



GRENADA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

(HANSARD)

**Second Session of the Tenth Parliament**

**OFFICIAL REPORT**

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**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Friday, 09<sup>th</sup> August, 2019

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**House of Representatives Meeting**  
**Held at the Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's**  
**On Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2019.**

**Attendance**

**PRESENT**

Michael Pierre, MBE, MP	- Mr. Speaker (In the Chair)
Dr. the Rt. Honourable Keith Mitchell, PC, MP, JP (St. George North-West)	- Prime Minister and Minister for National Security, Public Administration, Home Affairs, Information and Communications Technology, Finance, Planning, Economic Development and Physical Development
Honourable Gregory Bowen, MP (St. George South-East)	- Minister for Infrastructure Development, Public Utilities, Energy, Transport and Implementation
Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, MP (St. Mark)	- Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation
Honourable Alvin Da Breo, MP (St. John)	- Minister with responsibility for Forestry and Fisheries
Honourable Peter David, MP (Town of St. George)	- Minister for Foreign Affairs and Labour
Honourable Yolande Bain-Horsford, MP (St. Andrew North-West)	- Minister for Agriculture and Lands
Honourable Kate Lewis, MP (St. Andrew North-East)	- Minister with responsibility for Youth Development
Honourable Pamela Moses, MP (St. Patrick East)	- Minister with responsibility for Tertiary Education, Skills Development and Education Outreach
Honourable Emmalin Pierre, MP (St. Andrew South-East)	- Minister for Education, Human Resource Development and Religious Affairs
Honourable Nickolas Steele, MP (St. George South)	- Minister for Health, Social Security and International Business
Honourable Delma Thomas, MP (St. Andrew North-West)	- Minister for Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment
Honourable Anthony Boatswain, MP (St. Patrick West)	- Deputy Speaker
Honourable Tobias Clement, MP (St. George North-East)	- Member

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***Attendance***

***ABSENT***

Honourable Oliver Joseph, MP  
(St. David)

- Minister for Trade, Industry, Co-operatives  
and CARICOM Affairs

Honourable Kindra Maturine-Stewart, MP  
(Carriacou and Petite Martinique)

- Minister for Carriacou and Petite Martinique  
Affairs, Local Government and Legal Affairs

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**Prayers**  
**Minutes**

***The Sitting of the House of Representatives began at 9:05 a.m.***

**Mr. Speaker:** Good morning, Honourable Members. Let us pray.

***(House Prayer was said)***

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

***(The Lord's Prayer was said)***

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

***(Sound of Gavel)***

**Mr. Speaker:** This Honourable House is now in Session.

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 3 - Oath of Allegiance or Affirmation of a new  
Member.

Item 4 - Confirmation of Minutes.

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

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the proceedings of a Sitting of the House of Representatives held at the Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's, on Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2019, be taken as read.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Minutes taken as read.**

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

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**Minutes  
Announcements**

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the said Minutes of the proceedings of a Sitting of the House of Representatives held at the Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's, on Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2019, be confirmed.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Minutes confirmed.**

**Ag. Clerk:**       Item 5 - Messages from the Governor General.  
                          Item 6 - Announcements by Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, I would just like to inform that I participated in the Fourth Annual Conference of the Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic Region Parliamentary Association, from the 12<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> of July.

The Conference was attended by seventeen (17) Territories and Wales and Suriname as observers. The participants consisted of Members of the Commonwealth Women's Parliamentarians, Presiding Officers, Clerks of Parliament and Youth Parliamentarians. Grenada's delegation to the Conference was the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Senator the Honourable Cathisha Williams, representing the Commonwealth Women's Parliamentarians and Mr. Nielon Franklyn, representing the Commonwealth Youth Parliamentarians.

The theme for the Conference was "***Globalisation and Nationalism: Quo Vadis Impacts on Commonwealth Parliaments***". Some of the topics we discussed at the plenary sessions were: '***Migration and Refugees – Is There a Need for a Collective Regional Response; Human Rights; Are our Parliaments Fully Accessible to Persons with Disability; Forging a CARICOM Identity; How Relevant are the Westminster Traditions in Modern Parliaments; Committee Systems and the Part-time Parliamentarian; Digital Disinformation – The Challenges to Parliaments and Democracy; and Rethinking the Westminster Model of Governance – The Need for a Fundamental Shift.***'

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**Announcements**

Some other matters that was discussed, under the status of CPA work is: Ongoing to Convert the Commonwealth Parliament Association for a British Charity to an International Parliamentary Organisation with Rights, Privileges and Immunities along the Model of the International Parliamentary Union.

There would be; and I think it is important that we prepare to participate in the revised Benchmark for self-assessment. So far, nineteen (19) Parliaments were selected for this. Grenada is invited to participate in the Benchmark Review. If we are willing to do that, if we want to participate then we have to communicate to the CPA. And, one of the reasons for this is, because many of the Programmes that are planned for different Territories would be determined by the needs of the Territories. So, the Benchmark studies that would be done, and it is a self-assessment, with the assistance with funding from the CPA. So, the President of the Senate and myself we were invited to participate by encouraging our Parliamentarians to be part of that programme.

At present, we have one (1) Parliamentarian, who is participating in the study with the Commonwealth; it is sponsored by the Commonwealth, Honourable Kate Lewis. We had Senator Cox, who participated two (2) years ago, and let me say that because of their participation, others from Grenada are getting permission to participate. Countries where they began and stopped, they could not get other persons to come into the Programme. So, I think it is important and I encourage the Honourable Minister, Parliamentary Representative, to continue the Programme.

CPA has introduced an online course for Parliamentary Staff Development, and this will be facilitated by McGill's University of Canada and Kings College of London on a pilot basis from 2020. This is in order to build capacity at the Parliament offices.

Let me say here that one young man, Mr. Nielon Franklyn, represented Grenada at the Youth Parliament with the CYP, and he did deliver himself well. And, I think he must be commended. He delivered himself very well. **(Applause)** In fact, thirty-five (35) youths debated, and your humble servant was the Chief Judge of the debate, and I wish not to be in a position like this again, because the debate was of a very high standard. Our young Parliamentarian, Mr. Nielon Franklyn, because of the position that he had to debate and the function he had to play was not among the

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**Announcements  
Papers/Reports**

first three (3). But, I can tell you, he was the fourth person, very close, so I think we must commend him. **(Applause)**

The PGA, there is an invitation to the Women's Parliamentarians, which will be held in Trinidad on the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2019. We are to nominate one (1) person. The Parliamentarian for Global Action (PGA), the Regional CARICOM and the Central Americas Workshop on Engaging Women's Parliamentarians in addressing the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. So, we must send someone, and I might say here that the Workshop is covered, the airfare and accommodation is taken care of by the Funding Agency. So, we want to encourage and make sure that we participate in this engagement.

I must say that the Speaker of the House of Representatives in the Bahamas has invited the representative from the FROC to come to the Bahamas to speak to them about the functions of the FROC. **(Applause)** So, two (2) Members would be attending, the Chairman and another Member and this would be taking place on the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> August, and this is because of the sounding of our FROC and how it is received by the international organizations, so they are supposed to be there to assist and share some of the experiences.

Honourable Members, let me mention that on the 30<sup>th</sup> of August, only one member of the FROC would still be functioning, because of the time that was given to them and they already had an extension of time. So, we must and I am pressing here to the Committee of Privileges, to say to us that we must identify four (4) persons to represent the FROC, or as Members of the Committee on the FROC. We have circulated to every Member of Parliament that communication, and we have sent, after that, reminders. Please, we must have the names of persons, who we can recommend, because we must next have discussions with the Auditor-General before we make the recommendation to the Governor-General. End of Announcements.

**Ag Clerk:** Item 7 - Presentation of Petitions.

Item 8 - Presentation of Papers and Reports from Select  
Committees.



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**Papers/Reports**

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

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the following Papers and Reports from Select Committees be laid on the Table:

- i. The Report of the Director of Audit Grenada on the Financial Statements of Spicemas Corporation for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2015.
- ii. Report of the Director of Audit Grenada on the Financial Statements of Spicemas Corporation for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2016.
- iii. Report of the Director of Audit Grenada on the Financial Statements of the Confiscated Asset Funds for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2017.
- iv. The Report of the Director of Audit Grenada on the Financial Statements of the Grenada National Accreditation Board for the years ended 31 December 2016 and 2017.
- v. Report of the Director of Audit Grenada on the Financial Statements of the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) Grenada for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2018.
- vi. The Fourth Annual Report of the Office of the Integrity Commission for the year ended December, 2017.
- vii. Annual Report of the Fiscal Responsibility Oversight Committee (FROC) for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2019.
- viii. Annual Report of the Grenada National Training Agency (GNTA) for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2018.

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- ix. The Minutes of the proceedings of the Sitting of the Standing Committee on Finance held at the Conference Room of the Parliament Building on Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2019.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, these Reports are laid at the Table.

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 9 - Unopposed Private Business.  
Item 10 - Questions.  
Item 11 - Urgent Questions under the Provisions of  
Standing Order No. (20) (i) – Notice of  
Questions.  
Item 12 - Statements by Ministers.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, just before we begin the Statements, I must advise that we confine our Statements to our Ministerial role.

**Hon. Yolande Bain-Horsford:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share some updates on the projects and Programmes of the Ministry and some noteworthy achievements over the past few months.

Mr. Speaker, a major mandate of the Ministry of Agriculture relates to the propagation of economic plants for farmers to ensure sustainable production of a wide array of crops. In that regard, I am exceedingly pleased to inform this Honourable House that the official Plant Distribution Ceremony was held on Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> of July at the Mirabeau Propagating Station. Mr. Speaker, in excess of forty-two thousand (42,000) plants are available for farmers and other stakeholders, backyard gardeners with the majority of these being Nutmeg, Cocoa, Soursop, Avocados, etcetera, Mr. Speaker.

One notable absence this year is the unavailability of the citrus fruits, as the Ministry has stopped that propagation for the time being, because we are revisiting the whole Citrus Greening Programme. So, in a few weeks' time, you will see a team of people out there in the field, pruning and checking on Citrus Greening and

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also spraying etcetera, so that we are working on now. We already have the Green Houses and so set up, so we can have new, clean planting material at Mirabeau. So, as soon as that is finished, we would start on the propagating of citrus.

Mr. Speaker, we have been placing enormous emphasis on capacity building, right across the Agri-Foods Sector. And, in that regard, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that over the last few weeks a number of training activities have been taking place with officials of the Ministry, Farmers and other persons. The training in soursop pruning, soil and water conservation, pesticides use and safety, production and care of coconuts, sweet potatoes, ginger and tree crops and also pesticides resistance. So, we have had a number of training throughout Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique in those areas, Mr. Speaker.

Also, Mr. Speaker, we have reactivated that project to where we move into the Communities, meeting with the farmers. It is a multi-disciplinary approach we have taken to extension, so we have a team of persons going into the field, checking on the tree, crops and all the other plants that are in the field with the farmers, making sure that they are being taken care of and giving them guidance and support as to how to improve and enhance their production level.

Also, Mr. Speaker, since July of this year the ASCUYDA system was placed online for Plant Quarantine. That is working out pretty well. Importers, traffickers and persons importing or exporting fruits, vegetables and plants now have to apply online. It has been tough to start off with. It is still is, but people are getting used to the system now. But, it is taking more than just you know, a while. A training was conducted with Custom Brokers and traffickers to ensure that they have a better understanding of this new System, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are now working closely with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in exploring the possibility of resuming the export of mangoes to the United States of America. You know, some years ago, because of the Mango Seed Weevil, we halted the export for that produce. But, now we have been meeting with the relevant persons to ensure that Mangoes could be exported back to the United States of America.

Golden Apples, Mr. Speaker, you know, we have Golden Apples we have resumed that, and we are now exporting Golden Apples back to the United States of

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America. But, you know it is subjected to some radiation at a certified Laboratory in the United States; that has to be done, so that we can continue with the exporting of Golden Apples, and I have a feeling that the same will happen with Mangoes when we reach to that stage.

Mr. Speaker, the AGRICOM Project, a World Bank Project of \$10.8 million is now being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture. This project seeks to improve the competitiveness of the Farmers, the Fishers and Agro-Processors involved in the Sector. A call for proposals has been sent out by the media and all the necessary requirements have been outlined. The deadline has been extended to the 6<sup>th</sup> of September, Mr. Speaker.

During the past few months, the team was going out in all the different Communities, explaining the project and ensuring that people get a good understanding, so that they can participate in the project and benefit from it. All the meetings were successful. They had loads of people and people were finding out what are the best ways to be part of the project.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Agriculture, with support from the World Bank, under the DVRP Programme, will be installing a complete Hydrometric Network in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique beginning in September. The Network would be supplied by Sutron, and it will include an automatic Weather Station, soil temperature equipment, water monitoring equipment for monitoring rivers and wells and tide gauges to monitor the sea level rises that we are having.

Also, Mr. Speaker, this is a very important development, as it will allow the Ministry to monitor climate elements in a more organized and precise manner, given the enormous impacts of Climate Change, which we are experiencing these days.

Another very important development, Mr. Speaker, ...

***(Time Bell Rings)***

**Hon. Yolande Bain-Horsford:** Well, I am almost there, Mr. Speaker, so just give me....

**Mr. Speaker:** Proceed.

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**Hon. Yolande Bain-Horsford:** I will like to highlight, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to this National Soil Survey also funded by the World Bank, under the DVRP Programme, will also commence in the later part of this year. This Soil Survey will be a comprehensive survey that will build on the work done under the Moroccan Project that we have started sometime last year that focused on soil fertility. It will also cover the engineering properties of soils to assist the Government farmers, the Private Sector, Engineers, Consultants and Investors.

And, lastly, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that the Ministry is currently providing technical support to the Caribbean Aqua Terrestrial Solution (CATS) Project, to install demonstration, Rainwater Harvesting Irrigation Systems on a number of farms, so that farmers do not have to access to a stream for irrigation water. They can continue to farm in very, very difficult Dry Seasons, which will ensure more sustainable Agricultural production. So, these are a few of the things we are doing at the Ministry, Mr. Speaker. They are very important and farmers are getting the hang of things now. They are feeling like they have something to rely on, although they still think that there is much, much more that they would like to achieve. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister for Agriculture. Honourable Minister for Education.

**Hon. Emmalin Pierre:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning I rise just to give an idea of some of the activities taking place in preparation for the reopening of school. But, before going into that, Mr. Speaker, I just want to inform this House that during the last two (2) weeks, many of our Principals and Teachers were involved in the preparation for the reopening of school through the regular Summer Training. Part of that was in collaboration with the Grenada Union of Teachers, where the Ministry of Education and the Union partnered in delivering some of this training that would have taken place during the period, and I want to commend and recognize all of those who were apart of making this a success.

Mr. Speaker, in preparation for the reopening, we have already approved a list of Teachers for Teachers' College. As you know, we have committed to moving, as

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swiftly as we can and closer to that of pre-service training, and we are hoping that we would phase ourselves out of this trend where we take Teachers from the classroom to go to Teachers College. Eventually, we will be taking persons coming from the outside, going to Teachers College, because they have a passion, because they want to teach and they want to be prepared for when that opportunity arises. So, we have a batch of Teachers, who are going off and we have already approved the reappointment and replacement of Teachers for the new Academic Year coming up. We want to make sure, Mr. Speaker, we do all that is possible to be ready for the reopening of school.

Additionally, I want to draw to the House's attention that the Holy Cross R.C. School, the new building is earmarked to be opened sometime the last week in August, and I am sure the Parliamentary Representative is quite happy to hear that. She would have the opportunity to cut the ribbon, long awaited, and I just want to say that arrangements are now being made for the opening of that new facility at Munich in St. Andrew.

Speaking repairs of school, Mr. Speaker, I am sure we are aware of the challenges that we have, as it relates to the condition of some of our schools around the Island. But, while we do recognize the challenges, Mr. Speaker, I think we can safely say that this Government has been doing a lot, as it relates to school repairs, infrastructural development. But, I believe the magnitude of the problem, Mr. Speaker, it may be even difficult to recognize 'the lot' that I referred to, and sometimes you hear a lot of the negatives, you know what is not being done and very little of what is being done. And, I just want to highlight that during this Summer holidays, during this August vacation, the Ministry of Education has started the repairs of a number of schools. As a matter of fact, I believe we would be spending way over three million dollars (\$3 m), just within those couple weeks, leading up to the reopening of school.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, while I am saying this, I am not speaking about the larger project, as it relates to maintenance and development of schools, which is over thirty-two million dollars (\$32 m); I am just speaking here about minor repairs.

Speaking about major repairs, though, I want to make reference to Bishop's College. And, I am singling out Bishop's College, not that any of the other schools in

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that category, would probably take it personal, Mr. Speaker. As you know, we have some schools earmarked for development. Some new schools would be built, for example, St. David's Catholic Secondary, the St. Andrew's Anglican Primary School, and those schools are all on schedule, as it relates to the plan, as it relates to the development of those schools. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker, there has been major consultation with stakeholders and I am not going to go into the details. I am specifically mentioning Bishop's College, because I know there are concerns about temporary housing of students for the reconstruction of that particular wing.

Mr. Speaker, we have been in consultation with the school community, particularly the Principal, and I want to give the assurance that we are going to work together with those persons on the ground, at the school and in the community to make sure that we have the best possible option, as it relates to housing our students.

I want to, though, at this stage say, Mr. Speaker, we are not going to be moving on the route of constructing a temporary building. And, I really do want, through you, Mr. Speaker, that persons understand, we are in a situation where finances are limited and whatever we do, we want to get the maximum out of it, and so it would not make a lot of economic sense to spend five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000.00) to build a temporary building and then you break it down shortly after. So, we are going to be soliciting the support of the persons, on the ground, in Carriacou for temporary housing of students where it is absolutely necessary. The Principal has indicated that it will be about five (5) classrooms, and we believe that we can find temporary accommodation, in Carriacou, without having to build a temporary building.

In addition to that, as we are still speaking about repairs, because I know that is a major concern, Mr. Speaker, this Government has moved a step further, and I want to point out this. We are not just repairing the schools, we are not just reconstructing new buildings, but, Mr. Speaker, we have gone one step further. We recognize that one of the challenges, one of the weaknesses that we face is the absence of persons, on the ground, to supervise and to monitor the infrastructural situation with our schools. And, so what we are in the process of doing now, within

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another week, those persons would be engaged is to appoint School Maintenance and Inspection Supervisors, and these persons would be responsible to ensure that our schools are checked regularly, infrastructurally, that they are sound and that there is no surprise that we are going to get when we wake up one morning, as it relates to the condition at any of our schools. They would also be responsible for liaising with Ministry of Works, facilitating the preparation of scopes and so on. So, we are moving one step further in that regard and I want to thank the Cabinet for their support and understanding the need for this.

Mr. Speaker, we have just spent, facilitating thousands of families throughout the Island, provision of school vouchers for uniforms. I want to say that sometimes we take a lot for granted and we don't look at the costs of some things, and sometimes because of that we don't value it. But, Mr. Speaker, the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on facilitating this project is to provide this opportunity where we support our parents in preparing for back to school. Not just the school vouchers, Mr. Speaker, but we have just spent over \$2.5 million on school books. That is the Government saying, we understand the costs, we understand the challenges and we want to support. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage parents here to take full advantage and to make the best use of that.

Let me be probably the first here to say, we have had challenges in the past where parents have literally gone into stores, trying to negotiate and bargain with the persons there to provide other things than what they're supposed to use the vouchers for. Mr. Speaker, I want remind our parents that what the Government is trying to do is to support the children and their education, and they must do everything to facilitate that, as well.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the season that we are in, my personal choice is not to participate, but, of course, everyone has a choice, everyone has a freewill to do so. But, I want to really remind parents this morning, Mr. Speaker, of their responsibility, as parents. Mr. Speaker, too many of our children are allowed to participate in some of these activities, unsupervised. The number of children, Mr. Speaker, students that we see in activities that they should not be involved in, Mr. Speaker, again, I want to appeal to parents this morning remember your responsibility.



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Mr. Speaker, persons, who are selling alcohol to children and persons underage, I want to again, remind them this morning of what the Law says, but not just what the Law says, our moral responsibility to protect the children of this Nation. And, so as I said persons have a right and a freewill to participate, but let us remember we have, as a Nation a responsibility to protect our children. There are some activities that are not for children, and we must ensure that those activities, they are not allowed to partake in. Children and parents must not be partaking in the same activities, where children are not allowed, or should not be allowed to be part of. Again, Mr. Speaker, children learn what they live and our parents must be the biggest role models for our children. Let us remember this Season that we have a responsibility. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister for Education and Human Resource. Honourable Minister for Sports... (sorry) Youth Empowerment.

**Hon. Kate Lewis:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning I am happy to provide some updates from the Ministry of Youth Development, Sports, Culture and the Arts. Mr. Speaker, as you know, the Ministry of Youth Development continues to be very active as we cater to the needs of our Nation's youth.

Only last week, Mr. Speaker, we saw the culmination of a two-week National Summer Programme, which catered for almost eight (800) young persons between the ages of 10 to 16. And, they benefited from Civics, Personal Development Courses, Conflict Resolution, Sports, Culture and also Craft, Mr. Speaker. Last week, at every Constituency, the participants were able to showcase their work at the closing Ceremony. And, from all indications, it was a successful activity, successful two (2) weeks engagement of our children.

Only last week, also, Mr. Speaker, last week Friday we held a National Fun Day bringing together all of our trainees from the various Programmes. We had trainees from the MPOWER, IMANI, Project FLY and also Project ACE. This National Fun Day also included the MPOWER Finals Cricket Competition. And, I want to congratulate the MPOWER Team of St Mark, who was successful. **(Applause)**

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Mr. Speaker, as you know our MPOWER participants continue to train in hands-on skills. Some of them are at Ajamu Recording Studio, ABC Construction, and also TAMCC, as they complete their CVQ in different levels, in different areas, areas that we believe is very important towards labour demands, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we continue with our Parish Youth Parliament and last week we saw the completion of the St David's Youth Parliament, as they debated the NIS proposed increase in the contribution rate, as well as the periodical increase in the Age Pension, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we know that the Youth Parliament is very important to our Nation's youth, giving them that opportunity, that platform to participate in issues of National importance. We always encourage our young people to lend their voices, because it is important that we include them while we prepare them for the future, Mr. Speaker.

Next week, on the 27<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Speaker, we will move on to the Parish of St Mark to have the Youth Parliament there, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a Ministry, we will join the rest of the world, next week Tuesday on August 12<sup>th</sup> to celebrate International Youth Day, under the Theme: **'Transforming Education.'** Mr. Speaker, this is in line with our Government's vision in providing educational opportunities to our Nation's youth, and we can see that through the increased number of young people, who receive scholarship opportunities, as well as the various skills training opportunities provided for our young people.

Mr. Speaker, we know that next week Tuesday is Carnival Tuesday, and, you know, it coincides. As a Ministry, we have set aside one (1) week in November in which will be celebrating our Nation's youth, as we call it National Youth Week.

Mr. Speaker, the New IMANI Programme continues to facilitate trainees through the Scholarship Programme and come September, we will have twenty-one (21) new trainees beginning their studies, Mr. Speaker. Just recently, we had seventeen (17) of our trainers graduating from TAMCC.

In the field of Sports, Mr. Speaker, the support of our Track and Field Athletes continues, and I am happy to report that eight (8) of our athletes have recently obtained scholarships to Junior Colleges and Universities in the United States of America, Mr. Speaker. I wish to congratulate all of our athletes, their parents, their

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Coaches and to encourage them to do well and as a Ministry and as a Government, we will continue to support all our athletes in every way.

Only last week, Mr. Speaker, two (2) of our young Cricketers, Mr. Devin Tyson and Mr. Divonie Joseph, left Grenada to join the rest of the West Indies Under-15 Cricketers for their tour of England. Mr. Speaker, I am extremely happy, especially, because Mr. Divonie Joseph is from my Constituency, Mr. Speaker, and I wish them all the best, as they continue to represent our Country and also West Indies, well, Mr. Speaker.

This morning, Mr. Speaker, the Grenadians on the Windward Island Under-19 Team departed for St Vincent to participate in the CWI Rising Star Under-19 Tournament and they are: Mr. Ronel Williams, Seandell Regis, Teddy Bishop and Jamie Buddy, with their Team Manager, Mr. Randall Baptiste. I wish them all the best, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Damion Daniel, I wish to congratulate him, as he was, again, victorious (**applause**) in his first IFBB Diamond Cup in Saint Martin, and we want to wish him all the best, from the Ministry, as he continues his travel to Spain, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Pan-Am Games are in progress and we want to congratulate Mr. Lindon Victor who placed second in Decathlon Event (**applause**); the just completed Decathlon Event. Mr. Speaker, we have many of our athletes, who have made it to the semi-final and final round and we wish to wish them all the best, as they continue to make Grenada proud out there, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Grenada team competed at the Windward Island School Games in Dominica and we placed second, Mr. Speaker, so I wish to congratulate all of our athletes who participated in that Event.

On a more sad note, Mr. Speaker, from the Ministry, we wish to express condolences to the family of Mr. Alister Clouden, who passed away at the age of eighty-four (84). He was a National Record Holder in the 200 meter and the 100 meter in 1958. He was also a Sports Administrator and established the National Starters Association and played a role as an international and regional Starter in many local and International Events. He will be laid to rest on Tuesday, Mr. Speaker, and may his soul rest in peace, as a Sporting Icon.

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Mr. Speaker, as you know that Spicemas 2019 is in full swing and, thus far, everything seems to be going well, incident free and all activities, competitions are, so far, successful. I wish to congratulate all our winners of Carnival, thus far. Last week Saturday we had the Kiddies Carnival, and I wish to congratulate our Junior Calypso Monarch, Ms. Kate Mitchell; Junior Panorama Champions, Republic Angel Harps; and the Mass Band Champions, Helen Marie and Associates.

Last night, Mr. Speaker, we had Majestic Thursday, and I wish to congratulate Ms. Odessa Merriman of St Mark. **(Applause)** I know the MP for St Mark is extremely happy. But, I also wish to commend and congratulate all of the other contestants. I believe they represented their Parishes well, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

Tonight is Fantastic Friday. I wish all our Soca and Groovy Artistes all the best in the competition. And, also, as we move on to Panorama, Fantastic Saturday, tomorrow and Dimanche Gras on Friday, we will see the Carnival activities coming to an end on Monday and Tuesday with our Jouvert and our Parade of the Bands.

Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to appeal to all of our Carnival revelers to ensure that we have a clean, safe, incident free Carnival, and we can enjoy Spicemas 2019. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, kindly, Honourable Minister for Youth Empowerment, Sports and Culture. Honourable Minister for Health.

**Hon. Nickolas Steele:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to give an account of events that have occurred in my Ministry since last I was in this good House.

Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, let me mention what has probably been on some minds of the members of the public, which is the Ebola, or change of status of the Ebola outbreak in Africa. And, just to update this House and the Public through this House that the Ministry has implemented the various strategies. First and foremost, it is the screening at our Ports of Entry, in particular, our Maurice Bishop International. And, to say that we do have an infrared video surveillance at Maurice Bishop International Airport. This has been in place for quite some time. We visited

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a couple of weeks ago just to make sure that everything is functional and, in fact, we will be stepping up the number of cameras that will be there. This allows us to do what is called passive observation, as opposed to having a Health Professional in front of everyone checking temperatures. It allows us, in a background, in a different room to look and see and only approach individuals, who show a sign based on what the camera picks up. Mr. Speaker, also from that is the ensuring that there are the proper isolation facilities at our Healthcare and enforcing, with our staff, the various procedures.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also mention that we have received confirmation from the Maria Holding Memorial Foundation, that have donated to us, a 128-Slice CT Scanner for our General Hospital. **(Applause)** That moves us from not having a CT Scanner at our General Hospital, to having the most advanced CT Scan in the OECS, at our General Hospital. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker, the rains are here with Carnival, and as always there are requests from members of the public for increased fogging. The Ministry does have a Fogging Programme, but I want to, again reiterate, in this House, that mosquitoes breed where there is litter. The fogging is one method of control, but the most effective method of control is to ensure throughout our facilities, our homes and where we live, that there is as little, if any litter, open bottles, open containers and areas for the mosquitoes to breed. Mr. Speaker also the Hospital has procured, through the Indian Government, an Incinerator. That also will be installed to get rid of medical waste at the Hospital facility.

Mr. Speaker, also I am pleased to announce that through the OECS Programme with the World Bank or IDA, the Ministry of Health is a recipient, thanks to Ministry of Finance and our Minister for Finance, of six million dollars (US\$6 m) to be used for the upgrade of various Healthcare facilities. The ratio of this is \$3.3 m for Health Facilities and Laboratories, 1.75 for Health Surveillance Facilities and nine hundred and fifty thousand for Capacity Building, US dollars, in each case, Mr. Speaker.

We also received, in the last two (2) weeks, a Mobile Cancer Screening Unit. Mr. Speaker, we are appreciative to Republic Bank and to the Trinidad and Tobago Cancer Association that worked with us. **(Applause)** Mr. Speaker, too many times

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we are approached, at the Ministry, to assist and assist wherever possible, even as far as getting people to Cuba or so for treatment. And, too many times, recently, we are seeing loved ones and friends, who have passed away, because of cancer. And, in most cases, Mr. Speaker, in most cases, it is because of late diagnosis. So, the Cancer Screening Unit will be going around the Island, doing two (2) things: (i) offering the ability for people to be screened; but, also, educating people, at the same time, sensitizing people to what is in most cases preventative measures.

So, to early screening for breast cancer; early screening for prostate cancer; early and regular screening and regular checkups, Mr. Speaker. Prevention in most, if not all cases, is far better than the painful and sometimes unsuccessful routes to cure with respect to cancer, Mr. Speaker.

And, on that note I also want to mention, in this House, the passing of one of our pillars within the Health Sector, at the General Hospital, Dr. Winston Thomas, who served his country till the end. He passed away approximately two (2) weeks ago, and I just want to take this time to mention, in this House, his years of service to country and our deep appreciation in the Ministry for the service that he gave. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Minister with responsibility for Tourism and Civil Aviation.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to share with this Honourable House, through you, and also through to the Grenadian public, just a few of the exciting things that have been happening in the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to address first the appreciative increase that we have seen in visitors to our Shores for the first half of the year, January, 2019 to June 2019. So, year-on-year, for the first half of both years, between 2019 and 2018, we have seen significant growth in our stay-over passengers to the tune of, approximately, 3.81%., and we have seen a total of eighty-two thousand, three hundred and ninety-nine (82,399) stay-over passengers only. We have seen some

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increases also in Cruise and Yachting, even though these increases have been more modest.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, in Cruise, last weekend, on Saturday, we were very pleased to have a call from the Oceania Insignia, a Cruise Ship, which has a capacity of eight hundred and twenty-four (824) passengers and four hundred (400) staff on the Cruise Ship. So, overall, we had a visit of over one thousand, two hundred and twenty-four (1,224) passengers. And, I was told by one of the Coaster operators that all of them got a little something.

Mr. Speaker, this is as a result of aggressive lobbying and marketing with the Cruise Lines, so that we can have year round visits from Cruise, because we know we do extremely well during the winter months, but during the summer months, our Cruise calls cease almost completely. And, in recent times, we have been aggressively working with the Private Sector persons to visit with those Cruise Ships administrative persons, to see if we can get more Cruise calls, and, Mr. Speaker, I want to, through you, assure this Honourable House that we will continue to work, assiduously, towards year round Cruise calls instead of seasonal Cruise calls.

Mr. Speaker, also, I want to mention, in this Honourable House, that as we speak about stay-over passengers, we must talk about the Airlines that bring those persons to our Shores, and our biggest source market is the USA, which accounts for the first half of the year for 45% of our visitors; UK comes second, accounts for 17% and Canada accounts for 12% of our visitors.

The Caribbean is also a very important source market, especially during the Carnival Season. So, last year we had an increase of 24% of visitors during the Carnival period. And, this year, while we are expecting about an increase of 6%, we are still hoping to be surprised, again, to get a bumper turn out in our country. But, I must say that persons who own accommodations, they're very happy, because all of those rooms are filled for Carnival, even those in the Airbnb. And, I want to encourage our people to look at the potential of Airbnb as an income earner, income generating activity for them, because while we know our Grand Anse Beach ranks No. 1, and recently we were voted No. 1 by the Travellers Under Condè Nast. Out of the twenty (20) best beaches in the world, Grand Anse was again rated No. 1 in the world, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)** So, while we love our visitors to go there, we want

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them to visit the Golden Falls in Mt. Horne; we want them to visit Mt. Carmel, and we are working, very aggressively, to improve on those attractions in the community to create the experience.

So, we are doing research on the Sulphur Springs. We are having the materials tested, at this time, so that when we market it, we can scientifically say that this has health benefits and it is safe for you. So, we are working with the persons, who operate in those areas to ensure that by next Season that too, will be on stream.

Mr. Speaker, we are working on a number of experiences for our people, because now we are well aware that the visitor just doesn't want to sit on a lovely launch chair on a beach, or just drive around, because sometime that can make you a little bit dizzy too, but you can go to some wonderful places we have out in the communities and enjoy it with the locals and dance and enjoy the Saraka or the Salaka, as the people say, whichever one we want to use, and I want to compliment the people of Pearls. I understand they started a new Saraka initiative, and I want to urge that we look at the potential for Tourism in all of these things. And, while we know our Grenadians, they love those things and they attend and they participate in those activities, it would be so nice to see a mix of Tourists and locals enjoying what we have, as our Culture.

Mr. Speaker, we have collaborated, perhaps, a little bit more energetically with Spicemas and the Ministry of Culture, last year and this year and that has redounded to our benefits and the benefits of all the people, who make an earning from Tourism, from the people who visit our shores, and we are seeing the turnout. Yesterday, we had some additional flights from Caribbean Airlines. LIAT has put on some more new flights, and Jet Blue has put on some additional flights, as well, and so we are seeing those flights coming in full, and we are very happy for that. We are happy with the contribution and the partnership between Spicemas and the Ministry of Tourism, because they both go hand in hand. We work with them to market Spicemas and we have seen the results of that, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, even though the Carnival doesn't fall directly under my Ministry, but we contribute significantly to the marketing of our Grenadian product, and so I think it's only fitting for me to take this opportunity to commend and congratulate our Queen, the winner for the Carnival Queen Competition. **(Applause)**



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But, also I was very impressed with the performance of the Traditional Mass, in general, in Grenada, that is growing again, because I was a little bit concerned and sometimes you see some small Short Knee Bands and the Vieux Corps, Mr. Speaker, the children's mass, in the Children Carnival Frolic. The St. Mark Vieux Corps Band, again, the children came first. So, I want to compliment them and commend them, and we will continue to work with Spicemas, and we expect something to be great.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to leave with a question, and it's not directly for you, but for all of us in this Honourable House and in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, and my question is, is it possible to enjoy Carnival without being vulgar? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister for Tourism. Honourable Minister for Communication, Implementation, et al.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before I delve into the Statements with respect to the Ministry, just permit me to inform this Honourable House of the absence of two (2) Members here, as we're doing Ministerial Statements, and they will forgive me that it was not done earlier. The Honourable Member for St. David, Honourable Oliver Joseph, he is on Official Business outside; so, too, is the Member for Carriacou and Petite Martinique. She is also on official Government Business outside and the Honourable Delma Thomas is on a very urgent personal matter and she will be joining us later. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would want to start with a very important matter under the Ministry and that is with respect to the Postal Corporation. In October 2018, the United States of America gave notice that they wish to withdraw from the Universal Postal Union and under the Convention, we have one year so to do. This could have significant ramification, because of the contribution paid by the biggest economy in the world. It will mean, then, that Grenada will have to double or triple its component, so we will have to maybe help the Postal Corporation, and, as you know, Postal Corporations around the world, they are not doing too well, at all.

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Everybody has gone electronic and we have to now compete with the big players, DHL and FedEx, right, so we're in a bind.

There's a special Congress called to deal with this from all the Governments of the world, and it's not a Postal Corporation that are members of the UPU, it's the countries. And, so we are supposed to meet to see urgently, how we can reallocate costs to keep the UPU going. If the UPU is disbanded, then the young lady or the old lady way in the country, will not be able to send a little mail. Yes, it is going out, but still this will hasten the demise of the Organization, if we do not form some arrangement or entice or encourage the US to remain within the UPU. So, this has significant ramifications for us, Mr. Speaker. Maybe Postal Corporations around the world will be going out. In Grenada, we saw the trend, so we have taken some precautionary measures that we will have to really expedite to get this done, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to the Ministry of Implementation, and as we have said before, we included this and there is a Permanent Secretary with responsibility for this, Mr. Speaker, but we recruited a CTO, from Canada, an Engineer from Ghana, and as you know the Ministry now has one Engineer. Yes, we were assisted by the Cubans coming in and they are doing significantly well, but their forte is not in that interactive component, with respect to the communities that we serve; so they do all the work in the back office, but there is only one Engineer now to interact with the Ministry of Education, to react with the Ministry's affairs, because they too, because of the language barrier on some occasions, they are not so proficient at doing so, Mr. Speaker. So, we will be recruiting, Mr. Speaker, seven (7) persons, Engineers and Quantity Surveyors within the Ministry to help us to deal with the problems, Mr. Speaker.

We all understand that we are not supposed to increase staff, so we buy in the service. But, buy in the services or not, we still need people within the Ministry that could negotiate with the Service Providers. So, in that context, Mr. Speaker, we expect to be of better service to our client Ministries and to the Communities. As to what is happening, Mr. Speaker, you have great knowledge of this. Our young Engineers will come in for two (2)/three (3) years, and they go to greener pastures. Nothing is wrong with this, if we can continue to have a cadre of persons, at a

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superior level. But, we are going up and down, and we are now faced with a scenario, on whether we pay these people four (4) or five (5) times, which is a real value of whatever the Public Servants would get, or we just continue in this cycle. It is a significant problem for us, Mr. Speaker. But, we hope to be able to undertake the twenty-four (24) major projects that we have prioritized, Mr. Speaker, out of one hundred and sixty (160) that the Ministry would be responsible for, and, so this is of critical importance, Mr. Speaker.

At the World Bank Administered Canadian Trust Fund, they will also be helping us with some technical assistance, by providing some persons to sit with us and training our staff, over the next period, Mr. Speaker, and we are grateful for this assistance. But, we must train our people, and if we continue with the fact that when our people become trained and they can command even more, if they leave us again we will be in significant problems. So, we are asking for some patriotism, particularly from those of us who benefited from the taxpayers of Grenada to help within the Ministry. And, when we look, we will see a lot of Guyanese, a lot of Trinidadians, a lot of Africans and people may ask the question why? We must be a little bit more patriotic, Mr. Speaker.

I wish to advise, Mr. Speaker, that the arbitration between the Government of Grenada and WRB, which was held from between the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of June this year, this has come to a close. The Tribunals have been requesting submissions from the parties, and so we have not been making statements on it. We expect that no more submissions will be requested after the 31<sup>st</sup> of July, but we cannot be certain of this. And, no Tribunal, that is when, as we refer to it, we tried their case in the public domain. So, some people must be asking, but I have not heard much of the comments of why is not the Government saying more. All we are doing, Mr. Speaker, is to await the results of the Tribunal, how the award will be made. They will have to decide, Mr. Speaker, whether or not a repurchase event occurred, because WRB asked the Government to buy out the shares, because the Government passed some Laws where we will be regulating the Sector. So, if the Tribunal rules that no repurchase event occurred, that is, you cannot ask the Government to repurchase, because they passed Laws, then all they will have to do is to sit and run GRENLEC, and if they don't want to stay, then sell it at an arm's

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length price and the price you are requesting is sometimes in the range of three times the real value of the shares, and that is one of the problems, Mr. Speaker.

The Tribunal will also rule even if the Tribunal says that a repurchase event occurred and Government you must buy the shares, then the Tribunal will rule on the quantum of the shares. So, all we can do now is simply await the ruling of the Tribunal, Mr. Speaker. We have repeatedly said, every Member here including the Prime Minister, that the Government does not want to manage or run GRENLEC. So later on, based on what the Tribunal rules, the shares may be available to the Public, or any other investor, because our Investment Law says that we cannot treat anybody, no matter nationality, or their creed, or their colour, better or worse than a Grenadian. So, maybe, we may wish for Grenadians to buy it, but if somebody else comes to ask to buy it, we should treat them in the same manner, Mr. Speaker.

And, with the Transport, we have named two (2) new routes, in other words we would extend the routes from Beaton to Red Gate and the number of students from St. David's School and Westerhall, who cannot get from Red Gate to Beaton, this problem will be solved, in particular, for the students, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)** And, the route again, coming in from Grenville where the buses can go directly to Grand Anse and drop workers off at the site, at some worksite there and go back. They cannot come to Town, they will have to go back; so, we don't expect a lot of buses will be applying for that route. But, if we get three (3), I am sure it will help a lot of the workers coming from St. Andrew to work in the Southern belt, Mr. Speaker.

And, by the third quarter of the year, we certainly would want to implement the buses schedule, so that the hotel workers, leaving the Southern Belt will be able to come to the Bus Terminus and after 12:00/1:00, they will be able to get a couple buses going in either direction, up through Grand Etang, to Gouyave, to St. David, etcetera, and this, we know, is a serious problem. So, those are the two areas that we wish to respect.

And, the Park and Ride, Mr. Speaker, we've been talking to the Bus Association and they are asking for a contribution from Government, if they must drop the people off, park at Queen's Park and get into the market. They are saying that they cannot make the return, so Government must contribute. That delays a little bit, because Ministry of Finance must advise whether or not there are resources

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to do so. But, it must happen, Mr. Speaker. I think we must bite the bullet, because we cannot continue with the congestion in the Town of St. George. At the same time, we are looking at the GCF Project to help us with the route from the Town of St. George to Grand Anse; another cluttered route that's hurting productivity; that people must be on the road when they could be behind their workplace, at their work desk and actually and productively engaged in ensuring that the economy grows from strength to strength, Mr. Speaker. So, the Ministry is doing what it can, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure that when we get our seven (7) additional staff that will, Mr. Speaker, be supplemented by the Canada Fund, by the World Bank, where we will get additional staff, then we can grow, and you will see the Ministry getting back into top performance again, Mr. Speaker. I thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister with responsibility for Implementation, et al. Honourable Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and National Security, etcetera.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first of all I just want to point out that the Leader of Government's Business, in presenting the Papers this morning, presented the FROC Report for 2018 – 2019, and, as the Law indicates, it is also simultaneously we should have had a response from the Minister for Finance on the FROC Report. So, I just want to point out, that would be forthcoming at the next session of Parliament that we have. I just want to make this point.

Mr. Speaker, I just want, from the outset, to indicate to you, since I was not here at the last Session, since I had a number of major activities that I may have to, from the outset, ask you for additional few minutes to give a Report on the Prime Minister's Ministry and activities in the last couple months. I do want to point out on couple occasions that I have had to be out of the State on personal and also business activities. It must be pointed out, Mr. Speaker, that the Prime Minister never really is out of work, even when you want to take a quality rest, you don't get it, because people find out, people call you, businessmen, persons of interest to the country, other Governments, wherever you are, who wish to meet with you to

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discuss major issues, whether it's relative to Grenada, or to the Caribbean Region, so we are never really out on any holiday. There is no such thing as a holiday for me.

But, I do want to point out, Mr. Speaker, in one of those meetings I was attending, I received a call that I was very ill, and I was rushed to the General Hospital in Grenada. I don't know, because when I left here I left with JetBlue, and I know I must have been seen, and I don't know how I reached to the General Hospital without being on a stretcher and no one seemed to know about it, but speculation. Everything about the Prime Minister is rumours, rumours, rumours. Prime Minister could have no private activities at all. Everything is a rumour, and some people enjoy speculating about the Prime Minister, in every respect.

But, I just want to say this, Mr. Speaker, for those who were genuinely concerned about my health, tell them that I am doing well. I am one of those persons, Mr. Speaker, it is well known that anything could happen to anybody, at any time, but I am pretty sure that if something has to happen to me, physically, I wouldn't be a major contributor to this. There is one big person, who is responsible for all of us and we just hope and pray that He gives us long life and health and so on. So, for those who were genuinely concerned, I say to them, I am fine. But, for those who may be wishing my physical demise, I am sorry to disappoint you, because it appears the speculation must have been more mischievous, in my view, because I don't see how something like that could happen and for it not be known and for facts to be obtained. So, there is no need for persons to be concerned.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I think it is a sad thing, when we have persons spending their quality time that they could use to improve themselves and their families, and to spend those times spreading propaganda, and even a certain document called a newspaper is into this. But, that's been a historical aspect of that particular scandal sheet, I call it, more than anything else, not a newspaper; that's why I won't ever be seen with one of those, because, clearly, it is not a paper, as far as I am concerned. So, I just need to make the point that everything is fine, that my doctors have been giving me very good reports. I do that every six (6) months, every aspect and I urge all Members, particularly men folks, don't wait to see signs, do it regularly; that's my

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advice, in fact, to all those who may be wishing my demise. I advise them to follow my approach to my physical health.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to make a comment on a very important issue. The issue of telephone; in fact, I heard it is being described as Telephone Gate. I have never been described like this. But, Mr. Speaker, this is a serious issue, and it is something that I have spoken about, and I think it is something that we all must treat very seriously. We guard the resources of this country, in a very serious way. We take it very seriously, this Government does. And, while we have expanded the economy and have created resources by our initiatives, unlike those in the past, could not even spend, because they did not create wealth and resources for the country. We are still very concerned that any such resources are the country's resources and it is the responsibility of the Government of the day to guard those in every sense of the word. So, we take this very seriously, and, therefore, that is why the Government had not attempted to just pass the blame. It took responsibility, at the highest level, for what took place.

But, we make the point, Mr. Speaker, the issue of telephone usage and abuse has been a historic one. In fact, when the data comes out about past behaviour patterns, some people are heard in the press making statements about the irresponsible nature of the Government and investigations and so on about telephone. Yes, we will have investigation, if you want one, but it would be from 2008 to 2018. And, I am sure some people may want to hide below their desks in the process, Mr. Speaker.

But, I do want to make this point, the question of telephones and that's why our Public Service also must accept its responsibility. And, when we say that, some people say we are criticizing Public Servants, this is not the case. The Government has first taken ownership and that's the first area. Our view is always, Mr. Speaker, when something happens to you, look at yourself first, and then you could look at other persons around you. So, we are not hiding or ducking our responsibilities and I have owned it first. But, when telephone or electricity bills or any other bill comes, the Minister does not see those bills. He ought not to have time to see those bills. If the Minister wants to sit down, going through a telephone bill, then he is abdicating his fundamental responsibility to manage the affairs of his Ministry and the country,

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as a whole. And, those who just sign off, without even checking, must know that's a fundamental problem. I have heard it said "I don't see bills", but it is your responsibility, you have to see it, and you can't pass the buck to anybody. And, that is not to criticize anybody, it is to talk about what is right and wrong, and the Government has already accepted its part. So, we accept this, and those who have been out of Government for a while know that they're using a phone and they must know that what they are doing was not right. And, therefore, the Audit Department is doing a thorough analysis of all those bills and those who have, in fact, used Government. I could use different words, but I use safe words, will be called upon to repay the taxpayers. And, that is every man, woman, toot-moon, Mr. Speaker, not one person. In fact, we have a mass of problems, but I am only hearing one name, one name you're hearing. It is amazing, one name.

But, you know, significantly, you're not hearing anything about the Prime Minister, you're not hearing one thing. Still blaming the Prime Minister, blaming the Government, but they will not say the Prime Minister's bill was not exorbitant. They will not say. So, if the Prime Minister's bill is not exorbitant, relatively speaking, with responsibilities, it means, therefore, that he is careful about the use of the Government resources. How can he therefore, be so careful about himself and, therefore, encourage others, maybe a friend or whoever to do the opposite? Does that make any sense? Mr. Speaker, but that is the level of dishonesty that exists.

So, what we're saying? We are going forward. Audit is being done, the people have to repay and they're going to be a new approach to this thing. In fact, Mr. Speaker, this thing would not have come out today, it would have been far worse. We will find out, may be, next year. It was the Prime Minister and the Minister for Finance, who asked for... because I became concerned. Certain things came to my attention and I said no, I asked for it and it was presented at a staff meeting. So, I want to be clear that the Government does not intend to hide anything. So, investigations will be done, people will have to repay those and systems would be put in place. So, if a Minister's bill is looking high, the job of the Public Servant is to advise the Minister, look the situation, because he or she may not know. So, I rest the case here.



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Mr. Speaker, another issue, and that's the next issue that I am going to talk about, again tells you the problem that we face, as Politicians and Ministers of Government. The issue that a lot of noise has been made about payments to Police Officers in the Prime Minister's detail. This should never have happened, and I am being blamed, as if I want to give friends money, not myself, you know, I am giving friends, again. I didn't give myself, Government pays people. Mr. Speaker, a rule is in place that no one should have more than one hundred (100) days inside Leave you hope to take. That is being managed by the Public Service. It cannot be managed by the Minister, or Ministers. But, historically, and you're not hearing anything about that, throughout the entire Public Service, some people have to get paid for two hundred (200) and odd days, a lot of people, and these are facts, Mr. Speaker. These are not things being said now. And I ask them, well how come this person has two hundred and fifty (250) days leave? We have to pay almost a year's salary, and sometimes over seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000.00), but you hear nothing about this, not a word. All levels of Public Servants and Police Officers, top members of the Police Force have been paid over the years, top members for a lot of Leave not taken. You're not hearing a word. All of a sudden, information come that all the men around the Prime Minister detail must take leave immediately. I said, well what nonsense is this? Somebody maybe has something up their sleeve. How could all the men around the Prime Minister have to take Leave... when they pointed out all the amount of leave, I said, well, no that does not make sense.

So, two choices, they go on Leave, or unfortunately we have to pay; that's what happened, and we couldn't decide, pay one, don't pay the other. Well, that is creating more problems. What am I supposed to do, take it from my pocket? But, you're hearing noises, noises, noises, as if some wickedness took place, the unfairness of it. And, I must speak about that, because it is unfair. I know some members/people coming to me; I have some days I want paid too. What do you mean you want paid too? Some Police Officers, Public Servants, requests after requests, because the perception is that the Prime Minister sharing bread. He giving things, man, Christmas time; nothing about the security issues involved.

But, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, I must talk about this, but I said, again, the Politician has to be taking licks for what was not done by those who are paid to do it.

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But, going forward, Mr. Speaker, again, like the telephone, a system would be put in place. They will not have a reoccurrence of this. The Police have been advised, the Public Service has been advised that the people who refuse to do their work, there must be penalties applied. If someone is responsible for personnel and managing the system and you allow this to happen, there should be some method to get you to understand, or your own responsibility. A Politician takes licks, he gets licks and he has to pay the price when he goes before the people, even if he is not the Accounting Officer, he will get his day. The people will have a chance to judge him, but it seems like, within our system, there is no penalty for things that are not done by those who are responsible. And, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I felt as I told you, I had to speak.

I would just make the point further, the Officers who received, some of them said, if they knew that they had to pay all that tax on their money, they didn't want it. Some outside there behave, as if the people got quarter million dollars, a bunch of lies. But, it is sold, and, you know, the gullible man believe, oh, the Prime Minister gave all this money to his boys, as if it's my sons and daughters or something. I don't check. I don't ask Police Officers who their politicians are. I have said over and over to the Policemen, I don't care about your politics. Grenada is a society of many Political Parties, the Force... the members of the Force come from that society. So, for one to expect that everyone would be a sympathizer to the Government of the day would be unrealistic. What I say to them is do your job as a Policeman. Do not allow your politics to interfere with your responsibility in discharging the Rule of Law in this country, that's what I have said. Where you vote is not our business. We have a good image out there. The country enjoys one of the best images, in terms of security in the Region. So, I am proud of that. So, as they continue to do their work, at the same time having their own political views, which is their right, the Government should be extremely proud of everyone, not just those who may have been sympathetic to the Government of the day. So, Mr. Speaker, as I have told you, I just felt it was necessary for me to express and explain some of these fundamental things, in going forward.

Mr. Speaker, many of the Members already spoke on several issues. We are proud of where the economy is going and things are happening. We are proud.

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Later on, I would speak, more specifically, on some of the successes, as we look at the Supplementary Estimates.

But, just to say this, finally, the Carnival is here. I have already spoken, but, Mr. Speaker, I do need to reinforce. I think the Commissioner has also spoken. The Member for St. Mark asked a question, and I am wondering how did we get this so wrong. Where are we going? When we were growing up, Carnival was fun. It was clean fun, because, as we enjoy ourselves, we have to remember the little minds are out there, they are watching. And, if we send the wrong message to our children and grandchildren, what are we doing, Mr. Speaker? We are, in fact, preparing a dangerous future society. So, while some of us are getting old, we may reap the benefits of what we have created later on, and that is the time we need more care than any other. So, I say let us enjoy ourselves. Let us do it with a clear understanding of fun as I said, I made a short presentation this morning. If you have to drink, be responsible. If you have to drive, do it with a sense of responsibility, and let us have the best Carnival, as we continue to have. There are thousands of visitors, wherever I pass. Every time there's a function, massive crowd. I have never seen this; so something good is happening in this country. Let us continue to keep it good. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Prime Minister.

**Ag. Clerk:** Item 13 - Personal Explanations.

Item 14 - Motions.

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

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the following Motion standing in my name, which reads:

**WHEREAS** section 50 (i) of the Constitution makes provision for each House of Parliament to regulate its procedure and make rules for orderly conduct of its proceedings;

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**AND WHEREAS** such proceedings and rules were provided for in the House of Representatives Standing Orders on April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1993, and includes amendments approved on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2002, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2003 and November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015;

**AND WHEREAS** a Standing Orders Committee was elected by the House of Representatives during the Sitting of the Second Session of the Tenth Parliament, on Friday November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018. In accordance with section 70 (i) of the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives;

**AND WHEREAS** the Standing Orders Committee constituting of the Honourable Gregory Bowen as Chairperson, Honourable Tobias Clement, Honourable Kindra-Maturine Stewart, as Members convened on Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, at the office of the Houses of Parliament. The Honourable Kindra-Maturine Stewart was absent from the said Sitting;

**AND WHEREAS** the Standing Orders Committee deliberated and agreed that amendments to the existing Standing Orders were necessary to further regulate the procedure of the House of Representatives;

**AND WHEREAS** the Speaker of the House of Representatives directs that the amendments recommended by the Standing Orders Committee be put before the next Sitting of the House of Representatives for consideration, debate and approval;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the following amendments contained in the Schedule be here approved by this Honourable House.

**Question proposed.**

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

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before I get into the Schedule, I wish, pursuant to Standing Order 34 - Amendment of Motions, to propose the following amendment, and it is simply in the preamble, Mr. Speaker, the fourth paragraph, which states the Honourable Kindra-Maturine Stewart was absent from the said Meeting, Mr. Speaker, and we do have another Member here present,

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the Honourable Tobias Clement, Member for St. George North-East. The Meeting transferred from one day to the other, it was not adjourned. Yes, she was not there on the first day, which was much shorter, but she was there for the lengthy session on the second day, Mr. Speaker. So, I wish to recommend that the sentence in the fourth paragraph: **“the Honourable Kindra-Maturine Stewart was absent from the said meeting”** be deleted, as many of the contributors that we see here she participated.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, having been there to the Meetings myself, I want to suggest that this be omitted from the Motion. It's so done.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if we look at the Schedule and we get into the gist of the amendment... the first amendment, Mr. Speaker, is to insert in, after the heading 'Members and Officers of the House,' and I think every Member has the Standing Orders before them, and it's really to do with definitions, Mr. Speaker. As we are rightly guided in the Standing Orders of many of the other Houses of Representatives in the Region, in the Commonwealth, they do have a Glossary, a list of definitions. And, the definitions that we put there is the same definitions that we practice here, but it's not in the Standing Orders.

For example, Mr. Speaker, 'Chair', we say 'Chair' or 'Chairperson', but it's not defined. But, we know what it means, and it's defined here means “the Speaker or other person presiding.” So, that's the Chair, whether it's a Committee, or whether it's the House itself. Chairman means “the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, or of a Select Committee.”

Circulate, this is the particular one we want to go with, Mr. Speaker. It means “to distribute electronically, as far as possible.” And, one of the gist behind the Committee Meeting was, we practice distributing documents electronically, but it's not in the Standing Orders. And, that is one critical component; so the definition there, circulate before meant you must print and bring to people. Now, we are saying circulate means, as far as is possible, you expect and you will receive electronically, Mr. Speaker.

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Constitution, I need not read that out, it defines it. Court... House, and sometimes we hear, Mr. Speaker, the terminology. Now, we used to hear the Senate before, we hear the House of Senate, so now we define House. Apparently, this is a practice maybe throughout the Region, where they say House of Senate and so. So, House now is defined; whenever we say here House, it cannot be not identified only as the House.

The Leader of the Opposition... Leave of the House, that's defined. We know what it is. But, Leave of the House, or leave of the Committee, this means 'permission to do something'. We always say it. From time immemorial we would say 'with leave of the House'. What does it mean? We define it, means, it is the consent, or with the permission of the House.

It defines Member, Members mean "a Member of the House or of a Committee." It defines what Minister means, it defines the Order Book. This may be strange to us, but the Order Book means a listing of all the business of the House. I think it is in the Standing Orders, but it's never really defined and we never really use it a lot.

Order Paper, we know what it means, Mr. Speaker. Paper, we have laid a lot of Papers and documents. Person includes an Organization, so when we say 'person' in this House, it doesn't mean the biological person only, it includes the corporate person, as otherwise.

A Private Member, it was not defined, but I think we know what it means, "A Private Member refers to a Member of the House, who is not a Minister, or Parliamentary Secretary." It's defined now, no ambiguity.

Privilege means "the special rights and immunities belonging to the House, its Committees and its Members, in accordance with Section 50 (3) of the Constitution". Maybe we knew it before, but it's not defined. Like you say in the other Parliaments in the Region, it is well-defined.

Session, "the Sittings between one prorogation and the other", we know, but we define it. *Sub judice*, we always say it in this House, "for the purposes of Standing Order 38 (1) refer to a matter before the Court and awaiting adjudication." It was not there before although we practiced what was there.

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Substantive Motion means “a self-contained proposal drafted in a form expresses an opinion or decision of the House.” A Visitor, we speak about visitors to this Honourable Place. It means “a person other than a Member or employee of the Houses of Parliament.” In this case, whether you’re in the Upper or the Lower House, you’re not a visitor. So, we cannot say because the House is meeting and a Member of the ‘Other Place’ is there, we cannot refer to that person as a Visitor. You must not belong to any of the Houses, or the staff of any of the Houses.

Writing, this one is of critical importance; “includes any communication which is hand written or printed and is hand delivered or transmitted by Fax, Post, or any Electronic means.” So, we see the word ‘writing’ there, I don’t expect it to be a pen and handwritten. We are moving away from that stage and so it is, and this is what is defined there, Mr. Speaker.

In Standing Order 6, as we go to the amendment by repealing and replacing paragraph (2). “The Clerk shall circulate the Minutes...” and what we want to add there, “of each Sitting to the Speaker electronically”, because we do it, we practice it, but any Member could stand up and say no, I don’t want it this way. Although we agreed amongst ourselves we must put it in the Standing Orders now. So, everybody must expect their document; not only because we practice it and we are in a period of transition you will get it electronically, “or a printed copy for his signature”; so between the Clerk and the Speaker, not we alone must get it, between them, they will be communicating electronically, Mr. Speaker.

By repealing Item (4) and substituting thereof; “the Clerk is responsible for preparing an Order Paper Book, which must be accessible”, you delete that and you put “the Clerk make available to the Members, draft bills, notices, communication, information.” The idea here is to bring in electronically again.

Paragraph (5) (a), which I just read, in Standing Orders 13, paragraph (3) by deleting the word ‘often’, where it appears and substituting, therefore, the words ‘of’, ‘of ten’. It was a typo error, Mr. Speaker. So, we are saying ‘often’ something, and they joined it together and the word ‘often’ came up. So, when you are reading it, it made no sense, so we’re simply correcting a typographical error, Mr. Speaker.

In Standing Order 16, paragraph (I), by deleting (10), and substituting, therefore, (15). This is to do with the time limit that is given to Ministers in Ministerial

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Statements. We have a lot of complaints and Members were saying, well, I can't say what I have to say in ten (10) minutes. Mr. Speaker, we discussed this, at length, at the Meeting, and we decided that we ourselves are not too big to learn. We note what happens in the Parliaments, when they have three hundred (300) and four hundred (400) Members. Mr. Speaker, they say what they have to say, what will take us maybe one hour, they say it in five (5) to ten (10) minutes. And, when we understand, when we look at what has happened, they did not do it just like this, you know, they went into a Training Programme mode to do it, and we are saying that, yes, we too can do it.

I listened to the BBC, and we should listen to the BBC to some of the Programmes, when experts they come in and you have Judges there, high standard University group persons, and you must say and bring out the information. And, when I look at the quantity of books and pages they give them, and these people must bring out the information, in a specific time, and I think we must learn to do it that way, and we have fifteen (15) here, so we're moving around. But, that does not mean that we should not learn.

And, the Youth Parliament coming after us; as you well articulate, Mr. Speaker, they should also be involved in some of these training, so that they say what they have to say, and say it concisely and precisely and move forward, Mr. Speaker. So, we go from ten (10) to fifteen (15); that does not mean, Mr. Speaker, that when we, ourselves, would come back and say we're going back to ten (10), because we can do what we can do in ten (10) minutes. But, the proposal here is to change from ten (10) to fifteen (15).

In Standing Order 18 by inserting paragraph (3), the following new paragraph, all... and this was deliberated. The Honourable Member for St. George North-East and another Member was there, when deliberations went a lot on this, when the Committee was very, very reluctant to go from ten (10) to fifteen (15).

In Standing Order 18 by inserting paragraph (3), the following new paragraph: "All Papers, Reports and other documents that are required to be laid in the House must be done electronically." Remember this big package that we get here, yes, so we will get it electronically now, because we said, **(applause)** we made the decision, but we did not implement it here. We have been practicing it for over a year, so we



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don't expect any resistance now. All of this would be electronic, and this is one of the biggest components of the amendment.

By repealing Standing Order 19, and substituting therefor and 19 is Questions. Remember, that's a long time that we have not had Questions, because of the nature or the makeup of the House, and the Member for St. George North-East led a lot in that debate, to say that, well, one day it will happen, and so we must make provision for it. It says: "Whenever a question is asked of a Member, the Member is required to provide a response to the question within thirty (30) days after the question is first asked in the House. Should the Member be unable to provide a response within thirty (30) days, that Member may request additional time from the Speaker within which to respond to the Question, and the Speaker may grant such additional numbers of days within his or her discretion. Where there is no Minister in the House, who is exclusively responsible for the matter forming the subject of a Question, the Question may be put to the Leader of Government's Business." The former documentation said: "to the Prime Minister," and now it's changed to the Leader of Government's Business. And, you'll see the term 'within his or her', and that is the new trend we took, and we want to put wherever you have 'him' before, that; I would not read it out, but the amendment will take care of it. It will always be 'him' or 'her'. 'He' will be 'he' or 'she', although there was a blanket coverage which said 'he' means 'he' or 'she'. But, now they say don't put that in one little place and hide it, put it in every place you have 'she.' So 'she', 'he', 'he' or 'she', wherever you have one, so you wouldn't have any one coming together; so the amendment takes care of this, Mr. Speaker.

Standing Order 35, "by repealing thirty (30) with forty (40) minutes"; I would encourage, Mr. Speaker, the Members of this Honourable House, my colleagues to look at Standing Order 35 before them. 'Time and Manner of Speaking' and, if we go, Mr. Speaker, to paragraph (2) (a): "A Member, introducing the Bill, shall speak for more than thirty (30) minutes", that is a Member introducing a Bill. "And, any other Member shall speak on the Bill for a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes." Members appealed to the Standing Orders Committee and to myself as Chairperson, in particular, that the thirty (30) minutes was insufficient, so we proposed forty (40) minutes. I am asking the entire House to relook at this again, because we had great

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debate on it. We brought it up and we said the final decision is the House. But, if you are presenting a Bill, you have half an hour to do so, we are asking, do you want more? The amendment is here, so, Mr. Speaker, I crave your indulgence, if you will ask the House, specifically, a decision on this, and the House must not feel that because the Committee brought it and so we are sticking with it. But, I could tell you, there were lots of toss ups. We are saying that you should be able to do that, particularly, if we ourselves undertake the necessary incentives to be efficient with our time and how we present. So, it's there, so I am asking you to give it some special attention and ask the Speaker to get a ruling on it.

"The Member may use an electronic device in making his/her presentation...", we are still on Standing Order 35, 'by inserting, after (5), the following new (5) (a) to read as follows: "A Member may use an electronic device to make his/her presentation in the House." A lot of debate went into this; suppose we want to come and we want to get out of track and the Member for St. John, who is so very versed in electronics may come in and take two (2) hours to set up a piece of electronic equipment and could revert to this Order, and say, well, I can use whatever I want. But, we thought that the general principle of the Standing Orders gave the Speaker enough authority to tell him, no, you have two (2) minutes to set up, and you have one (1) minute to use etcetera, etcetera. It may not be expressly written here, but since we are moving with technology, we want Members to be able to use a device properly, and to give the Speaker the authority to manage it. I don't know if the Drafters, or if we want to add in something there that the Speaker would have the authority to manage the process, but, we thought no, at our level of the Committee, that the Speaker has enough authority already to be able to decide this.

Standing Order 47, by deleting the word 'be' where it appears after the word, 'unless' and substituting it, therefore, with the words 'he' or 'she.' Now, you know when they had 'be' a typo again, it should be 'he'. So, it's just the wrong word, 'b' instead of 'h'. But, at the same time, we are saying that you cannot put back 'he' alone, we must put back 'he' or 'she', as I intimated earlier, Mr. Speaker. And, you see the second section by deleting the word 'his' where it appears and substituting the word 'his' or 'her'.

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In Standing Order 48 by inserting, after paragraph (48) (i), the following; this is of critical importance. Note, besides me, the Minister for Finance and Prime Minister has members of his staff here, and I'll read it:

(1a) This will be inserted, and whether it is not inserted, you might ask, is the Law of the Land superior to the Standing Orders or not? We may say the Law of the Land; I would hope the legal person would say the Law of the Land must be superior, so it is already there that we have to follow, we are just implementing it in our Rules, so that the Clerk, the Speaker, people like myself, Leader of Government's Business could really do what the Law says we should do.

"Pursuant to section 26, subsection (1) of the Public Finance Management Act, No. 17 of 2015, every draft Bill submitted to the Parliament for debate and approval shall be, at the time of being submitted to the Parliament, be accompanied by a Fiscal Impact Analysis, at the time of being submitted to Parliament."

The Speaker has repeatedly reminded us, the Leader of Government's Business, in particular, the Standing Orders Committee then decided that we will implement it here. What does that mean, Mr. Speaker? That if we're presenting a Bill, a Bill that says we will be cutting the trees off in the Gardens, there, it says every draft Bill, it didn't say a Money Bill. They say it must be accompanied by a Fiscal Impact Analysis. And, this is not new to us, you know. I remember in Canada and in the US, you hear the Congress reporting a Bill and at the end of it you see monies. But, where does money come in there, because the Bill has nothing to do with anything. It may be a social something, but it is saying, you must tell us whether there is some fiscal consequence in this Bill. So, the report attached to it may say there is no fiscal consequence, but I have never seen a Bill without any. You might say it is significantly less etcetera. This is important. So, from the next Sitting, from whichever Ministry it emanates, we must work with the Ministry of Finance to have attached to that Bill by a Fiscal... and the Analysis, if we go further and we look at that Bill, we expect it to come from the Ministry of Finance. So, it's a lot of; I wouldn't say burden, both Ministries must work together to ensure that we accompany it, otherwise we would not see our Bill being accepted by the Speaker of the House.

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In Standing Order 55 by inserting after paragraph (12) the following new paragraph (12a), which reads: I think we practice this, I remember since a well renowned Speaker was here. “If, at any stage, while the House is in Committee, a request is made for a short adjournment, the Chairman shall first return from the Committee stage to the full seating before granting the adjournment.” And, again, Mr. Speaker, I think Legal Affairs helped us draft that, say from Committee Stage to the full ‘seating’. They say ‘s e a t i n g’, maybe that’s the correct word or ‘sitting’. I am just asking, we have the Legal persons here, so that they would confirm at the correct time, and allow us to know what should that be, because we want to get our Standing Orders correctly.

Standing Order 69 reads, as follows: “By replacing 3 (ii) (b)”... I think we left out (3) (ii) before there and it’s a typo, so, I think the Clerk and the Speaker would have the right to correct this, and substituting ‘therefor’, and this is of importance; “where there are no Members of the Opposition in the House of Representatives, one of the Senators, appointed by the Governor-General, under Section 62 subsection (ii) of the Constitution of Grenada, may be appointed by the House of Representatives, as Chairman.” And, it refers to the Public Accounts Committee; this is what 69 is always about.

Many of us have travelled, Mr. Speaker, and we have been told, when we go into the CPU Meetings and the Commonwealth Meetings, they are saying that the Public Accounts is the purview of the House. The fact is, it’s a money matter and the fact that we are putting persons from the ‘Other Place’ is not proper. We explained, Mr. Speaker, that we certainly want to show the Public that because we have everything in the House. And, these people, appointed by the Governor General, remember she consults with the Leader of the Opposition. They tend to show a balance of not being along our sides in our method of thinking. So, while you cannot call them Opposition, fully so, because there is no Opposition Leader to appoint them. And, if you look at what constitutes this in the Senate now, you would realise that the persons there, they are not part and parcel of the New National Party Organisation. So, to have that part of it that they will provide some oversight, we are saying that we cannot get them in the norm and practice. I don’t know if they are saying constitutionally, whiles they’re inferring that nothing to do with monies and

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accounts should be handled outside of the Senate. But, we are proposing that such a person from that 'Other Side,' Mr. Speaker, be the Chairperson. What we have changed, in particular, is 'shall'. We are saying that such a person shall be appointed Chairperson.

So, we put 'may' and I'll tell you why we get to the 'may' before. The Members of the Committee brought out the other point. They said, but you may have the Leader of the Opposition, and, so you do not have sufficient Members in the House, as well. It might be the Leader of the Opposition alone. It might be the Leader of the Opposition and one other person, and since you need at least three (3) persons, then you don't know what to do. You don't have sufficient, so we did not provide for that before. We want to now provide by saying, "where there are insufficient eligible Members to serve on the Committee, at least one (1) of the Senators, appointed by the Leader of the Opposition...", there will be such persons now, because this is the scenario where you have a Leader of the Opposition, but he only has one person or no persons with him, and so we cannot form the Committee.

We are saying that one of the Senators appointed by the Leader of the Opposition, under subsection (24) of the Constitution, and we want to change 'shall', we say "may be appointed by the House of Representatives." The idea is, well, even if you have a Member, who is a Private Member, even associated with the Government, that person could go on the Committee, and you can work with that Committee as well. So, you could have two (2) from the Opposition and a non-member from the Government Side.

When you look at Committees in Great Britain and in the U.S., they do have Members from their Party on there. The democrats will have three, but they will always have the majority, and the 'Other Side' will have some. So, there is no harm in letting the Leader of the Opposition be the Chairperson, as is required under the Standing Orders, as is present now. His one person with him, if he has one, or if he doesn't have any with him, he may appoint two (2). He may take two (2) from his persons, but the House must appoint them. While we are trying to show this, since it is a House matter, it is not a Joint Committee. It is not the business of the 'Other Place', but we want to show that we have people of different opinion that will overlook what we do. So, it is "the House shall appoint" these people now to be on

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the Committee, Mr. Speaker. And, these are the gist of the amendments that we have made, and we are presenting it to this Honourable House, Mr. Speaker, for approval. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Leader of Government's Business. Now, sometimes I don't see the light, so if you stand, then I will be able to recognize you. Honourable Parliamentary Representative for St. Patrick West.

**Hon. Anthony Boatswain:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand in full support of all of the recommended changes to be made. I do believe that the time has come and maybe even passed that we should have moved into this era of a paperless Parliament.

However, Mr. Speaker, there is one concern I do have, that notwithstanding the move towards a paperless Parliament, from what I have read, and what I have seen here, it still requires of Members to Carry Your Own Devices (CYOD). And, I know that there are Parliaments where those devices are provided by the Parliament. So, I am saying we are just halfway, and we need to go the full house, that Parliament, in order to be fully an E-Parliament, we are supposed to have the devices in the Parliament here, rather than asking every Member to carry a device. And, this is the only short coming I see and maybe the Leader of Government's Business can tell us when we can move to that stage where we are fully equipped, and we can indeed say, this is an E-Parliament; the devices are in the Parliament. As it stands right now, we are only half way there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

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

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, a very short comment. I think I understand the point being made by the Member of St. Patrick West. Of course, we will certainly have to look into that. But, I think the Leader of Government's Business did advise about the possibility of the recommendation from thirty (30) to

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forty (40) minutes being looked at by each Member, independently, to see whether, in fact, it makes sense. So, Mr. Speaker, I think we are going to need your guidance, as to how we approach finding a solution going forward, whether, in fact, we stay with the recommendation by the Committee, or, in fact, we stay with what exist right now, the thirty (30) minutes. There are merits on both sides, so I think it's up to individual Members to vote, as they see it fit, so, Mr. Speaker, you will have to guide us.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. Honourable Members, let me address the availability of electronic devices for Parliamentarians. I must say that we are working expeditiously, to ensure that we go fully paperless, and in which case each Parliamentarian coming here and sitting, there would be the device available, so that we can work with it. I couldn't give you immediately, at this time, the time, but we will see that in the very near future, we would get there. In the meantime, I would beg of you to walk with yours, **(laughter)** but we will soon say to you, you can leave yours home, don't worry.

I just came from a Session with the CPU, and we had, as I said before thirty-five (35) young people debating and timing was critical. And, each of them had seven (7) minutes to debate, and at the end of seven (7) minutes, they could continue speaking nobody would hear, the speaker was locked off.

I was listening to the debate on the Budget in Canada. Admittedly, they have a very large Parliament, and each Parliamentarian had five (5) minutes to debate the Budget. At the end of five (5) minutes, you saw his mouth moving, but you wouldn't get a sound. All the Speaker does is just switch off the mike.

I know that we want to say, as much as we can on any one Bill and presenting a Bill we want to get it clear. But, I also believe that you can say the same thing in one minute that you can use an hour to say it. But, that is not me, it's the other Members of the House.

At present, in presenting a Bill, the presenter has thirty (30) minutes to present the Bill. It is suggested by the Standing Orders Committee, based on the request, by Members, that you need forty (40) minutes. You need an extension of time. The decision is yours. If you believe that forty (40) minutes is what would give

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you the opportunity to make the Bill as clear as possible... you might want to take ten (10) minutes, twenty (20) minutes, depending on the size and the conditions and the extent of the Bill, you might want to take more time, the decision is yours. What I would ask you to indicate to me, whether you think we should stay with the thirty (30) minutes, or we should move to forty (40) minutes. If you go to forty (40) minutes, it would mean that at the end of forty (40) minutes and the bell goes you sit. If you stay at thirty (30), at the end of thirty (30) minutes the bell goes, you may get five (5) minutes more, so you would have to decide. In any case, if you go to forty (40) you would benefit, but do you want it? Now, if, for some reason you think you should stay with thirty (30), or you should move to forty (40), please indicate. All Members, who think that the thirty minutes is adequate time to do...

**(Dr. Mitchell rose)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Oh, sorry. Honourable Prime Minister.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, just to apologise and just to ask for your indulgence. I think one of the problems we have had is the time for Members to be allowed to speak on the Adjournment. I thought we should limit this, because I have seen occasions where some of us have been made to sit for a long time, because there has been no restriction, and I am suggesting that the same way we put limits on Members speaking on a Bill, I think there should be limits on speaking on an the Adjournment. And, five (5) minutes, maybe, is a reasonable recommendation on the Standing Orders. I don't know what Members think, but I was talking to the Leader of Government's Business and I remember over the years, we have had some serious concerns, because some of us have, in fact, abused that particular area. So, I just want to just add this to see if Members may wish to consider this in the same time, as we are looking at the question of the time for Members presenting and speaking on Bills. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



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**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. **(Discussion between the Ag. Clerk and the Speaker)** Sorry, so it is already catered for, ten (10) minutes. So, you have ten (10) minutes to speak on the Adjournment.

***(Inaudible comments by the Prime Minister)***

**Mr. Speaker:** Because we so often, on the Adjournment, we adjourn. **(Ag. Clerk converse with the Speaker)** So, we are back to amendment 7 (a), the thirty (30) or forty (40) minutes. Honourable Members, those who believe that thirty (30) minutes is good enough, say 'aye'. **(Members respond)** If you believe that forty (40) minutes is the better thing, say 'aye'. Nobody said 'aye' for forty (40)? Would you rather thirty (30) than forty (40)? **(Members respond)** Right. Good. So, we would stay with thirty (30), then. So, in other words, 7 (a) could be omitted, and we renumber. So, we don't have a 7 (a), it was before. The 7 (a) now becomes what was 7 (b). Okay. Any other contributions? Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. And, I mentioned 12, the last amendment where we have (b) (a) 'Where there are insufficient eligible Members to serve on the Committee, at least one of the Senators, appointed by the Leader of the Opposition, shall be appointed'. Mr. Speaker, we would change 'shall' to 'may', because, as I indicated before, we may have private Members in the House, so you could have everybody from the House, the two Opposition and a Private Member from the Government Side.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay. So, we want to amend the 'shall' to 'may'. Honourable Members are there any objections to this? If no objection, Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. We have section (c) in Standing Order 69, and section (c) says: 'If the Senator so named, declines, the House may name any other Senator not appointed by Government to do so'. I am just wondering if section (c) from the Drafters shouldn't be more specific. If the Senators

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so named, because we have (b) and (ba). I don't think our document has section (c). Section (c) says: 'If the Senators so named declines..', that is it is referring to only (b), but now we put for insufficient. So, should (c) read: 'If the Senator or Senators...' with your leave, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Yes. Please.

**(Discussion between Hon. Bowen and the Legal Drafter)**

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I thought, the section (c) in Standing Order 69 (3) (c), because we introduced another provision; (c) says: 'if the Senator so named declines...' referring to only one. But, now we must be specific: 'If the Senators so named under subsection (3), subsection (ii) (b) and (ba); so this should be added, section (c) should be amended, as well.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** 69 (c).

**Mr. Speaker:** (69) (c), and it should read...

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** 'If the Senator, so named, under...' and we put the two (2) subsections, which is 3 (ii) (b) and (3) (ii) (ba)..' 'so named under subsections (3) (ii) (b) and subsection (3) (ii) (ba)..' and that is all we have to add there; 'declines...' So, in both cases, if anyone of them declines, then (3) (c) continues, as usual. So, just under these two things here.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay. So, Honourable Members, are you following there? Okay. We want to amend it. 'If the Senator so named declines.'

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** 'If the Senator so named under...' and after 'named, between 'named' and 'declined', we will put 'under Section (3) (ii) (b) or (3) (ii) (ba)'.

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So, it is inserted between 'named' and 'declines'. And, well, 'if the Senators...', we will have to change 'declines' to 'declined,' the Grammar?

**Mr. Speaker:** 'Declined.' Okay. So, the amendment is accepted. And, we had one other correction, I think. 'The full seating before granting adjournment', that is on (11), (12) (a), that is the moving from the Committee back... So it's the 'sitting' 's i t t...'. This was a typographical error that needs to be changed. You got it there? It is 11, 12 (a), that's: 'If at any stage, while the House is in Committee, a request made for a short adjournment, the Chairman shall first return from the Committee Stage to the full S i t t i n g'. What it is saying is the full Sitting of the House. Yes, Honourable Representative for St. Patrick West.

**Hon. Anthony Boatswain:** Yes. Mr. Speaker, just for clarification, 'short' could mean 'short,' 'short' could mean not too short. What exactly do we mean by a 'short adjournment', in the context of what we are dealing with; five (5) minutes, two (2) minutes, ten (10) minutes? Should we put a qualifying, not more than a certain amount of minutes to qualify short?

**Mr. Speaker:** Because we are not in Committee, we would want to address the Speaker by standing.

**Hon. Anthony Boatswain:** Oh yes. Sorry.

**Mr. Speaker:** You were saying for a 'short' adjournment, well, that will have to be from the discretion of the Speaker, because 'short' may mean one (1) minute, it may mean one (1) hour. It may mean you're breaking from there to go to lunch. You are in Committee, but you are now breaking off. We are now returning the Sitting of the House, so that you can go to lunch and come back. So, I think we should say: 'A request is made for an adjournment', and omit the word 'short'. No? Leader of Government's Business.

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**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** With your permission, Mr. Speaker, the adjournment means we adjourn the Sitting, you have to call a next Sitting. A 'short' adjournment distinguishes it from the Adjournment. When I move the Adjournment, the Sitting is finished. I could move the Adjournment to another day, so you have full Adjournment, Sitting is done, an adjournment to another time or place.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is a 'short' Sitting.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Right, and then you have a 'short' adjournment. You're coming back here; maybe we adjourn to go to discuss something with the people of Legal Affairs; that's a 'short' adjournment. And, we must distinguish it from an Adjournment, the close of the Sitting for that day. We have to give notice to come back, or for an adjournment for another date or venue.

**Hon. Anthony Boatswain:** Mr. Speaker, sorry, but I am still not too clear, because there could be an adjournment that could take a long time. You're not adjourned, you are resuming, but it can be an hour, because you are not closing the Session. And, then you could say, okay, we adjourn for five (5) minutes. What do we mean by 'short' in the context of the discussion that might be taking place? That's the lack of clarity I see here.

**Mr. Speaker:** If we say the Sitting of the House is adjourned, we sometimes say until three (3) days from now, or a particular date, or *sine die*. It is adjourned. If we have any other adjournment that is not the close of a particular Sitting, it is a 'short' adjournment. So, a 'short' adjournment could be an adjournment that could last for two (2) days, because we did not adjourn that particular Sitting. What we did was to pause from here to go for some other reason, but we are coming back, so the Session continues. An adjournment that closes a Session is an Adjournment. Any adjournment that allows the Session to go on after the adjournment is a 'short' adjournment. So, the adjournment may be short for two (2) minutes, it may be short for a whole day, it may be short for the whole weekend. But, that one is a 'short' adjournment.

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**Hon. Peter David:** Mr. Speaker, may I?

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative.

**Hon. Peter David:** Is there any provision for the House to just rising rather than... you used the word 'adjourn' for a couple of minutes. I am not sure, it's a genuine question. Is there a provision for the House to 'rise' for a few minutes rather than 'adjourn' for a few minutes?

**Mr. Speaker:** Now, if the House...

**Hon. Peter David:** For example, if we're here and there is an issue that arises that we need to deal with and we want to just take a break, is it called an adjournment? **(Inaudible comments)** That's called an adjournment, too? Really? I thought you would just 'rise' the House for that period, but anyway.

**Mr. Speaker:** Let's say while the Sitting is going on, sorry, Prime Minister.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Wouldn't it be the Speaker's prerogative to say in five (5) minutes/ten (10) minutes. The Speaker should be the one. I don't see why we should want to define 'short'.

**Mr. Speaker:** At the discretion of the Speaker.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** That's the prerogative of the Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** For example, if a rat were to run in here and everybody scampered about, the Speaker could adjourn for two (2) minutes to get the rat out and then come back. Okay.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Motion approved as amended.**

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**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Prime Minister.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I stand, of course, to move the Motion standing in my name, which reads, as follows:

**WHEREAS** section 23 of the Public Finance Management Act No. 17 of 2015 provides for a Supplementary Appropriation to meet additional requirements of the State of Grenada during any Financial Year for which an Appropriation Bill has been approved;

**AND WHEREAS** it has become necessary to provide for additional expenditure for the Fiscal Year 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019, as determined by the Minister and approved by Cabinet;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Supplementary Estimates of Expenditure for the period of August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019 be approved.

**(Ag. Clerk converse with the Speaker in private)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, we were just verifying. Honourable Members, I would ask that we take a five (5) minute adjournment, just to clarify two (2) issues that I have, a 'short' adjournment, this one would last five (5) minutes. Honourable Members, the House stands adjourned for five (5) minutes.

**House adjourns for five (5) minutes at 11:30.**

**House resumes at 11:35 a.m.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, this Honourable House now resumes. Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we discussed, the particular Resolution was inadvertently left out. I therefore propose, Mr. Speaker, to dispense with the period of Notice for the Motion by following Standing Orders No. 28, and, requesting, Mr. Speaker, that this Honourable House

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doth now dispense with Notice, so that the Resolution can be introduced into this Honourable House.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, in keeping with Standing Order 28 of the Standing Orders, the Notice is now dispensed with and the Motion will now be tabled. Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Mr. Speaker, since the Motion was put I think it says without the consent of the Speaker and the assent of the Members. So, you have consented, so now we must get the assent of the Members, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, all those who are in agreement that the Motion be dispensed with, say 'aye'. **(Members respond)** Motion has been dispensed with. Honourable Prime Minister and Minister for Finance.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, just to find out, do I now proceed to continue, or to read over the Motion since we have now officially...

**Mr. Speaker:** Please, read over the Motion.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I now beg to move the Motion standing in my name, which reads, as follows:

**WHEREAS** section 23 of the Public Finance Management Act, No. 17 of 2015, provides for a Supplementary Appropriations to meet additional requirements of the State of Grenada during any Financial Year, for which an Appropriation Bill has been approved;

**AND WHEREAS** it has become necessary to provide additional expenditure for the Fiscal Year 1<sup>st</sup> January to the 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019, as determined by the Minister and approved by Cabinet;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Supplementary Estimates Expenditure for the period August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2019, be approved.

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**Question proposed.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Prime Minister and Minister for Finance.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, since this is a money Motion, I wish to advise that I do have the Governor-General's consent to proceed with this Motion.

Mr. Speaker, section 23 of the Public Finance Management Act 17 of 2015, stipulates that if in a Financial Year it is found that the amount budgeted for a particular purpose is insufficient, or there is no budgetary allocation, a Supplementary Estimate, detailing the sums required should be approved by the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, in this regard, we are seeking to introduce the Supplementary Appropriation Bill in this Honourable House, providing for the use of such sums from the Consolidated Fund. The attached Supplementary Estimates totals nine million, nine hundred and sixty-seven thousand, seven hundred and ninety dollars (\$9,967,790.00), which includes a capital sum of seven hundred and seventy-five thousand, eight hundred and forty dollars (\$775,840.00).

Before I get into a few critical details of the Supplementary Estimates, Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to provide a short update and a mid-year update on the economy. Mr. Speaker, therefore, I want to indicate that the economy remains very strong in 2019, with another year of growth projected, driven specifically by serious increases in Agriculture, Tourism, Transport and Construction activities.

Mr. Speaker, the growth anticipated is job-rich growth that impacts directly on our human capital. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, as you know, we have growth, but it is skewed towards certain Sectors of the society, and doesn't, in fact, provide a sort of uniformed opportunity throughout the society. This has not been the case, therefore, we are very proud to indicate that we have literally job-rich growth.

The Labour Force Survey for the third quarter of 2018, Mr. Speaker, confirms this, as it shows a decline in the rate of unemployment from 21.7% in the second quarter to 16.7% in the third quarter (**applause**) literally, a drop of 5%, Mr. Speaker.



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And, based on the level of economic activity in the country and Government's ongoing efforts to create more opportunities for the Nation's youth, we anticipate continued contraction in the unemployment figures. In fact, Mr. Speaker, as we have already announced, a number of major initiatives in hotel activities, which will begin in the second half of the year and the initiative in the Youth Ministry and several Programmes, the number of Capital projects with the Minister for Works and his team have, in fact, have the responsibility to implement, and as indicated today, one of the problems we have had is the lack of Technical Engineering Support, and that is being obtained now. So, we expect to see a much more aggressive implementation process, as far as Governmental activities, which will impact and more jobs and opportunities in the Construction Sectors and other Sectors of the society.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of June 2019, also, the total Public Debt, which includes Central Government Debt and Government Guaranteed Debt stood at 59.5% of GDP, which works out to be one billion, nine hundred and twenty four point two million dollars (\$1,924.2 m), which marks a decrease of 4.4% from the same period in 2018, where the Public Debt was recorded at 63.9% of GDP, \$2.0159 billion.

Further, Mr. Speaker, within the first half of 2019, the primary balance, after Grants records of \$116.2 million was achieved, which was 20.7% more than what was realized for the first half of 2018. Government's overall balance including Grants at the end of June, 2019, was \$89.1 million, which is 31% higher than 2018.

Mr. Speaker, I do need to make an additional statement on this. It is not suggested when there is a primary balance that it means that we have monies there to do whatever we want. It is the accepted philosophy that you have to grow your economy by building your capital stocks. And, therefore, in addition to Grants that you receive and additional Soft Loans for building capital stocks, savings on the recurrent side must be used to create further opportunities in job related areas, in the productive sectors of the economy, building capital stocks, not adding more personnel within the Public Sector Payroll. In other words, just adding additional recurrent expenditure; that's why we have the savings and that's why we are being encouraged to have more and more savings. So, I want to make it clear, because I

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don't want the perception we have a lot of money, we save a lot, so, therefore let's give more increases and more increases to the Public Sector and then you find yourself later, Mr. Speaker, going back to where we were before, with less and less capital stocks being built and less employment and less development in the country.

Mr. Speaker, permit me to address a few key areas relative to the Supplementary Appropriation, 2019 that I just mentioned, and that continued commitment for **“Building Resilience, Advancing Social Development and Transforming our Economy”**.

The Honourable House will recall that this Government feels strongly that it is our moral obligation to address the matter of Pensions for Public Officers. With the noblest of intentions, Mr. Speaker, we engaged our Public Sector Trade Unions, representing the workers in the spirit of partnership and respect, and with the intention to seek a resolution on this vexing matter. It is known, Mr. Speaker, what has transpired. The conversation on the ongoing consultation became one of unsustainable demands, strikes, misinformation and now legal action. Mr. Speaker, this Government's commitment to Pension Restoration and Reform remains unchanged, and so we have said this over and over again. Therefore, the Pensions matter is one before the Courts, and, therefore, I will not be addressing the Pension matter, that is before the Courts. However, understanding the hardship facing Public Officers, who have already left the system and what they face, personally, and otherwise, and as a responsible and caring Government, we have decided to take steps to alleviate those pains.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, the Supplementary Budget provides for two million dollars (\$2 m), as an advance payment towards any pension resolution to retirees, who joined the Public Service in an Established post after April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1985, and served for twenty-six and two-thirds (26 2/3) years (**applause**), and also have attained the retirement age of sixty (60) years. This is very important, Mr. Speaker.

In essence, Mr. Speaker, we are topping up the NIS Pension Funds to ensure that those retirees receive at least, 70% of their last salary. (**Applause**) In other words, Mr. Speaker, we do not have a dispute on Pensions. What we have, a dispute is what has been introduced as Gratuity. But, really, Gratuity, as we have said over and over is just an advanced payment to the Pension. So, that is what is

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before the Courts, and as I said I can't address this more, because the Courts will decide, and we have to abide by rule of the Courts.

But, you see, Mr. Speaker, this issue have been brought before the Courts, we know how our Court System works, the amount of, sometimes, years to get to a simple decision, while people are hurting. We have seen it over and over, over the years. They said that we should not and we cannot interfere with the decisions of Court, because they are an independent body, but a lot of time it interferes with us, which is a very strange one. But, the point is, since we are waiting on that result, we feel that while we are doing so, a lot of workers, some of them have gone to the Great Beyond. So, in other words, as we sit and wait on the Courts to make a decision, people are suffering and people are in fact, as I said before, dying. So, should we wait? No. This caring Government says while it's not a legal obligation, we believe it's a moral one, Mr. Speaker, and we believe morality works before legality. Therefore, this move by the Government is purely voluntary. There are specific administrative procedures that would support the payments, which would be administered by the Ministry of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, I hasten to add that this would not be a one-off payment, but rather a monthly commitment that would supplement the NIS Pension received by Pensioners, who meet the criteria I mentioned before. In other words, it's a top up to the monthly Pension that the NIS gives them every month.

Mr. Speaker, I make the point that this Government remains committed to providing adequate; but before I go into this, Mr. Speaker, if the worst case for the Government turns out that the Court moves that the Union's position was correct, all it would mean, the Government then has a responsibility to provide the additional support in addition to what they have given. But, we would have taken care of an immediate problem, but the Court decision and the Unions' position would still be given the consideration, legally, that it requires. So, we are not interfering with that, as I pointed out before.

Mr. Speaker, in the Supplementary Estimates, also, we must point out that the Government remains committed to providing adequate Healthcare for the people of this country. We have heard, over and over, many times, we've seen the debates how this is short in the Health System, this is bad and this is bad. And, so much has

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been happening, so much investment has taken place in the area of Health, but we still have problems, major problems. The Minister for Health has spoken about a major initiative this morning. One of the most modern pieces of equipment that most countries in the Region do not have, we will have it soon. It costs over 1.5 million US dollars, a gift given by persons, who are interested in helping this country, recognizing that the Government's position as far as improved Healthcare is concerned.

So, a part of this commitment, Mr. Speaker, requires that we continue to continuously stock our Pharmaceutical supplies. I remember when we came into Government, in 2013, we owed millions of dollars to the OECS Pharmaceutical Operation, so much so that we were not able to access medical facilities and medical equipment, and, of course, necessary pharmaceuticals. Sometimes, I hear some people talking about health, but if you wouldn't even buy medication, you wouldn't even pay for medication, you would not even pay for medication, because I visited the Hospital on several occasions to see people, and not even basic pain medication we did not have, because we did not pay. So, there was an urgent situation, where we had to end up spending money outside of the OECS Pharmaceutical Operation, costing far more, but a limited amount. That was the order of the day; so you are listening some people and they say, how they were taking care of the country's resources so well. We're mismanaging the resources, because we are now providing. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, it almost become laughable, when you hear some people talking, you know, it's sad. But, I am making the point, Mr. Speaker.

So, in this regard, Mr. Speaker, an additional one million dollars (\$1 m) was allocated for the procurement of pharmaceuticals, particularly for the treatment of Cancer and Kidney Disease patients. Mr. Speaker, that's an area of serious concern. I have seen it, personally, myself, members of family, Constituents in North-West, St. George's, and I am sure members all throughout this country has seen it, and that's a tough one, because we are seeing more and more incidents of Kidney failures and related diseases, and it's become a real difficult one, Mr. Speaker, for all of us here.

When someone has to get dialysis and the cost of doing that three (3) times a week is beyond the ability of most of us in this country, maybe a few of us could

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afford it. And, someone comes to you, every week, seeking help, because the Government does what it can, but it is limited, because there are a number of patients. Private Sector Organizations, some of them have been helping. But, the person comes to you, how can you find thousands of dollars, every week, to help someone. But, you know what happens, Mr. Speaker, if you have a conscience, that person comes to you and you give them what you have, but you know it's not enough, and that person is leaving you, and it's painful, if you really care to watch them go. And, every time they return to you, you notice their skin colour changes further, so you know what is becoming clear, and if you have a conscience. So, the Ministry and the Government, we're working, as hard as we could, and people say that we have dialysis... they sent machines, but, Mr. Speaker, you could have machines and machines, but you need equipment, you need better equipment, you also need trained personnel, you also have medication, they cost a lot of money. So, we are going to have to do this, because we can't continue the way we're going.

So, Mr. Speaker, a further one million, three hundred thousand, six hundred and forty-six dollars (\$1,300,646.00) was also provided to cover expenditure for the salary of our nurses, in addition to all the monies that have been spent. And, sometimes you hear we're not spending more money on doctors and nurses. And, in fact, we are educating and training a lot of our Professionals, again, we have a problem. As we train, many of our people are not staying, so we have a continuous shortage. But, that's not a problem only in Grenada, you know, Mr. Speaker. I heard, recently, Barbados get hundreds of nurses from an African country, and Barbados was the premier country in the Region where Healthcare system was concerned, when I was growing up when I went to school there. That's not the case today, but we are moving heavily in that direction.

Mr. Speaker, the social well-being of our country's citizens is also one of the primary areas of focus for the Government, and as such, we continue to provide assistance to the less fortunate, to ensure that our students and senior citizens are able to meet their basic needs; that's in the Ministry of Social Services.

Additionally, we continue to create tremendous opportunities for our Youth to empower them, so part of the Supplementary Estimates includes allocation in those areas. Mr. Speaker, therefore, while this Government is not perfect, clearly, and we

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can always do more with what we have, and we can improve in many areas, we have repeatedly demonstrated that we are a Government that put the people first.

Mr. Speaker, in addition there is a six hundred thousand dollars (\$600,000.00) Supplementary under the Governor-General's Vote and that, primarily, goes towards the Integrity Commission, because the Integrity Commission's Vote is under the Governor-General, away from the Political Directorate, and, as you know, there have been a number of ongoing inquiries or investigations or both. The fact is well known that the whole issue of the Marketing Board, and some people are asking, is it dead? No. It is not dead, it isn't dead at all. But, it's not under the Government, directly, but we've been advised, by the Integrity Commission, that they are moving and they have indicated that the resources in the Budget was not sufficient, so they wanted another additional six hundred thousand dollars (\$600,000.00) to continue their work, so that is why this additional amount.

It must be noted also, Mr. Speaker, that the Ministry of Finance undertook all the necessary assessments to ensure that these Supplementary Estimates conform to all the fiscal rules, specifically the Primary Expenditure Rule, and as required by the Fiscal Responsibility Act. A Compliance Report also accompanies this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, this, therefore, concludes my presentation on the Motion for approval of the Supplementary Appropriation, and, therefore, I seek to advise Members to support this important Motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister for Finance.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Motion approved.**

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

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the Motion standing in the name of the Minister for Finance, which reads:

**WHEREAS** section 56 (1) of the Public Finance Management Act, No. 17 of 2015 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act") provides, *inter alia*, that no

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money shall be raised on the credit of the Government of Grenada except under the authority of this Act, or under an Act of Parliament, or a Resolution of the House of Representatives;

**AND WHEREAS** section 56 (2) of the Act provides *inter alia* that the Minister for Finance may borrow, when authorised, by Resolution of the House of Representatives, money on behalf of the Government of Grenada, in any form and from any legitimate source on terms and conditions to be agreed with the creditor;

**AND WHEREAS** it is further provided that the amount shall not exceed in the aggregate the sums specified in the Resolution;

**AND WHEREAS** it is expedient that the Minister for Finance would be authorised by a Resolution of the House of Representatives to borrow, on behalf of the Government of Grenada, money to an amount not exceeding in the aggregate the sum of One Hundred and Eighteen Million, Right Hundred Thousand Eastern Caribbean Dollars (EC\$118,800,000.00) to meet the current expenditure requirements;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives hereby authorises the Minister for Finance to borrow, on behalf of the Government of Grenada, money to amount to not exceeding in the aggregate the sum of One Hundred and Eighteen Million, Eight Hundred Thousand Eastern Caribbean Dollars (EC\$118,800,000.00) for the period July to December, 2019.

**Question proposed.**

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

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I proceed, I advise this Honourable House that I do have the Governor-General's consent to proceed with this Motion, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as is always, the funds from the Government will come from its taxpayers, from grants and from loans, Mr. Speaker. In this particular case, the one

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hundred and eighteen million, eight hundred thousand Eastern Caribbean Dollars (EC\$118,800,000.00), this amount has already been negotiated and is within the framework, Mr. Speaker. It is being borrowed by the International Development Agency (IDA) from the World Bank, Mr. Speaker, and we need to give it Parliamentary approval, so that the Ministry of Finance can access and disburse the loans.

Mr. Speaker, from the IDA we know the normal term is something like half a percent interest, forty (40) years and sometimes between five (5) to ten (10) years' grace and that is the normal terms, Mr. Speaker. And the US \$3 m, first, Mr. Speaker, from CARCIP. Since the World Bank has provided this envelope to many countries around the world and those countries, who do not utilise them within the time allocated, they lose them and the Bank takes them back into the envelope and redistributes them to the countries that are utilising them efficiently, Mr. Speaker.

In that context, Mr. Speaker, our loan for the CARCIP, because you know CARCIP is a project which is providing a lot of communications network to our country, Grenada. It involves Grenada, St. Vincent and St. Lucia and in most occasions we go out and tender, collectively. One of the biggest components is the PPP, which DIGICEL won, Mr. Speaker, and they are now running fiber optics throughout Grenada, Mr. Speaker. They are also putting equipment in schools. We are also connecting all Government buildings, so that we can download and upload data at high bandwidth, Mr. Speaker.

But, we know one area we have always advocated for is that one Lecturer remaining in one school and that best Lecturer will be teaching all schools in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. **(Applause)** When we looked at the equipment that will be given to us, Mr. Speaker, it falls short of being able to do this properly, and so we always advocated the need for more monies. And, so monies taken back from other countries, Grenada was allocated three million dollars (\$3 m) more. So we already have the loan agreement, but in order to exceed it, you see it says here, Mr. Speaker, you cannot borrow more than what was approved previously. So, we must come back here and we're coming under this Loan Authorisation Resolution, to ensure that we have the permission to accept three more million dollars (\$3 m), in this case, Mr. Speaker. And, it will help us well to put



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in for the equipment and to do expansion in other areas, Mr. Speaker. All the Government buildings are connected. They need and require certain equipment that the three million dollars (\$3 m) will help with, Mr. Speaker.

We have twenty million dollars (\$20 m), Mr. Speaker, already approved under the Development Policy Credit, again by IDA and the Ministry of Finance will be well placed to use these monies, on various items, in the development of our country, Mr. Speaker. We love to hear, Mr. Speaker, when they say budgetary support. Budgetary support, it goes into the Ministry of Finance and you just use it wisely to support yourself. So, whenever we get budgetary support, we are really, really very happy, Mr. Speaker, because we can use it in various areas, rather than the Banks specifying a particular area and we only have to use it there, Mr. Speaker.

In this context, Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance has mentioned, on many occasions, the sixty-four million dollars (\$64 m) that we have gotten from IDA; thirty million dollars (\$30 m) for a particular use and the rest, the thirty-four million dollars (\$34 m) for budgetary support. But, in order to increase, or to get this in a Developmental Policy Loan for a specific development, then we need to come back to this Honourable House, again from the same IDA, half percent to three quarter percent, forty (40) years, five to ten (5 – 10) years' grace. This is what you call really concessionary loans, Mr. Speaker.

Another is, US\$15 m for the digital governance. This, again, is a World Bank project that we have negotiated, and we are putting everything in place now. The Bank is happy and we are ready to draw down. That is, Government will be able to provide digital services, Government will be able to teach, and there will be a transformation of the Public Service, Mr. Speaker. When you come in there you wouldn't have to go in line to pay licences and so forth. Therefore, you can do all the things online, but we need equipment, we need training. All of this will be provided for under this US\$15 million dollars Digital Governance, Mr. Speaker.

And, lastly, the US\$6 million for the OECS Regional Health Programme, and I know the Minister for Health is very involved in this. He has been articulating the need, and so the Ministry of Finance did what they had to do and they developed this Programme. It's an OECS Regional Programme. So, if we get six (6), St. Lucia may get a little more, they always do. St. Lucia got four (4). Wow!! We did better

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than St. Lucia, Mr. Speaker, and the other countries. So, six million dollars (\$6 m) there. A lot of things would be done with this in the Ministry of Health. We have so much to do there, Mr. Speaker, and any bit of funding there will go significantly in helping, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure that the Minister for Health, I would not go into detail, will elaborate further on the six million dollars (\$6 m).

So, let us add, Mr. Speaker, 6 and 15 is 21, 41 and 3, forty-four million dollars (\$44 m). Therein, you have, Mr. Speaker, the one hundred and eighteen million dollars, eight hundred thousand dollars (\$118,800,000.00), that we are asking this Parliament to give us approval for. All the arrangements have been done. The World Bank and the Ministry of Finance and the respective Ministries, they have looked at the project and we are ready to go, Mr. Speaker, critical projects. And, so, I encourage this Honourable House to give approval to this Motion, this Loan Authorisation Motion, so that we can bring in the funds and start these very important projects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Leader of Government's Business. Honourable Prime Minister.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, in standing to support this Motion, I just need to add, because sometimes when we come to Parliament and we ask for authorisation for loans, there is a misinterpretation, or wrong impression given that we are borrowing to add to the debt of the country so to spend on our pet activities and to create a bigger bureaucracy and jobs for the boys, so to speak. Sometimes that's the perception. But, I want to make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, when I presented first, this morning, when I was speaking on my Ministerial Statements, I pointed out that the job related growth is the focus of any Government and, therefore, building the capital stocks. Those loans are going to building the capital stocks of the country. When you invest in digitization, this is what you are precisely doing. You are, in fact, investing in the future development of the country.

And, the other areas, as mentioned by the Leader of Government's Business, the CARCIP project and all these projects are essential projects. And, the key thing about it, Mr. Speaker, is that many countries had the opportunity to get loans, these

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soft financing. When you get the financing of .5 to .75%, you don't see those loans easily. Forty (40) years loan to repay, ten-year grace that means you don't have to pay any monies for ten (10) years. Mr. Speaker, it cannot be softer than that. Many countries were offered, but there was certain conditions, performance and how we operate, fiscally, to show that we are responsible. So, having done well on the Structural Adjustment Programme and having got the cooperation of our Social Partners, this is the result of that cooperation. **(Applause)** It is not just a success of the Government of the day. What we are talking about is a success for every one of us. So, this is a success for the Trade Union Movement; it is a success for the Churches, because they were part of it; it is a success for the Business Community; it is a success for the NGO community, and, clearly, it's a success for the people and the Government of the day.

Mr. Speaker, Grenada is the first country that was able to get that sixty-five million (\$65 m) from IDA, **(applause)** and many of the countries who were offered they have not been able to qualify. So, the World Bank came back recently, and said, well, Prime Minister, because a lot of your sister countries have not been able to accept, we have additional money, so we have more money for you to do more work. So, you see, when you behave yourself, when you conduct yourself responsibly, a lot will go for you, and this is precisely what is taking place, the performance of the Government. So, that is why all of our friends must see this. This not all about this Government. Any Government comes after this Government will benefit, enormously, from what is taking place here today. **(Applause)** Sometimes, Governments come in, you meet a terrible situation, Mr. Speaker, you have to correct it. So, we made the sacrifice. We could have gone and do all sorts of gerrymandering and creating more problems for ourselves and trying to camouflage what is taking place in the country. We went straight to the country, put the cards on the table, and today we are benefiting.

Look at what is happening in the United States. When Obama came into Government in the United States, there were serious international crisis. They had to take some tough decisions, bail out banks, do all sorts of things. Today, without getting into the politics of America, the present Government is enjoying the benefits of those days of sacrifice. So, anybody coming after this Government will benefit

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from the sacrifices that we have made and all of us have made it, Mr. Speaker. Therefore, I am proud to support this important Motion. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister for Finance. Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to thank the Minister for Finance for elucidating and expanding on how Grenada benefits. And, Mr. Speaker, in discussions with the World Bank, we were advised also, that even way down in Vietnam they did not spend a lot of their IDA allocation. So, we are positioning ourselves in the 'Slips' again, Mr. Speaker, **(applause)** so we must do well now and spend what we have. And, that is why, Mr. Speaker, even now the Ministry of Implementation plays a very important role, because they are looking to see us improve our implementation rate, and that is why we are prepared to take on seven (7) and get three (3) more and fourteen (14) more. We need fifty (15), you know, but if we can't work with fifteen (15), we will get it done, and we will have to do what is necessary to do to ensure that we implement projects on time, so that the next time, wherever they move, they will come to Grenada first and we will always be waiting now. If it is not in the 'Slips', Mr. Speaker, it is behind the 'Stumps', so that everything can come to our country. I recommend this Resolution to the Honourable House. **(Applause)**

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Motion approved.**

**(Ag. Clerk converse with the Speaker in private)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, it is now 12:30, the lunch is here. We can adjourn for lunch and move to the Bills afterwards, or we can take one. We can start the Bills and break for lunch at 1300 hrs. So, we take the shorter Bills.

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**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Mr. Speaker, the sentiments around the Table is to go through all the Bills, maybe we can put the food on warmers or something.

**Mr. Speaker:** The food going on warmers is one thing. The stomach going on warmers is another thing. But, we will see how we will operate until 1:00 o'clock.

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 15 - Bills.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Prime Minister.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I now stand to move the first reading of the Bill, entitled Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 2019.

**Ag. Clerk:** An Act to appropriate an additional sum of nine million, nine hundred and sixty-seven thousand, seven hundred and ninety dollars (\$9,967,790.00) to the service of the State of Grenada for the period August 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, shortly entitled, Supplementary Appropriation Act, 2019.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Prime Minister.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, in standing to attempt to move the second reading, I just want to inform this Honourable House that I do have the Governor-General's authority to proceed.

Mr. Speaker, I just also stand now to move that the relevant Standing Orders of this House be suspended to allow this Bill to be taken through all the stages.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Relevant Standing Order suspended.**

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I now stand, formerly, to move the second reading of this Bill. And, just to inform that we have now passed the

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Motion for the Supplementary Appropriation and I have already spoken in detail of the specific aspects of all the supplementary items on that Motion. So, Mr. Speaker, I don't think I need to add any further comments on this, but just to ask that we move to adopt the second reading of this Bill.

**Question proposed.**

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Bill read a second time.**

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I now want to move that the House resolves 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:** I have to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the Whole House and passed without amendment.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I stand to move that the Chairman's Report be adopted.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Chairman's Report adopted.**

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I therefore move the third reading and passage of this Bill.

**Question put and agreed to.**

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

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

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to introduce the Bill for an Act shortly entitled 2019 Budget Loan Authorisation Bill, 2019.

**Ag. Clerk:** An Act to authorise the Minister for Finance to borrow, from various sources, a total amount not exceeding one hundred and eighteen million, eight hundred thousand Eastern Caribbean dollars (EC\$118,000,000.00), shortly entitled, 2019 Budget Loan Authorisation Act, 2019.

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

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform this Honourable House that I do have the Governor-General's consent to proceed with this Bill. Mr. Speaker, I therefore beg to move that the relevant 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:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

**Question proposed.**

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

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**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Mr. Speaker, as in the Motion before, I think, we articulated not only the presenter but the Minister for Finance and Prime Minister, who contributed to the Motion, all information really pertinent to this Bill, Mr. Speaker.

I simply want to add that while we know the rates of IDA, it is still a requirement under the Act, that all the agreements already signed, pursuant to this Loan Agreement will be tabled in Parliament, as soon as practicable. So, as soon as we get the approval from the Parliament, then all the relevant Loan Agreements will be tabled in the House. It is a requirement, not only for this Bill, but of all borrowing instruments. So, I, therefore commend the second reading of the Bill.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Bill read a second time.**

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

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House resolves 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:** I have to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the Whole House and passed without 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.**



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

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

**Question proposed.**

**Question put and agreed to.**

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

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

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to introduce for first reading, a Bill for an Act shortly entitled, the Customs (Amendment) Bill, 2019.

**Ag. Clerk:** An Act to amend the Customs Act No. 9 of 2015 shortly entitled, Customs (Amendment) Act, 2019.

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

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

**Question put and agreed to.**

**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.

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**Question proposed.**

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Mr. Speaker, this Bill is simply to correct an error, with respect to numbering in the parent Act, Mr. Speaker. “Section 82 (i) of the principal Act provides for, unless otherwise specified in this Act, the due date for the payment of duty assessment, in accordance with subsection (79) shall be the date that is seven (7) working days, after the date at which written notice of the assessment under Section 79 (ii)”. So, there is a section in the Bill, which refers to another Section, 79 (ii), and it is speaking about written notice. But, if we peruse the Act, we will see nothing about notice in Section 79 (iii); so obviously there is an error and this is to correct the error.

And, to go just further, Section 79 (ii) says: “Where the Comptroller has reasonable cause to suspect that delays, or other charges are payable on goods for which no entry has been submitted, the Comptroller may determine the duty due at such amount as the Customs thinks fit, based on the provisions of this Act”.

I just read this out, Mr. Speaker, so that we see that nothing here talks about notice. So, it could not be referring to Section 79 (ii). But, if we look at 79 (iii), Mr. Speaker, it says: “Reassessment is made under this Section and such reassessment has the effect of imposing a new liability, or altering an existing liability, the Comptroller shall give to the importer or exporter written notice.” So, therefore, we see here, mainly, we’re talking about 79 (ii), there is an error; (iii) is talking about notice, Mr. Speaker.

And, if we go further, 79 (v) also speaks about notice, Mr. Speaker. And, if you look at five (v) it says: “A reassessment made under this business with the effect of posing...” it says: “Written notice shall be given.” And, Section 3 says “be advised of any assessment under subsection (2) by notice in writing. So, 79 (iii) and 79 (v) speaks about notice, Mr. Speaker. So, the correction in this Bill, it’s really to refer... 81 (i) must now refer to Section 79 (iii) and 79 (v). So, it’s simply a typographical error, Mr. Speaker, and I commend the Bill for its second reading.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Bill read a second time.**

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

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the House resolves 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:** I have to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the Whole House and passed without amendments. 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.

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

**Question put and agreed to.**

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Were you addressing the Chair, Honourable Representative for St. Patrick West? I know we have two (2) additional Bills, but it is now five (5) minutes to 1:00.

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**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Mr. Speaker, the final Bill is for first reading only, so, if it is okay for us to take it.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay. Proceed, proceed, proceed, proceed. Proceed, Sir. Honourable Representative for St. John.

**Hon. Alvin Da Breo.** Mr. Speaker, I beg to introduce for first reading, a Bill for an Act shortly entitled, the Integrated Coastal Zone Bill, 2019.

**Ag. Clerk:** A Bill for an Act to establish the enabling framework to facilitate the integrated management of the coastal resources of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique for the conservation and enhancement of those resources and for matters related thereto, shortly entitled, Integrated Coastal Zone Management Bill, 2019.

**Mr. Speaker:** This Bill is only for its first reading?

**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** No. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the relevant Standing Order of the House be suspended to enable the Bill to be taken through all of its stages at this Sitting.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Just before we move. We are taking this Bill through everything now, and we will complete that, how soon do you think?

**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** Mr. Speaker, on the old rules, I think I had thirty (30) minutes, but I can do it in about half of that.

**Mr. Speaker:** Right, we will have to double that then. We will have to double that. The half of that has to be doubled, so you will take the whole time, and we have decided that we must have lunch. So, we'll adjourn for forty-five (45) minutes

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to have lunch, and then return. This will also give Members the opportunity to speak at the Adjournment for your ten (10) minutes about your Constituencies.

Honourable Members, this House stands adjourned for forty-five (45) minutes for lunch, so we will be back here at quarter to 2; 1:45 p.m.

**House adjourned for lunch at 1:00 p.m.**

**House resumes at 1:45 p.m.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, this Honourable House resumes. Honourable Representative for St. John.

**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do I start over, or should I continue?

**Mr. Speaker:** We were just on the point of asking for the suspension of the Standing Order.

**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the relevant Standing Order of the House be suspended to enable the Bill to be taken through all of its stages at this Sitting.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Relevant Standing Order suspended.**

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

**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

**Question proposed.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative.

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**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** Mr. Speaker, we are well aware of the importance of our Coastal Zone to every citizen and visitors to our Tri-island State; and whether it's because of the beautiful coastal beaches and beautiful caves and bays that we have right in St. John and other parts of Grenada. I know this coming weekend, we will be utilising those areas to have our cook up and our picnics and many good things during this season.

And also, Mr. Speaker, we have many other assets on the Coast, including our International Airport, that's very close to the Coastline and where we meet and greet people; the Coastal Towns, where we live, or where we do our business, the Ports, the Fish Markets, Fishing Villages, Marinas, Hotels, agricultural lands, Mr. Speaker, they are all located in the Coastal Zone. As a matter of fact, about 90% of the population live less than two (2) miles from the Coast. And, in our Sister Isle of Carriacou and Petite Martinique, the people there, Mr. Speaker, they live less than a mile from the Coast, and as a matter of fact, in Petite Martinique they depend on the Coast and the Ocean for 90% of their livelihood and transportation.

Mr. Speaker, our Coastlines also support many forms of nature, or Eco-systems including Coral Reefs, which are home to thousands of species of Marine life and those reefs, Mr. Speaker, they are responsible for dispersing storm surges and other wave energy from further eroding our coastline.

The Sea Grass beds are vital for turtles and many other marine species that we exploit, commercially. The Mangroves, Mr. Speaker, some of us used to think that those are just areas for mosquito breathing, but now we know how critical they are, like they are critical nursery for most of the fish species that is where they come in to spawn, to lay their eggs, and also they are protected from the predators while they grow into juveniles. The mangroves also help to stabilize the coastline and protect it from erosion while another important factor or job of the Mangroves, Mr. Speaker, they filter out the pollutants that come from the land that's entering into the ocean.

Other forms of nature, all found in the Coastal Zone, which includes fish life, shellfish and many other forms of marine life, Mr. Speaker, that we depend on to also aid in our Food Security. So, Mr. Speaker, as important as our Coastal Zone is for us, it is vulnerable; vulnerable to natural hazards, to Climate Change impacts like

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rise in sea level, storm surges and coastal erosions and through manmade unsustainable activities. Also, through the use of pesticides and other chemicals, there is also inadequate waste disposal, Mr. Speaker, where a lot of people just ruin our coastline. If you take a boat around the country, you would see many places where people use the coastline as dumping sites. The evidence is there. So, all those things, negatively affect our coastlines.

In addition, if, Mr. Speaker, we do not properly manage our Coast and near shore, we could see a severe degradation in the marine life and in the ability for us to support the livelihoods of many of us, who depend on the Marine Eco-System.

Mr. Speaker, industries such as Agriculture, Tourism, Fisheries, those industries are very important and are very dependent on coastal resources and our natural assets. So, Mr. Speaker, knowing that our coastal zone has vital important resources and that there was an absence of an overarching coordinating mechanism to ensure integration of coastal considerations into all national and sectorial plans or policies or programmes, and that we had fragmentation of institutional responsibility for Coastal Management. It was very viki-vie. We had different pieces of Legislation. We had the Sand Mining Act and other things, Mr. Speaker, that were in different Ministries.

So, in 2014, we had over one hundred and twenty (120) stakeholders; they gathered together to discuss Grenada's Coast and what it needs. So, out of this visionary exercise was born a Coastal Zone Programme that is well managed, sustains livelihoods, supports the country's Socio-Economic Development. It also contributes to our ecological sustainability and its resilience to environmental risks.

As the vision of the Coast, we as a people, we want to ensure, Mr. Speaker, that when our time has expired, we leave a beautiful land for our descendants. So, building on this, Mr. Speaker, on this Integrated Coastal Zone Policy, this Legislation was drafted and it underwent exhaustive stakeholder consultations over the past four (4) years.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I bring to this House, this key Legislation to give life to the Policy and support effective coordination and the promoting of sustainable livelihoods, while, at the same time, conserving and wisely using nature to ensure

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goods and services are available for us today, and, as I said before for our future generations to benefit from.

In light of this, Mr. Speaker, the Government has taken bold steps for more effective coordination of our Coastal Zone, and this, Mr. Speaker, will result in better use of our limited resources and address user conflicts, because, Mr. Speaker, on our Coastal area we have many different users; we have people that fish, some people want to go there to recreate, play games, others want to sail, others want to cast nets. So, we have quite a variety of users using our coastlines, and we want to manage it effectively so that everybody could enjoy its beauty and benefit.

Another thing, Mr. Speaker, is sometimes you have other NGO's, some based here some not based here, doing research and they are all researching the same thing; lots of duplication. So, this Act, Mr. Speaker, would be able to stem that in the fact that we would have all that now under one Ministry.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, an integrated approach, supported by this Bill, is essential for managing all our resources, whether it be plant, animal, coral, whatever resources that we have and Grenada's pioneering role, Mr. Speaker, in our Global Blue Economy, and that must be underpinned by a strong framework. And, this Bill, Mr. Speaker, provides an effective framework that takes into account coastal resources and our eco-system, or nature's way that provide these resources.

Coastal Zone Management, Mr. Speaker, is a crucial task in building resilience to Climate Change, in keeping with Grenada's part to become a Climate Smart State. This Bill, Mr. Speaker, the Integrated Coastal Zone Bill is an essential step in the effective coordination and management of our coastal resources.

Mr. Speaker, although this Bill is prepared after the Fisheries Act, I just want to note that my colleague here, the Member for the Town of St. George will know that if there are any discrepancies, the Fisheries Act, Mr. Speaker, will take precedence. So, our fisher folks do not have to worry that this will put any burden on them, because they already operating under the Fisheries Act. In fact, Mr. Speaker, this Bill will enhance the Fisheries Act, and they will strengthen the framework for Coastal Resource Management.

Mr. Speaker, I will just take a little time to explain some of the Clauses of the Bill. This Bill has a total of six (6) parts and thirty-six (36) Clauses. It seeks to



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establish a legal framework for implementation of these principles and to facilitate the strengthening and enforcement, also management of the Coastal Zone, as well as promote greater awareness to our peoples of the issues, general or related to sustainable management of those resources.

Part (1), Mr. Speaker, has three (3) Clauses which is the Interpretation, the Definition of the terms and the application to the Crown. Part (2) has eight (8) Clauses and they provide for preparation and approval of a National Coastal Zone Management Plan through public consultations.

Part two (2) also provides for designation of Coastal Zone Management Areas, with specific policies and provisions for protection of Coastal Resources. And, this is because, Mr. Speaker, in one area, you might not be able to harvest plants like Seaweed, but in another area, depending on the importance of it to the community, you would be able to harvest or grow Sea Moss.

Also in Part two (2), a few of the Clauses call for the standards of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for development and, Mr. Speaker, any new development that is coming, we would have to do an impact assessment to see how it would affect the environment.

The other one would be standards for water quality in the Coastal Zone to effect the maintenance, rehabilitation and enhancement of Coastal Marine habitants. And, that, Mr. Speaker, will ensure that in some areas, you have a high quality of many things that are in the household, because, in Grenada here, there is an old Law, on the Books, that says all the grey water supposed to go down into the sea, and that Law is still there. So, all the toothpaste that we use, with micro plastics balls in it and all the exfoliating gels or whatever that the ladies and some men use, you know, on their face, the cosmetics, they all have a little micro plastic balls, Mr. Speaker, for the cleaning, and all those things go into the grey water when we shower and they all end up in our Ocean. So, with this Bill, we will be able to maintain a good water quality. Also, in some rivers, you have pesticides and a high level of sediments that's coming down, so depends on the test, you would be able to talk to the farmers, so that they could have better agricultural practices to limit the amount of sediments that are coming into our ocean.

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Also, Mr. Speaker, it has provisions for public access to the beach and other natural areas to the coastline. So, it ensures, Mr. Speaker, that the public would have access to our beaches and that nobody could own our beaches, so that we could all enjoy them, and not only the beaches, the coastlines, because we have some beautiful coastline that people will like to go and relax, sometimes to fly kite during Easter times and other activities, Mr. Speaker.

It also has guidelines for the establishment of Marine Protected Areas and for the conservation of species of special concern. Right now, we have concerns for the Parrot fish; it's in decline, that's the fish that looks like a parrot. We used to call it 'Blue Bees', so that is in decline. We also know that Conk is in decline and some of those other species, Mr. Speaker.

The other Part; Part (3), it provides for protection of the Coastal Environment, and also for the establishment of Restricted Areas, and also to have prohibited areas. Because some areas, Mr. Speaker, you would restrict access and, especially, certain times, like in Levera, when the Turtles are coming up to nest, you have people go and disturb them, sometimes people drive on the beach. So, this also will be dealing with this.

Other areas, is to promote scientific research for the preservation of archeological and historical value. We have around Pearls and other areas, people were indiscriminately going and dig up all the Amerindian artifacts that we have there, so now we would be able to keep control of all these things, have Laws now to protect that.

A few other things we have, Mr. Speaker, is for the protection of a special species, so that we could monitor different species, and if there is any decline, then Laws and Regulations could be put in place. For instance, the White Sea Egg, because they are also in decline, because, usually, people like their White Sea Egg, but, Mr. Speaker, you would have to kill the whole animal, the crustacean, to get at the egg on the inside. And, those White Sea eggs are very vital, because they live off the bacteria and other things that's on the reef, so they are the ones that usually cleans our reef, so they are very vital for the eco system.

It also provides a Permit for the removal for Coastal resources, because in some areas you might have to remove other things from there, whatever it is, but it

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doesn't give total restriction. It calls for Permit, so people will have to apply for a Permit in case they have to remove anything from the Coast and then it will be looked at and granted.

It also provides for the appeal for person aggrieved by the application being denied for a Permit. They have a procedure for appealing that. Also, Mr. Speaker, it provides for the removal of vegetation and sand from any beach. We have seen the destruction that Sand Minding cause, so we all know that this is a habit that we have to stop.

Also included would be the Powers of Arrest and this area, Mr. Speaker, calls for arrest without a warrant, because sometimes if you are caught in the act, if you have to go get a warrant, the Police would know, sometimes it is very difficult. So, you could be arrested and there is a certain time in which you have to see a Magistrate, the Acts calls for that. It also provides for the seizure of the vessels, or whatever vehicle that is being used to remove things from our Coastline.

And, coming to the ending, Mr. Speaker, on Part (4); it calls for the establishment of a Coastal Zone Management Unit within the Ministry of Climate Resilience, and that Unit will be headed by a Director, and also it calls for the inclusion of Coastal Zone Inspectors. The duties of Coastal Zone Inspectors and that may be designated as the need arises. And also, it also includes the Fisheries Division and the Forestry Division, because we do have what is called the Dry Forest along the coastline, Mr. Speaker.

This area, the Director, is an important part of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, so I will just do a little bit explanation here. It says that the Director may adopt with or without variations, a draft Management Plan for any coastal area in Grenada, proposed by any person who has an interest in the area, or by a community situated in or the local authority for the area, so that's also part of the duties of the Director, Mr. Speaker.

In conclusion, getting close to the end, the last Part, Mr. Speaker, is Part (5), and this provides for the creation of offences related to the Coastal Zone. And, it addresses the assault, or if you want to assault or obstruct any Officer, who is seeking to enforce this Law, because most of the time you will have some of the Officers in remote areas, and they might need added protection. For example, Mr.

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Speaker, offences under this Bill would include the removal of species of specified flora or fauna, or other items restricted, or removing things from prohibited areas. Also, harvesting, importing, exporting regulated coastal resources. And, we talk about the importing or exporting regulated resources, Mr. Speaker, and that would be things like exporting coral reefs, or any other stuff from our Marine Coastal Area. It speaks to buying, selling or trading regulated coastal resources, and also the breaking of coral, or damaging regulated coastal areas.

The last Part, Mr. Speaker, Part (6), provides for the power to institute proceedings and empowers the Minister to designate a Coastal Resource and provides Regulations thereof, and it provides for the repeal of Chapter 29 of the Beach Protection Act, Mr. Speaker. And, my colleague, here, would know exactly more than I do what that means. It is good that I am sitting down right in the middle of a qualified Doctor and a qualified Lawyer, Mr. Speaker, so it has its benefits.

So, Mr. Speaker, the implementation of this Bill will have very minimal financial implications. Earlier on, the Member from St. George South-East was speaking about the new Regulations, where everything has to come with an attachment, if you have financial implications. But, this Bill, Mr. Speaker, will have no financial implication; it is just that we will have much to gain.

And, by the passing of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, we signal Grenada's commitment to effective Coastal Resource Management, and we would all reap the benefits of the implementation of this Bill now, in the present, and for many generations to come. So, Mr. Speaker, this concludes my presentation here, and I ask my fellow colleagues to support this Bill, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative for the Town of St. George.

**Hon. Peter David:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. Despite the fact that it is Friday afternoon and Carnival weekend, I chose to make a contribution, because I believe in the importance of this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, our marine space, the space that is considered Grenada, in our maritime area, is much more than our land space, and our coastline is the beginning of that marine space. In fact, Mr. Speaker, there is a view that we should pay much

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more attention to our marine space, be it for fisheries or oil exploration, many other things can be done in our marine space, and we, as Small Island Developing States, must do more. In fact, I remember, some years ago, one former Minister of Government proposed that we should establish a Ministry of Maritime Affairs that will take care of all of the resources in our marine space. So, I want to commend the Ministry of Fisheries, the Ministry with responsibility for Forestry and Fisheries and the Minister responsible, Minister Da Breo for bringing this Bill to the Parliament.

But, I also want to suggest that education is a big part of this. The Minister mentioned the role of the Mangroves. I mean, I remember growing up and there was an area, we now call it the Lagoon Road, but I used to know it as the Mange, and it's only recently that I realized that 'the Mange' came from 'Mangrove'. And, as the Minister properly said, we just saw it as a place where mosquito infestation and mud and all of that, so you chop it down and you move on. Only in recent years, have we been paying attention to the development of our Mangroves.

In fact, I want to commend those in the Environmental Community, out there, who have lobbied for that for many years. So, I want to say that education, Mr. Speaker, teaching our people, educating our people about the importance of areas like the Mangrove and areas on our coastline; you know, as kids we didn't understand the importance, and I supposed many of us destroyed many of the things that existed in those areas. But, now that we have this Bill and we have the Ministry responsible for it, it's going to take care of some of those problems.

The truth is, that we have to educate our people also about Climate Change. Climate Change is having a devastating impact on this world, and Climate Change will affect our coastline. And, what we have to do is not only ensure that we use the resources of our coastline, the resources of our Marine space, but to ensure that we preserve that space and to do what we can, as a small society. I agree with those who said, as a small State, we contribute little to the Carbon Footprint that is out there. But, we must, still, by doing what we can, give an example to the world about how we can impact, or remove whatever impact we are having on Climate Change, so that it has less of an impact on our marine space and our Coastline.

I also want to commend the Ministry of Agriculture for, at this time, working on the Land Use Policy, because I think all of these things must be integrated; that if we

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do not develop a Land Use Policy, we will find ourselves down the road having to work even harder to reverse some of the things we are doing along our Coastline. We must be able to say this area must not have this; this area can have this and integrate that into what my dear friend the Minister was speaking about earlier with respect to our Coastline.

In other words, I do hope, when the Land Use Policy comes out, it would not only come out, as a document from the Ministry, but it would find its way into the hands of the people. And, this is another issue, Mr. Speaker, these Bills that we are passing, the Land Use Policy, this Bill about our coastline, will be of no effect unless our people, our people are involved in, not only in its implementation, but also the point at which we are going to discuss them in our Communities.

So, I want to suggest, to the Ministry of Climate Resilience and Fisheries and Forestry, that this document be taken into the communities, into our groups, into the youth groups, the Women's groups, the community groups, so that they can now educate the people in the Communities, because, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, we will not protect our Coastline if our people are not involved in so doing.

Similarly, with the Land Use Policy; we need to take that to the community, take it to the people, and I do know that, at some point, before the end of the year, we should have our National Development Plan. I also hope that that, too, will be taken the people, because without the involvement of the people, it is just going to be a document in a book somewhere, and the only relationship the people will have to this is when they get locked up for doing something that they did not know was a crime. We must get them involved in the formulation of the Policy and the implementation of the Policy.

So, in closing, (I said I wasn't going to be long), I want to commend the Ministry and the Minister for bringing this here, but to urge them to take it further, out of the Parliament into the Communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable representative for the Town of St. George. Honourable Representative for St. Mark.

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**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Bill of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Act, as presented by for the Member for St. John. Mr. Speaker, I will endeavour to make it short, but the reality is, there is a lot more that can be said on this topic and a lot more that needs to be said, at another time. Maybe, as a certain Calypso says, "When the Carnival Over." But, Mr. Speaker, we believe that it is so important that we have foregone some of our time for pleasure in ensuring that this Bill is presented to this Honourable House and passed.

Mr. Speaker, the sea and the coast; this is such an important facility to all of us. Pretty much it is used by all, if it's not for bathing, people think of it as useful for health purposes, people say if you are sick, whatever you have, just go and bathe in the sea and it will take care of it, and people swear by it. And, if you're talking about the Black Bay Beach, which you find in the Constituency of the Presenter of the Bill, that, too, is said to have minerals in it that provide health benefits.

The fishermen, they use it for livelihood, whether it's for net, or whether it's rock fishing and what have you. It's used by everybody. People have pleasure in bathing in the sea, and sometimes even if you don't bathe in the sea, as such, but the beauty. We spoke about Grand Anse earlier on, and if you look at the coast anywhere there, the coast adds a pleasant site to watch, especially in this beautiful country of ours. So, it is important that... if all of us use it, there has to be collective responsibility and an integrated approach. And, therefore, I want to complement the Ministry of the Environment for involving.

I saw a list of persons, who participate, in terms, of looking at how this Bill should be presented, and they will play an important role in the effecting of the Bill, and I think it is very broad-based. But, as much as we use the Coast and we use the sea, we are the biggest destroyers of the Coast, the biggest contributors. Whether, it's the Farmer, way up in the mountain who uses the pesticide or the weedicide, or whether the people in the household who use they fancy term that they Member used in using the toothpaste. I don't remember what it was. I thought I would remember it, but I don't, (but the micro something or the other). You know, the household, the grey matter, people who dump. Mr. Speaker, I have seen all kinds of thing dumped on the coast, on our beaches, whether it's construction waste, whether

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it is dirt from excavation, all sorts of things that are very harmful to the life on the coast. And, we expect it to keep yielding you know. We do what we want. We even overfish. We have too much. We destroy the coral and we expect every day to come back and meet it as it was before, but that cannot happen. If we want to have it continue to be as it is, or even improved, then we must play our roles and play our roles very strategically.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for the Town spoke about education; that is so important, consultation. And, the Bill speaks to extensive consultation and public consultation and by implication education of the public, because people need to understand that their actions have serious consequences.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am appalled that after four (4) years of MPAs in this country, isn't that so, Minister? After four (4) years or more, and in case, just for clarity, MPA means a Marine Protected Area. So, it is an area in the sea that is protected, in such a way, that we cannot go and do just what we want there. So, that the live forms within that area will be protected and they can grow and proliferate in that area, and in other areas for the betterment of human lives. But, you have a designated area, people go, they dive, they come there with boats, they do what they want, because we feel it's ours, and we could do what we want. But, whatever God gives us, we have a responsibility to take care of it. And, if the education had been effective, we wouldn't have to be coming here talking about a fine for this and a fine for that, because while the fine works, because when you make people feel it in their pocket, they do pay attention, and it is sad, because it hurts us more deeply than it hurts our pockets, but some of us are not aware of it.

And, before it goes too far, I urge that, as the Bill is passed and it becomes enacted that the responsible Entities take on the role of educators and go out, as said for the Member for the Town of St. George and educate our people and really get them truly onboard.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to mention the importance to Tourism. I mentioned earlier about Grand Anse Beach, and we all know it always get great reviews. People just love to walk on Grand Anse Beach, just to look at it, and everywhere else in the country, where you have sand, whatever the colour is, our locals love and enjoy it.



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Further from the coast inside we have Dives Sites. Our Dives Sites are recognized, as some of the best Dives Sites in the world, with the Bianca Sea and some of the other ships that have sunk and our underwater Sculpture Park. We have the first Underwater Sculpture Park in the world, and Grenada Tourism Authority, and then others had it. And, so we are having dialogue with the gentleman who built it, so that we can do something even loftier, so that we could have the best improved Underwater Sculpture in the world. It's going to cost us a bit, but he did the first one for us free of cost, so it's only fair that we give him something. But, the benefit to Tourism and to our country will far outweigh what he is asking for. And, we are in dialogue, with him, at this time. So, the sea does provide so much for us, and we do not treat it, as it really deserves.

Mr. Speaker, there is one thing that has confused me for a long time, and I hope over the next few months and years, when consultations are held, I will learn about the high water mark and how far you could go, because, you know, I see people who own lands, close to the Coast, everything is theirs. Perhaps, the only thing they don't claim is where the wave actually breaks, where you go inside, everything is theirs, they want to claim it. And, they want to do what they want, and our people do not have the access. When we talk to our investors and they want to build a hotel, or whatever, we make sure that we are clear with them that Jah beach belongs to the people. And, that while we don't want them running all over and terrorizing our visitors, you must have some levels of control and restraint; we want them to enjoy the beach. But, the beaches will cease to be beaches of pleasure, if we do not take time off now to learn about them, and to follow the guidelines and the rules.

So, I am really, really, really very happy that this Bill is coming, and I look forward to further dialogue, further conversations on it, but, Mr. Speaker, I will end here, in the interest of getting a little rest for the Soca Monarch later on. I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Representative for St. Mark.  
Honourable Representative for St. John.

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**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I guess in your wisdom you know that a Bill so important will not take fifteen (15) minutes. That's why you made sure that we all took care of the resource that we have inside us.

So, Mr. Speaker, in wrapping up, I just want to say that the bill is integrated, because it also integrates with other Legislation and Entities. For instance, you have the Grenada Ports Authority, who has the authority for the shoreline, for berthing and things like that. The Fishing Act gives the authority to the Ministry of Fisheries for the resource of the fish and stuff, but the actual coastline is within the Port Authority, so it has to be integrated.

Finally, I know that many people make their living, for instance, Boat Building, in Petite Martinique and Windward, but we would have to ensure, with this Bill, that you don't drop your fiberglass raisin and how you conduct your business, the asphalt and everything on the shoreline. So, I want to conclude by thanking my colleagues. I see I got support from both left and right, verbal support, but I have mental support from everybody. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Representative for St. John and presenter of the Bill.

**Question put and agreed to**

**Bill read a second time.**

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

**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the House resolves itself into a Committee of the Whole House to consider the Bill Part by Part.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**House is in Committee.**

**House Resumes.**

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**Mr. Speaker:** I have to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the Whole House and passed without amendments. Honourable Representative for St. John.

**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** I beg to move that the Chairman's Report be adopted.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Chairman's Report adopted.**

**Hon. Alvin Da Breo:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the third reading of this Bill and its passage.

**Question proposed.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Did you want to make a contribution? I noticed your light was on.

**Question put and agreed to.**

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative for St. George South.

**Hon. Nickolas Steele:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to introduce for its first reading, a Bill for an Act shortly entitled, Tobacco Control Bill, 2019.

**Ag. Clerk:** A Bill for an Act to regulate tobacco use by individuals, prevent tobacco use by children, enhance public awareness of the hazards of tobacco use and provide for other related matters, shortly entitled, Tobacco Control Act, 2019.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, this Bill is only for its first reading. Thank you.

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**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, in particular to give the public an opportunity to zero in and make comments on it. The purpose of the Bill, as explained is very serious. You hear about children with tobacco and people and all its hazards and so forth. So, we expect, just as the Coastal Zone, we will be going through the Communities and getting the concerns of the people; no smoking in vehicles, no smoking here, maybe they might even advocate no smoking in their own houses and that will be very well, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Leader of Government's Business for his support.

**Assistant Clerk:** Item 16 - Request for leave to move the adjournment of the House on matters of Urgent Public Importance.

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

**Honourable 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. George North-East.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise because I believe I should make mention here that coming from St. George North-East, I know I do not have any coastline, but even myself and my good friend from St. Andrew North-West. But, still Carriacou and Petite Martinique is my background, so coastline is very important. We have very little, and so I give full support of this Bill.

But, Mr. Speaker, St. George North-East, in its entirety, we have four (4) Primary Schools; Vendome RC, Constantine RC, Beaulieu RC and St. Paul's Government. We also have two (2) Secondary Schools; Boca and Westmorland.

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And, on top of that, Mr. Speaker, it seems like all the Private Schools in Grenada are in St. George North-East. We have Alpha, we have Grenada Junior Academy, we have First Choice, we have St. Mary's, we have Sunnyside and still more counting.

But, Mr. Speaker, the purpose here today, since after the results came out for the Primary School Exam, I don't think the Minister mentioned it this morning. But I remember seven (7) years ago, myself and the Member for St. Patrick West visited Vendome RC School and that little school was situated, at the time, in a little tin shed on the Court. And, he always said, and I also believed that I was always seeing that tin shed there and always believed that there was some Cocoa Fermenting or Nutmeg Fermenting Facility. But, when I went into that school in 2011, just at the time of Campaign, I promised the Principal and teachers there that if NNP won, we will do something about that school. And, I said to her, at the time and I said to people, I would not have sent my child to Vendome RC School under those conditions.

I do believe after Ivan that was a school probably was designated just to terminate that service. But, in 2013, myself, the Minister for Education, along with the school, the Church, GRENLEC, True Blue Bay Resort, we really put some emphasis into it and this year the child that topped the Primary School Exam came from Vendome R.C.

But not only that, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to sound bias, or to be bias, and I asked my family, I asked my wife, I said: "You went to public school?" She said, "yes". I went to public school also, Petite Martinique RC and Hillsborough Government School, and I said, we turned out to be fine.

But, Mr. Speaker, when the Exams came out and I sat and I checked the statistics there, you would see that out of the first fifty (50), twenty-nine (29) were public schools and twenty-one (21) were private schools. And, I say that our public schools, teachers, parents, students give so much under difficult circumstances. I said, probably if there wasn't strike and all, maybe the results would have been a lot better. So, I take my hats off to the Teachers, the Principals of all the schools and all the students who did that exam and did very well.

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On another note, Mr. Speaker, the Member also raised the issue about having our children out in places where they should not be for the Season. But, Mr. Speaker, I also raise another pertinent issue. Sometimes our children should be in a place where they should be, but unsupervised; the same difference, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is the time when sometimes we go around and we do little house to house, around June, July, August time. Schools are on vacation, Mr. Speaker, and I should mention it a little bit secretly that sometimes on my visit to some of my Constituents, I would meet a nine, ten, eleven year old child, whether male or female, alone home, unsupervised. What are we doing about that in this country? Too many times during school vacation or school break off, mother gone to work, father gone to work, bigger sister and brother. What do we do? We do not have an alternative, yet, we leave them home. Maybe they should be at home, but unsupervised. No wonder why, Mr. Speaker, you know in your experience, this is the time when we have, sometimes, a lot of house fires and tragedies in our communities, because, in that instance, Mr. Speaker, we are not doing right by our children, by leaving them unsupervised, at home. And, I believe that steps should be taken, so that proper supervision can be done with our minors, especially when school is out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Nickolas Steele:** Mr. Speaker, just in closing, I think it would be remiss of me, as Minister for Health not to, one, wish everyone a very festive Carnival Season, but also a very safe Carnival Season. And, it is my true desire, if taken the right way, that the team at the Ministry of Health, General Hospital and Health Centers, do not see any of us, or any of the public over the carnival season except on the streets being merry. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Representative. Good advice. Honourable Representative for St. Andrew North-West.

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**Hon. Delma Thomas:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it will also be remiss of me, if I did not say something in closing, as we go into the highlight of Carnival. As Minister for Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment, I want to urge parents to take responsibility for their children. Ensure that you supervise them. If you are unable to supervise them, ensure that you have someone, who are entrusted to take care of your children. We heard of the number of abuses amongst our boys and girls, over the last couple of months and years, and, therefore, during the August vacation and during the Carnival Season, I want to urge parents to be on their guard and protect your children, in every form of the word. Ensure that you be there with them, or as I said, earlier, have supervision for them. I thank you, Sir.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Representative for St. Andrew North-West. I was just looking to see if there were any other issues that I wanted to talk with you about. But, Honourable Members, I know our minds are now settling to get onto the next activity for the Carnival. So, I want to wish you a safe Carnival and there is a song that I always remember: "When the Carnival Over."

But, what we are trying to do, at the Parliament, is to work so, at this time, we would have been on recess. I mentioned about this Conference and only one Territory of the entire group was not on recess and that was Grenada. You see, we give time for Parliamentarians to get a break. We work like slaves and Slave Master, joined together, during the year, and if you continue right on, there is something you call 'burnout.' And, as the Speaker of the House of Representatives, I would not be charged for leading you through the burnout stage. So, we are going to work, again, come the New Year, from after Carnival, to prepare, so that you would have some time that we would call a recess, if we work well during the course of the year.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**House adjourned sine die at 2:55 p.m.**

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