SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

ORDER PAPER

No.14 **45**

TUESDAY 1st SEPTEMBER 2009

PRAYERS

OBITUARIES

CONGRATULATORY REMARKS

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF SITTING HELD ON 13TH AUGUST 2009.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Government Orders are marked thus*)

1. **Motion on Housing -** Continuation of Debate.

WHEREAS the Unity Labour Party emphasised in its Manifesto for the 2001 General Elections that "housing is a basic human need" and accordingly elaborated its housing policy of providing, or ensuring the provision of, affordable housing of an acceptable quality to all Vincentians.

AND WHEREAS since 2001 the ULP Administration has implemented a veritable Housing Revolution through the following initiatives, among others:

(i) Restructuring and modernising the state-owned Housing and Land Development Corporation (HLDC) as the principal vehicle through which the nation's housing policy is fashioned and implemented.

(ii) Turning "Dead Property into Live Property" through the legal transfer by way of deeds for persons in occupation of state-owned lands at very low prices.

(iii) Passing the Possessory Titles Act to simplify certain land transfers in the private sector for those in "adverse possession" in excess of 12 years.

(iv) Putting together a coordinated and well-staffed Ministry encompassing Housing, Lands, Surveys, Physical Planning, and Informal Human Settlements to elaborate and implement housing policy more efficaciously in conjunction with HLDC and the private sector.

(v) Building hundreds of low-income houses at several places including Petit Bordel, Peter's Hope, Ottley Hall, Green Hill, Diamond, Brighton, Sans Souci and Colonarie.

(vi) Building a middle-income housing project at Clare Valley.

(vii) Commencing shortly a three-hundred "No Income Housing" Programme at several sites all over St. Vincent and the Grenadines, financed by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

(viii) Building houses at several places including Rose Hall, Langley Park and Byera (Manning Village) for persons whose houses were destroyed or severely damaged by storms and hurricanes.

(ix) Increasing significantly the distribution of building materials to the poor.

(x) Enhancing the tax benefits available for companies engaged in the construction of homes.

(xi) Providing 100-percent mortgages through the state-owned National Commercial Bank for all public servants, teachers, nurses, policemen/women, to the extent of some $50 million since October 2001.

(xii) Supporting the secondary mortgage market in the sub-region.

(xiii) Elaborating a Building Code and strengthening the Planning Laws on housing.

(xiv) Sorting out the NDP disaster at the Colonial Homes Project at Diamond and Gibson Corner, by way of the Justice Joseph Commission of Enquiry and follow-up action at a cost in excess of $8 million.

(xv) Devising special loan programmes through the NCB for housing repairs.

(xvi) Ensuring that the HLDC, the construction industry, and the Technical College work closely with each other to enhance quality training for technical construction employers.

(xvii) Engaging regionally through the Heart Trust of Jamaica the training and certification of skilled tradespersons so as to facilitate, among other things, the freedom of movement of skilled artisans within CARICOM.

(xviii) Providing water, electricity, roads, surveying, and land-titling to several informal human settlements.

(xix) Implementing a strict aliens land-holding licence policy to ensure that the patrimony of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is not alienated willy-nilly to foreigners.

(xx) Providing much more opportunity for tertiary education to train young Vincentians in all fields which touch upon housing construction including architecture, land surveying, engineering, construction management, and quantity surveying.

(xxi) Assisting private entrepreneurs in sourcing building materials of quality at the lowest possible prices.

(xxii) Taking the lead in the sub-region to push for a more coordinated and scientific approach to the construction sector.

AND WHEREAS the ULP government is seeking ever more opportunities to enhance in practice its many-sided housing policy.

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House endorse the housing policy of the ULP government and its several laudable initiatives and urge the government to continue steadfastly its magnificent work in the area of housing for the benefit of Vincentians as a whole.

BILLS

1*.	St. Vincent and the Grenadines Constitution Bill, 2009. (Honourable Prime Minister/Minister of Finance)	Select Committee Report
2*.	Rehabilitation of Offenders Bill, 2009. (Honourable Prime Minister/Minister of Finance)	Select Committee
3.	Hope Evangelism Outreach Ministries Incorporation Bill, 2009 (Honourable Mr. Speaker)	2nd Reading

ADJOURNMENT

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS

1. The Honourable Arnhim Eustace (Leader of the Opposition), to ask the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, Legal Affairs and the Grenadines Affairs:

   a. Will the Prime Minister state how much money has so far been spent on the Ottley Hall Inquiry; and
   b. Will the Prime Minister indicate the current status of the inquiry

2. The Honourable Arnhim Eustace (Leader of the Opposition), to ask the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, Legal Affairs and the Grenadines Affairs:

   a. Can the Honourable Prime Minister indicate whether any monies have had to be returned to the European Union which were to be used for the Agricultural diversification or any other projects; and
   b. If in the affirmative, how much money was returned and the return for the return

3. The Honourable Arnhim Eustace (Leader of the Opposition) to ask the Honourable Minister of Transport and Works:

   a. When will the workers at GESCO and the workers at the Ministry of Transport and Works to be severed as a result of the formation of BRAGSA be paid their severance pay; and
   b. What is the total amount to be paid in both cases

4. Dr. The Honourable Godwin Friday (Northern Grenadines) to ask the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, Sea and Airports, National Security, Legal and Grenadines Affairs:

   With the growth of ferry services between the Grenadines and the mainland and the long established regular transportation services provided to local traders by our local ship operators, it is becoming increasingly clear that the wharf facilities used by the boats involved in providing these services need to be improved and even expanded to meet the growing needs of the ferry and other boat operators and the travelling public;

   Will the government conduct a comprehensive review of the use of the wharf facilities, including consultations with stakeholders and other informed members of the public, and develop a forward-looking plan for the effective use, expansion and development of these facilities so that they might better meet the needs of people who use them and the country as a whole

5. Dr. The Honourable Godwin Friday (Northern Grenadines), to ask the Honourable Minister of Social Development, Youth Affairs, the Family and Gender Affairs and National Mobilization:

   a. Has the recently completes national poverty assessment report prepared for the government been made available, in its entirety, to the public;
   b. If so, how can members of the public obtain the report. And
   c. If not, why has the report not been made available to the public

6. Dr. The Honourable Godwin Friday (Northern Grenadines), to ask the Honourable Minister of Transport and Works:

   a. What is the status of the construction of the proposed cross-country road; and
   b. In light of the long delay of several years in the completion of the proposed cross-country road, has the estimate of the cost of building the road been revised; and

c. If so, how much more is the project likely to cost and where will the money come from.

7. Major the Honourable St. Clair Leacock (Opposition Senator), to ask the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, Legal Affairs and Grenadines Affairs:

   Recently the Commissioner of Police embarked on an initiative to bring feuding gangs in the Kingstown constituencies together.

   a. How pervasive and extensive is the activity of gangs in St. Vincent and the Grenadines;
   b. Is there a particular area of concentration of these gangs;
   c. What are the central issues around which these gangs feud are taking place; and
   d. Is the commissioner of police's initiative to be extended island wide

8. Major the Honourable St. Clair Leacock (Opposition Senator), to ask the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, Legal Affairs and Grenadines Affairs:

   a. What is the balance of trade deficit or surplus for St. Vincent and the Grenadines for the first six months of the year; and
   b. Is the country's balance of trade showing any improvement

9. Major the Honourable St. Clair Leacock (Opposition Senator), to ask the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, Legal Affairs and the Grenadines Affairs:

   a. What is the export performance of this country's five leading exports for the first six months of this year; and
   b. How does our export performance for 2009 to date compare with the corresponding periods for the last five years

10. Honourable Daniel Cummings (Opposition Senator), to ask the Honourable Minister of Transport and Works:

    Would the Honourable Minister please give a breakdown of the total debt formerly owed by GESCO which has been taken over by the Central government

11. Honourable Daniel Cummings (Opposition Senator), to ask the Honourable Minister of Health and the Environment:

    a. Would the Honourable Minister please state what is the policy of the government with respect to major medical incidents for persons of low or no income; and
    b. How does one qualify for government's assistance in such an event