



GRENADA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

(HANSARD)

**Third Session of the Tenth Parliament**

**OFFICIAL REPORT**

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**SENATE**

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

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**Senate Meeting**  
**Held at the Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's**  
**On Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.**

**Attendance**

**PRESENT**

Senator the Honourable Chester A. A. Humphrey	- Mr. President (In the Chair)
Senator the Honourable Simon Stiell	- Minister for Climate Resilience, the Environment, Forestry, Fisheries and Disaster Management
Senator the Honourable Judd Cadet	- Member
Senator the Honourable Norland Cox	- Minister for Youth Development, Sports, Culture and the Arts
Senator the Honourable Winston Garraway	- Minister of State with responsibility for Disaster Management
Senator the Honourable Kim George	- Member
Senator the Honourable Cathisha Williams	- Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Senator the Honourable Terry Noel	- Member
Senator the Honourable Tessa Alexander St. Cyr	- Member
Senator the Honourable Christopher De Allie	- Deputy President
Senator the Honourable Mondy André Lewis	- Member

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**Prayers**  
**Minutes**

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

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** His Honour, the President.

**Mr. President:** Good morning, Honourable Members. Senator the Honourable Winston Garraway.

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Good morning, Mr. President, and good morning Members. Let us pray.

***(Senate Prayer was said)***

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Please join with me, in saying the Lord's Prayer.

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

**Mr. President:** Thank you very much. Honourable Members pray be seated.

***(Sound of Gavel)***

**Mr. President:** This Session of the Senate now commences.

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

Item 4 - Confirmation of Minutes.

**Mr. President:** Senator the Honourable Simon Stiell.

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**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** Mr. President, I beg to move the Minutes of the proceedings of a Sitting of the Senate held at the Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's, on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2020, be taken as read.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Minutes taken as read.**

**Mr. President:** Senator Stiell.

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** Mr. President, I beg to move that the Minutes of the proceedings of a Sitting of the Senate held at the Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's, on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2020, be confirmed.

**Question proposed.**

**Question put.**

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President,...

**Mr. President:** Yes. Senator Williams.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Yes. I am sorry, Mr. President. My mike was on, but because of the logistics, I think you failed to see my hand.

Mr. President, I have a proposed amendment to the said Minutes. May I draw, Mr. President's attention to page 67 it is numbered, of the Minutes, the third paragraph, before...

**Mr. President:** One second, please, one minute. Page, what?

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** It's numbered 67.

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**Mr. President:** One second.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** The third before the last paragraph, Mr. President, it states that: ***“Senator Williams sought clarification on the debate that was occurring under Ministerial Statements and stated that she was lost, as it related to the Standing Orders and the Procedures in the Senate.”***

**Mr. President:** Yes, I am following the paragraph.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I don't believe that, that is an accurate characterisation of my intervention. It says here that I stated I was lost, as it related to the Standing Orders and Procedures in the Senate. I don't think it's fair to say that I was lost, but rather I sought...

***(The Clerk gave the President some clarification)***

**Mr. President:** You have to help me here. For some reason, and it might be not a technical glitch, but it may be how the system is set. I am not hearing you, distinctly, at all.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Okay. I will try to speak a little louder.

**Mr. President:** I don't know if the volume of the system could be adjusted. Other Senators are having that problem?

***(The other Senators responded in the negative)***

**Mr. President:** Well, I don't know.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** I'll try to project my voice.

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**Mr. President:** It may be unique to my age.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Okay. Can you hear me now, Mr. President?

**Mr. President:** Yes.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, my concern is that, that sentence...

**Mr. President:** The sentence, or the entire paragraph?

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** The entire paragraph, Mr. President, does not accurately reflect my intervention, at that time. It states here that I said: "***I was lost, as it related to the Standing Orders and the Procedures in the Senate.***" I don't believe that was the essence of my intervention. Rather, I expressed concern that the Procedures seemed to deviate from the Standing Orders. So, perhaps the Hansard can be consulted, so that my intervention can be more accurately couched in the Minutes, Mr. President, because on the face of it, it seems here that I did not understand the Standing Orders, which I don't believe is the truth.

**Mr. President:** That would take a minute or two to do. The Clerk has informed me that what is reflected here is a verbatim from the recording. So, what I would suggest that we do is that we suspend Confirmation at this point in time, have the Clerk check with the Hansard recording, to find this specific section, and then that can be introduced either by... a Committee of the House can then be appointed to listen to it and to come up with a resolution of the issue.

For us to do that now, we will have to adjourn, briefly, to allow that to happen, and I am not minded to be influenced that it's the best use of time. So, the other way, as I said is to have the Clerk get the Hansard Reporters to find this specific section and

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then we can just put together a Committee, including yourself to listen to it, and then to come back and advise me of the amendments, because it ought not to be a controversial matter. What amendments, if any are necessary and then we take it that way. Yes, Senator Garraway.

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Mr. President, if I may, I need to point out, also, an error in the Minutes.

**Mr. President:** Wait, wait. Let us deal with this, one at a time.

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Okay.

**Mr. President:** If this is a new matter, a separate and distinct matter, we can come to that. So, on page 67, the third paragraph from the ultimate paragraph, needs to be deliberated on, and I have indicated the steps we will use to do that. Honourable Simon Stiell, as Leader of Government Business, do you wish to...?

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** Well, Mr. President, I don't think it's the best use of Parliament's time. I think your suggestion, in terms of suspending confirmation, let us check it and if we have to bring back the confirmation of those Minutes, at the next Sitting, we can do so. But, I don't think we need to take up time on this, right now.

**Mr. President:** Okay. Senator.

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Yes, Mr. President, on page 64...

**Mr. President:** No, I am just seeking from Senator Williams...

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Oh. Sorry

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**Mr. President:** Are you on all fours with this direction?

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Yes, Mr. President.

**Mr. President:** Okay. Alright, fine. So that's then what we will do. The Leader of Government's Business is indicating that... I am trying to work out in my mind, what is the consequential effect of not confirming the Minutes. No, you can have Minutes unconfirmed, when we will take it at the next Sitting. So, it gives us a sufficiency of time for us to really deal with this, rather than try to rush things now, and then I can have an opportunity to hear the tape myself, as the Presiding Officer help to arrive at a resolution.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Yes, I agree with that approach, Mr. President. Thank you.

**Mr. President:** Yes. Senator Garraway.

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Yes, Mr. President. I just want to point out on page 64, the third paragraph...

**Mr. President:** Page 64, the third paragraph.

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** The first line in that paragraph...

**Mr. President:** One second, one second. Page 64, the third paragraph, that is the penultimate paragraph on 64, right?

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Yes, Sir.

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**Mr. President:** Beginning with the words: “**Mr. President, this has cost us to date...**”

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** “**Mr. President...**”, yes. “**Over two hundred and four...**”; “**thousand**” should be inserted there. I think I would have said that, “**two hundred and four thousand EC dollars (EC\$204,000.00).**”

**Mr. President:** Instead of two hundred and four EC dollars (EC\$204), it's two hundred and four thousand?

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Thousand EC dollars.

**Mr. President:** Ok. Well, Confirmation of the Minutes, are there any other corrections anybody else has picked up? Well, you have an opportunity to look at it in a little greater detail, as the item of the Confirmation of the Minutes hereby is suspended.

Clerk, could we take the next item on the Order Paper?

***(The Clerk conversed with the President in private)***

**Mr. President:** No, well, this amendment isn't controversial. This amendment has no controversial issue. The one submitted by Senator Garraway, there is nobody contending otherwise. Again, we could just double check it to make sure. But, in other words, even if he did say two hundred and four thousand (204,000), the fact is it's a hundred thousand. So either way, and I am saying it's not a contentious amendment, so we could accept that amendment as is, but that does not change the status of the Minutes, because there is a matter pending for us to resolve. Senator Garraway.

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Yes, Mr. President. Also, on page 65, the second paragraph...

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**Mr. President:** Page 65

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** The second line, we have “**Queen’s Bank**”; it should be “**Queen’s Park**.” I don’t mind it being a bank, if we had access to the funds, but...

**Mr. President:** Yes not “**Queen’s Bank**”, yes. Okay. If there are no further amendments, as I said the Confirmation now lies suspended.

**Confirmation of Minutes suspended.**

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

**Mr. President:** Honourable Members, it is with a degree of sadness, but also it is my duty to inform the Chamber, this Honourable House, that with effect from 2<sup>nd</sup> of September, instant, Dr. the Honourable Dunstan Campbell tendered his resignation, from the Senate to the Governor-General. Word of that resignation came to me directly from him. I am trying to pull up the letter, which he said he would send me, but I am not seeing it, so he probably hasn’t sent it yet. So, his absence from the Senate today is by virtue of the fact that on September the 2<sup>nd</sup>, he advised the Governor-General of his resignation from the Senate, with immediate effect.

It is somewhat unfortunate that we didn’t have an opportunity to recognise his contribution, and I indicated to him in our discourse this morning, that I will take the opportunity to convey his resignation to you, and at the same time, to give you an opportunity during the appropriate course, (we don’t have to all do it now), but if you are minded to do it, you can do it under this item.

My association with Dr. Campbell began long before he entered the Senate. I had a working relationship with him, when he sought my advice on industrial relation

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matters, when he came back to Grenada in a major undertaking to resuscitate Banana Production. I think I can say, without controversy, that Dr. Campbell's contributions in the Senate were profound. He is of a mild demeanour, quiet, but indeed, thorough. He indicated to me and he has allowed me to indicate to you that his resignation has come in the face of some medical challenges that he has been experiencing and that he has resigned after significant thought and contemplation.

He wants me to convey to you that he enjoyed being in the Senate. He, as a policy formulator, found the experience very rewarding, and he saw it, in a sense, as part of the apex of his life's dream; that he is of, and for those of you who don't know, of humble beginnings, and through studious efforts as a youngster, because he comes from the very bowels of the working-class. In fact, indeed, he comes from the agro-proletarian section of Grenadian society. His mother was an agricultural worker, worked all of her working life at Douglaston Estate. He got the opportunity of a secondary education and attended the Grenada Boys' Secondary School and the rest is history.

What I have always been impressed about Dr. Campbell is the fact that he did not join the army of the brain drain. He came back to serve the very salt of the earth that gave him birth, and he spent all of his time using his training, formulating policies for agriculture and its resuscitation. He remained bedded to the working people and that to me, since I myself have traversed the landscape of service and Public Service, is one of the most fulfilling things in one's life.

So, I want to use the opportunity to thank Dr. Campbell for his contributions to the Chamber, for his advocacy on behalf of agriculture and the farmers and fisher folk and for the use of his intellectual power to their benefit, as we all struggle to complete the Emancipation process by the liberation of the poor and dispossessed of Grenadian society. So, it's with a tinge of sadness I make this announcement that he has resigned.

On your behalf, I want to take the opportunity to wish him well in all of his endeavours. I am certain that he remains an accessible reservoir of information and knowledge and that he will always be available to give individual help to anyone who seeks it and he has given me this assurance that as health permits, he makes himself to

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be continuously available to Grenada and to contribute to the developmental efforts of our country, and he hopes his health permits him to do so in a more robust way.

Honourable Members, therein is my announcement on this question. Rather than go and come, I will now give you the opportunity to express your own view on the contributions of a Grenadian working man, who has served this Senate and continues to serve our country. I thank you. Leader of Government's Business.

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** Thank you, Mr. President. Well, on behalf of my colleagues on 'This Side', and they are free to make their own independent comments, but I wish to recognise the significant contribution that Dr. Campbell made to this Chamber.

At the beginning of your statements, Mr. President, it sounded more like an obituary than a recognition of his contribution. We certainly wish him the best of health, moving forward. And, what struck me about his contribution here was certainly his humbleness, his commitment to serving Grenada, not just the Constituency that he represented, our farmers and our fishers, but his interest and passion for the development of our Nation and always with an objective and constructive perspective.

There are others, who sat in his seat, Mr. President, as you will well remember from a previous time, where you may question the level of objectivity in some of the comments. But, Dr. Campbell showed at all times, that focus on the facts, that focus on those key areas, and where we need to pull up our socks and gave praise where praise was due.

And, this is my final comment. I recall, in one of his budget presentations, he spoke of Sisyphus, this Greek mythology, and I had to go and look up Sisyphus, but it's something that stuck with me, on the curse of a man forced for eternity to carry a big stone up a mountain only for that stone to roll back down again and for him to repeat that process to eternity. And, that symbolises, certainly, part of Grenada's past. But, it's through the contribution of Members such as him and many others, who reside here and elsewhere, is to break that cycle and to continue this forward progress, as we all strive for the same thing. Regardless of where you sit across the aisles, what Political

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Party, what political affiliation that you have, but you always put Grenada first and what is in Grenada's best interest, and Dr. Campbell was certainly a shining example of that. So, his contribution and his presence will be missed in this Chamber, but we wish him all the best in his future endeavours. Thank you, Mr. President.

**Mr. President:** Members, I have found the letter sent by Dr. Campbell, and it reads:

***"Dunstan Campbell, PhD, Senator representing Farmers and Fishers. The letter is dated today's date, September the 4<sup>th</sup>.***

***Mr. Chester Humphrey, President of the Senate, Grenada.***

***Mr. President, it is with sadness that I would like to inform you that I have informed the Governor-General of my intention to resign from the post of Senator representing Farmers and Fishers, with immediate effect.***

***I would have liked to continue my full term, but health challenges, which in turn is affecting my ability to meet with my Constituency and perform at levels I am accustomed to, have pushed me to take this decision.***

***I thank you for affording me the opportunity to serve at that level and to contribute to the development of my beautiful country, Grenada. Mr. President, let me assure you that for the short spell I have served as Senator, I have seen the future and it looks good for Grenada. I have seen the youth take their stand. I admire the performance of the young Senators, Ron Redhead, Judd Cadet, Kerryne James, Cathisha Williams and the new entrants Tessa St. Cyr and Terry Noel. To me, they have made a difference, and I am happy to have been a part of this era.***

***I am down, but not out as yet. I will continue to serve at other levels, that my health would permit.***

***Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances of my highest consideration. Dr. Dunstan Campbell, Senator representing Farmers and Fishers."***

So, the record will take note of this letter. Thank you.

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**Mr. President:** Senator Lewis.

**Sen. the Hon. Mondy André Lewis:** Thank you, very much, Mr. President. I too, on behalf of Labour, wish to join in recognising the services of Dr. Dunstan Campbell, but to firstly wish him all the very best, as he pursue matters related to his health.

Labour has gained a lot from Dr. Campbell. Myself, representing Labour at different forums have had the pleasure of interacting with Dr. Campbell. So for instance, we served together on the National Sustainable Development Plan, 2020 to 2035. It was 2015/2035, 2015/2030, at first, and Dr. Campbell, in his usual quiet, methodical, deep way has been responsible for helping guide us through many of the uncertain periods in the discussion in particular, on the National Sustainable Development Plan. He has a wealth of experience and I have formed the view, after getting in contact with him, that he is one of the persons, if I may say Comrade, Grenadian, that our country probably did not make enough use of.

After engaging him, based on his experience in Jamaica and other places, where he played a leading role and a significant role, in terms of long term planning for this Island, Grenada has a lot to gain from him. And, I want to reach out to him, to let him know that I will continue to reach out to him to seek his advice on matters. I appreciate all the advice that he has given, even if, at times that we disagreed.

What I found also interesting about him, is the fact that he was humble enough to say: **“Yes, I think I may have made a mistake. I think I did not consider (a), (b) or (c).”** And, if you do not hear it from someone else, you will not be able to look at his demeanour and even in terms of his presentation when he was making a point, to recognise that here is someone who is the holder of a PhD. His humility speaks for itself. And therefore, we, in the Labour Movement, want to extend our best wishes to him, continued health and strength, and yes, to focus on himself. Because after all is said and done, there are certain paths that you as an individual and your immediate family and those around you will have to walk. And in the Senate here I have gained a lot from him and to recognise his contribution, if I should say to the farmers and to the

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fisher folks, the issues that he raised here were very deep and thought-provoking, and, therefore, I want to wish him all the continued best. Thank you very much.

**Mr. President:** Senator Terry Noel.

**Sen. the Hon. Terry Noel:** Yes, Sir. Morning, Mr. President. It's saddens me to hear the news of Dr. Campbell. I have only met him briefly, in my encounter here, at the Upper House at the Senate. I believe it would be a great loss towards St. John, as well, I think that's where he's from, because I think he might be the only person here in the Upper House from the area. I know Senator Cathisha Williams, I think, has some connection there, as well. But, it will be a great loss for St. John, and it will be a great loss for the Agriculture Sector.

And, I was looking forward to him to having an ally, because, as you know, I've been speaking a lot about agriculture and the importance of agriculture, as being one of the main pillars going forward. So, it is a great loss for St. John, it is a great loss for the Senate at this moment, and it will be a great loss for the Agricultural Sector, as I see it, going forward, to be one of the main pillars, especially with COVID, and so on and we are still hearing a lot about Tourism and so on. So I was looking forward to working with him to have a great ally to push the Agriculture Sector and hoping the Government would pay attention and take heed. So, again, I wish him all the best. Thank you.

**Mr. President:** Thank you, Senator Noel. Senator Judd Cadet.

**Sen. the Hon. Judd Cadet:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I just want to add a few words, as well, because Senator Dunstan Campbell and I shared a very special relationship.

I can actually remember the Conference, I think it was the CPA Conference that we attended in Kenya and on that trip, I got to understand and know Honourable Dunstan Campbell more. In fact, he shared his story with me, as it related to the time he left Grenada during the time of Sir Eric Matthew Gairy, and when he went to study in

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UWI and how he ended up getting his PhD. He did some of his studies in France, and he was basically explaining to me, as someone coming out from humble beginnings, how he was able to attain his education. I think at the age of thirty-three (33), he was able to attain his PhD, coming from a background without great financial support. And, I always look forward to his presentations, because it wasn't one that was antagonistic, entirely, but one, which was very balanced, one that you can always look forward to, and he didn't just criticise, but provided recommendations, and he will greatly be missed. His presentations will be greatly missed, and I will definitely miss him. You know, sometimes after the Senate, we would sometimes meet and give some jokes. I'll definitely miss that. So, I just want him to know that he is in my prayer, he is in our prayers, and I wish him the best and the best of health.

**Mr. President:** Thank you, Senator Cadet. Okay. Honourable Members, the second item that I wish to address, under Announcements by the President, is to inform the House that tomorrow, the 5<sup>th</sup>, is recognised as International Day of Charity, or put another way International Charity Day.

In recognition of the role of charity in alleviating human crises and human sufferings, within and among Nations, as well as the efforts of Charitable Organisations and individuals, the General Assembly of the United Nations in its Resolution A/RES/67/105 designated the 5<sup>th</sup> of September, as the International Day of Charity. It also paid respect to one, Mother Teresa, who died on September 5, 1997, at age eighty-seven (87) years of age after a life dedicated to charity.

The objective of the day is to sensitise and mobilise people, NGOs and stakeholders all around the world to help others through volunteer and philanthropic activities. That being said and having mentioned Mother Teresa, as one such person, who dedicated her entire life to charitable work, I wish, also, to mention a small country, big in the Caribbean and big internationally, whose central philosophy and very being is doing charitable work, and I make reference to the People and Government of Cuba. That work done by Cubans internationally, Grenada, has been an outstanding beneficiary of that charitable work. They have not only trained our Doctors, not only

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trained our Veterinary Scientists, their Engineers came here and built the most important piece of modernising infrastructure that put this country on a path of transformation, our International Airport, and they did so, not knowing that their blood will be shed. They did so, not for material reward, but out of a philosophy, which drives their entire society.

In speaking about Cuba, we can think about the contributions they've made to the dismantling of apartheid, and the fact that they engaged in active combat against the apartheid Regime and fought them in Angola, fought them in Mozambique and other areas where apartheid had a stranglehold, and again, Cuban blood was shed.

We can think of the valuable work that the Cubans have done. In fact, they were the first to arrive, when the disastrous hurricane hit Haiti. They were the first to arrive, when the Ebola crisis broke out in Africa, and again, Cuban blood was shed, because some of the Cuban Medical Specialists, who went there to do battle, lost their lives in that encounter.

Again, Cuban blood is on the frontline, in the battle against COVID-19, and Cuba has been able to give assistance, charitable work to countries, as pronounced as Italy, to countries, as poor, as Grenada, to countries in Africa, to Venezuela, and to work amongst the poor. Cuba has the largest number of medical personnel working outside of its borders larger than that of the United Nations, bringing relief to human suffering.

We think about the Miracle Eye Programme, where hundreds of Grenadians, people who could not see and were aged and were affected by molecular difficulties and cataracts, in this wonderful Programme, the combining of Venezuelan resources and Cubans' skills and technology, introduced the Miracle Eye Programme that restored the sight of dozens of Grenadians, at no cost to them.

Again, in our battle against COVID, we have Cuban Specialists working here. They came in, specifically, to assist. And, we are happy to learn that Cuba is fairly advanced in developing a vaccine, which I understand now, is on trial in dealing with the COVID pandemic.

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So, when we talk about international Day of Charity, and we talk about charitable work, Cuba must be mentioned, and its people must be mentioned for what they have given to humanity and to the world. **(Applause)**

So, Honourable Members, tomorrow, as we reflect on this day, we should also ponder what we can do in our own backyard, in our own personal space, to improve the welfare of humankind, to do something positive, to relieve the difficulties faced by our fellow man and fellow woman, in our own personal backspace. And, with those few words, Honourable Members, I intone an appeal that we remember and mark the day tomorrow and give the necessary reflections that would signify our remembrance of that day as declared by the United Nations, and I thank you. This would be the end of my announcements on this occasion.

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 7 - Ministerial Statements.

**Mr. President:** Senator the Honourable Winston Garraway.

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Thank you, very much, Mr. President. Mr. President, I rise to give a few updates on the areas I am committed to report on in the Senate. And, I just want to, at this point, say, I share with the sentiments that were expressed before re the resignation of Senator Campbell. And I had some good moments with him, in private discussions, and I know he has a heart for the farming community of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. I wish him the best of health, in these trying times.

Mr. President, it is common knowledge that we are living in very tough economic times as a result of the pandemic, COVID-19. Government has seen a drop in revenue of some one hundred and eighty-one million dollars (\$181 m). However, given this reality, Government did not buckle under the pressure, but continued to provide services to the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, because it has been committed to this.

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Last year, around November, when the Budget was passed, Government, none of us saw this COVID-19 pandemic, and as such, we didn't budget for it, but, here it is. We are faced with those fallouts, as a result of COVID.

We did not see the majority of SGU students moving out of the Island, and we know the role and the economic importance of them being on Island. As you know, SGU is responsible for some 25% of GDP, but they not being here affected significantly, the revenue stream of Government.

We did not see neither, the trade between Grenada and Trinidad, more so from Grenada to Trinidad with the agricultural produce, would have been significantly disrupted, causing a glut in the market in some crops, because we just do not have the market.

We did not see hotels closing down, or reduced operations. And as a result, farmers were unable to sell their usual crops, eggs and other vegetables, or vegetables and other produce to the hotels. All these, Mr. President, affected and are affecting business in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. But one thing for certain, I have seen, this Government's continued efforts to cushion the effects of COVID-19.

Government will continue to do it, because for one, Government is committed to the well-being of the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, and will find ways and means to help cushion the effects, but being mindful that our revenue base has been eroded. So, it will not be business as usual, but we will continue to provide the important services of health, education, security, just name it, we continue to do this, and Government will continue.

With all these, Mr. President, Government continue to advocate the importance of safety, good education, generally encouraging people to enjoy a good lifestyle being mindful of COVID and the need to follow all protocols to save lives. And, in large proportion, the people are following, and I want to commend the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique for adhering to those principles. Government will continue to do what it promises to do under the circumstances.

In terms of infrastructure, I want us to advance and to inform this Honourable House that around the 13<sup>th</sup> of September, that bumpy piece of road on Marrast Hill,

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which has been a nuisance for us, the commuters, will be addressed. This is so, because the alternate routes, through the Mt. Parnassus area has been probably, around 95% complete. As you know, there would have been land slippage along that piece of by-road. It would have been addressed. Those walls would have been erected, and just the final surface paving is to be done, paving the way for work to commence on the Marrast Hill.

Of course, there are going to be some disruptions in the flow of traffic. It is estimated that the work will be completed in two (2) months. But most importantly, resources have been made available to get this work done and Government will do it, because infrastructural development aid in economic development.

In terms of what we have seen, re projects around the country, one will say, well, it's COVID, hardly any travel, the shutdown of a lot of things, but there is going to be a bounce back in the world, and what is important now is to prepare your infrastructure and prepare yourself for when that time comes around. And Government continues to work assiduously, with the Private Sector to ensure that construction, a major source of employment in the country is up and running and is doing well. And a large percentage of our young people, and of course, middle-aged persons are employed, and they are in a position to provide for their families.

I spoke to the financing, one hundred and eighty-one million dollars (\$181 m) less in revenue. But Government would have just committed over \$1.9 m towards ensuring that schools are ready and the sanitisation of schools and so forth is in place to welcome our students for the starting of the new School Year. It will not be business as usual, but one thing is certain, the commitment of this Government is unwavering. We will continue to ensure that our students are given the opportunity to excel, and we were committed towards that.

Mr. President, in terms of the Ministry of Health, and I want to, from the offset, take this opportunity to commend and congratulate the Minister for Health and the team of professionals within the Ministry of Health for the outstanding work they have done to date, in keeping this Nation safe. **(Applause)**

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Mr. President, as of the 25<sup>th</sup> August, some three thousand, three hundred and ninety-six (3,396) PCR tests were conducted on Island: some two thousand, six hundred and eighty-four (2,684) at the Windward Island Research and Education Facility within the SGU, and very significant, seven hundred and twelve (712) within the General Hospital in the Phase Two Project or building of this Facility.

Significant is, in that number of seven hundred and twelve (712), but what it speaks to, Mr. President, is that Grenada now has two (2) Testing Labs on-Island. In February, March, we had none. As a matter of fact, within the OECS, we didn't have any. But, today, because of the importance of health care and protecting this Nation, Government has been able to have, on-Island, two (2) Labs, and we are continuing to ensure that we provide the services, so that our people will remain safe. It is important to note, Mr. President, that again, we are leading in the OECS, in terms of labs on Island, for testing for the COVID-19.

Today, Mr. President, I want to remind us of the importance of maintaining the Protocols, wearing the masks, absorbing the physical distancing, that's the information we have from the scientists. I know there are a lot of theories out there, but let us follow the words from the professionals. Let's follow the words, or the advice from the professionals, as they say, we need to wear the mask. Yes, we have opened the border, and with that, increased the risks of infection. But, let me state here, Mr. President, we will spare no effort in ensuring that the Nation remains safe.

I am pleased to announce that we have been welcoming chartered international flights out of Canada, and Canada is now recognised as being a country in the Green Zone. And the Green Zone simply states that within a two (2) week period, fourteen (14) days, if you have less than nineteen (19), or nineteen (19) and lower, in terms of infection, within a hundred thousand (100,000) population, you are considered to be a Green State, and Canada is a Green State. So, persons coming home from Canada will be ushered through, and the need for the quarantine is removed, as a result of that characterisation of being a Green State.

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Unfortunately though, our neighbour to the South, Trinidad, who has been, historically, a very important trading partner to this Nation is now within the Red Zone, and hence the reason why, it is disrupting and affecting trade between both Islands.

Persons coming from Trinidad will have to be quarantined for the fourteen (14) days, at least ten (10) days. And the advisory is out that if you do not have to travel to that destination, at this point in time, don't look to travel. But, we trust with the measures that have been taken in Trinidad, the lockdown, the shutdown of schools for the rest of the year will stop the community spread.

But, thinking of just less than one hundred (100) miles away from us, and the close ties that we have with Trinidad, how risky this is, because of course, we continue to have trade with Trinidad. And, I know a lot measures have been put in place to ensure that we protect our people. But we want to remind our nations and our people, they need to follow the protocols that have been established.

Mr. President, Government will continue to spend towards making sure that the necessary protocols and whatever needs to be done in retrofitting the building to accommodate the Protocols, we will continue to do that.

I am extremely proud to also announce that this Honourable House, Mr. President, that the Phase 2 of the General Hospital Project continues to do well. **(Applause)** To date, I am beaming with pride and as a Government and as a people we have to be very proud. Just a few years ago, I remember the steel frame at the General Hospital that was condemned and so much was said. Monies were secured towards doing the work on it and a change of Government and nobody did anything, because we were condemning it, when it was only a simple remedy.

Mr. President, you were talking so much of the service and the contribution of Cuba to the rest of the world. The steel frame and the work that was done in erecting it, was a combination of grant support from the Bolivian Republic of Venezuela.

***(Time Bell Rings)***

**Mr. President:** Fifteen (15) minutes more.

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**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Fifteen (15) or five (5)?

**Mr. President:** Fifteen (15).

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Thank you.

**Mr. President:** Oh, five (5), my mistake.

**(Laughter)**

**Mr. President:** Five (5) minutes more.

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** You would have taken it.

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Well, with open arms.

**(Laughter)**

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** It's a combination of grant support from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the People of Cuba, and it was a simple problem to be corrected.

Within Cuba, the AC connection to those facilities hangs from the outside. So then you will have more space within the building, so you will get to do more. But, within a PAHO context their Protocol speaks to the AC to the ceiling. So, what we had to erect the AC in the ceiling, there would have been less space for manoeuvring, and that was it, to simply change the structures of the floor. And it had to take this Government to come back into Office and to correct this, and today we are able and we are happy, because we are benefitting from that Phase 2 Project.

As I speak, Mr. President, we have the training of the Nursing Assistants; it is being done in the Facility. The Admin Section of the Facility is up and running, not too

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long from now, we will have the Imaging and so forth placed within that structure. But, important enough to note, Mr. President, the long awaited and talked of Dialysis Unit is scheduled to commence at the end of this month in the Phase 2 Complex. Significant is the fact that the cost will be reduced, Government will be able to have that production or Facility within its compound and the people of Grenada can rest assured of improved service, as it relates to Dialysis technology on-Island, and this is great news for the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

Mr. President, a few years ago, we had a lot of issues about elevators in the General Hospital. I want to announce to this Honourable House that the replacement of the two (2) elevators within the General Hospital compound, the replacement elevators are on Island. They will be installed in a phased approach, because we want to ensure that we have one working while we're installing the other. So, probably within three (3) to four (4) months, we should have the two (2) functioning new elevators within the Hospital compound, also indicating the commitment of this Government towards improved health service to the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, and this is a proud moment for this Government.

We will continue to ensure that the smartening of the Hospitals will continue; work started within Carriacou. They too, will have their own elevator system, but more than that, when this is finally completed on the Sister Isle of Carriacou, the need for persons to take the Osprey, or whatever mode of transportation to come over to the Mainland to get basic services, will be over, because it will be provided within the Hospital in Carriacou. And I am extremely happy, Mr. President, because it's said, **“a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.”** And some of those things we were aggressively working on it, COVID came and would have slowed, in a lot of ways, some of the things that we would have programmed for. But one thing you can rest assured, the commitment of this Government towards providing the best for its citizens, will continue. We will not give up. COVID cannot stop us, COVID will not prevent us. We will continue to ensure that the people of this country...

**(Time Bell Rings)**

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**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** ...continue to get the best, and thank God that this Government is in office, at this time, so that to ensure that the people continue to get the best. Mr. President, I thank you for this moment.

**Mr. President:** Thank you, Senator Garraway. Senator the Honourable Simon Stiell.

**Sen. the Hon Simon Stiell:** Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I will provide some updates from the Ministry of Environment, on some initiatives that are taking place there, and also I will speak to the Ministry of Education and the reopening of schools, which is clearly, a hot topic at this time.

So, Mr. President, I will first like to speak to the Levera Project and some of the recent concerns that have been expressed over the possible encroachment of a temporary worksite that is currently under construction on that site, and its possible encroachment on the RAMSAR Convention Protected Wetlands area. And, Mr. President, this is a matter that is currently under investigation with Physical Planning and with the developers to resolve.

Mr. President, on Monday of this week, we held a community meeting, via Zoom, with Environmental Groups, within the area, OIBSTPO, Ocean Spirit, Friends of Levera, others. There were somewhere in the region of eighty (80) persons on that call.

We had representation from the Parliamentary Representatives for those Northern Constituencies, so Ministers Pamela Moses and Clarice Modeste-Curwen and then the MP, Anthony Boatwain. And then from a Government side, representation from within the Ministry: Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, representatives from Physical Planning, the Head of Physical Planning and the Consultant that is currently engaged in the development of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for that project.

There was also a site visit that took place, yesterday, that visit was specifically to the RAMSAR site. There were some who attended at that site visit. There were some fifty (50) persons. Some persons were genuinely interested in what is happening in the

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Levera area and specific to that project. There were others that questioned some of their motives, but the intention was to visit the RAMSAR site. Others thought it was to visit the actual construction site, which was not the case. It was specifically to see those areas of environmental interest and its proximity to that site.

So, at the community meeting that took place on Monday, the objective of that session was to share information with the local community, as to where we are with that project, so that there is clarity, in terms of what is happening, how we intend to move forward and really to listen to the concerns of the community.

We had technical persons, who were able to answer some of the questions. But, what is critical to understand and this was communicated in that session, there are still a lot of unknowns, Mr. President. The Developers are yet to submit their final designs and final approval requests, and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which will inform all involved, as to where the environmental sensitivities lie, what the risks are, what the threats are to those natural assets, and the remedies and prescriptions to mitigate against those risks and threats that the Developer will have to factor in to their design and their work in order to gain planning approval. So, we are still midway in the process, and as the process evolves, more information will be available, more questions can be answered. But what will happen throughout this process, Mr. President, and the process of completing the EIA, it is a consultative process, engaging with community members and there have been already been a number of consultations and will continue to be.

There are some challenges in this COVID environment, in terms of face-to-face meetings, so I think questionnaires are also being used to supplement those general meetings. But, what has been approved to date is just limited to the two (2) acres on the overall site. The overall site is four hundred and sixty-three (463) acres, but just from the two (2) acres where temporary buildings are being constructed, where workers for the project will be housed, over the duration of the project, and there are requirements that the Developer must undertake to protect the sensitive environmental assets that surround that site.

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So, planning and approval has been given just for that two (2) acre site and planning and approval for the geotechnical studies that are required that will inform the design. So, one of the messages that we are getting across, both at the community meeting and the site visit, is this is the start of a conversation and a journey that is going to take... it's a long road ahead of us, but we will be walking through that process, with the local community, understanding those sensitivities and how they are being addressed.

Mr. President, what is also very clear in the public conversation that is taking place is, as we move forward, it is important that we separate what the genuine issues are, what are the genuine concerns, what are the genuine challenges that will emerge from this project, whether they are environmental or social, and it's separating those from what is also very clear is that there needs to be more public education, as to the project, what it is trying to achieve and how it's trying to achieve it. And in the absence of that public information, that void is filled with a third element that we have to be aware of and that is those with political motivations and engaging politically-based conversations rather than the real facts of that project.

Mr. President, we all want the same thing, whether it's the Developer, the operators of that Hotel Facility. As with all resort developments today, have to have an environmental sustainability at its core. The world has changed, and it's not in the Developers, or in the operators' interest to create a Facility, or to create a Resort that is in conflict with the environment.

I know the local community, Government, all stakeholders have an interest in ensuring this project succeeds and this project is done well, and if it is done properly, it will be a win-win for all. The economic benefits from this project will be significant. The jobs created will be significant, especially in our rural communities up in the North of the country, where for generations we have talked about development outside of St. George's and developments in the Northern Parishes. And we have an opportunity, Mr. President, to realise that vision and that dream that has so far eluded us.

But those jobs and economic development cannot be at the cost of those environmental assets and at the heart of the development will be ensuring that those

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assets are protected. So economic development, in concert with the protection, preservation and embracing of our natural assets. So this is a conversation and a conversation that will continue for some time.

Mr. President, I also wish to update this House on a meeting that took place last week, a Ministerial Roundtable with CARICOM Ministers of the Environment and the UK Government, who are taking over the Presidency of COP26. This is the biggest Annual Climate Conference that takes place and because of the COVID pandemic, COP26, which was scheduled for November of this year, has been postponed to November of next year. But, the UK Government, who as I said is taking over the Presidency of this event is engaging countries, engaging Regions to start the dialogue, so that when the meeting is held next year, it will be, as productive, as possible. And, part of the conversation was on some of the key priorities for us, as a Region, as the Caribbean, as Small Island Developing States, and the role that we can play in this major Climate Change Conference.

And, Mr. President, our Region continues to be seriously impacted by climate change and in a disproportionate way, in terms of when we compare that to our contribution to global warming and these effects of increasing temperatures, that we are experiencing resulting in changes to our rainfall patterns, increases in floods, increased droughts, coastal erosion and frequent and severe hurricanes and storm surges.

In this meeting, the British Government expressed their intent to collaborate closely with CARICOM. CARICOM and Small Island Developing States have a very strong reputation within the International Community in the climate change arena, and we are strong advocates for action ambition in the battle against climate change. And part of the conversation was to determine what modalities CARICOM can play in these negotiations as we move forward to Glasgow next year and one of the key elements of that is our inclusion, we need to be at the top table in these negotiations. And some of the critical priorities include access to finance and the financial resources that need to be made available by the International Community to enable us to fulfil our ambitious plans, in terms of building resilience, in terms of adapting to the threats of Climate

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Change. And with Grenada as the Co-Chair of this meeting, it signals Grenada's role and Grenada's prominent role in these international negotiations.

So, Mr. President, now moving on to the Ministry of Education, an update on where we are with the reopening of schools. Work continues, in preparing for the start of the Michaelmas Term and the opening of schools on September 7<sup>th</sup>, in these extraordinarily, challenging COVID defined times. And, as we roll out this plan for the reopening of our schools, there are three (3) critical challenges that we face.

The first is limited finance. Senator Garraway already spoke about the severe impact this global crises has had on Government revenues, reduced by almost half to date. The limited physical space with the need for physical distancing to follow the protocols in our schools and the need to adapt a blended approach to education, by face-to-face classes, blended with online classes.

But, Mr. President, despite the significant drop in revenues and the challenges in meeting our financial responsibilities, Government has committed an additional \$1.9 m to ensure that our schools are safe, as possible, the changes that need to be made in our schools to accommodate the protocols are achieved, and this is \$1.9 m just for this Michaelmas Term, four (4) months, between September and December, of this year.

But, Mr. President, we also must not forget the significant investment in our Education System that Government continues to make. So in addition to that \$1.9 m, the fifty million dollars (\$50 m) that has been allocated to school repairs, over this period. And the twenty-one million dollars (\$21 m) that has already been committed in supporting the E-Learning activities, using Modern Technology to further the teaching and learning experience for our school children.

And, as I said, Mr. President, the need for this blended approach, using the M-STAR Digital Platform, the E-learning ecosystem, the tablets, the applications, the electronic content, the digital books, E-books that are now the co-tools of our students in this new period.

Mr. President, the reopening of our schools will be carried out in phases.

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**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** And, that phased approach...

**Mr. President:** Five (5) minutes more.

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** Thank you. And, that phased approach provides for engagement with our parents. There will be information sharing to inform parents of some of the critical decisions that have been made, or are to be made, to ensure that this period runs as smoothly as possible. The assessment of students and the continued programme of training and retraining and retooling of our teachers, using the new technology, in this new environment, with this new normal.

And during this term, Mr. President, devices will be distributed. I gave an update, I think, a couple of sessions ago. Twenty-four thousand (24,000) tablets and laptops are being distributed, configured, student registration for all Secondary School students for the start of this Term, and this is a major undertaking. So, the first week of school, we will have attendance of a single Grade or a single Form on any given day. So this is to create, again, the physical distancing that is required and attention can be spent on that specific Grade, that specific Form.

In the second week, will be, mainly, the engagement of parents; and again, they will be provided with information that would enable them to better support their children, as they start the new School Term in this new environment. And also during this second week, all students will remain at home. So, the focus, week one will be Grade, or Form, at a time, the second week will be parents that are engaged. In week three, students will be engaged in assessments to determine their specific academic needs. Since March with the exception of Form 5, our children have been at home, and it's important for that assessment to take place, to see where they are, where their academic attainment is and what special provisions need to be made, so that no child is left behind.

And, then we move to the new normal, which will then take place in the fourth week, where regular, normal teaching, with this blended approach, will take place and there will be specific school plans. So, there are those schools that will have to focus

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more on the online teaching and learning components. Others where they have the physical space are able to conduct more in-class sessions, observing all of the protocols, but each school will have their own specific plan. Mr. President, we know that many of us are very keen for the academic activities to restart. The focus of the first three (3) weeks is on orientation, is on sensitising teachers, students and parents and the psycho-social support that is needed for our students.

So in closing, Mr. President, this continues to be a challenging time, but the Ministry of Education and the Government of Grenada are doing all that they can to ensure that the Education Services, the best possible Education Services that could be provided to our students are offered, at this time. And, I want to recognise all of the stakeholders for being involved in the process to get us where we are and to continue to work closely together, and that is our principals, our teachers, the Grenada Union of Teachers, parents, students, the Ministry, as we walk, shoulder-to-shoulder, in order to best serve our students. I thank you, Mr. President. **(Applause)**

**Mr. President:** Thank you, Senator Stiell. Okay. There doesn't seem to be any more contributions. Could we move along? I am not seeing any lights.

**Ag. Assistant Clerk:** Item 8 - Presentation of Papers and Reports from Select Committees.

**Mr. President:** Senator Stiell.

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** Mr. President, I beg to move the following Paper be laid on the Table:

- Report of the Fiscal Responsibility of the Oversight Committee 2019, Response of the Minister for Finance.

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**Mr. President:** Honourable Members, I do now order that the Report be so laid on the Table.

**Ag. Assistant Clerk:** Item 9 - Petitions.  
Item 10 - Government Notices.

**Mr. President:** Senator Stiell.

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** Mr. President, I beg to move a Motion to amend the Order Paper. There are two (2) proposals, Mr. President, the first is the deferral to the next Sitting of Item 12, Questions.

We, on "This Side" received the Questions that are here on the Order Paper, this week. Those Questions have been distributed to the various Ministries. It is not just for us on "This Side"; even though the Questions are posed to Members on "This Side", the technical expertise that is required to provide a proper answer to these Questions resides with the technical officers within the respective Ministries. So the Questions have been distributed and we await those responses for formulation and will be presented to this House when they are available. But work has started in terms of compiling the technical content of those Questions.

The second proposal is the deferral of Item 16, Public Business, the three (3) Motions. Up until Wednesday of this week, Mr. President, I think there were changes to, at least one of those Motions. But, what we seek to do is to defer those Motions to the next Sitting, where those matters will be debated.

**Mr. President:** Senator Stiell, you're putting this, as a Motion for consideration?

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** I am. So, I am begging to amend the Order Paper to defer those two (2) items to the next Sitting.

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**Question proposed.**

**Mr. President:** Senator St Cyr.

**Sen. the Hon. Tessa St Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I rise to get some clarity on the Resolution put before the House by the Honourable Leader of Government's Business.

The Honourable Member would have just mentioned that the Questions, under Item 16, Public Business were amended up to Wednesday. Mr. President, based on the emails that we would have gotten, the Motions were not substantially or significantly amended, in such a way that debate on the matter cannot be held this morning.

**Mr. President:** Senator Stiell.

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** Once again, Mr. President, the items need to be given due consideration, which is why we're deferring them to the next Sitting, but they will be addressed.

**Mr. President:** Senator Lewis.

**Sen. the Hon. Mondy André Lewis:** Thank you, very much, Mr. President. I too, echo the sentiments of Senator St. Cyr. These are serious matters to be discussed. For instance, the amendment that came on Wednesday or whatever day it was, basically just had to do with what the Resolution actually called for, and it was not the substantive matters that were actually raised, and therefore I just want to also register my deep concern.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Order Paper amended to defer Item 12 (Questions) and Item 16 (Public Business).**

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**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 11 - Unofficial Notices.

Item 12 - Personal Explanations.

**Mr. President:** Senator St Cyr.

**Sen. the Hon. Tessa St Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I rise to give a brief synopsis of a meeting, a Virtual Roundtable that I would have represented us at, last Wednesday. The Virtual Roundtable on Gender Responsive Crisis and Disaster Planning; the meeting began at 10:30 our time and ended approximately 1:45 p.m. The meeting was hosted by the Bahamas; it was attended by Members from various English speaking countries, who are members of Parl-Americas.

Two (2) questions formed the basis for the discussion, and I am going to read them with your permission, Mr. President. Question one: ***What gender responsive actions have been taken by your countries to strengthen your responses to disasters and crises and build resilience? What inclusive decision-making practices have been adapted to develop these responses?*** What was discussed in the meeting and what resulted, coming out of the meeting, that many of our regional countries have had, basically, the same sorts of initiatives has being implemented in response to COVID. A lot of the discussions surrounded COVID. So while they were called differently, for example, our Roving Caregivers, there were different names for that, but the initiative was a similar one. It was also acknowledged that stimulus packages were offered basically, by all of the Caribbean Islands represented. So, Member Countries have taken similar actions. However, some were more structured than others based on type, based on scope and based on the reach of various Units and Departments.

***“The need for cohesion and coherence in actions across Stakeholder Entities”*** were highlighted. A red flag on that question was that most of the actions taken, though impactful, were gender neutral or blind and this was a concern for the majority of Member Countries.

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The second question reads: ***What challenges including those caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, do you face in trying to adopt gender responsive approaches to disaster and crisis planning or in implementing planned activities effectively? And what tools would be helpful in supporting or overcoming these?"***

The main takeaways from that question were that despite inroads, Member Countries are still being faced with a multiplicity of challenges. There is the need for more knowledge sharing and partnership in interventions, to ensure that no country is left behind. And out of that discussion, the most profound pronouncements coming out there, was that data is our new oil, highlighting the fact that we would need to focus on evidence-based approaches and to ensure that we are using the data effectively to inform these approaches.

It was recognised that more dialogue was needed on these issues, moving forward, and as such an invitation to join the WhatsApp Group Chat was extended to facilitate on-going conversation. As per usual, a recording of the meeting will be posted on the ParlAmericas website. I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to have represented us.

**Mr. President:** Thank you, Senator St Cyr.

**Clerk Assistant:** Item 14 - Motions.  
Item 15 - Bills.

**Mr. President:** Senator the Honourable Cathisha Williams.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I beg to introduce for first reading a Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, the Extradition (Amendment) Act, 2020.

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**Clerk:** An act to amend the Extradition Act CAP. 98, shortly entitled, Extradition (Amendment) Act, 2020.

**Mr. President:** Senator Williams.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I beg to move that the relevant Standing Order of the Senate be suspended to enable the Bill to be taken through all its stages, at this Sitting.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Relevant Standing Order suspended.**

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

**Question proposed.**

**Mr. President:** Senator Williams.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Thank you, Mr. President. The Extradition (Amendment) Bill, 2020 seeks to amend the Extradition Act, Chapter 98, which is the principal Act.

Mr. President, extradition is the procedure by which a State, upon receipt of a formal request by another State, surrenders to that requesting State, an individual charged with, or convicted of a crime in that requesting State. The intention is for the accused or the convicted person who has escaped custody to be prosecuted or punished under the jurisdiction of the requesting State.

Mr. President, extradition is regulated in the States themselves, by the respective Extradition Acts of those States. But between countries, extradition is regulated by Diplomatic Treaties, sometimes bilateral, sometimes multilateral.

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In Grenada, Mr. President, the principal Act, the Extradition Act, provides the Legislative framework and procedure for extradition of persons and that procedure can only be applied where there is a concordance with the Bilateral Treaties of the contracting States. Therefore, Mr. President, in order for extradition procedures to be effected between States, who are parties to a Bilateral Treaty for Extradition, the provisions of the principal Extradition Act must conform, or be in harmony with the provisions of that set Treaty. And I must say, Mr. President, that we have quite a comprehensive Extradition Act.

Section 3 of the Act sets out the main criteria for extradition, it makes liable for extradition, a person who is accused of an extradition offence or is alleged to be unlawfully at large, after conviction of an extradition offence in a Foreign State or a Commonwealth country. Then, the Act goes on to define the extraditable offences. It outlines the extradition procedure and it provides important safeguards. But for the purposes of this Amendment Bill, the Section which defines the extradition offence is of particular concern.

This Section, Section 4 makes an extradition offence one which, on indictment in Grenada and in a Foreign or Commonwealth State, punishable with imprisonment for a term of five (5) years, or a longer maximum custodial penalty. In short, Mr. President, for an offence to be considered an extraditable offence, it must be punishable by a term of at least five (5) years in both States, the requesting State and the requested State. This Act, which contains that Provision, was entered into in 1998 and entered into force in 2000.

However, Mr. President, prior to the entry into force of this Act and subsequent to its entry into force, the Government of Grenada had entered into various bilateral Extradition Treaties with States, and those Treaties defined extradition offences, as that punishable by imprisonment of, in some cases, a term of more than one year, or at least one year.

Two examples of such Treaties, Mr. President, is the Extradition Treaty between Grenada and the United States of America, which was signed in 1996 and was ratified

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in 1999, and that makes an extraditable offence, one referable to a penalty of more than one year.

Another example is the Extradition Treaty between Grenada and China, which was signed in 2016, and recently incorporated by an Act of Parliament in 2018; and that Treaty, Mr. President, refers to extraditable offences punishable by a term of at least one (1) year.

So, Mr. President, there is a clear conflict here between the definition of extradition offences pursuant to our Act, and the definition of extradition offences in the Bilateral Treaties that we have entered into. And what this amendment seeks to do is to rectify this conflict and bring our Act in harmony with our Bilateral Treaties.

Therefore, Mr. President, the amendment that is being sought, is the amendment of Section 4 of the Act, particularly subsections, (i) (a), (i) (b), (ii) and (iii) (c), by deleting the words: **“Five (5) years”** where they appear and substituting that with the words: **“one year.”** By effecting these amendments, we will be facilitating the harmonisation of our Laws, and, therefore, we will be able to honour our obligations under these International Treaties.

Now, Mr. President, the amendment of this maximum penalty should be no great cause for concern, because what we are really doing is bringing Grenada in line with the current international trend and the international trend in relation to Extradition Treaties, or that those extradition offences are defined by terms that are punishable, or carries a punishment of at least one year, or in some cases more than one year, and I would like to give a few examples.

The United States Extradition Regime provides for extradition offences referable to imprisonment of a period of more than one (1) year; that is the same with Canada, Mr. President.

Also, the European Convention on Extradition, a Multilateral Extradition Treaty provides for extraditable offences, punishable for a period of at least, one (1) year, or by a more severe penalty. And, Mr. President, where a conviction and prison sentence has already occurred, the punishment awarded must have been for a period of at least four (4) months. And that Treaty, Mr. President, has fifty (50) ratifications or sessions,

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including Members of the Council of Europe and non-council Members such, as Israel, South Korea and South Africa.

Further, Mr. President, extradition offences in India are defined as those punishable for a period of at least one (1) year. And I know that, currently, Grenada is endeavouring to strengthen its diplomatic ties with India and part of that is a contemplation of the entering into an Extradition Arrangement with India for which this amendment would be applicable also.

Closer to home, in the Caribbean, the Extradition Acts of our brothers in St. Lucia, Dominica and Barbados, for example, define extradition crimes, as those for which the maximum penalty is death or an imprisonment term of twelve (12) months, same as a year, or more. So, Mr. President, it seems, in relation to this issue, Grenada has in fact, been behind the curve. So what this Act seeks to do is to bring us in line, with international norms and set us on a path to modernity in our international relations.

It is also important to note that entering into these Extradition Treaties and the alteration of the definition of an “extradition offence” does not, in any way, disadvantage us relative to our other Treaty parties, because the conditions for extradition and the conditions of these Treaties are negotiated and agreed to by both parties. An extradition offence in Grenada must be the same as an extradition offence in the other contracting party, and the terms are the same, so no one party is more disadvantaged than the other. Also, Mr. President, there is no automatic right to extradition, even though we are party to those Extradition Treaties. For example, the Act provides for exceptions where the offences are of a certain nature, such as political offences, or military offences. It also provides for avenues for redress for an individual who has been committed and awaiting extradition, that individual can apply for a Writ of Habeas Corpus to be released. And where an Order for the surrender of that person to the other country has been made by the Minister, the subject of that Order can apply for judicial review.

Furthermore, Mr. President, the Minister, in his or her discretion, can refuse an Order for Surrender, by reason of the trivial nature of the offence, by reason of the passage of time, or because the accusation against the individual is not made in good

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faith, or in the interest of justice. So there is no automaticity as it relates to extradition. The contracting parties, the parties to the Treaties, still have discretion, in relation to the grant of a Surrender Order, which will effect an extradition.

Mr. President, with all of the Legislative changes taking place, there is bound to be conflict, and this is an example of one such conflict. In many cases, those conflicts are allowed to just languish until an emergency situation occurs and we have to rush to Parliament to make rapid amendments. So fortunately, Mr. President, this is not the case. And, I must commend the AG's office and the Drafting Unit for taking the proactive approach to systematically harmonise these Laws.

This Bill, Mr. President, will surely raise our international profile, increase our effectiveness in fighting crime, especially transnational crime, and it will enable us to honour our international obligations under these Treaties. So for those reasons, Mr. President, I commend this Bill to the House. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. President:** Senator Garraway.

**Sen. the Hon. Winston Garraway:** Thank you very much, Mr. President. Mr. President, I rise to give support to the second reading of this Bill and to signal, after, maybe, more than more than twenty-two (22) years, we are now seeing the coming into being of this whole Extradition Treaty.

It is important to note that what would have transpired over the years, in preventing the finality of this, is no longer, and we're all happy to move ahead to ensure that this Bill is finally enacted into our Law. And for this, I give my full support to the second reading.

**Mr. President:** Senator Kim George.

**Sen. the Hon. Kim George:** Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I rise, likewise, to lend my support to this Bill. Substantially, the items, which I would have addressed in support have been variably canvassed by Senator Cathisha Williams,

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certainly, in terms of the general context, the historical context and the actual context of the principal Act.

I will add simply, Mr. President, by way of reinforcement, that this is a Bill, which contains substantial safeguards against the power to extradite being abused. I refer, in particular, to Section 4 itself, which is the Definition Section, which very clearly sets out the type of offence that will count as an Extradition Offence and clearly states that the offence must be an offence, which is existing on our Books, in Grenada, as an offence.

I refer as well to Section 8 of the principal Act, which identifies several categories of offences, which are not extraditable. So for example, Section 8 subsection (1) (a) states that **“an offence of which that person is accused or was convicted and is an offence of a political character is not extraditable.”**

The offence, and I continue, Section 8, subsection (1) (b), **“the offence of which that person is accused, or was convicted, as an offence under Military Law, which is not also an offence under the general Criminal Law is not an extraditable offence.”** And it continues to list several other offences that are not extraditable.

In terms of a further safeguard, there is provision in the Act, as well for the review of the extradition request. So, as my colleague Senator mentioned, there is no automatic adoption or application of the Extradition Act. And, the safeguards there reside in the Minister, for example, for Foreign Affairs, who have a discretion, whether or not the request is one that should be complied with. Then, any Court of committal within the State of Grenada has jurisdiction to consider and determine whether or not the offence is an extraditable offence. Our High Court has similar jurisdiction and our Court of Appeal has similar jurisdiction.

Mention would also have been made of the right to ask for a **“Writ of Habeas Corpus.”** For those of us, who would be familiar with the Law, we would understand that this is one of the most powerful tools in the arsenal of any citizen of Grenada, because what it essentially allows you to do is to petition the Court and to say to the Court, whenever you are in custody, I am asking you to compel whoever this person is, who has me in custody and is denying me of my liberty and my freedom to bring me

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before you, so that my legal issues can be addressed. Literally translated into English, it's a Latin expression it means, '**we command that you deliver the body.**'

And so, as was also mentioned earlier, the intention behind the amendment is simply to bring the legislation in Grenada in conformity with what is clearly an international trend and which has been an on-going international trend from as early as 1996, when the Bilateral Treaty Arrangement between us and the United States, for example, would have been entered into. I thought it's important to mention, as well, that the provisions of the Extradition Act do not touch and concern any person who has committed an offence in Grenada, so that the only persons, who can potentially be affected by an Extradition Order are persons who are alleged to have committed, or have committed an offence in a Territory outside of Grenada and happened to be within the jurisdiction of the State of Grenada at the time the extradition request is made.

And so, in its present construct, I support the Bill as one, which shows, certainly, the maturity of this Government and its continued commitment to respect for International Law Principles and its obligations to other countries and generally the role we play, in terms of maintaining International Law and Order. And so for those reasons, Mr. President, I support the Bill. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. President:** Senator Williams, you may proceed.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I will like to thank the Senators for their contributions and their support of the Bill. And, I beg to move that the Senate resolve itself into a Committee of the whole Senate to consider the Bill, Clause by Clause.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Senate in Committee.**

**Senate resumes.**

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**Mr. President:** Honourable Members, I have to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the whole Senate and passed without amendment. Senator Williams.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I beg to move that the Chairman's Report be adopted.

**Question put.**

**(Clerk converse with the President in private)**

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Chairman's Report adopted.**

**Mr. President:** Senator Williams.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I beg to move the third reading of the Bill.

**Question put and agreed to.**

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

**Mr. President:** Senator Williams.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I beg to introduce for first reading, a Bill for an Act shortly entitled, Supreme Court Fees Act, 2020.

**Clerk:** An Act to make provisions for the methods of payment of Court fees and percentages and for the repeal of the Supreme Court Fees Act CAP. 315, shortly entitled, Supreme Court Fees Bill, 2020.

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**Mr. President:** Senator Williams.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I beg to move that the relevant Standing Order of the Senate be suspended to enable the Bill to be taken through all its stages at this Sitting.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Relevant Standing Order suspended.**

**Mr. President:** Senator Williams.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

**Question proposed.**

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, the Bill before us, the Supreme Court Fees Bill, 2020, this Bill seeks to make provision for the methods of electronic payment of Court fees and percentages, in addition to our traditional methods. It will establish a framework for the payment of fees to the Supreme Court and establish a harmonised fee structure throughout the Eastern Caribbean Member States.

Mr. President, the rationale for the introduction of this Bill, which specifically introduces electronic payments is to facilitate the implementation of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Courts Electronic Litigation Portal, or e-Litigation Portal, for short.

Mr. President, in the wake of hurricanes Erma and Maria, in 2017, which caused great damage to the Region's Court infrastructure including the loss of case files, the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, acted with renewed urgency to implement an Electronic Filing and Modern e-Case Management System.

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This system entitled the e-Litigation Portal System facilitates e-Filing, e-Case Processing, and every time I mention 'e' that's 'electronic', storage and retrieval of files, thus increasing operational efficiency, transparency of Court services and improving access to justice.

This system, Mr. President, offers filing parties and Court users, a single access point for commencement and active management of case files, throughout the Litigation process. Through this system, front-end users can input information directly into e-Forms and that information can be harnessed throughout the Case Management System. It also allows for a Court Calendaring Process, which can be managed and streamlined to allow Court Officers to better schedule their current calendars.

Some important and useful features of this system, Mr. President, include prompt notifications for our Legal Practitioners regarding important activities related to their cases; quick access to all pending tasks and all Legal Practitioners will be able to view all of their cases, all of their pending cases through this Platform. And, that will be a marked improvement over our current system of Dispensation of Justice, which is fraught with challenges associated with a system that is heavily paper-based.

Mr. President, some of these challenges, which I have experienced, which I know that my colleague, Honourable Senator George has experienced and Legal Practitioners in Grenada and throughout the Region have experienced, include dealing with an immense amount of paperwork. Every day, tons and tons of papers, printed for applications, appeals. Another challenge is the labour and time involved in trekking to the Registry every day, with bundles of documents to file.

Sometimes, the Stamp Depository runs out of stamps and you have to run around Town to find someone who sells stamps, apart from the Post Office, and this makes the Administration of Justice very arduous and sometimes unnecessarily time consuming. And, it's not only so for the Legal Practitioners, well, the Attorneys, but also so for the Judges and the Court Administrators, who have to manage a mountain of case files.

Sometimes I would feel sorry for my Judges when I see the number of files that they have to carry into the Courtroom or the Chambers and have to go through all of

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these documents looking for particular applications, and all of this will be made much easier, if that information is digitised and available at the click of a mouse, Mr. President.

So, hopefully, with the push to implement this e-Litigation System, many of these concerns can be addressed. The ability to file and process and manage documents will save time, money, labour, help preserve our environment, because we will be using a lot less paper, and essentially, transform the way the Court and Practitioners do business, Mr. President.

Crucially, though, it will revolutionise the way members of the public interface with the Court and improve access to and delivery of justice, because at the end of the day, Mr. President, ultimately, our goal is the fair dispensation of justice to the public and allowing the public equal access to justice, in a timely manner.

Now thus far, the e-Portal has been implemented in six (6) of the nine (9) OECS Territories, which the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court serve. The first was the BVI, in 2018, and just recently, Montserrat, this year, in March, launched their e-Portal. So, Grenada is one of the three (3) outstanding Member States where this e-Portal has not yet been implemented, through no fault of ours, mainly caused by complications due to COVID. But, the passage of this Bill represents a step towards modernity, a step towards the streamlining of our Justice System and the better administration of justice, Mr. President. And, I will just like to point out, what I believe are the crucial aspects of this Bill, which will aid in that regard.

Firstly, Clause 4 provides for payments to be made by credit card, payment of Court fees and percentages, that is, by credit card, debit card, in addition to cash, cheques, or other payment methods that may be fixed. So, no longer would you have to run to the Registry with cash in hand to buy stamps, you would be able to pay online with your card, from the comfort of your Office or Firm.

Also, Mr. President, the procedure applicable for the payments online and the manner in which these payments will be evidenced, will be determined by the Chief Justice, through the issuance of practice directions, and that is according to Section 13.

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And, Mr. President, on the broader point of integration, the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court is an institution that we should be very proud of. It serves nine (9) Territories, as I mentioned before. It comprises Judges, who are sons and daughters of the soil and for the most part, it's managed in an efficient manner, as is possible, given a lot of the trying circumstances.

And, in delivering justice to these Territories, it's important that there is equality in the administration of justice and part of achieving that is ensuring a harmonisation of fees throughout the Region. So that's why it's important to highlight Section 3 of this Act, which provides for a Harmonised Fee Structure to be prescribed by the Chief Justice, together with two (2) other Judges of the Supreme Court. In that way, the fees that someone in Grenada pays to file documents, etcetera, would be the same as the fees someone in St. Vincent or St. Lucia pays. So, no one would be disadvantaged, and in any case, most of us use the EC dollar.

This Act also plays a part in strengthening and deepening our integration process, specifically as it relates to the Administration of Justice. This is very relevant, at this time, because this e-Litigation Portal came on stream, motivated by some of the challenges faced after hurricane Erma, the loss of files, etcetera, and, now we are in the middle of a pandemic, where we have been forced to conduct much of our business online. The Courts in Grenada have had to adjust their procedures to facilitate hearings, online. So, it only makes sense that the processing of documents, filing of documents also be digitised to enable the quick and effective administration of justice, in times of crises, such as these.

We have already seen a movement towards that with the launch of the Government e-Portal. Much of Government's business is now done online. Your taxes can be paid online. We're now having this thrust in e-Learning, where a lot of the classes are online; and although I believe we should treasure our social, interpersonal interactions in a period such as this, COVID, where that sort of thing is not encouraged, we really should be looking to strengthening our procedures and making them as digital, as possible to preserve our safety and health. So, Mr. President, with those words in mind, I commend this Bill to the House. Thank you. **(Applause)**

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**Mr. President:** Thank you, Senator Williams. Having discussed the proposed Bill, it is now that the Bill be read a second time.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Bill read a second time.**

**Mr. President:** Senator Williams.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I beg to move the Senate resolves itself into a Committee of the whole Senate to consider the Bill, Clause by Clause.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**(Clerk converse with the President in private)**

**Mr. President:** It is being suggested that for the question of time, that we take the amendments Part by Part, so that we resolve for purposes of considering the Bill, Part by Part.

**Senate in Committee.**

**Senate resumes.**

**Mr. President:** Honourable Members, I have to report that the Bill was considered, by a Committee of the whole House, and passed without amendment. Senator Williams.

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I beg to move that the Chairman's Report be adopted.

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**Question put and agreed to.**

**Chairman's Report adopted.**

**Sen. the Hon. Cathisha Williams:** Mr. President, I beg to move the third reading of the Bill.

**Question put and agreed to.**

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

**Ag. Assistant Clerk:** Item 17 - Adjournment.

**Mr. President:** Senator St. Cyr.

**Sen. the Hon. Tessa St. Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, it would be remiss of me, if I did not stand during this adjournment to further address the issue of the Resolution brought before the Honourable House this morning, where Items 12 and 16 were moved to the Order Paper for a next Sitting.

Mr. President, the Honourable Leader of Government's Business indicated that technical officers needed to collate the information needed, to respond to the Questions. Mr. President, I wish to highlight that these very Questions were on the last Order Paper and were removed because of the time period. So, in essence, these questions were already put forward, but had to be withdrawn, because of the period given.

Mr. President, I wish to refer to the Minutes of the last Sitting that we had, this morning that has not been confirmed, but if we take a look at it, Mr. President, on page 62, I believe it is, and I wish to read it, Mr. President, just part of it, and I am quoting you here, Mr. President: ***"And, in respect of days, days here mean working days, Parliament does not meet on weekends and there are other sections..."*** and there is a bit of a trail off. ***"When you come to the issue of Questions,"*** lower down, ***"you would notice that a Senator who wishes to ask a question can write if the House***

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***is Sitting, give notice of the Question to the Clerk and if it is not Sitting, it has to be six (6) clear days from the giving of the notice and those do not comply with the Standing Orders. So I had to give directions to correct it, so all questions would be moved to the Order Paper for the next Sitting,***” which is today, Mr. President.

So, I am questioning and I really do not want to question the Honourable Leader of Government's Business genuineness in asking that the questions be pushed back to another Sitting, but I am a bit confused, as to why that would have been put forward this morning.

In addition to that, Mr. President, I know the questions that were asked, because I reviewed them a couple of times and there are questions here that really do not require technical information. So, again, while I am hesitant in questioning the genuineness of Honourable Leader of Government's Business request this morning, I have to stand to point out that this is not consistent with the behaviours that are expected in this Honourable House.

Mr. President, further, I wish to encourage the Honourable Members of this House, I wish to encourage them to read the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Benchmarks for the Democratic Legislatures Draft Report of Grenada's Self-Assessment that was submitted to us earlier on this week, or late last week, because it does present a number of issues and this very issue may be symptomatic of something that they are cautioning against.

So, Mr. President, again, I am looking at the intent of pushing back these Questions, as they was already put forward and withdrawn and now pushed to another Sitting. Thank you, Mr. President.

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** Yes, Mr. President ...

**Mr. President:** Oh. Sorry. Senator Lewis caught my eye first.

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**Sen. the Hon. Mondy André Lewis:** Thank you very much, Mr. President. On the Adjournment, it is very important and something came to my mind and people who know me know that apart from carrying my red scarf in my pocket, I carry a red pen, and I found myself writing here National Salute by Sound to our Heroes. And, I can't miss any opportunity to really commend our Frontline Workers, who went beyond the call of duty, in the height of the COVID assault on Grenada, after we identified our first case, and even at this present period, as we continue to manage the challenges that are still out there, despite the fact that many of us, in the country, are taking the approach, as though there is no COVID, and there is no threat of COVID, and everything is back to normal.

Having said this, and in recognition of the National Salute by Sound to our Heroes, I couldn't help but reach out to my colleagues again, and to listen to their pain and frustration, as the Doctors, who have been on the frontline and continue to be on the frontline, the vast majority of them are still not permanent. The vast majority of them are unable to live a decent life, because they are unable to present themselves to a Financial Institution to secure the necessary financial support to improve their standard of living, because they do not hold a letter of permanent appointment.

My heart goes out to the Laundry Maids, some who have been working for over twenty something years, fifteen (15), fourteen (14), twenty (20) years, without a Letter of Appointment, an Instrument of Appointment, otherwise known, as a Letter of Appointment, or a permanency; who continue to have to send their kids to school; who have to continue meeting their daily expenses and are not able to do that in the manner in which they will like all because of their Status of Employment.

The pharmacist workers, who have been continuously serving our General Healthcare Professionals, who have not been made permanent; as a matter of fact, there are permanent positions that are available to be filled even within that Department. But, the unfortunate comment that comes from the Authorities, and these workers have been told that you are not qualified enough. Could you image that most of the jobs and functions performed by our healthcare workers, doctors, nurses, pharmaceuticals, laundry maids, orderlies, cooks, for ten (10), fifteen (15) twenty (20)

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years, and to be told after fifteen (15) or twenty (20) years of service that you are not qualified enough to be made permanent, at the same time that you have been providing these services.

Salute must not only be by sound. We should not only recognise and call for that salute, as was done in April, by sound, for five (5) minutes, from 19:00 hours, or 7:00 p.m., but we must walk the walk and deliver tenure of service to these workers. It is not just enough to speak. It is not just enough to indicate that these workers are hard working.

I remember quite clearly, the challenges that the Labour Movement went through and the Public Workers Union, in particular, when confronted with the aspect of the confirmation of the first case through you, Mr. President, to my colleagues on the "Other Side." And, the request was made of these same maids, who were not yet trained and have not been trained to face the psychological threat, the physical threat, the practical threat of being exposed to cases of COVID, and having to get those maids to go to the ICU Room to clean the rooms, occupied by our people, who have been confirmed, as having COVID.

I want to repeat this. While we sat and stayed at our homes and while our Leaders, our Minister for Health and the Government Officials did a very good job by staying in the Command Post, in the Command Centre, Mr. President, where the battle against COVID was directed from and not being physically exposed, our maids, our doctors, our cooks, our orderlies that you may call the Infantry Personnel, who had to be on the ground, faced that assault, did it, and did it, quite, bravely, leaving their families at home. Leaving their families at home, while our Leaders in that Command Centre that was protected, because they didn't have to go outside and if they went outside, they could have determined where they went, or where they didn't go. These maids, these doctors, these cooks, the people in the Healthcare Facility didn't have that luxury, and yet still, we salute them by sound, but not by appointment. We salute them by sound, but not by appointment and they continue to languish, without that Letter of Appointment and they go to work and do a genuine and committed job, every day.

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The vast majority of them, all of them, have no pension or gratuity to get to go with, as some of our officials in our Parliament are qualified to do, after the amendment made by this very said House coming after the Disqualification Act of 1983, when the Members of this House looked out for themselves. These workers, after giving thirty-something years of service, are going home without that, but yet still, they are at the frontline. These are our mothers, our sisters, our brothers, our aunts, our nephews, and yet still it is impossible to get a Letter of Appointment; and yet still, we seek to defer this Motion to be discussed today, which is absolutely nothing new.

The Motion brought, a private Motion/Bill by Labour to discuss and deal frontally with the aspect of permanency of these workers, even in violation, even in violation of our Labour Code Section (29) (v). This ought not to even be a legal discussion. Even if the Governments didn't have the heart or the commitment to ordinary working people in the Government Service and in particular the Healthcare, to give them a Letter of Permanency, certainly, the efforts made during COVID-19 must qualify these workers to be made permanent, although the Law guarantees that.

If we have a heart and if we are committed to ordinary working people and if we are committed to the workers in the Healthcare Sector, the very said workers that we compliment every day, and I heard the Prime Minister and I heard the Minister for Health, and no praise is too much for these workers, no praise is ever too much for these workers through you, Mr. President, why aren't they made permanent?

I remember the Registered Nurses' struggle of 2012, when they marched the street, from the National Stadium on to the Ministerial Complex in 2012. These are some of the more committed Registered Nurses, young nurses that I have come across, and I have been around for a little while. All they wanted to do is to serve this country. All they wanted to do is to continue serving this country, but they wanted permanency. They wanted a decent salary and they wanted to move away from the stipend that was given to them. Some aspects have been addressed, some aspect of the payment, but not the permanency.

I know, through you, Mr. President. I have very good friends, Registered Nurses, we're in the struggle together in the trenches. Our Union, the Technical and Allied

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Workers' Union were involved in that struggle, the Public Workers' Union, and these workers wanted to stay here and serve our country. Some of these workers have their little children. Some of these workers have their mothers and their grandmothers and grandfathers, who require their assistance to be home. But, they could not survive without that Letter of Appointment that means so much and they had to get up and go.

And I am aware that there is this talk outside there that there's a history of Nurses going. Yes. But, I can attest that the majority of nurses who have left over the last, 2012/2013, over the last six/seven (6/7) years, the young Nurses who left, left because they became frustrated by not being made permanent or being appointed. I know that. I have been in touch with them; the Labour Movement has been in touch with them. They didn't go because they figured there were greener pastures on the other side, through you, Mr. President. They left because they didn't feel appreciated; they left, because they did not feel that their employer, the Government was prepared to make them permanent.

Our nurses, our doctors, the vast majority of doctors are on contract, a violation of the Law. The information that I have is that the last set of doctors were made permanent in 2008. Yet, still, they get up every day, they get up every night, they go to the Emergency Department and they work, working for long hours.

I do not feel comfortable coming to this House, many times, through you, Mr. President, while we speak, because we are the Legislators and we have not seriously, been able to fulfil that mission of recognising in a practical way, our nurses, our doctors, our Healthcare Professionals, and all others in the Government Service that have not been made permanent. But, in particular, today, I am focusing on nurses and doctors, nurses, doctors, laundry maids, cooks, orderlies, lab technicians, the pharmacists. The pharmacists have been running this Department for the past 'x' amount of years, and they have not been made permanent.

I do not know, I can't say what happens after tomorrow, in terms of the Sitting of this House. I do not know if there'll be another Sitting. What I do know, is that, if there is not another Sitting, then it is likely that our Questions and Motion dies. But time is on

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our side. I am just saying that for whatever it's worth. Let me repeat this for whatever it's worth. There will always be another Parliament Sitting; it may not be in the Session.

You see, through you, Mr. President, something is just not adding up, something didn't add up. The level of respect that I had developed for colleagues on the "Other Side," and I still have that respect, because I think we are all interested in progressive development, it just didn't add up to me. This curveball that was bowled and it is within the Rules; yes, I understand that. Googlies are Legal deliveries. Yes, so I wanted to address this matter.

And, also, my heart goes out to sister Gemma Bain-Thomas, who has not received an income from Government since 2018. Who, despite the fact, and in spite of the fact that there was an agreement to pay her, she has not received one cent from the Government, who continues to have to meet her daily bills; who gave close to thirty (30) years of service to this country. What messages are we sending to our people, to our patriots to come in to work into the Public Sector/Public Service?

***(Time Bell Rings)***

**Sen. the Hon. Mondy André Lewis:** I am assuming I have fifteen (15) more minutes?

***(Clerk converse with the President in private)***

**Sen. the Hon. Mondy André Lewis:** How much? Five (5) more?

***(Clerk converse with the President in private)***

**Mr. President:** Senator you have exceeded your time, so you could wrap up. You could proceed.

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**Sen. the Hon. Mondy André Lewis:** Okay, Mr. President. Thank you. I'll just wrap up this thing by calling on the Government as the employer, to do what is honourable and dignified, in appointing all Contract workers, and in particular, the first workers within the Healthcare Service and to pay Ms. Gemma Bain-Thomas.

I would use another minute, just to give a brief report on the TUC, the Labour Movement. Monday will mark a very significant day, starting the 7<sup>th</sup> of September. Through our partnership with the Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies, we have been able to secure over fifteen (15) scholarships, one year scholarships in the areas of Labour Studies, Human Resource Management, Cooperative Studies, Occupational Safety and Health, Project Management and Emergency Management. So, that's a one year scholarship for our members. We have already made the applications, and they have been accepted, so Monday will be a significant day, and that ties in with the education drive that the Labour Movement has been involved in, coming out of the close to two hundred (200) workers that were trained in March, of this year. And to end by calling on all of us to take the threat of COVID-19 extremely seriously and not to be complacent; look at what is happening to our neighbours right around us, and to be extremely careful.

Our workers will continue to work. I am absolutely sure that even if, as we have demonstrated that the Healthcare workers have not been made permanent by the Government, they will continue to work, and they will continue to do what is required. They will continue to expose themselves in the service of keeping our Nation safe. That assurance I give you, because I know we have spoken to them, and the leadership of our Unions has continued to encourage them to continue to work, so that even when they called us after the first case was identified, and we were uncertain about the level of the threat or the level of preparedness, in terms of the PPEs (Protected Personal Equipment), we still advised them to go out there and do their work. But it was done with the understanding that the Government will get the message and make them permanent. I rest my case. Thank you very much, Mr. President, and to everyone.

**Mr. President:** Senator Norland Cox.

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**Sen. the Hon. Norland Cox:** Thank you very much, Mr. President. Mr. President, I rise to speak on a matter and topic, which is critical and I believe very important, and maybe on two (2) topics, on leadership, Mr. President, and hope. Leadership, in the context of national leadership and hope, in the context of our people in times of crisis as we are now.

But, Mr. President, I think it is important to put it in the context of facts, of what would have happened previously and also where we are now. And, I'll speak about three (3) occurrences, inclusive of where we are now, Mr. President.

In 2004/2005, Mr. President, hurricanes Ivan and Emily, the global economic downturn, 2010 to 2012, thereabout, and, currently, the global pandemic, COVID-19 in 2020, which we believe will also extend into 2021. Mr. President, this Government, this New National Party Government has overseen the stewardship of this country throughout each and every one of those crises. **(Applause)** I do not believe, Mr. President, it is by chance, or by guess that we were given the mandate to oversee during those crises, Mr. President. But, not only that, but during those times, and I'll speak to the first two (2), we have done so successfully, Mr. President. **(Applause)**

Mr. President, but I think it's very important to single out some critical initiatives during those crises times that show to the contrary that some may think that this Government is not a caring Government, that this Government doesn't look after the people, that doesn't seek the interests of the people, Mr. President.

Mr. President, during those crises time, in terms of recovery, this Government, and I do not want to put it as a reduction in unemployment, we want to put it as employment creation, employment was created, Mr. President, coming out from those crises. And, I think most importantly, Mr. President, is that, while countries were sending thousands of workers home, in all those crises, this Government never sent a single worker home. **(Applause)** I think it is very important and proper for us to understand this, and put it in the context of how we operate, as a Government, Mr. President.

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Mr. President, throughout those crises, we have seen that, economically, we have grown. We have created opportunities, not even just through scholarships for our children, but for our businesses to grow, for persons to do things for their families from an economic standpoint, Mr. President.

But, most notably, Mr. President, what we have done and continue to do, successfully, is to project hope throughout this country, project hope to every household, to every home, that once we continue to work together, we are going to get through this crisis, as we have the other two (2), Mr. President.

But, Mr. President, it is also important to note that in every instance, every success, we have worked together with all our stakeholders, including the Unions, the Business Sector, the Churches, the Social Partners, our International Partners, Mr. President. We have worked together to resolve these issues and it shows responsibility on our part, and it is because of our modality and how we operate as a Government, that is why our people are hopeful that we, the New National Party Government will take them through this COVID-19 crisis. **(Applause)** Mr. President, I think it could be summed up by saying that we have done it and we can do it again, and we are the Government to be trusted in times of crisis. **(Applause)**

So, Mr. President, we see what is taking place with COVID-19, and we know. I could recall, Mr. President, having a conversation with a close friend of the Prime Minister from one of our neighbouring countries, and as recently as April, just a month after the pandemic, they could not pay salaries, they could not find monies to pay salaries.

Mr. President, that said country announced a stimulus, maybe two (2) or three (3) times what we put out for our country, for Grenada, but they cannot meet it, Mr. President. They have not been able to meet it. But, we have been able to do that, because of how we have managed this country over the past decade, Mr. President. This is important. **(Applause)** We didn't just paid salaries. We paid them on time, and we paid stimulus, as well. Mr. President, this cannot go by and brushed aside. This is significant. We have stepped up. We have not been able to touch everybody, but we

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have touched a significant sum during this crisis, Mr. President. I think we must, we must pay attention to that. **(Applause)**

Mr. President, all these that I have just mentioned are just a few of the number of things that we have done. But, this could not have been achieved, if we didn't have the leadership and the hope, Mr. President. Those are the things that have helped us through this. The leadership from our Prime Minister, from our Cabinet colleagues, and of course, the hope that we have instilled in the people of this beautiful Nation, that they have believed in us and they have trust and confidence in us to ensure that we can take them through this crisis and any other to come, in the future, Mr. President, and, Mr. President, this is important. This is important to note.

We have worked, and I believe that we have done more. Mr. President, I don't have the facts, but I believe that we have done more for the working-class of the Nation than any other Government, Mr. President. **(Applause)** And, we have more, Mr. President, we have more to offer them, but we must do it together. Mr. President, I close by saying, we have done it successfully, and we can do it, but we must do it together. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. President:** Just before we proceed, I know the Standing Orders, but sometimes, I can't recall the number. But I knew there was a limit, and I just want to read it to Senators, so that there is not a view that I am impinging on the debate or the rights of anyone.

Standing Order No. 12, and for those of you who have your Standing Orders, you can go to Standing Order No. 12. Its nomenclature is: "Adjournment - Definite Matter of Urgent Public Importance." And, it reads and I quote: ***"On the Motion for the Adjournment of the Senate, any Senator may rise and speak on any matter of public importance, or urgency, up to a limit of ten (10) minutes."*** Yes. So, I am aware of the Rule, I just couldn't recall the exact number. So, I just thought that just to inform and clarify the situation. Yes. Senator Stiell. Yes.

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**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I will address comments made by Senator St. Cyr and Senator Lewis. It's quite novel to be schooled on the procedures of this House and the treatment of Questions. Just for the record, the Questions are either on the Order Paper, or they're not on the Order Paper. If Questions were on the Order Paper and withdrawn, they are withdrawn. When they appear on the Order Paper and they are presented to us, then they will be dealt with, either on or off.

But, to give a little insight to Senator St. Cyr, that first lot of Questions that were withdrawn were actually presented to the Ministries. And, then when we were told they were withdrawn, they were withdrawn from those Ministries. There were differences. There are differences in the Questions that are on this Order Paper and those that were presented a couple of weeks ago. But, when they were withdrawn, they were given the instruction to stop. We have no idea. I have no idea why they were withdrawn, what is going to reappear. But, for the record, they were forwarded to the Ministries, as they were withdrawn off the Order Paper, the instruction was given for the Public Officers to wait until we see what actually comes on the Order Paper and formally on the Order Paper.

So, what I don't want to be doing, Mr. President, is wasting the time of our Public Officers. Their time is constrained; they have the matters of Government that need to be addressed on a daily basis.

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** Deputy President in the Chair.

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** So, Mr. Deputy President, just drawing a line under this, as I said, they're either on the Order Paper to be dealt with, or they're not on the Order Paper. And, as mentioned by Senator Lewis, what we've done is perfectly within our rights.

But, addressing Senator Lewis, starting to enjoy the Adjournments, getting to know you Senator Lewis and the grandstanding, the passion, through you, Mr. Deputy President, that you show on issues in defence of workers, and that is your job, Senator

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Lewis. But that passion and that grandstanding doesn't tell the full story. If one was ignorant of the facts and they just listened to that presentation, one would think that this was a Government that was uncaring, a Government that did not take the interests of workers to heart, and the reality is, nothing could be further from the truth. The New National Party, every Administration it has presided over, has demonstrated, time and time, again, that it is a Party for the people and it is a Party for the workers. **(Applause)**

Mr. Deputy President, Senator Lewis spoke about the permanency of workers and a small group of workers, our Healthcare workers, and we applaud the work of those Healthcare workers, especially at this time, and Senator Lewis is implying that we don't care. What Senator Lewis isn't grandstanding about are the over six hundred (600) teachers and nurses that have been regularised under this Administration, Mr. Deputy President, **(Applause)**, over six hundred (600), something like five hundred (500) teachers. And, I would replay the narrative played out about all of those workers for over fifteen (15) years, as temporary workers; unable to benefit, or receive the same benefits as permanent workers, unable to go to a bank to borrow a loan, a mortgage; unable to receive the training that is afforded to permanent contracted workers.

And, that is precisely why this New National Party Government, over the course of the past few years has regularised over five hundred (500) teachers, who were in exactly that predicament, at a cost of millions of dollars, but recognising their needs and rewarding those needs, and I think it's close to one hundred (100) nurses.

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** The President in the Chair.

**Sen. the Hon. Simon Stiell:** Mr. President, he is not recognising that somewhere in the region of one hundred (100) nurses, who suffered the same predicament and have been regularised over this period. That demonstrates the care, the love, the consideration this Government has for its workers. **(Applause)** But, the Senator on the "Other Side" knows that, identifies a small group and amplifies that to send the wrong message. What's his motivation for that, Mr. President?

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Mr. Speaker, he spoke about pensions. It was the New National Party Government that restored Pensions, Mr. President, **(applause)** and is committed to Pension Reform, a vexing issue that has offended workers and Unions for over thirty-five (35) years. And, it is this New National Party Government that had the courage, the fortitude to tackle this head-on. But, do we get any recognition for that, Mr. President? Why? Why this narrative? We are not quite in that season, yet.

One hundred and ten million dollars (\$110 m) in back pay, in increments, in salary increases that this New National Party Government has provided to its Public Workers, one hundred and ten million dollars (\$110 m). That is a Government and a Party that is championing the cause of workers. But, can we address every ill? Can we address every working group that has been disenfranchised? No, Mr. President. So, we are not hitting 100%. There is still work to be done, but we are committed, committed to standing up for the rights of the workers.

What the Senator also ignores in these changing times, Contracts for Service. It is not just here in Grenada. It is the world over. Governments, Businesses, Institutions are constantly looking for ways to increasing efficiency. Times are changing and we have to move with the times, and also respecting the rights of all workers. And, Mr. President, we are doing the best we can and no other Party, no other Government in Grenada's recent history has done as much for workers, as the New National Party, Mr. President. **(Applause)** But the Member on the "Other Side" continues to push his narrative, and I think that narrative is simply going to amplify as time passes.

And then, in terms of Court Judgments and payments to Claimants, the Member on the "Other Side" continues to imply that Government is not fulfilling its obligations. This Government has made provisions. It stated publicly to address all of those outstanding Claims, those outstanding Judgments. The Member on the "Other Side" continues to single out one name. There are dozens and dozens of other names on that list. There are Claimants that go back before the Revolution. There are Claimants, who would have passed away. How do we prioritise? But we just hear one name recurring, over and over. Speak up for all the others. But, Government is committed to meeting those legal obligations and the Member on the "Other Side" continues to imply

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we are not. Do we have the financial means to pay off all now? Of course we don't, especially in these difficult times, where we have to prioritise the limited resources that we have. Stop beating your drum. Stop beating that drum through you, Mr. President.

So, in closing, before I move the Adjournment, there is no question, as to which Government, which Party stands shoulder to shoulder with workers. And, in the most demonstrable ways possible, continues to show its solidarity with the people and does the very best it can as the national employer. So, on that note, Mr. President, I beg to move the Adjournment, **sine die**.

**Mr. President:** Honourable Members, before I put the question, as per usual, I will take the opportunity to make available either an appeal, or an observation or both, and I want to do so now.

Honourable Members, I have had the privilege to serve, and I was called upon to serve the country, when the global pandemic reached our shores, and I was appointed to the Advisory Committee. I think it goes without a debate, that the Committee did the best it could, with very limited resources and limited knowledge at the time. So, there were two (2) compounding negative factors; the lack of knowledge and the lack of resources.

When we got to work, this country did not have an adequate supply of PPEs. We couldn't even test. We didn't have, by the very nature of the disease, and the way in which this disease infects persons, was changing and is still changing, every day.

Now, we are learning that a person, who recovers from an infection may not necessarily have protection from this disease, because there is a case in South Korea and in the United States, of recent vintage, where a patient recovered from the infection of COVID, and several months down the road became re-infected and ill again. We were told, the Epidemiologist told us that the young is spared, but we are seeing signs where this is not so. In fact, I think the youngest person to die in Florida, I believe is either a seven (7), or an eight (8) year old.

This is not the first pandemic that has faced the world. If you were born in 1900, by eighteen (18) you would have faced the first pandemic. And, what is interesting

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about these viral diseases, we have all the modern technology that we have, we have combined, in an artistry unknown, prior to now, with human civilization, knowledge, as expressed in technology. And, yet what is most important in dealing with this virus is some simple things, which, in 1918, they did: masks and keeping away from others.

Now, I speak because of the enormous amount of information that I have had, by virtue of the engagement. Our Committee has been in touch with Centres all throughout the world. We had to arrange and organise supplies all the way from China. We had to try to get Cuban Specialists in here, when there were no Aircrafts flying. We had to get tests and other things done and reagents. I mean, Senator Cox, as a member of the Committee, I mean, just did a marvelous job, because he was the logistics man. And, the population is making a serious mistake.

I have heard the phrase: **“Man, it ain’t have no COVID in Grenada.”** I want people to understand that Grenada has, as all countries in the Caribbean, including Cuba itself that has such a depth of medical knowledge and training, but there have been deaths in Cuba. The nature of this disease is you can’t tell who has got it. Grenada has limited facilities, and that has not changed, from March to now. Yes, we can do more testing now and that’s a significant achievement, but the fact of the matter is, we have limited ICU facilities.

And, while it is correct to take our hats off to the Frontline Workers, and I associate with the salute of those workers, there is a certain reality and that reality is the limitations, which we face. Look around us and see what’s happening, next door, in Trinidad. Trinidad managed well, in the first phase, but look at what is happening now.

So, I make an appeal, because people are inclined to conduct themselves, as if we are in normal times. People want to have Stadia with lots of people, playing games. People want to have Carnival-type activities, which would include Panorama and Soca Monarch. People want to have a lot of fun. These are not normal times, and we are putting ourselves at significant risks.

Already our economy is under enormous stress. There are economies right around us, next door to us, where the workers get half their salary and the next half they

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get in bonds, because the State can't pay. There are countries in the neighborhood, because of that fact, they are forced now to open and by virtue of that they are inviting the disease. I want to appeal to the people.

There's a propensity amongst us. I don't think it's unique to Grenada. You just have to look of what's unfolding in the United States. It's what I call the politics of COVID. There are people leading millions of people to their deaths. They expose themselves and they celebrate and they move around without masks. They invite you to an event, but when you are going to the event without mask, they give you something to sign, so that in the event that you get sick, you can't sue. So, the politics of the disease is something that we have to forget. We can't be drawn into the politics of the disease, because ultimately, what is at stake here is life.

So, I make this special appeal, because from my involvement, I am privy to information, which tells me that the decisions, which are taken, the protocols that are developed are in the best interest of preserving lives. So, I want to appeal to the Nation, as a whole, that it is reckless to go around saying that there is no COVID in Grenada, and, as a result of that, the basic precautionary measures, wearing a face mask and staying away from crowds. I mean I heard an advertisement on the radio, over the last few weeks, inviting people to receive an Award by going on the Beach and play Carnival, in the middle of a pandemic, where people are dying. One hundred and eight thousand (108,000) persons plus, have died in the great United States.

I got a message, from a friend from Jamaica last night. He said: ***"I know you do a lot of regional travelling, but I just want to send you this message. If you are booked to come to Jamaica, don't come, and if you must come, be exceedingly careful, because the disease is raging."***

Well, to be frank Colleagues, I know I have the comorbidities. I am in the age range, and, as Senator Cathisha would tell you, when we had this invitation to attend a Parliamentary Meeting, was it in Singapore or Malaysia, we spoke to each other and we decided, oh, no. The Malaysian Government contacted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and said: ***"Well, we need to have these two (2) Senators. Could you all please, come? We don't have any COVID here."*** And, Senator Cathisha and I made the

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following conclusion; we don't know whether or not we will ever get COVID, but one thing we know, we're not going and meet it, it will have to come and meet us. And this was an all-expense paid trip, as Parliamentarians, and we simply told the Government that in that part of the world COVID is raging and that our Ministry of Health has told us, so we thank you for the consideration, and we did not travel.

So, I am saying all of this, because we are letting our guards down. We are letting our guards down. And, if we have a breakout here, which, on the basis of what I see is only a matter of time, we are going to be in deep, deep trouble. So, I want to appeal to the Nation as a whole.

The history of these pandemics is that they last for about thirty-six (36) months. I know there is a lot of research to find a vaccine. There is no certainty that a vaccine would be available. Vaccines may be developed, but whether or not the efficacy of it and how it works and what side effects they are, cannot be determined, in a short period of time that some are indicating.

And let me put to you this way, in March and April, Senator Cox can tell you, we were trying to identify vital equipment, and there were countries, which were preventing that equipment from reaching us. And, so let me tell you, if a vaccine is discovered, we are far way down in the queue. If a vaccine is discovered, we are far way down in the queue. So, I may sound repetitive, because none of us are capable of giving life. But, all of us are capable of protecting life, and we have more than a moral obligation so to do.

So, Senators, with those few word, I intone the population not to be led along the path by believing that there is no COVID in Grenada and that things must go back to normalcy. Normalcy is a long term objective, but it is not something that currently exists, and we have to realise that and to take the necessary steps. From a personal level, there are things only you, the person can do. I mean, we can pass Laws. Yes, they may be able to find you, but you must do it. You have that responsibility to yourself and others. And, with those few words, I would put the question, although I can on my own.

**Senate Meeting**  
**Held at the Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's**  
**On Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.**

***Adjournment***

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Senate adjourns sine die at 12:25 p.m.**

**PREPARED BY**

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