

THE PEOPLE'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

We, the voting people of St. Maarten, take great pleasure in presenting to the candidates and paid agents of the Dead Party in Curacao, St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius and the PPA-Gang in Aruba, the reasons why we have left them in the lurch this time, and now place our fullest confidence and support at the disposal of the Windward Islands People's Party - Our Own Party.

In the course of the last 4 years 1959 - 1962 which marks the darkest period in the history of our beloved Windward Islanders, throughout the Netherlands Antilles, we have been continually trampled, neglected, scoffed at, and humiliated by those whom we voted into authority. Our basic human-rights have been ignored, and pushed into the background in order that the greedy schemes and plots of the chosen few might materialize. In the midst of this confusion, abuse and negligence we were led to believe that we were making fantastic steps towards progress and economical stability. We have been told that millions of guilders were been spent on the island to finance great projects such as new airport, new roads, hotels, electricity, and pier at Point Blanche. Why should those in authority attempt to insult our intelligence to such an extent as to tell us daily how well off we are by means of these new projects while we, the poor suffering fathers and mothers of St. Maarten know how, roughly said, we are "catching hell" with our starvation wages which can hardly even feed us and our children. Why should they try to fool us that we are coming up, while we, the suffering, labouring people of St. Maarten know deep in our hearts that we stand before the most critical period of our existence as a result of these small, pitifully small hand to mouth wages of fl.5.--, a day for which we have to toil in order to make ends meet. Yes, St. Maarten is materially coming up, but what benefit is that to the people, since we are not included in the progress? What use is electricity to us when our slave-wages of fl.5.-- per day can hardly feed us, much less pay the cost of enjoying electricity. Has all this been done to torture us more? Have they put these things here knowing full well that our slave-wages cannot afford it? Yes, we know that millions of guilders are being spent in the island lately, but with all of it our little children must still run to school barefooted. Still millions are being spent, while we cannot afford a decent shelter over our heads. WHERE THEN ARE THESE MILLIONS OF GULDERS MELTING AWAY??? ARE THEY BEING SWALLOWED BY WATHEY'S HUNGRY, BULGING IRON-CHEST??? Long before these various projects were even spoken about we were told that when they got started, things would look a little brighter for us. The projects have now started months and months ago and we are still struggling with our starvation wages. Of what benefit are all these projects to us then? Why have the proceedings of these projects not improve our wages, so that things would become a little better. In fact things are getting worse and worse because the essential things of life such as food and clothing are rising steadily to frightening prices which we, poor abused labourers of St. Maarten, are forced to meet with slave-wages. Is this fair?? Is this not an abuse of human dignity?? It is a crime indeed. We know that Claude Wathey, Milton Peters, Clem Labega and John Larmorie are responsible for conditions here. Why does Wathey go our of his way to see to it that we, the hard working people of St. Maarten earn no more than fl.5.-- a day, while we should be working for no less than fl.10.--? Where does the rest of the money go?? Does it find its way right down into pockets and Wathey's iron-chest??? We know now why Mr. Wathey is forcing us to work for no more than fl.5.-- guilders a day. It is because he wants to keep us in constant need, so that we will have to come and beg him for a guilder - He wants to keep us depending on him, like beggars. But we, the people of St. Maarten refuse to be beggars to anyone. We must have our own guilders and the only way to do so is by means of rightful decent wages which are due to us. And this is one of the many reasons why we, the voters of St. Maarten, pledge our loyal support to the W.I.P.P. - The W.I.P.P. will see to it that no man, woman or child in the Windward Islands is underpaid for his or her labour. The W.I.P.P. will never permit anyone in the Windward Islands to labour all day for starvation wages of fl.4.75 and fl.5.--. - The W.I.P.P. will never tolerate that our children suffer lack of proper education.

MR. H.I. LOPES IS LIVING EVIDENCE TO THIS FACT. THIS HONEST FIGHTER FOR FREEDOM WILL NEVER RELAX UNTIL THE EDUCATION IN OUR ISLANDS IS EQUAL TO THAT OF CURACAO AND ARUBA. While we, the people of St. Maarten can hardly afford to buy sufficient food, those chosen few in power pay more for their drinks per month than our wages can ever amount to. This is another crime which will not be tolerated by the W.I.P.P. - While we, the poor people labour all day, those in power sit around in the Lido making jokes and living lavishly. What a pity that the money of the hardworking taxpayers should be wasted like this. Many times, during the course of this D.P. regime we have appealed to those in POWER to consider our case. But, our appeals always fell on deaf ears. Where were Ciro Kroon, W.C. Anslijn and others during those dark moments? They were nowhere to be found because they had no more use for us after we gave them our votes. What did our needs and suffering mean to them now that they had gotten what they wanted and were in power?? As terrible as it may sound, they had utterly no use for us then. They left us up to our fate. But all the time during those dark days of our pitiful condition, Mr. J.H. Lake, honest and noble fighter for Freedom stood strong as a rock at our side. Never once forsaking us, this fearless and brilliant young man lived each bitter moment with us from day to day, making