

Ezzard Miller, MP
New Year's Message

EMBARGOED TO 1 AM THURSDAY, 31 DECEMBER, 2020

My fellow Caymanians and residents, as we embark upon another new year, we have, yet again, the opportunity to renew our faith, hopes and plans.

Even as we do so, I am only too conscious that during the past year we have had to face challenges and setbacks—most related to Covid-19, which will continue to have its impacts for some time.

We have nevertheless sought valiantly to rise to and overcome many of the challenges. And we can be sure that our tested traditions for strength and resilience in the face of hardships and difficulties will continue to stand us in good stead as we start a new year.

Indeed, we begin 2021 much better prepared to forge forward despite the trials and tests that may inevitably come our way.

For the immediate future, the Government expects to receive a shipment of vaccines early in the new year. We can anticipate an effective vaccination programme, designed to enable each of us and our families, our way of life, and our Islands to resume an appreciable degree of economic equilibrium by as early as August or September.

My family and I plan to take the vaccine as soon as available to us. I similarly encourage all Caymanians and residents.

So, as we begin 2021, we do have a strong basis for the expectation that life will get better as the year progresses.

In line with these expectations for change and renewal, the Cayman Islands People's Party offers Caymanians an opportunity to play a direct role in directing and guiding our own future and that of generations to come.

This is essential, as meaningful political and economic growth and change can be achieved only when people are empowered to participate fully in our democracy.

The Cayman Islands People's Party is a movement thus built on the foundation of true participatory democracy.

As such, the goal of the People's Party is to return the rightful political power to the people and away from the self-seeking politicians. This includes the narrow special interest groups that constantly lobby for the benefit of their own agendas.

To do so, the People's Party has been conceived, constituted, and organized to empower the people to effect positive changes in their respective electoral districts and for the Islands as a whole.

The Constitution of the People's Party mandates that the power resides with the people and not with the politicians—no politician, for example, can hold administrative office in the People's Party. The party's constitution requires that the core executive body of the party be elected from among and by non-political members of the party.

Importantly, the People's Party advocates for change in the way we select, elect and govern political representatives.

Under the principles of the People's Party movement, the people—not the Party Leader nor the Party Chairman—will determine and administer political candidacy for respective electoral districts.

This is a central tenet of our new movement.

This major departure from the standard *modus operandi* here and elsewhere is driven in the Cayman Islands by the concern that under the current political parties the majority of Caymanians are excluded from the decision-making process.

This concern is at the heart of the distressing phenomenon of Caymanians being left behind in the political and economic dynamics of our Islands.

Much of this is based on the so-called “trickle-down economics”.

As an economic proposition unduly favouring businesses and the wealthy in society—supposedly as a means to stimulating business investment in the short term and benefiting society at large in the long term—this economic scheme has never managed to achieve its stated goals.

It is not hard to understand why this stratagem has failed. The top-down decision-making style that trickle-down economics promotes inevitably leads to poor government decisions, in both policy direction and programmes.

It is time to stop allowing a few politicians, influenced by the wealthy, to decide what is best for Caymanians and the Islands as a whole.

This reflects a model bereft of empowerment, participation, and consultation with the people. Instead, we handout some turkeys, microwaves, and cash or gift certificates to influence or buy votes.

Unfortunately, we have seen this corrupt and corrupting influence at work even over this holy observance of the birth of Christ.

We expect that this already festering sore will degrade further into an open, oozing wound leading up to the May 2021 elections.

The Cayman Islands People's Party aims to eradicate these all-too entrenched undemocratic and corrupt practices.

We anticipate that the principles and goals of the movement will come as welcome relief across the three Cayman Islands, as the interim officers of the People's Party launch a membership drive in this new year. That will be followed in rapid succession by the establishing of electoral district committees.

These initiatives will enable electoral district committees to begin selecting candidates to contest the election in May 2021.

We therefore believe, despite all the setbacks of 2020, that 2021 will be a year not only of renewal but also of transformation.

Indeed, we, the interim executive of the People's Party, intend to make 2021 a historic year.

We invite each of you to join us in steering these Cayman Islands to new horizons, and making this a happy, prosperous and healthy 2021.

May God continue to bless these beloved Cayman Islands. —Ends—