

PRESS RELEASE

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The SLP Comments on “Rodney Bay Residents” Open Letter to the Government

The Saint Lucia Labour Party believes that solutions to the problem of noise pollution should be given the priority it deserves, as the government endeavours to address the needs of its citizens. In areas like Rodney Bay, a happy medium must be found which demonstrates sensitivity to both residents and businesses. The means for the two to co-exist must be pursued with diligence. The residents of Rodney Bay have a right to call for: *“balance and compromise so that residents and businesses can all co-exist”*. As a political party we fully support that call and hope that this desired outcome can be achieved in the near future.

However, there are disturbing and unwarranted statements included in the letter purportedly penned by “Residents of Rodney Bay” which raises questions about the sincerity and integrity of the appeal being made. We highlight the following:

“The bold and blatant corruption that runs rampant through the government ministries and departments, the selfishness and the obvious lack of empathy towards citizens...”

“Saint Lucia currently has a mile high pile of disgusting and shameful issues in its government. The on-going St Jukes Hospital fiasco, illegal and obscure real estate deals, money laundering, fraud, and the list goes on. How can we ever trust that any of these issues will be addressed, if something as simple as the noise pollution that is severely affecting its citizens on a daily/nightly basis can’t be addressed? The Saint Lucian government has made it apparent, that they don’t care. The only concern our government has is, “what’s in it for me?”

As a Party, we feel compelled to raise issue with such statements especially as they mirror the exact unfounded accusations levelled by Allen Chastanet, also a resident of Rodney Bay, and other spokespersons of the United Workers Party.

What was the point of writing if you feel the Government does not care? Was the letter simply an opportunity to assist Resident Chastanet to attempt to score cheap political points? You yourself have given reason for such questions.

Those attacks are nothing more than a regurgitation of statements being made by the opposition United Workers Party, which they themselves cannot justify [or provide evidence to support] but for which they have been calling on civil society to rise up and lend their support to. All in pursuit of seeking public support to feed their hunger for a speedy return to public office.

We do not even question the right of Residents of Rodney Bay to level political attacks at the government. It is the right of those residents. What we question is sneaking such accusations and attacks under the guise of concern about noise pollution. One wonders whether all residents of Rodney Bay are in support of this naked attack on the government. This behaviour does an injustice to residents who have a genuine concern and do not want

to be tainted by those with their own political agendas and naked desire to see UWP back in power.

Is noise pollution in Rodney Bay or elsewhere in the country a new development? To our knowledge, this has been a problem which successive governments have grappled with in search of a solution. There are laws in place for police to act while exercising their discretion. The problem becomes more complicated in areas which have mixed land use – residential and commercial – as is recognized as the case with Rodney Bay.

We do not recall at any time during the three years that UWP placed the St Jude Hospital reconstruction project on hold that “Residents of Rodney Bay” raised their voice to call on Chastanet and his government to desist from that outrageous decision or say anything to suggest that there was a fiasco surrounding such poor judgement.

Prime Minister Philip J. Pierre is a man of high integrity, which has been demonstrated throughout his life – in and out of public office. As a Party, we trust his integrity and honesty and so too do most Saint Lucians. If the Residents of Rodney Bay have evidence to support the statements highlighted above, they should feel confident that if they provide such evidence to the Prime Minister, he will deal appropriately with those matters.

Alternatively, having revealed that “...*The most encouraging thing is, our law enforcement officers actually want to assist us*” they should rely on that confidence and provide the evidence to support their claims to the police.

We have no doubt that there are residents of Rodney Bay who do not support such attempts to take potshots at the government behind a mask of concern about noise pollution. This matter is serious enough that it does not deserve to be placed under such a cloud of mischief.