



## TOURISM FOR CANARIES

### New jetty boosts village's confidence about the future

Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, and a high-level team of government officials journeyed down the west coast on the afternoon of Monday, November 25, to celebrate a significant achievement with the community of Canaries. The commissioning of a brand new jetty for which villagers had been waiting for years.

Against the backdrop of a magnificent sunset, the formal opening of the \$1 million facility marked a sunrise of renewed hope for one of St. Lucia's poorest communities

whose residents demonstrate an eagerness to creatively use local resources in the quest for an improved quality of life.

"We can praise God for this wonderful occasion," remarked Canaries Development Foundation president, Gregory Deterville, who emceed the afternoon's proceedings. "Many years ago, Canaries was called the forgotten village but today, ... it is very nice to see us standing on a concrete structure which we call a jetty for the people of this great community."

Why is Canaries so excited about the jetty?

It's because villagers see it as the key to unlocking the community's vast ecotourism potential which they see as crucial to creating jobs and boosting economic activity, in addition to improving the fishing industry which is the village's traditional mainstay.

"We have long waited for this jetty," remarked parliamentary representative, Cyprian Lansiquot. "It marks the beginning of a bright new dawn for Canaries. It provides a new opportunity for us to explore the touristic and fishing potential of the

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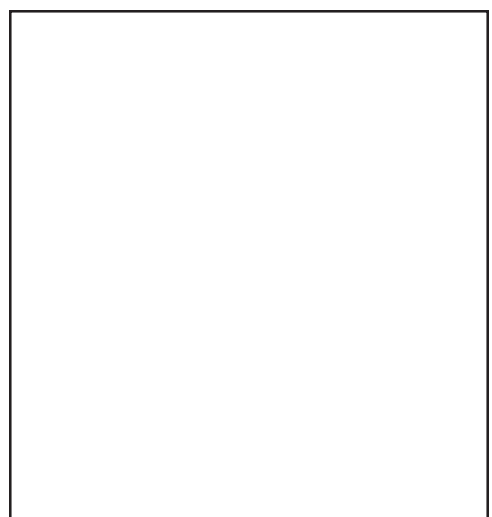
The Canaries jetty, open for business - A sunrise for the west coast community

## BETTER USE OF GOVERNMENT ASSETS

### NEC proposes strategy for recovery of the St. Lucian Economy

Eight meetings in two months! A sure sign of how busy the National Economic Council (NEC) has been since its formal launch on September 13th, as well as the seriousness members are attaching to their pivotal role in helping to shape and guide St. Lucia's economic destiny.

"Our early sessions were designed to update and educate our members on the state of the economy and on the



Richard Peterkin - Chairman National Economic Council

major issues influencing economic development in St. Lucia and the OECS," NEC chairman Richard Peterkin told the first-ever National Economic Briefing on Tuesday, November 26.

"We invited mainly public sector technocrats and some private sector consultants to brief us on some of the critical issues and challenges facing the country, including public sector reform, tourism industry development strategy, national economic policies and priorities, the national debt, central government revenue, monetary policy and the EC currency, national development and investment."

cont'd on page 2

## EDITORIAL

### ENCOURAGING SIGNS

The definition of economic growth and development is a fundamental question which societies have grappled with down through history.

Basically, there are two divergent positions in the debate. One equates economic growth with development, the result being that the achievement of growth is seen as the end in itself.

The other position holds that while economic growth and development are closely related, they are not the same thing. Economic growth is seen as necessary for economic development but economic development is not considered to be achieved unless the benefits are spread across the society.

Societies which have held to the first view, historically, have been characterized by a noticeably wide gap in the distribution of national income, a clear divide between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. On the other hand, societies which have opted for the second approach have tended to be more equitable in orientation.

St Lucia has clearly gone for the second approach as the incumbent administration aspires towards building the proverbial "Good Society". The definition of economic development given by the president of the National Economic Council at the historic National Economic Briefing on Tuesday, November 26, is a powerful vision statement of the type of society St Lucia is aspiring towards through the teamwork of Government, business, labour and the other social partners.

"Our definition of economic development is not limited to economic growth and wealth accumulation, but refers to an increase in the capacity of the economy to produce goods and services that result in an improvement in the quality of life for all citizens of the country," said Mr. Richard Peterkin.

"Quality of life refers not only to access to a greater quantity and better quality of both public and private goods and services, but also to improvements in the natural and social environment," he explained. On this path, St Lucia undoubtedly has a bright future ahead.



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# BETTER USE OF GOVERNMENT ASSETS

from page 1.

"All these sessions were highly informative, extremely interesting and challenging," Peterkin said.

The meetings also addressed a number of house-keeping matters, including fine-tuning the NEC's terms of reference to achieve a sharper focus, establishing a two-year term for the President and other members, establishing sub-committees, choosing a vice-president, and giving authorization for the commissioning of research and the pursuit of public communication activities, including operation of an Internet website.

"The intention of the revision was simply to make the terms more achievable and the work of the NEC more easily defined and implementable," explained Peterkin. "The substantive changes that were proposed make the focus of the NEC more pro-active, suggesting that national priorities rather than external factors should drive the national planning process.

"The president went on: "There is a strong sentiment among my members and others that we should establish term limits to ensure that the Council will be continuously transfused with new talent, energy and vision.

## Preparing for Emerging Opportunities

"Under the revised terms of reference, the principal role of the Council is to serve as a forum for informed discussion among the social partners with the aim of identifying key economic challenges facing St. Lucia in the short, medium and long term and to recommend measures that enhance the country's ability to anticipate, respond to and benefit from emerging opportunities."

"The Council is also expected to contribute to the emergence of a shared vision for transforming St. Lucia's economic and social landscape over the next two decades," Peterkin said. Based on its initial findings, the NEC is giving the St. Lucia economy the thumbs-up as far as its prospects are concerned, despite the current challenges. "There's sufficient evidence that many of the fundamentals are still in place and there is still a strong interest in St. Lucia as a tourist destination and as an attractive location for foreign direct investment," Peterkin observed.

In everything it does, the NEC says it will focus on contributing to creating an enabling environment for sustainable economic growth. Its emphasis will not be on the

**"The Council is also expected to contribute to the emergence of a shared vision for transforming St. Lucia's economic and social landscape over the next two decades" Richard Peterkin**

problems of growth, but rather the objective of growth in pursuit of the broader goal of an improvement in the quality of life for all citizens.

"There appears to be a number of areas where economic activity can perhaps be further generated, can be enhanced, can be facilitated by the Government agreeing to utilize what are now state assets, even

if it is in a private/public partnership, rather than sitting on those assets...., opined Peterkin.

"In addition, there are a number of assets that Government simply is not using and could perhaps be better utilized even a lease basis by the private sector. These are some of the issues that need to be explored," he added.

PHOTO 2/1

Chamber President Mayers and Former P.S. Finance La Corbiniere at the NEC briefing

# RELIEF FOR MOTORISTS

It's been a bumpy ride for motorists ever since sections of the main Castries-Gros Islet highway had to be dug up to facilitate the laying of a 20 inch water main.

The good news, however, is that the French-financed EC\$11 million project, undertaken to improve the water supply to the north, will finally come to an end in the first quarter of 2003.

"That project actually should have been completed but we ran into some technical difficulties," WASCO Managing Director, John Joseph, told *Nationwide*.

These difficulties stem from the fact that the City of Castries basically sits on water – something that created a tougher than expected challenge for the contractors laying the main. As a result, there had to be some changes to the original route for laying the pipe.

When the pipe laying is completed, checks will be conducted to ensure that the main is in perfect working order. Once this is achieved, the dug-up sections of the road network will be repaved for a final time to restore the original smooth surface.

Meantime, to ease the inconvenience for motorists during the busy Christmas period, a layer of concrete is expected to be put down soon to make the ride at least a bit more comfortable until the final repaving is done.



Construction activity during the laying of the twenty inch pipe has always been a source of curiosity for motorists, causing occasional delays in traffic flow.

# LABOUR CODE GOVERNMENT MOVES ON

The draft Labour Code, the subject of intense national debate over the last several months, is now engaging the attention of the Attorney-General's Chambers.

The AG's job is to fine-tune the draft legislation, taking into account views expressed by labour, business and other interests during consultations held by the Minister for Labour, and then send it to the Cabinet of Ministers for consideration.

"At that point, the Government will say whether this is the Labour Code that we are recommending for adoption in St. Lucia and this is the Labour Code we now want to engage in final discussion before we pass it into law," Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony explained.

He pointed out, however, that this stage is "still some distance away".

Dr. Anthony has re-emphasized that while his Government remains firm in its commitment to ensuring that workers get a fair deal, it also wants, at the same time, to ensure that the Labour Code which is eventually adopted, is the product of a consensus involving the other stakeholders.

"We have to make sure that we have a Labour Code that reflects our circumstances and our needs. It is absolutely vital," he said.

[www.stlucia.gov.lc](http://www.stlucia.gov.lc)

## VEHICLE REGISTRATION

Social and Economic Review 2001

Classes of Vehicles	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Goods Vehicles	7011	8285	7458	8958	9186
Taxis/Hired	1369	1603	1738	1836	1881
Motorcycles	682	706	735	765	768
Private	13651	15426	17094	18539	20156
Passenger Vans	2808	2938	3061	3206	3335

**St. Lucia's manufacturing sector comprises some 180 firms: 40 per cent engaged in beverages and agro-processing ; 24 per cent in paper products; 8.5 per cent in garments; 8 per cent in electronics; with the balance in plastic products, printing and furniture-making.**

As St. Lucia looks to diversify its economy, focusing in particular on the development of new export earners to compensate for reduced earnings from bananas, the fledgling manufacturing sector is showing lots of promise.

According to Minister for Tourism, Commerce, Investment and Consumer Affairs, Philip J. Pierre, who has responsibility for the sector, manufacturing's export performance is showing "some encouraging signs" with food and beverages leading the way.

In a detailed presentation to the first-ever National Economic Briefing on Tuesday, November 26, Pierre reviewed manufacturing's performance up to June this year compared with the corresponding six-month period in 2001, and outlined various strategies being pursued by Government to support the sector's growth.

# GOOD SIGNS FROM MANUFACTURING

The Prime Minister announced that the Cabinet of Ministers will meet manufacturing stakeholders at a special one-day session in January 2003. The purpose of the meeting is to bring manufacturers up to date on current international trade negotiations, explain the implications for manufacturing, the challenges that Government faces, and discuss other issues affecting the sector.

St. Lucia's manufacturing sector comprises some 180-odd firms engaged in the following activities: beverages and agro-processing –

With this in mind, the Small Enterprise Development Unit, which operates out of the Ministry of Tourism, Commerce, Investment and Consumer Affairs will soon give way to a new private sector-type entity called the Small Enterprise Development Company (SEDCO), being established by Government.

"The structure and mandate of the new entity will reflect a more solution-oriented approach to the needs of the micro and small business sector," explained Pierre. "The Small Enterprise Development Company (SEDCO) ... will focus on human resource development, marketing and product development, provision of investment funding, competitiveness enhancement and related business extension services."

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Produce from agro-processing companies have made a positive dent in export earnings

"Exports of alcoholic beverages increased by 10.8 per cent," he revealed, "with the total value of local manufactured exports for the first half of 2002 at approximately \$57.7 million."

The real significance of this piece of good news is that the food and beverage sub-sectors of manufacturing are clearly adopting an export-led orientation and are breaking out of the traditional inward-looking mould of manufacturing in which production was geared primarily at the domestic St. Lucian market.

What it further means is that certain St. Lucian manufacturing enterprises clearly have the potential to hold their own in export niche markets, despite the broad challenges presented by globalisation and trade liberalization.

Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony was clearly elated by manufacturing's performance. "It occurred a little faster than we had thought and I want to take the opportunity to compliment the manufacturing sector because there are persons in there who have really persevered and that is overall good news," Dr. Anthony remarked.

40 per cent; paper products – 24 per cent; garments – 8.5 per cent, electronics – 8 per cent, with plastic products, printing and furniture-making accounting for the balance.

Generally speaking, the sector's performance has seesawed in recent years, with the garment and apparel sub-sector in particular going into decline as a result of external pressures from globalisation and trade liberalization.

On the other hand, the production of food and beverages, industrial chemical and rubber products, and paper products was up.

Pierre disclosed that some 208 St. Lucians were expected to find new employment as a result of Government support in the form of concessions and incentives for the establishment of 24 new entities. Such support was given during the first half of the Government's current financial year.

Pierre also disclosed that Government is stepping up support for the development of small business which, he said, had "good export and growth potential" in several areas.



St. Lucian-made beverages ... holding their own in the export market and earning the island some foreign exchange.

## RETOOLING AND CONCESSIONS

"Government, over the years has created the enabling environment for the manufacturing sector by endeavouring to reduce the cost of production through the provision of tax concessions. As a result tax concessions granted to the sector under the Fiscal Incentives Act increased by 19.4 percent to \$20.05 million in 2001. In addition manufacturers have also benefited from a second year of retooling allowance which is based on their levels of production. The St. Lucia Bureau of Standards has assisted manufacturers in raising their quality standards in order to become internationally competitive. However, as the sector is private driven, the role of Government is to assist manufacturers in addressing some of the problems identified".

*Saint Lucia Economic and Social Review 2001*

# TELECOMMUNICATIONS FOR THE PEOPLE AND

## The NTRC gives St. Lucians a say in the management and regulation of local telecommunications operators

When the present government decided to team up with other OECS governments to press for liberalization of the telecommunications market, getting improved, expanded services and lower prices for consumers weren't the only motives.

Rather, it was about the much broader issue of creating an enabling environment to stimulate new economic activity, by giving St. Lucians unprecedented access to the virtually limitless possibilities which modern telecommunications offer for self-fulfillment, especially in business.

As Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony remarked at the official opening of the Vide Bouteille headquarters of the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL) last June 3, telecommunications liberalization "is but one, albeit significant step, in a larger process that recognizes the fact that the OECS countries must develop alternative economic activity if they are to prosper in the evolving global environment."



Victor Ellis, NTRC Commissioner

"We are breaking new ground as public consultation is definitely not one of the things that constitutes the traditional approach to policy matters in St. Lucia," says Eldon Mathurin, chairman of the two-year-old National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC).

### Bridging Information Gaps

"If we look more particularly at the objective of liberalizing telecommunications as involving the provision of access to a majority of the population and bridging what has become known as the digital divide, .... one of the only ways in which one can genuinely establish a linkage between a service meant to benefit the population at large and the realization of that objective, is to have some form of public consultation," he adds.

Interestingly, the body of legislation establishing the NTRC emphasizes public consultation as the process to be used by the five-man Commission for the determination of issues coming before it.

This first consultation, in which members of the public were invited to make written submissions, is being guided by a document entitled **Conducting Public Consultations**. The document has been in circulation for the past month and the Commission was hoping to receive all responses by yesterday, Friday, December 6, 2002.

Considering its limited financial and human resources, the NTRC has expressed a clear preference for consultations to be conducted in writing. Here's how the process will work: the NTRC proposes to publish documents from time to time for public consideration, and the public will respond by submitting comments or suggestions in writing.

### Facing the Public

This approach, however, may be supplemented from time to time by other methods of consultation – for example, public hearings, meetings or seminars, Internet discussions, and individual meetings with NTRC members—depending on the nature of the regulatory issue and the resources available to the NTRC at the particular time.

Basically, the NTRC is using the first consultation to ask St. Lucians if they agree or disagree with its planned approach to consultations.

"Public consultation enables the Commission to ensure that the public in general, and telecommunications stakeholders in particular, are involved in its decision-making process," says the NTRC in the document, which seeks answers to six questions.

"Public consultations, whether a formal written exercise or a face-to-face meeting, is essential in the Commission's process

of formulating strategies in its desire to ensure the best deal for its stakeholders in terms of choice, quality and value for money," the document explains.

Besides Mathurin, a retired technocrat who worked for many years at the Guyana-based CARICOM Secretariat, other NTRC commissioners are chairman of the Bank of St. Lucia, Victor Eudoxie; chartered accountant Wendell Skeete; retired telecommunication technician Victor Ellis, and Malcolm Nelson, another retired telecommunications professional.

The NTRC operates out of an office established earlier this year inside the ECTEL headquarters. As coordinator, telecommunications engineer Michele Marius runs the office and manages the day-to-day business of the Commission, the first ever regulatory body for telecommunications in St. Lucia.

### Working with ECTEL

It's hardly surprising that the NTRC and ECTEL share the same building. They are essentially birds of the same feather working closely together in pursuit of a common objective. The only difference is that while ECTEL is responsible for regulation at the regional level involving its current five member states, the NTRC deals strictly with domestic St. Lucian regulatory issues.

NTRCs exist in the other four ECTEL countries

"We are part and parcel of ECTEL and ECTEL is part and parcel of us," explains Mathurin. "ECTEL is not supranational and can only deal with



Michele Marius: in charge of the NTRC's day to day business

As St. Lucians witness the first encouraging signs of telecommunications liberalization with the entry of two new players into the fast-growing cellular phone market, the government-appointed agency responsible for regulating the industry, is holding its first public consultation. The objective is to hear from as many St. Lucians as possible what form future consultations should take.



Country directors at a recent Board meeting of ECTEL.

# LIBERALIZATION BY THE PEOPLE

## NEWS BRIEFS ABOVE BOARD

national problems by reference to us. It can only take action in St. Lucia through the national commission, as it has no *locus standi*. here”

Since being appointed in 2000, St. Lucia's NTRC commissioners have been busy preparing themselves for the important task ahead. They have undergone various forms of training in order to be on top of current developments and issues in global telecommunications.

In building up capacity, the fledgling Commission has received technical assistance from the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and Japan.

"We have also been leaning on our brothers in the region where possible," says Mathurin.

### Compliance with WTO requirements.

The liberalization of the OECS telecommunications market, which has effectively ended Cable & Wireless long-standing monopoly, reflects a global trend of the past decade or so. In fact, the legislation making it possible is compliant with the requirements of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the seven-year-old international body responsible for liberalizing global trade.

The legislation imposes obligations on the islands to take into account the obligations they have both regionally and internationally as members of the WTO," Mathurin explains. "This is what opens us to liberalization which has to take place in consideration of those requirements."

**December 2002: the deadline for public comments on the first document published by the NTRC.**

Mathurin is generally satisfied with how liberalization has gone so far.

"We've moved several generations in a very short time," he says. "I think in five years you are not going to be able to recognize the communications landscape of the region. Every service that is available in other parts of the world is going to be available to us and at a competitive price."

"I doubt we are even at the fringe of imagining what a liberalized communications market can do and do pretty reasonably given the developments that have taken place in communications technology over the last five to 10 years," he adds.

"Our bright young people have the entrepreneurial energy and are only waiting for the opportunities to express themselves. I think that is where the revolution is going to take place."



Eldon Mathurin, chairman of the NTRC

**Anyone interested in finding out more about the work of the NTRC is welcome to contact its office at 458-2035, by fax at 453-2558, or by email at [nrtc\\_slu@candw.lc](mailto:nrtc_slu@candw.lc)**

Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, says there's nothing sinister behind the recent amendment to the environmental levy, as some persons have been suggesting.

Dr. Anthony, who is also the minister for finance and economic affairs, says the amendment simply was to give effect to a budgetary measure allowing St. Lucians who are resettling after residing abroad, to bring in their motor vehicles without having to pay the levy.

"All this measure has done is to say that the minister of finance may, by an order published in the Gazette, waive the environmental levy," he explained. "In other words, the minister can only waive it when he publishes an order in the Gazette."

"Anybody who can pick up the Gazette can see ... for whom it waived. The fact that you are putting it in the Gazette is to show the whole world for whom it is being done. There is no secret," the Prime Minister added.

## POVERTY REDUCTION FUND TOUCHES ALL

Everyone of St. Lucia's 17 constituencies has benefited in some way from the work of the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF).

The PRF spent more than EC\$6 million during the last four years on some 100 projects to improve the quality of life in several communities around the island, especially those with crying needs.

According to a newly released constituency by constituency breakdown, Anse la Raye/Canaries, considered among the island's poorest communities, received the single largest share of PRF assistance amounting to some 12 per cent.

Babonneau and Gros Islet were tied in second place with 10 per cent each. Next was Soufriere with nine per cent, followed closely by both Castries East and Dennery North which received 8 per cent each. Vieux Fort North took 7 per cent and its neighbour, Vieux Fort South, 6 per cent.

- The rest of the breakdown is as follows:
- Castries SouthEast, Micoud North, Choiseul — all on 5 per cent.
  - Castries North — 4 per cent
  - Castries Central, Dennery South, Laborie, Micoud South — all on 3 per cent.
  - Castries South — 2 per cent



ECTEL's Headquarters: also the home of the National Telecommunications Regulatory Council (NTRC).

# WE CAN BENEFIT FROM REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

## Minister of External Affairs and International Trade spells out the challenges

PHOTO 6/1

*Hon. Julian R. Hunte  
Minister for External Affairs  
and International Trade*

As he reflects on the challenging task of managing St. Lucia's external relations in a world undergoing rapid and sweeping change, Minister of External Affairs and International Trade, Senator Julian R. Hunte, has one particular regret.

It's that when St. Lucia signed up for membership of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) back in 1994, it did so apparently without fully grasping the far-reaching implications of such a move for the island's future economic development.

"The WTO is a very serious organization ...," Hunte said recently. "When we joined it, we didn't even know, as far as I am concerned, what we were joining or else we would have done differently at the time we joined like Barbados and Jamaica."

Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the seven-year-old WTO is a United Nations-affiliated agency pushing the neo-liberal agenda of global free trade. Free trade requires all countries, big and small, to open up their markets by removing barriers to the free international flow of goods and services. Such a move subjects domestic producers to competition.

### Protection for small economies

When Barbados and Jamaica signed on to the WTO, they negotiated special provisions allowing them to take a phased approach towards eventual adoption of a free trade regime. Their objective was to protect their small, vulnerable economies from the major dislocation a headlong rush into free trade would bring.

St. Lucia, however, didn't press for that type of elbowroom when it joined the WTO. Nevertheless, Hunte says pragmatically, "we have to deal with it and ensure that we put our best foot forward."

"(This) Government," he adds, "is looking after the interests of St. Lucia and leading the way in the OECS to ensure that we are not taken advantage of."

How is St. Lucia going about this crucial task? By not repeating the WTO mistake, carefully thinking through the implications of a series of upcoming international trade negotiations, and making sure that its concerns are known to the international community and hopefully acted upon.



*The banana industry was the first casualty of liberalisation*

"Our government has made it very clear that insofar as we are concerned, we are not prepared to become involved in any trade agreements unless special arrangements are made by special and differential treatment to ensure that our circumstances are given priority," Hunte explains.

### CARICOM and FTAA

"In other words, we are not prepared to involve ourselves in any jam and sack arrangements. We want to ensure that our circumstances, the smallness of our size, our vulnerability, that these matters are taken into account in any arrangements and that special arrangements are made for us." Prime Minister and Minister for Economic Affairs, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, clearly spelt out St. Lucia's position at this year's CARICOM summit in Guyana. He did so as the region prepares to take part in the hectic programme of international trade negotiations over the next few years.

These negotiations will involve the European Union (EU) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group, the United States and

other Western Hemisphere countries pursuing the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), and a new round of negotiations at the WTO level that's expected to lead to a further liberalization of global trade.

Then, within the Caribbean itself, there's the process of establishing by 2005 the CARICOM single market and economy which will create a single economic space stretching from Jamaica in the north down to Guyana in the south. It's an integral part of the region's response to the challenge of globalisation.

CARICOM as a group is also pursuing bilateral economic arrangements with Cuba,

"There are a lot of things that are going to happen in this period ...because we are into a world of globalisation and trade liberalization," says Hunte.

The harsh reality of international politics is that a small group of powerful countries always sets the global agenda. Small countries like St. Lucia and the rest of CARICOM have very little say in the process but then are often required to move with the flow as has happened in the case of the free trade issue.

What happened with the European market for Caribbean bananas over the last decade is a good example. When the European Union decided to free up the market under pressure from the United States, banana exporting countries like St. Lucia virtually had no say even though the consequences of a reduction of long-standing trade preferences proved devastating for their economies.

The Trade Council, which was launched earlier this year, comprises representatives of Government, private sector, academia and other interests. Senator Hunte says when it's fully up and running in the new year, it will go across St. Lucia to engage citizens in a debate and explain to them how globalisation, trade liberalization and similar issues will affect their lives.

"We intend to take it to the schools, we intend to discuss it with constituency groups," the minister says. "We intend to go right around the island and in all organizations in order to ensure that this matter is fully understood."

"...The whole face of the economy is likely to change and we have to make certain adjustments," Hunte stresses. "We have to adapt."

### TOURISM FOR CANARIES

*from page 8.*

Two weeks ago, another west coast community, Laborie, also witnessed the commissioning of a new \$1 million jetty which it intends to use, like Canaries, to exploit its tourism potential.

Soufriere has also received a modern jetty as part of a major waterfront development project under the present administration. In nearby Choiseul, a new fisheries complex, including a harbour, is approaching completion.

It's expected that the rundown jetty at Anse-la-Raye will be next in line to receive attention as Government pursues its programme of improving seaport facilities along the west coast to open up communities to tourism and other economic benefits which a thriving marine transport trade can bring.

A major dilemma facing St. Lucia – and all other CARICOM countries for that matter — is that Government depends heavily on import duties for raise the bulk of revenue needed to finance the public goods and services which St. Lucians require. Trade liberalization, however, calls for a phasing out of import duties and therefore presents St. Lucia and other regional countries with the big challenge of finding new sources of revenue to fill the projected void.

Hunte says the newly established Council on Foreign Trade will play a key role in formulating policy responses to these issues and will also help to educate St. Lucians about the implications of the various changes that are set to take place in the next five years or so.

# ST. LUCIAN ECONOMY BOUNCING BACK

## Global factors could still affect prospects for further growth

St Lucia's 2002 economic performance up to September showed an encouraging improvement following the decline of 2001.

But a cautious Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, pointing to the undermining impact which a possible outbreak of war in Iraq could have, is warning St Lucians that "we are not out of the woods".

"(War in Iraq) is the greatest threat to recovery in St Lucia and the Eastern Caribbean," said Dr Anthony, who is also minister for finance and economic affairs. "All of us have to pray very hard that that war is not unleashed because we have urgent economic reasons why that war has to be avoided."

"Restraint across the economy is going to be very critical and crucial in the next few months," Dr Anthony said, praising public sector managers for adopting such an approach over the past year.

The PM also called for emphasis to be placed on improving productivity and efficiency to assist the economy's forward thrust

"Like most open economies of the world, St Lucia's economic prospects are influenced by several factors," Dr Anthony explained.

"Among them are the external forces which shape the regional and global economy within which we must operate and over which we have only indirect and limited influence.

### Influencing the External Environment through Negotiations

"Then, too, there are the internal forces which shape the domestic economic environment over which we can exercise a higher level of influence and control," he added.

"While we remain cognizant of the external environment and seek to influence it through external negotiations, international lobbying, overseas promotion and the like, we acknowledge that our influence over the course of world events is at best limited and indirect.

"We must therefore take steps to maximize our influence over the domestic forces within our immediate control," he said.

With this in sight, Government is pursuing a policy of "fiscal consolidation" which includes broadening the revenue base, capturing all revenues generated particularly by improving and increasing efficiency, and reducing current expenditure to generate more savings for investments.

Dr Anthony said Government accepted it had to play the role of catalyst in the economy because of the fact that it occupies the "largest single space". However, he made clear that the safeguarding of St Lucia's economic interests wasn't a job for government alone but "a joint responsibility" with the social partners, including business and labour.

"This Government has long maintained that the task of positioning our economy to face the challenges and respond to the opportunities requires a cohesion of the private, public and the other sectors as the principal social partners," he said.

Government's role, will increasingly focus on the creation and management of the enabling macro-environment for growth, development of pro-active policies, the maintenance of law and order, development and maintenance of economic infrastructure, strategic planning for growth and development, and regulation.

"It is on these critical areas that Government must increasingly focus its attention if the future growth of the economy is to be assured," he stressed.

**Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony**  
Taking steps to broaden revenue base of government.

If the United States acts on its threat to disarm Iraq of alleged 'weapons of mass destruction', the repercussions for St Lucia will be felt most likely through an anticipated rise in oil prices, which could push up domestic prices, and a drop in international travel which would hurt the tourism industry.

### Growth in 2002

Dr Anthony gave the forecast at the first-ever National Economic Briefing, held at the National Insurance Conference Room on Tuesday, November 26. The briefing will reconvene at 9 a.m. on Thursday, December 12.

"Preliminary indicators have revealed improved economic performance for the first three quarters of 2002 after declining in the previous year," the PM reported, describing the recovery as "tepid" and identifying the resumption of sustainable growth as his administration's no.1 objective.

Given the uncertainty of the international environment, Dr Anthony said "reform, restructuring, and restraint" have to be watchwords over the short term to nurture the recovery.

## BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

### WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF ST. LUCIA

The Government of Saint Lucia, with financial support from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), is embarking on an institutional strengthening project for the Inland Revenue Department.

The specific purpose of the project is to strengthen the capability of the Inland Revenue Department to administer property taxes and to facilitate an island-wide valuation exercise.

Objectives of the institutional strengthening project are: (a) increased government revenues from real property; (b) reduced arrears and evasion and (c) increased voluntary compliance.

The goals of the national valuation exercise, on the other hand, are to: (a) capture all properties and to develop a Tax Roll that is 100 per cent complete and accurate; (b) consistently apply systematic and acceptable valuation techniques to value properties; (c) make use of up-to-date technology for property identification, valuation, accounting and record maintenance; (d) provide to the central government a compendium of up-to-date and meaningful information upon which fiscal policy can be developed and implemented and (e) ensure that a fair and equitable property tax system is implemented.

**Government is seeking to recruit consultants for this important assignment. The basic requirements are: expertise in land economy and valuation surveying or a related discipline, and formal training in project management with extensive experience in the use of Geographic Information System and property valuation software, as well as experience in the conduct of training courses in the use of the tools and techniques of valuation surveying.**

Eligibility is limited to individuals who are citizens or *bona fide* residents of CDB and Inter American Development Bank (IADB) member states, or companies legally incorporated in the said countries and more than 50 per cent owned by citizens of permanent residents.

The successful consultant will be required to (a) develop a strategy and structure for an island-wide evaluation exercise; (b) prepare a comprehensive implementation plan and budget for the exercise; (c) develop and execute an appropriate training programme; and (d) monitor the implementation of the national valuation exercise.

Statements of capability must be submitted in English by January 31, 2003 to:

Comptroller  
Inland Revenue Department  
Ministry of Finance, International Services  
and Economic Affairs  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Heraldine Rock Bldg  
Waterfront  
Castries  
St. Lucia

Tel: (758) 468-4706  
Fax: (758) 453-6072  
Email: [ird\\_property@candw.lc](mailto:ird_property@candw.lc)

The same statement of capability  
should be sent simultaneously to:  
Chief Project Officer  
Technical Cooperation Unit  
Caribbean Development Bank  
P.O. Box 408  
Wildey  
St. Michael  
Barbados

Tel: (246) 431-1600  
Fax: (246) 426-7269

### TENDER OPPORTUNITY

**The Board of Directors of the Union Sports and Social Facility Inc. is offering its Restaurant and Clubhouse Facility for lease for two years in the first instance with an option for renewal.**

The facility is housed in a one-storey building occupying approximately 7,400 square feet at the Union Industrial Zone.

Further details can be obtained from the Ministry of Labour Relations, Public Service and Cooperatives, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Greaham Louisy Administrative Bldg., Waterfront, Castries at 468-2220/2221. Tenders must be delivered in sealed envelopes no later than 4 p.m., December 16, 2002, to:

The Chairman  
Union Sports and Social Facility Inc.  
C/o Ministry of Labour Relations, Public Service and Cooperatives,  
P.O. Box 974  
Greaham Louisy Administrative Bldg.  
Waterfront  
Castries.

# TOURISM FOR CANARIES

from page 1

community, thereby strengthening our capacity for growth and economic development."

Canaries is blessed with a magnificent waterfall and rain forest, among other natural resources. There were attempts to develop this eco-tourism potential back in the early 1990s but it all came to a screeching halt after Tropical Storm Debbie caused extensive damage to the main access road, which was rendered impassable.

The Valley Road subsequently languished in this state of disrepair until last year when Government decided to spend \$360,000 to refurbish and reopen the road, as a complementary project to support the jetty's pivotal purpose of serving as a catalyst for the village's economic development primarily through the

Finisterre, who previously was closely connected to tourism as coordinator of the Heritage Tourism Programme, revealed that a study had estimated that jungle tours by tourists to the Canaries Valley up to the time of Tropical Storm Debbie, used to generate around \$1 million in business a year. However, Castries-based tour operators, rather than Canaries residents, were the main beneficiaries.

## Increase in Economic Activity

"The trend in tourism generally is for those tours to be put on and for persons in those villages to stand idly by looking on as spectators," Finisterre told the ceremony. "This government did not invest \$1.38 million (in the road and jetty) to just marginalize the people of this community but no one is going to come and give you the bread."

Canaries folk are clearly heeding this "get up and get" piece of advice. They are organizing themselves to ensure greater benefits come their way as a result of the anticipated pick-up in tourism activity.

"Because we realize that there will be an increase of economic activity in this community due to the construction of this jetty, we the people of Canaries have started putting certain things in place," Deterville disclosed.

A group of young women, for example, has come together to produce handicraft and a special type of soap made entirely from local raw materials which they hope will interest visitors to Canaries. The excited young entrepreneurs used the opportunity provided by the commissioning ceremony to put on an exhibition to promote their products.

## Eco - Tourism

Some villagers are also being trained to work as tour guides in anticipation of a resumption of the jungle tours and the launch of similar ventures. Negotiations are



**Applause after Edward Prospere, one of the Canaries' longest-serving fishermen, performed the honours of cutting the ribbon**

promotion of tourism.

The repair of this vital road followed a fact-finding constituency tour by Prime Minister Anthony in early 2000. During the said tour, Dr. Anthony had also reiterated his government's intention to carry through on a 1997 election promise to build the jetty to replace a wooden one which had deteriorated and disappeared through lack of maintenance many years earlier.

## Ferry System for West Coast

"Canaries will benefit from the stopover of cruise passengers who undertake the west coast day tours and the use of water taxis will be encouraged," Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities, Thecla Augustin, noted. "The construction of this jetty will also allow for the development of a ferry system along the west coast, similar to what existed in the past."

She added: "There are now improved facilities for the fishermen as this jetty will now provide them with a place to temporarily moor their boats while they discharge their daily catch. The construction of this jetty is therefore a very important element in the development of Canaries."

Communications and Works Minister Felix

**"Many years ago, Canaries was called the forgotten village but today, ... it is very nice to see us standing on a concrete structure which we call a jetty for the people of this great community."**

PHOTO 8/2

**Hon. Felix Finistere**  
Communications and Works Minister



**The new jetty in Canaries all decked for the opening ceremony.**

PHOTO 8/1

**Hon. Cyprian Lansiquot**  
M.P. for Anse-la Raye/Canaries

currently taking place with tour representatives and boat charter operators with a view to making Canaries one of their regular stops.

"This will open the way for tourist visits to the village and the nearby attractions such as the waterfalls," said Lansiquot, "thereby providing opportunities for our young people in tour guiding and more business in arts and craft, entertainment, shopping, et cetera."

Canaries' vision for the development of tourism also includes plans to convert the old church building into a craft and visitor centre. Discussions are taking place with the owners of the property.

To build awareness of Canaries and what it has to offer, the parliamentary representative, who is also parliamentary secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, is considering holding sometime soon what he calls a Canaries Development Day.

"The success of this (jetty) project and the realization of its objectives in the weeks and months ahead, will be measured by the way we use and care for the facility," said Lansiquot. "We are very grateful to the Government for what is being done to promote and foster the socio-economic development of the village."

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*Saint Lucia* NATIONWIDE is published every fortnight by the Department of Information Services.

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