

STATEMENT ON IWC 2001

by
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BACKGROUND

For the past 8 years, Dominica has taken positions at the IWC that have been most closely associated with the positions held by those countries interested in the recommencement of commercial whaling, in stopping the establishment of whale sanctuaries and in downplaying the importance of whale-watching as the most sustainable use of whales. The countries that have taken the lead on these positions at the IWC are, Japan and Norway.

Since 1992, three different Dominican Governments have taken these positions. Each Administration has claimed that the country's votes at the IWC were in the best interest of Dominica and were based on the scientific data and not on the promise of aid from Japan. The construction of a US\$18.6 million Fisheries Complex with Japanese Government aid on the Dame Eugenia Boulevard in Roseau remains the most tangible evidence of possible benefit related to Dominica's participation at the IWC.

Along with the majority of nations at the IWC, the Dominica Conservation Association and for the past three years, the Dominica Hotel and Tourism Association, has taken the position that membership in the IWC is not remotely as critical to the country's development as membership and participation in other key organizations such as, the O.E.C.S., the University of the West Indies, the various UN Agencies, to name a few.

The position is even more pertinent when we recall that membership in the IWC involves an annual fee of 21,567.00 Pounds Sterling (approximately EC\$85,000.00) at a time when we are in arrears on payments to several important sub-Regional, Regional and International organizations (???) more directly linked with economic prospects for the people of Dominica.

DOMINICA, WHALES AND THE IWC

In the context of this discussion regarding the implications of Dominica's involvement with the IWC for the country, we recall that the IWC is an organization that was set up by whaling countries to regulate that industry in the face of depleted whale stocks. In light of this, an obvious question that arises is, ... "If Dominica has never been engaged in commercial whaling, why do we belong and participate in that organization?"

The first time around, we were coaxed and facilitated into joining the IWC by international NGO's intent on getting the IWC to support the protection of the world's whale population through a ban on commercial whaling. The second time around, Dominica was coaxed and facilitated into rejoining the IWC by pro-whaling nations to cast votes that would block the establishment of whale sanctuaries.

The first time around, Dominica's vote seemed consistent with what by then was the country's unique tourism image as a "nature island" able to offer a different experience to the visitor arising from a commitment to the protection and conservation of habitats and wildlife. The second time around, the vote seemed to depart from that "nature island" image and legacy.

All independent nations enjoy the privilege and responsibility of participating in international for of their choosing. There are dozens of international organizations that a country can choose to join. For small, developing countries, one of the most vital considerations in making that decision, is the extent to which the country's international association will advance its domestic agenda in such areas as trade, aid, investment, training, etc.. In that regard, since Dominica has never been a whaling country, a legitimate question can be, what is the domestic agenda driving our participation in a forum dealing with issues of commercial whaling?

The answer to that question has its beginning several years ago (1989) thanks to the pioneering work of Fitzroy Armour who started recording whale sightings in our waters noting frequency, location and species. Soon, scuba divers in Dominica were being exposed to whales as an added bonus to their planned diving trip. Later (1993), with the assistance of IFAW, special techniques for whale watching in Dominica were developed and dive shop personnel were trained to maximize sightings in ways that were sensitive to the behaviour of these mammals. Several local dive shops started marketing the activity of whale watching which then became a new and unique element of the Dominica tourism experience. In fact, in just seven years (1992 to 1999), this activity moved from earning EC\$40,000.00 per year to EC\$1,200,000.00 per year.

It seems clear that if participation in the IWC has any sustained material relevance for Dominica, it would have to be in promoting the advancement of whale watching, a fast-growing segment of the tourism sector that will create more jobs, earn foreign exchange and expand local investment in the economy.

SANCTUARIES, CONSERVATION AND DOMINICA

On the question of sanctuaries, Dominica has always been and still is, the logical proponent of this measure for the protection of endangered species and their habitats. The reason is very simple. Dominica is the one country in the Caribbean where the establishment of sanctuaries for water, trees and wildlife has been standard procedure for over 50 years. Our extensive system of forest reserves and national parks covers close to 30% of the island's total landmass, one of the highest in the Region and certainly, one of the highest in the world.

The success of this strategy of establishing sanctuaries on land has recently been extended to the establishment of the country's first marine reserve in the south of the island.

Dominica is, therefore, no stranger to the benefits of sanctuaries as the basis for the conservation of vital natural resources such as soil, trees and water, which are crucial to the prospects for agriculture, health, housing, tourism and recreation. Substantial work

has been done here and globally, to establish the direct links between the protection and conservation of natural resources and the prospects for sustainable development. Notable among these initiatives are: the 1967 Shankland and Cox Report; the 1992 UNCED Program of Action, Agenda 21; the 1994 National Environmental Action Plan; the 1994 Program of Action of the UN Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States; the National Biodiversity Strategy now being prepared by the Environmental Coordinating Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture; the O.E.C.S. Environmental Charter; and others.

The successful promotion of Dominica for over 30 years, as The Nature Island of the Caribbean is due directly to the vision and persistence of the foresters, scientists, conservationists and others who have pioneered this strategy of sustainable development through the conservation and management of natural resources locally and globally.

In fact, Dominica has strongly signaled its commitment to environmental stewardship locally and globally, by signing on to important international agreements such as the Convention on Biodiversity and, the Framework Convention on Climate Change. The clear message that we have sent to the world is that while we will continue to care for and manage our national resources, we are also committed to playing our part internationally for the proper conservation and management of the Earth's resources for the benefit of all of humanity now and in the future.

If we participate in this year's IWC, there is, therefore, every reason for Dominica to be one of the leading proponents for the extension of this successful strategy of sustainable management of protected areas and species to the Southern Pacific and to other parts of the Earth. **SCIENCE, SANCTUARIES AND SOLIDARITY**

There are some who tell us that the scientific data supports the killing of whales while not supporting the establishment of sanctuaries. We should also be reminded that the majority of countries participating in the IWC have SUPPORTED the establishment of sanctuaries. In fact at last year's IWC (2000), 18 countries supported the establishment of the Pacific Sanctuary BASED ON THE AVAILABLE SCIENTIFIC DATA. At that same meeting 11 countries (including 6 OECS countries), VOTED AGAINST the establishment of the sanctuary. Why did the majority vote not prevail? Simply, under the rules of the IWC, there must be a 75% majority for the establishment of a sanctuary. In spite of the majority in support of the Sanctuary, it was 6 votes short of passage. Who are these countries that support and oppose the sanctuary? Well, included among the countries supporting the establishment of the Pacific Sanctuary BASED ON THE SCIENTIFIC DATA, are the United Kingdom, France, the United States of America, New Zealand and Australia, to name a few. Included in the list of countries opposing the sanctuary are Japan and Norway. All these countries have substantial national scientific capability in the relevant areas of competence for the IWC deliberations.

It can be submitted that the scientific capability of these countries (all former whaling countries) is at par with each other. It must mean therefore, that Dominica and the other OECS States participating in the IWC, have taken our cue from an assessment of scientific data by the significant minority at the IWC i.e. the five nations besides the six of us who voted against the establishment of a whale sanctuary in the South Pacific.

In this regard, as Dominica establishes its independent position at the IWC as in other fora, we remind ourselves and others that it was outstanding science and outstanding local scientists who were instrumental in establishing the strategy of terrestrial sanctuaries as an effective means of maintaining a healthy natural resource base for agriculture, tourism and the general development and health of the people of this island. That admirable track record makes a resounding call for an approach to the management of natural systems that is based on conservation, protection and proper management of fragile resources by people, for people.

In light of this, at the IWC, Dominica should be a logical supporter of the establishment of protected areas **IN KEEPING WITH THE ISLAND'S ENVIABLE TRACK RECORD AS A PLACE WHERE NATURE IS CONSERVED AS THE BASIS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.**

THE PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE

In this regard, it is worth noting that one of the cardinal principles of sustainable development is the PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE (See Principle 15 of Agenda 21) which notes that in the face of a dispute about data, decisions favour caution, discretion and non-extraction.

It is also worth noting that, contrary to the claims of Japan's scientists, the growing body of data on the status of minke whales, in particular, indicate that the species IS in a severely depleted state and in need of protection.

GLOBALIZATION AND THE NEW SOVEREIGNTY

This is about Dominica taking a position that is in Dominica's interest and this, notwithstanding the fact that environmentalists and several major nations of the world also believe that conservation of special areas and species is a proven strategy for ensuring the well being of humans and the natural systems vital to their survival.

The sovereignty of our nation is under attack, not by NGOs, but by the WTO, the FTAA, the FATF, and the OECD. Governments that give in to these institutions give up our sovereignty. Governments that vote one way in order to get the promise of aid, violate our sovereignty. In contrast, Governments that have the vision and courage to prepare and persist with proven development strategies that work for our people, are protecting and consolidating our dignity and self-determination.

In this regard, what about the views and development aspirations of the people of the Pacific? We would have taken serious objection to any effort at preventing us from establishing the Morne Trois Piton National Park, the Morne Diablotin National Park, the Cabrits National Park or the Soufriere, Scottshead, Marine Reserve. We would have considered that an affront to our national pride and right to self-determination. The Dominica Labour Party call for the establishment of the Caribbean as a zone of environmental protection. The Governments of CARICOM have for years, called for the Caribbean to be a nuclear-free zone. The people of the Pacific ask for no less than respect for their right to determine how to protect global resources that are directly vital to their economic well being.

It is worth noting that the Caribbean has for many years now, condemned the passage through the Caribbean Sea, of ships carrying spent and re-processed nuclear materials moving between Japan and Europe. Our right to protect our seas and people from major nuclear accidents has been championed by all the Governments of the Region. We as a people are violated every time those ships transit the Region, in open defiance of our Governments' position and our peoples' safety.

DEVELOPMENT: THE MEANING OF SUSTAINABILITY FOR DOMINICA

The development issues raised by the IWC are primarily: how we as a people and a nation view ourselves; how we view the resources of the Earth (Apres Bon Dieu cest L'ater); how we respect and build upon our history and tradition of care and management of these resources; how we strengthen our ability to patiently develop economic opportunities from the resources that we have learned to conserve; how we deepen and extend the successful promotion of our island as THE quintessential nature destination of the Caribbean; how we convert that unique image into a major economic breakthrough in tourism, health, nutrition, organic agriculture, renewable energy and a genuine culture of democracy that guarantees economic sustainability of, for and by the people.

The real meaning of these issues is not that they define what we feel about whales, or Japan or Green peace, or anybody else. The real meaning of these issues is that we seize the opportunity to convert the notion of "nature island" into a comprehensive development strategy for Dominica that gives us the competitive and comparative edge that secures our sustainable development for generations to come.

We are best able to do this because we are the Region's leaders in conservation and management of specially protected areas. In more recent times, Dominicans have established some of the best-managed and regulated terrestrial parks and marine scuba diving businesses anywhere in the world. Dominica has recently had one of its National Parks declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and the island is consistently listed as one of the top five dive destinations in the world.

This is not an accident. This is instead, the direct result and continuation of a long and proud tradition of sensible and sensitive management of our natural resources by our people, for the economic benefit of our people.

It is not an accident that over the last few years when the actions of the large industrialized nations and the WTO have traumatized our banana industry and more recently, our fledgling off-shore sector, it is nature-based tourism that has earned over EC\$100 million per year, employing over 2,000 persons full-time and contributing EC\$35 million to direct public revenues in 1999.

Conservation and the effective management of natural systems does result in DIRECT ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO PEOPLE. Dominica's nature-based tourism demonstrates that sustainable development is possible and can be extended to agriculture, health and other sectors.

In the context of the IWC, this tradition of economic sustainability can continue to find expression if we remain consistent and support the creation of these specially protected areas called sanctuaries and stand strongly for the protection of whales and other endangered species that inhabit these areas in Dominica as in other parts of the Earth.

THIS APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT IS NOT SHORT TERM, IT DEMONSTRATES VISION, REQUIRES PLANNING, DEMANDS LEADERSHIP AND, IT WORKS. Dominica's tourism is living proof of that. The challenge and the task is to apply these same principles of vision, leadership and planning to the other sectors of the economy.

THE ECONOMIC TRADE-OFFS: HOW WE CARE FOR OUR FUTURE BY MANAGING OUR PRESENT

Sometimes, the economic argument for conservation is clouded by the more spectacular action associated with the extraction of resources as in mining and logging or the construction of large buildings as opposed to the more careful management of parks and other whole systems for the sustainable generation of income and livelihoods for present and future generations.

Over the years, Dominica has quietly demonstrated that the sensible management of natural systems has allowed us to generate significant economic benefit. In 1999, EC\$131 million was earned from nature tourism as people come to Dominica from many other countries primarily to hike, dive, snorkel and just relax in a setting of exquisite, natural peace and quiet. Incidentally, many of these visitors came from the same countries that are SUPPORTING the establishment of the Pacific Sanctuary for whales (Britain, France, Germany, the United States). It is also true that the people who buy and consume our main export, bananas, come from Britain, a country that believes that the scientific data supports the establishment of a whale sanctuary in the Pacific.

On the other hand, Japan and Norway purchase precious little from Dominica (in the year 2000, EC\$15,356 for Japan and EC\$0 for Norway as compared, for example, with EC\$36,063,973 for UK). In that same year, we sent EC\$24,987,126 to Japan to purchase cars and other depreciating assets. If we allowed ourselves for a moment, to determine our position on this and other international issues, based on raw economic benefit, the trade data suggest that our interests lie in cooperation and collaboration with countries like UK with whom we have favourable trade balances and not with the manufacturers and exporters of Japan.

Data from the Central Statistical Office of the Government of Dominica indicate the following:

Japan has enjoyed a favourable trade balance with Dominica of

- EC\$14,509,991 in 1995
- EC\$19,386,724 in 1996
- EC\$15,845,291 in 1997
- EC\$16,889,318 in 1998
- EC\$10,314,371 in 1999

- EC\$5,315,435 in 2000
Totaling, EC\$82,261,130 for the six-year period.

In the face of these data, even senior member of the Japanese delegation to the IWC, Mr. Joji Mushita, believes that our economic realities dictate that we vote with the countries buying our goods and services.

What then is the explanation for our position on the Sanctuary at the IWC?

I return to our first point. Some argue that Dominica has voted the way we have for the past 8 years because it has been in the country's economic interest. The trade data with Japan does not support this claim. The logic behind this claim seems to be that in this new globalized world economy, small, poor countries must be prepared to "take what we can get even if it means trading off the one thing which gives us equal rank with other countries of the world, our vote at international fora".

Well, not only does this make a mockery of the 'sovereignty' argument, but, we can ask, "What have we got for 8 years of voting at the IWC?" How has it benefited Dominica, to take positions at the IWC that are directly counter to the island's trading interests and our tradition and track record of the development of protected areas for people, plants and animals?

Let us examine the facts. In the mid-nineties, Japanese aid allowed the construction of a fisheries complex in the constituency held by the then sitting Prime Minister, Hon. Mary Eugenia Charles. Japanese aid for the construction of a second fisheries complex was promised to Prime Minister Edison James in the late nineties. That facility was to be built in Mr. James' constituency. That facility was never built. Japanese aid was then promised to the late Prime Minister Roosevelt Douglas. The facility was to be built in Mr. Douglas' constituency.

There is a pattern here of aid and the promise of aid, for projects that move around depending on the location of the Prime Minister's constituency and not according to any reasoned plan for the development of the fisheries sector.

I recall that last year (2000) when the Japanese Ambassador to Dominica came to see me as then Minister of Agriculture, I shared with him the details of the plans for development of Dominica's fisheries sector. That plan had been the subject of years of preparation by technicians and planners at the national and OECS level and had by then was a full section of the proposed OECS Development Strategy. I recall that during the time that I was sharing this information, the Ambassador was looking out the window of my Office. When I was through, he looked at me and said, "Fisheries Complex!"

He had come to having already decided what it is Dominica needed. That was the last I saw of the Ambassador from Japan.

Quite apart from the obvious political implications of a foreign Government wanting to decide for another Government what were its development needs, let us examine this

pattern of aid giving from the point of view of net economic impact on the recipient country.

The one fisheries complex that has been built in Roseau cost US\$18.6 million (approx. EC\$45,000,000.00). Half of the building is devoted to office and meeting space for the 20 members of staff of the Fisheries Division. The other half is devoted to the provision of cold storage space that has been rented out to private importers of frozen products and, retail space for the sale of fish.

The value of that complex is approximately equivalent to half of Dominica's trade deficit with Japan over the period 1995 to 2000. Put another way, that is the cost of 1800 vehicles at an average price of EC\$25,000.

Where does the money come from to purchase these goods from Japan? It comes from trade with Britain, France, the United States and other countries. Many of these countries are convinced that the scientific data available at the IWC supports the establishment of the whale sanctuary in the South Pacific.

The trade data tell the story:

- In 1995, the value of exports to Britain was EC\$46, 533,187
- In 1996, the figure was EC\$49,211,518
- In 1997, the figure was EC\$45,488,873
- In 1998, the figure was EC\$41,365,645
- In 1999, the figure was EC\$40,770,465
- In 2000, the figure was EC\$35,862,752

The question is, how has Dominica benefited from persisting with a voting pattern at the IWC that is in direct contradiction to our clear trading and economic interests and in contradiction to our tradition and strategy of protection, conservation and sustainable management of natural areas on land and in the sea?

One can surmise that prior to the emergence of the WTO, special agreements between Britain and her former colonies facilitated special protected trade relations. Since the WTO, these protected arrangements are no longer sacred. The fate of bananas and the challenges to the offshore financial sector reveal the impact of the new world economic order on small economies like Dominica. It is not reasonable to expect that Britain or any other traditional trading partner will risk further WTO-driven trade retaliation in order to protect us.

An equally important question is, how has Dominica earned the foreign exchange that has been used to pay for these and other exports? The answer is by using the island's natural resources to produce agricultural goods and a unique tourism experience.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM

In recent years, the largest share of Dominica's foreign exchange has been earned from agriculture and tourism. the latter, most directly the result of the practice of creating and managing parks, reserves and protected areas.

To put these economic issues in even more current perspective for Dominica, in 1999, the country earned EC\$45,533,187 from export of bananas and other commodities and, EC\$131,000,000.00 from tourism. That is, in one year, banana earnings equaled the value of the Roseau fisheries complex and tourism earnings were three times the value of the fisheries complex.

Eighty-five percent of that money earned by tourism was directly attributable to stay-over tourism or, the visitors who come to Dominica precisely to enjoy the natural environment of the island that is directly linked to the last 60 years of conservation and protection policies and programs. Some 2000 Dominicans were directly employed by the tourism sector while close to 2000 farmers were on record as selling bananas to the DBMC in that year. Where do the economic interests of the people of Dominica and the Dominican economy lie? Is it in more fisheries complexes or in the diversifying and strengthening of the agriculture and tourism sectors, both of which will generate demand for the goods and services of all other sectors?

Who benefits from the nature tourism product? The tour companies, taxi operators, dive and whale watch operators, tour guides, hotel and restaurant owners and workers, musicians, vendors, club and bar owners as well as the Government Treasury (EC\$35 million) are all beneficiaries of this NATURE TOURISM. If we can resolve the difficulties facing the banana sector and the manufacturing sector, while we strengthen and extend the tourism sector, Dominica would be well on its way to sustainable prosperity.

SILENT TRUTHS

There is a silent truth that needs to be shared. There are many thousands of Dominicans who, without being aware of it, benefit today from the practice of conservation and protection started over 60 years ago. Witness the fact that as many other Caribbean countries have suffered from the severe effects of drought this year, Dominica though affected, has not experienced the acute crisis that has plagued some of our neighbours.

This legacy of being concerned about our environment and protecting our plants and wildlife habitats has served Dominica well. As Dominicans, we have to think long and hard about how much aid it would take to make us turn away from that path of sustainability.

When there is only a trickle of bilateral aid and further, when our balance of trade worsens with the very country that wishes us to turn away from that legacy, the choice is easy. Dominica, the Nature Island supports sanctuaries, and opposes the decimation of endangered species at home and abroad. Dominica is and will remain a leader along the road to sensible and equitable development. The legacy of the Nature Island is NOT FOR SALE.

There is another silent truth that we must face up to. The European Union, not Japan, is the largest external aid donor to Dominica, the African, Caribbean and Pacific States. EC\$134,686,700 between 1991 and 2001 compared with EC\$40,842,600 from Japan.

EU assistance, like all aid, is also tied to conditions. These conditions, however, do not require us to turn away from policies and practices that are tried and proven. The aid is not given on condition that we support the policies of the countries of the European Union. The aid is available under terms and conditions that DOMINICA WAS A PART OF NEGOTIATING. This a very different arrangement compared to what we are required to do at the IWC in order to get Japanese aid.

HARSH REALITIES

As we approach the next IWC meeting in London in July, we should examine these issues very carefully for yet another important reason. The IWC meeting convenes from the 23rd to the 27th July. During that time, our Commissioner would have voted on the resolution for establishment of the South Pacific Whale Sanctuary AND the South Atlantic Ocean Sanctuary that is being sponsored by Brazil, Argentina and several other countries of Latin America.

On the 27th July, the closing day of the IWC meeting, Dominica participates in a major 3-day Caribbean trade, investment and tourism promotion activity organized by CARICOM and the Commonwealth Secretariat, CARIBBEAN EXPO 2001. The theme selected for the Dominica booth at that event is “Dominica, the Nature Island”.

The same travelers, tour operators, international agencies and media that would have just witnessed our vote at the IWC must now be encouraged to continue to trade with us, to invest in our economy and to book their next holiday in Dominica, the Nature Island. In business, one of the cardinal rules is, the customer is always right. Are we ready for customers who are convinced that the right thing to do is to support the establishment of sanctuaries for whales and other species?

TOUGH CHOICES

Ultimately, the choice is ours. We can abandon the proud legacy of conservation and protection that has left us with a real chance for sustainable development or, we can find partners who identify with and respect our own traditions of natural resource conservation through protection, to strengthen our nature-based tourism that has strong links with a new, clean agriculture, health, education, research and recreation for Dominicans. And visitors alike.

We can agree to use the most modern technologies of information management and dissemination to convert into reality, the vision of the late Prime Minister Douglas and Prime Minister Pierre Charles, of Dominica as the Nature Island of the World.

As we do all this, we can really test the extent of external support for Dominica and determine once and for all if the promise of aid is linked to our vote or if support to our development is based on mutual respect and a genuine desire to help Dominicans develop our island as we determine.

Remember, even as we have voted AGAINST Britain, France and others at the IWC, they have not stopped aid to Dominica. Remember also that the changed world economic order suggests that this arrangement is not likely to continue. By the same token, can we

expect Japanese aid to Dominica to arrive if Dominica votes with the majority at the IWC in SUPPORT OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC WHALE SANCTUARY? This is a test of the basis for the relations between our two nations.

VISION AND LEGACY

There are some who wish us to believe that the sum total of the vision and legacy of the late Prime Minister Douglas was the extent to which he was willing to go to get Japanese aid for Dominica.

This is a travesty and a great disservice to the life and work of a man who struggled persistently to establish the fact that as small as we were, we had to insist on our own view of the world. In these modern times, Prime Minister Douglas' vision was clearly stated over and over again:

- He insisted on a Government of national unity as the only way forward for Dominica. It is interesting that there is an unfolding effort in that regard in St. Lucia today. Maybe the presence of Mr. Carbon here tonight signals the coming to fruition of a Government of total unity involving all three political Parties.
- He saw the emergence of a global network of Labour/Democratic Socialist Parties in Government all over the world as being an exciting opportunity for small countries like Dominica to make use of the relations that he had spent so much of his life developing. These countries include, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Sweden, Canada, France and many others. We should take note of the position of these countries on such issues as the whale sanctuary.
- He was convinced that the unique location of Dominica between Martinique and Guadeloupe had to be turned to our special advantage by forging a special relationship with France that would give us direct access to one of the three biggest markets in the world, the European Union. France was the sponsor of the Southern Ocean Sanctuary which passed without the vote of Dominica, and France is a strong supporter of the South Pacific Whale Sanctuary.
- He conceived of that special relationship with France evolving into a special relationship with the European Union, our largest source of development assistance.
- He emphasized the power and allure of the Nature Island image of Dominica and was convinced that this needed to be turned to our advantage via organic farming, health tourism building on the legacy of another great Dominican, Ma Pampou to underscore the longevity benefits of clean living.
- He understood the relevance of the benign and non-polluting technologies of the information technology sector to create thousands of new jobs for Dominican youth while challenging them to become the brightest and best scientists that the Caribbean has produced. He understood the need to build the capability of our young people so that we would not have to depend on others to interpret the data that informs our decisions.

The late Prime Minister was also a realist and he realized that many of these development issues would have to be negotiated and that in negotiation there is always compromise. There is, however, no one who can claim that this man's vision for Dominica included

selling Dominica's name, dignity, sovereignty and vote to anyone for a 'few pieces of silver'. As the late Mike Douglas would say, "MAGWAYS!"

These are hard times but they cannot be hard enough to reduce the legacy of the late Prime Minister or the legacy of this great little country to a vote at the IWC in return for two more fisheries buildings. Dominica is bigger than that. Dominica is better than that. Dominica deserves more than that. Dominica deserves respect. Dominica is not for sale, NOW or EVER!

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