



**THE PROGRESSIVES**

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

*For Love of Country*

## **Joey Hew - Remarks at the Progressives National Council Meeting**

**August 10, 2024**

Progressives Family and Friends, Thank you all for being here tonight.

I stand before you with deep gratitude and humility.

I wish to thank the Honourable Roy McTaggart for his unwavering trust in putting me forward as the next Progressives' Political Leader at our upcoming Party Conference in January.

I am also incredibly thankful to Roy for his confidence in me as I take on the role of Opposition Leader when the Parliament next sits. This opportunity to serve our country in such a capacity is humbling and motivating.

To my fellow Progressive colleagues, I sincerely thank you for your support and belief in me. I commit to leading with dedication and integrity, striving tirelessly to serve our party and our country.

I add this commitment as well: While the opportunity to serve as Opposition Leader will provide me with excellent experience leading the Opposition in Parliament, I do not plan to get too attached to the role. Because, after the elections, I intend for us to return to Government.



**THE PROGRESSIVES**

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

*For Love of Country*

Friends, the Progressives continue our party's proud tradition of seamless leadership transitions. This tradition began with D. Kurt Tibbetts, who stepped aside for Sir Alden McLaughlin when the time was right and continued when Sir Alden made way for Roy McTaggart. With God's help in January, I will be honoured to become the fourth Progressives Leader in our 22-year history - once elected at the Party Conference.

As your leader, I commit to delivering stable government and fostering collaboration over conflict. That is what Progressives are known for. We will present a clear and actionable program addressing the country's needs while actively engaging younger voters to encourage their meaningful and rightful participation in the political process.

Like many leaders, I would not be who I am without the support and guidance of those who have shaped my journey.

My parents, Lennie and Valma Hew, instilled in me the values of hard work, humility, respect, and the importance of putting others first, shaping the person I am today.

My community also shaped me. Spending some of my early years with my sister Annie Bodden, right on Shedden Road at the 'old' Bodden house. I then spent the remainder of my childhood growing up in Northwest Point, West Bay. However, I would spend much of my weekends or holidays back at Shedden Road with Annie and her family, or on North Sound Road around Commodity Marketing, my father's business.

I was fortunate to form friendships with people from all walks of life, whether it was swimming in Captain Ertis turtle crawl in Northwest Point or playing marbles over in Bell-Bell yard behind Jaques Scott. This played a crucial role in shaping my character. My early career included stints in hospitality as a bartender and a server, later with the agriculture department, and



**THE PROGRESSIVES**

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

*For Love of Country*

eventually working in my family business. These diverse experiences gave me a deep appreciation for our rich and vibrant community. With a Cayman Bracker mother, my love for the Sister Islands is as strong as my commitment to Grand Cayman. My roots and love for our three Islands run deep and drive my commitment to serving and uplifting my people. When I considered accepting party leadership, I asked my family for advice. Their unanimous encouragement inspired me to take on this challenge. I am deeply grateful to Cindy, Josh, and Jacob for their unwavering support.

Before I delve into political topics tonight, allow me a moment to share a bit about myself. Before my political journey began with the PPM in the 2013 election, I was deeply involved in community service, driven by a strong passion for my country. My early experiences included volunteering at annual football camps organized by my father and sponsored by Rotary Club of Grand Cayman. This passion for service led me to join the Rotary, where I ascended to President and later Assistant District Governor.

I also coached and mentored a group of young men who, one night after closing Macdonalds Restaurant, I discovered playing football at the Annex. I would take the left-over chicken and fries (I may have cooked a little extra) to them after work, this eventually led to the formation of the Naya youth football team. Many of those young men remain close to me to this day. My civic duty as a businessman saw me lead the Cayman Islands Restaurant Association for over six years until its amalgamation to the Cayman Islands Tourism Association. In 2004 I became the President of the Cayman Islands Chamber of Commerce, two nights before hurricane Ivan struck. Talk about baptism by fire!

I have, and will, continue to lead my life following the Rotary motto of "Service above Self". In politics, I have had the privilege of learning from the best.



**THE PROGRESSIVES**

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

*For Love of Country*

When elected Party Leader, I will stand on the shoulders of three political stalwarts: Kurt Tibbetts, Sir Alden McLaughlin, and Roy McTaggart.

These leaders share qualities I deeply admire and aspire to emulate - steadfast loyalty, unwavering integrity, and a commitment to public service. Over the past 11 years of working closely with them, I have learned invaluable lessons about leadership.

As a representative, I've carried those lessons into my work, always striving to understand and meet my constituents' needs. This dedication paid off again in 2021 when I won my seat for a third time - increasing my vote share in George Town North. Despite campaigning on crutches with a painful broken foot, I was determined to win and continue serving my George Town North community and my Progressives party. I often joke that even with only one good leg, I still managed to kick my opponent's butt on election day!

I will bring that same dedication as Party Leader, working hard for all of you.

The lessons I've learned from Roy, Kurt, and Sir Alden have profoundly shaped my approach to leadership. I will serve with integrity, listening to every voice and working tirelessly with my team to drive the improvements our country needs.

Next year at our conference, we will introduce an exceptional slate of candidates who will bring a wealth of knowledge, skills, and experience to a Progressives Government.

We govern as a unified team committed to a shared platform of common goals and principles. Unlike the current administration, which is plagued by disunity, frequent shifts, and unclear priorities, we will offer consistent leadership and a clear vision for the Cayman Islands. Our plan for the future is built on four pillars: economic revitalization, fostering social unity, environmental stewardship, and lowering the cost of living.



**THE PROGRESSIVES**

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

*For Love of Country*

Firstly, we will focus on economic revitalization. Our goal is to create jobs, stimulate innovation, and ensure that every Caymanian has the opportunity to succeed while respecting our environmental limits. We will invest in infrastructure, support small businesses, and champion technological advancements that will propel us into a new era of prosperity. I believe in the ingenuity and hard work of our people, and we will provide the tools and resources necessary for every Caymanian to thrive. We will drive economic growth that benefits all Caymanians.

The next Progressives Government will develop a new strategy for both stayover and cruise tourism. As the market evolves in the post-pandemic era, we will craft a forward-looking plan to ensure a vibrant and thriving tourism sector.

While the financial services industry remains a bright spot in our economy, we will continue to support and strengthen this vital sector, as we have always done.

To diversify our economy, we recognize that growth extends beyond physical development. Infrastructure improvements are essential, but they must align with population growth, job creation, and housing needs. Plan Cayman, which I initiated during our last Progressives term, is crucial to this effort, and we are committed to moving it forward.

Secondly, we are committed to fostering social unity. To prevent the divisions that have affected other nations, we must address emerging rifts such as socioeconomic disparities, cultural differences, and political polarization before they deepen.

Caymanians have always been a welcoming people, but no Caymanian should be excluded from the opportunities our country offers. By focusing on improving educational standards and results we will ensure every child gets a strong start in life. We will work to bridge economic gaps, maintain a robust middle class, and promote a sense of community that transcends race, religion, and political affiliation.

We must also shun voices within our community—whether in the media or in any government—that seek to create divisions rather than foster unity. We will celebrate our



**THE PROGRESSIVES**

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

*For Love of Country*

Caymanian heritage while embracing the rich diversity of our expatriate communities. Our diversity is our strength, and it's time to fully embrace it. By ensuring every Caymanian voice is heard and every citizen is valued, we will come together to build a more inclusive and harmonious future for all.

Thirdly, we will prioritize environmental stewardship without halting development. The health of our planet is directly tied to our future. We will take bold steps to safeguard ourselves from the effects of climate change, protect our natural resources, and promote sustainable practices for all three Islands. This is not just an environmental issue; it is an economic and moral imperative. We owe it to ourselves and to future generations to act now and act decisively.

The next Progressives government will build on the climate change policy, prioritising adaptation strategies to prepare our three Islands for the inevitable impacts of climate change.

Sustainable development does not mean halting progress. We must advance critical projects such as affordable 'high-performance energy efficient' housing and necessary national infrastructure, including modern waste management facilities, to support the National Energy Policy's goal of transitioning to sustainable energy.

Lastly, and crucially, we will work to lower the cost of living and improve the quality of life for every Caymanian. We understand that the rising costs of housing, healthcare, insurance, and everyday essentials have put a strain on families across our three Islands. We will address these challenges by implementing policies that increase affordable housing, reduce healthcare costs, and reduce our dependency on fossil fuels while also ensuring that we build more energy-efficient homes and workspaces. We will work to ensure that no Caymanian has to choose between putting food on the table and paying their bills. Lowering the cost of living is not just an economic necessity; it is a moral commitment to the well-being of our people.

In the long term, we will improve the quality of life for our Caymanians by putting our education system reforms back on track to better equip young Caymanians for the future job



**THE PROGRESSIVES**

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

*For Love of Country*

market. We will promote careers not only in digital industries but also in health, wellness, and social homecare, addressing the needs of our ageing population. We need to prepare Caymanians for these skilled roles.

A new public transport system is also a pressing need. The next Progressives government will implement an affordable and reliable modern public transport system, reducing congestion and improving travel across Grand Cayman.

Finally, we must address crime, especially violent crime, which has escalated in recent years. We will ensure the RCIPS has the resources and support to combat crime effectively and rebuild neighbourhood policing. We will work closely with all law enforcement agencies, including Customs and Border Control and the Coast Guard, and focus on crime prevention.

In 2025, we will reveal a comprehensive manifesto outlining our detailed governance plan. Voting for Progressives candidates means choosing certainty in both our priorities and our leadership. Our polling shows that the public desires stability and clarity, and the Progressives are ready to provide the leadership necessary for a prosperous and stable future for all Caymanians.

Fresh ideas from our candidates and broader Progressives members will certainly enrich our manifesto and reflect our collective vision for the future.

Unlike the current Government, we are committed to upholding principles of good governance. Our mission is to restore the highest standards in public life that our country deserves.

There is much to be done, and I am determined to get started. We must win the election next April to make this vision a reality.



**THE PROGRESSIVES**

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

*For Love of Country*

Today, I confirm that I will accept the nomination as Party Leader at our Conference. I commit to leading our Party and fighting for a Progressives majority in Government.

I ask for your trust and support, not just today but in the months ahead, as we work together to secure victory and deliver on our ambitious agenda for the Cayman Islands.

Thank you.

~ENDS~