

**THE ANTIGUA BARBUDA TRUE LABOUR PARTY
MANIFESTO, GENERAL ELECTION 2014**



THE PLAN

ANTIGUA BARBUDA TRUE LABOUR PARTY MANIFESTO

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WHO WE ARE:

The True Labour Party is the Third and Best Option that you can vote for on Election Day. The Party came into existence on the 5th July, 2013 when the organization was registered as a friendly society.

We were diehard supporters of the Antigua Labour Party that saw corruption and undemocratic practices in that organisation, and after attempting to solve the matter internally by contesting in primaries based on the party's constitution failed, decided to form a democratic inclusive political organization. The True Labour Party is closer in practice of the ideologies of the founders of the AT&LU in 1939 than any other political party in Antigua and Barbuda.

We believe that the political salvation of Antigua and Barbuda is when the electorate becomes astute and mature enough not to vote based on support for political parties coloured red or blue, but willing to change the political culture and vote against corrupt politicians regardless of the political parties they represent.

WADALI POWER PLANT:

There is an energy crisis in Antigua and Barbuda that will affect our ability to grow our economy. We do not have affordable and reliable electricity in our country and Antigua and Barbuda will continue to suffer higher electricity bills due to the government's inability to procure proper generators to provide for the nation's present and future energy needs in addition to a long term energy plan to phase in the use of renewable energy, in particular wind and solar power.



It is the policy of a True Labour administration to procure generators for Antigua and Barbuda in order that our people will have better living standards, and that we can grow our economy in the future. We will do this with or without the assistance of the Peoples Republic of China.

Antigua and Barbuda's energy needs are a national security issue and will require negotiations with all stakeholders, private,

governmental and state entities. The True Labour Party administration will not be paying for any generators that are below the standards of their purchase price.

CITIZENSHIP BY INVESTMENT PROGRAMME:

A True Labour Party administration will not sell the Antigua and Barbuda passport. The Antigua and Barbuda passport can only be obtained at birth, marriage and through application after stipulated requirements of residency are satisfied. All the last remaining beach front properties owned by the government will be turned over to the National Parks for preservation for future generations of Antiguan and Barbudans.



CONSTITUENCY ALLOWANCE:

All True Labour Party Candidates Pledge that upon winning their seats to become Representatives in Parliament they will account to their constituents for the constituency allowance received from the government to benefit the constituency.

We believe good governance starts at the branch level and we pledge that all branches of a True Labour Representative in Parliament will register their branch as a friendly society and open bank accounts in the name of the branch so that all constituency allowance will not go to the Representative but instead to the branch via its bank account.

We further pledge that the Representative will not be a signatory to the branch bank account but will make the secretary, treasurer and chairman of the branch signatories to the account with any two of the three signatories able to sign cheques for the branch.

Under a True Labour Representative all constituents, supporters of True Labour or not will be capable of asking a True Labour Constituency Branch Office for an accounting of the constituency allowance.

THE ECONOMY(Overview)

- A True Labour Government will invest in the development of high-end tourism products such as adventure tourism, nature tourism, cultural tourism, conferences and community tourism.
- Emphasis will be placed on high value agriculture, focusing on food industry, agro processing and horticulture.
- Improvement in public revenue, including compliance and administration.

- Careful management of deficits and debt including a focused debt management strategy.
- Improvement in the productivity and transparency of public expenditure.
- Strengthening the government's institutional framework for accountability.
- Protection of the poorer class and the vulnerable through fair and balanced fiscal measures.
- Consideration will be given to the introduction of an employment tax credit. This system will give tax credits to businesses that generate significant new employment.

To encourage new investment we will grant three years free of tax for a new company that employs at least 10 people who are paid over \$25,000.00 each per annum and 4 years free of tax for new companies that employs at least 15 people who are paid \$25,000.00 each per annum.

- A True Labour government will pave the way for all foreign companies to setup a special fund to contribute to their employees' severance pay in the event of closure, so that every year as the employees years of employment increases so will the contribution the employer will make to the fund.
- A True Labour government would focus on developing our tourism product by creating a duty free port at English Harbour and Falmouth to encourage yachts to shop in Antigua and also develop and strengthen our yachting industry.
- Creation of an inter-island ferry service would be part of our economic and tourism plan in order to encourage regional tourist to travel at a cheaper rate and will also assist with strengthening our international travel.
- The True Labour Part sees a need to place a cap on all-inclusive hotels. With some of our hotels staying as "pay as you go" will help to build small businesses such as taxi services, restaurants, tour guide services etc. which will create an economic ripple effect in the economy.
- A True Labour Party administration sees the need for our seaports to be managed by a board which will assess from time to time the need for dredging or sweeping of the harbours, (St John's Harbour, English Harbour, Falmouth Harbour, and Parham Harbour). This will allow us to be competitive with other developing harbours in the Caribbean.

- There is a need for a ban on all anchoring on or around our coral reefs; a True Labour government will invest in moorings which will be maintained by a fee that would be charged to all boats that cruise around our territorial waters.
- There is a need for research into our history and urgent renovation of our cultural and historical sites. We will establish a fund to maintain, research our history and to preserve our historical sites.
- Developing a sports industry with a package which will penetrate the east coast of the United States to host practice matches and competitive games in our country.

ECONOMIC POLICY(Three Stage Approach):

The True Labour Party will remove the personal income tax to attract investors to the island. Antiguanians have always paid taxes whether it was a direct tax on your income or indirectly on custom duties.

1. JOB CREATION:

We will create work for the unemployed in the light manufacturing industry and it will be the policy of a True Labour Government to cater and grow this industry to support the needs of our hotel industry and households.



The light industry will manufacture all the towels, hangers, detergents, cleaning agents, toiletries, and bed linen, etc that the hotels will need.

A True Labour government will also promote agriculture and aquaculture industries to cater for the needs of our hotel industries. True Labour envision and support companies that will provide these produce to the hotels in a well organized and efficient manner that will provide revenue for the government, give wages and benefits to the farmers and fishermen who are employed to supply the produce required for the hotels.

2. WAR ON CRONYISM(Cutting out Corruption and Wastage of Scarce Revenue)-

It is a core policy of a True Labour government to remove the personal income tax; the question that many of the electorate would like answered is how will we provide the revenue that will be lost from P.I.T?

Our solution to providing revenue to replace the P.I.T. is an unflinching and sustained war to stamp out cronyism where government contracts do not go out to tender but are awarded to cronies of the politicians who overinflate their bills that the tax payers are burdened with.

The True Labour Party believes that Antigua and Barbuda has sufficient taxes presently in place and the revenues that are raised are sufficient to run the country at a surplus with good governance that we intend to provide. The problem has been under various administrations of government too much of our taxes have gone to the cronies of politicians.

The True Labour war on cronyism will consist of legislative amendments to the:-

(a)Tenders Board Act

Amend the act so that all government contracts that are awarded, but do not go out to tender will be a criminal offense making the person getting the contract and the government officials who signed the contract offenders and capable of being punished with imprisonment.

Under an amended Tenders Board legislation the average Antigua and Barbuda will get a fair chance to place and have a successful bid based on the best price, efficiency and quality of their work.



Nut Grove Community Center
\$1,203,000



\$247,000 Nut Grove Stand



(b)Finance and Administration Act, 2006

Any contract that will be paid from the government treasury must be presented to Parliament for debate by the lower and upper house and eventual vote on the matter.

It will be a criminal offense for any politician to sign a contract that will be a burden on the public purse without the contract being debated and voted upon in Parliament.

The contract/legislation **must** be brought before the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda so that the people can rightfully have a say through their representatives in Parliament on how the public purse is being spent, and so that the contract can be vetted, voted upon for approval or denial.

The True Labour Party believes that this legislation is necessary in order that the Antigua and Barbuda people will at the end of the day have knowledge and a say in how their money is being spent. Presently, our political system allows the politicians to a great extent to saddle the citizenry with debts through incompetence and illegality without any recourse to the criminal courts.

c) Auditing of Public Accounts

True Labour will also make it a criminal act, punishable with a minimum of five years in prison for any failure to have the public accounts audited with any reason outside an Act of God. The citizenry must know how their money has been spent in order to make decisions on how they want their limited resources in the public purse to be spent.

The True Labour Party believes we will have a better informed public as to how their money is being spent through the proposed amendments to the stated legislations, and the savings to the treasury will amount to tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars. It is a necessity to have an informed public in our democratic styled government and the amendments to the legislations will assist towards this end in order that the general public will be informed through parliamentary proceedings so that they can speak out against incompetence by the politicians and corrupt practices.

3. Legalisation of Marijuana

One of the biggest issues that has never been discussed by the two other major parties is the national debt. Antigua and Barbuda's sovereignty is threatened by the large amounts of borrowing, corruption and incompetence in government that has kept pushing up our national debt. The True Labour Party intends to use all proceeds to greatly reduce if not wipe out all debt owed through the revenues gained by the legalisation of marijuana.



The True labour Party believe that Antigua and Barbuda could solve many of our economic problems with the legalisation of marijuana and the medical marijuana industry that we will promote to provide employment for those out of work.

True Labour envisions a highly regulated legal marijuana industry that would provide large revenue to the state to reduce our national debt. We will set a legal age limit for purchasing marijuana of 18 which will prevent the youth from police brutality and the stigmatisation of incarceration for smoking an illegal substance.

Upon attaining government a True Labour administration will have a referendum within the first year of its administration after promoting a national discussion and debates aimed to inform the public of the pros and cons of the legalisation of marijuana.

The legalisation of marijuana will only happen upon a fair and successful referendum being conducted by the majority of all eligible votes voting in support of the policy. If the referendum is successful True Labour will pass legislation to legalise marijuana in a highly regulated manner and the general policies are herein stated:

(a)THE MORATORIUM-The True Labour Party will pass legislation that will make marijuana legal for five(5) years in which time we will use the revenues to greatly reduce if not wipe out our national debt. After the moratorium of five(5) years a True Labour administration will request studies and statistics and have a post-mortem on the 5 years that marijuana was legal. The Party will make all information public as to the pros and cons of legalising marijuana. The administration will then determine whether to permanently legalise marijuana based on the studies that are done.

(b)The only persons who can grow and sell marijuana will be those who make application to the government for a grower or sell licence and have been approved(all other persons who do not have a licence and continue to grow or sell marijuana will be engaging in an illegal activity and the same criminal penalties that are presently enacted will apply to the said individuals).

Upon being approved for a licence the grower or seller will be given a certificate upon paying the requisite fees and will have to pay their contributions to social security, medical benefit and education levy.

The state will inspect the product from the seed to the harvest for quality and the only purchaser of the product will be the government which will have statutory bodies established to set the rate that the state will purchase the marijuana from the grower(any sale by a marijuana grower or seller outside the government as sole purchaser will remain an illegal act and will be punishable with the same laws presently enacted).

The seller of legal marijuana will purchase the product from the state or established statutory body at a fixed rate(any seller purchasing outside the government or statutory body established for that purpose will continue to be an illegal act punishable with the same laws presently enacted to fight crime).

The sellers will obtain a licence to sell the product and will have the premises inspected for cleanliness and quality of the product being sold to the public. The rue Labour Party will protect the public from dangerous additives to the marijuana such as crack cocaine which is referred to locally as “spranger” or “pelico”. True Labour is of the opinion that with high regulation and inspection of the growers and sellers we can provide a healthier and safer product to the segment of the public who chose to use marijuana.

Because Antigua and Barbuda have made the decision to legalise marijuana a True Labour administration will not promote illegal shipment and/or transshipment of marijuana into and out of Antigua and Barbuda. We respect the laws of other independent nation states and such actions will remain an illegal act and the laws governing this illicit activity will be strengthened under a True Labour government.

**Note- There will be several professions where use of marijuana by active practitioners will remain illegal due to the need for public safety and confidence such as Police Officers, Firemen, Air Traffic Controllers, Publically Employed Doctors and Nurses, Taxi and Bus Drivers.*

EDUCATION POLICY:

The education policy of the True Labour Party advocates that there should be revolutionary Education, whereby the State should provide programs to help individuals with life skills, consequently creating employment opportunities. The relevant safety nets such as soft loans, training programs etc. should be put in place to encourage individuals to be self-sufficient, promoting self-esteem, so that better choices can be made in order to alleviate poverty.

This is a direct link between what goes on in the home and what goes on in the Lower and Upper House of Parliament. National economic policies determine what goes into our pots, and how we feed and care for our children. What our children learn and how they grow and develop are guided by these policies. What goes into the national health budget establishes whether we live or die, and how we care for our ill and our elderly.

Political participation provides political solutions to social, economic and political problems. In short, political problems are bread and butter issues.

Teachers – The Agents of Change

ABTLP will re-assess the Teacher Training Department with a view to improving the training given in:

- Early Childhood Education
- Primary Education
- Secondary Education
- Tertiary Education

ABTLP believes that teachers should be afforded the opportunity to examine their strengths so that they can further pursue courses that will allow them to become specialists in the areas listed above as well as the following:

- Remedial learners, late/latent developers
- Adult Education

We will further examine the teachers in the schools with the intention of them becoming specialists in subject areas, such as Mathematics and English.

A more meaningful role between the coordinators in the Ministry of Education and the specialist teachers in the schools will be explored. Associations of specialist teachers will be introduced to stimulate the instructors and to place specific skills and alternative teaching methods at the disposal of the teachers.

Skill-Based Programs

The skill-based curriculum will be redeveloped in a way that will ensure:

- Internship/Job training segments are realized
- Students are remunerated during this period
- The Business Community absorbs students seeking to fulfil their job practice requirements

Other Plans

ABTLP will set up an assessment program to assist our skilled workers in acquiring certification. They will also ensure that:

- Our schools place greater emphasis on functional literacy.
- An environment that will assist our students in enjoying the learning process is created.
- Extra-curricular activities form an integral part of the school curriculum
- Schools are encouraged to participate in National sporting events.
- Youth organizations receive tangible support from the government.
- Voluntary work done by youth leaders receives national recognition.
- The constitution of Antigua and Barbuda is taught in secondary schools.

HEALTH POLICY:

There are no “free” health services provided by any government throughout the world as was promised by a former Minister of Health in Antigua and Barbuda prior to the 2009 General Election.

As tax payers who fund Mount Saint John's Medical Centre and Medical Clinics throughout Antigua and Barbuda we deserve the best medical care that our taxes can provide. A True Labour administration will focus on improving healthcare in Antigua and Barbuda by:

- Transforming State Insurance and Medical Benefits Scheme into a proper National Healthcare Scheme where people can buy additional healthcare options.
- Expand the international base of specialist so that they can be flown to Antigua and Barbuda instead of one patient flying out to receive that treatment.
- Healthcare must be accessible within three miles of all communities in Antigua and Barbuda. To this end where there are no medical clinics to serve these remote communities a True Labour administration will invest in mobile clinics to provide medical care until permanent structures are erected.



It will be the goal of a True Labour administration to build and/or maintain medical clinics in all 17 Constituencies in Antigua and Barbuda and more if possible, but the basic medical needs of blood works, general examination, emergency medical attention and pre and post natal care should be provided to our citizens not at Mount Saint John's Medical Centre, but should be provided at the various Medical Clinics throughout Antigua and Barbuda as the first line in protecting the health of the nation.



A True Labour Administration will provide the leadership and organization to best staff and establish a managerial protocol that all public medical facilities will be governed by.

A True Labour administration will make it compulsory that all medically qualified Doctors and Nurses will have to give one year of service after or during their training at the various medical clinics throughout Antigua and Barbuda.

Mount Saint John's cannot be looked at as the first option for medical care. Healthcare must be administered from the grassroots in the medical clinics for minor medical issues up to Mount Saint John's when specialist care is required. The more serious ailments receive special attention with more senior doctors, nurses and technicians being available to aid the staff at the clinics if the individual patient is assessed to need specialist care.

ABATEMENT OF CRIME AND SOCIAL POLICY:

(a) Many of the citizens of Antigua and Barbuda are single parents; a True Labour administration will assist this segment of our society by building more community centres

especially in the working class constituencies to provide their children with after school supervision.

As a working class single parent trying to make ends meet the community centre will provide the parent at work some peace of mind knowing that their child is in a safe and well supervised environment.

The True Labour policy is that community centres would provide single parents with the option of sending their children to the community centre after they have finished school. The community centres will close at 7:00p.m. so that parents at work will not have to worry that their children are home unsupervised, or on the streets, or may become victims of crime.

The community centre will have a library, internet access and be sufficiently staffed so that single parents will not have to leave work early or find friends, family or pay to have their children supervised whilst the parent is at work.

(b)Health and Life Insurance for all members of the Police, Firemen and Defence Force

The three professions of law enforcement, firemen and soldier are the most dangerous to health and life in our society. A True Labour administration would ease the concern of all members of these professions of risking their health and life when performing their duties to the benefit of our nation.

A True Labour administration would make it an obligation of the state to make the health insurance policy transparent, lucid and concise to all members of the profession and the public. A True Labour administration will do its part to honour on time insurance premiums for all members of these professions as they are the backbone of a well functioning, safe, and free society. In addition when a member of these professions gets married their family will automatically be covered under his or her health policy.

Full health and life insurance would be made mandatory for all members of these professions as it is only fair that the state will take care of those made sick or lose their life serving the nation.

Life insurance would be an added comfort and peace of mind to the individual members of these professions and the family left behind for those who may die in the line of service.

True Labour believes that members of these professions would be more willing to perform their duties and take risks to protect life and property with these added benefits.

(c) Repeal Magistrates Code of Procedure Act, 2004

The True Labour Party will repeal the Magistrates Code of Procedure Act, 2004 (MCPA) in order to restore the Magistrates power to grant bail for the offences that they were allowed to grant bail for prior to the act.

The True Labour Party are of the opinion that the need to apply for bail in the High Court when we have capable men and women as Magistrates that can competently balance the individuals constitutional right to be deemed innocent until proven guilty and the safe guard of the public from crime can and should be left to the Magistrates who are the court of first instance. Moreover, the True Labour Party believes that the (MCPA) should be repealed based on the hardship that the common man in our society has to face financially to secure the finances to retain legal representation in the High Court for a bail hearing and the length of time that the individual spends in prison waiting for the matter to be heard in the High Court.

(d) New Legislation governing the police power to stop, search, seizure and arrest (PACE)

The True Labour Party will enact legislation to regulate police powers in relation to stop, search, seizure and arrest which will in particular protect the young men and women in our society who are daily stigmatized from their experiences with improperly regulated law enforcement. The powers of the police need to be regulated by legislation that will protect the citizens' constitutional right and dignity from abuse. We will be modelling the new legislation on the United Kingdom's Police and Criminal Evidence Act, 1984 (P.A.C.E.)

We are of the opinion that too many young persons are being victimized and locked behind bars for 48 hours to investigate a criminal allegation by the police when the individual could initially be asked to return to the police station for questioning when needed.

The stigma of being denied your liberty for 48 hours without being charged, or being charged, but the matter is dismissed before the courts for want of prosecution should not be used by the police as a "crime fighting tool".

This sort of policing should be seen for what it is, a breach of our citizens' constitutional right to liberty until proven guilty, and such practices our government intends to do away with inside the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda.

(e) The Need for a new prison facility

279 years after Her Majesty's Prison (a.k.a. 1735) was erected at Coronation Street the country's penal correctional facility needs to be decommissioned.

We need a new prison facility not only to house and protect our citizenry from those who have fallen foul of society's laws, but also to provide hope and forgiveness to all those who are incarcerated but want to rejoin society and be a good and productive citizen.

The inhuman conditions that inmates are living under at Her Majesty's Prison requires our society to do better by providing better facilities for the inmates, but also providing social improvement tools so that the inmates can turn their lives around if they so choose. Besides providing the essentials such as a library, secondary education programme, art and crafts skills we would like to have the inmates learn the skills necessary to produce the light manufacturing products above-mentioned in Economic Policy so that they will be capable of working in the industry upon their release from prison).

NATIONAL SERVICE POLICY:

A nation's human and natural resources are the greatest and most important assets. Antigua and Barbuda had the good fortune of becoming independent on November 1st 1981. The service will mobilize and motivate support for the drive to "feed, clothe and house" the people and will develop the necessary skills and attitude which go with and into nation building.

National service will encourage the physical and mental discipline necessary for satisfactory and satisfying development.

The True Labour Party is committed to the development of all its resources within the shortest time possible hence the need to ensure cohesion and unity between the various groups: religious, social and economic.

National Service will provide an opportunity for all people, from whatever background they may come from in society to get to know each other in the course of training together in work and sports. Its aim will be to produce a truly productive Antiguan and Barbudan citizen equipped with both the skills and attitudes needed to contribute positively to the economic, social and political arena. As a citizen who places nation above self, the national service will comprise of units catering to different categories of people in Antigua and Barbuda.

The administration of the National Service will fall under the ministry of the Prime Minister who will be its chairman. This body will include the Minister of Education, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Public Works, also the commander

of the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force, The commissioner of the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda, The Matron of the Hospital and the Ministry of Health.

The national service will be divided into Corps:

- The National Cadet Corps
- The Nurses
- The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda
- The Coast Guard
- The Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force.

(a) The National Cadet Corps will be attached to all secondary schools from Form 2 to Form 4.

(b) The Nurses will begin training from age 18.

(c) The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda, Coast Guard and Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force, will all be trained in 3 areas as recruits over a six months period then pass out as to their respective areas.

There will be more areas built for the protection of our natives and visitors. Nurses will be trained to defend themselves from any eventuality. They will also be trained as stenographers and any other programme that will be made available.

When national Service personnel acquires 5 CXC subjects they will be given the opportunity to go to the Antigua State College and when any reach the rank of sergeant or its equivalent they will be sent to the Antigua State college to get a Diploma in the Teacher Training Department where they will assist at any of the secondary schools to assist with the cadet corps and implement discipline and self respect also with teach their best qualified subject.

In conclusion, national service as indicated above is intended to be the principal instrument to ensure the emergence and development of the type of Antiguan and Barbudan men, women and youth essential to prosperity and the survival of the nation.

We can only hope that our twin island nation will be able to transform our people to be great, patriotic, self-disciplined, self reliant, productive of goods and services and enjoying this gem of the Caribbean again. In today's world, Antiguan and Barbudans must rise to new and higher levels of awareness, new and higher standards of performance and new

and higher achievements in terms of national pride, national self reliance and national efficiency.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS POLICY:

As small island nations in the West Indies numbering just over 20 million in population, and whose people for the most part are the product of the West African slave trade or some other form of servitude. A True Labour Administration will attempt to unite the region to speak with one voice in regards to any international, regional and local incidence of Human Rights Abuse.

United the West Indies can play a international role of championing the cause of Human Rights which we as descendants of the slave trade should be naturally inclined more than other nations to make our voice be heard through shaping policies for human rights at the United National General Assembly through the region voting in blocks.

A True Labour Administration will also promote, establish diplomatic, or strengthen trade, and cultural ties with West Africa in particular Ghana, Nigeria and The Gambia our cousins on the other side of the Atlantic.

