Swearing-in of the 8th Executive President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, H.E. David Arthur Granger
Today belongs to the people

By
Frank A. Campbell

A J Seymour’s “Tomorrow Belongs to the People” has long been for me a favourite fruit of the Guyanese poetic mind. So when time came to conceive the look, feel and sound of this celebratory issue of Diaspora Times, I quickly concluded, and our team readily agreed, that this edition ought to highlight not our new president and prime minister but our new people. This issue has few words. It is largely the product of the creative imagination of Claire Goring and Ashton Franklin. Over the last few weeks, Claire and Ashton have given selflessly, often sacrificially, of their time and talent as our graphic artists and desktop publishers. In this issue, they replicate the celebration that’s happening in the hearts and homes of our people and on the streets of our towns and villages.

The next few pages are about the celebration of a people’s freedom from almost a quarter-century of social and economic abuse and imprisonment. They’re a celebration of the power that people wield, even when, under the thumb of their governors, they no longer laugh, but weep. These pages are a celebration of the delivering power of a people’s God, who sometimes pauses but never sleeps.

In this celebration of the victory of our people, may we not lose sight that it is a victory for everybody. It is a victory for that young man, that young woman who, as my nephew, high-school principal Wil Campbell, and I seek to highlight in our article inside, voted “like a boss.” But don’t forget that 80-year-old great grandfather or that 101-year-old great-great grandmother. They too voted like a boss. Guyanese voted like a boss in the nation’s capital and in the far hinterland. They voted like a boss in Indian villages and in African strongholds.

Some voted for APNU+AFC, some for the PPP, a few for one or other of the smaller parties. They all won. They all are blessed today to have David Granger and Moses Nagamootoo as their new top national leaders. They are all about to see governance of the kind they have not often seen, experience peace at a level that in recent times they could only dream about.

Let us not lessen the value of our victory by seeing it in terms of one party, or, worse, one race. The tendency to do so is one we must leave behind if we are to free Guyana from the divisiveness that has strangled it for too long.

We did not campaign to win an election. We campaigned to win a country and to change it, to unite it. I appeal to readers of Diaspora Times to be wise enough to hasten the unity our country badly needs and patient enough not to be too frustrated by those still too blind to see the shift in political culture that we have started. Let’s patiently help them learn that tomorrow, in fact today, belongs to all the people.
SWEARING-IN OF MINISTERS

Hon. Simona Broomes
Junior Minister within the Ministry of Social Protection

Hon. Valda Lawrence
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More Photos of the Swearing-in Ceremony at Parliament Buildings

Photos from left are Mr. Bryan Hunt, Chargé d'Affaires of the US Embassy; Mr. Greg Quinn, British High Commissioner; and Dr. Nicole Giles, Canadian High Commissioner on their arrival at Parliament Buildings for the Swearing-in Ceremony on Saturday 16 May 2015.

Lisa Punch performing the National Anthem at the Swearing-in Ceremony

Brigadier David Granger taking the Oath of Office

Brother of Courtney Crum-Ewing crying out for justice
More Photos of the Swearing-in Ceremony at Parliament Buildings
President David Granger sweared in his new Ministers of Government on Wednesday 20 May 2015 at the Ministry of the Presidency (formerly Office of the President). Below are photos of the swearing-in of the Ministers. (More photos on Page 5 and Back Page)

H.E. Mr. Moses Nagamootoo  
Prime Minister & First Vice President,

Hon. Ronald Bulkan,  
Minister of Communities.

Hon. Carl B. Greenidge  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Hon. Basil Williams  
Attorney General & Minister of Legal Affairs

Hon. Winston Jordan  
Minister of Finance

Hon. Amna Ally  
Minister of Social Cohesian

Hon. Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine  
Minister of Education

Hon. Dr. George Norton  
Minister of Public Health

Hon. David Patterson  
Minister of Public Infrastructure

Hon. Nicolette Henry  
Junior Minister within the Ministry of Education

Hon. Dr. Karen Cummings  
Junior Minister within the Ministry of Public Health

Hon. Annette Ferguson  
Junior Minister within the Ministry of Public Infrastructure

A UNITED GUYANA
Swearing-in Ceremony of Guyana’s 8th President

Address by Brigadier David Granger at Swearing-in Ceremony, 16 May 2015

Guyanese,

It is written: “This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” We have come together at the National Assembly of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana as a mark of respect for the Parliament, for our Constitution and for the People of this great country, Guyana.

We have good reason to rejoice. We rejoice not only in the favourable results, but also in the enjoyment of our democracy. We went into the general and regional elections on 11th May 2015 as a grand Coalition, comprising six parties - the Alliance For Change; Guyana Action Party; Justice For All Party; National Front Alliance; People’s National Congress Reform and Working People’s Alliance - and won the support of the majority of people.

We therefore record our gratitude, first, to the more than 408,000 citizens who participated in this important democratic process last Monday. We thank, also, the thousands of observers, officers, officials, agents and other workers - from overseas and from Guyana - and representatives of foreign missions who worked to ensure that the elections were conducted in a manner than satisfied international standards for efficiency and credibility.

We congratulate the successful candidates of all parties who will soon be selected to become members of the 11th Parliament and encourage them to be faithful to their oath of office and to their constituents.

Guyanese,

The elections are over. The Guyanese people have chosen their representatives. The Constitution has been respected. Our democracy has been fortified. Let us now put past rivalries behind us and work in unity to banish poverty, ignorance, fear and hatred. We assemble here today to witness the swearing in, not of a party leader, but of the President of all the people. I shall be a good President for all the people.

We the Guyanese people have chosen to inaugurate a ‘government of national unity’ and to promote our multi-party, inclusionary partnership. We are convinced that this is the best way to overcome our historic divisions.

We have witnessed the damage done to our beautiful country over the past two-thirty-three years. We have been mocked by the destruction of local democracy and the denial of local government elections. We have been treated with contempt by the dictatorial prorogation and dissolution of Parliament. We have had to bear the brunt of the high rate of crime including armed robberies, arson, interpersonal violence, murder, piracy, rapes, road fatalities and trafficking in persons. We have had to bear the cost of the squandering of state resources on exorbitant but misconceived mega-projects. We have suffered most from the high cost of living and the high level of unemployment.

We have not been filled with hatred by these conditions. We are, indeed, more determined than ever to refashion society into one in which our womenfolk can look forward to working for ‘living wages’ to cope with the cost of living; one in which old folk can enjoy adequate pensions and social protection. Our young people will be able to attain higher educational standards and look forward to finding satisfactory jobs when they leave school. Our men and girl children can look forward to living in safety and to being protected from abuse and violent crime.

We the Guyanese people have seized the opportunity to vote for human safety, national unity and inclusionary democracy.

We now look to the future. We invite you to attend the formal, official “Inauguration Ceremony” to be held at the National Stadium on 26th May; Independence Day.

We also wish to inform you that the outgoing and incoming administrations, respectively, have agreed to establish a ‘Transition Team’ to facilitate the transfer of assets and the transmission of information needed to ensure the continuity of government and to guarantee the stability and security of the state. Lt Col Joseph Harmon has been appointed the next Prime Minister as soon as he is sworn in as a Member of Parliament in accordance with the Constitution.

Guyanese,

We declared on 1st January this year that 2015 would be the “Year of Democratic Renewal.” We were right. Let us therefore rejoice in the people’s choice. Let us embrace each other - regardless of religion, race, class, occupation - as fellow Guyanese. Let us work together, to realise our inspiring national motto: “One People, One Nation, One Destiny.” Let us be reminded of the famous national song: Let us co-operate for Guyana, Let us co-operate for our land,

Let us resolve to fight together, See we do it right together Can we do it? Yes we can.

May God bless Guyana!

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