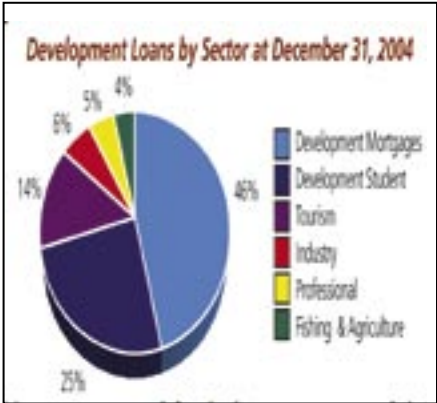




Sapphire Cover Resort - A great partnership - pages 1 & 3



More good news in banking - page 2



Investing in our youth to secure our future - pages 4 & 5



Youth Development Fund takes off - page 6



Strengthening ties with Italy - page 8

SAPPHIRE COVE RESORT “A GREAT PARTNERSHIP”

This is going to be a great partnership, an extraordinary partnership”. This is how Saint Lucia Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny Anthony described the billion dollar Sapphire Cove hotel project which is expected to deliver its first seven hundred rooms in time for Cricket World Cup 2007.

Addressing the ground breaking ceremony on Tuesday May 10th , for the US\$380 million (EC\$1.26 billion) project, Dr. Anthony said the new five star resort and international convention centre will provide a quality product and put Saint Lucia at the upper end of the tourism market. Dr Anthony said “Saint Lucia badly needed a five star property and this complex together with what will be produced by the Landing (resort) will finally confirm Saint Lucia’s place at the upper end of the marketplace whether in Europe, or the United States. We will be able to say to the people of Europe and elsewhere, we have a quality product that we have always known, that we have



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony

always offered a quality product but so convinced we are about what we offer, that we are taking it a few notches upwards. Finally tourism and its potential will be realized.”

Continued on page 3



A section of the crowd at the ground breaking ceremony

According to the recently released 2004 Report of East Caribbean Financial Holding Company Limited (ECFH), the year under review was a highly successful one for the Company. The overall success of the ECFH Grouping was in large measure due to the performance of its subsidiaries. The Bank of Saint Lucia, which is a major subsidiary of the ECFH Grouping recorded improvements in many facets of its operations during 2004.

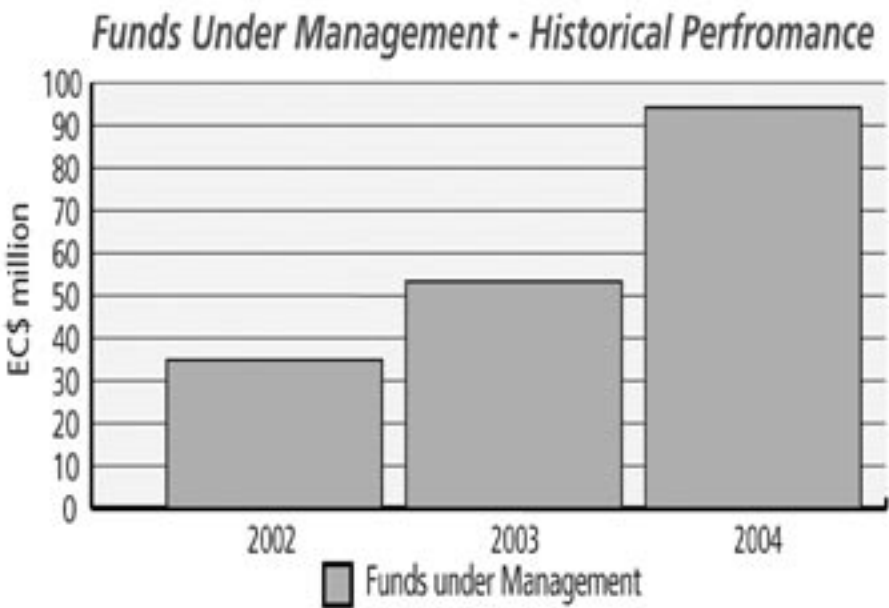
Corporate and Development Banking

According to the Report in the area of Corporate and Development Banking, the Unit responsible for that aspect of the Bank’s operations administered 170 loans with balances aggregating \$239.9 million as at December 31, 2004. This represented an increase of \$19.2million or 8.7% over the comparative figure of \$220.7million in 2003. Growth within the Tourism Sector of \$11.8million or 68% over the figure of \$17.3million over the same period was principally responsible for that development. Foreign Currency Loans to the Tourism Sector also recorded sharp increases to \$27.6million from \$10.5million over the comparative period of 2003.

Due to the Bank’s increased vigilant in terms of asset quality and the strengthening of its mechanisms to monitor delinquent loans, the level of non performing loans was reduced to \$43.9 million from \$54.8million in 2003. In 2003, this figure accounted for 25% of the outstanding portfolio balance as against 18% in 2004. In keeping with the Bank’s commitment to create a stronger financial indigenous institutions and market in the Eastern Caribbean, it accepted the invitation extended by the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank initiative to strengthening the region’s development finance institutions (DFI). The Bank as a member of the DFI Enhancement Committee will be expected to share in the responsibility for the establishment and implementation of a programme for upgrading and capacity building within these institutions.

Development Banking

The Report also indicated that improvements were registered in terms of the development loan portfolio which refers to loans made to and in support



Sapphire Cove Resort - A great partnership

Continued from page 1

Dr Anthony added that the partnership between the Irish investors and the people of Saint Lucia was rooted in shared democratic traditions, excellence in literature and the fight by both people of both countries to create the prosperity they now enjoy.

While committing Government's full support for the project, Dr. Anthony paid tribute to the Louisy family of Laborie, owners of the Sapphire estate lands for holding onto their dream that the property was best reserved for a major tourism resort. Dr. Anthony said that the family had maintained a special relationship with persons from the neighbouring communities.

Developer of the Sapphire Cove, the Irish corporation Premier Resorts has indicated its intention to ensure the cultural integrity of the neighbouring communities is maintained. Speaking at the ceremony Mr. Tom Colton, chief financial officer for corporation said "We wish to create a resort in Laborie that will integrate its culture, heritage and art and will invite the people of Laborie to participate in this. The project will have a retail value in excess of US\$600 million."

The project will encompass special features for the development of sports tourism utilizing the extensive investment in sports facilities in the north and south of the island. Mr. Colton added "With the national sports stadium only ten minutes away from the resort, this huge amenity can be used to its maximum by attracting pre-season soccer training from Europe and United States, soccer camps for the resort guests and local children"

When completed the resort will contain 1100 units of accommodation



**MP for Laborie
Hon. Velon John**

totaling up to 3400 rooms, extensive water sports and children's play facilities, gourmet restaurants, an Olympic size swimming pool, an eighteen hole golf course and a delegates conference centre capable of holding up to four thousand persons.

Member of Parliament for Laborie, Hon. Velon John welcomed the project as "tourism with an indigenous face" stating that the resort will benefit from the rich cultural resources of the community of Piaye, the heritage attractions and amenities of the Rudy John park, Morne Le Blanc historic site, the charm of the people of Laborie and the expertise of agencies like Labowi promotions. He called on residents of Laborie and neighbouring communities to put their shoulders to the wheel,



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony with members of the Irish team



Dr. Pearce Louisy

as the quality of their lives will only be enhanced through their increased capacity to offer their services.

In attendance at the ceremony of a section of the Sapphire estate were officials of government, representatives of the Saint Lucia Tourist Board, the National Development Corporation, members of the Louisy family including former Prime Minister Sir Allan Louisy and persons from the Laborie community, and former Prime Minister Mr. Michael Pilgrim. Also at the ground breaking ceremony were Tourism Minister Hon. Philip J. Pierre; Laborie MP and Minister of Labour Hon. Velon John; and Choiseul MP and Minister of Physical Development Hon. Ferguson John; Minister of Social Transformation Menissa Rambally; Communications, Works and Public Utilities Minister Felix Finisterre, Attorney General Philip La Corbiniere and Soufriere MP Hon. Walter Francois..

Speaking on behalf of the Louisy family, Dr. Pearce Louisy commended the ministers of government on insightful examination of the proposal and their professional approach to the negotiations with the developers. He said this approach "seemed to impress the Irish people tremendously because very soon after we culminated a deal and things moved precipitously"

Dr. Louisy also thanked the staff of the National Development Corporation for the facilitation of the negotiations. He presented a historical sketch of the changes in ownership of the estate and the management by the Louisy family for the past ninety years providing employment for generations of families from the neighbouring communities. Among the economic activities on the estate included bay rum production,

sugar production and cattle rearing.

The wind swept 130 acre Sapphire estate is located on the south western coast of the island flanked by the scenic bays of the Laborie village and the Piaye community. The project will benefit from the recent completion of the Vieux fort to Soufriere highway which will enhance communications from Hewanorra International Airport and shorten the usually long drive to the world renowned Pitons, now a World Heritage site.

In brief remarks at the ceremony, Minister of Tourism, Investment and Consumer Affairs, Hon. Philip J. Pierre said he was delighted that in keeping with the philosophy of the St. Lucia Labour Party administration, the investment and benefits of tourism were spreading throughout the country. Mr. Pierre noted that this expansion started with the implementation of the heritage tourism programme which brought benefits to many small communities.

He added that the developers will benefit from the extensive concessions granted by the Government under the CWC 2007 incentives legislation.

Also addressing the ground breaking ceremony was Mr. Michael Chastanet, chairman of the NDC, and Hon. Fergusson John Member of Parliament for Choiseul. Mr. John called on all residents of the neighbouring communities to rise to the challenge presented by the project, optimize their skills in construction and other areas required in the development and operation of the resort. Up to 1500 persons will be employed when the resort is fully operational.



Mr. Tom Colton



Stilt Walkers a sample of the arts from Laborie



**Tourism Minister
Hon Philip J. Pierre**

The ceremony for the Sapphire Cove resort was held a mere 22 days after Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny Anthony announced in his 2005 – 2006 budget address that "The project will be developed in three phases. The first phase will comprise 447 units, with the second and third phases accounting for 450 units and 280 units respectively. Approval in principle has been granted to this development, which is expected to be officially launched in May. The Government can only hope that it becomes a reality."

The Prime Minister who is also responsible for Finance, Economic Affairs, International Financial Services and Information, stated that over thirteen additional hotel projects were ongoing in Saint Lucia contributing in part to growth in that sector, which in turn provided the backbone the projected growth in the economy.

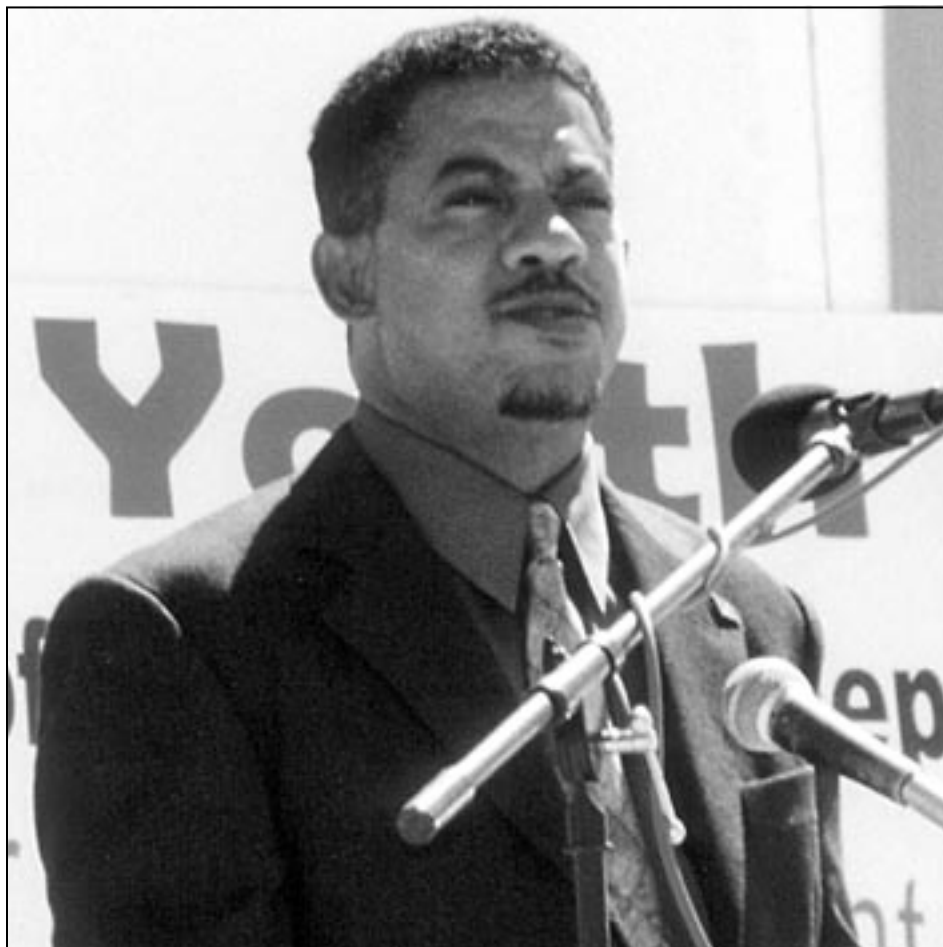
Investing in our youth to secure our future

The following is the full text of the address by the Honourable Mario Michel, Minister for Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports at the 2004 National Youth Awards which took place at the Gaiety on Rodney Bay on Saturday May 14, 2005

This evening we bring the curtains down on Youth Month 2005 with the presentation of awards to outstanding young persons and youth organizations for work done and contributions made in the year between April 2004 and April 2005.

The year might appear to be unremarkable in terms of major achievements of young persons and youth organizations in that year. Apart from the feats of young persons in the sporting arena, for which they are awarded at the Annual National Sports Awards Ceremony, and the achievements of our young students in the academic arena, for which they are awarded at the annual school graduations and award ceremonies, there was only the persistent, patient and positive work of individual young persons and youth organizations in the various communities of St. Lucia from Gros Islet to Vieux Fort.

And Yes, this is what makes youth work so challenging. It is hard work, requiring persistent effort, but much of it goes unnoticed and unappreciated. It does not draw spectator interest, like the notable performances of our sportsmen and sportswomen. It does not enter the institutional records, like the excellent performances of our students. But it is



**Minister for Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports
Hon. Mario Michel**

vital work which must be done for the benefit and betterment of the youth of our communities and our country.

So awardees, you will not here get the very large audience and the large press corps and coverage that attends the sports awards ceremonies or the graduation ceremonies, but that should not daunt or deter you from continuing

with your youth work in your community and your country.

I know too that your cause as youth workers would have been advanced and enhanced by a National Youth Council which was tuned in to the real issues of our youth in the several communities around St. Lucia and which was serving as an instrument to amplify and

broadcast their voices and views. But alas, the Council appears at this time to voice only the views of its leadership and to be tuned only to its own special frequency.

I know that in saying this I risk incurring the wrath of the NYC President, who has never been shy in taking to the airwaves to let his own voice be heard, but I believe that history will confer on me the legitimacy to constructively criticize an organization that I fought to create, to sustain and to grow and will continue to support as long as I and it still have life. My own legacy is inextricably intertwined with the fortunes of this once powerful youth organization which in its heyday was led by a strong and united seven-member National Executive, with a vibrant General Council comprising no less than fifteen active branches and a committed membership of over one

been "Investing in our Youth to Secure our Future." This has been manifested in the millions and millions of dollars invested in sporting infrastructure in the last eight years to enable our youth to recreate and represent in the field of sports, and the millions more invested in educational infrastructure in the same period for the education and edification of the children and youth of this country. We have also invested in the supporting infrastructure of sports policies, educational policies, youth policies and programmes and in the National Youth Council itself.

So yes, the Government of St. Lucia has in the last eight years invested in our youth to secure our future. It is therefore for the youth of the country to utilize this investment to reap the maximum possible dividend for themselves and for their country.

Permit me now to congratulate in



Another deserving youth



The winners!



A section of the audience



Hon. Mario Michel presents an award to the deserving young person

hundred clubs and organizations from all across the island regularly attending the Council's activities.

I want therefore to appeal to the youth workers and youth leaders who are here this evening to take an interest in the National Youth Council as you have obviously taken an interest in youth work at the level of your community and to consider getting involved at the leadership level of the National Youth Council. The role and purpose of this organization, combined with its history and track record, are too important to allow it to be suffocated under the pillow of personal egos or to be asphyxiated by apathy on the part of the youth of our country. Nuff said.

Allow me at this juncture to speak briefly from the perspective of the Government of St. Lucia, of which I am a member, and indeed which I temporarily head at this time in the absence from the State of the Honourable Prime Minister. From this perspective, I want to suggest that – consistent with the theme of Youth Month 2005 – we have

advance those young persons who will this evening be awarded for their outstanding contributions in social development, in arts and culture, in entrepreneurship and in student leadership. Permit me also to congratulate in advance the Most Outstanding Community Youth Club and the Most Outstanding Youth and Sports Council. And permit me to specially congratulate the young person who will this evening be awarded the title of the Youth of the Year and who will consequently receive the Wayne Louis Award.

For the benefit of the young man or woman who will shortly receive this award, I want to repeat and reiterate the words which I spoke in May 1998 when we first created and conferred the award. I said then and repeat now: "To the individual who will tonight be announced as the Most Outstanding Youth and will receive the Wayne Louis Award, I want to urge you to live up to the honour that the conferral of this award renders you deserving of. In deciding to name the award after Wayne

Louis, we were not only recognizing and paying tribute to the departed NYC President, but we were also seeking to immortalize his life and work. Wayne was a person who did well in all that he endeavoured. He was a fine youth leader-, an outstanding school teacher, a great debater, a renowned community activist and a devoted husband and father. He was politically conscious, socially responsible, economically independent and morally upright. He represented everything we wanted our young people to be. You who will tonight receive an award in his name must seek to display those same qualities and do the best that you can at whatever you choose to do."

In closing, I want to thank those of you who turned out here this evening to honour and pay tribute to our outstanding young persons and youth organizations for the period April 2004 to April 2005. Your presence and participation is appreciated.

I thank you all and bid you a good evening.



NYC President, Mr. Silas Wilson

Ten years of marine management

Saint Lucia's first Marine Protected Area System, the Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA), was officially established in July 1995. As the 10th anniversary approaches, a number of activities are being planned for the celebration, as well as a number of public awareness initiatives to highlight the successes and importance of the SMMA to the Soufriere region and the island as a whole.

The SMMA was created as a solution to the many conflicts which existed between the resource users, including fishermen, yachtsmen, divers and snorkelers, water taxis and day charter boats and those who simply wanted to enjoy the beautiful beaches in the area. The original area included the shore zone from Anse P'lvrogne to Anse Jambon, which features some of the island's most spectacular and popular sites, comprising the Pitons.

Another important objective was to guarantee the conservation of the coastal resources for current and future generations. The SMMA is recognized as an important element of the Piton Management Area, with the Pitons and surrounding terrestrial and marine area having been designated a World Heritage Site.

Following a unique process of consultation, participation, research and site visits involving the majority of the stakeholders, the 11 kilometre coastline was apportioned into various zones:

(1) **Marine Reserves** – consisting of the valuable coral reefs, where extractive and damaging activities, including yacht anchoring are prohibited; the reserves are now recognized as some of the best diving and snorkelling areas in the Caribbean; (2) **Fishing Priority Areas** – where precedence is given to fishing over all other activities; (3) **Multiple Use Areas** - activities that may take place in these areas include fishing, diving, snorkelling and other recreational activities, under the guidance of existing regulations; (4) **Recreational Areas** – these are terrestrial (beaches) and marine (swimming and snorkelling) areas, which are reserved for public access and recreation; (5) **Mooring Sites** - these areas provide anchorage for local and visiting yachts and recreational boaters to avoid damage to the bottom substrate.

The marine reserves and fishing priority areas are delineated with signs on shore and with demarcation buoys at sea.

An important aspect of the SMMA is that it is financially self-sustaining through the collection of yacht mooring, diving and snorkelling fees. Marine Rangers administrate the collection of fees as well as provide security and regulation enforcement for the area.

As testimony to its effectiveness, a number of accolades and awards have been given to the SMMA, including the 1997 British Airways Tourism for Tomorrow IUCN Special Award for



The Majestic Pitons - in the Management Area

National Parks and Protected Areas and being named the first "world demonstration site for management of coral

reefs" by the United Nations International Coral Reef Action Network initiative in 2001.

Youth Enterprise Development Fund takes off!

Thirteen young people will undergo a thirty hour Personal Development Training Programme from Friday May 13th through to Sunday May 15, 2005 as part of the first segment of the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF).

The Youth Enterprise Development Fund which is being funded by the Commonwealth Youth Programme CYP and the Government of Saint Lucia is being implemented by the James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Fund BELFUND with assistance from the National Skills Development Centre NSDC.

According to the Manager of BELFUND Mr. Marcellus Joseph, the Personnel Development Training Programme is designed to assist entrepreneurs to acquire the knowledge and skills which will aid in their personal growth and development. "At the end of the programme participants should be able to improve their understanding of self and others with whom they have to interact; understand the impact of human growth and development on behaviour and personality; acquire tools for visioning, goal setting and good leadership and acquire knowledge and skills for family life improvement."

Following this initial training, participants will undergo a ninety hour business management training programme which is expected to commence on Tuesday May 17th. "The aspect of the training which include topics such as Entrepreneurship and Income Generating Activity, Managing Money and Savings, Feasibility Study, Marketing and Selling Techniques and Managing



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, Hon. Menissa Rambally, Government and CYP Officials sign the Funding Agreement

People and Customer Relations, is to instil and/or sharpen the business management skills of participants, in an effort to sufficiently prepare them to operate their own micro businesses in an effective and efficient manner, towards achieving sustainability and profitability." Mr. Joseph said.

It was during his 2004/2005 Budget Presentation that Prime Minister Honourable Dr. Kenny Anthony articulated the need for greater social participation by youth of the society. The Prime Minister said that government also recognised that social participation without economic enfranchisement is

a rather hollow ideal. "Thus we approached the Commonwealth Youth Programme to secure a portfolio of resources to specifically target young people between the ages of eighteen to thirty years, allowing for interventions that would permit them to engage in viable economic ventures," explained Dr. Anthony.

The Commonwealth Youth Programme agreed to make available a sum of twenty thousand pounds sterling (£20,000) or approximately \$94,000.00 to launch a new Youth Enterprise Development Fund. This, according to Dr. Anthony, is a modest

start, but once established it is expected that more resources will be directed to the Fund. "The Belfund shall be used as the window through which we shall collaborate with the Commonwealth Youth Programme in managing this Enterprise Fund. We expect the Youth Enterprise Development Fund to have a number of positive effects on the communities throughout the island. For instance: (1) There will be more opportunities for disadvantaged youth to create their own enterprises and acquire new skills. They will be so empowered as to be able to participate in more social, economic and political activities; (2) As more young persons gain the experience of running successful enterprises, it will mean more young people becoming economic leaders in their communities; (3) Young people will have greater access to knowledge as a result of acquiring information and communication technology (ICT); (4) There will be a stronger partnership between Government, the private sector, NGOs and other organisations; (4) There will be a strengthening of the support structures for youth development.

During the budget presentation the Prime Minister urged the private sector, NGOs and community organisations to join hands to forge a strong partnership with Government to address issues of youth unemployment, job creation and economic growth. "As already stated, the Government cannot do it all. Hence the private sector is encouraged to increase investment in the youth because by so doing, they will be investing in the sustainable future of this country." He said.

Saint Lucian prison officers get training

Instructors from regional prison establishments in the Eastern Caribbean, Barbados, Trinidad and Guyana will be undergoing training in control and restraint techniques in St Lucia from 16 to 27 May 2005.

Conducted by UK Prison Service training experts Jon Collier and Mick Rayner, this course follows on from

one held in Grenada in 2003. It will provide refresher training, updating of techniques, instructing skills and re-accreditation. A large group of St Lucian prison staff will also be trained in level one control and restraint skills as the participants of the course practise their instructional and teaching techniques.

The UK Government is offering this training as part of a commitment, given at the UK-Caribbean Forum in 2000, to

support reform of the region's correctional establishments. So far this year St Lucian participants have taken part in training provided for Assistant Superintendents and a joint Police/Prison Liaison course. Further courses are planned for officers dealing with female issues, security managers, management of inmate activities, prison officers with potential, staff profiling and a workshop for Visiting Justices.



**President British Commissioner
Mr. Kelvin Green**

Bank Refutes Secret Account Claim

The Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) has refuted claims that the National Conservation Authority (NCA) has a secret account at any of its branches here in Saint Lucia. In a letter to Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, area manager for the RBC in the Eastern Caribbean and Saint Lucia, Mr. Greg Gilpin Payne, said the bank is not aware of any particulars of the so called "secret account".

In a letter to Dr. Anthony, and in response to statements made in the media by former NCA chairman Mr. Antonius "Secra" Gibson that the NCA had a secret account, the RBC manager said "the bank is not aware of any account save to say that all accounts with the bank are secret so to speak as all customers accounts are covered under the Bank's confidentiality guidelines".

Mr. Gilpin-Payne added "Since we are not in a possession of the particulars of this "secret account" we are not in a position to comment on whether the teller used the bank to manage a "secret account"

In further clarification of the matter the manager of the RBC wrote "Cheques referred to at page 25 of the Report on the

Investigation of the NCA – the Bank confirms that the said cheques were cashed at the Bank but only after the bank's proper procedures were adhered to and followed. Further these cheques were never deposited into any account in the bank".

The cheques in question were cashed by persons who were employed by the NCA as confirmed by the report of the investigation.

Earlier this month Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony wrote to Mr. Gibson inviting him to provide evidence to support his charges that the NCA was holding a secret account. The letter was copied to the general manager of the RBC.

The accusation by Mr. Gibson was among numerous charges leveled at the NCA during an investigation into the government agency where Mr. Gibson served as chairman. The investigation was sparked by allegations of impropriety at the NCA. Minister of Social Transformation, Local Government and Culture Hon. Menissa Rambally initiated the investigation following a formal request from former NCA chairman Henry Charles for the probe to clear his name and reputation.

Thanks for a great Internet Fiesta 2005



The National Planning Committee for Internet Fiesta 2005 sincerely thanks the following Sponsors, IT Dealers, Internet Cafés, Schools and others Agencies for their participation in this years celebrations- IT vendors exposition, Free internet access points, Internet Friendly Lab decorating competition, Radio quizzes, Internet Fiesta challenge.

We look forward to formally acknowledging your contribution to Internet Fiesta at a grand prize giving ceremony- date and venue to be announced at a later date. We look forward to working with you again.

Secondary Schools - Vide Bouteille; CCSS.; Corinth; Babonneau; St. Joseph's Convent; Leon Hess; Comprehensive; Ciceron; Mico; Vieux- Fort campus; George Charles; Entrepot.

Primary schools - Gros-Islet; Dame Pearllette Louis; Reunion Laborie Girls; Banse la grace.

Private Sector Sponsors - Internet café; Click.com; Mr. Smith's Computer Learning Centre; Cellular World; Data Dive Café; M2KIDS; Caribbean Computer Literacy; Courts; Cable and Wireless; CES Group of Companies; Computer World; Matrix computer Solutions; The Wave; Mainlan; GBTS; JE Bergasse; World; Mayers Printing.

Canada withdraws visa threat

Canada has taken off the table a threat to re-impose visa restrictions on St. Lucia to combat the flow of unqualified persons seeking refugee status and other forms of illegal migration.

Minister of External Affairs, Senator Petrus Compton, says the Canadian authorities have decided not to proceed with the re-imposition of visa restrictions, on account of a marked reduction in the number of persons making false claims for refugee status or seeking to enter the country with illegally obtained travel documents.

Canada had threatened to re-impose visa restrictions for St. Lucia after the number of persons arriving at Canadian ports bearing illegally obtained St. Lucian passports or making false claims for "refugee" status based on false claims had reached such levels as to cause concern.

It was discovered that hundreds of citizens from several OECS member-states had been engaging in the practice. In the four years leading to 2002, the total number of refugee claimants from all the OECS member-states stood at 864, with St. Lucia registering 275 – the highest. In 2003, St. Lucia still registered the highest.

By August 2004, there were already 616 claims launched in the first eight months of that year. And by October of

that year, St. Lucia registered a total of 245 claimants.

Particularly disturbing was the situation in Grenada and Dominica, which allegedly sold "economic citizenship passports" that were purchased and used for illegal entry by nationals of other countries. In December 2002, the Canadian government re-imposed visa requirements for Grenadians and Dominicans wishing to travel to Canada.

This led to a direct appeal to the Governments and citizens of the OECS by the OECS High Commissioner in Canada, Lorraine Williams, to take steps to stem the tide of illegal immigrants and false claimants, or face the re-imposition of the visa restrictions on those from which they had been lifted.

Senator Compton, who visited Canada recently, said the Canadian authorities had reported to the St. Lucia Consulate General that there was also a marked decrease in the number of persons arriving in Canada with falsified travel documents, including passports that had been tampered with, or which were illegally obtained.

He said St. Lucians seem to be heeding the Government's call some time ago for holders of St. Lucian passports to take better care of how they secure their travel documents.

The minister also credited tighter controls and heightened vigilance on

the part of the local immigration department, especially at the island's airports, where more persons have been intercepted of late.

Among the main offenders had been persons of other Caribbean nationalities who had illegally obtained St. Lu-

cian passports and used St. Lucia as a transit base to enter Canada.

Several steps have been taken locally of late to make it more difficult to replace travel documents, such as passports and ID cards, that may have been reported "lost" or "stolen".

One approach has been to lengthen the amount of time it takes to replace the document to allow sufficient time to certify suspicious claims.



The departure launch at the George F.L. Charles Airport

Strengthening ties with Italy

Saint Lucia and other CARICOM member states likely to benefit from the latest memorandum of understanding signed this week, between the Italian Government and CARICOM. Italy's Deputy Foreign Minister Giampalo Bettamino affixed his signature to the agreement along with CARICOM Secretary General Edwin Car-

rington.

The Italian Deputy Foreign Minister, on a tour of the region, paid a courtesy call on Saint Lucia's Prime Minister Honourable Dr. Kenny Anthony on Tuesday, May 10, 2005. He spoke of multilateral talks that would lead to increase cooperation with the

CARICOM grouping along the lines of e-government as well as bilateral discussions that could benefit St. Lucia in the field of tourism.

"We are ready to cooperate and to have much more Italian visitors here than in the past. We know from Europe that St. Lucia has a very large presence of German people and it would be nice if we could get similar figures of Italian tourists coming to your country," said Bettamino.

Prime Minister Honourable Dr. Kenny Anthony said the relationship between Italy and Saint Lucia had been longstanding and has been strengthened over the years. The arrival of the Italian Deputy Foreign Minister he noted, would allow for discussions not only on domestic and regional issues but on international issues like the reform of the United Nations and its Security Council.

Dr. Anthony said, "Italy holds a fascination for people in the Caribbean." He noted, "We must never forget that the majority of St. Lucians are Catholics and most of them travel to the Vatican in Rome for religious reasons. Therefore Italy is an important country to us and that's why we have maintained an Honorary Consul in Italy to



**Italian Minister
Giampalo Bettamino**

look after our affairs and the affairs of St. Lucia over there."

Prime Minister Anthony pointed out that discussions on boosting tourist arrivals from Italy and surrounding areas will be pursued vigorously, as St. Lucia had in the past welcomed to its shores several high level Italian officials among them, Italy's Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony with Italian Officials

OECS LEADERS REVIEW TREATY

A Technical Committee has been appointed by the OECS Heads of government to Review the "Treaty of Basseterre." This process is to allow for the strengthening of the Treaty, with a view to the formation of an economic union. The Committee which comprises regional technocrats met in St. Lucia on Tuesday May 10th, 2005, under the Chairmanship of Sir Dwight Venner Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank – ECCB.

The committee is charged with shaping proposals for the consideration of the OECS Prime Ministers who will meet in Dominica next month.

The proposals will in the main fall under two broad options. The first will consider the possibility of amending

the Treaty to include features and conditions that will support and sustain an economic union. The second option is to create a new Treaty of closer integration for the formation of an economic union as well as to forge closer amalgamation in other policy areas.

Communications Officer at the OECS Secretariat Mr. Kendol Morgan says as far as the Heads are concerned the Treaty of Basseterre has served well over the past 24 years. He says the political leaders intend to ensure the Treaty which brought the OECS group to life in 1981, remains a relevant and vital force in today's changing global climate.

"The heads have agreed that based on the report of a consultant, perhaps it is time to look at a new Treaty to re-

place the Treaty of Basseterre which reflects the times that the sub-region is in at the moment. The feeling is that the Treaty has served the region well in the past 24 years as the countries have engaged in activities related to functional cooperation but now that the sub-region is moving closer to strengthening ties economically and creating a single economic space, perhaps a new treaty to reflect this should be the way to go," Morgan explains.

The Technical Committee comprises representatives from each of the nine member states, the OECS Secretariat and personnel from the Economic Union Project directly charged with the task of creating the OECS Economic Union.



OECS Heads at a recent meeting in Saint Lucia



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. May 21st - Fri. May 27th, 2005

Youth Parliament Part 1- Sat. May 21st - 7:30 p.m.

• Youth Parliament Part 11 - Sun. May 22nd, 7:30 p.m.

• Special hour-long Konsit Kweyol - Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny Anthony discusses issues of national interest - Mon. May 23rd, 8:00 p.m.

• Carnival St. Lucia Style - Tues. May 24th, 8:30 p.m.

• Ready for the Big Rumble: Disaster Preparedness for 7-11 year olds - Wed. May 25th, 8:30 p.m.

• Regional Unity & Constitutional Reform - Thurs. May 26th, 8:30 p.m.

• The Ministry of Education presents National Youth Awards 2005 - Fri. May 27th. 7:30 p.m.

Remember to tune in for:

• GIS News Breaks and Kweyol News daily from 6:30 p.m.

• Issues & Answers/Mondays at 8:00pm:

• Interview/Tuesdays at 6:15pm :

• Konsit Kweyol/Tuesdays at 8:00pm (Kweyol Discussion):

• Your Right to Know/Thursdays at 6:15 p.m. (Min. of Ed. Prog).

Take 2/Fridays at 6:15pm (Week in Review)

• Weflechi/Fridays at 6:40pm - (Week in Review—Kweyol)

For the complete programme guide, log on to our website at www.stlucia.gov.lc and then click on the NTN icon.

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