



GRENADA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

(HANSARD)

**First Session of the Tenth Parliament**

**OFFICIAL REPORT**

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**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Friday, 05<sup>th</sup> October, 2018

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**House of Representatives Meeting**  
**Held at the Parliament Building, Mt. Wheldale**  
**On Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 @ 9:00 a.m.**

**Attendance**

**PRESENT**

Senator the Honourable Chester A.A. Humphrey	-	Mr. President (In the Chair)
Senator the Honourable Simon Stiell	-	Minister for Climate Resilience, the Environment, Forestry, Fisheries, Disaster Management and Information
Senator the Honourable Norland Cox	-	Minister for Youth Development, Sports, Culture and the Arts
Senator the Honourable Judd Cadet	-	Member
Senator the Honourable Kim George	-	Member
Senator the Honourable Cathisha Williams	-	Member
Senator the Honourable Kerryne James	-	Member
Senator the Honourable Ron Livingston Redhead	-	Member
Senator the Honourable Christopher De Allie	-	Deputy President
Senator the Honourable Mondy André Lewis	-	Member

**ABSENT**

Senator Dr. the Honourable Winston Garraway	-	Minister of State wrf Disaster Management and Information
Senator the Honourable Glynis Roberts	-	Member <b>(Excuse tendered)</b>
Senator Dr. the Honourable Dunstan Campbell	-	Member <b>(Excuse tendered)</b>

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*Prayers  
Bills*

**The Sitting of the House of Representatives began at 9:00 a.m.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Good morning, Honourable Members. Please join with me, as we say together, the Lord's Prayer.

*(Prayers were said).*

**Mr. Speaker:** Pray be seated.

*(Sound of Gavel).*

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, this Honourable House is now in Session. Let me just say to you, Honourable Members, that this is a Special Sitting. So, the main... the substantive item today, the Representation of the People's Act (Amendment) is the main matter that would be discussed today.

**Clerk Assistant:** Item No. 3 - Bills.

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to introduce for first reading, the Bill for an Act shortly entitled, Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2018.

**Ag. Clerk:** A Bill for an Act to amend the Representation of the People Act, Cap. 286A shortly entitled, Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 2018.

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

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**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the appropriate Standing Order of the House be suspended in order to take the Bill through all stages at this Sitting.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Relevant Standing Order suspended.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

**Question proposed.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this particular amendment Bill was tabled before this Honourable House sometime in 2017. Mr. Speaker, as Leader of Government's Business, I had to withdraw the bill, because of the process with which Government undertook to go through with amendments of the People's Representation Act. It would entail, Mr. Speaker, collaborations with the Supervisor of Elections, and with all the Political Parties. We gave the undertaking that unless everyone was on board that we would not proceed. There was one particular Party, Mr. Speaker, from whom we did not get the written commitment, although it was given by word. I am happy to say today, Mr. Speaker, that we have everyone on board, and we will be proceeding with the Bill, Mr. Speaker.

The Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, that we are considering today will close a lot of areas of concern, pointed out by the various Political Parties, and readily agreed to by the Supervisor of Elections. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker,

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there are many procedural matters here that the Supervisor of Elections pointed out. The people would recall, Mr. Speaker, that notwithstanding we did not get agreement from all the Parties, there were areas that we must have amended and we did so, two small areas in order to make the elections full-proof, in the sense that we were doing everything legally, and it would withstand the challenges. So, we made these two (2) small amendments, and I don't think anyone disagreed with them, because there were no voices against it. But, the substantive motion of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, the substantive contents of this Bill is what we are addressing today, Mr. Speaker, and it is public record.

If we look at what we are doing today, Mr. Speaker, we would see that it is identical, except for one Clause that by Agreement we have removed from the amendment and which the public and their Social Partners and the others could look at, together with other amendments. And, that piece that we left out, it has to do with giving permission for people, those who really qualify to be able to vote and not to dip their fingers into the ink. It means you must have some serious complaints and that the contents of the ink would be damaging to your health, etcetera. But, this one, we have agreed to just remove it from the 2017 Bill. All the rest remains the same, Mr. Speaker.

If we look at Clause 1, Mr. Speaker, Clause 1 is the amending of Section 6 of the principal Act, and to provide for our Commonwealth citizens to sign upon registration under the Act, and electors to provide proof that he or she is ordinarily resident in that Polling Division, in that Constituency. We have heard the allegation and complaints that someone is not ordinarily resident in an area, yet they were allowed to register in that area. So, this particular amendment, Mr. Speaker, will close any loopholes there, or make the registration amendment really follow the rules, and then we cannot have too much controversy, Mr. Speaker.

The main content says: "A Commonwealth citizen, who wishes to register under this Section, shall fill out and swear the Declaration contained in Form M in the Second Schedule." Before, maybe, you would have gone to a Justice of the Peace, etcetera, and he would sign that 'yes' you have been resident here for one year. But, this forces

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now the Commonwealth citizen to sign a form, and to swear to it, in addition to the JP's signature, because he would be swearing to it before the Justice of the Peace. Now, I think the idea is you can take certain legal actions, if that person gives you wrong information, Mr. Speaker.

There is a minor amendment to Section 28, "by repealing the words, 'at least two' where they appear and substituting the words: 'one or more'." The Law says that there must be two (2) Assistant Supervisors of Election. So, if you don't have two (2), you are somewhere in contravention. And, if it is within the Governor-General's purview that one is sufficient, then one would be appointed. So, we are saying instead of saying you must have, Mr. Speaker, 'at least two', so you would have two or more; now we are amending it to say 'one or more'. So, you can have one, which is what pertains now, one Assistant Supervisor, or you could have more. So, if you don't need two, then you have the Supervisor and an Assistant Supervisor. But, if you need two, you can also have it. But, right now, we are operating with one (1) Supervisor and one Assistant Supervisor, so this is to correct something that we are doing now, which may not be legal, but if you don't want to, and you have to expend money for a second Assistant Supervisor that you don't need, this gives the Governor-General the right to do such an appointment, Mr. Speaker.

Clause 4 amends Section 29 to allow persons appointed as Registration Officers to carry out the functions of Returning Officers. This is happening now, Mr. Speaker, but when you look at it, there was no real legal authority, real legal authority. We know the Registration Officer in every Constituency; we all know him. It is that same person, on Election Day, him or her, who is now the Returning Officer. We are practicing it, Mr. Speaker, we are now putting it into Law. So, there are no controversies from among all the Political Parties, Mr. Speaker, in any of these amendments.

Clause 5 amends Section 39, which implements a new procedure whereby "a nominee or someone on his or her behalf pays a nomination deposit into the Treasury Office instead of paying same to the Nomination Officer". And those of us who have been Nominees for many years, you walk with the money, and you pay it to the person

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at a particular point on Nomination Day, you pay it to that person. This is now saying that you can go into the Treasury and pay it into the Treasury and not burden the man by collecting the money and going there. What you want, therefore, is to show, on Nomination Day, that you have a receipt. I think we only pay on Nomination Day. This would allow you to pay, maybe, a day before, or a week before, and you walk with your receipt, and the Returning Officer, at that time, the Registration Officer, will inspect; well, obviously, you would come with a receipt, I don't think anybody would try to forge a receipt. But, it is within his purview to really see that the receipt is authentic and then on Nomination Day you bring that receipt. So, all these amendments, Mr. Speaker, have been discussed.

Section 6 amends 40 to insert into the principal Act a certificate, which is normally issued by the Supervisor of Elections. So, in the prescribed form this is a minor amendment, Mr. Speaker.

Amendment of Section 44 of the principal Act, that's 7, deleting the words, Section 4 is provided for the adjournment of Nomination. So, Nomination closes one day, twenty-four hours, you get up, or you go to that day, and if you miss that day, that's it, Mr. Speaker, and we are saying, "Provided if such twenty-third day is a Sunday, or a Bank Holiday, Nomination shall be deemed to be adjourned to the first day, not being a Sunday, or a Bank Holiday after such twenty-third day." So you have, when you are checking you must be nominated before that twenty-third day. But, when the twenty-third day falls on a Sunday, on a Bank Holiday, we are forced to go to the day before, because we are frightened, the twenty-third day has not yet arrived, but we would do it on the twenty-second day, because that is when it is not a Bank Holiday. The Act is now saying if that twenty-third day is a Bank Holiday or a Sunday, you have the right to go to the following day, as is the norm with the interpretation of other Laws and Acts.

The people here in the Ministry of Finance will know that, when you come to pay and you are rushing, and that day that they gave you, the last day in Law is a Sunday. You will see it in the Gazette, and the Ministry of Finance will say, oh, you can pay on the next day, and we are taking no chance here, we are doing all of this. These are

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some of the amendments in the Law. So, some of it you may see, Mr. Speaker, they are not controversial, at all.

So, Mr. Speaker, Clause 8 repeals and replaces Section 52. This new Section implements a clear procedure for candidates to follow, who may wish to vote in any Polling Station in the Constituency in which he or she is nominated, as a Candidate, other than the Constituency in which his name appears on the official list of electors. If we search the Laws, Mr. Speaker, if you are registered in a Constituency and you are the candidate, already you can go into any Polling Division in that Constituency and vote. But, what if you are registered in the Constituency of Trinidad and Tobago, but you want to vote in the Constituency of Canada, your name would not be in Canada, at all. Your name would be in the Constituency of Trinidad and Tobago. This amendment is saying you are being nominated for that particular Constituency, Canada, you don't live there, your name is on the Electoral List in Trinidad and Tobago. You would now go to the Supervisor of Election, fill out the appropriate form, he will endorse it, because he knows you are a candidate for that area, and he will send this to the Returning Officer. Now, we have just proposed to make the Registration Officer the legal Returning Officer. So, that Returning Officer, for that Constituency, will now see your name, and you will be allowed to vote in the Constituency of Canada, and this is what the amendment says. Apparently, before, we may be doing it, I don't know, because I know many of us, or many people live in a different Constituency; their name may appear in that Constituency, but they went up there. Perhaps, they can't even vote in the Constituency that they are being nominated for; they are going to have to stay where their name is. Now we are having the opportunity to vote for yourself, even though you are registered in another Constituency, and this, we believe, was critical, again this has been accepted by all the Political Parties, so no controversy, Mr. Speaker.

Clause 10 amends Section 86 by criminalizing the use of cellular phones, digital cameras, or any other electronic device, to record, photograph or otherwise capture and publish the image of a marked ballot on Polling Day. And, this is really from experiences around the world, in the Region. If somebody wants to pay you some

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monies for voting for them, you have to show proof that you voted for them. So, you go into the Polling Booth, you vote, take your picture and you come out now and say, “my money, here, I voted for you.” So, most countries and most Political Parties, they are banning the use of cellphones, any electronic system.

People think it is only cellphones that could take pictures, you know. We have not reached that stage here, some pin here, some pin there, the mirror or the glasses, maybe not sophisticated as that, as yet. I see my Brother Steele is smiling. So, you go in, the Law doesn't say glasses. I don't believe that we can cover all areas in a modern technological world, but the phones. So, we are saying phones and we mentioned cameras, but there are many other things, but this is what will mainly happen. This is what people would mainly use. So, we are now saying do not go into the Polling Division with a phone. You remember last Elections, we said so, you know, most people obeyed. **(Applause)** Was it here? So, someone, possibly, then, could have said, I am walking with my phone, so the Policemen come and say, “get out,” and you say: “You don't have authority to get me out, I am coming with my phone.”

I think Grenadians understood what we were doing, because we discussed this thing so much, the procedure we used for making the amendments, everybody was attuned to it. So when you are asked, even without, perhaps the mandatory legal authority, people simply left it out, because they understood. And, that is why, Mr. Speaker, amendments to come, amendments that are proposed, we go through the rounds with it, all the Political Parties, the public and the Supervisor of Elections, so everybody see it is fair, it is not bent towards one Political Party, Mr. Speaker.

Now, we criminalize it, though. If you come in, is it five hundred dollars, or six (6) months imprisonment? I am sure that when the Police tell you go out, or leave it outside, if you inadvertently walked in with it, then I don't think that they would charge you so much, once you hasten to go back out. But, if you want to say, no, I am going with it, then, perhaps, you are going to end up in serious trouble, and there are fines for it, Mr. Speaker.

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Clause 11 inserts a Section 9 (a), which prohibits electronic devices on Polling Day, Mr. Speaker, and, as I indicated before, that bit, which was left out, because people could be questioned and say, well, why, you agreed on this one, because other Political Parties were there when we made that particular agreement about dipping your hands in the ink. We are saying now the rule remains that once you vote, you must dip your hands into the ink. But, we had general consensus before, among all Parties concerned and consulted that if you qualify, you may be exempted by the Supervisor of Elections only. And, the only way we could see this is by putting your hand into this ink, this chemical, something will contaminate your blood, you may have some special problems and so forth. But, again, we have removed that, so I am repeating it, so that, if asked, why did you leave this out? It appears that this did not find total agreement with the last membership, and so the Cabinet says, well, we will leave it out, we could go through the rounds again.

But, remember, Mr. Speaker, most of the amendments here do not really affect a Referendum. A Referendum doesn't take care of Constituencies. A Referendum is a totality, just add up all the Votes; so, you could be living in Sauteurs, St. Patrick and you went to vote up there and so forth, it is relevant, the only thing is you would not be able to vote anywhere, because we don't have your name. But, when you are adding the vote, you don't add Constituency by Constituency, you will do that first, because that is how it is done, but the result is a totality, 66 and 2% of all the votes, irrespective. So, maybe you would get 50% in one Constituency and 90% of the vote in another, once the average comes out to over sixty-six and two-thirds then a Referendum will be passed. This in particular for General Elections where you must deal by Constituencies, and so in a nutshell, Mr. Speaker, in wrapping up, we are trying to ensure that when you register, you register in the Constituency where you live, and we know that you have been. Some people live in one place for three (3) weeks, come back home for a next week and so forth, and we are trying to clear all this up. What is your place of residence?

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And, it also says that if you are living in St. John, if you are registered in St. John, but now you are living, you get married to a beautiful young lady and you are living in St. George, you can go back where your name is in St. John and vote, because you cannot vote in St. George. So, some people might say, well, he is living down there, and look at it, he is trying something and he came back all in St. John and vote, no. If you had a problem with him living in St. George and his name is still on the list, you should have gone to the Supervisor of Elections, the Registration Officer and say: "This man does not live here, move his name to the place where he is living." So, under that process, his name will come down to St. George. So, he might be living in St. George for two years, but his name remains on the list in St. John, you cannot stop him on Election Day. You should have done your process and say: "Mr. Supervisor of Elections, move this man to where he is."

So, again, Mr. Speaker, I want to recommend this Bill for its second reading, and I am saying that we are taking it now, because the one Party, who did not give their written consent has now done so, and we have agreed with them, with the proposal to omit the amendment where some people could escape putting their hands in the ink, so that person will have a choice. If by putting their hand in the ink, it would contaminate your blood, you have a chance, you may not vote, and that is the concern, that is why it ended up there. I am not a medical person. I don't know about the conditions that would cause danger to your health by putting your hand in the ink. But, it appears that it could be dangerous. My colleague in the Medical Profession, maybe, could say so. But, that one is out. You must put your hand in the ink, because we have not yet tabled this amendment. Mr. Speaker, I move the second reading of the Bill.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative for St. Mark; oh, sorry, St. John.

**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** Good morning, Mr. Speaker. The Member for St. George South-East said that you could have two (2) Supervisors of Election, if I heard him right.

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***(Other Members consulted with the Member).***

**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** Okay. Well, he said you could, one or more. So, one or more could mean any number or numbers greater than one. So, why it didn't say one, no more than two, then it's clear to everybody that the maximum you could have is two. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative for St. David.

**Hon. Oliver Joseph:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to give my support to the amendment, but it does not go far enough, Mr. Speaker. In Clause 5, it says: "You must pay the money to the Revenue Office, or the Treasury..." and so on. Mr. Speaker, that is a deposit. You know I haven't gotten back my deposit up to now? **(Chuckles)** The current legislation says: "Within thirty (30) days, you must file", well if it is a deposit, there should be no condition to a deposit. I deposited my money, I got the 12 ½%, I should be refunded. So, I want to see that there; let me get back my money. **(Applause).** So, that is the first thing I want to point out here. How could I lose my deposit? I don't know where else I could collect deposit. So, that is the first thing, that is Clause 5, Mr. Speaker.

Clause 10; there is some confusion in Clause 10, Mr. Speaker, because it says, it would be a criminal offence to go into the Polling Booth and use an electronic device, whether you take the photo and publish it. But, 11 prohibit you from going inside there with the electronic device; 11, Clause 11 prohibits you. So, what I want to know; so I could go into the Polling Station with the device, but I cannot go into the Polling Booth with it, because that is the only distinction I am seeing there, because if you prohibit it from going into the Polling Station with it, then I can't do anything else. But, how am I going to take out picture and post it, because it is prohibited. So, we either have to decide, in this Section that it is prohibited, and once it is prohibited, well I cannot commit no offence again, because I don't have it with me.

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But, the way the amendment is written now, you could go in with it, one Section is telling you that, but the other Section is saying while you are in there, you cannot go into where you are going and mark the Ballot, because it says to mark the Ballot on Polling Day. Well, the only time you are marking your Ballot is when you go inside the Booth, where you going in to mark, and only on Polling Day you could mark your Ballot. So, I think we need to be certain. We need a level of certainty, and maybe the Member for St. George South-East will clarify it for me, because I don't think the two (2) Sections are really necessary, but that is just from reading of it. As I said, maybe, there should be some clarification, but let us have it clear what it is that the intention here is, and I think we could settle that easily with some clarification from the Leader of Government's Business, but for the other amendments, I welcome it, and I still hope I could have an opportunity to recover my deposit. Thank you. **(Applause)**.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Representative for St. David. Honourable Representative for St. Patrick West.

**Hon. Anthony Boatswain:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I support most of the recommendations that have been advanced by the Member for St. George South-East with regards to making changes to the Representation of the People's Act.

Mr. Speaker, with regards to the issue of Commonwealth citizens and having a JP authenticate that that person is indeed, a Commonwealth citizen and residing in the Constituency for more than twelve (12) months, one of the issues that we do have is really the true qualification of persons calling themselves JPs. Yes, maybe, that person was a JP at a certain time. I do not know whether there are any conditions that would cause someone to lose the status of a JP, how often you have to renew, if ever, the qualifications to continue to remain a JP, someone may have been a JP for the last twenty years or so, twenty-three years. Is there anything in Law that says that prior to the Election, there must be published in the Gazette, or any established place, a list of all the qualified JPs? I think this is crucial, because someone could say, hey, I am a JP,

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you go to that person, only to find out that the person isn't. I am saying that there should be a list of all the qualified JPs and it should be published, either in the Gazette, or one of the newspapers. I don't know if that is in Law right now, because I could say I am a JP, you come to me and only to find out, afterwards, I am not a JP. But, if that list is published, the list of all qualified JPs, that list is published, is that a requirement in Law, right now, that prior to Elections, a list of all JPs must be published? I am asking that question, Mr. Speaker. I am saying that if it is not, that should be a requirement to authenticate who really is a JP or not a JP.

The second point, Mr. Speaker, relates to making payment. Yes, we are removing the old-fashioned method of carrying cash to the Returning Officer, on Nomination Day, and we are saying that now we could make that deposit in the Treasury. Are we saying that it still must be cash; because you get a receipt, is it still cash or you could generate a cheque? The payment could be made by cheque to the Treasury and carry a receipt, or it must be cash, as well? I need clarification, because not everybody would like to carry cash, and in these modern times, we try to minimize the use of cash.

And, also, while on this point, Mr. Speaker, I cannot recall for how long the requirement of three hundred dollars (\$300.00) deposit has been in existence. And, I am saying that I believe the time has come for us to relook that quantum, three hundred dollars (\$300.00), because, really, this thing has been reduced, for a while; I don't want to use the word 'pappy show' but almost it is like a joke, that anybody could say, well, I want to be nominated, I will just pay three hundred dollars (\$300.00) and look around Grenada and get six (6) persons to nominate me. I believe we should look at a higher quantum of, maybe, one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00), to really put some seriousness into this thing, because too many people just present themselves. So, I am suggesting that we should look at a higher figure, apart from the three hundred dollars (\$300.00) as a deposit. These are the three points, Mr. Speaker.

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**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Representative for St. Patrick West. Honourable Representative for St. George North-East.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the debate ensued, I cannot help, but think about Mr. Sun Tzu, General Sun Tzu, and if I may quote, Mr. Speaker, Sun Tzu said: “The art of war is of vital importance to the State.” Today, Tobias Clement says: “The art of politics is of vital importance to the State. It is a matter of life and death, a road, either to ruin or to safety, hence it is the subject of inquiry, which, on no account, can be neglected.”

Mr. Speaker, I believe the subject of Elections is of vital importance to the State, and it must be studied and studied well. Now, Mr. Speaker, while I support some of the amendments, I do believe that we must take our time in going forward. On Nomination Day, it goes from 9:00 to 12:00 in the forenoon. One has to make sure you have all your ducks in a row before you get there, and then you pay your deposit of three hundred dollars (\$300.00).

Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to interact with some of my fellow candidates on Nomination Day. In some cases, I had to use some of my people to help them to get the other six people needed. I had occasions where a couple of my candidates’ friends had to go and look for the three hundred dollars (\$300.00) on Nomination Day.

I mean, Mr. Speaker, three hundred dollars (\$300.00) in EC currency, as is well stated; now we are saying that we should now go to the Treasury. How is it; I believe now that we are moving some of the drama from Nomination Day and taking off the drama in the whole thing. I had my Campaign Manager, while I am going down, who said to me: “Mr. Clement, you sure you have the three hundred dollars (\$300.00)? Make sure when you push your hand in your pocket, to see if you have it.” And, I have had occasions where people get there, and they did not have it. I have seen that on Nomination Day. And, to keep it within that timeframe; if you get there after twelve, you cannot be nominated.

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Mr. Speaker, my colleague says that he finds that the three hundred dollars (\$300.00) should be; the stake should be increased. But, Mr. Speaker, Elections should be free and fair. I mean, yes it is a token, but should we now move it so high that it is out of the ordinary citizen's reach?

**Hon. Anthony Boatswain:** Increase it.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Increase it. But, Mr. Boatswain, suppose now that you increase it to a thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) and Mr. Joseph cannot get back his thousand dollars; that is trouble. And, it says now that you have to apply and so forth to get back what you deposited; it is just a deposit, and I support him in that venture that our deposit should be made readily available to us. I think it says in the Law that you ought to get a certain number; even if you do not win, but you get a certain percentage of the votes, you are entitled to get back your deposit.

Mr. Boatswain, I do not know if I would trust the system enough to increase it, and then after it is increased to such figure, whatever it might be, I might get it back in a timely manner. My colleagues there can tell you that maybe this Election process, this time around was the first time that some of us got it back in due time, but before that we never heard about it before. Mr. Speaker, so in that light, in terms of what we do with the process, because Elections are so important to us, I do believe that much deliberation should be done.

For instance, the Leader of Government's Business made mention that if; well, I know today, as a Candidate, if you are nominated on Nomination Day, the Law states that you can vote in any particular Constituency. Even if you are registered in St. George North-East, as long as you are a Candidate nominated, you can go over to North-West and vote; and to me that has intrigue and drama. Suppose on Election Day, in my calculation, I realized that I am behind in the process by five (5) votes and I really need that five (5) votes, in order to come out ahead. It doesn't even have to be five (5) votes; let us say two (2) votes. Or, if, in my calculation, we are thinking and all the data

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shows that I am neck-and-neck, the intrigue is, I could call the Member for St. George South-East, I could call the Member for Town, I could call North-West and say: "I need your help, come over to St. George North-East and vote in St. George North-East." Now, you are saying that we ought to take it out and confine it to that particular Constituency that you are running for.

Mr. Speaker, we ought to leave intrigue in the system, so that generations to come, we will talk about the dynamics of such, if it is done. Mr. Speaker, you may think I like a lot of drama, not really, you know, but I think the intrigue of the Electoral process should be there. And, what we do, Mr. Speaker, what we do, in this House, is to move in such a way to make the Elections freer, fairer and available to every citizen that has the right to vote in this country. I thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Representative for St. George North-East.  
Honourable Representative for St. Mark.

**Hon. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to give support to the amendments to the Bill as presented by the Member for St. George South-East. I take note that some of the contributions that would have been made subsequently are pertinent and may need some consideration. I also just want to add my bit to it.

The Member, in his presentation, said, with all the different devices that you have, in this day and age, you can't put everything, especially with the electronic age where the advances move so swiftly. But, I just wanted to make a suggestion. I don't know if I should do it when we go into Committee Stage. But, maybe we could use a general terminology that covers all of them, because if you specify phones today, maybe next time you have to come back and say, well, okay, this electronic device now has become very prevalent in Grenada, so we need to add it. But, if we said something like photographic imaging device or something like that, could we use that so that

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whatever developments come we don't have to come back and amend. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Representative for St. Mark. Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleagues for their contributions, very pertinent, and wish to respond, perhaps, in the order of the Clauses, one, Deposit. If we look at... both proposed was five hundred dollars (\$500.00), and now, in this Law, is five hundred dollars (\$500.00). So, it has gone up a bit.

Mr. Speaker, the Supervisor and more the Political Parties, we gave this great consideration, and many of the smaller Parties indicated, well, to make it much higher would be preventing them from even participating. So, the idea of the five hundred dollars (\$500.00) came from consultation, and I am saying the last one did not go against that. So, it would go up by two hundred dollars (\$200.00), when this is passed in both Houses and assented to by the Governor-General. I don't think we had a lot of problems with this, at all, Mr. Speaker.

If we look now at Clause 11, the electronic devices, it says: "No person shall have in his or her possession, any electronic device", so we covered that in the interim. And, the Member for St. David sought to say if you did not have this, well, you have already taken care of what is going on in Clause 12. **(Inaudible comments made)**. Okay. No electronic device. But, at the same time, we are moving on to criminalize the issue for the phones and things that are taking picture.

The criminal component of it is when you go with an intent to do something wrong. So, if you take the picture and you send it out, with any ulterior motive, that is the criminal part of it, that is what is criminalized. But, you shall not enter, and I agree with him, if you don't have it, you cannot do it. But, if you enter with a device that was not intended to do anything wrong, all the Security and Policemen would tell you, well, "leave that out there."

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The criminal part is when you use it to do something wrong. So, according to the Legal personnel it is not mutually exclusive, it is complimentary, and the Drafters took that into consideration by putting in the both Sections, Mr. Speakers. So, the Member is correct to ask for an explanation for it and it has been so given.

JP; a qualified list of JPs. This could be done under another Act, the Act that deals and gives the permission to appoint the JPs and so forth. Yes, they are Gazetted, but if we are saying that particularly perhaps before an Election, or before something, we should have a list, that, perhaps, could go with another Law, or every year, the list could be updated, so we have a standard list. So, you would have a Gazette with one name, you will have a later Gazette, three (3) months, with four (4) names, etcetera. So, yes, it is difficult, perhaps, to look for them going through the Gazettes. But, making a list and putting it in a Gazette could be tackled, perhaps, in another Law, Mr. Speaker.

Clause 8...

**Hon. Anthony Boatswain:** Clarification.

**Mr. Speaker:** Just a moment, Honourable Leader of Government's Business. Honourable Representative for St. Patrick's East.

**Hon. Anthony Boatswain:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That question was in two (2) parts, the list. I also said that someone who was a JP for thirty (30) years, and has now become senile. What procedures, or what system do we have in place to ensure that that person's faculty is still there, because the JP doesn't have to get a licence. There is no continuous screening. Can that person still perform that duty now that there is an enhanced role for JPs? That person might be considered, but what review method do we have in place to ensure that that person still qualifies to be a JP, based on senility, age or things like that, because there is nothing in place, and I can go to someone, who is senile and that person is still a JP.

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**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This issue is not only relevant to the Representation of the People's Act. So, yes, as I am saying in another Act you can clean up that area, one, under the Act, which gives the Governor-General the powers to appoint JPs under that particular Act (his comment is good), then we can clean up this and every six (6) months or so, you have a list. We might make it every three (3) months, that might be too soon, or every year, so we have a consolidated list, as you clean those out, who are no longer JPs and the procedure for so doing. What I am virtually saying is that it would not come into this particular bill, because we are talking about JPs, so your comment where you said the Legal people; it would affect this Act. It will affect a lot of other things, because JPs sign for other things, for witnesses before Court and other things. So, your comment is really valid, but I am saying it should not be taken care of in this Act, it is taken care of in the JP Act, through the Legal people.

Clause 8, where the Member for St. George North-East mentioned the intrigue and a person like, I said, living or registered in Trinidad and Tobago and wanting to represent the people in Canada. The Law does not say that you must, you must go and vote for yourself. The Law says that you may. Of course, that should be your fundamental right, because you are vying for something, you must be able to vote for yourself where so ever you live. And, if you look at the Law, it says that person may, previously, it could not be done, so you could stay. With the intrigue you could say, well, I am living there, my colleague there needs a vote, so I will go back down there and vote for him. But, I cannot vote for myself up there, that is your decision. So, I just want to point out that it is not mandatory, you can so do, Mr. Speaker.

So, I hope I have addressed most of the concerns, Mr. Speaker, and, again, we may have situations; for example, I have pointed this out to them. Where we said, if you want to go to vote for yourself up there, the Supervisor of Elections will send a document up to that Returning Officer. We did not say much about down there, but I

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mean if anyone of us, who wants to represent people, would even contemplate that and will force with Honourable House to put this, meaning that you have that ulterior motive in your mind. We did not send a document to the Returning Officer where he is registered. Did we? No. So, if that person is so malicious and wicked, and if the Supervisor of Elections does not have the preventative devices or procedures in place, then he may want to come back, because remember his name is down in the other place, as well, his name is down there, and he gets something from the Supervisor of Elections, but the Law says that you would send it up to the one where you are going to register. It did not say that you have to send it to the person where your name is to vote to say, make sure on the day of Election Day strike this man's name off. Maybe the Supervisor of Elections may so do. I do not see it that he should not be able to allow to do so. You tell one he is voting up there, because seven (7) days before you go to say I want to vote up there. The Law only says that you should send the document to the place where you are going to vote. The Law does not say that you must send a similar document to where your name is registered to prevent you from voting there. But, I am sure the Law, by not saying so, it does not prohibit the Supervisor of Elections from alerting the persons down there. So, if you want to cross all 'T's' and dot all 'I's', we will insert that there.

But, Mr. Speaker, in discussing this with the Attorney-General and Legal persons, I am saying, if anyone of us, who wants to represent people, tell the Supervisors of Elections I will vote up there, and we have it in our minds to go to vote down there, what sort of persons would that be? But, other ways in the Law it says you can only vote in one place, one place, so the Law covers that you are wrong. So, if the Law says that you could only vote in one place, you would get into penalty, but you might say, block the holes by forcing the Supervisor to send it to that person down there. No. You could put that, but that would be casting a dangerous aspersion on those persons, who aspire to be Representatives of the people. So, I just left it blank and I figured this is good enough, together with the fact that you could only vote in one place, this is good enough. By trying to block all loopholes, you are really throwing a

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bad light on all of us, present, past and to come. So, I simply, after saying this, Mr. Speaker, wish to commend the Bill for its second reading.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Bill read a second time.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House, to consider the Bill Clause by Clause.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**House in Committee.**

**House resumes.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, I have to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the Whole House, and passed with one (1) amendment. Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the Chairman's Report be adopted.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Chairman's Report adopted.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

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**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the third reading of the Bill.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Bill read a third time and passed.**

**Clerk Assistant:** Item 4 - Request for Leave to move the Adjournment of the House on Matters of Urgent Public Importance.

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the adjournment of this Honourable House *sine die*.

**Question proposed.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative for St. Andrew North-West.

**Hon. Delma Thomas:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, please allow me to speak on an issue I raised here a couple of weeks ago, and I think it is relevant and important that I speak about it again, because of what is happening in Social Media in recent weeks.

Mr. Speaker, please allow me to comment on the issue of our approach to people, who have been dealing with mental health challenges. It is an issue, Mr. Speaker, that we must confront, head-on.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. Honourable Representative, just before you proceed, because it is a Special Sitting and your matter is a very urgent one, as it represents the

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State, I would have to ask the House's leave to permit you to proceed. So, please be seated.

Honourable Members, the Parliamentary Representative for St. Andrew North-West and Minister for Social Development have an urgent matter that she wants to raise in the Parliament. I would now ask, is there any objection that she do so?

***(Members responded in the negative).***

**Mr. Speaker:** No objection. Honourable Representative for St. Andrew North-West and Minister for Social Development.

**Hon. Delma Thomas:** Mr. Speaker, I am making this comment, in particular, at this stage, because of an incident that transpired in recent weeks, something that has been given added currency by our exposure and attachment to Social Media.

As we stand here today, Mr. Speaker, making the rounds on Social Media, an incident that is being investigated by the Police, is the video of an obviously mentally ill young girl, who was apparently filmed in a demeaning sexual way.

I have heard of a second video, Mr. Speaker. I have seen the second one, but I am only speaking of the one for which I saw. The video has been transmitted to thousands of people. On the video what appears to be the voice of two (2) men, taking pleasure in conducting the filming, as well as making inappropriate, demeaning remarks. Thankfully, Mr. Speaker, the woman has been identified by the Police and she has since been brought in for medical treatment she deserves. The woman, in question, has a long history of struggle with mental illness. But, Mr. Speaker, this brings me to the larger point, that, we, as a society must be more sensitive to people with mental illness. What was seen on the tape was not a girl, a woman, our sister deserving of ridicule, but of a fellow human being, deserving of our help and intervention. **(Applause).**

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At a time when she was most vulnerable, we, as a society, failed her. The young men, who took the effort and the energy to film her, so that she could be the object of ridicule, should have used the same energy to reach out to help her. For the scores of people who have distributed the video and who have taken pleasure in extending the scope of the ridicule should think deep within themselves.

Mr. Speaker, our society must be kinder and more sensitive to mentally-ill people. We must change the way we react to mentally-ill people, and we must drop the stigma attached. Mentally-ill people are not crazy. They are sick just like other people with other ailments. Mental-illness results not only in the difficulties arising from the symptoms of diseases, but also in disadvantages through society's reactions.

We also have to do a better job of identifying people with mental illness and not dismissing odd behaviour for what it is not. Mental illness comes in many forms, such as Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, Panic Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Major Depressive Disorder. The good news is that they are all treatable and manageable. It is something that even as Law-Makers and Policy-Makers must wrap around our minds.

The time has come, Mr. Speaker, to discuss and debate whether our system is adequately set up to identify people with Mental Disorder and if enough resources are being put in their treatment, once they are identified.

We can no longer afford or dismiss people with such challenges, as if they are supposed to remain on either the fringes of the society to become objects of ridicule. People with mental-illness can live full and satisfying lives, if they get the treatment and support they deserve. They can be productive citizens, who can rise above the challenges to work and take care of their families.

Let us, Mr. Speaker, declare here today that people with mental illnesses still have an identity and still have a voice. I thank you. **(Applause)**.

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**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Representative for St. Andrew North-West; very unfortunate. Thank you for bringing it to the attention of the House. It is all of us business.

Honourable Members, the question is that this Honourable House now stands adjourned **sine die**.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**House adjourned sine die @ 10:20 a.m.**

**PREPARED BY**

**HANSARD REPORTERS**

Mrs. Bernice Horsford-Bridgeman

Mrs. Raquel Morgan

Ms. Janelle Palmer

**EDITORS**

Mr. Augustine Andrew (Clerk)

Ms. Daniele Blackman (Secretary to the Clerk)