

## **THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY – An Expose'**

The inclusion in the first ever NDC budget for 2023 of an allocation for the establishment of a new industry – “THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY”, also called the ORANGE ECONOMY; followed by public discussion and consultation and the recent workshop on the workings and implementation strategy in moving forward with an ACTION PLAN; is indicative that we are advancing from an exporter of raw material into an intellectual era of creativity.

In this regard talent, artistry and (poetic) ideas and performance (theatre), including computer wizards, playwrights, authors and even architecture are given recognition as an industry of national significance, that could make a difference in raising the bottom line to Grenada's economic fortunes.

The quantum leap by government and its leadership cannot go unmentioned, and could be described as a “flash of genius”- when compared to the modus operandi of our recent post-colonial, run of the mill political actors, whose ambition is personal political power and not empowerment of the people ((Echoes of the political journey of Delma Thomas), as we yearn for prosperity, social justice and the eradication of poverty.

Jamaica – over the years, has led the way in the English speaking Caribbean-promoting CULTURE, especially the music industry, and how it has been harnessed into an international product for export, with the (huge) economic benefits that continue to be derived by the music and lyrics of Bob Marley, the Whalers and others in the global arena, that has catapulted Jamaica – a relatively small nation, as a cultural icon together with sports (Unison Bolt) on the international stage.

In Grenada until now, the recognition and appreciation of our history, heritage and culture, as the intangible elements in our Grenadian Identity – has not been recognized by our politicians as a factor in nation building. This consequential oversight has played a decisive role in the rate and quality of our development – even as we approach our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of political independence on February 7<sup>th</sup> 2024, as Caribbean history and civics - continue to be excluded from our school curricula, with its obvious negative impact on the conduct of our youth.

In the opening paragraph, mentioned is briefly made of architecture as part of the Creative Industry. This discipline is a CIVIC ART that resonates in all our human relations, and although not prominent in the conversations so far, it must be recognized as the underpinning of our “Social Infrastructure” – and has been referred to as “the Mother of ART”, as it provides the physical space and social environment for all our human pursuits. “When designed well”, as Eric Klinenberg-in his Palaces for the People – opined: “it promotes community and enhances civic life.”

In light of the above and in recognition of the changing dynamics of our time, opportunity is taken to congratulate the NDC government under the leadership of Prime Minister Dickon

Mitchell in leading us into the age of enlightenment and creativity, “as we aspire build and advance as one people”.

Norris Mitchell – President Emeritus the Willie Redhead Foundation

6<sup>th</sup> June, 2023