



Office of the Leader of the Opposition

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Hon. Philip J. Pierre
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
5th Floor
Graham Louisy Administrative Building
Waterfront
Castries

Dear Prime Minister,

We write to express our deep concern over several critical issues currently affecting the nation, particularly regarding the rising cost of living and the careless actions of your government in respect of the Citizenship by Investment Program (CIP).

We warned against allowing the price of gas to exceed \$14.00 per gallon, yet, you allowed the price of gas to rise to \$17.95 per gallon and is now being maintained at the high price of \$16.50, with significant implications for the cost of doing business and households. Bus fares have risen, and it is clear they will not decrease. Similarly, the cost of bread has increased, and there is no expectation that this too will return to previous levels. The rising price of oil on the world market was deemed a significant factor in the inflated cost of gas at the pump. The price of oil on the world market has now dropped to \$70 a barrel leaving no justification for maintaining inflated prices at the pump, especially given the impact on households and small businesses. By virtue of this, we demand that by 1st November 2024 you take the necessary action to reduce the cost of gas.

We also raised serious concerns about the 2.5% levy. You, Prime Minister, assured the public that the levy would not affect the price of food, yet the reality is quite different. Households are now burdened with increased costs and small businesses are struggling under the added financial load. On 12 June 2024 the

public was made alarmingly aware that the Cabinet of Ministers had granted concessions to a businessman by waiving the 2.5% levy for his project. This selective exemption is patently unfair. If you can justify this for one individual, it is only fair that you extend this relief to all the people you serve. As stated in previous correspondence on this matter, this blatant inconsistency sends a distressing and unacceptable message that the sacrifices are not to be made by all. In this instance also, we are putting you on notice that we expect the suspension of the 2.5% levy by 1st November 2024.

The situation with CIP continues to spiral out of control, largely due to a lack of transparency and accountability. The most recent revelation is the situation with Bemax. The principal of Bemax was recently arrested, accused of multiple criminal offenses as part of a major organized crime crew.

As a result, we demand the following:

1. The immediate dismissal of the CEO of the CIP programme.
2. The replacement of the CIP Board.
3. The removal of the Minister from the CIP portfolio.
4. An independent investigation spearheaded by the DPP and the Auditor General, with the necessary resources to carry out the task.
5. The suspension of any further issuance of citizenships related to Galaxy and infrastructure investment until a full investigation has been completed.

Life is being made increasingly difficult by unnecessary financial impositions and the recklessness of this administration. It is clear that the people of Saint Lucia have lost confidence in the integrity and trustworthiness of the government. The overwhelming evidence of deceit and betrayal by your administration has made it evident that only the will of the people can bring about the necessary changes. As a responsible Opposition we will continue to demand immediate corrective measures that meet the expectations of the people.

Yours sincerely,



ALLEN CHASTANET
Leader of the Opposition