



# TRANSFORMATION IN CHOISEUL

## Million Dollar projects lead the way.

If he didn't before, Choiseul's parliamentary representative, Ferguson John, certainly has a lot to smile about these days.

A major transformation of the quiet, seaside community on the southwestern coast is gradually starting to take shape, as the first of several big development projects get underway.



The massive fisheries complex taking shape on the waterfront in Choiseul

Considering John's description of Choiseul as a "forgotten" community where "hardly anything happened prior to 1997", it's easy to understand why he's so upbeat and confidently looking ahead to a brighter future for his constituents.

"By the time all the things that are happening are completed," the second-term MP proudly declares, "Choiseul is going to be a different, better place."

"Someone who left St Lucia in 1996 and is returning in 2004, is not going to recognize Choiseul,"

he asserts. "The physical appearance will not be the same and that's a fact."

The Choiseul waterfront, usually teeming with fishermen on the move, is bustling these days with new additional activity. The construction of a sprawling, ultra-modern fisheries complex that is going to radically change the face of Choiseul's important fishing industry.

"You see that thing going up over there," says Edgar, a fisherman

for the last 20 years, as he points to the complex. "It is one of the best things that ever happened in Choiseul. It is going to save us time and make life a lot easier for us fishermen."

### Our Own Complex

"When we catch our fish, we will not have to travel up to Vieux Fort anymore to sell it to the complex up there," adds Edgar. "We will now have our own complex where we can sell the fish, store the fish on ice if we cannot sell all, and go home after a hard day at sea."



Hon. Ferguson John

Member of Parliament - Choiseul

Francis, another village fisherman, nods his head in agreement with his colleague. He says the recent passage of Tropical Storm Lili shows the project will not only benefit fishermen but, in fact, the entire community along the seafont.

### Protection from storms

"When the sea used to be rough, water, sand, rubbish and other things would wash into the village and into people's houses like what happened during tropical storm Lenny a few years ago," he says.

"It didn't happen with Lili and the seas were rough. The wall at the complex is like a protection for the village."

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**REFLECTIONS ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF JUSTICE IN THE COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEAN.** The theme of an address by Dr. Kenny D. Anthony to the graduating class of the Norman Manley Law School in Jamaica on September 28th, 2002. See page 3. For full address go to [www.stlucia.gov.lc](http://www.stlucia.gov.lc)

## EDITORIAL

### RECLAIMING OUR ROADS

Respect for the rule of law is fundamental for the orderly running of any society.

Contrary to what some may believe, the law doesn't exist for the purpose of restricting citizens from enjoying their basic rights and freedoms. Rather, it exists to ensure that in so doing, citizens act responsibly so as not jeopardize the well-being of others.

Anyone who travels the highways of St Lucia is almost guaranteed to see glaring and often terrifying examples of blatant disrespect for the rule of law. Reckless overtaking around corners, drivers abruptly stopping their vehicles anywhere without indicating, speeding through communities and putting residents at risk. The list goes on and on.

Often the consequences are tragic not only for the inconsiderate drivers but innocent bystanders. From all accounts, the wild west-type behaviour on the nation's roads is exacting a rising toll in personal injury and death. An average of 22 persons are killed in road accidents every year - 22 too many. Between 1996 and 2000, the death toll was 117.

Government is saying: "Enough is enough!". That's why the House of Assembly passed on October 1 a new Motor Vehicles & Road Traffic Act with stiff penalties to crackdown on the lawlessness and restore some order on the nation's roads. Government is determined to enforce the new law and is equipping the Royal St Lucia Police Force with the resources to do the job.

However, cleaning up the mayhem on the roads of St Lucia isn't the responsibility of the government and police alone. Every road user has an important part to play. If everyone would simply obey the traffic laws and use the roads responsibly, safety would be significantly enhanced and the risk of injury and death greatly reduced. It's not asking too much. So let's do it, starting from today!



"Take ②" - A fifteen minute news review of the week.

Every Friday at 6.15 p.m. on **NTN**, Cablevision Channel 2.

# TRANSFORMATION OF CHOISEUL

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The multi-million dollar project, which includes a sheltered harbour for safely securing fishing boats particularly during bad weather, is a gift from the Government of Japan to St Lucia under its development cooperation programme in the Eastern Caribbean.

At the steady pace construction is proceeding under the supervision of Japanese engineers, the facility seems on course for completion in a matter of months. The workforce is largely St Lucian, including a number of Choiseulians.

## 10 Wheelers.

One recent Wednesday evening as workers on the complex were winding down at the end of another day, a procession of three 10-wheeler trucks drove through the village. It was a sign that work on another big project, not too far away, had also ended for the day.



Fishermen from Choiseul welcome the fisheries complex.

The trucks bore the name "Lagan", the main Irish contractor carrying out the \$43 million upgrade of the Soufriere to Vieux Fort highway which passes through the heart of Choiseul. This project, intended to enhance travel between the south and the rest of St Lucia, is seen as pivotal to unlocking the vast economic development potential of the south.

Following measurements and other preliminary work in the weeks after the official launch in July, the project has now reached the stage where heavy construction equipment is busy excavating land on both sides of the existing road to make way for

the wider, improved highway. Examples abound all over Choiseul.

Both construction projects are undoubtedly a welcome boost for the Choiseulian economy which traditionally has centred around fishing, agriculture and the manufacture of handicraft primarily for the tourist market. The fisheries complex and new highway have not only meant jobs for some Choiseulians but some welcome business for area shops and business places.

## Highway Benefits

Construction of the highway too has brought an unexpected windfall for some property owners. Perhaps because of the convenience of location, several contract workers from overseas have chosen to rent homes in Choiseul. Lagan Holdings' office too is based in Choiseul, operating from a rented two-storey building occupying a



The old fishing complex has become obsolete and inadequate

strategic spot halfway between Vieux Fort and Soufriere.

If Choiseulians are excited about the Soufriere to Vieux Fort highway project, they are even more so about a forthcoming project that will have a greater and more direct impact on their lives. It's the rehabilitation of several rundown secondary or feeder roads all over the constituency. Roads people use daily to reach their homes, to get to school, to transport produce from their farms.

This specific project, falling under the Kenny Anthony government's ambitious \$120 million national Road Development Programme, is expected to get going sometime within the next year. Choiseulians living in the village, are also eager to have the authorities complete for permanent use a temporary, alternative road that has been cut from next to the cemetery and runs straight into the village to the

fisheries complex on the waterfront.

"Soon we're not going to be travelling on substandard roads anymore and the people are happy about that," says John.

The story of the transformation of Choiseul does not stop with the modern fisheries complex, improvements to the road system, and a major expansion of electricity, water and telephone services in the last five years.

## Housing Project

Choiseul is getting a piece of housing action with a major development earmarked for La Fargue. Details are still being worked on by the National Housing Corporation but, from all indications, this additional investment to improve the quality of life for Choiseulians should come on stream within a couple of years. Prospective homeowners, you should definitely take note!



Excavation work along a Choiseul section of Soufriere-Vieux Fort highway.



**“At times, our Courts appear to be always looking over their shoulders across the vast ocean of sea towards the Privy Council for applause and approbation”. *Dr. Kenny D. Anthony***

On Saturday September 28<sup>th</sup>, the Hon. Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, delivered a seminal lecture to the graduating class of the Normal Manley Law School of Jamaica. Given Dr. Anthony's former role as a leading regional academic at the UWI, and as the Director of the Caribbean Justice Improvement Project, his “Reflections on the Perceptions of Justice in the Commonwealth Caribbean”, provide an important key to the thinking of the Government of Saint Lucia on this important question.

Dr. Anthony was speaking, in his capacity as the head of the Executive Arm of Government, and from that vantage point, was identifying the weaknesses in another branch of Government, the Judiciary, which remains independent of his authority. This is important to emphasize, because very often, when people criticize the courts and the legal system, they vent their anger at the “Government”, by which they mean, the Prime Minister, his Ministers, and the Civil Service as a whole, forgetting that the courts are independent from governmental interference.

One of the most striking presentation features of the Prime Minister's address was the extent to which he was in touch with popular sentiment about the weaknesses of the legal system. He did not hesitate to outline those weaknesses and to condemn them frontally. Thus Dr. Anthony argued that “there is a deep rooted belief that our judiciary has to a large extent not lived up to other peoples' expectations”; “that cases take years to reach the courts and when they do, the judiciary does not deliver timely reasoned and erudite judgments”; that “courts are citadels of sympathy for criminals who commit outrageous crimes”; and that “distrust of lawyers and judicial

## Dr. Kenny Anthony and Legal Reform in the Caribbean



*Caribbean lawyers have been debating the pros and cons of the CCJ.*

personnel is endemic and widespread”.

### Law and Criminality

The Prime Minister was particularly critical of what he described as the greed, notably among young lawyers some of whom have been particularly vulnerable to the wealth and glitter associated with the drug trade. In Dr. Anthony's view, the earlier motives of honor and the desire to protect the vulnerable people and to advance justice and development have now been “replaced by greed and incompetence”. According to the PM, “Legal professional privilege has become a cloak to cover criminal conduct”. He lamented the fact that the “profession is being criminalized while others watch helplessly”.

### Crisis of the Magistracy

He was also critical of the lethargy and inertia currently evident within the Magistracy, most evident in the length of time which elapses before the

conclusion of cases. Describing the magistrate courts as “the fora of justice for the masses”, Prime Minister Anthony lamented the fact that the “magistracy is on the verge of collapse”, and “has become overwhelmed with an enormous overload of cases”. He argued that the provisions in the constitution which had illogically placed the magistracy under the rubric of the Public Service had become dysfunctional. In the view of the Prime Minister, much of the disrepute which surrounds the magistracy has occurred because of the “low esteem” which has been afforded to these courts precisely because they are the institutions of the poor.

### Shared Responsibility

The heart of Prime Minister Anthony's talk, however, lay not in the mere description of the existing shortcomings, but in his analysis of the basis for resolving these weaknesses. Critical among these solutions was his call for a rethinking of the notion of “independence” of

judges, and the need for the development of a “shared responsibility for justice”. Thus whilst Dr. Anthony was at pains to point out that judges should be more accountable to society, he was also quick to admit that the Executive Branch of Government is also partly responsible for the shortcoming in the legal sphere since oftentimes it is “unsure of itself and of its responsibilities”. He noted for example that it has “allowed the infrastructure to deteriorate and suffer decay”. He also held lawyers responsible for the existing situation since they were often guilty of utilizing “delay” as a weapon to frustrate magistrates and the administration of justice.

### Demanding Accountability of Judicial Personnel

It is the Prime Minister's views on the question of accountability of judges, however, which will perhaps resonate most forcefully within the legal community. The Prime Minister described the question of accountability of judicial personnel as “one of the biggest challenges facing the judicial system”. What is interesting is that whilst Caribbean populations are used to demanding accountability of their political leaders, and while Caribbean populations (including the legal community) are quick to raise their voices in anger at any perceived shortcomings of public officials, there has been a glaring reluctance to apply a similar approach to the failures of the judiciary. Prime Minister Anthony's observations, it is hoped, will initiate a debate which will usher in a new relationship between judicial personnel and civil society.

According to the Prime Minister, “there is no constitutional basis” for the widely held view that for judges to be “truly independent”, they must not be accountable “whether to the people or the Executive or Legislative Arms of the State”. In

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# CHARTING A NEW ECONOMIC

## St Lucia formalizes the consultative approach

The administration of Prime Minister Dr Kenny Anthony is democratizing economic decision-making by emphasizing a consultative approach as it seeks to build new structures to help St Lucia effectively cope with fundamental international change that influences national development.

Consultation with the private sector and organized labour, which became increasingly frequent subsequent to the incumbent Labour administration's accession to office in 1997, was formalized here on September 13 with the historic launch of the National Economic Council through a sub-region-wide initiative of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB)

Economic decision-making has traditionally been the sole purview of governments. Of course, there was occasional consultation with key stakeholders but it was not formalized in a structure that gave meaning and significance.



Prime Minister of St. Lucia Dr. Kenny D. Anthony

**"As a nation, our choices are simple: we can either see this as a hostile world of shrinking opportunity or as a shrinking world of increasing possibilities. We can envisage our country on a threshold of opportunity with serious decisions to be made, or accept the fatal consequences of decisions made for us, by others beyond our shores. We can either wait expectantly at the cross-roads, or proceed on our own" Dr. Kenny Anthony**

between the US and the former Soviet Union has long ended; St Lucia and the rest of the Caribbean have lost the key bargaining chip of geopolitical significance, and today we are now very much on our own to fend for ourselves in a hostile world dominated by the ideology of the market.

As Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank Sir Dwight Venner observed in his keynote address at the NEC's launch, "we are now living in what can be described as a defining time in the history of the international community in general and in these islands in particular. It is therefore a time and an occasion for deep, sober and objective reflection on the circumstances in the world and in our countries."

That, in a nutshell, is the backdrop against which the NEC has been launched as a deliberative forum to come up with ideas and



The private sector - one of the groups in the NEC consultative process

### Listening to all Stakeholders

The emergence of globalization and other related issues which have diluted the traditional dominance of governments, have led to a more broad-based approach to decision-making that incorporates the views of other key stakeholders to produce a national consensus.

Apart from being televised 'live' on the National Television Network

(NTN), the fact that the launch of the NEC, a landmark event with profound implications for national development, has not generated widespread debate in the media, suggests insufficient public awareness of key underlying issues which shape daily life in St Lucia.

In fact, if opinions aired occasionally during public debate of economic issues are an accurate gauge, many St Lucians

are seemingly trapped in the time-warp of the "good old Cold War days" when developed country benefactors like the USA guaranteed us a good life through generous offers of aid and trade preferences that provided a guaranteed export market for our bananas.

### Reflecting on our Circumstances

But the East-West ideological rivalry that was the Cold War



New standards for man...



Tourism is continuing to contribute significantly to economic growth



# OMIC COURSE FOR ST. LUCIA

## n, Paving the way for recovery of the economy

solutions to assist government in charting a new course for St Lucia with the aim of maintaining and improving living standards.

In his address to the NEC's launch, Prime Minister Dr Kenny D. Anthony observed that a failing of Caribbean countries during the height of the Cold War years, was the assumption that preferential trade, easy migration, and a flood of investment money would endure indefinitely.

### Less Dollars from Donors

"We traded, not on competitive advantage, but historical circumstances, waging that competing economic and political ideologies would outbid each other with gratuitous aid and technical assistance. In that environment, regional growth rates peaked, employment expanded and primary exports traded like green gold," he noted.

### Tough Choices

The Prime Minister then listed the choices facing St Lucia as a nation. "We can either see this as a hostile world of shrinking opportunity or as a shrinking world of increasing possibilities. We can envisage our country on a threshold of opportunity with serious decisions to be made, or accept the fatal consequences of decisions made for us, by others beyond our shores. We can either wait expectantly at the cross-roads, or proceed on our own terms, changing our prospects from perilous to prosperous."

The way forward, according to Dr Anthony, is for St Lucia to "aggressively seek out the world economy in which we hope to prosper."

He added: "We must bring a new analysis and understanding to the choices

## THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FOR THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL

"One could regard the present period as another turning point in the international system. My conclusion is that it is certainly unprecedented in the history of the global economy as the tension between global needs and the needs of individual countries and regions appear to collide, where technology and changing demands are leading to significant structural changes in economies, where the international financial system has been experiencing significant volatility and moving from crisis to crisis – the Mexican crisis, the Asian crisis, the Russian crisis, the Brazilian crisis, the Argentina crisis.

Where labour markets stretch beyond national boundaries through either the importation of workers, the export of jobs to production platforms overseas, or the use of technology to carry out jobs overseas. Where production is concentrated in multinational corporations and commodity chains. Where production and the exchange of goods and services can be disrupted by security threats and

the spread of terrorism as witnessed by the impact of 9/11 on our tourist industry.

In an environment of such uncertainty and unpredictability two concepts have come to the fore, namely Governance and Accountability.

These phenomena have been recognized at the international, national, and most recently, at the corporate level, following the wake of Enron and Worldcom. At the international level the end of the Cold War has meant that we have moved from a bipolar to a unipolar world with all the implications for the hegemonic determination of global issues. For this reason it is important to have the international community recognize the existence of global public goods such as security, public health, financial stability, the environment and the eradication of poverty."

*Sir K Dwight Venner  
Governor of the  
Eastern Caribbean central Bank.,  
Speaking at the launching of the  
National Economic Council*



Manufactured goods will provide the competitive edge

Dr Anthony continued: "Today, that world has vanished. .... Without the ideological war, the region's strategic importance is less obvious. Donors are far less indulgent; their tax-payers less tolerant; their generosity shaped by domestic priorities and economic self-interest. Meanwhile, repatriation replaces emigration and investment must be earned in a cold, capricious and competitive global market."

before us. Only from that understanding can emerge the kind of consultation and consensus on where we wish to go as a society, and how we are going to get there. If we so arm ourselves, it will be possible to devise long-term strategies to take our young nation forward."

The NEC will assume a front-line role in guiding this process of national discovery.

## BANANA RECOVERY PROJECT LEAF SPOT MONITORING SERVICES

The Government of St. Lucia is seeking consultancy services to implement a leaf spot monitoring programme. The firms or individuals will be required to develop and implement programmes to monitor and determine the leaf spot disease status in the banana industry and contribute to the timely application of measure to effectively control the diseases in the industry.

Legally incorporated firms and individuals from any of the member countries of the Caribbean Development Bank are eligible for consideration, and the successful applicant will be chosen, based on relevant local or regional experience and financial capability.

Additional information can be obtained form the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Castries, St. Lucia. Deadline for submissions is November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

The disease monitoring is part of a banana recovery project aimed at addressing the threat posed by declining productivity in the banana industry. Funding for this programme is being sought from the Caribbean Development Bank.



# OPENING SOON!



This brand new state-of-the-art Gros-Islet fire station will soon become operational. The much needed fire equipment is already on the way. Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony is due to visit the \$1.5 million fire station on October 5<sup>th</sup> 2002, along with a government delegation which will also include the District Representative for Gros-Islet Hon. Mario F. Michel. On that day also the government

delegation will also visit a similar new fire station in Dennery and the new Divisional Police Headquarters in Vieux-Fort. These new facilities have been constructed by the present government to improve living and working conditions of the fire and police officers. They were constructed by NIPRO, the property development arm of the National Insurance Corporation

## WEST COAST GOES MOBILE *Deregulation Driving Expansion in the Telecommunications Sector*

The deregulation of the telecommunications sector continues to bring both direct and indirect benefits to the people.

Latest to benefit have been the people of Anse La Raye on the island's west coast, who now have access to mobile (cellular) telephone services.

Up until just over a week ago, there was no cellular service in the west coast villages. Subscribers were unable to make or receive calls in Anse La Raye and Canaries, but could do so from Dennery, Micoud and Vieux Fort.

This inexplicable situation soon came to an end with the opening-up of the telecoms sector to competition. As soon as two other companies were granted licenses to operate cellular services in St. Lucia, Cable & Wireless reshuffled its local top management and a St. Lucian was appointed General Manager.

Very soon thereafter, the new local manager launched cellular services in Anse La Raye, with a promise that Canaries and other West Coast areas will soon follow suit. The new manager has also promised that Cable & Wireless will soon provide cellular services to 100% of the island – meaning, everywhere in St. Lucia.

Meanwhile, the two new companies – AT&T and Digicel – have begun advertising for recruitment of top local administrative and technical staff to run their operations here.

When the two companies begin operations, the choice of mobile and other cellular services will be wider for telephone subscribers.

The cost of cellular services can also be expected to reduce even more than they were earlier this year in the latest agreement between Cable & Wireless and the Government of St. Lucia.

### PUBLIC INFORMATION

Read all the major addresses  
by government ministers  
on the Government of  
St. Lucia website  
[www.stlucia.gov.lc](http://www.stlucia.gov.lc)

## NOTICE

The Inland Revenue Department would like to remind Employers who have not submitted their Employers Annual Returns (TD6) by the extended deadline of February 15, 2002 are to do so **IMMEDIATELY**. Please ensure that **ALL** sections of the accompanying TD5 Certificates are complete so as to facilitate quicker processing of the information by the Department.

Failure to adhere to this requirement will result in the imposition of a penalty in accordance to Subparagraph 131 (1) (a) (vii) of the Income Tax Act No. 1 of 1989 which states "Any person who being an employer, within the prescribed time, fails to furnish to the Comptroller an annual return of tax deductions and remittances shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine of one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for one year."

TD5 forms are available from all offices of the Department in Castries, Vieux Fort and Soufriere.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to call the Taxpayer Assistance Unit at telephone number 468-4730/35/66 or the Taxpayer Relations Unit at telephone number 468-4781/65.

E-mail:  
[ird\\_assistance@candw.lc](mailto:ird_assistance@candw.lc) or  
[ird\\_relations@candw.lc](mailto:ird_relations@candw.lc)

*Inland Revenue Department*

## St. Lucia Welcomes New Government in Trinidad and Tobago.

Acting Prime Minister Mario Michel on Wednesday welcomed the conclusion of the general election in Trinidad & Tobago and congratulated the victorious party on the swearing-in of a new Prime Minister.

Mr Michel said the Government of St. Lucia welcomed the election of the victorious People's National Movement (PNM) as "an expression of the will of the electorate in an election that was, from all initial reports, free and fair and free from fear."

The Acting Prime Minister said the people of Trinidad & Tobago and the rest of the region

could now "breathe a sigh of relief, now that the anxiety and suspense is over, after a long campaign that spanned two general elections in less than a year, one of which produced a tie."

He said it was "now for the parties and people of the twin-island republic to look to the future."

Mr Michel said "the St. Lucia Government looks forward to continuing to work with the newly elected government at the Caricom level and in the international community, in the interests of our respective peoples and that of our region."



# SOLVING THE TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

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months. If there's a situation where after an additional year the same offender runs up 18 points, he or she will not be able to drive legally for one year.

"If, in spite of those suspensions, you are caught driving, the fine shall be \$5,000 or one year in jail or both," says Finisterre.

It's a clear example of how seriously government is treating the problem. Traffic violations, however, will not be recorded as criminal offences.

Congestion of the roads in and around Castries is a most visible consequence of the sharp increase in motor vehicles. Some roads which were originally intended to be two-way, have now been effectively

rendered one-way because of indiscriminate parking.

The new law offers a solution to this and other congestion problems by proposing the introduction of paid parking, a common feature in international cities. Parking will be treated as a scarce resource for which demand is greater than the supply. There will be exemptions for emergency vehicles, some public officials, business people and residents who qualify.

"At first there may be some queries and concerns but we are confident that once the system is explained to the citizenry with adequate justification, persons will understand that this is something for the public good," says Finisterre.



Traffic congestion is becoming a regular feature on the mainroads in St. Lucia

## LEGAL REFORM IN THE CARIBBEAN

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Dr. Anthony's view, our judiciaries are funded by taxpayers, and they must be accountable to Civil Society. He added further that constitutional and democratic systems such as ours are founded on the principles of openness and accountability and therefore, no branch of Government should be exempt from these principles. In a rather forceful statement, the Prime Minister declared that "incompetence and laziness cannot be allowed to parade in our judicial corridors". As a solution to the problem of the lack of accountability of the judiciary, the Prime Minister proposed the establishment of a Judicial Review Commission which would engage in periodic reviews of the Judicial Arm of the state.

### The case for CCJ and Justice Improvement

As was to be expected in a talk of this nature, the Prime Minister took the opportunity to highlight the need for the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice. Critically, Dr. Anthony stressed the importance of the Caribbean Court as a means for ensuring legal reform in the Caribbean and for making justice more accessible to the poor in the region. This was an

important contribution to the debate on the establishment of the CCJ, particularly since much of the discussion on the issue has been mired in the issue of "hanging". According to the Prime Minister, "protection of the law is worthless if you cannot get access to the courts". According to the PM, it is the inaccessibility of the ordinary Caribbean citizen to the British Privy Council, which is one of its greatest weaknesses. Thus, according to Dr. Anthony, "justice before the Privy Council is neither easily accessible nor popular. It is elitist, available only to Governments and litigants with means and property". By locating the debate on the establishment of a Caribbean Court of Justice in the question of the democratization of Justice for the Caribbean common man, Saint Lucia's Prime Minister has therefore indicated to the skeptics the link between the abolition of appeals to the Privy Council and the improvement of Justice in the region.

Reports indicated the speech by Dr. Anthony struck a significant chord among the graduating class of 2002 of the Norman Manley Law School. It will be interesting to observe the response of the local legal fraternity.

## TOURISM PROMOTION: CANADA & LONDON

Tourism Officials in St. Lucia will be looking forward to the gains from two major promotional blitzes during the month of October. Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony last weekend led a high-powered local delegation to Canada to promote the island's tourism industry and encourage more Canadians to visit and invest in St. Lucia, and tourism officials at the same time welcomed five Londoners involved in promoting the St. Lucia's tourism in Britain.



Tourism Minister - Philip J. Pierre

Accompanied by Tourism Minister Philip J. Pierre, Tourist Board Chairman Desmond Skeete, Director of Tourism Hilary Modeste and Hotel & Tourism Association President

Berthia Parle, the Prime Minister addressed travel agents and the Canadian press during several meetings, seminars and other related functions.

The blitz, which took the local delegation to the Canadian cities of Toronto and Hamilton in Ontario, is part of a continuing international promotion that followed September 11, 2001.

The Government has pumped over \$20 million into tourism promotion for the current year, which has seen similar efforts in specific destinations such as Britain, Germany and the USA as well as regional destinations such as Martinique, Trinidad & Tobago and Barbados.

While the Prime Minister's delegation was in Canada, five London taxi drivers involved in a campaign promoting St. Lucia in the British capital arrived here for a familiarization tour that will increase their knowledge of the island.

They drive the famed London taxis painted with promotional images of St. Lucia and received preliminary training in basic information about the island, which they pass on to passengers.

After their visit here, they are expected to be even better equipped to tell Londoners about the wonders of this simply beautiful island.



# TACKLING TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

## New Moves to ensure order and smooth traffic flow

If you drive in St Lucia, it's inevitable you'll come face to face with the mayhem that prevails daily on the streets, especially major highways like the one connecting Castries with Vieux Fort.

The reckless, high speed driving that's so commonplace, the dangerous overtaking around corners which puts the safety of other road users at risk, the questionable roadworthiness of some vehicles which travel without lights, properly functioning brakes, and other essentials.

The consequences are often disastrous. Accidents which cause serious injury and sometimes death that could have been avoided, only if the culprits had driven with due care and attention and showed consideration for the well-being of other road users.

The government of St. Lucia is determined to bring the mayhem to an end. In the last week or so, the administration has sent out an unmistakably clear message to road offenders that enough is enough. It's either they will clean up their act or feel the full weight of the law!



**Hon. Petrus Compton**  
Attorney General & Minister of Justice

of Justice, Senator Petrus Compton. "We have to go now and give the police the resources they need to put the law into effect."

### More Equipment and Manpower

If everything goes according to plan, the crackdown is likely to come at the start of the new year, 2003. It's welcome news because it's what law-abiding road users and other concerned citizens have been calling for.

The Police Traffic Department is getting additional manpower and

end of the day, we want everybody to be aware that we all have to take control of the roads away from the madmen and women who try to kill all of us," says Compton.

"We hope that the courts will support us, ... that when (offenders) come before the magistrate for the offenses they commit on the road, that they will feel the full weight of the law."

### Increased Traffic

The troubling traffic issues are partly linked to the fact that St Lucia has seen a dramatic increase in the number of motor vehicles on the road within the last decade. In 1996, for example, there were 26,595 vehicles; by 2001, the figure had shot up 30 per cent to 39,416. Given consumption patterns, the figure has obviously moved up a few notches since then.

Concomitantly, traffic accidents have risen steadily over the last decade. According to figures quoted by acting Health Minister Jon Odlum during the debate, there were 10,232 accidents reported to police between 1996 and 2000, with the annual total ranging from 1,944 to 2,151 and showing an increase every year.

In the same period, there were 117

adults, with road accidents accounting for over 75 per cent of all fatal accidents," notes Odlum.

The new Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act, he points out, "offers the potential for increasing health gains not only by reducing morbidity and mortality related to road and traffic accidents, but also curbing the toll on our environment and improving our quality of life through overall reduction in the risk factors."



**Hon. Jon Odlum**  
Parliamentary Secretary  
Ministry of Health, Human Services  
and Family Affairs.

### Inspection for All

Under the new Act, vehicles will be subjected to a more stringent system of inspection for road-worthiness, a regulatory system for car rental operators will be introduced, regulation of car dealers will be strengthened, and there's an attempt by means of a prescribed penalty to curb the growing and dangerous practice of persons driving and simultaneously chatting on cellular phones.

An innovation under the law is the proposed introduction of a demerit system. It's a sure way of ensuring accountability by repeat traffic offenders who managed in the past to get away because of loopholes in the legislation. A computer database of all vehicles and issued driver's licenses will be set up to support the effectiveness of the demerit system.

Here's how it will work. If an offender accumulates 10 demerit points within a period of one year, his or her driver's license will be suspended for six

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**Motorists have eased their vehicles onto sidewalks leaving little room for pedestrians**

The tough, no-nonsense approach to traffic offences was spelt out on October 1 as the House of Assembly passed a new Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act. The Act, repealing a 1994 law, addresses the issues of reckless road use in the overall context of an effective, new, national motor vehicle traffic management system.

"Passing the law is just the first step," says Attorney General and Minister

equipment, including vehicles, to patrol the streets and enforce the law. However, this is just one aspect of a multi-faceted approach government is taking to the problem.

The Ministry of Communications and Works is working with the Insurance Council to educate the public about safe road usage. The National Crime Commission is also expected to lend support by going into communities on a public sensitization mission "At the

road deaths including 30 children and adolescents and 56 victims between the ages of 20 and 44, making a yearly average of 22.

"That is really too many," says Communications and Works Minister, Felix Finisterre. "We've got to bring an end to the carnage on our roads."

"The Chief Medical Officer's report for 2000 ranks accidents as the leading cause of death among youth and

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