Puerto Ricans in the US Virgin Islands: Gov. Juan F. Luis Saldaña

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English Dept.
College of Humanities
Proyecto Diáspora
Inaugural Address

My fellow Virgin Islanders and Friends:

The day has come that brings with it great significance to the evolution of the Virgin Islands. I am privileged to stand before you, at this time, to address you, as your new Governor. I take great pride in the history of our people and the culture that this land has nurtured.

Today, we celebrate the inauguration of a new leader in our midst. Your support and trust in me is an honor I do not take lightly. I promise to serve you with honesty, integrity, and a commitment to the betterment of the Virgin Islands.

Our past is marked by resilience and determination. We have overcome adversity, and our future is bright. With your help, we can continue to build a brighter tomorrow.

I wish to express my gratitude to all who have supported me on this journey. Your understanding and encouragement have been invaluable.

I am committed to the principles of justice, equality, and opportunity for all Virgin Islanders. We must work together to ensure a brighter future for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve you. I will do my best to fulfill your expectations.

Governor Juan Luis

January 3, 1979
ST. THOMAS - ST. JOHN HOTEL ASSOCIATION salutes the administration of GOV. JUAN LUIS and LT. GOV. HENRY MILLIN

Distinguished ...And Not So

CONGRATULATIONS JUAN LUIS
New Administration Faces Myriad Problems

With the last strains of inaugural waltzes and military drumbeats now a lingering memory, public attention is turning to the agenda for action that now confronts Gov. Juan Luis.

Little has been heard from the governor in the two months between his election and his inauguration, either about his specific plans for solving the myriad problems facing the territory or about the people he will choose to help him solve them.

That is expected to change now that he has been sworn in as governor in his own right.

The problems facing the territory are so well known that a school child could recite the litany:

- Crime against person and property that, if unchecked, could prove disastrous, socially and economically.
- An educational system burdened with some double sessions, overcrowding, dilapidated schools, discipline problems and graduates who are often poorly prepared academically.
- Lack of adequate potable water on St. Thomas, with some residential areas and housing projects sometimes left without water for days on end.
- Frequent power outages.
- Woefully infrequent garbage collection on St. Thomas, a situation that has spurred some residents recently to resort to arson to overcome the health hazards created by piled-up garbage sitting for days in cans and bins.

Other problems are less immediate in terms of improving people's day-to-day lives but will require priority action. In this category are the need for continued management of the economy with an eye toward controlling growth, as Luis pointed out in his inaugural address, and the need for greater emphasis on planning to make the most of the limited resources on these small islands.

The question for Luis and Lt. Gov. Henry A. Millin seems simple, but there are no easy answers: How does one go about solving these complex and often interrelated problems?

New policies presumably will be sought, but a key, of course, is the people who are or will be—in charge of helping to devise plans of action and who are made responsible for carrying out those plans.

Several crucial Cabinet positions are vacant, namely the commissionships of public safety, education and commerce. They must be filled.

There also are persistent rumors that Luis may be considering a shake-up—though perhaps a gradual rather than an explosive personnel change in other Cabinet and Cabinet-level positions.

This rumor gained some credence after the private but official New Year's Day inauguration ceremony at Government House to which Cabinet members were not invited. Perhaps this was oversight, as one commissioner suggested privately, but other sources suggested that Luis did not want all of his cabinet members to get the false impression that they were witnessing something of which they would remain a part, and therefore did not invite any of them.

While Luis's choice of Amadeo Frankie Jr. for commerce commissioner is an open secret, there has been no indication of whether the two have come to an agreement on Frankie's conditions for accepting the job. Sources close to both believe the details have not been worked out, particularly on salary.

Frankie, who has 25 years of experience in economic development and tourism working for government and private industry in Puerto Rico, was a VIP guest at last week's inaugural festivities.

Meanwhile, Millin remains acting commissioner of commerce as he has been since the September departure of Augustine Rimpel Jr., who also was on hand for the inauguration.

If Luis has made a decision about perhaps the most important vacancy in his Cabinet—a public safety commissioner to replace Charles Groenewoldt, who stepped down last month—his choice is a well-guarded secret.

Several names have been bandied about, including that of Acting Commissioner Gaylord Sprauve, who reportedly will be endorsed by the police officers and sergeants, and Milton Branch, who was a special prosecutor for the U.S. Justice Department in the Fountain Valley case and later served as chief of the Law Department's Criminal Division.

However, Luis has given no sign as to whether he favors either one or someone else to help him fight what may be the most difficult battle of his administration—the battle against spiraling and increasingly violent crime.

It will not be an easy battle to win, if past experience is any indication. But crime is so intricately intertwined with economic progress because of the territory's dependence on tourism, that failure at least to keep the lid on crime—if not reduce it—could have untold economic repercussions that in addition to the obvious social ills that would stem from continued fear and unrest among Virgin Islanders and their visitors.

(Continued on Page S-19)
Parade And Speech
Watching In Frederiskted
“Les pido que se me unan en esta ocasión histórica para rededicarnos a unas virtudes simples y básicas: preocuparnos por, amar a, y ser generosos con nuestros conciudadanos.”

“Las virtudes más simples son aquellas que hoy más necesitamos si vamos a superar las fuerzas que nos dividen y a cultivar los valores que nos unen”
On Tourism and Economic Development
1983 Inauguration Edition

This is the complete text of Gov. Juan Luis' inaugural address delivered Jan. 3 in Emancipation Garden, St. Thomas.

Today as a new chapter in the political history of the Virgin Islands is being recorded, I invite you to share with me and Lt. Gov. Julio A. Brady the significance of this special day on which we take the oath of office.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of those individuals in the community who elected us to office - for without such support this inaugural day for us would not have been possible. Again I wish to take this opportunity to express to them our deepest thanks and appreciation.

Each moment in history is but a transitory time marked with varying perspectives. But some stand out as great moments in which courses are set that will shape the future of government and the course of our lives.

Today, I perceive forces in our beloved Virgin Islands now converging together that may make it possible for our deepest aspirations to be realized. Attainments that once seemed impossible are beginning to take shape all around us.

One has only to examine the overnight progress in the construction of public facilities on all three islands to see the ongoing progressive strides of our developing society.

Unfortunately, even the rapidity of the changes we see as a result of our impressive development is not fast enough to keep pace with some of our severe social and economic problems. But I am optimistic that we will continue to be successful in minimizing those remaining problems to acceptable levels. We will do so with God's help, with the help of our great nation, and with the help of the people of the Virgin Islands.

The chance to move swiftly again onto the high ground of continued progress begins today. This is our summons to move onto better times and greater things.

I know that Virgin Islanders are land acquisition program for our people. We have done so because we have recognized that without land, our explosive population growth will make it virtually impossible to implement the viable homeownership and agricultural programs so desperately needed to promote the pride of ownership of a part of one's homeland and to increase local food production.

We have managed, despite our economic problems, to maintain a relatively low, non-inflatory level of unemployment, which nevertheless we will continue to attempt to reduce to a more acceptable level.

We have created tough anti-crime laws calling for a host of stiff mandatory minimum sentences and have enhanced our crime fighting capabilities in our efforts to send to the criminal elements in this community that lawlessness will not be tolerated.

And while it is impossible to attain perfection in what we do, we have brought significant progress to most departmental areas of our government. Observing new ambulances, fire trucks, police cars, garbage trucks, specialized road-patching trucks, and grass cutters and hoses on our roads and highways is testimony to this fact.

Realizing that the task in continuing our progress to make our lives more secure has just begun anew, I now call upon all elected and appointed leaders, civic as well as private, to join forces together in a revitalized attack against our worst enemy, the social and economic problems that beset us.

I submit to you on this, inaugural day, that for my part I have again, with renewed spirit begun this attack. But realizing that much more remains to be done and requires the full cooperation of all, let us from this day on form a healthy working partnership to achieve these goals. For our part, Lieutenant Governor Julio Brady and I pledge to all we can to maintain this partnership and to work together with all committed groups of the public and private
University of the Virgin Islands
VI- STH Friendship Committee
Preguntas??