

Request for Support for a Caribbean Political Union Clement Payne Movement

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Dear Brother/Sister

The Clement Payne Movement of Barbados is convinced that our Caribbean leaders are giving up too easily on the imperishable dream of political union and the establishment of a Caribbean nation.

Other people have been prepared to struggle for decades and to undergo many sacrifices, including armed struggle and loss of lives, in order to achieve their goals of unity and nationhood. Our leaders, on the other hand, seem to believe that three or four decades of irritating frustrations is enough to justify their abandonment of the dream and the struggle.

Well, we beg to differ, and we are prepared to make an effort to revive and re-energise the quest for a political union of the CARICOM countries.

We really do believe that the time is ripe for the governments of the 15 Caribbean Community nations to commit themselves to a step by step process and a timetable for establishing a political union of our CARICOM states.

To this end, we have come up with the idea of drafting the text of a resolution which we propose to make available to Parliamentarians in all of the CARICOM nations. We further propose to request them to table a country specific version of this resolution in their national Parliament with a view to securing its adoption by their legislature during the year 2011.

We are sending you the text of the draft resolution and are requesting that you consider this matter and give us your feedback, advise and support. The draft resolution follows:-

UNION OF CARIBBEAN STATES RESOLUTION

Whereas the people of the 15 member states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) share a common geographical space, history, kinship and cultural identity, having undergone almost identical processes of European conquest and colonisation, forced migration from the continents of Africa, Asia and Europe, slavery, slave trade, indenture-ship, resistance to slavery and colonialism, Emancipation, labour rebellion and organization, de-colonisation and the conscious development of a Caribbean variety of political and cultural nationalism;

And whereas these common and shared realities have long impelled the people of these territories to conceive of the value and desirability of welding their relatively small separate states into one large unified multi-territory nation state under a Federal system of government;

And whereas this popular conception of geographical, political, economic and cultural unity was embraced and nurtured by the early pioneers and architects of the Caribbean Labour Movement, and found its most forceful expression during the decades of the 1930's, 40's and 50's in the multiple demands of the 'Caribbean Labour Congress' for the de-colonization and self-government of the British West Indian colonies under a unified, multi-territory Federal system of government;

And whereas the progressive political wing of the Caribbean Labour Movement gave autonomous expression to these demands with the formation in 1956 of the West Indies Federal Labour Party, a coalition of labour oriented political parties based in the various British West Indian colonies;

And whereas this deeply felt authentic popular desire for the establishment of a sovereign, independent, federated nation state of the Caribbean was frustrated and subverted through the British Colonial Office's imposition of a colonial, non-self-governing British West Indian Federation between the years 1958 to 1962;

And whereas ever since the collapse of the British West Indies Federation in 1962 the people of the member states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) have been embarked on a collective journey back to realizing the unitary independent Federal nation state vision of the pioneers and architects of the Caribbean Labour Movement, a vision that is implicit in the work and ideals of the earliest craftsmen of Caribbean independence and nationhood – the leaders and statesmen of the Haitian Revolution;

And whereas, to date, the most significant landmarks in this collective journey have been the establishment in 1968 of the Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA); its transformation in 1973 into the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM); the 1981 establishment of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS); the 1989 Grand Anse Declaration committing CARICOM to the creation of a Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME); the

work and the 1992 report of the independent West Indian Commission; and the inauguration in 2006 of the Caribbean Single Market;

And whereas these institutions and measures of economic integration, intra-Caribbean trade facilitation, functional cooperation and coordination of external economic relations have been important achievements, yet they fall short of the ultimate goal of political union and collective nationhood, and do not provide the people of the Caribbean Community states with a strong enough mechanism for protecting their welfare and advancing their collective economic, cultural and political objectives;**And whereas** the world has entered an era fraught with dangers and disadvantages for small developing nations, and characterised by a fundamental dislocation in the European and North American based international capitalist order and a relentless system of economic globalization that is forcing small developing nations to expose themselves to the full blast of international competition;

And whereas it has become absolutely clear that the only mechanism potent enough to protect the well being and welfare of the people of the Caribbean Community states, to create a concrete and practical basis for the development of new regional industries and structures of production, to deliver enhanced economic and life opportunities to the masses of our people, to maintain the cultural uniqueness and integrity of our Caribbean region, and to ensure the continued existence of the sovereignty, independence and dignity of our people, is the merging of the separate nations of the Caribbean Community into one strong regional nation state.

IT IS NOW HEREBY RESOLVED that the Government and people of (Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago)

Agree in principle with the idea of transforming the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) into a multi-territory politically unified, nation state existing under a Federal system of government.

Commit themselves to participating in a Constitutional Convention of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) states to be held in one of the said CARICOM states commencing in the month of February in the year 2016, for the purpose of devising and agreeing upon the structure and Constitution of the said nation state, as well as the formula for ratifying the said Constitution and bringing the said nation state into existence;

Commit themselves to utilising the years and months between the adoption of this resolution and the month of February 2016 to engage in a comprehensive national consultation in the Island of Barbados, designed to prepare the Barbadian people for their integration and participation in the new nation state, and to discuss, devise and agree upon the ideas and proposals that the Barbados delegates will put forward at the said Constitutional Convention;

Agree that the location and specific dates of the said Constitutional Convention shall be decided upon by a majority vote of the CARICOM heads of government assembled together in a CARICOM heads of government summit; and

Agree that each Caribbean Community (CARICOM) state that participates in the said Constitutional Convention shall be represented by a national delegation consisting of a maximum of 10 persons, of which number five shall be representatives of the governing political party, two shall be representatives of the political opposition represented in Parliament, and three shall be representatives of civil Society.

This resolution is dedicated to the honour and revered memory of the giants of the Caribbean integration movement – Captain Arthur Cipriani, T.A. Marrayshow, Marcus Mosiah Garvey, Sir Grantley Adams, Robert Bradshaw, Richard Hart, C.L.R. James, Dr. Eric Williams, Forbes Burnham, Elma Francois, W.A. Domingo, Richard B. Moore, Wynter Crawford, Sir Frank Worrell, Ebenezer Duncan, William Demas, Sir Arthur Lewis, Lloyd Best, Norman and Michael Manley, Walter Rodney, Tim Hector, George Odlum, Maurice Bishop, Bob Marley and Rosie Douglas – and to the Haitian fathers of Caribbean independence and nationhood – Toussaint L’Ouverture, Jean Jacques Dessalines, Henry Christophe and Alexander Petion.

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DAVID A. COMMISSIONG

PRESIDENT

CLEMENT PAYNE MOVEMENT

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January 6, 2011