

Insight

St. Vincent & the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. Quarterly Newsletter

October 2003

From the President

Greetings to members of the Association, our friends and well wishers. Welcome to those of you who may be coming into contact with us for the first time. I trust that you had a good summer and that you are preparing for the cooler months to come.

As we move into the next few months we will be focusing on our Independence Anniversary celebrations, Christmas programs and then in January for our annual general meeting.

Our plans for Independence celebrations are well on the way and we are expecting the turn out to exceed the numbers we had at each function last year. The events are listed in a separate article and I invite you to contact any member of the Executive should you require any other information.

At this time of the year the Association usually stages events to recognize persons in the community. We recognize our young people who are doing well for themselves by moving on to higher institutions of learning or have graduated. There has not been a good response to our appeal for names of graduates but I hope that the responses will rapidly come in. We also invite community members to submit the names of persons for the Dr. Allan Liverpool Award. This award is to be presented during the banquet.

The Association was involved in two major events during the summer – the annual Vincy Unity Picnic and the visit by the Constitutional Review Commission from St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This year, the Thousand Island Picnic had its largest attendance so far with an estimate of over two thousand persons attending. The weather was great and so too was the variety of food and the socializing. My understanding is that folks interacted well with ones they had not seen for years. There were nine buses from Toronto as well as numerous families that drove their own vehicles. The turnouts from Montreal and Ottawa were huge as well. My sincere thanks to all of you who attended and I should not end without complimenting and congratulating all those involved in making it a good picnic. For those of you who assisted in cleaning up the area we used, a hearty thank to you as your work enabled us to get back the deposit made to the St. Lawrence Park. Special thanks to St. Elmo “Boney” Hunt for providing the Maypole and carnival costumes as well as to Maxwell Bobb for his usual contribution of entertaining music.

Four members of the Constitutional Review Commission visited Canada where they held sessions with Vincentians in several

cities to get their views on the revision of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Constitution. The electricity black-out marred their visit to Toronto but overall the rescheduled meeting provided a forum for useful contributions from Torontonians. Consul General E. B. John is attempting to coordinate another session with the help of Vincy groups in Toronto so that more of us can come out to participate in making a presentation to the government. A member of our community has provided his input in an article found on page 6 of this publication.

Our website, “vincytoronto.com” is being updated regularly and I invite all of you with access to computers to visit it. Please feel free to write to us and share articles with other readers. For those of you who are not on our mailing list to receive *Insight*, our quarterly newsletter, you can now download it from the website.

Over forty letters of introduction have been sent out to Vincentian organizations based in Canada, the United States, England and the Caribbean with the intent of getting them to know of each other and work together on matters that are of their common interest. We hope that one day we can pool our resources to coordinate a project for the people of our homeland. We invite those groups that did not receive letters but get hold of this communication to contact us.

We look forward to the support of the Vincentian community here in Toronto to attend our Independence activities.

With all good wishes.

Gideon L. Exeter

(N.B.: Gideon Exeter can be reached by telephone at (905) 831-1814 or by email at gexeter@yahoo.com or president@vincytoronto.com.)



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General Secretary	- Ms Petra Hutchinson
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Assistant Treasurer	- Mr. Dennis Bucchan
Public Relations Officer	- Mr. Ricardo Francis
Committee Members	- Mr. Cordel Telfer - Mr. Chester Searles
Immediate Past President	- Mr. Kenneth Farrell

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS TO VINCENTIANS

Our sincere thanks to those companies that have provided assistance to this publication by advertising with us again. Please support them.

To place your Ad, please email us at svgatoronto@vincytoronto.com, or contact any member of the Executive.

Meetings and Contacting Us

The Association meets on the 1st Sunday of each month at Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court, (Keele & Sheppard area) North York from 4:00 p.m. Business meetings are held in January, April, July and October. The other Sundays are used for educational discussions and social events. One can get in touch with the Executive either by writing to P.O. Box 392, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2L8, e-mail at svgatoronto@vincytoronto.com, or phone at (416) 763-9889.

2003 Walk-a-thon

The annual Walk-a-thon was held on Sunday, September 21 having been postponed from August 10. This year's turnout was disappointing and has been our lowest so far. At this time all the pledge sheets have not been collected so we are unable to determine what amount was raised. In promoting the event it was advertised that part proceeds will go to the House of Hope Society, an organization formed in St. Vincent and the Grenadines that is proposing to build a hospice for persons with AIDS whose families either neglect or cannot provide the level of care those persons need.

We are still open for donations to this cause and ask that you contact Cordel Telfer at 416-630-4965, Gideon Exeter at 905-831-1814 to make your donation or mail your cheque to: St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc., P.O. Box 372, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2L8.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc.

Annual Children's Christmas Party

**An Evening of Entertainment, Refreshments
and Gifts for the Children**

*Sunday, December 21, 2003, 4:00 p.m.
Northwood Community Centre
15 Clubhouse Court, North York*

Please contact Marcia Farrell at 416-762-3283 or by email at svgatoronto@vincytoronto.com or execsecretary@vincytoronto.com to register your children up to 12 years of age.

Make a contribution to the Association

You can now donate to any of the following, the Relief Fund, the Scholarship Fund, the Children's Christmas Party, the Christmas Hamper to Families In Need and/or to General Operating Funds.

Association Sub-Committees

Our Sub-Committees with their respective chairpersons are listed for your information. Please contact the chairperson to indicate your interest in volunteering for the community or the Association: -

Education & Culture	-	Malcolm Garraway
Sports & Recreation	-	Kenneth Farrell
Finance	-	
Fund Raising & Entertainment	-	Elma Gabriel
Seniors Enrichment	-	Chester Searles
Relief	-	Cordel Telfer
Public Relations	-	Ricardo Francis
Youth	-	Marcia Farrell

Dr. Allan Liverpool Award

Nominations are invited from members of our community for the Dr. Allan Liverpool Award. Throughout his lifetime, Samuel Allan Liverpool dedicated himself to serve the communities in which he lived, both in his homeland of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Montreal and Toronto, Canada. He did so with enthusiasm, dedication and without looking for any reward.

This award is given by St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. in honour of one of its founders and the first president. The award is to be presented annually to one or more individuals whom the Association feels meet the criteria as set out below.

The Relief Committee of

**St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Association of Toronto Inc.**

presents

A Valentine's Ball

***Saturday, February 14, 2004
7:00 p.m.***

Crystal Fountain Banquet Hall
60 McDowall Road
Markham, Ontario
(Warden & 14th Ave)

Admission: \$60.00

Proceeds in Aid of Relief

For further information, please contact
Cordel Telfer at (416) 630-4965 or
Cynthia John at (416) 291-6731.

*Please follow our website at
www.vincytoronto.com for updates
on this event*

Dance The Night Away

***Celebrate the end of the cricket season
with
St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Association's Cricket Team***

***Saturday, October 11, 2003,
10:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.***

**C.A.W. Union Hall
30 Tangiers Road, North York
(Keele & Finch)**

Music by:
DJ Max and DJ Francis

Admission: \$10:00

Contact: Jimmy – 905-455-6820, Malcolm
– 416-755-4406, Carlos – 905-457-1073

OUR CRICKET TEAM IN FOCUS

The cricket team has kept up the tradition of playing friendly games with local cricket clubs. It also enjoyed its annual tours to Montreal, and Rochester and Sodus in the U.S.A. By the conclusion of the season at the end of September, over twenty games were played. During this period, the fun of cricket was punctuated with successful fundraising ventures. We are pleased to say that all of these activities were well supported by our community at large. We therefore take this opportunity to register our sincere gratitude to all those who supported the team on and off the field.

The management committee reported a higher level of performance over the last year. On another positive note, there has also been some infusion of new and younger players. While this year there has been a greater effort to win more games, the spirit of fun and enjoyment was not compromised. It is also important to note that the season was completed without any serious injuries to the participants.

The final game was played in memory of the late Patrick Woodley who passed away at the end of our season last year. Patrick was a great supporter and sports lover, who coached many of our youths to athletic scholarships. The guest speaker at this match was David Miller, a mayoral candidate in the upcoming municipal elections. The team is now preparing for its annual presentation dance which takes place October 11. This is to be followed by planning of the next season, which will include a tour to St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

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Peter Haywood, Proprietor

To be eligible for the award, the person's name must be submitted to the Association outlining his or her contributions in serving the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto, the Vincentian community in the Greater Toronto Area, the wider Vincentian community and the Canadian community at large. Members and friends of our community are encouraged to forward the names of any individual they feel merit this award not later than September 30th, 2003 to:

The Recognition Committee
St. Vincent and the Grenadines Ass'n of Toronto Inc.
P.O. Box 392, Station F
Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2L8

YOUTH RECOGNITION

In 1993 the Association began an annual event of recognizing children of Vincentian background who have graduated Grade 12 or Grade 13. The intention is to encourage them to pursue a higher level of education and to motivate their juniors to excel academically. Please encourage those qualified to use the registration form on Page 9 or get one from any Executive member and complete it before returning it by mid September.

It is expected that the recognition will take place during our Independence Anniversary Celebrations held from October 19 to October 26.

We take this opportunity to congratulate all those who have graduated.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Help a child in your homeland to a brighter future.

An old saying reminds us that children are the future of every country. Each of us can help to build the future of St. Vincent and the Grenadines by helping the children. As little as Cdn\$1.00/day per month will give at least EC\$50.00 per month. This small amount can help to keep a young child in school and contribute to his or her development in the community. If you are interested in learning how you can go about sponsoring a child in St. Vincent, how to get such a child and how to ensure that your sponsor money is used for the development of that child, please enquire in confidence by writing to the Association either through regular mail or e-mail. You can also contact any member of the Executive.

HIGH COMMISSION FOR ORGANIZATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES

130 Albert Street, Suite 700
Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5G4

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High Commissioner: Her Excellency Ms. Lorraine Williams

Medical Supplies to St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The following letter was received by JRM Ministries and the Children Enrichment Foundation (CEF) in response to supplies sent to St. Vincent recently. Earlier this year the groups responsible for this donation were raising funds to assist with the shipping of the items and even though the goods arrived in St. Vincent the shipping costs are still to be paid. Please contact Earla Labban-Dalzine at 416-878-7449 to make your donation to help them repay the loan.

Subject: MEDICAL SUPPLIES.

Date: Mon, 15 Sep 2003

Dear Compatriots,

It has been brought to my attention that a significant donation of medical supplies have been facilitated by your efforts. I wish to take this opportunity to express my personal and our Govt's gratitude to you for your magnanimous gesture. I assure you that our citizens will benefit tremendously from the use of these items.

Kindly accept our sincerest considerations and we wish you success in your endeavours. Please convey our best wishes to all who may have participated in this effort. Our Govt. and citizens are most grateful to you.

Best wishes again and keep remembering your dear homeland.

Yours in service,

*Dr. Douglas Slater,
Minister of Health & the Environment, SVG.*

Want to get news and views on SVG matters on the web?

Here are some links and sites to view: -

www.nbcsvg.com

www.vincv.com

www.svgtourism.com

www.cananews.com

www.scubasvg.com

www.svgbc.com

www.windiescricket.com

www.svgottawa.com

www.embsvg.com

www.visitsvg.com

www.svg.8m.net

www.freenet.hamilton.on.ca

www.tonyoldies.homestead.com

www.vincytoronto.com

www.caribbeannetnews.com

www.crc.vc

**ST. VINCENT AND
THE GRENADINES
ASSOCIATION OF
TORONTO INC.**

**INDEPENDENCE
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATIONS 2003**

**Thanksgiving
Church Service**

*Sunday, October 19, 2003,
11:00 a.m.*



***Anglican Church of the Nativity
10 Sewells Road @ Neilson,
Scarborough.
(2 lights north of Sheppard)***

***Lunch will be served in the Church
Hall following the service.***

Bus Route:

From the Scarborough Town Centre, take the Neilson #133 Bus. It leaves every 15 minutes or you can take the Nugget #131 Bus leaving every 25 minutes. Either bus takes you just in front of the Church.

For more information regarding connecting buses to the Neilson Road route, please call the TTC at 416-393-4636.

**St. Vincent and the
Grenadines Association of
Toronto Inc.**

invites you to celebrate with fellow
Vincentians on the occasion of the 24th
Anniversary of Independence of

St. Vincent and the Grenadines



at its Annual Banquet

**Saturday, October 25, 2003
7:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.**

**Guest Speaker :
Senator Julian Francis
Minister of Transport, Housing & Works
St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

**Travelodge Hotel, 2737 Keele Street,
Toronto
(Keele Street & Wilson Avenue at Hwy 401)**

**Dinner will be served between
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Gideon – (905) 831-1814**

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Obituaries

Quite a number of our friends and relatives of our community have passed to the great beyond since our last publication. At the time of going to press, we have been unable to get a complete list and for the fear of unintentionally omitting anyone, we would like to state that the Executive and Members of the Association take this opportunity to express sincere condolences to all who have lost their loved ones.

The Executive is looking to reach out to Vincentian groups around the world as we feel that from time to time we may be able to work together on matters of mutual interest and on projects designed to benefit St. Vincent and the Grenadines. If you know of any of these groups in Canada, the United States or elsewhere, kindly ask them to contact us.

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CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM: POLITICS, ILLUSION AND THE MANAGEMENT OF THE VINCENTIAN STATE:

By **Gidron Cadogan**

The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines has embarked on a bold path of Constitutional reform. To this end a Constitutional Review commission has been established with a mandate to canvass the ideas of Vincentians both at home and abroad.

The efforts and initiatives at constitutional reform are certainly in the noblest of traditions within any political system. A constitution is a mechanism for the expression of the collective will of a people. It establishes the ideals and structure of a state. It is a document that reflects the past and maps out the future of a people. The constitutional commission will no doubt take back to St. Vincent a wealth of proposals, ideas and schemes for reforming the constitution.

But as the debate rages on, it is important that our ideas and proposals for reform are grounded on the basic needs of the Vincentian people and the limitations of the Vincentian state. In other words, our proposals for reforms should consider the practical needs of the Vincentian people and their right to good governance, and economic prosperity.

One should take a serious look at all proposals that tend to increase "politics" in the country. Such proposals include the introduction of a bi-cameral house with a separate senate as well as proposals for proportionate representation. It is questionable whether these systems are necessary or suitable to a micro-state with a small population and tax base. The natural results of any endorsement of a bi-cameral house and proportionate representation are a proliferation of politics and politicians, with a concomitant increase in the costs of governance. This begs the question: How many political bodies are necessary to govern a country with a small population? This author contends that the country could be adequately governed by a small group of elected representatives, convening in one central assembly. To this end, this author proposes that the current Parliament should be reduced by half.

The above observations are mindful of the political culture in St. Vincent and in the wider Caribbean, where "politics" is as big as a continent. There is an apparent disconnect between politics and the size of the state, be it measured in economic or geographical terms. The hysteria and messianic fervor conjured up by Vincentian and Caribbean politicians far outweigh or justify the actual reality of the Vincentian people and state. For instance, the tax base and available resources to governments are such that there are marginal benefits between governments. To put it bluntly: it matters little what government is in power. When the dust settles, rhetoric and politics always fall short of economic development. A cursory analysis of the achievements of Vincentian governments reveals that that the pace of development is at best equal under each administration.

The advancement of proposals to reduce the political organs of state is not an attack on the noble tradition of politics within St. Vincent and the Grenadines. It is recognized that our history by its interaction with all the major political systems creates a cosmopolitan but illusionary view of politics and governance as it relates to the state. If serious consideration is being given to the abolition of the British Monarch as head of State, we should also consider our political philosophy, mores and psyche, which are more in keeping with a large Westminster democracy, than a state in the eastern Caribbean, with limitations of geography and resources.

This suggests that the path of constitutional reform should be modeled on the needs of the state in a truly indigenous fashion. What then should drive reform of the constitution? It is my submission that reforms must be closely knitted to the economic realities of the state at home and its interaction with the Caribbean and wider interventional community. At home the thrust should be the reduction of politics by reducing the size of the current parliament in favour of a smaller central assembly. Supported by local councils with real powers to cater to the needs of the people. Cabinet should be a bi-partisan body elected by the central assembly.

The Prime Minister will also be elected by the central assembly and could be removed by the central assembly. Such a scheme ensures the participation of opposing political parties in the management of the state. Conceptually, in this type of system politicians from parties who did not gain a majority at the polls could be elected to cabinet. This ensures the participation of people with opposing political views in the management of the state. Moreover, it diminishes political tensions within the country and advances the management of the state, rather than the promotion of self-serving and narrow political agendas.

Proposals for the curtailment of politics should be supported by ideas for the effective management of the state. In the Westminster political system, there is an inherent tension between political management and the organs, the bureaucracy that administers policy. In our system of government in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, there have been historical tensions between the bureaucracy and the political masters in parliament. The independent of the bureaucracy or public service is often compromised by the whims of political parties for narrow political gains, which have little or nothing to do with progressive management for the common good of the people. It is this author's opinion that the stability of the public service should be cornerstone of constitutional reform in the context of economic development.

To this end careful attention should be given to the reform of what is referred to as the "executive". Under the current system, the prime minister wields tremendous power over the appointment of the secretary to Cabinet, the permanent secretaries, heads of departments of Governments. This system does not augur well for good management and for the development of a professional public service with an unselfish devotion to the management of the Vincentian state. A critical unit in this scheme is the public Service Commission. At present, the members of the commission are appointed with the advice of the Prime Minister. The end result of this system is the politicization of the public service.

It is this author's contention that the public service commission should be appointed by a bi-partisan committee of parliament, acting on the recommendations of key sectors in the economy, such as business, agriculture, education and the professions. The commission would then have powers to reassign, and discipline public servants in the interest of the management of the state.

As the reform process moves ahead, this author challenges Vincentians to review the role of politics in the state. Is Politics

contributing to waste and inefficiencies? Should the country place more emphasis on management systems? Is the current format of the Westminster political system compatible to a small state? It is my submission that more bi-partisan structures in the constitution, coupled with an emphasis on management as it relates to people and resources without political underpinnings could enhance progress and development in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Gidron Cadogan is a practicing lawyer in Toronto

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Calendar of Events

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>VENUE</u>
End of Season Cricket Dance	October 12	CAW Union Hall
Youth Forum	To be arranged	
Independence Church Service	October 19	Church of the Nativity, 10 Sewells Rd
Independence Anniversary Banquet	October 25	Travelodge Hotel, Keele & 401
Community Discussions	October 26	Northwood Community Centre
Monthly General Meeting	November 29	Northwood Community Centre
GHS Alumnae Christmas Luncheon	December 7	
Children's Christmas Party	December 21	Northwood Community Centre
Christmas Hampers Delivery	December 23/24	Throughout Toronto
Annual General Meeting	January 25, 2004	Northwood Community Centre
1 st Annual Relief Committee Ball	February 14, 2004	Crystal Fountain Banquet Hall

**ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC.
STUDENT RECOGNITION INFORMATION SHEET**

Full Name of student: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Father's Name: _____ Mother's Name: _____

School of graduation: _____

Please give a summary of your achievements in school: _____

Do you intend to post secondary education? _____

Or, are you currently attending college or university? _____ If yes, name the institution:

Please indicate which career you intend to pursue: _____

List other extra curricular interests: _____

Do you volunteer any of your time to a charity or cause within the community you live? _____ If

yes, give details: _____

Please indicate if any member of your family is a member of the Association: _____

If you are not a member and wish more information about the Association, please contact any member of the Executive or call write to us at the address listed below.

Please complete and return this form by October 15, 2003, to:

P.O. Box 392, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2L8. Tel (416) 763-9889 (email: svgatoronto@vincytoronto.com)

RELIEF COMMITTEE VALENTINE'S BALL

The Relief Committee is planning its first Annual Valentine's Ball for Saturday, February 14 at Crystal Fountain Banquet Hall. This effort is expected to involve the wider Vincentian community including the Consulate. More information on this event will be provided soon. Please mark the date on your calendar and plan to assist our outreach projects.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc, Membership Registration Form

*Be a Member!
Join with us in achieving our goals.*

Mission Statement

The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association (SVGA) of Toronto is a non-profit community based Association. We are committed to providing assistance and support to groups, institutions in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Ontario and wherever the Association deems fit. To provide an anti bias forum for Cultural, Educational, Social and Recreational enrichment and to maintain a network of communication through information and referral.



Objectives

- To maintain a high level of volunteerism through recruitment, training and effective utilization of skills.
- To provide a forum to promote leadership and advocacy for the enrichment of Culture and Education.
- To provide an anti bias environment for the discussion of matters of general interest to its members.
- To plan, implement and participate in fundraising activities to meet urgent human needs.
- To promote social and recreational events to enrich the lives of Children, Youth, Adults and Seniors.
- To maintain a network of communication through information and referral.

Our membership meetings are held on the LAST SUNDAY IN EVERY MONTH from 4:00 p.m. at Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court (Keele St.& Sheppard Ave. W), North York.

We hope to see you there!

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

FAMILY MEMBERS: _____

NEW MEMBER OR RENEWAL : _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____ (\$2.00 for new membership registration, \$20.00 annual subscription)

Please make cheques payable and mail to:

**ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC.
P.O. BOX 392, STATION F, TORONTO, ONTARIO, M4Y 2L8**