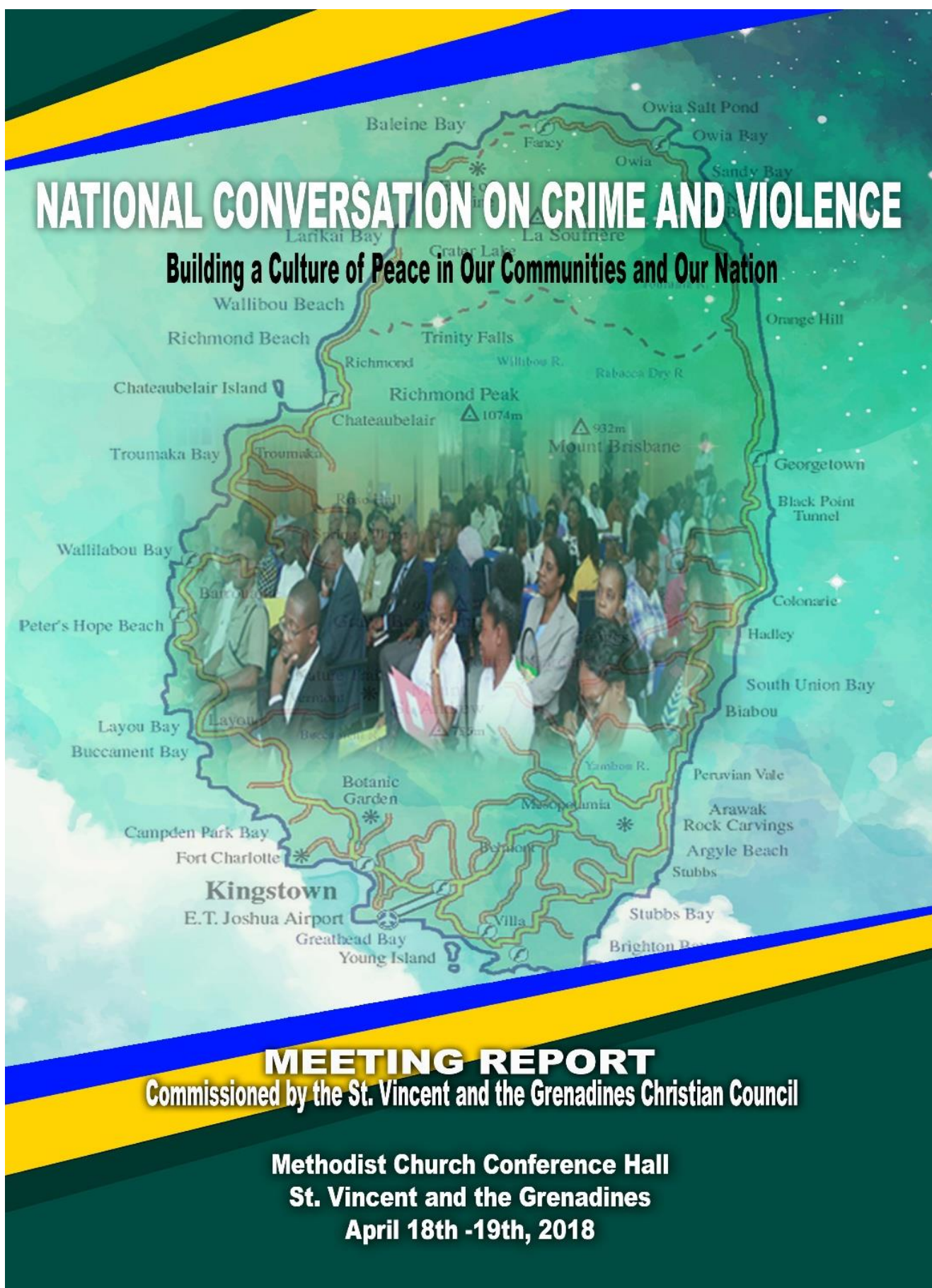


NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Building a Culture of Peace in Our Communities and Our Nation



MEETING REPORT

Commissioned by the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Christian Council

**Methodist Church Conference Hall
St. Vincent and the Grenadines
April 18th -19th, 2018**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The increase in crime across the Caribbean and violent crime, in particular, has posed the greatest threat yet to the region's development as a whole. In this regard, St. Vincent and the Grenadines is no exception, having witnessed an increase in homicides from a total of 24 in 2013 to 38 in 2014 with this trend being almost continuous up to 2017. This marked rise in the number of murders triggered a widespread national outcry and condemnation of violent crimes by all sectors of the society including churches and Non-Governmental Organizations. In October 2015, the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Christian Council agreed that it should host a panel discussion on the crime situation as an initial response to this national outcry. At that time, several presenters from key areas of public life – including *the Police, the Judiciary, the Church and Mental Health* – all shared their various perspectives on the gravity of the situation and agreed in principle to assist the Council in any meaningful follow up.

Whilst this discussion was deemed a success and provided the Council with basic insights into the nature and types of crimes committed, current trends and strategies being employed by law enforcement authorities and useful information on rehabilitative work being done, it did not provide any specific way forward with regards to preventing, reducing, or managing violent crime in the Vincentian society. It is within this context, therefore, that the need for a ***National Conversation on Crime and Violence*** was conceived. This National Conversation was held on April 18th and 19th, 2018 at the Methodist Church Hall in Kingstown, St. Vincent. The primary objectives of this national dialogue were, inter alia, to:

- 1. Examine the nature, causes, and consequences of crime and criminality in our society with the aim of assisting in their prevention and reduction,*
- 2. Explore options for collaborating with existing institutions and organisations charged with the prevention, detection, and prosecution of individuals and institutions involved in crime,*
- 3. Conceptualize and design a workable Plan of Action to combat violence in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, taking into consideration the work of existing institutions, local relevant data and applicable regional and international studies,*

4. Make recommendations to the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines with the specific purpose of reducing crime and criminal activities.

The Conversation brought together 157 participants representing 25 civil society organisations, 4 Political Parties, 8 Ministries of Government and 20 Secondary Schools. It was the first time in the recent history of the country that such a diverse group of individuals working in the areas of crime prevention, detection and prosecution, community development, and Education had been brought together to share their experiences, knowledge and solutions to arrest the crime situation in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Christian Council shares the view that the exercise was enriching and provided a sense of satisfaction with what was accomplished over the two-day period. It recognized that the broad representation added to the interest and enthusiasm among participants, including the students (*though there was a noticeable absence of students from the Community College, and the majority of students were obliged to leave by 3.00 pm*). On occasions, it did appear that some students were intimidated by the presence of so many adults and as a result, did not fully contribute to the substance of the conversation. In this regard, the Council proposes that the conversation on Crime and Violence be replicated at all levels of the school system to allow for similar conversations to take place with students.

Notwithstanding the perception regarding the role of the Christian Council in the socio-political life of the nation, the body sees itself as an important voice and actor in this new period of “transition”, bringing stakeholders together to pursue issues of national concern, whilst continuing its efforts to build a culture of peace. We believe that there must be a strong resolve to wrestle with the question, “*what kind of society do we want to build*”? In a real sense, therefore, we acknowledge that while the National Conversation on Crime and Violence provided a real and rare opportunity to listen, learn and allow for venting, it is the beginning of a long and perhaps arduous journey for our society. It is within this context of listening and learning that the recommendations gleaned from the panel discussions, the Soap Box presentations and the group discussions are made at the end of this report. For simplicity, we have categorized these recommendations under four (4) main areas that surfaced throughout the two-day exercise. They are: (1). Legislative Change and Strengthening,

(2). The Creation of New Institutions, (3) Policy Creation and Strengthening, and (4) Reform of the Criminal Justice System.

INTRODUCTION

This National Conversation which constituted a gathering of key stakeholders, professionals, practitioners, students and the unemployed under the theme: *Building a Culture of Peace in our communities and Nation* began with an Opening Ceremony, chaired by Pastor Terrance Haynes. The gathering had been convened in view of the widespread concern over the increase in crime, and more specifically the growing number of heinous crimes in the Vincentian society.

Following the call to order, the invocation was offered by **Rev. Shakika Fraser**. The Ceremony featured several speakers, most significantly, the keynote presentation, which was given by **Professor Anthony Harriott**, internationally renowned criminologist, from the Institute of Criminal Justice and Security at the University of the West Indies Mona Campus, Jamaica. The two-day conversation **was facilitated by Mrs. Ingrid O'Marde, Community Development Consultant**. Participants were from Churches, the NGO community, political parties, Government agencies and the media.

The rest of the event was structured in a manner that featured stand-alone presentations, panel presentations and open discussions. Importantly, there was room for feedback from the participants. This was provided in the form of questions and comments to presentations and brief sounding-offs by participants that were referred to as: Soapbox. Finally, participants were able to provide input through recommendations to issues raised and also a written evaluation of the proceedings.

DAY 1

April 18th, 2018

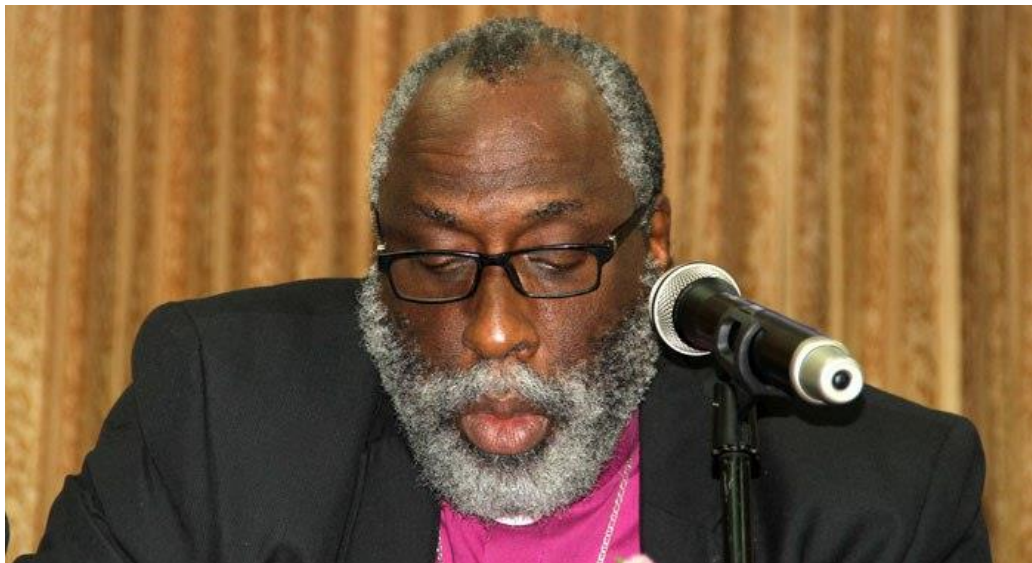
SUMMARY OF OPENING PRESENTATIONS

Welcome - Pastor Terrance Haynes

In his welcoming remarks, Pastor Haynes stated that those gathered – the citizens of St. Vincent and the Grenadines - had come together to unite around a common problem, that being the scourge of crime and violence. He noted that the central tenet of the occasion was to commence a dialogue to pursue a culture of safety. Such examination and discussion should however, be conducted in the context of Proverbs 11:14 in which Solomon instructs us that: “where there is no counsel the people fall but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety;” and Proverbs 13:22: “Without counsel, purposes are disappointed but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.” The chairman stressed the importance of an inclusive dialogue between all parties concerned if we are to arrive at any meaningful solution to the terrible problem of crime and violence.

Remarks - Bishop C. Leopold Friday,

Chairman of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Christian Council



His Lordship, Bishop C. Leopold Friday, in his remarks indicated that the gathering had been convened in the context of what was perceived to be a growing culture of

crime and violence in the Vincentian society. He stated that there had been an increase in crime and violence and that the frequency and nature of these crimes were issues of concern for the Church as a whole. He posited that these occurrences pointed to the need for deeper reflection and more deliberate actions on the part of all stakeholders.

The church, Bishop Friday noted, emphasizes “the necessity of the formation of character, the education of the conscience, and the acceptance of responsibilities, as persons are called to be human, moral agents and, as moral beings, we must all transcend social, psychological, biological and environmental influences.”

He observed that crime and violence have been on the increase not only in St. Vincent and the Grenadines but also in most states in the Caribbean. He noted that this increase in crime is not focused on one particular type of crime only. He cited gun-related incidents and what have been deemed to be reprisals of one kind or another; the targeting of financial institutions and places of commercial activities; most significantly the assault on women, girls and boys and more recently, the emerging trend of violence among our youth, and other forms of violent crime.

He stressed that the frequency and the nature of these crimes call into question our humanity. As the head of the Anglican Church in the Windward Islands, he explained that “we believe that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God, and that all people are worthy of respect and honour. This places a responsibility on all of us to uphold the dignity of every person even in times of conflict.”

He pointed out that God created this world, it belongs to God, and we are to enjoy it and care for it in accordance to God’s purposes. No one has the right to claim for himself the right to destroy, hurt, vandalize or violate another’s property, person, life or freedom. Violence, no matter how disguised, simple, or sophisticated, destroys our human dignity, and prevents whole societies from optimizing their full potentials.

Furthermore, crime and violence are issues of development. They are costly social ills which diminish development gains and deplete resources. They lead to broken and unstable communities and if left unchecked, their erosive effects can span

generations. The high rates of crime and violence in the region have both direct effects on human welfare in the short term and longer term effects on economic growth and social development' (UNODC 2007).

In 2014, the Global Status Report on Crime Prevention noted that:

"...the non-fatal consequences of violence are by far the greatest part of the social and health burden arising from violence. Physical injuries themselves are outweighed by the wide spectrum of negative behavioural, cognitive, mental health, sexual and reproductive health problems, chronic diseases and social effects that arise from exposure to violence. All types of violence have been strongly linked to negative health consequences across the lifespan, but violence against women and children contributes disproportionately to the health burden."

His Lordship indicated that the main objective of this National Conversation on Crime and Violence was to provide an opportunity for the Churches, NGO and Civil Society to take the lead, in collaborating with important government agencies in our society, in looking afresh at the complex and changing nature of Crime and Violence and the impact on the national psyche and development prospects of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The dialogue, he explained is expected to build upon current preventative initiatives and those designed to reduce crime and violence. Most importantly, the Bishop hoped that every person would experience that abundant life which our Lord came to give.

Whilst the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Christian Council recognized and commended the efforts of many young and mature persons for the excellent work which they have been engaged in to enhance their own personal growth and by extension the sterling contribution they have been making to the development of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, it was recognized that there is still much work to be done. What events like these and efforts to address immorality and deeds of unrighteousness and sin do is to promote, safeguard and maintain the good and excellent work referred to above.

His Lordship reiterated the fact that the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Christian Council in collaboration with Civil Society Organisations, the Churches, and several Government agencies, have joined together to host this National Conversation on

Crime and Violence under the theme, ***“Building a Culture of Peace in Our Communities and Our Nation.”***

The Bishop emphasized the fact that it is important to avoid seeing crime and violence as a matter for the police, since it concerns every Vincentian citizen. In addition, he admonished that it should not be seen as an issue of “us and them” (good people and criminals) for those who make wrong choices and engage in crime and violence are our brothers and sisters, and blood relations. They are our present or former class mates, or team mates on the athletic, football or cricket field. They were our neighbours and people whom we grew up with in the same village. But for the grace of God the roles could have been reversed.

Finally, Bishop Friday called on every Vincentian to conduct a self-evaluation and through this appraisal determine how they contribute to or help to perpetuate, whether directly or indirectly, various situations of crime and violence. The Bishop implored the gathering to extend the hand of fellowship, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, and empathy to those who have made wrong choices and commit ourselves to working with them towards restoration and wholeness. He ended his remarks with this verse of encouragement from Philippians 4:8:

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Remarks – Opposition Leader the Honourable Dr. Godwin Friday



In his remarks, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, Dr. Godwin Friday, began his speech by thanking the Christian Council for inviting him to be a part of this very important conversation and emphasized the significance of the discussion at hand as it was a timely reminder of the seriousness of crime in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. He stressed the need for honesty in the approach to addressing the problem of crime and violence, claiming that “if we are honest, and we must be honest if this conversation is to be of benefit to any of us and to our nation as a whole, we must acknowledge that the crime situation and the violence in our country is very serious and in need of intervention.”

Dr. Friday explained that, considering our crime situation, it cannot be business as usual. He indicated that in 2016, St. Vincent and the Grenadines was listed 13th among the top 25 countries in the world in terms of the highest homicide rate with a rate of 25.6 murders per 100,000 persons. He noted that during that same year there were 39 homicides, a record high for such a small state. He expressed concern that we are losing young people increasingly to guns and the illegal drug trade and cited a marked increase in homicides for 2017 with a total of 40 murders for that year. Furthermore, he pointed out that the society is plagued by a high number of burglaries, growing and alarming increases in sexual crimes and sexual violence against women and girls, and increasingly against boys.

Whilst acknowledging that every Vincentian has a role to play in combating crime and violence in our society, the Honourable Leader noted that the government is nevertheless the primary agent charged with the responsibility to provide security and to create an environment that fosters opportunities for growth and development.

Dr. Friday continued that whilst crime and the causes of crime are complex, multifaceted problems, “One thing I can say for certain is that it has long been established that there is not merely a correlation but a causal connection between economic hardship and an increase in crime.” “This is as true here in St. Vincent and the Grenadines as it is elsewhere. So it seems clear to me that one means of addressing the problem is by promoting economic growth and opportunities in our country.” He further elaborated that joblessness and poverty are well known to be contributing factors to the crime rate. “We must do more to create opportunities for our young people to find decent paying jobs to lift themselves out of poverty, to be given a chance at financial stability and economic independence.”

He said that the nation must also ensure that the youth are provided with alternative paths to foster positive behaviour, adding that these paths may include youth clubs, after-school programmes and sporting activities. “This requires providing adequate facilities,” he said, adding that his New Democratic Party has spoken on this over the years in urging the implementation of its Spiritual and Social Redemption Charter, which, he said, includes many of the factors that are spoken of as helping young people to find a positive path.

The Opposition Leader said that critical to reducing crime and violence in St. Vincent and the Grenadines “is the presence of equity in our justice system. “Persons must have confidence in the criminal justice system so that they will refrain from taking matters into their own hands. Our police and security officers must also be properly equipped and well-trained to handle and respond to reported instances of crime before they escalate.” Moreover, he said that community policing must be more widely implemented as this promotes trust between the police and the people, and aids in the detection and prevention of crime.

Dr Friday indicated that ...the problem of crime and violence in our country requires a holistic approach and response with all stakeholders ready and willing to play their

part. Most importantly, an event hosted by the Christian Council is a great place to remind us all that in seeking answers, we must look to our Creator. “As a God-fearing people, we must ensure that the message of hope, peace, and love permeates our Vincentian society. We must return to being our brother’s keeper. We must fight hatred with love, choose a better path and look for peaceful solutions to conflict. This is a good place to start in building a culture of peace in our communities and in our nation.”

Significantly, the Honourable Leader referred to the fact that ...“In the Bible, it is written in Matthew chapter 5, blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God. As leaders — political leaders, religious leaders, civil society leaders — we also have a duty to promote peaceful discourse, to be good examples for our fellow citizens to follow. We must always have the courage to stand against actions and words that tend to lead to violence and that may seek to justify criminal behaviour based on one’s political allegiance. Wrong must always be seen as wrong and called out as such without equivocation that masquerades misguidedly as the balanced approach.”

Finally, Dr. Friday said he was happy to be a part of the event, not only to offer his perspective on crime and violence in St. Vincent and the Grenadines but also to learn from participants and to work with the Christian Council, civil society and other social partners in finding solutions to this very grave situation. In conclusion, he expressed the following commitment to the process: “I pledge my parliamentary colleagues, my party and myself to being part of the solution to this problem.”

Remarks - Prime Minister: The Honourable Dr. Ralph E. Gonsalves



The Honourable Prime Minister commenced his presentation by indicating that it is a well-known fact that there has been an increase in the prevalence and incidence of violent crime throughout the Caribbean and that St. Vincent and the Grenadines is not exempted from this trend. He stressed that this increase is unacceptable.

The Prime Minister explained that “As St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) strives to address the issue of crime and violence, the goal is not so much to build a culture of peace but of putting measures in place to maintain peace. He summarized his point saying, “I have no doubt that such a culture exists in our country. It is to build it further...” He went on to elaborate that “The issue is to broaden, deepen, consolidate and strengthen the culture of peace that already exists and to ensure that the rupturing of this culture by violent murders or other forms of violence is reduced to the most minimal extent possible or tolerable in a civilised society.” He explained that currently, “the extent of this rupture is unacceptable and intolerable.” He said that the overall strategic response to the problem of crime is to ensure the strengthening, maintaining and sustaining of the highest practicable levels of social order in a free and democratic society.

Upon examination of the crime situation over the last 20 years, the Prime Minister made the following points with regards to the characteristics of crime in St. Vincent and the Grenadines: There was oscillation in the crime statistics between 2002 and 2013 but there was a marked (and out of the norm) increase in 2016 and 2017. Analytically, what is critical is the question of why are some individuals more likely to commit crimes? “The answer is not easy to locate precisely. A facile answer or answers is likely to lead to programmatic actions. There are many facile theories which abound, some of which are borrowed

wholesale without regard to context, comparative or historical analysis”. He said, adding that, a credible search for an answer to this question requires multi-disciplinary approaches ranging over the field of the social sciences, including psychology, the medical sciences and theological studies, among other disciplines.

The Prime Minister said that most serious crimes are committed by young males. “Persons who turn out to be violent criminals usually do not do well at school. Violent crimes are more commonly committed in urban or urban-connected centres than in rural communities.” He said that violent criminals hail disproportionately from dysfunctional families and tend to live in marginal economic circumstances. Persons who gravitate to the illegal trafficking of narcotics invariably embrace gun violence in support of their illegal activities.

He noted that most young males do not commit serious crimes. Only a minority of persons who do not do well at school turn to violent crime. Urban youths are overwhelmingly creative and productive and most of them stand askance from crime. Most persons who live in marginal economic circumstances do not turn to serious crimes for a livelihood. Only a small percentage of economically disadvantaged youth go to the selling of illegal drugs and embrace gun violence. Most persons who grow up in dysfunctional families do not commit violent crime. And, violent crimes are committed by a tiny minority of persons in the society. And we do accept that well educated persons from the middle class do commit violent crimes.

“The quest for answers prompts us not simply to reflect on the causes of crimes but, critically, to examine the patterns of criminality, which are connected to the issue of the causes of crimes. “He said that having stated in a summary manner how the society might identify certain patterns of criminality, it is also important and obvious to put in the mix the counter balancing assertion. These observations complicate the nature-nurture analysis of criminal behaviour to such an extent that certain professionals tasked with arresting criminal misconduct, insist that the causes of crimes are unique to the particular criminal offenders. Often, they may arrive at the conclusion that it is down to choice”.

“The persons who are in here, the professional counselors, more likely the prison wardens, people who have to, on an on-going basis, interface with criminals, will tell you that it is difficult to construct a general theory of crimes or causes of crimes. Of course, some of them would go to the extent to tell you that it is well nigh impossible to define causation of crimes in a general way.”

The prime minister, however, said that the data suggest that general patterns of criminality are observable even though each criminal is different. He said these and other considerations prompted his government to present to parliament in 2003 a 14-point strategic framework to address the crime situation. This strategic framework has been refined over the years and each strategic element has been fleshed out in practical programmatic actions.

Key Note Speaker – Professor Anthony Harriot:



Feature Address: Imagining a Safe and Just St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Professor Anthony Harriot began by framing his discourse in the context of the very famous song “Imagine” by the late John Lennon. He invited the audience to imagine a safe and just St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG), adding that, as John Lennon would say, “it’s not very hard to do”. He stressed that it was easy enough to imagine a safe and just St. Vincent and the Grenadines because at the core of this issue is how we interact with each other and how we define our obligations to each other. Imagining would involve forming a mental image of how to interact with each other justly. Making a commitment to these forms of interaction would require us to transform ourselves into just persons.

He indicated that in such a scenario the state and society would be forced to contemplate and collectively deliberate the values that structure our actions and interactions - such as the sanctity of life, mutual respect, and, care for the vulnerable. Imagine a society in which whenever someone fails to wait their turn in a queue, or, yield to a pregnant woman or elderly person, they were told by their fellow citizens present “that is not the SVG way.” “That is not who we are.” I imagine the power of those words as the will of the people. If we were to imagine these things and wish to animate them, then we would be forced to revisit the rules of conduct that we would want every just person and, every just, safe and peaceful society to adopt.

Furthermore, in the expansion of his argument, Professor Harriott elaborated that it is easy to imagine these “things” because at the core of this transition is the individual, having momentarily removed the state from the equation. So that, if the people were to order themselves properly, there would not be a need to so greatly rely on the coercive power of the state to keep the society in line. The outlines of this kind of (police-less) society may be observed in some places – where there are shops without attendants: where one can purchase the necessary merchandise and leave the money; places where there are trains that do not need conductors, libraries without check-out processes and, university examinations without invigilators. These beautiful realities, he elaborated, provide a glimpse of what is possible on a larger more generalised scale. He emphasized that he for one is a great believer in imagining better futures and believing in the possibility of a better quality of life for all.

The greater challenge is to also imagine how to bring it about and to take responsibility for bringing it about. This process of doing must involve the state but with the citizen as the co-responsible partner. The idea is to link the power of the state with that of the citizen - what criminologists refer to as formal and informal control.

Having set out the parameters of his basic argument, Professor Harriott viewed from a long-term perspective, our shared violent crime problems are rooted in the common Caribbean moment of a long transition from the old to modern, post-independence societies. We are transitional societies. **What we are experiencing are the difficulties of modernization; not a descent into darkness and chaos.** The challenge is to properly manage this transition. And to do so, we must have a clear vision of the kind of societies that we want. We should consider how to better order our everyday citizen-to-citizen interactions and; our state-to-citizen relationships – such that we get the desired outcomes of safety and justice.

Professor Harriott referred to the words of Churchill who said that America usually does what is right but only after trying all the wrong things. It is hoped that this will not be said of the Caribbean but rather that we are quick learners – who did not flounder for too long before doing the right things. One way to avoid this problem of muddling-through is to learn from each other's experiences.

On this premise, he indicated that he would provide an overview of some of the lessons from Jamaica and elsewhere in the Caribbean where the problem is a bit more intense and protracted. Professor Harriott called on those present to draw on their imaginations, their experiences and their collectively held knowledge in the search for solutions to the crime problem.

He explained that his presentation was divided into three main arguments:

- First, the development of the crime problem;
- Second, selected lessons from the Jamaican experience;
- Third, some more general but related lessons on crime reduction.

TRANSITION AND VIOLENT CRIME

Professor Harriot pointed to his earlier suggestion that as a region, the violent crime problems are rooted in the fact that Caribbean countries are transitional societies. Accordingly, the Region is experiencing “a transitional moment”. He highlighted the fact that many of the persons present would have witnessed rapid changes in all of the important aspects of our society during their lifetime. He posited that the old had collapsed and the new was still taking shape - still emerging. In such transitional moments, there are huge challenges but also considerable freedom to shape the society that is desired. “The principles governing this process of becoming (participation, deliberation, consensus-building etc.), and what we wish to become remain the big post-independence issues.” A short fifty years ago, most Caribbean countries were largely agrarian and poor. Today, their economies are largely built around tourism and other services. They are in the main, urban and middle income. This transition has been rapid and marked by a growing awareness of our opportunities and vulnerabilities.

In general, the Caribbean has managed some of the developmental changes fairly well. For example, there has been a revolution in education and significant progress in health care. However, the demographic changes have not been managed as well. The Caribbean is now 50% urban. SVG is 51% urban. Rapid, unplanned urbanization has its challenges. There are large ghettos across the Caribbean which are largely populated by uprooted rural migrants who sought new opportunities in the cities and towns and who were forced to learn new ways of life. Today, generations have been born in these conditions. Thankfully, some of the Eastern Caribbean states, including St. Vincent and the Grenadines, have avoided the inner-city bulge. However, our **populations are young**.

Professor Harriot observed that in the case of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, 50% are below the age of 30 years. It is also from the under thirty age that one can find a high proportion of those who are associated with crime. He claimed that **right across the region, the rates of youth unemployment and underemployment are high and chronic. Youth unemployment is a powerful predictor of homicide rates.**

And, with this uprooting and rapid change, there has been **a transition in the normative order. Thus:**

- The time-achievement horizon has been much reduced. Money is considered to be supremely valuable and it must be achieved quickly. As one unemployed, unskilled, uneducated, gang-involved young man from a

neighbouring island recently said, “you wake up thinking about it (money).” You study to see who has it. And you will do “anything to take it” from them. You will kill for it.

- There is a narrowing of social distance – which reflects a stronger positive orientation to equality and fraternity but which also weakens age-based and other forms of traditionally grounded authority.
- There is a consequent weakening of informal control (which travels on institutionalized conduct norms and moral authority).

The region is in a period of rapid socio-economic change at the structural level and turmoil at the individual level. Let me give you an example of the latter.

The Bobo taught him to make and sell brooms as a means of making a living. That was his job. From my brief interactions with him, I believe that this first effort at a “job” was for him a frustrating experience. He was not a good salesman. But the Bobo held him to account and tethered him to honest means of making a living. Unhinged from the Bobo and left to make a life on the streets, he could very well switch or drift to crime. More so, if his street associates regard criminal methods as “jobs” or “a work” and guns as “tools.’ Such language serves to neutralise the conventional moral order and to reduce the guilt that may result from criminality. It lowers the moral guard-rails. These are some of the challenges that such young people face in trying to make the transitions to work and adulthood in conditions of chronic youth unemployment and a chronic violent crime problem. Under these conditions, **they need help to resolve these life-course issues. Our institutions – the family, school and *most of all institutions for the problematic in between*s such as *youth clubs* - must provide this help.**

A group of researchers analysed data on attachment to family and school among populations of prisoners across LA (Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Argentina ...). They found that:

- 13 to 28% did not know their mother or father
- 30 to 56% did not complete 12 years of schooling (Human Development Report on Citizen Security in Latin America 2013-2014).

Professor Harriot further supported these findings with his analysis of risk factors affecting death row prisoners and persons in jail. A much greater proportion of them were detached from family, other institutions and any form of pro-social support systems. He pointed out that these are deep social and psychological changes that are difficult to manage. There are winners and losers. Public policy should seek to maximise the former and minimise the latter - by developing appropriate institutions and programmes for dealing with these challenges.

The upshot of these changes includes high rates of violent crime.

- Figure 1, depicts the trends in homicidal violence for selected Caribbean countries. It shows that the region is marked by high and increasing levels of murder. This **similarity** may be partly explained by the similarity of national level structural changes which I have sketched above.
- There are also important **differences** in the trends, level and types of violence. For example, Jamaica and, Trinidad and Tobago have very high rates of gang violence; Guyana has a high rate of domestic violence and, Antigua – gender based violence.
- **There are contrary cases, that is, countries which have consistently low rates of homicide and violent crime.** Grenada does not have a homicide or even a violence problem. But it has a similar economic history and socio-economic problems. A key difference may lie in how they have reengineered their institutions of control. Like Nicaragua, it had a radical transformation of its policing— in particular, they restructured the relationship between police and community. Their police service is more community and prevention oriented.
- Figure 1, depicts three clusters of countries by their homicide trends. The first cluster is the group of high homicide outliers which consists of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. The second group is the low rate outlier cluster of Barbados (and Grenada). The third, includes most of the OECS territories and

they cluster around the mean but all on an upward trend. This group includes SVG.

Figure 1:

Homicide rates Caribbean 2000-16

Homicide per 100,000 inhabitants Jamaica and Other Caribbean

Professor Harriot outlined three phases that demonstrate the development of crime in the Vincentian society and the behaviour of the SVG homicide rate (2000-2017) as presented in Figure 2 below:

- **A Period of Stable Plateau**

During the early period, the rates were below the Caribbean mean and were relatively stable. This period ended in 2004.

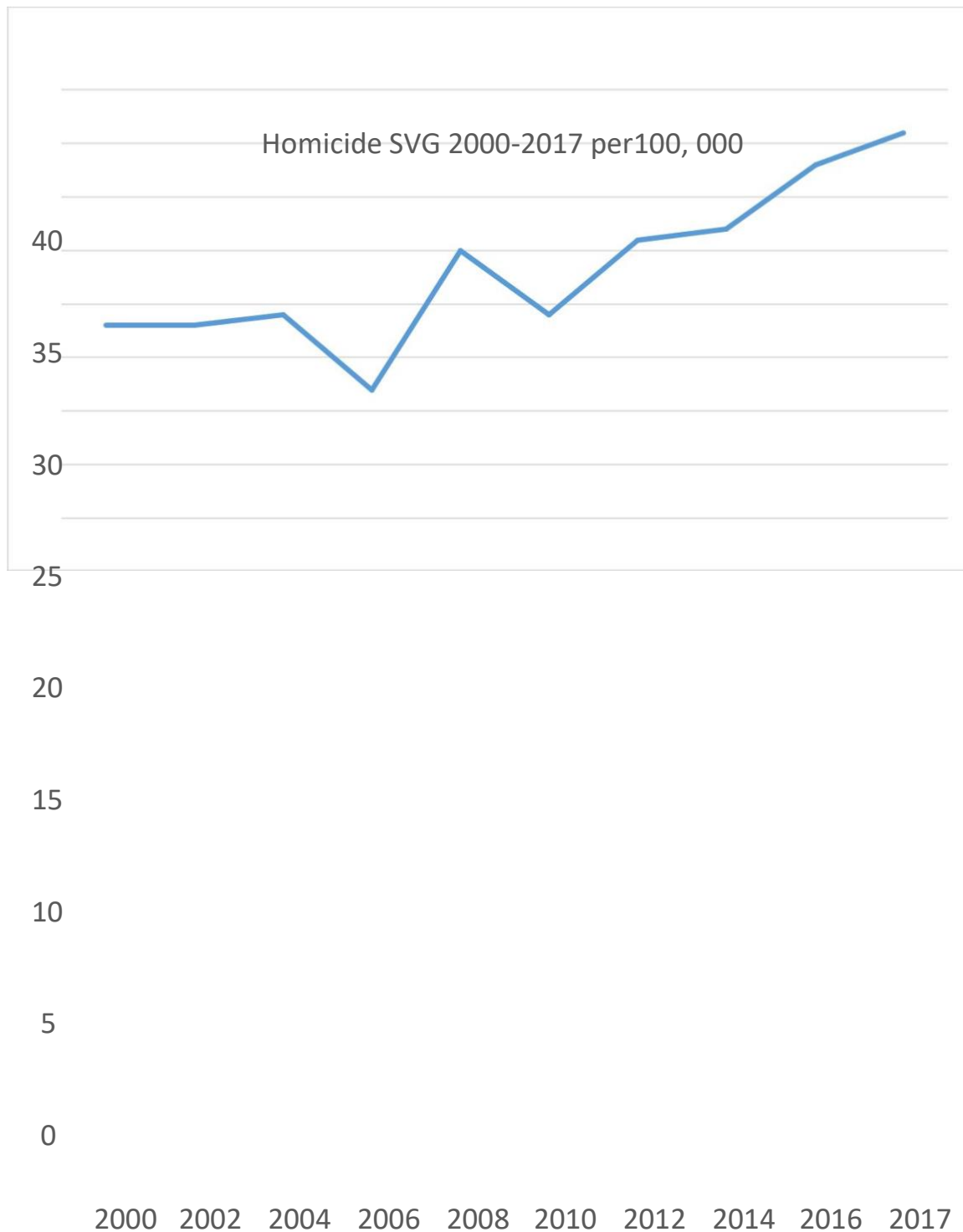
- **A Period of Oscillation**

During the next period there were a number of oscillations in the rate. The sharp wave-like changes in the rates may have been due to changes in the SVG crime world which may have triggered a series of retaliatory killings. Alternatively, they may track the erratic control efforts of law enforcement.

- **A Period of marked increases in murders with less oscillation**

Then there is the period of take-off and elevation of the rate to new highs.

Figure 2 below gives a closer depiction of SVG:

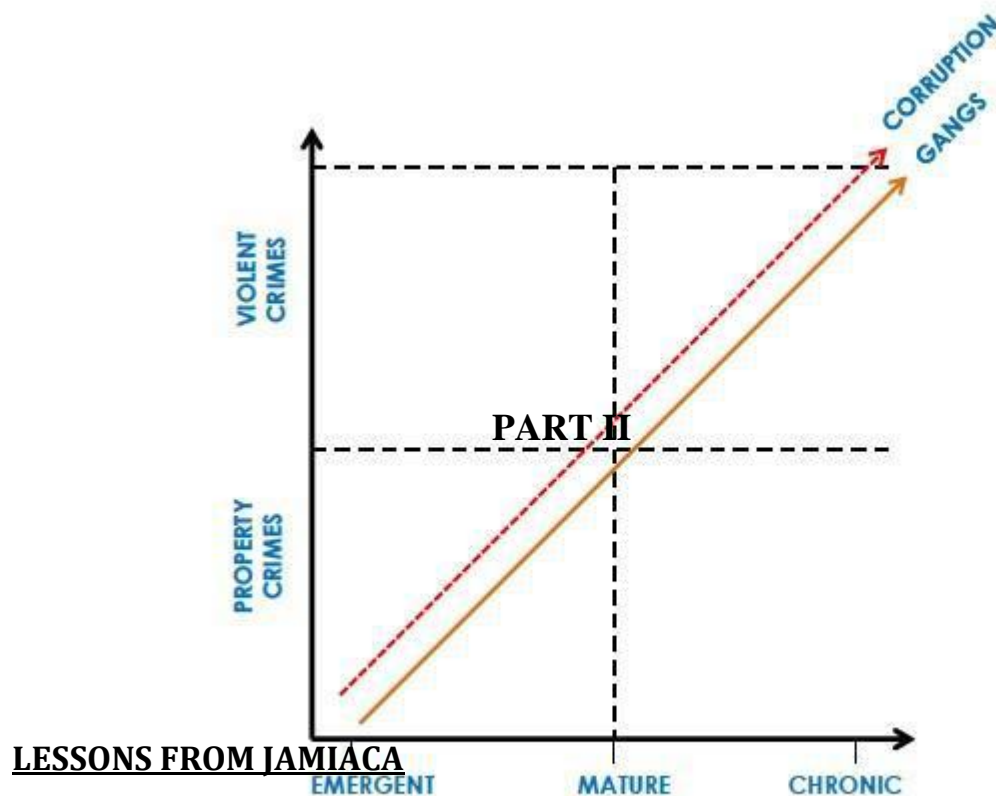


The violence problem in the Caribbean was described as being emergent, mature or chronic (see Figure 3). In Jamaica, for example, the problem is chronic. High rates of homicide have persisted for more than three decades. A wide range of conflicts

are settled by the use of violence. However in many instances violence leads to more violence. Retaliations are predictable. Young men develop an affinity for the gun – and use them. Gangs become a major engine of violence and their members use it with near impunity as they come to be protected by a code of silence.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines has an emergent violence problem. This means that the problem is less resistant to control which is measured, targeted and governed by respect for the rights of people and of the law. It also means that detached youth and offenders who have been processed by the criminal justice system are more likely to be responsive to well-crafted social prevention programmes. It is a good time to learn from other countries and to invest in rapidly developing the institutional capabilities that are required to ensure effective management of the problem.

Figure 3: SVG as having an emergent violence problem



Professor Harriott proffered two lessons from the Jamaican experience. He explained that given the similarities and differences between the two countries, caution must be taken about generalizations and portable solutions.

The first lesson refers to understanding the long-term consequences of allowing a long and slow deterioration in the security situation. The second lesson provides guidance on how to avoid this slow deterioration.

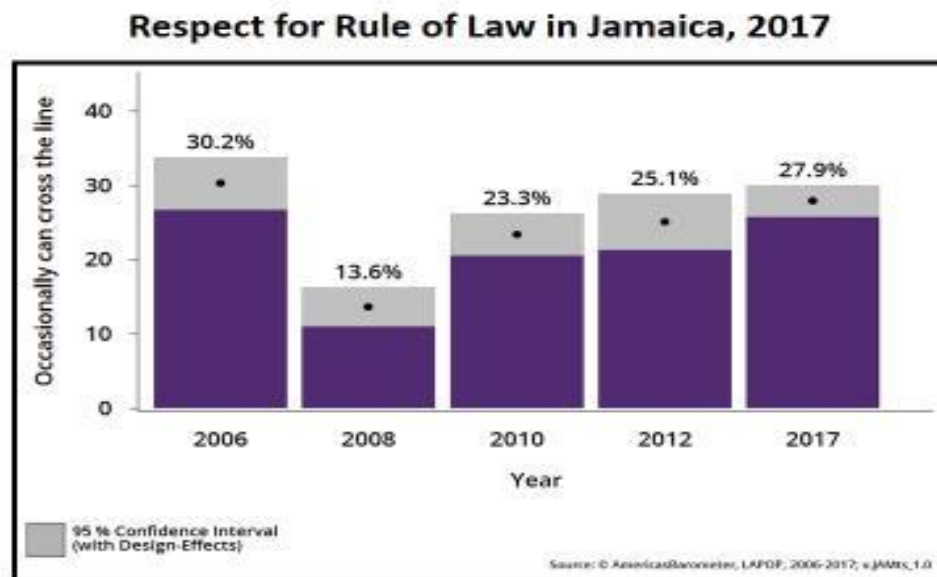
Lesson 1

In managing the transition, we must understand that crime control is not just a matter for the state; for the police and criminals but that the public matters.

In Jamaica where the problem is chronic, a large section of the population has been drifting towards cynicism and authoritarian solutions. We have repeatedly measured this tendency.

Figure 4 shows the progressive decline in support for the rule of law. These people disconnect safety and justice and are willing to disregard the latter. The behaviour of our police service has been influenced by this tendency and the result is less safety and less justice.

Figure 4:



In 2017, a majority of Jamaicans reported that they were willing to support a military coup as a means of better controlling violent crime and delivering security (see Figure 5). Policing failure has led to support for a military coup as a means of better managing the crime problem.

Support for coup is inversely related to the levels of trust and confidence in critical institutions such as the police, the parliament, government and the political parties. It is directly related to trust and confidence in the military. As the security situation deteriorated, successive political administrations have neglected to fix the police force and increasingly relied on the army to control the problem and it has comported itself in a manner that has increased its legitimacy.

Institutions matter. A clear lesson from the larger Caribbean experience is that governments should invest in the reform of the criminal justice system and in building a culture of lawfulness. Investing does not mean simply throwing money at these institutions and buying equipment and buildings. Trinidad has done that with little results. Rather, it must include building competence, promoting service and integrity and, establishing working systems of accountability to bring these things about and to ensure performance. There is need to strengthen legitimacy in its three dimensions: justice, integrity and performance.

Lesson 2: How to avoid getting to Lesson 1 above

Some control lessons:

First, Boundary Marking: Be careful to mark the boundary of acceptable conduct. The Jamaican security situation slowly deteriorated. Jamaica may be likened to the “chicken that was plucked one feather at a time”. Jamaica failed to establish boundaries or red lines, for example, the 20, 30, 40, 50 murder incidents per 100,000 residents; mass killings (i.e., 4 or more in a single incident); indiscriminate drive-by shootings; the collateral murder of children and old people; the deliberate murder of pregnant women and priests; daylight shootings in major public squares; beheadings etc. We have permitted an erasure of all boundaries – with impunity.

Professor Harriott urged that the government and people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines establish clear boundaries, and that the necessary mechanism be put in place to patrol them.

Furthermore, he explained that the society as a whole may wish to clarify the values and principles on which these boundary-marking parameters are based, such as:

- The sanctity of life;
- Consideration and protection for the vulnerable;

- Respect for sanctuaries and state provided places of safety.

The expressions of such values should become ingrained in everyday life as this gives them general currency in the moral life of the society. If this is done, then the public will be more easily mobilised when these values and the related conduct norms are egregiously violated. This is not the sole responsibility of the state. The church could take a leading role here and civil society could better define its role and contribution.

Second, (failure to) build the institutional capabilities to maintain the boundaries. And, to respond robustly, wisely and fairly.

Third, prevention, Prevention, Prevention, always prevention, in other words, the proper structures must be put in place to manage the transitions to adulthood and the transitions to the world of work. Build institutions that allow participation and promote pro-social conduct. All linked to community self-efficacy and the **advantages of small size.**

If there is one clear and uncontested statement that we may make about human nature, it is that humans are social beings. We wish to belong and be accepted by groups that we identify with. Groups may therefore set the rules of conduct and use the power of acceptance and rejection to regulate conduct. This potential for informal social control, for collective efficacy in matters of violence reduction is thus considerable. And it is considerably greater in small societies where interactions are dense and there is no anonymity.

And this change is not all bad. For the purposes of community power for crime control, this weakness may be bolstered by community-state partnerships. For example, community policing aimed at solving crime and violence related problems at the community level would be a good expression of this partnership. Done well, it couples the power of the citizen with that of the state and puts this power in the service of problem-solving to make communities safer.

CRIME-VIOLENCE REDUCTION -- ACHIEVING EFFECTIVENESS

There are many promising crime and violence prevention/ reduction programmes in the Caribbean. We should build on them and make them more effective and efficient.

In order to do so we must apply some principles/ lessons. In a very interesting and useful report on his analysis of some 1,400 academic papers, Thomas Abt drew some general lessons which serve to reinforce tentative conclusion which some of us here in the region had already arrived at.

First, that programmes must be targeted and have the required degree of specificity

- **They may target place, person, behaviour or, any combination of the three.** From a law enforcement perspective that is **focused deterrence**.
- **Also targeting for programme efficiency.** Comprehensive programmes are good but can be inefficient. Linkages are problematic. Women's equality or violence reduction? Poverty reduction or violence reduction?

Second, programmes should be legitimacy-enhancing vs. draining

- The legitimacy of state institutions turns on programme performance and justness. They must be effective and fair in their treatment of people.

Third, Capacity building

- Capable institutions are the key to sustainability and long-term transformation.
- Promote responsiveness and service.

Fourth, they must be informed by a theory of change

- At the national developmental level - a vision such as Vision 2030 for Trinidad and Jamaica.
- And more specific to crime and violence reduction programmes - a theory of how to bring about specified programme outcomes, for example, reducing delinquency in specified communities over a specified period of time. Such a programme could be informed by Life Course theory and would include identifying the problematic age ranges in the life course. Stage 1: age 12-16 when school retention is key. Stage 2 is the liminal period which could be extended to the mid-20s. Here the programmes may be about assisting the

transition from school to work and adolescence to adulthood. For this type of effort, a country needs institutions with the capabilities to effectively intervene. I mean institutions that will treat the target group as normal youth some of whom will need more or less help to get through liminality. It should not be too difficult to design a programme for school retention that could for example have some impact on 50% of those who need this type of assistance. A similar thing could be done for stage 2 youth. You may imagine the likely impact on the violence problem.

CONCLUSION

The changes that have been described have to be managed at two levels. There is the national-structural level which calls for a long-term strategic orientation to development. And there are the narrow and immediate crime management issues. This presentation has focused on the latter.

In conclusion, **the greatest lesson** from our Caribbean experience is that we should begin with the imagination; have a purposeful design. That is the power of human beings.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines should then, **build community self-efficacy** for crime control. And we should learn to effectively exercise this power of the community in ordinary everyday situations as informal control and boundary marking.

With this approach, it would then be possible to leverage the power of smallness. Smallness is usually seen as a disadvantage, but on matters of social control it can be a huge advantage. Professor Harriott reiterated the fact that we are social beings and what others think of us matters. We must live in community. We yearn for acceptance. Thus the threat of rejection for failure to conform to rules of respect for the lives and physical integrity of others is powerful. It is this diffused power and constant expression of the commitment to a socially healthy normative order by ordinary Vincentian citizens that matters the most. The authority of the rule-of-law and the efficacy of the state will be ensured by the social agency of this citizen effort.

The animation of this power for safety and justice can be done. It should be done via the institutions of family and school bolstered by those of the state. It requires the timely intervention of the institutionally embedded citizen who is willing to make quiet but timely interventions and seize the teaching moments in everyday life to help the young to make the transitions to responsible adulthood and good, public spirited, other-regarding and law abiding citizens. It requires patience but it is not so difficult to imagine and to make St. Vincent and the Grenadines a safe, just and absolutely wonderful place to live.

DAY 1 - SOAP BOX PRESENTATIONS

1. Mr. Simeon Greene – Retired Manager, Part-time Lecturer

The theme of Mr Greene’s presentation was *The Link between Drugs and Violence*.

He recounted growing up in the village of Diamond and the fact that he always felt safe walking the streets at any time, even late at night, he would be fearless. However, last year he had gotten a lift home with a colleague from work and was dropped off near his street. He explained that it was a short distance to his house but for the very first time in his life, he was gripped by fear. He reflected that recently there had been an increase in crime and violent incidents on the main road into his village.

He continued with the following quote from the Drug and Rehabilitation Centre in Thailand: “The relationship between drugs and violence seems apparent – Drug abuse leads to violence”. However, research shows that there is very little evidence to support this hypothesis with the exception of alcohol abuse. There is no significant link in general between the use of illicit drugs and violent crimes but there are two main links in drug use and violent crimes. Abusers of particular drugs may commit violent crimes and distribution of drugs can lead to violent crimes.

Mr. Greene summed up his presentation by stressing that the quest to determine the causal links between drug use and crime is a very complex exercise. He said what was clear is that the self-righteous attitude of “we and them” will not deter crime but may well help to nurture a further increase in crime and violence. For instance, a restaurant owner who knowingly purchases stolen produce, he argued that they are “nurturing in the same “potting pot” of crime and violence. He said we are all part of a cosmic battle – a battle between good and evil, truth and error,

between God and Satan. This battle is waging and we are not spectators we are actors who must choose which side we are on.

2. Ms. Aphine Simmons' Experience

Facebook Campaigner against Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence

Ms Simmons' presentation focused on *Women, girls and Domestic Violence*. She has held several *One Man Protests* against sexual abuse and violence and intends to hold the next one in front of parliament. She alleged that there are persons in key positions – even those who are part of the social protection services - who know of sexual abuse and violence against children and they remain silent. She indicated that she is calling on the SVG Christian Council to investigate the situation.

Ms. Simmons began by explaining that she had been molested as a child, blamed and shamed, by her mother in particular. She was her father's last child and was born when he was 72 years old. She explained that she had been subject to verbal and physical abuse from a very early age. In particular she recalled being beaten terribly for telling her mother that she had been sexually abused.

She had her first baby at sixteen and after finding herself with three children, she got into a very abusive relationship. She relayed instances in which her abuser would tie her up and rape her. He would constantly beat her, even in the presence of her children. She became a shell of herself, extremely depressed and lived in mortal fear of her abuser. She explained that he tried to kill her and her children and that it was only after this experience that she was able to find the strength to leave him.

She said that her mother witnessed her being abused yet she encouraged her to remain in the relationship because of the fact that the man had provided some place for her and her children to live, he had a good job and a regular salary. Ms Simmons commented that this mentality is very prevalent in Vincentian women, the willingness to allow men to ill-treat them in exchange for money and security. She called on the young ladies present to listen to her life story and to be cautious about the choices they make. She encouraged them to pursue their education and to build themselves before thinking of getting into a serious relationship.

DAY 1 - PANEL DISCUSSION

The second half of Day 1 focused on the **Theme: “Contributing Factors to Crime and Violence”**

The Panel Discussion topics and presenters were as follows:

- Socio-Cultural Issues: Mrs. Deborah Dalrymple, UWI Open Campus
- Challenges in Maintaining Law & Order: Mr. Frankie Joseph, Deputy Commissioner of Police
- Drug Culture and Trans-Border Issues – Superintendent Kamecia Blake-Byam, RSS
- The Level and Tone of Social and Political Discourse – Pastor Terrance Haynes

Socio-Cultural Issues: Mrs. Deborah Dalrymple, UWI Open Campus

Mrs. Debbie Dalrymple, Resident Representative of the University of the West Indies and Social Worker by training, provided a cogent outline of the nature, effects and means of addressing the secret crime of incest. The Former Director of the Social Service Agency, The Marion House, launched her argument with reference to a discussion on incest on one of the national radio stations. She indicated that the radio personnel were lamenting the view that attempts to bring cases of sexual abuse, and incest, in particular, to justice seemed futile in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Mrs. Dalrymple went on to explain that she later read about the incident which had sparked the radio discussion which was an article in the Searchlight newspaper headlined “*Vincentian Jailed in BVI for Molesting His Daughter*”. In the same newspaper was another article which was not headlined as child sexual abuse but which stated “*Thirteen Year Old Loses Her One Year Old Child*”. Mrs. Dalrymple observed that there was no mention in this article that this was clearly a case of statutory rape. She went on to highlight the fact that this was almost normalizing this crime.

She cited the fact that 300 cases of abuse in all its forms were reported to Family Services, 20% of which were sexual abuse cases. These amounted to sixty cases too many. Notably, these are reported cases and not cases that have gone through the court system. Furthermore, it is believed that child abuse is grossly under reported in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Mrs. Dalrymple made reference to the opposition

leader's term "the ugly truth" when he spoke of the fact that there are many cases of domestic violence and sexual crimes against children that are continually brought to the court. Mrs Dalrymple highlighted the fact that in the old days, perpetrators of incest were tried and hung in effigy on the tallest tree. She pointed out that this reaction is indicative of how strong the taboo against incest was and still is in view of the discussion she had heard on the radio.

Core Understandings about Sexual Abuse and Incest

- Sexual abuse is any form of sexual violence including rape, child molestation, incest and all forms of non-consensual sexual contact
- Sexual abuse is never only about sex but about power and the control over victims.
- Incest is defined as a practice of sexual intercourse between persons with degrees of kinship which may be a short or long term relationship and may or may not involve the procreation of children.
- Incest taboo is considered cultural universal.

Characteristics of Incest in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

- These acts were primarily committed by adult male on a younger female. The male may be the girl's father, step-father, uncle, step-uncle, grandfather or cousin.
- Mrs. Dalrymple also noted the occurrences of sibling on sibling incest that is an older brother with a younger sister.
- These incestuous relationships may continue for years. It was pointed out that in most instances the victim is blamed for the extent of this relationship - the idea that the girl "should know better".
- The victims often blame themselves – they experience feelings of guilt and shame, anxiety and depression.
- In many instances the perpetrator is very kind and loving towards the child and at times this is the only person who is kind and loving so that the child is often confused about reporting the abuse.
- Sometimes the child is threatened with death or harm should she, and increasingly he, divulge any information regarding the relationship.

- Physical abuse may accompany the incest and in such cases, it is often easier to reach the child since they may be very angry at the perpetrator
- Incest may develop in a situation where a mother has died and the girl is left in the home with male relatives.
- Family is enmeshed and socially isolated, where the child is fearful of speaking out, having been muzzled by the family's code of silence – whatever happens here “is our business”.
- Father may have a warped idea that he is responsible for initiating his daughter into sex.
- Mothers are usually very much aware of the abuse but often turn a blind eye. Sometimes mothers do not listen to the child's inadvertent plea for help. They continually leave them alone in the care of the perpetrator, not realizing that the reason the child does not want to spend time with that particular person is because they are being abused.
- Exposing the child to Pornography.

Research has Shown that Certain Factors are Related to Incest

1. The Personal Characteristics of the Perpetrator
2. The Role of the Mother
3. The Milieu of Abandonment – the child feels as if there's no way to turn. They live in a Subculture of Silence and Social Isolation
4. Poor family sexual boundaries – for example being touched and tickled inappropriately by male relative when the child is at the stage where they do not want this to be done to them

Impact of Incest on the Individual - The victim may experience the following:

1. Aggressive behaviour
2. Becomes very shy or withdrawn, sometimes to the point of being agoraphobic where the child might not even want to go outside
3. Difficulty in maintaining sexual relationship – the feeling of being “used goods”

4. Sometimes there are no outward signs, the child simply endures the sexual abuse for a long time until perhaps a younger sibling or their own child is being threatened by the same perpetrator.
5. Reproductive health issues because of trauma experienced as a child
6. Trust is destroyed – Children should feel safest in their homes but incidents of incest erode and undermine trust.
7. There is sometimes fear of losing the “love” of the perpetrator.
8. Fear of being hurt or killed – in a dysfunctional family, very often both the mother and the father know about the abuse. Sometimes the child is coerced into an abusive relationship for money because the relative is assisting the family.
9. Middle-class incest more likely to go unreported.

What to look for in Children

- Acting out in inappropriate sexual ways with toys and objects
- Nightmares, sleeping disorders and Mood swings
- Regression to younger behaviour such as bed wetting and thumb sucking
- Physical signs such as soreness around mouth and genitals
- Running away or not wanting to be in same place with a particular person
- Become unusually secretive, withdrawn or very clingy
- Sudden unexplained personality changes
- Unaccountable fear of particular places and people
- Outburst of anger and changes in eating habits
- New adult words for body parts
- Reference to new older friend
- Self harm such as cutting

This crime is still clothed in silence. The victim and the family are carrying a lot of shame. The abused remains a victim for a very long time. The therapeutic goal to share with someone who has experienced incest is to say “speak out – break the silence because as long as there is silence, one is in fact protecting the perpetrator”. Mrs Dalrymple ended with this very emphatic statement: “you’re keeping his silence, you’re keeping his shame”. The victim is not to blame. Speaking out ensures that one does not remain a victim for life, one has to take back their power. And to do this the first step is to speak out.

Challenges in Maintaining Law & Order: Mr. Frankie Joseph, Deputy Commissioner of Police

Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mr. Frankie Joseph made a rousing presentation on the need for meaningful interventions in the community that would support parents in the socialization of their children.

He raised the issue of good parenting as the foundation of character formation and the capacity to be a productive citizen. Without correction, ill-disciplined children are more likely to end up as criminals. He stressed that parents need to take more responsibility for their children's upbringing. Moreover, citing the African proverb that it takes a village to raise a child, the Deputy Commissioner, called for greater involvement of the church in shaping the lives of young people and communities at large. Intervention must take place before coming into conflict with the law in order to have maximum impact. He referred to the police as a last resort. He said that anything less than this would lead to our society graduating criminals from uncontrollable schools every year, adding to the pool that our society is already grappling with at this time.

Drug Culture and Trans-Border Issues – Superintendent Kamecia Blake-Byam, RSS

Superintendent Kamecia Blake-Byam of the Regional Security System made a thought-provoking presentation on the subject of the Drug Culture and Trans-border Issues. In addressing this matter, Mrs. Byam spoke from a dual premise: the Academic Approach and her experience, having worked at the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. She indicated that in terms of geographical location, St. Vincent and the Grenadines was sandwiched between the main countries involved in the demand and supply of marijuana, namely Venezuela, high supplier of narcotics in particular cocaine, and the United States of America. As such it has become a critical link as a transshipment point in the movement of drugs between these areas.

In addition, St. Vincent and the Grenadines has become a large-scale producer of marijuana, most of which is exported regionally and beyond. The remainder of the marijuana is used for domestic consumption. The high grade and potency of “Vincy Marijuana” has placed it in great demand in external markets. This has in turn increased the surveillance and policing challenges because of the increased awareness of the quality of the marijuana. Superintendent Byam highlighted the fact

that there is a strong correlation between the high crime rate and the large-scale exportation of marijuana. She elaborated that in 2016 alone, over 45,000 cannabis plants had been destroyed by the Royal St. Vincent and the Grenadines Police Service. She explained that the drug trade had given rise to illegal trafficking of fire arms and ammunition, and the formation of undesirables such as gangs.

She indicated that the Rational Choice theory and the Deviant Subculture Theory may be employed to shed light on the reasons for the increase in the number of persons participating in the drug culture. She elucidated that in the Rational Choice theory, those engaging in the cultivation and trafficking of drugs conduct a cost benefit analysis of this risky behaviour. They may consider the nature of borders and the fact that they are very porous.

Recommendations:

1. Situational Crime Prevention – Must make it difficult for drug-traffickers to engage in criminal activities by hardening policing strategies, increasing surveillance and enhancing coastguard assets
2. The Police must become more proactive in addressing crime and violence
3. Strengthen Families: Need to raise stronger boys –Greater attention to the process of instilling morals and values in children, especially boys: Working honestly and legally, not being greedy, not being jealous of anyone or their possessions
4. Education – Based on the fact that far more young men are involved in the drug trade, there is a critical need to ensure that boys remain in school and that they are not left behind. Greater emphasis should be given to vocational skills.
5. Develop Creative Ways to involve young people productively: Need for greater efforts to provide employment for young people beyond stipend-fuelled, internship programmes such as the Youth Empowerment Programme (YES).

The Level and Tone of Social and Political Discourse – Pastor Terrance Haynes

Pastor Terrance Haynes addressed the issue of the Level and Tone of Social and Political Discourse, citing the noticeable increase in media and various fora for expressing one's views. Pastor Haynes began by setting the definitional parameters of his argument. He reasoned that any reference to level, calls into consideration variable scale of some sort and immediately implicit in that are the measurements of "maximum" and "minimum," and in view of the context "acceptable". It may vary from context to context.

He defined “tone” as the character and nature of the kinds of discourse which are being engaged in. Social, he explained referred to the society or its organization. In examining the notion of “political” Pastor Haynes pointed out that this is not only in reference to a political party or a particular group of people but that it also refers to government and public affairs. Thus, every person is part of the political landscape and has a part to play. He completed the definitional parameters by indicating that discourse is both written and verbal in nature. The argument was presented in four sections:

Context

Pastor Haynes drew attention to the “Education Revolution” and the emphasis on literacy. He described these developments as a positive response to increasing the capacity for understanding and discussion. He cited the proliferation of radio stations and by extension, the increase in talk programmes. There are daily discussions of social and political issues on the radio. He called into view the political parties that “appear to be in constant campaign mode”. He observed that in the past the political rhetoric would have been ramped up during the election season but these days, it seems as though everyday is election – every event is an election pitch. Moreover, the means by which there is engagement in the social and political discourse appears to be ubiquitous, that is the extensive use of electronic devices such as cell phones, tablets and laptops. These changes have also been further facilitated by the government’s investment in the internet and wifi and mobile access to the internet being available from the telecommunication services. He indicated that social change was evident by the move away from communication media such as Skype to Facebook, Whatsapp and Instagram.

Kudos

There has been a marked increase in discussion of social and political issues in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The print and electronic media have distributed more information on national, regional and international issues affecting people in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. He highlighted the various sources of internet news on St. Vincent and the Grenadines and how beneficial these have been in connecting the diaspora. Furthermore, Pastor Haynes drew attention to SVGTV as an

informative source on social and political issues. He pointed out the government departments that foster access to educational programmes, such as “Police on the Beat” and parliamentary debates. The Educational Institutes such as The University of the West Indies Open Campus and the Public lectures which they host are a means of increasing social and political understanding. The Civic society organizations all have heightened public awareness of social and political discourse affecting St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Concerns

There has been an apparent reduction in critical thinking. We appear to be afraid to question ourselves and our motives. Pastor Haynes highlighted the fact that there is no perfect administration. Evaluation is necessary but this evaluation is seen as being critical and is therefore discouraged by politicizing rather than discussing the issues which affect the entire society. He referred to personal attacks on individuals as opposed to attacking the issue and the hard language used in the media, even at times disrespectful. Some callers are allowed to talk at length once their point agrees with the moderator’s while others are interrupted or eliminated. There seems to be a growing blatant bias on some stations. He raised the concern that very often persons seem to be encouraging a party agenda over national development, even to the point of politicizing national developments such as the opening of a public building, lacing these occasions with connotations of “this is we thing”. Sometimes it is necessary to surf all the radio stations to garner a holistic account of what is taking place on a certain issue. Some critical issues are not addressed on some media outlets. He commented on the overexposure and de-sensitization via media content, particularly with regard to crime and violence. For example, images and videos of victims of crimes are spread through the internet without censorship. Moreover, Pastor Haynes indicated that there is evidence that such practices may well have a negative effect on the capacity to solve these crimes. He posited that very often civil society leaders miss opportunities to educate the public on issues affecting development. For instance, he referred to the legal fraternity’s silence on the recent Cyber Crime Bill and the implications of it for Vincentian citizens. Similarly, there was no significant civic discussion on the issue of medical marijuana and the Domestic Violence Act of 2015.

Pastor Haynes expressed concern over the fact that critical issues are often discussed and judged in the court of public opinion with little or no input from those who are more equipped to provide guidance. He further commented that unfortunately, these discussions are usually geared towards increased ratings and entertainment rather than educating the public.

He provided a quote from James Mc Gravy, “We are losing sight of civility in government and politics. Debate and dialogue are taking a backseat to the politics of destruction, anger and control. Dogma has replaced thoughtful discussion between people of different views”.

Recommendations

- 1. Modelling** – Social political leaders media practitioners need to practice correct social and political discourse. Also we must practice religious liberty and tolerance and respect for those of different religious views.
- 2. Responsible Media Management** – There is an urgent need to restrict political campaigning to the platform and the season. It is also crucial to foster public unity and discussion of social and political issues without resorting to partisan positions. Inclusive dialogue must be fostered between all participants, even if the moderator does not subscribe to the views being shared. Zero tolerance for personal attacks, offensive or libellous language.
- 3. Responsible Robust Investigative Journalism and Reporting** - Reduce the level of opinionated media pieces.
- 4. Separate issues from Personalities and Political Affiliation**– There is need to encourage open dialogue.
- 5. Encourage critical and objective thinking and dialogue** – ‘Our hands are not clean’. It is time to repair the “Broken windows”.

DISCUSSION AND SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS

Dr. Karen Providence, Registrar in Psychiatry:

Question: What has been the effect of the change in the law in Antigua regarding the possession and consumption of marijuana?

Superintendent, Kamecia Blake-Byam

Answer 1): Antigua has relaxed legal penalties surrounding marijuana to allow 15 grams for private use. However, this has given rise to persons smoking in public sphere because they cannot be penalized. The Superintendent observed that very soon it will be very difficult to police this situation. Whilst Antigua has high consumption, St. Vincent and the Grenadines has high cultivation and exportation so dynamics are slightly different. It is still too soon to determine the impact of the legal reform or if the change in the law has, in fact, affected the social structure of society or resulted in a decrease in the crime rate.

Professor Anthony Harriott

Answer 2): Legal reform with regard to marijuana consumption in Jamaica has had very significant effect. Within six months of implementation of the new law, there was a reduction in the prison population by 6000 persons. Critically, Professor Harriott made the point that law reform in this regard also meant that young people between the ages of 12 years old and mid-twenties were less likely to be criminalized. Such reforms mean that young people will not be unnecessarily criminalized and therefore the emphasis can then be placed on getting them safely into adulthood and into work.

Augustin Ferdinand – Participant and Unity Labour Party Rep

Question 1): With reference to the statement that there is a high correlation between the use of marijuana and high crime rate, could you clarify if that is with regards to St. Vincent?

Question 2): What does the law define as a gang?

Superintendent, Kamecia Blake-Byam

Answer 1): The Superintendent clarified that the correlation was in fact between the cultivation and distribution of marijuana on the one hand and the increase in crime. Specifically, she pointed to the relationship between the increase in the murder rate and the cultivation and distribution of marijuana. She cited the increase in the murder rate.

Answer 2): The Superintendent cited a study conducted by the Regional Security System (RSS) on troublesome youth in the Caribbean which indicated that gangs

exist in all of the member states. She claimed that the political powers that be are unwilling to admit that there are gangs in our society. She indicated that there are several different definitions of a gang, and how it is defined may depend on the discipline to which you subscribe. She however, offered the following definition:

A gang is the anti-social gathering of two or more persons for negative purposes.

She further commented that whether St. Vincent and the Grenadines wanted to admit it or not, we have a cluster of people coming together for negative activities – violation of the law and this is what she referred to in her application of the Deviant Subculture Theory to the situation in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

JoAnn Haynes – School Guidance Counsellor

Comment: Called to mind research on the Effects of Media Violence on Increased Crime and Aggression in our Youths. She confirmed that the findings of this study were that media violence does in fact lead to increased crime and aggression. This is the violence in the media that our young people are exposed to on a daily basis. The lewd music in the mini vans, and the van culture in general is having a serious impact on our young people and this is not being dealt with by the police.

She further elaborated that crime against women and girls has been on the rise and also domestic violence, and the music in the vans spew out so many crude and disgraceful things about women. She alluded to the fact that it is not enough to correct the young people, other steps must be taken. Riding on the vans and being exposed to these aggressive lyrics daily, the young people are being given “ammunition”. They are being fed the very thing that is causing the crime and the violence. Something has to be done about this, if we are serious about having a positive impact on the crime situation.

Deputy Commissioner of Police – Mr. Frankie Joseph

Response: The Deputy Commissioner indicated that, in the past, the police had been actively pursuing convictions of minibus drivers for illegally playing loud music. He

indicated that this had been a successful measure until a particular lawyer put forward a challenge that undermined their case and as a result they could no longer take minibus drivers to court on such charges. The Deputy Commissioner, however, explained that the Traffic Laws are under revision and that this will be one of the key areas of reform.

Barrister at Law – Mr. Israel Bruce

Mr. Bruce explained that there is a loophole in the law which does not allow prosecution of vans for playing loud music. He indicated that the police had been charging the minibus drivers for playing a musical instrument but that there were no definitional parameters in the legislation for what was a musical instrument. This lacuna in the law meant that the charge became null and void. Mr. Bruce ended by saying that this was a golden opportunity for the law-makers to amend the law.

GROUP WORK OUTCOMES

Following the panel presentations, the participants were placed in groups and reported their reactions in the form of observations and recommendations.

Socio-Cultural Issues – Observations

- It is still taboo to speak about incest in our society
- Victims of incest experience negative psychological effects
- There are parents who condone incest – many times because of their inability to handle the situation
- Low self-esteem can make one susceptible to abuse
- The media can influence people's perception of incest.
- Sex is used as a weapon of power and control in society
- There is concern that children still have to testify in courts and that if they are afraid to do so the case would get thrown out
- Sexual abusers are still allowed to work with children. Is there a vetting process in place for persons who have to work with children
- Parents, especially mothers, prostitute their daughters

- In many cases of sexual abuse, mothers do not support their children (daughters) in the court process (especially in cases of sexual abuse within the home)
- Society is harsh on victims of abuse
- The psychological impact on victims is not being addressed or given much weight
- Parents are not fulfilling their parental responsibilities
- There are still dropouts due to pregnancy
- There is a lack of speedy trials
- Poverty is an issue
- There is a high level of school dropout among males
- Societal norms and values are changing
- There is drug abuse and moral decadence among the youth and a high consumption of alcohol, especially during carnival

Socio-Cultural Issues Recommendations

- Legal aid office to be put in place for those who cannot afford to hire legal assistance.
- The Ministry of Justice/Legal Affairs should invest in equipment and other resources for detecting/solving crimes.
- There should be an ombudsman system probably set up by the Christian Council.
- Justice must be speedily administered.
- The age of consent should be revisited.
- The public and the media should celebrate the strengths of young people.
- There is need for review of regulations with regards to Child Care and Adoption Laws. This should be addressed by the Ministry of National Mobilisation, the Office of the Attorney General and the Family Court.
- Children are to be adequately prepared for the Court process.
- There should be a hotline for persons who want to report incidences of abuse
- There should be better collaboration, such as the establishing an MOU among the various institutions that address social issues.

- There is need for more parenting education.
- There is need for a special victims Unit to deal with sexual offences.
- Special measures should be taken to address male vulnerability within the school/education system.
- There is need for greater research to ascertain causality or correlation between the socio-cultural issues and violence.
- There is need to evaluate some of the activities during carnival that contribute to increase crime and violence. For example abuse of alcohol, drugs and indecent forms of dressing.
- There should be more speedily and direct response by the police, gender affairs and other legal entities who have (legal) jurisdiction over issues that are detrimental to the well-being of a child. The full weight of the law should be brought to bear on those who are complicit in covering up such offences regardless of their office or status.
- There should be mandatory training in psychology and counselling for professionals and practitioners working in institutions which serve the well-being of children.
- Children should be educated on appropriate and inappropriate touching
- There should be full enforcement of current laws that require mandatory reporting of offences against children
- The Ministry of Education must be held responsible and accountable for any incidence that brings harm to the well-being of any child while at school.

Drug Culture – Trans-Border Issues Recommendations

- Increased border patrol with cooperation between coast guards. (There is also need for upgraded equipment. (This should be spearheaded by the RSVG Police Force and Coast Guard along with the Regional Security System.)
- There should be the legalising and regulating of the cultivation and the use of marijuana. (Parliament and the Cabinet should lead with appropriate legislations and regulations.)

- The Ship Rider agreement – signed with the United States of America – should be revisited with the view of reinstating but in a manner that is beneficial to St. Vincent and the Grenadines. (This should be addressed by Parliament.)
- Children and young persons should become involved in NGOs and youth based organisation. (This can be done under the initiative of the Ministry of Education.)
- There should be a period of community service for persons who are in tertiary institutions. (This can be spearheaded by the Ministry of Education)
- There should be meetings with families to foster communication and discussion. (Several agencies can foster these experiences including the Ministry of National Mobilisation, Marion House, the Family Planning Unit, PTAs)
- Religious Knowledge should become part of the life of schools. (This can be done through the initiatives of the Ministry of Education, Churches and the Christian Council)
- There is need for the legislative body to amend existing laws with regards to Education, Social Services, Security and Justice in a timely manner to foster cultural, social and economic change in our society.
- There should be reform of aspects within the education system to create skilled critical thinkers that can initiate positive social change.
- There should be the restructuring and retooling of the security forces in order to bring about transparency, equality, fairness among stakeholders and community.

DAY 2 APRIL 19TH - SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS –

The conference continued on Day two, April 19th with Superintendent of the Methodist Church, Kingstown/Chateaubelair Circuit, **Reverend Adolf Davis** opening the day's proceedings with a presentation on the theme: **"A Theological Reflection on Crime and Violence"**

Reverend Davis began by painting a global picture of the issue of crime. He indicated that given the global nature of the problem, it can then be deduced that the increase in crime and violence is not a cultural or economic problem or an ethnic problem, not a government problem but rather a fundamental human problem.

He offered a national and historical background to lay the foundation of the thesis that crime and violence evolves from anti-social behaviour. The main point of reference was the Genesis creation story beginning with the disobedience of Adam and Eve and the eventual violent and criminal outcome of the relationship between Cain and Abel.

Synopsis of the Presentation:

(a) Human beings are both moral and social

Rev. Davis stated that, creation established us as moral characters; that, this was established when God made us and called us “good”. The goodness of God in us calls us to be good continually. It is for this reason that what is good resonates with us and allows even the worst among us to perform good deeds, that is, to have “good” within them. This, he said, was the result of God breathing the breath of goodness in us.

In addition to making us moral beings, Rev. Davis advanced that God also made us social beings. This, he said, was evident from the case of Adam, where Eve was created for the purpose of socialization with Adam. He quoted from Genesis 2: “As God saw that it was not good for man to be alone.” This, Rev Davis said, signified that “the good” of man was threatened by aloneness. Therefore relationship is necessary for man to be good.

Rev Davis noted that advancement or progress will not be good or beneficial if it is done outside of relationships and if we function alone. He stressed that progress and development need relationships. We need to put into practice the concept of “helpmate” as from Genesis chapter 2 that is, functioning together – working with mutual respect and for the common good.

(b) Anti-social behaviour leads to crime

Using the case of Cain and Abel Rev. Davis pointed out that there is no good outcome when social interaction does not occur and that in fact anti-social behaviour did lead to the first crime – the killing of Abel by Cain.

(c) Antisocial behaviour is an indication of future criminal actions

Rev. Davis offered the conclusion that antisocial acts generally lead to crime. These actions are often started when persons do not admit or take responsibility for wrong doing. This can be seen in the case of Adam, Eve and the Serpent, where Adam

blamed Eve and the latter blamed the Serpent. Rev. Davis further added that he doubted whether the Serpent would have succeeded in his deception had he confronted Adam and Eve together or had Eve consulted with Adam.

On the other hand, Rev. Davis further elaborated, relationship demands that one looks out for each other, that is, for us to be our brother's keeper. Cain rejected this principle and could not celebrate the success of his brother. An antisocial person is generally wrapped in his or her feelings and needs. The concept of individualism takes root. This is displayed in the attitude that one's goals and gains should be at the expense of others or the collective good. The more we think we do not need others, the more prone we are to pursue crime and violence.

Rev. Davis concluded by saying that there are things in our modern systems of socialization that are making us more isolated and more prone to antisocial behaviour. These include electronic games and gadgets and the do-it-yourself kits that encourage more independence and subsequently greater antisocial behaviour.

DAY 2 - PANEL DISCUSSION

The main focus of Day two was a four panel presentation on the subject: **"Legislation, Policy and Rehabilitation"**

The panellists were:

- Barrister and Solicitor, Julian Jack – The state of laws related to crime and violence
- Commissioner of Police, Mr. Colin John, - Policies on Crime and Violence: How well are they working?
- Superintendent of Prisons, Mr. Brenton Charles – Rehabilitation and the Society
- Registrar in Psychiatry Dr. Karen Providence, Relationship between mental health and crime

Presentations

The state of laws related to crime and violence – Mr. Julian Jack, Barrister

Mr. Jack began his presentation by stating that there is a correlation between the law and crime and violence, which is, how laws are used to combat crime and violence

in any given society. He further stated that the constitution, which is the preeminent law of the country, is the foundation on which all other legislations are based. For example, the first chapter of the Constitution speaks to fundamental freedoms and rights. Section 2 addresses the intentional deprivation of life which directly sets the basis for legislation against the criminal intention of taking the life of another person. This section is bolstered by sub-section 16 which authorises the enforcement of laws to protect life. These sections provide the guiding framework for all laws addressing crime and violence.

Crime and violence, he stated, is an international phenomenon from which no country is immune. However, we must ask ourselves whether or not it is acceptable for us. Mr. Jack stated that he believes that the current statutes provide the basis for good governance and that the general rule of law is not threatened by the upsurge in crime and violence.

He raised the issue of violent crime and the use of hand firearms and made it clear that there is legislation to address the illegal use of firearms. He added that there are strict laws with regards to incarceration. Furthermore, Mr. Jack stated that, the policy thrust in addressing firearms related crime is a very serious one in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and throughout the region.

He highlighted some of the major pieces of legislations that combat crime. For example, the Criminal Code – Chapter 171 is a comprehensive piece of legislation to address several criminal activities. This is fundamental to understand in a rule of law state or in a democracy. There are laws to address:

- Sexual offences
- Offences against the person – homicide, kidnapping, abduction
- Crimes against property – there are many forms of protection of fundamental freedoms; protection against the person and the appropriate punishment which can be given for these offences.

Mr. Jack also drew attention to several other important pieces of legislation:–

- The Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act
- The Domestic Violence Summary Proceeding Act
- Drug trafficking – Drug Prevention and Misuse Act

The Proceeds of Crime Act is also important in dealing with profiting from criminal activities. Mr Jack also pointed to flaws in some of the laws. For example, with regards to the Firearms Act – it addresses the circulation of illegal firearms in the society but this may not be sufficient in dealing with the trans-border issues which are emerging. Captured evidence is beginning to reveal that there are catchments of ammunition and arms that are not sold in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. These issues need to be addressed.

He also highlighted the role of the Family Court, which has been in existence for almost thirty years. The Family Court helps poor and vulnerable women and children to seek justice even if they do not have the financial means to hire expert help, as legal counsel is not needed as advocates in the Family Court.

In closing Mr. Jack briefly mentioned that acts of money laundering, though not as sensational as homicides, can also have dire consequences on the rule of law if left unchecked. He also drew attention to the serious challenges many farmers face in earning their livelihood if their assets cannot be protected.

Policies on Crime and Violence: How well are they working? - Acting Commissioner of Police – Mr. Colin John

Mr. John began by stating his preference for the phrasing of the title, which in his opinion acknowledges that policies are working by asking: how well are they working? He framed his presentation by stating that the duties of police officers are set out in the Police Act Chapter 371 of the laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2009 – Section 12.

The Acting Commissioner spoke on three elements of these laws that define the role of the police:

- The prevention and detection of crime
- Preserving the peace
- Apprehending offenders

Mr. John added that there are corresponding policies that evolve from the respective laws. There are prevention policies; policies with regards the detection and conviction of criminals; policies with regards rehabilitation or prevention of persons from re-offending.

Preventative Policies:

- There are some tried and tested methods which include: patrols (both vehicular and foot), and community policing which involves interacting with residents. These are simple but effective methods.
- Stop and search – this is done periodically – on a person or a vehicle. Stop and search may be intelligence driven or random. But are they effective in preventing crimes?.
- The Crime Prevention Exhibition is another method of crime prevention. This is done twice yearly – before Carnival and during the Christmas season. Persons are advised on how to avoid becoming victims of crime.
- Visits are made to business houses or government offices to provide advice on crime prevention. There are opportunistic criminals who go into offices and steal unattended property, small gadgets such as cell phones.
- There are also neighbourhood watch groups which contribute effectively in deterring and reducing crime.
- *Pan against Crime* which focuses on the Youth to provide alternative forms of engagement and recreation.
- The Police Youth Club and summer programme to channel youth into non-criminal activities.

Policies and Practices for Detecting Crime

- The IT Department of the Royal St. Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force uses electronic devices to facilitate detection of criminal activities. The retrieval of evidence from electronic devices is also done, sometimes with assistance from regional bodies.
- There is training in Crime Scene Management; Informant Handling; Surveillance and Giving of Evidence.
- Attempts are being made to respond more quickly to reports of crime, investigate all crime scenes and to provide feedback to all virtual complainants concerning their reports.

- The amendment of laws as regards Interviewing of Suspects for Serious Crimes Act - this has reduced legal challenges to confessions and resulted in more guilty pleas. This practice has been effective in speeding up the administration of justice.
- There is the Witness Special Measure Bill that allows a person to give evidence from behind a screen; an undisclosed location via electronic means and anonymously.
- The Police Force is embarking on an organized witness protection programme – there is currently an ad hoc witness protection programme in which witnesses can be sent to other countries for their safety.

Apprehending Offenders and Seizing of Evidence

- The Fire Arms Act is amended to allow for longer sentences— previously the maximum sentence was 3 years, now it is 7. Based on the sentencing guidelines a person can be given 3 years. If it goes to trial 5/6 years.
- The Proceeds of Crime Act helps to remove the incentive for committing a crime to get money – it also helps in instances when one cannot state the origin of money in their possession.
- Finally, there is the honouring of warrants within the OECS – no need for extradition.

These policies and practices are working well but there is much room for improvement. As Arnold Palmer has expressed, “The road to success is always under construction”, so there is need to consolidate strengths and work on weaknesses.

Rehabilitation and the Society - Superintendent of Prisons – Mr. Brenton Charles

The Superintendent of Prisons is of the view that the majority of persons have a negative view of prisons; that it is seen as insignificant and as a dumping ground. Prisoners were at some point decent people but having transgressed the law their status changed.

Mr. Charles said that he had attended a conference and it was the impression that prisoners are viewed as: transgressors, gangsters and hustlers.

Mr. Charles stated that he recognized that the police has an important job to do with regards to crime protection which involves: investigation, prosecution and obtaining a conviction after which those convicted are taken to the prison and this is seen as the end. He further stated that if this is the view of the majority then we are going to build a society of convicts. He admitted that the prisons are not easy to manage but that their full circumstances must be understood.

The Superintendent presented a view of the prisoner as someone who may have grown up in an abusive environment, without stable parents or adult figures. This type of person, he further stated, then becomes an abuser –makes wrong choices and has anger issues and responds with violence. In his view, to have a prison system that is based on force – locks, batons, guns, would contain the prisoner but would not solve the problems.

On the other hand, the prison does not have the necessary resources to address the issue of rehabilitation. He welcomes the discussion and sees the church as finally playing its role in addressing some of the social issues.

Mr. Charles reported that in spite of limited resources past heads/superintendents have tried their best. There are initiatives which began with churches, and one initiative, the Christmas concert, is now part of the national calendar. Following the union Island uprising external examinations were done with two of the inmates – who were successful. This went towards showing that prisoners are humans.

Mr. Charles further pointed out the additional challenges in having a prison that focuses on rehabilitation. There was the challenge of space. The initial prison was built for 75 persons but the population grew to 625 at one time. Some small buildings were torn down and bigger ones were built to improve the situation. When additional space became available the education programme expanded to include literacy.

The education and training today now include the skills of: carpentry, tailoring, baking. The prison recently received tailoring equipment to conduct a fully certified programme which would be accredited by the Ministry of Education.

There is a culinary arts programme where 33 prisoners and 7 officers participated. The participation of officers is now a policy in every training programme. There is

a plumbing programme in which 9 persons participated last year and there are now 7 to be trained.

The Ministry of National Mobilization also intervened and conducted some social skills programmes including anger management. There is a mechanic programme that is sponsored by Cash Money autos. This is done four days per week. There are 20 inmates and 10 officers on this programme. The officers were trained to ensure continuity.

In closing, Mr. Charles stated that people who are behind the walls came from the society and would one day return. Their success would depend on how they are received. If a grown man who wants to earn his living and does not get that opportunity then he would be forced back into crime. He told a story of a man who found a job – then lost his job because he was asked to produce a police record which showed that he had had a conviction. This man has no option but to return to the prison.

Relationship between Mental Health and Crime -Dr. Karen Providence, Registrar in Psychiatry

Dr. Providence began by defining violence as:

“Behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something.”

She further pointed out that the World Health Organisation (WHO) provides an even broader definition as follows:

“The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation.”

Defining Mental Health:

Dr. Providence indicated that the adopted definition for Mental Health has also been provided by WHO. It refers to:

“A state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”

Furthermore, Health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. On the other hand, Mental Illness is a condition which causes serious disorder in a person's behaviour or thinking.

Dr. Providence explained that: (a) the relationship between Mental Health and violence is a complex one and (b) mental wellness should be a protective factor from engaging in violent behaviour. She then posed the question whether we should conclude that mental un-wellness (illness) is a predictor of violence?

There is the perception that violence and mental illness often go together. However, the mentally ill is more likely to be the victim of violence than the perpetrator. Mental illness is not a predictor of violent behaviour.

The Presenter also looked at Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, a condition which many persons, though not seen as mentally ill may experience. This can be brought on by trauma or by witnessing a horrific incident.

Finally, the violence of the mentally ill can be manifested in the following ways:

- Self-directed (Self-harm; suicide) This can often be associated with MDD; PTSD; Schizophrenia and other chronic disorders
- Violence towards others – This is often associated with abnormalities in perception of reality such as: hallucinations and paranoid thinking
- Violence against the mentally ill, which can be the result of stigma which gives the perception that the mentally ill person is dangerous

Some Mental Disorders associated with violent behaviour are:

- Schizophrenia - Loses contact with reality
- Delusions; Hallucinations - Impaired judgement
- Bipolar Disorder - Intolerable changes in mood and energy levels
- Depression - Persistent low mood; sadness; pessimism; suicidal ideas

DISCUSSIONS AND SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS

Rev. C. Stilson Cato – Methodist Church Clergy

Question 1): Have you come across inmates who prefer to remain in prison because they are able to get free food and free accommodation?

Mr. Brenton Charles - Superintendent of Prisons

Answer: It may appear that persons return to the prison for free food and free accommodation but I have never encountered someone who does not want their freedom. The problem is that there is no agency or institution which is available to former inmates and which will embrace them as they attempt to reintegrate into society.

You may prefer to have your freedom but what choice does one have if when you return to society, you cannot find a job, you have no place to live, you cannot take care of yourself? It stands to reason that you will want to go back to the place where you would find some level of comfort and where you can at least have your basic needs met.

Question 2): What is the procedure for dealing with a person, diagnosed as mentally ill, but has committed a serious crime? Are they referred to the mental asylum?

Mr. Brenton Charles – Superintendent of Prisons

Answer 1):

The Superintendent observed that a patient at the Mental Health Centre may commit a crime at that institution and will be transferred to the prison or vice versa. Mr. Charles, however, stressed the position that the Prison was ill-equipped to effectively deal with the mentally ill. He made a passionate call for a special wing to be erected at the Prison that would cater for the mentally ill and that it would have the requisite staff.

Mr. Julian Jack - Criminal Liability and being held Culpable

Answer 2):

With reference to the imprisonment of the mentally ill, Mr Jack argued that there is a fundamental legal principle in criminal law which must be considered and that is the principle of criminal liability and culpability. The legal system must make sure that if a person is being put away in a mental hospital and their liberty being curtailed, the law must ensure in no uncertain terms that the person is not criminally liable for what he or she has done and therefore not culpable. That person should therefore be given the necessary psychiatric care rather than be incarcerated. He stressed the need to bring to bear the right expertise and the required amount of resources to ensure that those persons who are not criminally liable do not end up in prison. We must be able to differentiate whether there is criminal liability and to establish it clearly. We must remember that the mentally ill still has rights.

Dr. Karen Providence –Registrar in Psychiatry

Answer 3):

The central point is that if a person has a mental problem and commits a crime, it does not mean that they are automatically not responsible for that crime. The question is, did the mental condition influence the commission of the crime and even so, to what extent? She cited the need for greater dialogue and discussion on these issues and for the need to develop expertise in the area of forensic psychiatry. She said that in the Caribbean such expertise is quite scarce and thus, we make do with what we have.

Dr. Amorie Morris-Patterson – Consultant Psychiatrist

Answer 4):

Dr. Morris concurred that if someone has been diagnosed with a mental disorder and commits a crime, this does not mean that they are not culpable. She emphasised that having a diagnosis does not necessarily mean that the person does not have competence or the capacity to make a decision. On the spectrum of mental illness, there is mild, moderate and severe. For instance, she recalled a case in which a young man had murdered his girl friend and in his defence it was cited that he suffered from anti-social personality disorder. She surmised that a diagnosis of anti-social disorder does not mean that you are not culpable. One-third of all persons suffer from this disorder or in other words they are psychopaths.

Dr. Morris further elaborated that during the course of her work with prisoners she noticed that most of them had grown up in very unstable family situations and that there had been an absence of proper parenting. Thus, there is need to “begin the discussion upstream” in schools, with families and parents and to hold them more responsible for the supervision and the proper training of their children. Otherwise this discussion will go on for many years to come. She said that the professionals present in the room could determine the children who were going to be problematic as adults and even end up in prison. She called for the adequate support structures to be put in place and for the discussion on how trauma in childhood affects personality development and life later on. She emphasised teaching emotional intelligence, giving every child the opportunity to reach his or her full potential and providing them with the skills so that they can feel validated and not just pushing them through school.

Monsignor Michael Stewart – Roman Catholic Church

Comment:

We must ask ourselves: “What kind of society do we want?” The answer to this question will be the philosophy or principle by which we would go forward into the future. That is, we would broker the transition between the old which has collapsed and the new which is emerging. That’s the real challenge for us.

He indicated that he was simply adding to the conversation and that there were three key words that stakeholders needed to ponder on and to make decisive

- Restoration
- Criminalization
- Community Service

Kenson King – Officer at Her Majesty’s Prison, Kingstown

Mr. King said he had attended a conference and the facilitator had expressed the following idea: Build a prison, no matter how large, and the judges and magistrates will fill it for you. He expressed deep concern and frustration over the slow rate of implementation regarding structures that are supposed to be put in place in the area of Juvenile Justice Reform. Mr. King lamented the fact that there is provision in the law for the separation of juveniles in confinement from seasoned criminals. He

indicated that it was high time that the reforms be rolled out for the benefit of juveniles.

DAY 2 - SOAP BOX PRESENTATIONS

1. Prison Rehabilitation – Documentary: *Grow in Time*

During his presentation earlier, Superintendent of Prisons, Mr. Brenton Charles had alluded to *The Grass Men* – a group of 30 prisoners who had participated in a training programme which had been funded by UNESCO and facilitated by well-known artist, Mrs Vonnie Roudette. Following the Superintendent's presentation, the opportunity was seized to share a documentary on the programme with the audience. This very powerful presentation was very well-received. Persons expressed a deep sense of satisfaction at the obvious positive impact that this programme had had on the participants, not only in providing them with a worthwhile skill and the possible economic means to survive, but by the way in which it had changed their attitude and their entire outlook on life. This programme was greatly commended by the audience.

- The Prison was invited to forward project proposal to BNTF 9 for consideration for funding.

2) Mr. Edgar Lewis –Cultural Artiste

Mr. Lewis' presentation highlighted the theme: "*the Web of Crime.*" He told the touching story of a little boy who had been raised in a single parent home in one of the poorest areas in Kingstown. He attended the Kingstown Anglican Primary School and at the age of 12, he was told he could not attend school anymore with his "Black Power hairstyle". He opted to leave school and started working so he could help his mother.

He began hanging out with the wrong crowd and soon got arrested on a minor charge. He was sent to prison for one month. Shortly after this incident, he was again arrested and this time was imprisoned for two years. Upon his release, he was able to make a positive turn around. He spoke of how much he loves to read and is today a well-known artiste. He teaches young people to play the drum and spoke passionately about the need to see our society changed in positive ways.

Juvenile Justice Reform –The Draft Child Justice Bill of 2018

This special presentation was made by Ms. Fayon Ambris – Probation Officer in the Ministry of National Mobilisation. Ms. Ambris presented an outline of the proposed Juvenile Justice Reform Bill. This legislation has not yet been discussed or debated in parliament. The key areas of concentration within the reform process will include:

1. Who is a child? Any person under the age of 18
2. The Age of Criminal Responsibility which is currently eight years old but it is proposed that this be increased to the age of 12.
3. The establishment of a Child Justice Committee
4. The establishment of Assessment Centres for troubled youth
5. Secure residential facilities for juveniles coming into conflict with the law
6. The role of the Director of Public Prosecution, Police Officers, Probation Officers, Counsellors, Psychiatrists
7. The Role of Parents

Importantly, the new legislation proposes the use of Divergence as a means of providing alternative avenues, outside of the criminal justice system so that juveniles will not be labelled and will avoid developing a criminal record.

Proposed Composition of the Juvenile Justice Committee

- A Magistrate
- A Probation Officer
- Upstanding Community Leader
- Representative from the Clergy

The intention is to move to Restorative Justice as one of the key instruments of the legal Mechanism of Divergence. For example, a juvenile who has committed an offense could be brought to a meeting convened by the Juvenile Justice Committee where he/she will be given the opportunity to face his/her crime and to apologise to the victim of the offense. This may be a written apology. In this way, the juvenile is not criminalized but is diverted away from the criminal justice system and given an opportunity for restoration – a second chance.

GROUP WORK OUTCOMES

Participants' Declarations

Having listened to the various presentations and participated in the various discussions, the Groups made the following declarations:
We have lost a sense of moral consciousness. We need to go back to the Bible.

1. We fully believe:

- This is a timely (perhaps overdue) initiative
- We can bring about change by starting “upstream”
- We need to encourage and help parents to fulfil their responsibilities to train, discipline and love their children
- Parents have a greater role to play in the nurturing and protection of their children
- The Church and schools need to do more in providing greater assistance and support to parents
- That crime and violence can be reduced with action taken at all levels of society; by all taking responsibility for addressing these social concerns
- With greater collaborative effort there can be a reduction in crime and violence
- The police are facing more challenges in maintaining law and order than in previous years
- The Church should take advantage of its connection with the community to bring about changes that are beneficial to citizens.
- The lack of financial resources and the criteria to access funds create a bottleneck to change

2. We are satisfied that:

- The conversation has started and needs to continue
- The Christian Council has taken the first step
- A wide cross section of stakeholders was represented at the gathering
- This was a tangible effort by the Christian Council to address the issue of crime. It was good that other stakeholders were involved
- The remedial efforts by the Prison Administration were truly encouraging

3. We know that we cannot:

- Be perfect
- Accomplish everything overnight but we all have a part in eradicating crime and violence. We also admit that crime will continue in the short-term
- Change things immediately but gradually, with a vision of willingness and vigilance, working together we could accomplish much.
- Get some of the perpetrators to change but the authorities can make a difference in the situation

4. But with God's help we hope to accomplish the following:

- Unity
- Put things in place for transitioning
- Significantly reduce crime and violence
- Assist in strengthening the family structure
- Bring about a positive change in society regarding crime and violence
- Develop a system of inclusion – that especially reaches those who are most in need of help
- Establish a code of ethics for media personnel to stop the negative and dangerous style of reporting
- Force the hands of the executive to put programmes in place to ensure that the education curriculum facilitates the reduction in crime and violence
- create a sense of community – of being each other's keeper
- create a new society
- Agitate enough to bring the authorities to the awareness that this is time to change
- Do our part to collaborate with other stakeholders to share information and resources to foster change
- As Christians, we must be witnesses to demonstrate a model of non-violence and a model of decency in our community.

EVALUATION

Participants were asked to draw themselves and use the parts of their body to represent their responses to the following questions:

1. How have the proceedings affected your – Head/Mind?
2. Did I learn anything new, were my views reinforced – Gut?
3. What hit me in the pit of me – stomach?
4. What am I taking away, what do I plan to do – Feet

The statements below are some of the common responses with regard to the impact of the proceedings on the Head/Mind:

- The various presenters, and the conference on the whole was very informative. Greater wisdom and knowledge on crime and violence was gained.
- The more awareness of statistics on crime in the country and the factors that contribute to crime and violence
- More knowledge of the NGOs in SVG
- It was interesting to know that most criminals who commit heinous crime are normal and not mentally ill
- To begin to think about how an individual can bring change to society
- There is now a better understanding of crime in St. Vincent
- Knowledge is gained of how crime can affect society and how society changes over time.
- There is greater understanding of the role of the police force and the mechanisms that are in place to fight and deter crime
- The conference has brought greater awareness of solutions
- The presenters were very knowledgeable. The guest speaker was very good.

These statements are what participants gave as their “gut” responses:

- Learned that actions are being taken to address crime and violence but there needs to be more investments in fighting crime.
- Reinforcing of views such as idleness will lead to crime

- Impressed by the work of the NGO
- If the 17-20 age group become employed, crime would decrease
- The soap box debriefing
- Reinforced the need for statistics
- The situation is not yet chronic and can be addressed
- The testimony of a victim who was further victimized
- The family structure is the key to fight crime and violence
- The extent of abuse and the abusive nature of the society

These are the statements which reflect what hit participants in “the pit” of their stomach:

- Struck by the level of child abuse, incest and overall sexual abuse within the society and the little that is being done to expose what is happening.
- Scary to note that as a society measures are not being put in place to curtail crime and violence – the situation may become chronic to the extent that the military will have to solve the problem
- The drug culture and the broader issues
- The contribution of a participant who spoke on sexual abuse
- The sickness and grossness of incest
- There is need for more parenting programmes

Takeaways and future actions - what do you plan to do – the Feet!

- There is need for a conversation among vulnerable groups and young people
- This conversation has provided a broader understanding of what is happening in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the need to do the best for the country
- The more we are isolated, the less we appreciate others. There is need for collaboration among all stakeholders
- Increased knowledge and understanding of the issue of Crime and Violence in St. Vincent and the Grenadines
- Better understanding of the state of laws related to crime and violence
- The imperative to continue the dialogue and discourse with others around us

- To be committed to becoming an advocate against crime and violence
- A greater collaborative effort can reduce crime
- The entire society must help to solve the problem

REPORT CONCLUSION

This two-day Conversation has delineated the multifaceted nature and complexity of the crime situation in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. However, the dialogue has been invaluable since it has given every stakeholder the vision within which to “imagine a safe and just St. Vincent and the Grenadines”.

In seeking to effectively address the crime problem, one of the most salient ideas emerging from the discussion was that “this is not an event but a discourse. It must be sustained.” It is clear that the road ahead will not be easy but the solutions discussed during this conversation constitute the substance of powerful actions that, if implemented, will indeed create a new St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Central to this quest is the fact that “All of us have a part to play”.

In closing, Mr. Ronnie Daniel said a special thank you to Professor Anthony Harriott in absentia since he had to travel on the morning of Day 2. The song Let There Be Peace on Earth was sung and was followed by a closing prayer led by Bishop Leopold Friday.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Further to the National Conversation on Crime and Violence, that the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Christian Council in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, convenes a follow up Conference for Secondary School students.
2. That a National Youth Service Programme to assist young people in gaining relevant life skills and competencies be introduced. The conceptualisation, design, and implementation of such programme should consider the emerging crime situation and any likely medium-and long-term consequence of this trend. This should be facilitated by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Churches and private and public sector entities.

3. That the member Churches of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Christian Council use their media programmes to educate the public on matters related to crime prevention and encourage other Churches to do the same.
4. That Religious Education be reintroduced as part of the curriculum in Secondary School.
5. That careful consideration be given to further amend, where appropriate and desirable, the Noise Control Act of 1988, and other relevant legislation to regulate noise emanating from public and private vehicles.
6. That the Govt. of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in dialogue with all stakeholders, change the age of consent to 18 years.
7. That the Govt. of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in partnership with relevant stakeholders, establish a Legal Aid programme, to assist the most vulnerable of its citizens and individuals in accessing basic legal services. (*Delegates of the Conference noted the existence of an OECS Mediation Programme but were unsure of its reach and impact*).
8. That the Govt. of St. Vincent and the Grenadines introduces an Office of Ombudsman to investigate matters of critical national importance that may arise from time to time with the view of making recommendations to enhance access to, and the delivery of justice.
9. That Govt., through relevant state agencies, considers the setting up of a Hotline to report suspected incidences of abuse including but not limited to incest, intimate partner violence and child abuse.
10. That greater efforts be made by the Public and Private sectors to provide life-skills for young people beyond stipend fuelled internship programmes that are relevant to the development of the individual and the society.

APPENDICES

Amt.	Organisation	Title	First Names	Last Names
7	Anglican Church	Mr.	Milton	Browne
		Ms.	Gillian	Griffith
	Anglican Church	Mr.	Keown	Mandeville
		Archdeacon	Everton	Weekes
		Mr.	Nigel	Weekes
		Ms.	Joy	Cato
		Ms.	Judy	Weekes
2	Association of Evangelical Churches	Pastor	Wade	Carter
		Pastor	Shakika	Fraser
1	Athletics Association	Ms.	Chantel	Legair
3	Barrouallie Technical Institute	Ms.	Deanna	Douglas
		Ms.	Deon	Fraser
		Ms.	Justhyn	Ollivierre
3	Bethel High School	Ms.	Gelann	Malcolm
		Ms.	Veronica	Young
	Bethel High School Counsellor	Mr	Andrae	Jackson
3	Bishop's College Kingstown	Ms	Cassandra	Doyle
		Ms	Kayla	Joyette
		Ms	Eldonte	Samuel
1	Buccament Bay Secondary School	Ms	Carmel	Leach
1	Citizen	Mr	Frederick	Forbes
2	Cricket Association	Mr.	Cleton	Burnett
		Ms.	Tenisha	Smart
2	Democratic Republican Party	Mrs.	Anesia	Baptiste
		Ms.	Karima	Paris
3	Emmanuel High School	Ms	Shellurn	Andrews
		Ms.	Wendy	Davis - Pierre
		Ms.	Kenetta	Marshall
3	George Stephens Senior Secondary School	Mr.	Carlson	Frank
		Ms	Xegourney	Simmons
		Mrs.	Selda	Warrican-De Freitas
3	Georgetown Secondary School	Mr	Aaron	Da Souza
		Ms.	Annalita	Dublin
		Ms.	Oniefa	Nickie
1	Georgetown Technical Institute		Chevara	Seaton
3	Her Majesty's Prison	Mr	Brenton	Charles
		Mr	Brian	Charles
		Mr	Kenson	King
2	Human Rights Association	Ms.	La Fleur	Johnson
		Ms.	Silma	McLean
3	Intermediate High School	Ms	Megan	Andrews

		Mr.	Ralvin	Henry
		Ms.	Tianny	Pierre
3	J.P Eustace Memorial Secondary School	Ms.	Leonora	Ambris
		Ms	Delesha	Billinghurst
		Ms.	Niasha	Bobb
1	Kingstown Baptist Church	Pastor	Cecil	Richards
2	Kingstown Technical Institute	Mr.	Denzil	Nanton
		Mrs.	Gizla	Young
2	Marion House	Ms	Lois	Dublin
		Ms.	Asheika	Medica
1	Media House	Mr	Bernard	Joseph
6	Methodist Church	Ms.	Margaret	Allen
		Rev'd	Stilson	Cato
		Rev'd	Adolf	Davis
		Ms.	Jacintha	James
		Mr.	Aaron	Dougan
		Mr.	Bernard	Marksman
2	Ministry of National Reconciliation	Ms.	Sunara	Lewis
	Ministry of National Reconciliation	Ms.	Degra	Michael
2	Ministry of National Security	Mrs.	Trereca	Andrews
		Ms.	Callysha	Brown
1	National Commission on Crime Prevention	Ms.	Kimeon	Byron
3	National Council of Women	Mrs.	Ancelma	Morgan-Rose
		Ms	Coleen	Ollivierre
		Ms	Beverly	Richards
1	National Drum Foundation	Mr.	Edgar	Lewis
4	Ministry of National Mobilisation	Ms.	Fayon	Ambris
		Ms.	Lou- Ann	Boyde
		Ms.	Porsia	Cottle
		Ms.	Janiel	George
2	New Democratic Party	Mr.	Israel	Bruce
		Hon.	St. Clair	Leacock
1	Nyadinghi Order		Ras Izaras	Tafari
1	Ottey Hall	Mr.	Zemron	King
3	Pentecostal Assemblies of the West Indies	Pastor	Ezra	Cumberbatch
		Pastor	Stephen	Ollivierre
		Pastor	Elvin	Peters
3	Petite Bordel Secondary School	Mr.	Phyziah	Craigg
		Ms.	Maxzell	O'Garro
		Ms.	Heather	Stewart
1	Public Service Union	Ms.	Javelle	Frank

6	Roman Catholic Church	Mr	Ronald	Browne
		Ms.	Catherine	Lewis
		Father	Peter	Okonkwo
		Rev'd	Victor	Peters
		Ms	Christine	Walcott
		Dr.	Jason	Young
5	RSVG Police Force	Mrs.	Nekisha	Andrews - Laynes
		Mrs.	Ophelia	Foyle-Little
		Mr.	Frankie	Joseph
		Mr	Alex	Primus
		Mr.	McLeon	Williams
1	Salvation Army	Mr.	Pierre	Antoine
3	Seventh Day Adventist Church	Pastor	Dermoth	Baptiste
		Pastor	Terrance	Haynes
		Pastor	Ian	Williams
1	SSBQ / KCCSVG	Mr	Joel	Jack
3	St. Clair Deacon Secondary School	Ms.	Renisha	Ashton
		Ms.	Tamica	Free
		Ms.	Joanne	Haynes
3	St. Joseph Convent Kingstown	Ms	Ria	Adams
		Ms	Deborah	Liverpool
		Ms	Neisha	Young
4	St. Vincent Grammar School	Mr.	Ishatta	Da Silva
		Ms	Faith	Odle
		Mr	Justine	Douglas
		Mr.	Gabriel	Frederick
1	Sustainable Grenadines Inc.	Mr.	Audwin	Andrews
2	SVG Cadet Force	Mrs.	Altocha	Anderson- Ward
		Mr.	Alston	McPherson
2	SVG Football Federation	Mr	Yociah	Dascent
		Mr	Robertson	Henry
2	SVG Girls' High School	Mr.	Bradley	Brooker
		Ms.	Tiffany	Pierre
2	SVG Green Party	Mr.	Kadmiel	McFee
		Mr.	Ivan	O'Neal
5	SVGCC Div. Technical and Vocational Ed	Mr.	Kelson	Bowens
	SVGCC Div. Teachers	Ms	Clyornique	Durrant
		Ms	Clemica	Fergus
	SVGCC Div. Technical and Vocational Ed	Ms.	Zellon	Bristol
	SVGCC Div. Technical and Vocational Ed	Ms.	Morrissia	Williams

2	Teachers Union	Ms.	Maurissa	Horne
		Mr.	Jonathan	Robert
1	Union Island Environmental Attackers	Mr.	Roseman	Adams
2	Unity Labour Party	Mr.	Augustine	Ferdinand
		Mr.	Lerone	Isaacs
1	Vinsave C.D.C	Ms	Merleana	Williams
3	West St. George Secondary School	Ms	Zehonna	Garraway
		Ms.	La Vern	Simon
		Mr.	Nigel	Walters
8	Christian Council	Bishop	Leopold	Friday
		Mr.	Ronnie	Daniel
		Mr	Dick	Neverson
		Ms	Theresa	Adams
		Ms.	Dorothy	Hannibal
		Major	Pierre	Antoine
		Msgr.	Michael	Stewart
		Mr.	Austin	James
1	Facilitator	Mrs.	Ingrid	O'Marde
1	Key Note Speaker	Prof	Anthony	Harriot
1	Panelist	Mr	Brenton	Charles
1	Panelist	Mr.	Frankie	Joseph
1	Rapporteur	Ms	Ro-Anne	Harry
1	Rapporteur	Ms	Christobelle	Ashton
	Secretary	Ms.	Sapphira	Samuel
1	Secretariat	Ms	Shirla	Little
1	Secretariat	Ms	Verlene	Saunders
	Co-ordinator	Mr.	Godfrey	Samuel
1	Panelist	Ms	Deborah	Dalrymple
1	Panelist	MS	Kemecia	Blake - Byam
1	Panelist	Mr	Julian	Jack
1	Panelist	Ms.	Desree	Providence
1	Panelist	Ms.	Aphine	Simmons
1	Panelist	Mr.	Simeon	Green
1	Panelist	Mr.	Colin	John
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DAY ONE: WEDNESDAY, 18th APRIL

Chair: Pastor Terrance Haynes

Facilitator: Mrs. Ingrid O'Marde

Keynote Speaker: Professor Anthony Harriot

OPENING CEREMONY

9:00-9:05 – Invocation: – Revd. Shakika Fraser, Ass'n of Evangelical Churches

9:05 – 9:10 – The National Anthem (to be sung)

9:10 – 9:20 – Welcome – Pastor Terence Haynes, Seventh Day Adventist

9:20 – 9:30 – Remarks – Bishop C Leopold Friday, SVG Christian Council

9:30 – 9:40 – Cultural Item – Monologue - Mrs. Loren Da breo

9:40 – 9:55 – Brief Remarks – Hon. Dr. Godwin Friday, Leader of Opposition

9:55 – 10:10 – Brief Remarks – Hon. Dr. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister

10:10 – 10:15 – Introduction of Key Note Speaker – Mr. Ronnie Daniel

10:15 – 11:00 – Key Note Address – Prof. Anthony Harriot - Institute of
Criminal Justice and Security, UWI Mona

11:00 – 11:30 – Responses / Discussion

Vote of Thanks - Mr. Dick Neverson

11:30 – 11:45 – Break

11:45 – 11:50 – Soap Box – Link between Drugs & Violence – Mr. Simeon Greene

11:55 – 1:00 – SESSION ONE PANEL DISCUSSION

“Contributing Factors to Crime and Violence”

- Socio-Cultural Issues: Mrs. Deborah Dalrymple
- Challenges Maintaining Law & Order: Mr. Frankie Joseph, Dep. Commissioner of Police
- Drug Culture/Trans-Border Issues – Kamecia Blake-Byam, RSS
- Level and Tone of Social/Political Discourse – Pastor Terrance Haynes

LUNCH – 1:00 P.M. – 1:45 P.M

1:45 – 2:00 – Soap Box – Women and Girls and Domestic Violence –
Ms. Aphine Simmons

2:00 – 2:20 - Presentation on the Reform of the Juvenile Justice System –Mrs. La
Fleur Quammie-Harry &Min. of National Mobilisation

2:20 – 3:20 – Group Work and Presentation

3:20 – 4:00 – Closing

DAY TWO: THURSDAY, 19th APRIL

9:00 – 9:15 – Summary of Day One – Rapporteurs

9:15 – 9:35 – A theological Reflection on Crime & Violence – Rev. Adolf Davis

9:35-9:50 – The Work of NGOs - Ms. Jeanie Ollivierre

9:50 – 10:00 – Soap Box – The Web of Crime – Mr. Edgar Lewis

10:10 – 11: 00 – SESSION TWO PANEL DISCUSSION

“Legislation, Policy and Rehabilitation”

- The State of Laws related to Crime and Violence – Mr. Julian Jack
- Barrister and Solicitor
- Policies on Crime and Violence: How well are they working? – Mr. Colin John, Commissioner of Police
- Relationship between Mental Health and Crime – Dr. Karen Providence, Registrar in Psychiatry
- Rehabilitation and the Society – Mr. Brenton Charles, Superintendent of Prisons

11:30 – 11:45 - Break

11:45 – 1:00 – GROUP WORK

LUNCH – 1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.

1:45 – 2:00 – Soap Box – Grass Men (documentary)

2:00 – 3:10 – Group Work and Presentation

3:10- 4:00 – Closing Exercise