storr, speaking on behalf of the current generation, noted that he was born after 1967, but he was appreciative and thankful for the generation that took the risks to ensure that he and others of his generation could enjoy the freedom and benefits of a modern day Bahamas. Liberties which he felt should not be taken for granted, but must be protected and built upon for generations yet unborn. It was his view that the current state of affairs in the Country pose a threat to those liberties and that his generation had a responsibility to learn from the rich history of



the past to avoid regression. He also noted that there is a need for the return to the philosophy of Bahamianization. Bahamians should be granted every opportunity to succeed in their own country by their government, instead of being faced with red tape and hurdles. Any government in this modern Bahamas should always put Bahamians first. The PLP is the only Party with a proven track record of doing just that.

Mrs. Strachan gave a vivid account of her experiences during the era leading up to Majority Rule. The former Senator described Majority Rule as “the culmination of a long and winding road of struggle by the black majority, assisted by some of their white brothers and sisters, to have the right to participate in the decision-making process in the land of their birth.”

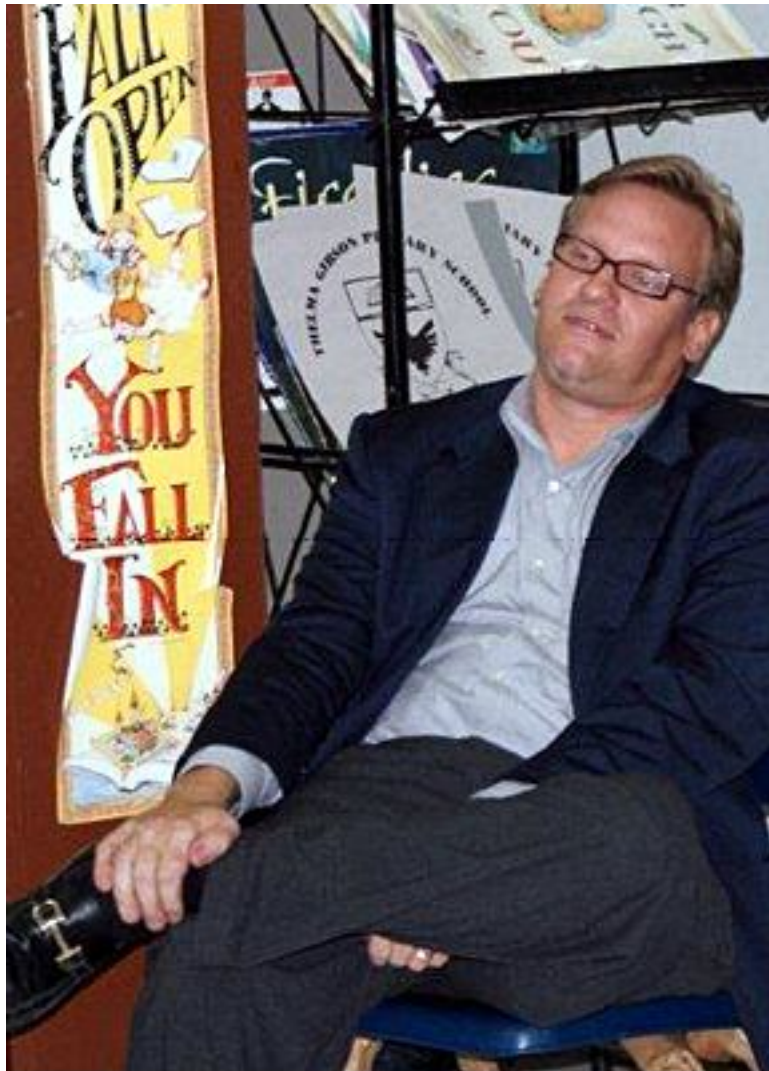


She told of how the global winds of change impacted the lives of the leaders of the struggle and the Bahamian landscape generally and shared about the exciting rallies and how the masses were inspired by the clear, strong message of the late Sir Lynden Pindling and others to take a stand for their rights. The role of the Straw Vendors in support the cause was also noted. Mrs. Strachan lamented that the successes of Majority Rule are threatened by those who seek to protect special interests and negative influences which have caused some to depart from the original course, following an individualistic culture. She was of the view that the Country, beset with social ills, a widening gap between the “haves” and the “have nots” and a non-responsive government seemed destined to self-destruct with crime and violence at an alarmingly unacceptable level. The way forward was to recapture the “fighting spirit” of Majority Rule, a fight which was not about knives and guns, but about changing the mindset of a people. She said love and compassion for each other must once more become the hallmark of the Nation.



Dame Marguerite captivated the audience with her riveting exposé of events and experiences leading to Majority Rule. She shared about the support she gave to her husband, the late Sir Lynden Pindling, as the leader of the Party and as the Prime Minister, but the experiences she shared also indicated her support for the Party and the cause within her own right. Dame Marguerite noted that the women of the Party always supported the men and that their fundraising efforts allowed the leaders of the day to continue their many travels to and from England to keep the Colonial Office there abreast of what was transpiring in the colony. They were also able to travel throughout the islands and carry out the work of the Party generally

because of the fund raising efforts of the women and others. The audience was intrigued by accounts of the election of the first six members of the PLP to Parliament in 1956 and the General Strike of 1958 when the taxi drivers blocked the entrance to the airport and were joined by hotel workers throughout the island who stopped work once the signal was given. Those present also learnt of Sir Lynden's move from a "safe seat" in New Providence to one in Andros where he had no ties and the account of Dame Marguerite's campaign in Andros on her husband's behalf was classic.



Again it was clear that the Party under Sir Lynden was able to garner the support of the various societal groupings, the Church, the Women's Suffrage Movement and Labour to bring about on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1967 what is noted as one of the greatest achievements in the history of this country – Majority Rule. Dame Marguerite spoke of the high ideals and goals of those early days and the achievements of the new Majority Rule government which culminated in the development of the modern Bahamas – the drive to build schools to educate the masses and the

development of institutions, like National Insurance which is still being used today to the social benefit the people. She encouraged those present to return to the high ideals of the struggle and to fight with renewed energy and compassion to assist those persons in our society who are hurting and seemingly unable to get any relief. She also gave a charge to the Party's current leaders to continue to provide hope in the midst of the difficult circumstances facing the Nation today where the development of the country seems at a standstill. The audience was invited to read "The Vision", a book comprising letters and speeches written by Sir Lynden as we formulate the way forward.

The Rt. Hon. Perry G. Christie in his closing remarks commended the panellists and the Branch for such an educational event in commemoration of Majority Rule. He reflected on the events leading up to Majority Rule and joined former speakers in encouraging those present to recapture the indomitable spirit and high ideals of the struggle. He noted that the PLP was still the best choice to move the country forward and that he would do all in his power to ensure that the next PLP government would honour the spirit of Majority Rule.

The audience ranged in ages from 5 to 91 years old as many came to learn about one of the most important events in our country's history. Also in attendance were: Obie Wilchcombe, MP for West End and Bimini; Glenys Hanna-Martin, MP for Englerston; Fred Mitchell, MP for Fox Hill; Ryan Pinder, MP for Elizabeth and candidates Dr. Danny Johnson, Carmichael and Dr. Kendal Major, Garden Hills.