

**LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, THE MOST HONOURABLE PORTIA
SIMPSON MILLER**

NEW YEAR MESSAGE 2010

My Fellow Jamaicans,

As we begin yet another New Year, and as we step tentatively; perhaps even haltingly, across the threshold of this calendar demarcation, no doubt, many of us are contemplating what lies in store for us this year.

Evidently, for the vast majority of us Jamaicans, the anticipation which traditionally greets the dawning of a New Year has been tempered by the prevailing economic challenges which face the world and Jamaicans in particular.

Notwithstanding the mounting difficulties that the average Jamaican family is enduring, today IS, in fact, the start of a New Year.

Every New Year marks an opportunity to see things from a different perspective.

As a people we could choose to continue to expend valuable time and energy looking back and apportioning blame.

That, however, will achieve very little in terms of advancing our development.

So then, let us seize this new day, in this new month, in this New Year and New Decade, to make it our resolve to recommit ourselves in the interest of our country for a renewed effort for national development.

As we start this year, let us begin by taking responsibility, as individuals, as families and as a nation, for those things which are within our control.

First and foremost, let us determine that we WILL NOT lose HOPE, because desperation and surrender are completely uncharacteristic of the Jamaican people.

We are not unaccustomed to challenges, but we rise to every occasion and we ALWAYS overcome.

I recall the words of National Hero the Right Excellent Marcus Garvey when he said:

“Let me say to you that a greater future is in store for us; we have no cause to lose hope, to become feint hearted.”

Garvey continued: “We must realize that upon ourselves depend our destiny, our future; we must carve out that future; that destiny.”

Just as we struggled through slavery and Apprenticeship to Emancipation; through Colonialism to Independence.

And though we might have to struggle through this year, in the end, we will triumph.

Within us reside the indomitable survival instincts of our antecedents and forebears who survived the horrors of the plantations.

Within us lies the invincible fighting spirit of heroes and heroines, named and unnamed, who, despite apparently impossible odds, stood up to be counted for freedom, equal rights and social justice.

We owe it to their memories, to ourselves and our children, NEVER to lose HOPE and NEVER to surrender in the face of the challenges of our time.

We too must stand up and be counted for equal rights, equal opportunities, brotherhood, fairness and justice.

The only path that we can take at this time is to insist on strong leadership. A leadership that is inclusive, compassionate, respectful and caring.

Let us recognize that there is but ONE JAMAICA and that wherever we travel, wherever we go, this Jamaica IS our homeland.

Whatever our gender, class, race, religion, political persuasion or social or economic status; our Motto calls us to be acknowledged as **“Out of many; One People”**.

The words of this simple song hold true:

*No man is an island,
No man stands alone,
Each man's joy is joy to me,
Each man's grief is my own.*

Let us resolve therefore, that despite the superficial labeling differences, we WILL be ONE JAMAICAN FAMILY and **“we will guard each man's dignity and save each man's pride”**.

Let us rise above the forces that seek to divide us and let us unite to trample our trepidations, tackle our troubles, and translate our tribulations into triumph.

For: indeed **“United we stand, but Divided, we will fall.”**

Over 70 years ago the Rt. Excellent Norman Manley said and I quote: ‘No amount of economic good will make our people a real unity.

All efforts will be wasted unless the masses of the people are steadily taken along the path in which they will feel more and more that this place is their home, that it is their destiny.

They will then do more for it, more work, more effort, more thinking, more sacrifice, more discipline, and more honesty than by any other measure you can bring in this country”. [END QUOTE]

He went on later to say he had hope in “The quality of the people of the land.

A people tough and resilient, taught by adversity to endure hardship with patience, given some special spirit of loyalty to inspire them in their devotion to the causes they espoused, a people well understanding right from wrong, well understanding decency in government, well understanding justice and the rule of law...”

Norman Manley’s faith in his people was well-placed.

My faith in you in our time is no different.

I affirm that:

- As a people, we are strong and resilient,
- we have a special spirit of loyalty to our country,
- we are inspired in our devotion to our development,
- **we understand right from wrong,**
- we understand decency in government,
- And, as a people, we understand justice and the rule of law.

My pledge to you this day, is that I will stand firmly with you as we take responsibility for our collective destiny as ONE people—united for the peace, progress and prosperity of every Jamaican citizen.

I invite all of you to make a similar pledge; assured that working together, we can all be triumphant.

In the words of our National Hero, Marcus Mosiah Garvey, we have:

“One God! One Aim and One Destiny!”

And I say to you – As One Jamaica, One Family, Let’s shape the future together.

May God bless you all and let us strive onward for the betterment of our country.