



GRENADA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

THIRD SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT

SEANTE

TUESDAY 1ST JULY, 2025

***Sitting of the Senate
held at Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's
on Tuesday 1st July, 2025***

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Attendance

PRESENT

Madam President

Senator the Honourable Dr. Dessima Williams

in the Chair

- | | |
|---|--|
| Senator the Honourable Adrian Thomas | - Minister for Tourism, Creative Economy and Culture |
| Senator the Honourable David Evlyn Andrew | - Minister for Education |
| Senator the Honourable Quinc Britton | - Parliamentary Secretary within the Ministry of Tourism, Creative Economy and Culture with Responsibility for Culture |
| Senator the Honourable Seville Francis | - Parliamentary Secretary within the Ministry of Youth and Sports |
| Senator the Honourable Claudette Joseph | - Attorney General and Minister for Legal Affairs, Labour and Consumer Affairs |
| Senator the Honourable Gloria Ann Thomas | - Minister for Social & Community Development, Housing and Gender Affairs (Social Security) |
| Senator the Honourable Norland Cox | - Opposition Member of the Senate (Deputy President) |
| Senator the Honourable Mondy André Lewis | - Member of the Senate (Labour Rep.) |
| Senator the Honourable Salim Rahaman | - Member of the Senate (Business Rep.) |
| Senator the Honourable Roderick St. Clair | - Member of the Senate (Farmers Rep.) |

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ABSENT

- Senator the Honourable Dr. Myanna Charles - Opposition Member of the Senate
(*Excuse tendered*)
- Senator the Honourable Dwight Hosford - Opposition Member of the Senate
(*Excuse tendered*)

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***Prayers
Minutes***

The Sitting of the Senate began at 9:07 a.m.

(Senate Prayer was said)

Madam President: Honourable Members, please join me in the Lord's Prayer.

(The Lord's Prayer was said)

(Sound of gavel)

Madam President: Pray be seated.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 3 – Oath of Allegiance or Affirmation of a new Senator.
Item 4 – Confirmation of Minutes.

Madam President: Pleasant, good morning, Senators. Leader of Government's Business, Senator Adrian Thomas.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Good morning, Madam President, and staff. Good morning to my fellow colleagues on "This Side" of the House and my colleagues on the "Other Side". Madam President, I rise to beg that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Sitting of the Senate held at the Parliament Building, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's on Tuesday, 27 May 2025, at 9 a.m., be taken as read.

Madam President: Thank you, Senator.

Question put and agreed to.

Minutes taken as read.

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***Minutes
Announcements***

Madam President: Leader of Government's Business.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam President, I rise and beg that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Sitting of the Senate held at the Parliament Building, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's on Tuesday, 27 May 2025, at 9 a.m., be confirmed.

Question put and agreed to.

Minutes confirmed.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 5 – Messages from the Governor-General.
Item 6 – Announcements by Madam President.

Madam President: Welcome again, Senators. Welcome to our July 1 meeting. We last met on the 27th of May 2025. First off, let me report that I have received two excuses.

One from Senator the Honourable Mayanna Charles, who is out of state on urgent family medical business. We are sending Senator Charles and her family get-well wishes. I have also been advised that Senator Dwight Horsford is flying into the country today and will unavoidably be absent from our Sitting.

Finally, I am asked to expect a late arrival of Senator Gloria Thomas-Samuel, as she is hosting a seminar under her name as part of a regional meeting and will join us as soon as she has concluded the opening. I welcome all other Senators.

Distinguished Senators, with cricket, graduation and returning nationals all filling our national air and space here in Grenada these days, I am sure you would want me to wish our graduates, our cricketers and our families a happy July as we start the month.

I have attended two secondary school graduations to date, more to come. In both cases, the valedictorians and the salutatorians were all females. One school, St. Joseph's Convent Grenville, is an all-girls school anyway, so no surprise there.

However, what was noteworthy to me was the scale and breadth of those activities

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that those young female emerging minds and leaders, including the student of the year, the one who received the principal's award and many others. From languages to Science, from chess and steelpan to ICT, helping peers and helping teachers, faith in the almighty, students seem to be equipping themselves well to go on to higher education and the world.

I am proud of the all-around achievements of Grenada's girls, and I congratulate and encourage all of them, and I offer inspiration, such that I can, to the boys to step up to their girl peers. Indeed, the boys have been and I am sure will continue to be competitive and to do well. And so, congratulations to all our graduates, from the tiny-tots going on to primary school, the primary school leavers going on to secondary schools, and on and on. All those heading into tertiary level, this week and next, more graduates will be marching in and out of our school halls with their gowns, with their pride, with the expectation that their studies have paid off. Congratulations again to all graduates across Grenada.

I extend special congratulations to my godson, Ethan David, who is 11 and has just performed very well at the Belair Government School in Upper St. Andrew. He is onto SAAS and onto national achievement. Go for it, Ethan. Do well, and you will succeed with the tens of thousands of other primary school students headed on to secondary school. And I know that many persons here, both you Honourable Senators and staff members, have family members who are graduating, I extend congratulations to them as well.

Since I am a self-advocate of rural Grenada, where schooling is a much more challenging proposition for families than in some other parts of the country, and where I have two pairs of twin boys as godchildren within the school system, I am keeping a keen eye mister Minister for Education on the progress of education in this country and our country. You have been doing very well for the education system. I urge you to do even better. I remind and thank teachers, head mistresses, head masters and the entire nation to celebrate and to continue to support our children across the board that they achieve the social and economic stability, the overall upward mobility and the happy, sustainable

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life that formal schooling and wider education intend to bring each of us.

I extend a warm welcome to our special guest here in the Chamber this morning. I think she is the only in-house visitor who is a young student. She is visiting for seven weeks to volunteer with our education NGO in Grenada, the Grenada Education and Development Programme (GREDED), from Georgetown University in Washington, DC. It is truly education season. Thank you for coming. **(Applause)**

I also want to extend a special welcome to a guest of Grenada, I must be transparent and admit it's a friend of mine, Ambassador Karen Tan, extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Singapore to Grenada and CARICOM. Ambassador Tan is on a short visit. She'll go up to CARICOM, fresh from Grenada, and the strengthening of Singapore-Grenada relations portends well for our country. Thank you for coming, Ambassador Tan and thanks to Singapore for its relations with our country.

I also want to welcome home former Senator Glen Noel, who I understand is visiting, Ambassador for the Republic of Cuba. He is home and a former Senator of course.

Distinguished Senators, yesterday, the 30th of June, marked World Parliament Day, 2025. The Speaker and I have issued a statement on the importance of Parliament as our leading national, political and policy institution outside of Government. This day has been established and led by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which itself was founded in 1889. This year's theme for World Parliament Day is "Achieving gender equality by action", which means equality of the sexes. Well, with four of the 13 Parliamentarians being female in this Chamber, I think we are on our way, and we could aim for 50/50.

Dear Senators I would like to on my own behalf, I want to thank all Parliamentarians and I am sure on your behalf as well, to thank all those who have gone before us, elected and appointed, past and present for service to this country and I urge continued high performance in whatever field we find yourselves in whatever committee we work in the Parliament to inspire our youth to elevate our country.

In closing, let me say that the Grenada Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association must soon hold a Grenada Branch meeting, and I am

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encouraging everyone, as we contemplate the backdrop of World Parliament Day, all Members in “Both Houses” to attend that meeting that I am sure our Clerk will soon be calling. Belatedly but sincerely, Happy World Parliament Day and onward to the rest of our session.

I would also like to announce that, as is the norm, the Public Accounts Training will take place again this year. We have the great satisfaction and opportunity that Senator Roderick St. Clair and Senator Salim Rahaman will be attending this Public Accounts workshop at Westminster, UK. The workshop will be from July 7 to 11, so you are excused to be out of the country. Just that you are reminded that the Public Accounts Committee is made up of non-government Members—so opposition and independent, and we are happy to be represented by Senator Roderick St. Clair and Senator Rahaman. Senator Cox, are you in attendance as well, given that you are the Leader of the Opposition on “Our Side” here? You have the mic, sir.

Sen. the Hon. Norland Cox: Madam President, no, I haven't received any communication as such.

Madam President: All right, well, thank you for your response and thanks to everyone for coming, and we continue. Any other announcements, you will hear from me. I thank you for your patience. End of announcements from me. Senator Cox.

Sen. the Hon. Norland Cox: Madam President, if you would permit me to steal a small segment of your announcements to recognise today being July 1. Carriacou and Petite Martinique, and, of course, the northern part of Grenada, experienced one of the worst hurricanes in our time, and I think it is a good opportunity to recognise that here in this House.

A number of people lost their lives, and of course, it is something that will forever be in our minds as Carriacouans, Petite Martiniquians and Grenadians, of course. So I just wanted us to recognise today as well. I will speak about it a little later on in the

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session, but I think it is important for us to have that on our minds before we start today's session. Thank you.

Madam President: I thank you, Senator Cox, and forgive me for my awful omission in my own remarks. I was so taken up with these wonderful graduations, but we join you in the sentiment of expression of remembrance and continued condolences to our people, our sisters and brothers across Carriacou, Petite Martinique and Grenada. Thank you for the reminder, and our solidarity continues as a nation. I see the light of Senator Roderick St. Clair. You have requested the floor, and you have it, sir.

Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair: Thank you, Madam President, and good morning to you and good morning to everyone in this Chamber. Of course, I want to welcome you for visiting us, and of course, to all our listeners and viewers on the outside. Madam President, I don't want to say that I want to "steal", like Senator Cox, "part of our remarks or announcements", but I am seeking your permission to make a small announcement which is very important. It's pertaining to the conservation parliamentary caucus that Grenada has. If you permit that, I can speak for a minute or two on this. **(Inaudible comment by a Member)** I am seeking your permission to speak for a minute or two on this issue of the parliamentary conservation caucus.

Madam President: Thank you, Senator St. Clair. Would you mind discussing this under Personal Explanations?

Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair: I thought of that, but I came here first rather than leaving it for later and then possibly having no other gateway. They say sometimes you should go to the first pipe or go to the first fountain. Thank you. Excellent. Good, good.

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Madam President: Item 13, we will come back to you. Thank you, Senator. Any other petitions for the floor? Hearing none, Clerk.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 7 – Ministerial Statements.

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

Item 9 – Petitions.

Item 10 – Government Notices.

Item 11 – Unofficial Notices.

Item 12 – Questions.

Item 13 – Personal Explanations.

Madam President: And I offer the floor to Senator Roderick St. Clair.

Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair: Thank you, Madam President. I just realised I didn't try to steal the time in the announcements, but I realised what had happened. You see, once you're stealing things, you get away with it, but that's okay. That was a joke.

Thank you, Madam President, I want to use this opportunity to share with this Honourable House and, of course, the nation, this very important information. Maybe after, you may want to comment too, Madam President, because in Grenada we have what we refer to as "Parliamentary Caucus and Conservation", and maybe that is the first time we are speaking about these things publicly. And so, Senator Cox, you, Madam President, Minister for Agriculture, MP Lennox Andrew, and, of course, MP Honourable Kerryne James, Minister for the Environment, to the best of my knowledge, are the membership of this caucus. It is our understanding that we have a mandate to dialogue amongst ourselves across the island, across Houses, to look at issues of the environment and conservation. Of course, representing the Farmers and agricultural interests, my presence is welcomed in that space.

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So this is a very important caucus and we need to ensure that it is very active because there are so many environmental issues that are taking place throughout the world, and it gives us a chance to address them. The public doesn't only see us fighting, chatting and giving different views, but also when we can come together to share experiences and look towards the common good for this country. So, it is something that people need to be aware of.

So this International Conservation Caucus Foundation, that's an international organisation, is spearheading that sort of initiatives, particularly targeting Parliamentarians, because at the end of the day, how the laws and regulations and all of this happens, we might have the technical persons doing a lot of work, but how do we sit and review and agitate.

And so, there have been several activities that have been organised by this International Conference over the years, and so on June 7 to 12, that happen already happened. There was a round table conference on the whole issue of... It focused on the whole issue of sustainability with our oceans and marine space. There was particular emphasis on marine protected areas. We spoke a lot about the Blue Economy and all of those things. So I had the opportunity to be recommended in our local caucus to attend this function in France. It was a picturesque place. It almost felt like you were home in Grenada in the summer. It was beautiful. That was the ocean.

In terms of the content and so on, it was a very good experience because you had Parliamentarians from all over, from Indonesia, St. Lucia, St. Kitts, Belize, Mexico, you know, sharing experiences. The truth is, we are no different to the challenges that they are facing, and this gives us a good opportunity to work in that global space.

Grenada was also represented at the UN COP. That's the bigger event, but, of course, you had Ambassador Jerry Enoe, and the Grenada team was also present at that event. The OECS also had some presentations going on.

But what was the main focus from our side, the Parliamentarian, had to look at the issue of financing because, for example, in Grenada, we have marine protected areas, but you may have issues with there are no boats, there are no people to man it, the

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involvement of the community and all of those things. How do we operate sustainably, not just extract all the fish resources? How do we ensure there are proper regulations? But most importantly, how do we arrange financing? Do we wait for our annual budgets, or do we only wait on funding from international agencies and have to make funny commitments, and so on? I will put together some notes so I can share with others later on, but this was the essence of the discussion.

What really came out? You might ask, what was the end game? The end game is basically, look, whilst there is funding and so on that is taking place, we have to ensure that as a nation, we ensure that the public is involved, it's the main stakeholders. We have to ensure that there is a sustainable financing mechanism, not only depending on donors and so on. Also, have that new self-awareness of what these resources really mean for our country.

And so, I take this opportunity also, Madam President, just coming out of the Fisherman's Birthday celebration and in the middle of that, it is something that needs to be tailored in. We have the Grenada National Trust. It is something that we need to look at as the caucus and see what role they are playing, or whether they are doing it efficiently, or if it is just a trust that is sitting there. I don't think we are just a caucus for paper, we need to caucus, we need to be doing. And I trust this pledge is that we really, if it's every quarter or so, we meet and we review and we look at things.

The impact of what is happening on the land with our farmers and also our household in terms of the way our waterways and pollution and all of those things, which impact the reef and so on and the near-shore activities. All of these have to be considered, and so what sort of regulations...

For example, I saw recently in Barbados on my way, and I stopped by and read some of the papers, they are speaking about stormwater management. How do we manage stormwater? We did a Bill recently dealing with Water Resource Management, but they are dealing with how they deal with storm water, which comes down and brings all this garbage and so on, which affects our fish, our turtles, and all of these things.

What it brought here is that it gave us an opportunity to really support the work of

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the Ministry of the Environment and support the work of the fisherfolks, and to create an opportunity for a cleaner and better Grenada. I thank you, Madam President. **(Applause)**

Madam President: I thank you, Senator St. Clair. Senator Rahaman.

Sen. the Hon. Salim Rahaman: Good morning, Madam President, and thank you for the opportunity. I just would like to briefly mention the upcoming Fourth Annual AfriCaribbean Trade and Investment Forum. It will be held in St. George, Grenada, from July 28 to 29. The theme of this forum is “Resilience and Transformation: Enhancing Africa-Caribbean Economic Cooperation in an Era of Global Uncertainty”.

So, this is a trade show, a trade forum that is coming to Grenada. We know that it is quite expensive to travel to the African continent, and here we have business people from the African continent coming to our shores at the end of July.

So, I just want to make a mention of that because I don't know if the Senate will meet prior to that date, so that the public can be aware of coming down to meet business people and making the necessary connections so that they can improve trade between the continent of Africa and our nation. Thank you.

Madam President: I thank you, Senator Rahaman. Other announcements? All right, we continue.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 14 – Motions.

Item 15 – Bills.

Madam President: Leader of Government's Business, Senator Adrian Thomas.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, Madam President, I beg to introduce the first reading of a Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Bank Holidays (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

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Clerk: A Bill which seeks to amend the Schedule to the Bank Holidays Act CAP. 25 to establish the observance of “Emancipation Day” on the 1st day of August as a Bank Holiday in Grenada, shortly entitled, Bank Holidays (Amendment) Bill, 2205.

Madam President: Leader of Government’s Business.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam 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.

Madam President: Thank you, Senator.

Question put and agreed to.

Relevant Standing Order suspended.

Madam President: Senator Thomas Adrian.

Senator Thomas: Madam President, I beg to move that the second reading of the Bill be taken at this time.

Madam President: Thank you, Senator Thomas.

Question put.

Madam President: Senator Thomas.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, this Sitting, today, is a very important and significant one in the lives of Grenadians at home, abroad, and in the wider Caribbean, as well as internationally.

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I would like to join with my colleague on the “Other Side”, Senator Cox, in also recognising the 1st of July as the day when the people, our brothers and sisters in Carriacou and Pettie Martinique, experienced Hurricane Beryl, something they have never experienced, well, the present generations have never experienced before. They may have heard about it in Grenada in 2004 when Hurricane Ivan struck our country, and we continue to empathise with the people of Carriacou and Petite Martinique, as well as the northern part of Grenada, St. Patrick.

And while this will always remain on our mind, Hurricane Beryl, I think the lesson that comes from Hurricane Beryl, Madam President, is the whole question of resilience. Emancipation Day is a true reflection of how our people stand firm, resolute and resilient in their struggle over the years. And so today we bring this Bill to the House, Madam President, not as the beginning of our struggle, but the process continues. As the Africans will say, “A luta continua”.

Madam President, Emancipation Day is a very, very important day. Therefore, it is our responsibility, this generation, not the ministers, not the Government, not the Prime Minister, but our generation must set the record straight. We cannot continue to just place in our calendar a day to observe Emancipation Day. Just observe. At many times, Madam President, we convert this very important day into a local parlance, “A wine and jam; drink and get drunk session”.

Madam President, this is a day of profound significance in our history, and we must ensure that we give it the relevant importance. Therefore, coming to this House, Madam President, we are going to amend the Act to reflect that the real emancipation day is commemorated on August 1, every year, and no longer just the first Monday.

Madam President, over the years, we have listened to the people. We have observed the struggles of our Caribbean brothers and sisters, and many Caribbean islands, Madam President. Barbados has already gone there, Jamaica has already gone there, St. Vincent is already there, and many of the other Caribbean islands. I think the time has come for Grenada to align itself with putting and giving the true meaning of Emancipation Day, a holiday with meaning, a holiday with significance.

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And, therefore, Madam President, it's an honour and a solemn responsibility to reflect on this meaningful day. And as we reflect on what caused this day, history has recorded, Madam President, that millions of our ancestors died, and they did not die in vain.

Madam President, for hundreds of years our ancestors were enslaved, forced out of the country, forced out of their culture, forced out of their language, forced to make others enjoy the fruits of their hard labour, and hence the reason why we are talking about today's reparations. The struggle did not end in 1834, Madam President. The struggle, as I said, continues, and how can we continue this struggle when we're just paying a glimpse of this and observing the first Monday in August that must change? It's an honour to be part of this Administration, Madam President, to take the initiative to put some meaning to that significant day. **(Applause)**

We know that the legacy of slavery is very painful, and sometimes it baffles me, Madam President. How can we not remember? How can citizens of Grenada, the Caribbean, the black communities, whichever part of the world you may find yourself in, for emancipation day to pass and not even remember it? Madam President, there are cold bumps on my skin at this point in time because, Madam President, if that day was to pass and to be a citizen or to be a black man, and don't even remember it, I don't think we know exactly where we're going, and we will not know where we came from.

And today, Madam President, all those who made the sacrifices before us must be remembered, honoured and respected. And in the Caribbean, we must remember the Maroons in Jamaica, the trade unionists in the wider Caribbean, and, to come, Madam President, T. A. Marryshow, Maurice Bishop, and Sir Eric Gary. We must remember them because they are all part of the struggle. We are happy, Madam President, to join the line and continue the struggle advocating for real emancipation, because mental slavery, we are still battling with.

There are people in the world today who are making every effort to ensure that the mental bond that they have deliberately imposed on us remains with us. But today, we are seeing a new wave of leadership across Africa and the Caribbean. The

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consciousness... I remember in the 70s, Madam President, black power in the Caribbean, you know, was part of the struggle. And again, sometimes they say in every generation you will find a new wave of struggle, but the time has come, Madam President, for we to take the necessary action.

And so, this Bill, Madam President, will amend the Schedule of the principal Act by deleting the following words in subsection (2)— “The first Monday in August, which shall be known and referred to as Emancipation Holiday”. This, Madam President, will be deleted and substituted with the words, “The first day in August, which shall be known and referred to as Emancipation Day”. We are hoping that this amendment will bring some level of consciousness to our people, not only in Grenada, but throughout the Caribbean, and it will chart a new course for each one of us. So I now commend this Bill to the House for your kind consideration. **(Applause)**

Madam President: I thank you, Senator. I thank you, Senator. I didn't know you were old enough to remember the 70s, but I take your word for it. **(Laughter)**

(Inaudible comment by Senator the Honourable Adrian Thomas)

(Laughter)

Madam President: You're cleaning up your act now? Senator Norland Cox from the great region of Carriacou and Pettie Martinique.

Sen. the Hon. Norland Cox: Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, this Bill before us, I think it's one that, as I said before, the genesis of the Bill in terms of emancipation, of course, not just for Grenada, but for the region, is a very important historical achievement for all people. Of course, it's something that we should always remember and recognise in every way that we can, Madam President.

But, Madam President, I listened to the Leader of Government's Business speak

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and I think some of his pronouncements are not quite accurate, in terms of where we are as a people. I think it's presented in such a way as if we, at some point in time, lost our sense and recognition of Emancipation Day, and I don't think that is quite accurate.

I know for a fact, of course, Madam President, that it is taught in our schools, in our classrooms on a daily basis, the date for Emancipation Day. So, people are well aware of the date when Emancipation Day is recognised. However, some decision was taken some time back, some policy decision, to have a holiday on the first Monday in August and not on the 1st of August, yes, and I'll go further to explain and for us to understand that it was not misplaced. All right? I have nothing against the idea of wanting to have the holiday on the 1st.

A number of references and examples were drawn from other countries, and also statements were made that our way of celebrating or recognising Emancipation Day is somewhat like "a wine and jam" or something to that extent was mentioned. But I just want to, before I go further, I just would like to give a quick example of some of the activities that take place in some of the said countries that celebrate Emancipation Day on the 1st. I'll probably start with Barbados.

Barbados celebrate their Emancipation Day. I think there is a bus for one of the rebellion leaders. There's a bus somewhere in Georgetown where they have a ceremony. I think one of the leaders who led the Rebellion in 1816; so they have that. They have an emancipation walk, Madam President. If I recall, we do have an emancipation walk every year. They have a beach fest. They have a food fest. I need to not go further to explain the details of those events. St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Madam President, they have a parade, cultural events, and a food feast. St. Lucia, drumming, dancing, and food fest.

Madam President, so I think it's important that I raise this so that my colleague, Senator, understands that it is quite similar to what we have and what we have been doing in respect to Emancipation Day and the holiday, the Monday.

On that Monday, Madam President, I think it's important that I start, first, with your parish. During that weekend, you have the Rainbow City Festival. That festival, of course, is a by-product of emancipation, where you have the community, cultural events,

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practices, whatever the case may be, food, all that depicts and derives from emancipation. You have the Carriacou Regatta Festival, as well as sailing. You have other events taking place. You have to take the same emancipation walk and the lighting of the flambeau; all that takes place on Monday.

So, I'm making this statement to say, Madam President, that while the activities were held on the first Monday and not on the 1st, Emancipation Day was being recognised and we will continue to be recognised because those activities are clear by-products and not just mere derivatives of the community of emancipation. Those events and cultural practices, well, cultural events, are deeply rooted and they go back a very long way. So, as such, I think in presenting this Bill, those cultural events are somewhat overlooked, and glossed over as if they are not important and they do not reflect or represent emancipation or recognition of emancipation.

But before, the presenter, Madam President, of the Bill, Madam President, maybe the Government in its decision to move those activities to the 1st, may have already a list of activities that they may have on that day that they can probably offer the House or the public so that we can, maybe sense to see if something is different from what has been done or what has been practiced throughout the region.

But I say this to say, Madam President, this policy decision to move the holiday, for me, is neither here nor there. The fact of the matter is, whatever decisions we make must, of course, be in tune with how it is received by our people. And I don't know what the Government plans are, as to how not having a holiday, which culminates in those two activities, which are on Monday. I don't know how they would treat it, but it's something that must be considered that will reshape those activities that may be smaller or may not have anything on Monday, but would conclude on Sunday. That is all good and well, but that is for the public, I assume, Madam President.

So I make these few statements to say that I do not believe that our people in any shape or form have been diminished in our recognition and awareness of emancipation, what it means to us, and what it has done for us. I don't think so. I think the decision to harmonise the day of remembrance, which is the first with other countries, is all good and

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well. But I don't think, Madam President, that it has in any way taken away from how you, Madam President, felt about emancipation or how the presenter of the Bill felt about emancipation. And I think most Grenadians feel that way, so I just wanted to underscore that.

This amendment, in my mind, is much more of a harmonisation than, in some way, trying to correct some wrong. Madam President, I don't think so. If that were the case, we would not have had matches on the holiday that was assigned to us. We would not have those cultural events. We would not have emerged or evolved in those days, Madam President. So I just wanted to underscore that, and to say that if we're making that harmonisation move, I think it's best not to diminish what we as a people have achieved in those events. The Carriacou Regatta Festival is the oldest in the region. It is over 50 years old, which is a significant milestone, and I don't think it should be brushed aside just because we decide now to recognise Emancipation Day on the 1st and not on the first Monday.

So, Madam President, with these few words, as I said, I am not adverse in any way to any change or any recognition for the day, on the day, but I don't think it should be as a consequence of what we had and what we know in terms of our celebration and the first Monday. Thank you very much, Madam President.

Madam President: I thank you, Senator Cox, for your contribution, and I offer the floor to Senator David Andrew, from the great north-eastern parish.

Sen. the Hon. David Andrew: Thank you very much, Madam President. Good morning to you. Good morning to all staff in the Chamber and my colleagues on the "Other Side" and on "This Side", and to every Grenadian listening to the proceedings of this Honourable House.

I joined with Senator Cox, and the Leader of Government's Business in remembering our brothers and sisters of the sister isles of Carriacou and Pettie Martinique who, and in the northern part of the island, were there and dealt with a very serious blow

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last year, this time and who are reeling this time last year from the ravages of Hurricane Beryl. We pray at this time, that even as we work acidulously as Government to restore, and we have been working, and incredibly so I would add, that God continues to strengthen them and give them the resilience that they need to continue emerging much stronger out of that experience and that they continue to survive well.

Madam President, I rise to give support to this Bank Holiday (Amendment) Bill, 2025. This is just another step, in my mind, to owning and recognising our history and ensuring that it becomes more deeply etched in our population's mind. I mean, it's unfortunate that there's probably a thought that we did not recognise emancipation. Far from it, because I think all of us appreciated it, but we ought to be deliberate about preserving it. We ought to be intentional about making sure it's not forgotten.

You see, Bible history tells us that after the children of Israel left captivity, and left 400 years of slavery in Egypt... In fact, before that. In fact, the forefathers of Israel went down there to farm, and Joseph became very popular with the king, because he was such a good leader and advisor. He became the boss in Egypt. He preserved them, and it was able to bring prosperity to Egypt; thus, they became good friends, the descendants of Joseph, the children of Israel. There came a time when the children of Egypt knew not the generations of Israel. And so they asked, "Who is this 'Joseph', what kind of things is that"? You understand what I am saying?

And so we want to make sure that in our context, in our history, that doesn't happen. And if we are true to ourselves, while we recognise the startling importance of emancipation, we could recognise that there are several things in our history that a lot of younger people don't quite know, and we don't have to go back as far as 1834 or 1838. We can go as close as 1979 or 1983, and we can talk about the Revolution. And if we had not made conscious decisions to more deliberately and intentionally talk about and teach our history... Some people would be like... Well, what about the Revolution? Who did what? And eventually it becomes so watered down, so far-fetched, and that's not what we want to happen. So we do appreciate the value. We understand the need to celebrate, but this is just one of a suite of interventions to make sure we are deliberate

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and intentional in preserving that history.

You see, I am from the big parish, and I remember as a much younger man what the Rainbow City Festival meant, and I remember the strength of the exhibits. I remember the cultural things. I remember the farine. I remember the displays of big yams. I remember lots of good things about it, and over the years, you see a shift, and you wonder. I'm sure my colleagues on the "Other Side" can talk about the extent to which that's changed, and not that anything, and this is not to blame anybody or to blame anything, but then they will come a generation that will think about Rainbow City more than they think about Emancipation Day.

So we still want the Rainbow City, but we want to make sure whenever that time of the year comes, the 1st of August, somebody is going to ask, "What is this holiday for"? Well, it will be marked on the calendar as "Emancipation Day". Yes? The history will be given an opportunity to be rehearsed, to be retold so that our generations and succeeding generations will have every opportunity to be told that our ancestors and their ancestors were taken, ripped from the course of West Africa and that they were brought.

Their strength and resilience allowed them to face the Middle Passage, be brought to the Caribbean, and survive it. After centuries of enslavement working for the white plutocracy, there came a time when, in 1834, they were legislatively freed. It took a number of years before it was finally operationalised in the British West Indies, until 1838, through several revolts, again, showing the strength of our ancestors. The Maroons, and all of these other—whether it's the Berbice, whether it's in Shana, whether all of—you can talk about Cuffy and all of those guys, who led various rebellions at various points.

But, you see, the point I'm making is that putting it deliberately on that date gives us the opportunity every single year to tell those stories and to make sure the national pride that our young people need to understand and associate with our Emancipation is never forgotten and it's strengthened.

You see, there's so much resilience in our heritage, there's so much strength. Sometimes people begin to think that our ancestors were all poor and they failed to recognise that we came from a place with higher civilisations. **(Laughter)** You know, we

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came from a place where civilisation was rich, **(inaudible comment by a Senator)**, and is still rich.

You see, I want us to get that place, and to me, this piece of amendment puts us on a trajectory to get there much more quickly. **(Laughter)** Senator St. Clair, I see you, sir. Right **(Laughter)** But over time, it allows us to recognise where we've come from, the struggles we've been through, and how the blood, the sweat, the tears, and the sacrifice over the centuries, that got us to this point, and how much more we need to preserve it. And so, I have absolutely no reservations.

Now the activities; the Rainbow City, we want it; the Regattas, brother Cox, we want it and we'll ensure that they're accommodated in some form or other, but I think more critically, this will preserve more intentionally, our history, and provide a platform for our upcoming generations, to never forget where we've come from and ensure, most importantly, that we don't go back there, not mentally or otherwise. In fact, we must continually emancipate ourselves, as Bob Marley said, from the mental and other forms of it that still linger around. And so, without reservation, Madam President, I give my fullest support to this Amendment Bill, the Bank Holiday (Amendment) Bill, 2025. Thank you very much. **(Applause)**

Madam President: I thank you, Senator Andrew, and without hesitation, I thank you. And I offer the floor to Senator the Honourable Seville Francis. Northern parish... Southern parish... Senator Seville Francis.

Sen. the Hon. Seville Francis: Thank you, Madam President. I was just asked by the Honourable Senator Britton where I'm really from, if it's the south or the north. **(Laughter)** Madam President, it's not where I live. It's where I am from and my heart, soul and every part of me will always belong to the people and the parish of St. Patrick. On that note, Madam President, allow me to also lend my support and my empathy to the people of St. Patrick and the northern part of our state, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, as we reminisce on the unfortunate anniversary of something very tragic.

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I recalled very vividly being activated as part of the NADMA district team and relieving that horrific experience. This is something I wish for no one in my generation or the generation to come to ever have to relieve and so, we must take steps as a people to ensure that we're climate resilient and we're climate-smart as a means of mitigating the impact that these disasters have on us. So, my thoughts, my prayers, and my support continue to be with our people, who have been adversely affected by Hurricane Beryl.

Madam President, I also stand here today to give my full support to the Leader of Government's Business and my colleagues as we put forward this Amendment Bill, Madam President. It's a simple but powerful legislative Act. One that speaks to who we are as a people. One that speaks to and seeks to correct a long-standing historical oversight, where we are now declaring or officially declaring August 1 as Emancipation Day in Grenada, instead of the first Monday in August.

Madam President, I want us to think beyond what this is saying on the surface. I want us to see this as a way of awakening our national consciousness, more than an Amendment to a Schedule, Madam President, because, in fact, this is what it is. We have to have that shared national consciousness and historical context to understand who we are as a people, where we've come from, which will also be the pavement to take us where we ought to be as a people, Madam President.

You see, Madam President, Emancipation is not a date that is merely punctuated on a calendar. Emancipation is a turning point in our people's history, Madam President, and I want us to understand that. You see, it's a day where our ancestors no longer stood as property, Madam President, but they're now seen as people. Madam President, that day in history, in 1834, was the day that the brutal shackles of slavery were legally broken, even though the scars remained and they're still here today, we're still living it. We're living the trauma of our ancestors, Madam President.

But it's also the day that our Caribbean civilisation began to reimagine itself as free, and we all love freedom, Madam President. We owe it to our ancestors, the freedom that they fought for, the freedom that we so graciously enjoy, Madam President, it was at the cost of someone else. So, we owe it to our ancestors to say, you fought for this on

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our behalf; therefore, we are giving it back to you, we are celebrating you, we are thanking you, Madam President. **(Applause)** This legislation, or this Act that we're debating here, Madam President, is saying thank you to our ancestors.

Madam President, you see, August 1, 1834, is not a convenient day, you know. It's not a convenient day for us to have another holiday; it's a covenant. If we understand what covenants are, Madam President, we'll understand the sacredness of Emancipation Day. Madam President, you see, by aligning our observance with the actual date of Emancipation, we are not just following tradition, you know. Madam President, I heard we have a lot of traditional events happening on that day, but what we're saying is that we are reaffirming our respect for our generations who endured the worst of human cruelty so that we may walk freely today, Madam President, **(applause)** so that we may have Regatta, so that we may have Rainbow City Festival, Madam President.

Madam President, I always believed that this Grenada, this little but beautiful state, we are trendsetters. Madam President, it seems like we're in the back this time because we have our neighbouring islands and countries: Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, and St. Lucia. They've already started observing August 1 as a public holiday and not just as a floating Monday because they understand the significance. So, Madam President, I'm saying, it's not too late for us to join the line. We're playing catch-up, but it's okay. It's better late than never.

As I reflect on my upbringing and understand my history, Madam President, if I may offer a brief but personal story. As a child growing up, I was brought up as a Seventh Day Adventist, so the festivities were not something that I was privileged to enjoy. It's something that I craved for, but unfortunately, because of my denominational obligations, I was not able to. Sadly, Madam President, whenever I heard about Emancipation Day, I heard about Rainbow City Festival. Yes, it may seem like a recurring theme here this morning, but that's the truth. And it took me a while, shamefully as an adult, when I was conducting research, I understood that Rainbow City Festival is not Emancipation Day and vice versa. I understood the significant difference.

Madam President, I'm not here to diminish the cultural significance of the Rainbow

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City Festival to the people of St. Andrew and to the people of Grenada, but, Madam President, it's sad that as a child, I thought they're one and the same. You see, it's something that I look forward to, but was not able to enjoy. I heard about the colours, the energy, the music; it was something that people looked forward to, and I never quite understood or connected the festivities to the true meaning of Emancipation, Madam President. I didn't understand that the joy I wanted to feel and others felt, dancing on the street, was made possible because someone else had bled, wept and fought for my freedom to do so, Madam President. **(Applause)** It took learning and, most importantly, unlearning for me to see that what we celebrate must not come at the cost of forgetting why we celebrate, Madam President.

Madam President, before I proceed, I've realised that sometimes we take things out of context, and I think by now, my famous debut in the Senate is, "Context is key". And in the "Other Place", one of my colleagues indicated that she was referencing, if we're not taught something, then we don't know better, and the word "illiterate" or "literacy" was referenced.

So, Madam President, before I proceed, I want to say—and I want us to understand that there's context to the word that I'm about to use. The American Futurist, Alvin Toffler, once said—and that was over 50 years ago, "The illiterate"... And I'm quoting here, Madam President, with your permission. "The illiterate of the twenty-first century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn." And I'll take that again, Madam President, "The illiterate of the twenty-first century, (and this was predicted 50 years ago, which is our century), will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn".

You see, Madam President, our generation and our people, we're not illiterate. We've always broken glass ceilings. We've always shattered them, Madam President, and I want our people and our young people to know that it's okay for us to unlearn and relearn, just like I did as it relates to the Rainbow City Festival and Emancipation Day, Madam President. Once we're able to do that, we'll have a powerful nation. We'll have a generation that does not relate to this quote, Madam President. We can say this doesn't

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apply to us.

You see, Madam President, this is what this Amendment demands of us, to learn our history, to unlearn practices that diluted its significance, and to relearn how to honour our past with dignity, Madam President. **(Applause)** Madam President, we love to play Jab and Jab must play. Madam President, that's a fact. That is not a myth. That is not a question. But imagine this, what if we as a people understood the struggles and the sacrifices that gave us the privilege to play Jab in the first place?

Madam President, we would not just play Jab for spectacle. We would play it with a different sense of pride and purpose, Madam President. **(Applause)** Madam President, we will embody the resistance, the rebellion, and the raw cry for justice that Jab Jab represents. Madam President, this is not about silencing our culture. This is not about silencing our festivities, but it's about elevating them, Madam President, because if we really understand and internalise, then our festivities, our traditions, our regattas, our festivals, they'll be elevated because our people will be enjoying a different sense of purpose and pride, Madam President.

Madam President, let me put this very plainly. Why does the exact date matter? To say that Emancipation Day can float on any Monday in August is like saying, I was born on the first Monday of August, 1990... Something. I'm very young, so my birthday will always be the first Monday, no matter the actual date. It sounds absurd, right? That's because it's very absurd, Madam President. Dates matter in history. They're not for convenience. They're there for commemoration. They anchor us in time, Madam President, and they preserve memory. They give us a shared moment to honour truth, Madam President.

And so yes, I've heard the Senator, my Honourable friend on the "Other Side" spoke about you know, Rainbow City and what will happen to these festivals. My response to this is very simple. It's now an opportunity. It's not just a festivity. It's an opportunity, an opportunity to revamp, reposition, and reimagine the festival. How about we incorporate education, storytelling and community teachings into these festivities, Madam President, so that when we're celebrating and enjoying these festivities, our

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young people can understand why we're doing it, why today is important and why it's significant, Madam President?

Let's invite students to dramatise the lives of our ancestors, Madam President. Let artist paint their stories. Let our elders pass the knowledge, and let Rainbow City become not just a space for celebration but a cultural reawakening, and I'm not saying awakening because I believe we're culturally awake, but I believe that we need to be reawakened.

You see, Madam President, I always thrive when I come to this House to educate our young people, because I represent them first and foremost, before anything else. And so, I want our young to understand why this Bill matters to them. It may seem small in wording, but it's monumental in meaning, especially because our generation needs to understand the significance. So you see, by observing Emancipation Day on the exact date, August 1, we'll be educating our young people about their history, with clarity and consistency. We're saying to our young people that we can't fabricate truth and we can't fabricate history. Madam President, we're also teaching them to tell the truth, because if we're saying that Emancipation Day is the first Monday of August, that's not true, Madam President. So are we saying, as leaders to our young people, that it's okay to fabricate the truth, which becomes historical? I think not, Madam President.

You see, by doing this, our young people are able to foster a deep connection of identity and pride. They'll understand where I came from. They'll understand what it means to be a Grenadian, what it means to be of African descent, what it means to be a black person in today's society and the significance, Madam President.

This will also create opportunities for schools, churches, and communities to align their teachings and commemorative events with the true historical timeline. In doing so, we're saying to our young people that our history matters, and we'll show them that their roots matter. Madam President, there's a song that says, "If you don't know where you came from, you don't know where you're going", and as Specky said, "If we don't do this, we're going the wrong way". Madam President, I stand by that.

In conclusion, Madam President, I'm here to say that by doing this, we're honouring our past, and Madam President, most importantly, we are empowering our future. You

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see, Madam President, when we correct the record, we correct mind-set. When we correct mind-set, we correct everything that comes after. This Amendment is not taking away from a long weekend. Yes, we all love a long weekend. But, Madam President, it's about giving dignity to a longer legacy, longer than any weekend that we can have, Madam President. We owe it to our ancestors to honour the date they were declared free. We owe it to them to honour the day when they saw themselves as humans, Madam President. We owe it to our children to teach them the cost of freedom. Madam President, we owe it to ourselves to carry the legacy forward, but not just forward, Madam President, but with a purpose.

Madam President, and so, I proudly stand here to lend my voice in support of the Bank Holiday (Amendment) Bill, 2025, not just for the sake of the past, but for the promise of the future. Thank you, Madam President. **(Applause)**

Madam President: I thank you, Senator Francis, and I'm sure the youth of Grenada. Thank you for your advocacy for them and education towards them. I thank you. I'll always remember you are from St. Patrick, living in St. George, as I pass the floor... I believe Senator André Lewis... Senator André Lewis, you have the floor, sir. Labour Leader in the Senate.

Sen. the Hon. Mondy André Lewis: Thank you very much, Madam President. And I, too, wish to pay tribute and recognise the activity that took place one year ago today. And more than that, to make the continued call for all of us that can continue to do something to assist the people of Carriacou and Petite Martinique, and all others who were impacted to recover from the negative impact, bearing in mind that it's not only physical but the psychosocial impact that it had on those who experienced it. Our considerations and solidarity go out to them.

Madam President, my colleague on the "Other Side"... He turned on the lights, and he said he was about to wrap up. That was okay, because this is just obvious, this Amendment. It's the right thing to do. There are three different sides of the discussion:

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the aspect of a date, the aspect of an observation of a day. And to be quite frank, you can observe a date or a day, without doing it on the particular date itself. However, what makes the difference is that we must elevate the importance of the issues that we're dealing with and certainly, Emancipation Day... **(Applause)** Emancipation Day, in my view, qualifies to be observed, whether it's 12 midnight, 1 a.m., or there's a new name given to the 1st of August. On that particular day is when the observation should be.

So, I'm making a point. We need to be careful. In our enthusiasm to highlight the need to observe Emancipation Day, on August 1, by making broad statements that we can't or ought not to observe a date or day on another day. It can have an observance. Because in doing those things, there are a number of factors; as my colleague on the other side said, "Context is key". There are a number of factors that will normally go into play as the impact on different activities, when you want something to fall, etcetera.

But, certainly, and therefore, I don't wish to discuss August 1st in its broad terms. For me, it's just straight. August 1st is significant enough for us to celebrate on that date. Having said that, it's also important to spend some time understanding and appreciating the circumstances; where we are today, and where we were.

I'm saying we, because it'll not be enough for us to just move to August 1st as the day, without making the necessary changes, and doing what is required to give significance to the date. So, all of us collectively, as a nation, have that responsibility, but the state, as the leader in this case, has a responsibility to ensure that the activities on that day, nationally, are designed in such a way to give significance to that day. I'm making a request here, that whatever activities—because there can be—and I'm expecting that there will be activities, leading up to August 1.

August 1 is the culmination or the declaration, the legal—where the abolition of slavery was legally declared. But, we must recognise that it took years of struggles, loss of lives, right, the rooting up of our people, from one part of the world, the continent of Africa. So, we need to have activities to remember those things.

However, on August 1, I'm making a request that the culmination of these activities be held in St. Andrew. On August 1, the national celebration—I know we have an issue

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that, you know, there are certain parts of our country where certain national activities take place, but given the fact that Rainbow City Festival, the other different festivals, the flambeau and...

As we're here, I think it's important to pause for a moment, to recognise the important role that ¹SADO played in bringing certain awareness around the August period. The role that, I'm sure that my colleague, and those who went before and didn't mention their name—but in my brief engagement, colleagues such as; current Ambassador to Cuba, Comrade Glen Noel, Arley Gill, Curtis Jacob, Anthony Prosper, may his soul rest in peace, he's no longer with us, and Peter Antoine. So that's why I said that. Yes, and all of the other people played, I just highlighted these, in helping to bring about certain awareness, because yes, although Rainbow City Festival took place on the weekend leading up to the first Monday, Emancipation was spoken about, observation of Emancipation, but at least the activities like the flambeau march from Seamoon, and the different other cultural activities, played a role in remembering or giving significance to the struggle upon African ancestors and our people.

So I think it's important that the culmination of that activity be held in St. Andrew. It can be at the Market Square, or the Grenville Bus Terminus, yes, let it be something that is well put together, something that is properly produced, because we want on that day—the responsibilities is big on us now, because we're hosting it on August 1, we have to ensure that whatever we do, is at a particular standard. Therefore, it must be properly produced and properly organised as we give it significance.

And as we speak, colleagues, as we speak about the nostalgic struggles, remembrance, and as we display how much we remember the written history, it's important for us and the different institutions to pay homage to things like the drums. There are some institutions that still, today, see the drums as something that's not good. I don't want to go into that realm and mention certain names of institutions that see that, but things to do with our Africanisms. And as we speak here of August 1, and as we mentioned, the other countries, in other places, we must recognise and pay tribute to

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Haiti, as the first country in our Hemisphere, to have a ruthless, well, I shouldn't say ruthlessly but, a heroically end of slavery and they took it onto themselves.

And that's why today, Haiti is suffering the way that it is suffering. Those of us, even in these halls, who blame the problems in Haiti on the African religion and the African belief, we have to stop it. And we cannot speak about the importance of August 1, as a significant date and move that date without broadening the scope of those discussions. Haiti is suffering today because it has done, in a broader sense, what we are trying to do today, recognising the first.

They took it up on themselves to confront the colonisers and it is time we get rid of the king and queen in terms of mentioning them, which are separate discussion, but we cannot continue to bow down to them and mentioning them when they are the ones that colonise us, and as we speak about African Liberation Day today, Emancipation Day, sorry, yes, because they are intertwined. African Liberation Day and Emancipation Day because it's part of the diaspora, part of our people. Right? I know the time has come, as with everything else, to make that move. So, I pay tribute to Haiti today.

I pay tribute to the leaders of the Haitian Revolution, and I pay tribute to those who, today, are struggling to survive from year after year of having to repay France. We must call them out for removing themselves, you know, running from Haiti and Haiti having to pay a debt for what they have lost economically, whether it was land, resources. I'm making that appeal to our people and our young people who are listening. Do not look at Haiti and blame Haiti, and say that it is "Voodoo". That's our African religion, our African culture, right?

So when we speak about the first of August, we also have to take into account this broader context and recognise that there's interrelation and interconnectivity between the struggle for our liberation, in terms of slavery, and the economy. Right? As Black Wizard said, in one of his songs, "I come back today..." Remember, there are a number of these companies in our Hemisphere and in Grenada that have the legacy of our Colonial Masters. He mentioned their names. We have to keep our ears and eyes open because slavery was used to enrich the colonisers. Slavery was used to enrich the colonisers.

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I'm absolutely certain that I would not have been a slave. I may have been a slave, but I would not have... In other words, it is right to rebel. It is right to rebel. It is right to rebel. The slave trade was used as an economic—and the use of our ancestors was used as a means... Because they were used as machines to work, right, to enrich, to ship our sugarcane and our cotton, to plant it. And these are the discussions that we need to have so we understand the connections.

If we are able to understand that to have those discussions then we'll be able to understand that the road to liberation and the road to emancipation because it continues, because as we said and it's good to see that colleagues are quoting Bob Marley today is another sign of the progress that we are making because people like Bob Marley the Rastafari Movement that has led in many of these discussions were marginalised. We have come a long way, and we still have a long way to go.

The ice, green and gold, I see you wear it today, Madam President, not just today, but there is significance in it. There is significance in it. Right? There is significance in it in terms of our Africanisms. Yes. It is intertwined. It is intertwined, so we owe to ancestors, we owe it to us, today, to have made that link and come forward and ask what could we do or what could we continue to do and when next we celebrate, if it is this year, as it will be, on the first, I know it is a short time, but to give the undertaking that we will improve on the quality or the content of that which has been done for August 1.

Because, as I said, you can have an observance of a day or you can have it on the same date, but if the content is not changed, because the issue of quality is important. The issue of quality is important. What do we do? As I said, we look towards substance over hype, the date. Yes, so, Madam President, for me, this is absolutely straight. The first section, the day of observance of Emancipation Day on August 1, absolutely. It is the right thing to do. It is the correct thing to do.

The other activities that we must not turn a blind eye to, and I do not expect a blind eye will be turned to them, are those for the people of St. Andrew who would normally have some economic activities because of the activities that took place around the observance of Emancipation Day... So let me make that point. It's not Emancipation

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Day, but the observance of Emancipation Day had some positive spill-off.

Yes, it required some re-managing and more content. One would recall that when it started, it was a major activity. The streets of Grenville used to be filled. There was hardly any elbow room, but, you know, as with most things in our society, consumerism has taken the lead.

In other words, it's part of the process of capitalism. Let's be quite frank. Part of the process of capitalism is that everything is now commercialised, and the businesses, here I'm speaking, not just the established business, but when people see an opportunity to make money. Those of us who are placed in leadership positions, therefore, have a responsibility to ensure that the quality and objectives are not changed. When it started, I was there. I am from St. Andrew. Whether or not I'm from St. Andrew, I would have been there, right?

One doesn't speak about most of those things many times, but I've been around. I remember the quality. I remember looking forward to going to the market, right, to listen on the stage and just see the different culture and see the different villages from St. Andrew and queens, and so on. As a matter of fact, if I may say, I felt more proud to observe these queen contestants than our National Queen Show, because our National Queen Show, to me, didn't have anything much to do with our culture.

Sorry, not as an apology, but I know my colleague from the "Other Side" Senator Adrian who has been deeply involved in number of those things, I'm not sure that, I don't think he'll be upset with me, but just in the event there is probably, you know, I speak on those things sometimes. Probably, I'm now in the mode because last night Senator Roderick and I spoke. You know, Senator Roderick, in a way, last night it went back to how many years of discussing. Right? I'll speak about it because he introduced it.

A few nights ago... Yes, yes. It was a few nights ago when tribute was paid to former Prime Minister George Brizan in Beaulieu. We were there and he mentioned to me that, you know, he has to go down to the office the next day or so to print out and prepare for the Parliament today. I'm like, well, what am I missing, because the two Bills I saw, right, well, I said we shouldn't be here for the night, right? **(Laughter)** But then

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again, I remember, it's Roderick. You know what I mean? **(Laughter)** Right?

In speaking about that last night, I called him. One has been on the road doing a number of things and I said look, I need to ensure that I nail down on this discussion today because I might be missing something so I called him to ask him if I am missing something some documents, only to realise that I was not missing any document, and this year should be just as straight forward, straight forward, straight forward, yes we support.

I know that there will be the politicking because I mean this is politics of the day... The "Other Side"... I mean, well, I'm hopeful that so far they would not turn it into political bashing because I think the day is too important. The day is too important. The discussion on the day is too important to turn into the usual partisan politics. The road that we walk. I'm making that appeal. I'm making that appeal. Right?

The praise will be given anyhow. The sitting Administration of the day, it's under your watch, it has come, but we can do that, we can do that by having a genuine and open discussion and the importance of the day itself, what it has meant and what it means and what it would mean going forward. Yes, and that is extremely significant.

Yes, as I was saying, they were these ancillary activities, I am hoping that the state and all of us will give thought to, as to what can be done, what can be done to incorporate and to give people that opportunity, those in St. Andrew and elsewhere, who around that time had an opportunity to be involved in some economic activities, what can be looked at. Yes?

So, having said these words, Madam President, it is certainly an important moment to not just recognise the first, but to be quite frank, I've always known that August 1 is Emancipation Day. So that's nothing new. What we are doing here is, we're now recognising it and saying that we are observing the activities on the first. So whether it falls on a Sunday, whether it falls on a Saturday, whether it falls in the night, we will observe it, that's the significance of it. Right?

But at the same time as we make that material change, in observance, let us commit ourselves to the ongoing struggle for the liberation of our people. Part of that struggle and part of that observance has to do with the way we carry ourselves in a

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dignified manner as black people.

In that context, if I had to advise certain offices in Grenada when the descendants of the slave owners came to Grenada, right, that undertake to make some reparative payment... There are certain offices in this country that would not have gone to the Trade Centre if I had to advise them.

Because we are speaking about this for the first time, I'm going to say so publicly. Are you following me? There is pride and dignity, yes, and there are certain offices in my view that must not bow down to a cow toe or appear, right, to be all happy and glad. You can have other ministers or other positions doing that. Part of our liberation and part of taking who we are is pride and dignity. Therefore, we must not give the appearance that at the first sign of, or when someone jumps up and says, right... Because remember, they used to give us trinkets. But... Well, certainly, no, the Aborigines that they met here, they used to give them trinkets, but it's part of the same issue of how certain people look down on other races. **(Inaudible comment by Senators)**

Yes, they did that too. Even when they went to the West Coast. Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. It is a standard thing. Even when they brought glass beads and they brought other things that they had to our shores. Although we had more advanced technology. Everything was much more advanced. Right. That is a different discussion, and these are discussions that I look forward to from time to time. Yes. But this, the first, has given us this opportunity to recommit ourselves and to do so with pride.

As we engage our African continent in terms of our trade and cultural exchanges, let us not make the mistake. It is not all African leaders who qualify, in my view, to be placed on a pedestal because they are from Africa. Right? It's not because everybody is from the countries that we all knew as progressive countries or liberation countries, nor because they are leaders. I'm just making a broad...

In this context, I wish to salute Captain Ibrahim Traoré for **(applause)** what he has done or what he continues to do for the African people, for us and for the underprivileged. Make no doubt about it, our struggles in all parts of the world and certainly in Grenada,

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are influenced by what happens globally, and one can feel the change in the mood. Looking up to Captain Traoré and the other African leaders who continue to speak out and who will not be silenced—who will not be silenced. You see the struggles our brothers and sisters in Haiti are enduring?

I'm calling for an end to the war and the killings and Gaza. **(Applause)** I'm calling for an end to all the senseless killing in Africa. **(Applause)** I'm calling for an end... Because you see, it is all part of the economics. Our great Malcolm X, whose mom is from La Digue, it is he who observed, after speaking to Commander Fidel and others, Fidel in particular, after coming out of prison, that it was not just a case of struggles of race or colour, but it was across the board.

I know we have to take small bites. I know we have to take small bites, but we have to be prepared that part of our liberation struggle is not just about your race, not about race... The first came from that. Yes? Economics. It's the economics colleagues, and therefore, I give my full support.

You know, I wish that we could have just come here, say "yes", and go? That would have been a powerful statement. All of us just come here, say "yes," and go. But I understand that you have to give context. I understand that the population is listening, and young people are listening, and therefore, this is an opportunity for us to speak so that they can research and read further the struggles of our people.

It is the same context, the same context that I... You know, the first is just the acceptance legally, slavery was abolished, although the practice continued. So even today, the aspect of certain parts of the world that still happens. So I call for the complete freedom of all people, the recognition of all people, and the recognition of all human beings.

There's absolutely nothing wrong if there's a generation, or there is a race of people, or there's a class of people who have been marginalised for calling out for them to be recognised. Therefore, August 1 represents a significant date, a significant date for us to recommit ourselves.

Senator Quinc as a brethren who, and I guess, Madam President, you'll permit me

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just to probably use that word, “brethren”, you know what I mean? Today is the first... Well, today is not the first, but we are speaking about Africanisms. As someone who, I am sure, may have observed certain challenges, because I’ve seen life and I know how it is, and I have observed you over the years, your commitment to culture, your commitment to be, I mean, I see you blowing the shells, and drumming. Yes?

Because these are the things that we grew up with in La Digue, right, LCYC, right, all the cultural activities, the drums, the goat skin drums, speak about Africa, and that’s what we did on the blocks. I grew up in a period when what we spoke about on the blocks was those things.

Madam President, I don't want to continue much longer. I can go on because it's something that evokes that spirit of resistance and that spirit of, what one will call, the fight for progress. The “fight for progress”. Yes, I support wholeheartedly the observance of that day on the date itself. Thank you very much, Madam President. **(Applause)**

Madam President: Thank you, Senator Lewis. Thank you. The spirit is evoked in you. Thank you for connecting, making all the connections; the past history of Haiti, today, the suffering of humanity. I offer the floor to the Senator from Sunset Parish, Senator Quinc Britton. You have the floor, sir.

Sen. the Hon. Quinc Britton: Morning, Madam President, and good morning to everyone in the Chamber, all the staff, and those listening online. I, too, Madam President, who just like to join with the sentiments expressed earlier in expressing sympathies with those who have lost their life one year ago. It was a very painful experience for me, as well. Having not been on the island, it was very, very difficult trying to connect with family members and friends. Being in New York, my colleagues and I never thought that we were going to experience a hurricane outside of the country.

Let me also express my profound gratitude. I asked myself that question ever so often because the Minister for Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs, Honourable Tevin Andrews, was there that weekend with us, and I don't know if it was divine intervention

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on that morning he left and came back down. I don't know what or who, you know, told him that he needed to be with the people. Every time I say I have to ask him, and I keep saying that to other people, I must ask the Honourable Minister what caused him to be there.

We were monitoring it and not, you know, thinking that it was going to happen so quickly. So I salute him 100%. I'm seeing that, you know, from back then to now, they have made significant progress, and I know they would continue to make more progress because they have a Government that would support them throughout their recovery, Madam President.

That being said, Madam President, I also stand to give support to the Bank Holidays (Amendment) Bill. I don't have to reiterate what was said. My colleagues quite eloquently explained and gave reasons for supporting. I, too, join with some of the sentiments that it happened. The Act was passed in the British Parliament, 191 years ago, that's 1834, but it only came into effect four years later, that's 187 years ago.

So it's always, Madam President, you know, when you reflect on what our ancestors went through, it relieves that kind of painful memory knowing, you know, well, understanding what they had to go through from the Transatlantic Slave Trade from West Africa coming over here, and for years, you know, the colonisers tried to keep us in a particular way.

Hence the reason, Madam President, I'm not trying to be defiant, but it's part of my culture. No coloniser should say who we should be or that we should look a particular way. There's a reason why I sport a dreadlock hairstyle. It's not that you have to tell me that I have to shave my head and whatnot, and if you want to chastise me for that, so be it, you know, we wear piercings as part of our rich cultural heritage, just the same. Back in the day, rather than when you go to a courthouse, the magistrate would tell you that you have to remove your piercings and all those kinds of things. Well, thank God, I don't have to go to court. **(Laughter)**

Madam President, I, you know, join with the observance of August 1. It doesn't matter which day it is. And I think, as my colleague Senator put it quite eloquently, that

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it's an opportunity for us to reimagine the purpose of what it is that we really celebrate in observing Madam President. It gives the opportunity for it to be even taught in school; why it is that, you know, we are celebrating Emancipation. We can clearly see how people, you know, can be when we say, "Jab", and Jab represents that kind of ancestral thing with slavery and whatnot, and it's a different kind of spirit that is invoked in us. But I think if our people get so understanding, even deeper, have a deeper sense of appreciation as to why we do what it is that we do, it can make a big, big difference, Madam President.

So I encourage other Members to support, and you have my unequivocal support, Leader of Government's Business. Madam President, I thank you. **(Applause)**

Madam President: Senator Quinc, I thank you. Thank you very much, Senator Quinc Britton. I offer the floor to Senator Salim Rahaman. You have to floor, Senator.

Sen. the Hon. Salim Rahaman: Thank you, Madam President. So, this day brings back memories of Beryl as if it were two weeks ago. Two days after, I was in Carriacou trying to see what we could do from the Business Community and from the Islamic Foundation to bring relief, basic necessities that people need in a time of emergency; water, food, clear the roads, and so forth. You don't have to be in Government to do good deeds. You don't have to be in Government to serve your fellow man; you just have to want to do it and to get up.

And so, we do not know what will happen tomorrow. We do not know what will happen by the end of today. What we do know is what we believe, and how we react to what happens. There is a statement in my faith tradition in the Quran which says, "Do not think that you would say that you believe and you won't be tested. Even the prophets and those who were with them used to cry out, 'When will the help of God come?' But verily the help of God is always near". So there is another statement which reads, "After difficulty comes ease, verily, after difficulty comes with ease".

And so we see that the people of Carriacou. I would like to commend, not only the

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Government, but the Grenadian people for their response in aiding and assisting our brothers and sisters in Carricaou, and that sort of spirit is what makes us the human beings that we are. And I extend my sympathy to those who lost their lives.

And in particular now, for this Bill, this Bank Holidays Bill, I fully support this Bill. Why is it important to speak on this? Change, which may seem like a simple change, but it is not; it's a distinction. It's an opportunity for education and re-education, that's what this is.

Millions of people, Madam President, lost their lives during the slave trade. Millions. Over a decade and centuries, that was wrong from the first day when it started in small numbers, and when a wrong is left unchecked, the people who perpetrate the wrong take it as a right to continue, because nobody is saying anything. Nobody is opposing. This is one of the problems we have in humanity; when it's not happening, or we don't get hurt from it, we say, "Well, that is their problem; that's the people of Africa's problem".

Weren't there kingdoms and other governments that were powerful in those times when slavery took place? Aren't there powerful governments now where 56,000 people have been slaughtered in Gaza? History repeats itself in different ways. So, Madam President, there are people today and yesterday who benefit from war. There are people who benefit from oppression. There are people who have benefited from the genocide of the American Indians and the genocide of the Caribs and Arawaks of our region. Madam President, there are those who benefited from slavery. Slavery was very profitable for some. That is why the call for justice to pay for the wrongs is a just call. But yet today, after all these human rights and human rights charters and so on and where we have seemed to advance in humanity, that call falls on deaf ears in large part.

Madam President, do you think the people of South Africa would have had justice if they hadn't risen up and fought for their rights? Do you think that the slave master would have woken up one morning and say, "Well, I think I've had enough of this slavery thing, let me let everybody go", if the slave did not revolt? Madam President, how many times are you going to run away for them to catch you and then for you to see your cousin

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or your uncle or your father being lynched? This was what the people went through.

And so, that is why changing the date to the correct date is important, distinctive. That is why it is important. It is not about feting. It is not about feting. Lest we forget what it is that those who came before us went through. It's not about drunkenness.

(Applause)

Madam President, there are still effects of colonisation upon us. Travel routes make it expensive to visit. To put it plainly, if a black man in the Caribbean wants to visit another black man in Africa, it is very expensive and prohibitive. Our passports depend on where you're from; a lot of countries have very limited options, and you have to have visas to go everywhere, that is, if you get the visa in the first place, and that has economic implications. Your currency. The devaluation of your currency.

Madam President, do you know that the third-largest holder of gold in the world, a European country, does not have one ounce of gold in that country? **(Inaudible comment by Senators)** Where does it come from? The cost of financing, in what they call the first world, you walk into a bank and open an account in five minutes. The only thing they don't ask you for here is your blood type. **(Inaudible comment by a Senator)** Yet. So, we have a long way to go, access to education. We have a long way to go.

But, Madam President, and yet we see that leaders in Africa in past who spoke up and tried to change their own condition have been assassinated. Yet, we see that the current leader today has faced at least 18 attempts on his life, and my colleague mentioned him. 18 attempts. Why is it that some people want a leader of a country dead when he's doing so much good for his people, and his people love him so much?

We have to understand what world we are living in, Madam President. We don't have anything against anyone. As a matter of fact, we don't hate anyone. We hate the act, and if the act is wrong, we call it out. If they stop doing the act, then there is nothing to hate.

So, Madam President, I would like to suggest a few things: how we dress on August 1 should be encouraged, and cultural representations of dress on that day should be represented. I would like to suggest that even in Parliament next year, the closest

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Sitting to that date, we respect this House and we have formal wear, but we have cultural wear and not remnants of colonialism. **(Applause)** That is part of the educational process.

In addition, Madam President, I would like to suggest that during the month of July, essays in primary schools should be written on the subject, "What does Emancipation mean to you"? Essays should be written in primary schools across the country, length and breadth, on this subject: "What does Emancipation mean to you"?

And finally, Madam President, a catalyst for economic activity. In order to change our circumstances, we need the resources to do so. So I would like to submit for the consideration of our leaders in CARICOM and if, in fact, we do find oil and gas in commercial quantities, I make this suggestion and appeal that 1% of the value of oil and gas sold in every territory that has it, Suriname, Guyana, God willing, Grenada, Trinidad and so forth, we use 1% towards developing new trade routes for the Caribbean and a stronger trade route connection, meaning ships moving with goods, from the African continent to the Caribbean region.

I would like to suggest that the leaders put their money where their mouth is. 1%. It is not going to make us poorer, but if we have a fund similar to the CARICOM fund, for this very purpose of developing trade within the region, I think we would be able to do something symbolic that will be able to push this opportunity for trade between the African continent and the Caribbean so that we, together with like minds, can grow and develop our nations.

Madam President, I thank you, and I fully support this initiative. Thank you.
(Applause)

Madam President: Thank you, Senator Rahaman. Thank you for your suggestions and your specific one on cultural wear. There is a day I think is already nationally recognised around that, but your suggestion is well-received. I offer the floor to Senator Claudette Joseph. Senator, you have the floor.

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Sen. the Hon. Claudette Joseph: Thank you, Madam President. Good day to all colleagues of this Honourable House and to persons listening to these proceedings wherever you are. I joined with everyone here in this Honourable House in recalling the dreadful day, one year ago today, when Hurricane Beryl struck our beloved country and devastated our sister islands of Carriacou and Petite Martinique, and the northern part of Grenada. I commend the resourcefulness and resilience of the people in our recovery efforts, and particularly, I commend, and indeed celebrate, the leadership that we've had in these months since the hurricane from the day that struck to today. **(Applause)** I think all things being said, if we had to be brutally honest with ourselves, we would all agree that the recovery efforts, and the rebuilding efforts, so far, have been nothing short of remarkable and commendable, especially when we compare it with the most recent example we had or we have in what happened after Hurricane Ivan. So I say, the struggle continues. We continue to forge on, to rebuild and to be better prepared for future climate events. In the modes by which we recover and rebuild, we ensure that we are stronger the next time another such event occurs.

Madam President, I rise to give my unreserved and indeed elated support for the Bill before this Honourable House. Madam President, this Act, being debated today, and which, from all of the presentations so far, will be passed into law without objection, is another step, Madam President, in our ongoing process of Emancipation from slavery.

Emancipation Day, August 1, 1838, was not just a day. Emancipation was not just an act. Emancipation is a process. To borrow my comrade, Senator David Andrews' words, "It's a process that must be intentional, deliberate", and to that I will add "unrelenting".

Madam President, we are all here, students of history, and we know that from the beginning, there was resistance on both sides, resistance from the enslavers and resistance and revolt from the enslaved. So it was a battle from day one. The powers that be in that period, for the most part, sided with the enslavers and gave them everything they asked for, and basically gave the enslaved our ancestors nothing. And I will explain why I say nothing.

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The Abolition of the Slave Trade happened on August 1, 1834, by an Act of the British Parliament, the Slavery Abolition Act, 1833, and from inception, this was not a willing Act. There was a robust debate in the British Parliament against the Slavery Abolition Act. Certain persons, such as Granville Williams, stood out, but there was robust debate and a lot of lobbying to the extent that, while the Act was passed in 1833 and came into effect in 1834, the enslavers were given grace.

In that, there was a period of apprenticeship under which the former slaves were forced to work for their former masters up until 1838 for free, in return for which, they said they would provide provisions, clothing, food and lodging. The argument was that the slave had to be acclimatised, prepared and trained for freedom. Which human being needs training for freedom to enjoy the natural state in which God created all of us, and which they had, and were taken from them? So that's the first thing the colonial masters did.

Then, they arranged for immediate reparations for the former slave owners, the value of which today would be in excess of \$20b. The former slaves in all the preparation during the apprenticeship period, no aspect of that concerned any form of reparation, any form of cash in hand, any form of property and nothing. So the apprenticeship period between 1834 and 1838 was just another means to continue slavery, and even during that period, our ancestors had to fight to say we don't need an apprenticeship period. We don't need a period of acclimatisation. We want our freedom now. There were protests and revolts in Trinidad and Barbados, and most of the other islands, during the apprenticeship period. So it was a fight from day one. Even after the apprenticeship ended, the employment of the former slaves on the plantations continued, and the Indians were added as indentured servants.

You just have to read George Brizan's "Island of Conflict", or any West Indian history book, to tell you that the conditions after slavery remained, essentially, the same until as late as the 1950s; that's during the lifetime of some people in here. The 1950s, when in the case of Grenada, people like Sir Eric Gairy came on the scene.

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Madam President, Senator Seville Francis, described the day on which Emancipation has been so far celebrated, the 1st Monday in August, as a historic oversight. It wasn't that. It was not a historic oversight. It was deliberate because, remember, up to 1967, thereabout, when we became an associated state, our legislature was controlled by our former colonial masters. Even the local people who entered the legislature were mainly of the planter class, the former slave owners and their descendants.

Most of us grew up knowing the August Holiday, not as Emancipation Day, but as "August Monday". It wasn't even called Emancipation Day; it was "August Monday". I was looking, but I could not find the original Amendment, but I am pretty sure that the current wording in the legislation that says, "Shall be known and referred to as Emancipation Day", was a fairly recent Amendment. If I were to take a guess, it probably happened during the Revolution. I'm just making a guess, based on the fact that it was quite a progressive Government then, so it was not even recognised as Emancipation.

The attempt by those who continued to own and colonise was now a country, and those whose ancestors owned our ancestors as chattel property to be traded, sold and bought at will, the way they recorded what should have been Emancipation in our legislation was still commemorated on a day which it was not.

I fully agree with my colleague senators, Seville Francis and André Lewis, in saying this is a day that is so significant that it must be commemorated on the actual day, so that we know our history. **(Applause)** We know our history so well that we make sure that it is never, ever repeated, and that when we are gone, we leave that legacy and understanding for all generations that will follow us. They will know their history, and they will know that it must never, ever happen.

Whenever, in the future, there's any semblance, it is crushed. It is crushed as immediately and decisively as Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Henri Christophe, Daniel Mc Candless and Toussaint L'Ouverture dealt with the colonisers in Haiti. That is how our future generations should treat each other with any semblance. When we recognise and record our history properly, we ensure that those who come after us are saved from

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possibly having to endure because we can't say it will never happen again. If we sit back and we become complacent and we take for granted the freedoms we know we enjoy, it may well happen again. It was all about money, power and economics. Human beings are the same today as they were then.

So, we have to continue to engage in this process of emancipation. If you check over history, it's a long incremental process, and at some point, I would say, Madam President, that we became laid back, complacent, and took our freedom, that we enjoy now, for granted. Which is why, for so many years, Emancipation Day was incorrectly recorded in our laws and celebrated, and I would make a confession similar to what Senator Francis made.

Growing up, I always wondered why it is that a day such as Emancipation is not a public holiday. It is not recognised, it is not celebrated, and I never quite understood what the August Monday Holiday was all about. Never quite understood, and I don't think the powers that be then intended for it to be commemorated as Emancipation. I think somewhere along the lines, the consciousness of all leaders and legislators was weakened, and they realised that we had to celebrate, we have to commemorate our demonstration of our ancestors, and the August Holiday was there, and it was close.

So, we are writing, today, a historic wrong. And for me, I never saw August Monday as Emancipation Day, because as a student of history, I know Emancipation is August 1, and we did nothing really that elevated and commemorated the day as Emancipation, and highlighted the day. While we had these festivals. We had the Regatta. We had Rainbow City, and we all went out and we enjoyed it as part of our Grenadian culture. There was not sufficient linkage to Emancipation from slavery when we were chattels in those celebrations.

It is only in the last, I would say, maybe 25 or 30 years when we had a concerted effort, people such as those named by Senator Lewis, Glenn Noel, the SADO group, the Institute for People's Enlightenment that was Peter Antoine, Anthony Prosper, yes, Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell, was an active member of the Institute for People's Enlightenment, Arley Gill, Kay Julien-Gutu, were the people who really started and drove

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what we now know.

We have a little ceremony happening at midday at the market square. I usually attend. I usually have to, on August 1, leave work and rush down there during your lunchtime. You have a few guys drumming. The Independence Proclamation is read, and whatnot.

So, we had, over the years, I think, become so watered down, and then it was just a few conscious people trying to keep it alive. So, I agree with you, Senator Lewis, that in addition to this step that we are making, it is very important to me. Emancipation is as important as Independence February 7. It is important. **(Applause)**

And so as Government, we appreciate that we have to get to the point where we not only commemorate Emancipation on the proper day, but also commemorate Emancipation properly so that this generation, our young people and those to come after us understand what this day is all about. It is the day after 13 million Africans died crossing the Atlantic. 13 million, and an estimated million who were enslaved, on August 1, 1838, gained their freedom. A million. There were a million slaves in the British West Indies, estimated on August 1, 1838. Think about that. They won their freedom; they earned their freedom.

Our process of Emancipation still continues, and that is why, Madam President, shortly we will come to this House with another piece of legislation that will abolish the need for all of us in here to swear allegiance to His Majesty King Charles III, his heirs and successors, when we take office. **(Applause)** To my mind, that one, just as this, is the obvious one and a no-brainer, and there should be, frankly, no demur to this legislation.

There should be, frankly, none, because we all know it. If we didn't know it, those of us who didn't know it should go back and check our history and the various attempts at Constitutional Reform going back to 1985 with the commission led by, I think, Justice Liverpool and Mr. Bristol. That Constitution Reform Commission, from then, that was what, five, six years after we got Independence, and in all the record of consultations, the people of Grenada, from then, were saying, who wants to swear allegiance to our former colonial masters who presided over our rule and the enslavement of our ancestors?

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So when we are talking consultation, the consultation record is there from 1985, up to the last attempt at the Referendum. So we are going to be coming back to this Honourable House and looking forward to the full support of all Members of the House as we take another incremental and unrelenting step towards full emancipation when we remove the need for us to swear allegiance to our former colonisers.

So, Madam President, I commend this Bill to the Honourable House, and I would like to place on record my delight. I never thought as a young student of history, wondering why August 1st isn't a public holiday, it's Emancipation Day, why isn't it a public holiday? I never thought I would be so intricately involved in making history and righting this wrong, and I am pleased, as all members of the Drafting Unit at the Attorney General's Chambers, to have had oversight of drafting this very simple, straightforward legislative amendment, but also exceedingly significant and impactful.

So I commend the amendment to the Bank Holidays Act to this Honourable House, and I think when the Bill is passed, we should all applaud. Thank you, Madam President.

(Applause)

Madam President: Thank you, Madam Joseph, Attorney General. First, a correction and then a salutation, but not so much a correction as a reminder that, in my lifetime, the Constitutional Committee or the committee to review the Constitution of Grenada was established in 1983. **(Inaudible comment by a Senator)** I can tell you the three members...

Sen. the Hon. Claudette Joseph: ... I was thinking of the post Revolution...

Madam President: ... After '83. Yes, but what happened in '85 was a result of the formation in '83 and the three members set up...

Sen. the Hon. Claudette Joseph: ...That was Mr. Allen

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Madam President:... by the then Prime Minister, to give you a minute's history here, it was...

Sen. the Hon. Claudette Joseph: ...Allen Alexander?

Madam President: ... discussed within the Revolution for some time, but on a visit to the State Department in the United States, Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, in conversation with the Deputy Secretary of State, was pressed, What was Grenada doing to hold an election? Prime Minister revealed that this Commission had been established and was going to be announced in October of '83. This was June when he was asked the question, he said, "It is constituted and it is forthcoming". It was constituted with Allen Alexander, Attorney from Trinidad and Tobago, Ashley Taylor, Attorney from Grenada and Merle Collins, a young Latin American student from Georgetown University, who was at the time, a budding intellectual in Grenada, and a thinker. Those were the three persons, and after the disaster of 83, this committee of three was disbanded, but the idea rolled over with new members.

I also want to quickly say that women, in slavery, suffered uniquely, in particular, were disadvantaged both as enslaved people and as women. So, it's an act of justice that women in the Chamber of the Attorney General, led by a woman Attorney General, would write that piece of legislation. So remember that women of Grenada, the position of complete subservience that was held by women for their gender is now, in some measure, removed or invalidated by the righting of this new legislation by women. Thank you very much. Other contributions? I see the request for the floor. I think our penultimate speaker is Senator Roderick St. Clair. You have the floor, Senator.

Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair: Thank you very much, Madam President. Senator Lewis said it was a very short discussion, and it is a very short Bill, and we have seen longer Bills here. I am very worried, you said it was a very short, sit down. I can't sit down. Senator Cox, I can't sit down.

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Madam President, I stand also with everyone before to recognise firstly the July 1 event of Hurricane Beryl, around now we all would have been in the heat of it or in the wet of it, in the storm of it and hoping for the best. It is not a good sight having been myself through Hurricane Ivan, through Hurricane Emily, and, of course, Hurricane Beryl.

For all who have been able to rise and stand up and be resilient, our trees, you can see they are naturally coming back notwithstanding the struggles, of course. We know that many others are still trying to recoup in their many different ways. We continue to ask God to bless us and give us strength as we rebuild and pray that we have a milder period this year and the next few years, such that we can recover and be able to implement better ways of living, of food security, and of our own survival techniques.

With this said, Madam President, I rise also to speak on the Bill in front of us, the Bank Holidays (Amendment) Bill, 2025. I realise that there was also a small window to go into this Oath of Allegiance; the window was opened, but I would not really go in the window right now because the window seems to have some tint on it still, so I cannot see through it properly.

Notwithstanding all of this, Madam President, what is before us here today is a matter, and I keep hearing about Emancipation Day and Emancipation Day on August 1. I like to look at the basics to start. We speak about Bank Holiday (Amendment), so the question is, what really is the objective? What really are we looking at, and by definition, on the Bank Holiday Act Chapter 25, it defines the Bank Holiday... not the definition, but it says here the purpose, and that is the original Act.

It speaks about an Act to make provisions for bank holidays and respecting obligations to make payments and do other Acts on banking holidays. I think we need to put these things in context because what we are saying here is that a bank holiday is a day on which banks should be closed; they would not have any transactions taking place, as we would know legally. If you owe someone and you have to pay by the 31st, and that day is a bank holiday, then it means that the next day is your legal obligation, and you shouldn't have to worry if you miss it.

I think we also have to put that in context. It means, therefore, from the business

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community, my good friend Senator Rahaman, it means that in some cases you may find that you have an extra day or you may have a shorter day, depending on how the first falls, is that correct? Correct. So I'm just sharing this with us from the economic standpoint from which you spoke.

Madam President, before us here today, the amendment proposed reads “amendment of the schedule to the principal Act... that’s on the second page, it says the first Monday in August which shall be known and referred to as the Emancipation Holiday and it will be substituted so you deleting that whole section and substitute it with the new version, the first day of August which shall be known and referred to as Emancipation Day.

So, essentially, it is not the first Monday as we normally know or August Monday, it is August 1st whenever it falls, and this we have to respect because history is history. We cannot say Christmas Day, December 25, I know Jesus Christ was born, and of course, because that’s why I go there, as my good friend is whispering, that is not true, and that’s his right, but I wouldn’t go there with you. The question can then be asked, if we make Christmas Day the 24th or the 20th, is that really the day? And so we know legally there was an Act, as my good friend Senator Britton says, in 1834 or 1833 establishing that fact, so that is an international fact.

What has taken us so long? Last night, after a discussion with Senator Lewis, I kept pondering all night. Our farmers, what were in their minds then when this August Monday, Tuesday came about? What was on their mind? Why didn’t they use August 1? And I think our learned Attorney General in some way gave some proposition, which is plausible, because at the time, we have to understand who was controlling the legislature.

It was the same colonial masters, through their own proxies and surrogates, who would have found ways for their own fun and frolic. Not necessarily for... In fact, some people might say back then, maybe they were horse racing and all those other things taking place, and that is a whole other economic activity for itself. Nothing around Emancipation. And so yes, this is welcome and it is basically correcting history but it

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means also, Madam President, a word to the wise is that we have a lot of history to correct and I trust that we can continue to correct this history but we must not go through it in pieces too much because sometime you lose the impact.

In so doing, I heard my good friend, Senator Francis, speak about her experience with Rainbow City and this Rainbow City business. Of course, being around a little bit longer I would put on record that Rainbow City would have started somewhere in 1984 and that would have been created not because of Emancipation, it was created, Madam President, and members because of the shared need to revive economic activities for the business community in Grenville and St. Andrew, that is what it was about. Initiated by a white person, if you want to call them colonialist, so maybe he was trying to emancipate us then, and we didn't understand.

But Emancipation had nothing to do with Rainbow City. It was about how people like your mother, Ms. Williams, Ms. Benjamin, Mr. Buckmire and others, along with this gentleman Jim, were meeting in Ms. Sheila's place, "Well-Fed in Grenville and sitting down to plan how to put a whole rainbow effect in Grenville and create a whole celebration. About craft and art, and get the business community to open on that day so that people can purchase not only the craft and art, but also create economic activity.

All of this in light of the demise or the closure of the Pearls Airport because of another advancement in liberation, brother André? Of the Maurice Bishop International Airport. You see, sometimes progress leads us down a path that causes us to lose our history, and so who was documenting this thing? Who was showing this transition that we are happy with the Maurice Bishop International Airport? It gave rise to the Rainbow City event so that the business community in Grenville would not be in a dire position. That is, you have the farmers, the agro-processors, the fishermen, all of those things. It wasn't anything about Emancipation, vendors, people, nada about Emancipation. I am sure Ms. Benjamin is alive, and I am sure she can contest that. It was never the case that had nothing to do with Emancipation. It had to do with creating business for these persons, such as Sam's Inn and so on, to keep their livelihood.

And so I raise these factors because as we make changes to things, the issue of

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context, impact and implications are very important, and so whilst my good friend Senator Lewis says well, he wonders what I was reading, it's a lot. Because the question arises, what consultation was done, not just with the persons involved in putting on the St. Andrew's Development Organisation event in Grenville in Rainbow City festival, but also with the broader business community and the impact?

I am not even speaking about Carriacou because Senator Cox has that lockdown on his side, such that we understand what this move is for them. And so I ask the question, what will Emancipation Day activities look like, or would there be one? And so, as I learn interestingly, our good friends at St. Andrew's Development Organisation, people have different views about them and have their different comments, and sometimes people criticise from the sidelines and fail to come forward, ask a lot of questions with no suggestions. As my good friend Senator Lewis says, what will this day look like?

I want to inform this House at the same time that SADO, as an organisation, perhaps might be the only organisation, maybe to start with, that has been marking and doing anything pertaining to this Emancipation. Not the August Monday, Tuesday business, the day of August 1, whether they go from Pearls or they go from Marquis with their torch and so on, marking as an organisation.

In fact, they get some level of support from the Cultural Foundation and the Government for that initiative, which means it is recognised, and so when I heard Senator Lewis speak about where we would have the centre of activities, I understand where he is coming from because SADO already had some level of commitment there. It doesn't mean, though, that it automatically has to be given that at the same time, prerogative, because the history of St. Patrick's would say, well, hold on, we have the slave pens in Hermitage, we have the slave pens in Mt. Rich, we have another... I don't know how you call it, but it is a big, deep iron structure right by Peggy Sue water plant there, another mark of our history, and I am not even going into the Carib Stone and all those other things.

So, how do we incorporate all of these things? Where all our sites are connected

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to slavery and emancipation and all of those things, and not only about the slave part, because the whole Emancipation is a process that up to today is not even finished. We are still tied up in different ways, particularly in the business in other sectors, in music and all of those things, and so when we speak about Indian Arrival and all of those different things, our good friend Senator Rahaman, with due respect, his ancestry... all of this is connected to this process.

So it's not about the pains and suffering or only about the blacks from Africa, but you have to look at it in the broader context, and we have to look at it even today, how we treat that imperialism from North America. If we want to speak about enslavement of the mind, let us not fool ourselves because we might try to be moving from one and we go into the other one and how interdependent can we be and survive and how far do we go and I guess that is where allegiance come in which we say it's a shady door right now we wouldn't go in.

But, Madam President, what is interesting in this Bill before us here today, very interesting, is that the issue of Bank Holidays is connected with this 1st of August, which we also say is connected to the first Monday in August, which is usually connected to the Rainbow City Festival. If we go and we take a look at the list of the festivals Act, the Festivals Act, Madam President, 262A, if we take a look at that we would discover on page 10 a reference to Rainbow City because in fact in that Act, it speaks about different festivals and the Rainbow City festival is referred to as a grand festival and also the Carriacou Regatta is also referred to as a grand festival and then there is subsidiary legislations connected with these two.

So for Rainbow City, there is a whole series of things; fees and what it involves, and this is very important. I want to just read this because we would understand that whilst we are trying to address this issue, we have a shortfall on the other side. On page 10, it is of the... It's supposed to be page 10, one second... I had it... page 10, so it is Clause 2 under the subsidiary legislation pertaining to Rainbow City, and it says here basically a definition. "Rainbow City Festival is a public festival known as the grand festival under the Act held at Grenville, St. Andrew, during and around the time referred

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to in the Bank Holidays Act chapter 25 as Emancipation Day”.

My good friend Dr. Alexis may find some explanation to tell me that it is the same thing because... It means, therefore, that if the first is today, which is Tuesday, the next first Monday is almost a week. So, around Emancipation, to me, is not a reasonable time, Senator Lewis. How far is that? So, I am wondering whether or not there needs to be some adjustment to this Act in terms of the definition of Rainbow City Festival.

Notwithstanding that they would not use that Monday because it doesn't exist, and they will use Sunday as part of their activity, and the first one, which is Emancipation Day, is a no-fly zone because you cannot have anything else connected to that. I would have liked to see, Madam President, in cleaning this up and bringing it clean to emancipate the whole thing, that this be adjusted with a similar adjustment. I think it may involve some rewording because Sunday is already a holiday, and there is nothing really you can do about it. So I want to suggest to the Honourable Councils on the “Other Side” to look at that to keep consistency.

At the same time, Senator Lewis brought a very important point, he used the word quality and as a student of quality myself it mean specification, it means definition of things, outlining what constitutes and in the public festivals Act all the activities connecting to regulations, whether you can sell beer after 12, the music, fees everything is defined in this Act and that's a grand festival. That is not a public holiday, national holiday, the Regatta is defined, and so I have difficulties, Madam President, in our not understanding what this Emancipation Day will contain. We don't expect it to be only the light and the drums. Senator Lewis's expectation is much bigger.

It is a national event, it's a national holiday of significance, and I believe that the proposers of this Bill should have come to us with some amendment to the Public Festivals Act and some definitions or explanatory definition as to what this Emancipation Day would look like. Such that the question would be, do I have two Rhum Rhunner cruises, three Esta Sea cruises, some jab in Sauteurs, and Regatta is still going maybe on the day because it's a day. I mean, it doesn't have to be a bank holiday for the boat to race. What is this day?

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Madam President: Thank you, Senator St. Clair. Please yield to the Leader of Government's Business.

Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair: Well, I want to know the point.

Madam President: We'll come back to you.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: No, I am just seeking some clarification, Madam President. I'm lost in the discussion. I really don't know. I mean, we are here discussing the bank holiday, and for the last 20 minutes we have been talking about festivals, even to the point of the Esta Sea cruise and all sorts of things. I'm really lost on this. Can you assist?

Madam President: Thank you. I think Senator St. Clair is about to wrap up the Bill.

Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair: This is why, Madam President, we are falling short. Let me help my good friend. If you go to the Festivals Act, No. 25, go to it, and that's why we have this problem. If we go there on page 10 and you look at the definition of Rainbow City Festival, it speaks about an event happening around Emancipation Day. Right?

Emancipation Day, as we know, is around, well, happening mentally around the first Monday. We are saying that we are moving it to the 1st... So this 1st of August could be any day, okay, but if the Rainbow City is speaking about around this first Monday, and all of those things around Emancipation Day, **(Inaudible comment by a Senator)** then what I'm suggesting is that this needs to be looked at and regulated.

I'm saying further, Madam President, when you look at this here, it also defines what Rainbow City Festival involves. For example, it defines the area from all Charles Gas Station all around Soubise down by the Old Church, and if you are coming into

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Grenville, I don't know if you went to Rainbow City the first time... From the time you hit by Ramdhanny Cinema, there is a toll booth that you have to pay to enter Grenville.

All of those things are in what it involves to apply for a fee to sell. Even buses entering Grenville had to pay \$10 and \$5. Those are there as regulations. What I'm saying is that, and the other activities and so on, so what I'm saying is that, for Emancipation Day... And that is why, Madam President, we plan things. We announce things, and when the time comes, we don't know what the hell, excuse that language... **(Inaudible comment by Senators)** We don't even know what to expect. That's right, Madam President. We don't know what to expect.

So, if we have Emancipation Day, Senator Lewis asks the question, "What is the quality"? Quality doesn't mean goodness; we want to know what its specification is. Would there be a church service, a road race, a walk, a talk, a debate? Look at Senator Rahaman, who made recommendations because he doesn't even know what would be on that day. So we are approving and agreeing to something that we don't even know what it will be? And what I'm saying is, if a simple thing like Rainbow City was able to have all these definitions as to what it would look like, we should have come up with some things saying what it would look like.

What would end up happening? On all the radio stations, people will be giving all kinds of ideas about what they feel and query things, because when there is a lack of definition and a lack of clarity, you create confusion in the minds of people on a big day. A big ticket item, as Emancipation is freeing the minds of people. We are trying. Their minds are made up, Madam President. So, all I'm saying is that these are recommendations we had to learn to accept and to review because they have to be answered at some point.

Independence. We have gone through so. We generally know what Independence Day look like. It's the same issues we had in Heroes Day about how it could happen and what cannot happen because of the definition of what these things will look like... We set the standard. We set the quality. You go to inspect your vehicle, and there is a requirement. We should not fall short as persons defining the law to leave those

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vagaries because that is why we are here today.

Some smart person, maybe, when they did it, they didn't realise August 1st doesn't always fall on a Monday. So, yes, Madam President, so this is my recommendation. We have no problem. I think these are, as we said, originally, there's not an issue, but sometimes, notwithstanding how good we are, there's always room for improvement, and this year we need to fix it. It will come back to haunt us. It wouldn't be us, just like how we are saying, well, why the others before didn't fix it, others will be laughing at us, 20 years from now and saying, "Well, who were these guys? They didn't know how to fix this thing?"

So now, Rainbow City people are confused. I would tell you, and I would say it here, from discussions with the Rainbow City person, they are speaking about having exhibitions and all kinds of stuff on the 1st of August and tell them they cannot do it. Where are we going to regulate that? I rest my case, Madam President.

Madam President: I thank the Senator. You did say that there is no relation between Emancipation and the Rainbow City festival. Not sure that I have experienced the no-relation part. I've experienced that and the relations as well.

I think there is an organic link that may or may not be specified in law or policy. I remember in 1996, I was a young university professor at the time, and I gave, what I hope to be, a linkage talk in the Market Square under the auspices of Rainbow City Festival, and it was entitled, "Our Emancipation Continues". So, I know and have contributed to that link. What you read, the definitions you read, seem to me to give leeway. The celebration of Rainbow City Festival gives freedom and space for the conduct of Emancipation Day.

I heard from several Senators, you know, they are making suggestions as to what the Emancipation Day should have as its content. Senator Lewis said that St. Andrew must take the lead, why, as I listened to him, because St. Andrew, and, of course, we know also St. Patrick, have content. They have content around Emancipation that can be of national utility here.

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I can bring to your attention, since you're a man from St. Andrew, that the National Cultural Foundation is hosting a consultation tomorrow, Wednesday, 2nd July, at the Granville Secondary School for that very purpose, led by the Chief Executive Officer of the National Cultural Foundation. So I agree with you that the proposed legislation seems to be missing the schedule, right, but I think it opens up the possibility for the nation to come forth with expressions of how it's celebrated.

I am sure most people don't pay attention to the unique role of children in slavery, and women in slavery. We pay no attention to the plutocracy and its continuing legacy, on us as emancipated people, as we think. We're not finished with our emancipation, and we're not finished with the celebration. So, I want to employ you to consider all these loose threads, if you will. All these possibilities are there hanging, and can, in fact, and should, in fact...

I thought you were headed, if I may be so rude as to say why I allowed this long contributions so eloquent from you, I thought you were headed to make a concrete suggestion around, what can we say, recovering Emancipation Day for the nation, in the context of the national celebration of Rainbow City Festival, which was the only thread that existed for decades to link us back to the pride and power of Emancipation in a material cultural social and spiritual way.

So, I think there is more work to be done, and I thank you so much for your legislative research about the Festivals Act and so on. But I think, if I might speak, and I'm not speaking for the Government, I am speaking only as the manager of this conversation to say that I think there is much more that can and will be done starting with the meeting on Wednesday and other expressions that will arise to give the Government some direction now that it has taken that step, it needs some direction on how to do it. We are all now travelling in the same direction.

So, thank you so much. Is there one more contribution, as we have crossed the noon hour? Is it a contribution from Senator Joseph? **(Inaudible comment by a Senator)** Senator Gloria Thomas-Samuel, who has made it from her first commitment, thank you for your steadfastness in coming over here. You have the floor, madam

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Senator.

Sen. the Hon. Gloria Thomas: Thank you, Madam President. Good afternoon to everyone in this Honourable House. I, too, want to at this point, remember the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Pettie Martinique who were affected by the passage of Beryl. I know it has been a trying year for them, especially the people in Carriacou and Pettie Martinique, but with a continued effort at rehabilitation and reconstruction, residents are now experiencing some semblance of normalcy.

There are still some work to be done, but the challenge of limited material and manpower has placed the reconstruction effort at a reduced space, but we are not daunted. As a Government, we are committed to ensuring that the needs of the affected persons are addressed as we continue to look after the victims of Beryl.

And with that said, I also rise here to give my support to the amendment to the Bank Holidays (Amendment) Bill, 2025. Madam President, we are here today not just to make an amendment to the Bank Holidays Bill or to mark a new emancipation date on the calendar. We are here to stand in the shadow of history and light of the resistance to ensure that the correct day is enshrined in the annals of our history here in Grenada.

August 1st is Emancipation Day. A day when the chains of slavery were legally broken across the British Empire in 1834. A day when millions who have been treated as property were finally declared humans in the eyes of the law, but Emancipation Day is not just about the end of slavery. It is about the beginning of something deep, truth, memory, justice and the long road to real freedom.

Madam President, we must honour the struggles by recognising the 1st of August as Emancipation Day, and we will be honouring the struggles of our ancestors. For over four centuries, millions of Africans were stolen from their homeland, stripped of their identity, sold into bondage, and forced to labour under brutal conditions.

But let's be clear, our ancestors were never just victims. They were survivors. They were fighters. Brave men and women whose memory must be saluted and recognised on the right day, the 1st of August. This did not come easily. Our ancestors

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led an uprising. They broke chains. They preserve language, songs and fate. They turned suffering into strength and planted the seed of freedom, which we stand on today.

Madam President, when we celebrate Emancipation Day on August 1st, we honour their courage and their resistance. We will remember that abolition wasn't a gift. It was earned in blood and struggle. How can we allow a certain important day to go by in an insignificant way? We need to wake the consciousness of our people through education and provide enlightenment about our history and heritage.

Madam President, slavery didn't just happen somewhere far away or a long time ago. It is what built the wealth of empires. It shaped the Caribbean, Africa, Britain, Canada and beyond. Plantations grew rich, while enslaved people were worked to death. The profit funded cities, universities, governments, and banks. This history was buried or whitewashed for too long. Let us recognise Emancipation Day on August 1st. Let us bring it to the surface because we cannot fix what we refuse to face.

When you celebrate Emancipation Day on August 1st, we celebrate survival and identity. Madam President, emancipation also means cultural survival, and this must be celebrated. The true date is August 1st. Out of slavery came rhythm, language, food, culture that cannot be erased from carnival to calypso, from creole language to Rastafari, black identity all bloomed in the ashes of oppression.

Madam President, today we celebrate that cultural fire. We celebrate that we are still here, that our story didn't end with chains, it continues with pride, purpose and power. Madam President, let's not forget the chains were broken, but the system didn't disappear. After 1834 came exploitations, segregation, racism, poverty, injustice that still echo in certain areas today.

Madam President, Emancipation Day isn't just about looking back. It calls to look forward. I asked, "What are we doing to finish what our ancestors started"? Focusing on August 1st as Emancipation Day will provide the opportunity for us to be more focused and targeted in our efforts in bringing awareness and consciousness to our people through organised activities.

Madam President, observing Emancipation Day on August 1st would also remind

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us that this day connects us from the Caribbean to Africa, from Canada to the UK, and beyond. It reminds us that black liberation is global, that truth and justice know no boundaries. And so let us not treat August 1st as just a day off. Let it be an opportunity for reflection, education and mobilisation. A day to honour the past, challenge the present and shape the future; a future that is rooted in justice and dignity.

Madam President, as I close, I wish to say to those who fought for freedom, we say, remember. To those still fighting today, we say we continue, and to future generations, we promise we'll never forget. Thank you. **(Applause)**

Madam President: I thank you, Senator Thomas Gloria Thomas. I offer the floor to the proponent of the bill, the Leader of Government's Business.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, in wrapping up, I would like to make a few comments, and I would like to reemphasise the importance of recognising that special day, August 1st. As my colleague made his statement, which was emphasised by the Attorney General, freedom and emancipation are all in an incremental phase, and this is part of it.

Madam President, a couple of years ago, we said Grenada's history must be taught in school. We did that. Incremental. Madam President, the fact that at the end of July we will be having the Afreximbank here with its trade show is part of the advancement of our struggle and emancipation. So, bit by bit, we are getting there.

Declaring August 1st as the day we must commemorate it is not in isolation. It's a work in progress, and we will continue. Madam President, August 16, to me, I'm not throwing off anything for that. Whether I was born on a Thursday or the second. Whenever August 16 comes, Madam President, that's my birthday. I'm celebrating it, I'm not changing that.

August 3, is the day I got married, and it's dear to my soul, and I'm holding on tight to it. August 8, may her soul rest in peace, the day my mother passed away, I was only four years old. It means a lot to me. February 7, we're not trading that for anything, and

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we can go on. March 13. We must remember this day. We're not trading that for anything, Madam President.

May 1. If only this Government were to make any attempt and say, "André, the first Monday in May must be celebrated Labour Day", well, the streets will have the biggest demonstration in 10 years, right? **(Inaudible comment by a Senator)** That's the point. **(Laughter)** So, Madam President, August 1... I mean, I couldn't imagine we would have stayed here so long and debating this thing. But I think, according to André, it's all about using the opportunity to educate our people, and we must use it wisely, wisely.

Madam President, just to give you some kind of information, because we have not let it out to the public yet. Comrades, my colleagues, you are right, I'm the Minister for Culture. We have involved, from the very beginning... As a matter of fact, it was the Cultural Foundation and other agents who came to the Government and said, "We need to designate August 1st as Emancipation Day", and we listened to them. I took the initiative and said to them, "However, this day must be in collaboration with SADO. I would like it to remain in St. Andrew for now".

This is not part of legislation. We came here to discuss just a bank holiday. The activities that will take place are not what we may say now. Ten years later, somebody is going to say they don't want it there, and they want a list of activities. So, to come here and discuss festivals is irrelevant at this point in time, because we are not indispensable.

We are not here to plan for 100 years. We can lay a foundation and say, yes, we want to go in that direction, but, Madam President, the next generation and the generations to come will determine their own future. We cannot hold it against them. We cannot say that because we started to ride camels in the desert as a form of transportation, we should continue. The world is moving on. It's not waiting on anybody.

So, Madam President, yes, we will be working in collaboration, the Cultural Foundation, SAOD, and the National Celebration Committee will all be coming together to make that celebration, but we are not here to discuss the celebration and the activities of the celebration. We are here to declare the 1st of August as the bank holiday and not just the first Monday in August. That is what we have here to discuss, and that is what

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has been laid in this House, Madam President.

So, Madam President, in closing, just let me say that I thank everybody for their support and their presentation here. I think we made maximum use of it for the last three and a half hours. I think the Grenadian people will be very happy, and they will have a different mind-set in terms of what emancipation really means and how we can use it to advance our struggle, to advance our development, and make Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique a better place. I thank you. **(Applause)**

Madam President: I thank the Leader of Government's Business, Senator Adrian Thomas.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Clerk: A Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Bank Holidays (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Madam President: Honourable Senator, Adrian Thomas.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam President, I beg to move that the Senate resolves itself into a Committee of the whole Senate to consider the Bill, Clause by Clause.

Question put and agreed to.

Senate in Committee.

Senate resumed.

Madam President: I have the honour to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the whole Senate and passed without amendment. Senator Thomas.

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Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam President, I beg to move that the Chair's Report be adopted.

Question put and agreed to.

Chairman's Report adopted.

Madam President: Honourable Senator.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam President, I beg to move that the third reading of the Bill be taken at this time.

Madam President: Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Clerk: A Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Bank Holidays (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Madam President: Honourable Leader of Government's Business.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, I beg to introduce for first reading a Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, the Grenada Tourism Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Clerk: A Bill which seeks to amend the Grenada Tourism Authority Act, No. 42 of 2013, to empower the Grenada Tourism Authority to collect fees that are required or prescribed under another enactment, shortly entitled, Grenada Tourism Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

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Madam President: Leader of Government's Business.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam President, I beg to move that the relevant Standing Order of the Senate be suspended, to enable the Bill to be taken through all the stages at this Sitting.

Question put and agreed to.

Relevant Standing Order suspended.

Madam President: Honourable Senator.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam President, I beg to move that the second reading of the Bill be taken at this time.

Question put.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam President, the Grenada Tourism Authority, presently, is one of the main architects of the development of the tourism industry in Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique. I'm happy to say that in consultation and collaboration, the Grenada Tourism Authority and the Ministry of Tourism have been working very hard to make sure that the Industry gets to a level that it can sustain itself. Madam President, sustainable tourism is something that we want to promote. It's an Industry that has the ability and the potential to finance itself and to generate the kind of monies needed, in order to create the kind of impact we want on our citizens.

However, Madam President, if we don't have the mechanism in place to make sure that happens, then it won't happen. It can't be a case where an industry that has so much potential is relying on the Government, on the Consolidated Funds, year after year, to finance that industry. The economist would tell you, "If you want to make money, you

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have to spend money". Therefore, the Government has been spending, but there are many avenues that we can explore, whereby we can generate the kind of capital that the industry is so badly in need of.

Hence the reason why, Madam President, this Bill that we're bringing here today, is seeking to amend the principal Act, the Grenada Tourism Authority Act, No. 42 of 2013. This Amendment, Madam President, will empower the Authority to collect fees, much more than they're collecting presently; much more than the Ministry is collecting. And therefore, we're calling and we're presenting here today, Madam President, the Amendment to sections 38 and 39 (d), which will empower the Grenada Tourism Authority to collect fees that are prescribed under any other enactment, or authorised under any other legally binding arrangement. So those two sections, Madam President, we'll be focusing on.

Madam President, under subsection (1)... Madam President, under section 38 of the principal Act, it'll be amended as follows—

(a) by numbering the subsection as subsection (1);

(b) by inserting after the subsection the following new subsection— (2)

So those are the two amendments, Madam President, that we're making here.

The Bill contains three clauses. Clause 1 of the Bill provides for the short title of the Bill, and clause 2 of the Bill provides for the amendment of section 38 of the principal Act to insert a new subsection.

Madam President, clause 3 of the Bill provides for the amendment of section 39 (d) of the principal Act, to be read as follows— "All amounts collected under the Authority of regulations made under this Act, or under the Authority of any other enactment". So these three clauses, Madam President, when enacted, the GTA will have the power to visit and establish mechanisms in place, so that we can establish important sites, whereby we can collect the necessary funds.

For example, the Molinere Underwater Sculpture Park, Madam President. Those things have been established and costed the Government a lot money, but we don't have a system in place to collect any fees, of persons' visiting those areas and so, other people

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have been able to capitalise on the opportunity and is able to make monies that the Authority, who established the site, can't collect.

Madam President, we have some of the Marine Protected Areas, Clarkes Court Bay, Grand Anse, and Sandy Island. All these sites, Madam President, can generate capital, and we want to make sure that it happens this time around.

Madam President, I'm positively sure that the people visiting those sites, and I'm talking about local visitors and foreign visitors, nobody really complains about making a contribution to sustain something that they enjoy. I know for a fact, Madam President, that most of the fees in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique are reasonable and fair.

So, I believe that the people patronising the Tourism Authority, the Ministry of Tourism, and the people visiting Grenada, would be quite happy to pay that small fee for the level of enjoyment that they have. So, Madam President, without further ado, I'll now commend this Bill to the House for consideration and approval.

Madam President: Thank you, Senator; if I might be permitted two points of clarification, as the debate gets ready to take off. I want to clarify for myself whether these sites are all public or a combination of public and private sites. Are you hearing me? Should I start again?

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Please start again.

Madam President: Thank you for your presentation of the proposed legislation. I wanted to find out whether or not these sites, that are now going to have a fee attached to them, are all state-owned property or private property. For example, Molinere, Grand Anse, waterfalls, and so on. Are these all state-owned properties? And before you get to your feet, the second question is, you said a small fee will be attached to them, do you have an idea what the range of the fees that will be attached now is? Thank you, Senator Adrian.

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Sen. the Hon. Adrain Thomas: Thank you. Thank you very much, Madam President. Well, Madam President, we're not talking about the private entities per se, but the law will allow the Grenada Tourism Authority to make arrangements with other entities, and NAWASA may have control over all bodies of water in Grenada. There may be a waterfall that could be converted into a tourism site. NAWASA and GTA can engage with each other, and we can create something. We have what you call the Community-Tourism, in the Ministry of Tourism presently, where we try to work with the private entities, and we can collaborate. But, there's no particular fee that has been submitted as yet...

Madam President: And when will these fees be... I guess at the passage of the legislation, we'll know when the charges will start, so I could go before the charges start.
(Laughter)

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam President, I can't give you the exact time in terms of... AG?

(Inaudible comment by Senator the Honourable Claudette Joseph)

Madam President: ... After the passage of the legislation? Thank you. Thank you, Senator Thomas. The floor is open.

Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair: Yes, Madam President, thank you.

Madam President: Senator St. Clair.

Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair: Yes, Madam President. As I start to comment on this, Madam President. Well, I'm not too sure if it's gazetted yet, but the Water Resource Management Bill should have put the Water Resource Management Unit in

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charge of this water business. NAWASA shouldn't be... And the word was maybe, you know, the Honourable Member... Next thing, NAWASA feel they can take control of all the water again? I know this unit is supposed to oversee all the water.

But again, Madam President, we asked a series of questions pertaining to this important Bill. I was wondering where we were going. I must commend the Honourable Member for presenting this Bill very adequately. I know his Ministry, and so you're very good and clear. But, Madam President, had some very important questions. **(Inaudible comment by a Senator)** No, you had some important questions, private properties, etcetera. Those were areas that you could look at, which I would speak about, but specifically, I got excited when we started speaking about the Marine Protected Areas and those areas.

In my personal explanation, and being a member of the Conservation Caucus, that has been a concern in terms of... And even so, the fisherfolks, other people and the stakeholders regarding all of these MPAs, and the same sculpture park and so on. How do we monetise this, and ensure that there's sustainable financing, because you have to pay for the boats? You have to pay people on the boat. You have to pay the guards who safeguard and look at all of those things; life-jackets for them, all of those things have a cost. And when you look at the budget line in the regular Government Consolidated Fund, it's nothing much, and so I fully endorse that.

And of course, many other people I've spoken to in preparation to go to the conference in France, spoke about how we really do that, and I've recognised it's the Government's direct funds. So when I heard the Honourable Member spoke about this mechanism, will allow for much more money to be collected than how much is collected now, in fact, I don't even think any money is being collected now, and no mechanism is in place because you don't have nobody there managing and even protecting the area or guarding it. People can pollute it and do all sorts of things there, and maybe we need to start looking at how cameras and other things can be used to guard and improve the service and so on.

So what? It's like paying for something, you are able to offer more, and so I'm

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happy to see that because having in from the GCNA standpoint, we're deeply involved in the Agro Tourism linkage. Many other farmers are looking at that opportunity for feeding and providing other types of agro-tourism experiences. The point is very critical. How does the Board of the Tourism Authority link with some of these people in facilitating certain experiences to our waterfalls, accessing through their property to get to those areas?

It's good. I've worked with the authorities' high command, and I'll say they're very good and competent. They know what they are about, and I have no fear that this wouldn't be a good thing. The issue would be, how will this money be used? How will it be entrusted, and used to develop and further protect and not cause them to use this as a main source for their own sustenance, rather than protecting those sorts of areas? So, that's my concern in terms of the utilisation of these new monies that will be coming in, and of course, we'll see them in the annual report. These are my comments on that, but I'll endorse that in line with—I think I can speak on it, on behalf of the caucus.

We'll want to see how that money will be spent. So, we would like to get some more details at a later stage. What will these fees look like? Because it doesn't make sense to go and say, "Well, no fees were collected before, we'll collect fees now", and you're collecting \$2, \$3 and \$5. Sometimes people value your things based on how you price them, and what we also have to do is upgrade the product, the experience, and all of these. It's not just going and visiting the sculpture park, but what other things are connected to that?

Because, for example, Madam President, I, actually, myself and Senator Rahaman, about two months ago, we went to this panel discussion with the Grenada Hotel and Tourism Association at the rooftop of some building, located at True Blue, and the idea was about how we should improve agro-tourism linkage. Senator Rahaman spoke on the issue of the business connected to tourism. And I met one of the ladies there, who's actively involved in one of those dive shops, and her concern was, okay, the folks come and go to dive, and what happens next? They're looking to have experiences to visit other sorts of sites on land.

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So, there's a significant interest in connecting that full experience, and so maximising on that opportunity is very important. In fact, we left there with a general agreement that among myself, the Tourism Authority folks, and ourselves, can easily put together a list of some of the possible sites that they can visit to start creating different tour packages and so on, not only for her own customers, but at a national perspective, which the Tourism Authority is very competent and capable to help design. I'm sure they'll be very happy to hear this, and I'm happy to hear this also.

What we'll want to see are the rates. Have it done properly, and how that money will be used. Will it be placed in a special fund, because who will then pay this guardian? Because if you're collecting the money from the private sector, even if it's your own MPA, you collected \$200,000, what's this money used for? Is it to service the boat, service the lifeguards that protect, maintenance of the Marine Protected Area, and half of the money goes to that? Then what are you using the other half for?

What about the livelihood of the fisherfolks? How can they have education sessions for the community, and more protection? For example, they use the whole issue of the FAD, the Fish Aggregating Devices, you need to train more people and build more of that for sustainable fishing. How do you educate the farmers and the nearby people using the land resources, which can impact pollution and all of those things? And lastly, how will the hotels and their guest contribute to some sort of fee because they have an open space of utilisation? We're not saying they have to pay to go to the beach, but that open space of utilisation, you know, the vendors on the beach have to get a license and they have to pay a fee, but what fee does the hotel pay? Is it out of the national tax? Is it...?

You see, I'm trying to broaden, Madam President, the scope of funding opportunities because all the users, for example, the Marine Protected Area in Grand Anse, are almost in the midst of the sea. Then you have those boat taxis and water taxis all running in that space. All of that can disrupt the whole fisheries and reef environment. So I'm raising this problem because from my knowledge and interface with those folks, we may sit down and discuss this thing here in a broad way, but then when it comes to

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the technical people, we create difficulties for them because we set up something that doesn't give them that teeth and that strength for them to do their work properly.

So I'm airing this because I know if you speak to them, brother Remey and all of these sorts of technical people on the ground, they'll say, "Well, Senator, you know, you all should have looked at that because, you know, xyz". So, I think a consultation with them in the Fisheries Department would be very critical and also the fisherfolks within the neighbouring areas. I thank you, Madam President.

Madam President: I thank you, Senator St. Clair, and Senator Salim Rahaman, you have the floor, Senator.

Sen. the Hon. Salim Rahaman: Thank you, Madam President. I rise to support this Bill, the Grenada Tourism Authority Bill, for several reasons. We need a better quality tourism product, and we're always trying to tweak and redefine what we offer and with what we offer, we can deepen the experience of the tourist, so that we can have repeat visits to our island, and this translates into our economy. Tourism is the largest driver of our economy, and so this Bill gives the authority an opportunity to earn some revenue outside of the Consolidated Fund, which is a very good initiative, business-wise.

I would like to propose an idea that I've seen in other countries, that you have a heritage site pass and with this heritage site pass, you can determine Leaper's Hill and other places like where the Old Plantation sites and so on of value, and you have two or three different tour options., let's just say that the Ministry of Tourism approves of, and then you have these site passes that can be sold through the tour operators and can be sold through the hotels.

So the hotels will sell these passes, even before the tourists come to Grenada. They can offer it to them, you know, while you're here, day one, we can do this, we can do snorkelling and so on around the... We can do the beaches, day two, we can do... We have two options for you: a historical tour, our option one is your heritage site pass, \$150 to access four sites and so on. You really build it out, and you have a product that you'll

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offer them so they can choose.

This is done in Mexico. This is done in Mexico. Mexico has this down pat, and so if they ever wanted to see what that is like, they can visit there, and you'll see that from the hotel. You can book before you arrive. You can book when you arrive. You can book when you're at the hotel, and they're very good at offering these packages, and they're very well done. So, meals and all that are included as well.

So it doesn't have to be, you're going to Grand Etang Lake and you're paying a little \$5 at the booth. This is moral thinking, and that's something that's sometimes even annoying, because when tourists come, they want to book things in advance. They want to know that you're prepared for them. They want an experience.

And so if you... You know, when you're booking, you have these options according to your interests. If you are a history buff or you want to, you know, learn about the plantation. So, for example, when you're passing outside of Gouyave, as you're about to enter to cross the bridge in Gouyave, there are ruins on the left-hand side. Many people don't know what that was used for.

I don't, can't recall the French word. Is it "beauséhir" or something like that, but that house was a storehouse that was used by the plantation. So when the ships from England would come, the produce from the plantations would be brought down the river into that storehouse and would be held there to await the arrival of the ships that were coming to collect.

In addition, when the ships collect, they will also offload implements, tools, forks, and spades or whatever it is they have to offload there, to be then brought back up to the plantation. We don't even have a plaque on one of those storehouses. As a matter of fact, there's a bar right next to that. We put bars all over the place whenever we feel like. So the point is, sites like that need to be part of deepening the experience, and that can be done when the Tourism Authority have access to be able to charge a fee, and together with the GHTA, they can come up with packages.

The important subject here is to consult with the operators, the taxi operators, and the hoteliers, to make sure that you find a product that is appealing to them and their

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plans, the tourist. At the end of the day, its success will depend on whether people are interested in it or not.

We already saw, if you recall, you use Annandale Falls as an example. Many of us would have gone there, you know, when we were children and so on. It was basically maintained by the Government. There was no cover charge. You just walked down to the river, and you might see a few people. You give them \$1 or \$2 to jump down, and that's about it. There was no refreshment. There were no restaurants. There was nobody really working there, and now, if you visit the site, it's privately run, run by lease. You can go there. You can have lunch. There's a facility there. There's an entrance fee, and so, there are jobs that have been created through this one site and that can be repeated at many different sites across the country. So, that's an example I just wanted to point to.

And then more robust training. In addition, with the GHTA, more robust training for your tour operators, your taxi operators and even your front desk hotel staff with regards to these products. That's important; some in-depth knowledge regarding these products, so that they help to sell the whole heritage sites.

And finally, my business people and I were discussing, and I don't want to say too much about this because it's still in discussion, but there's a need for a rest stop. You know, when you travel through the United States, you travel through many countries, you have rest stops every few exits on the highway and so on.

There's a need for a rest stop on the western side because tourist that are going all the way up to Sauteurs, there's no real place for the buses to stop where you can have, you know, local ice-cream, sampling of local chocolates, you can have some cultural experience, it's on the coast, and you really prepare a place where that is an official approved rest stop for tourists, so they can take a bathroom break, it's clean and so on. So, they're not just stopping on the corner of here or there with a view. You know this thing has to be planned properly.

So that's my final take on it, advice or recommendation. This has actually been planned, and there are business people who are interested in this. So if the Government wants to find out more about where the business people are talking about, we can

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definitely reach out to the businesses and business people that are interested in developing that site. So I fully support this. This is a step in the right direction. I thank you.

Madam President: I thank you, Senator Rahman, and thank you for your suggestions. Senator David Andrew. Senator Andrew.

Sen. the Hon. David Andrew: Madam President, thank you. I rise to support the Grenada Tourism Authority Amendment Bill, 2025, as presented by the Leader of Government's Business.

I think this is timely. Grenada has a number of excellent tourism products, but I would probably describe them as all virgin and primary, and with excellent potential for further development and more appropriate utilisation. The passage of this Bill allows for amassing great and collecting greater revenues, which in many ways could see the further development of those products.

I mean, I've gone to some places in some countries and you can almost spend a whole day in one side because from the one attraction there are so many derivatives and so many things you can do and Grenada needs to get to the place where the beauty that we have, and, you know, the treasures we have in our tourism products can be further exploited, and I mean this in the most sincerest term, further utilised so that we can better profit from it and our country would benefit.

But, you see, the tourism product that we are envisaging, and this comes at a timely place, because even from the Ministry of Education we are now looking at developing the hotel and tourism school to ensure that that holistic tourism product continues to be better shaped, better formed. So that forms yet another intervention that will strengthen the tourism product in Grenada. And so, I give my full support to the Bill as presented here today. Thank you.

Madam President: I thank you, Senator Andrew, Senator Claudette Joseph.

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Sen. the Hon. Claudette Joseph: Thank you, Madam President. I rise to give my full support to the Bill as presented before this Honourable House, as we continue to take steps to improve on our tourism product, the sector of the economy that contributes the most to GDP. We make this amendment to strengthen the functionality of the Tourism Authority to give it more leverage and wiggle room, so to speak, as it leads in the administration of our tourism product.

The Amendment would allow for the Tourism Authority to directly collect and properly utilise revenues derived from tourism sites. And one of the proper utilizations would be the development and further enhancement of these sites, making for an overall improved product for our visitors and, of course, locals alike.

So with these few words, Madam President, I commend the Bill to this Honourable House.

Madam President: I thank you, Senator Claudette Joseph, and I offer the floor to Senator Andre Lewis. You have the floor, Senator.

Sen. the Hon. Mondy André Lewis: Thank you very much, Madam President. And I would like to start where my colleague, Senator Joseph, more or less ended. Because in all of our discussions, I know it is the Tourism Authority we are speaking of and that instinctively speaks of the tourists. But, we also need to ensure that whatever local products we have are at a particular standard, a high standard, so that our locals can also enjoy them. And I know it was intended, but because he brought it out into something, I wanted to put it on the table too. Yes.

And it is important that that fees be collected. But I found it interesting, though, that the presenter of the Bill, the Leader of Government's Business, spoke about the sculpture, the underwater sculpture park, and if my memory serves me right, I think only recently, the ad may still be running.

There's an ad which speaks about x and y times. I think visitors are expected to pay a "small fee" in US or EC dollars. Yes? And it brings to mind the question of who is

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collecting that. Is it private? **(Inaudible comment by a Senator)** Well, is it Inland Revenue? Because, the way it is... If it is the Government, that is an important clarification for me. Because, in response to your question, Madam President, I was left with the impression that the Government spends a certain amount of money there, and somebody else is collecting for visiting. Yes. I came up with that inference, and I'm glad to know that that's not the case. Yes?

I will also wish to propose, if it is not yet done, for the places that you already have to pay for, because they are sites that you already have to pay to enter, that there should be a two-tier, at least two-tier, pricing system. There's no way, absolutely, no way will one expect a local to be paying the same fee as what I call a visit, an external visitor for want of a better word.

As a matter of fact, you may even wish to consider what you call national-regionals, CARICOM and beyond. I mean, as we work towards the integration of our people, the free movement of our people... Because pricing, price is a means of a way that one can send messages, and so, the importance that you place on different segments of the market, if I may use that.

Senator Rahaman, I want to take up on a point that you raised. The suggestion of a rest stop, yes, along the western side. But what I wish to take up is the point that you raised, that there are businesses, in the private sector, who may be waiting on the Government, my interpretation, to do something. And I am wondering whether or not the reverse can be done. I know you have now made this public, but whether or not an approach could have been made. It is a business opportunity. It's a business opportunity, and probably therein lies the challenges our private sector has.

So when I walk through the Town of St. George or Grenville, other places, our traditional businesses, I do not see them. Right? And there is this feeling that our private sector is a bit restricted or reluctant to give true meaning to the greater the risk, the greater the return, or you'll be able to get a return if you invest. I don't know if there is some level of fear, but probably there is fear. Right? In terms of exposure. Right.

So I just thought that it's a brilliant idea, and also we should not wait. Those who

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can do it, and the state should consider it now. Not in this context, because a rest stop is important. I mean, how many times would a tourist go on the western side? It's important for this. Don't get me wrong. Right?

But the driving factor. I want to go beyond just the tourist. We have our people who travel that corridor every day, so, where are they using? You understand the point I'm making? So, I want us to move to that state where we can start looking at our given emphasis on what would make the quality of life for our people better, the experience as we travel, as we walk to the streets and St. George or Grenville, and someone wants to use a bathroom, are there facilities available? So this leads into the bigger issue.

I know many times what appears to drive us is how we make the lives of the people, the tourists that visit us, comfortable, but as we speak about Emancipation, we celebrated August 1st, I want us to move away from that. What I want us to do is to start with us. What can we do to improve the quality of life, which is not just at the workplace or in the home, but the quality they experience, for instance, what we call a public good? What can we do as we educate our people, in terms of littering, etcetera, and it is linked to tourism, right, it is linked to us, in providing the necessary facilities that will encourage people, not to have to go out of the way to be able to behave in a particular manner? So it is important.

There is also the issue of, as we expand the experiences, so in Annandale, for instance. In Annadale, for instance, the major community activity was the Annandale Falls. Annandale Falls provided an opportunity and avenue where people went, and that's where a lot of people learn to swim, almost everybody from Willis is a swimmer, with free access. So there are fallouts, even the jumpers.

I can't speak right now about what probably happened over the past year, but I'm aware that the jumpers who were apart of the association, and that's how they made their livelihood, who were impacted, this is a point I made in "This Place" when the idea came up about leasing the place, which is okay, but there ought to be arrangements, if there are not, to take into account the local experiences and the needs of the people.

So, for instance if I'm living in Willis, Annandale, and every Sunday I'm free to go

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to the to the waterfall to bathe, you're following me, right, how would I respond, react if there is now a business venture that tells me I could no longer come; if I come, I would have to pay x or y amount? Arrangements. So as we go into... And certainly, this arrangement here now, in terms of collecting the fees, and I support it, let me make that point, would also mean now that the Tourism Authority will, now give focused attention to revenue generation at different sites, where they will have to be maintained, etcetera.

But as we do that, I want us to pay attention to the local cultural norms and social things and not displace them, but, as a matter of fact, even enhance them where it is possible. This is my contribution that I wish to make here. And, yes, we have lost the opportunity in the past to collect revenue because, though when we go places we have to pay to go to see certain things, and therefore that is okay in my view. Thank you very much.

Madam President: I thank you, Senator Lewis, and I offer the floor for your summation, I believe, Senator.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Thank you very much, Madam President. I'm very grateful and thankful for the support that has been shown on both sides of the House for this very important Bill, and I think that the Tourism Authority will be very happy to know that everybody is behind this Bill.

I want to thank Senator Rahaman for the suggestions that he has made and put forward here and I want him to know that they have been fully noted and those are some observations that I've heard before and nothing really has been done about it, but it's something that, if we want to develop the tourism product and we want to sell Grenada as the destination or the "Spices of the Caribbean", then we definitely have to consider some of those suggestions that you have put forward there. And I will definitely reach out to the Business Committee and engage you all in some way or the other. Once again, I say thanks very much for your support.

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Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): A Bill for an Act shortly entitled, the Grenada Tourism Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Madam President: Senator Thomas.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam President, I beg to move that the Senate resolves itself into a Committee of the whole Senate to consider the Bill, Clause by Clause.

Question put and agreed to.

Senate in Committee.

Senate resumed.

Madam President: The Senate is resumed, and I have the honour to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the whole Senate and passed without amendment. Senator Thomas.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam President, I beg to move that the Chair's Report be adopted.

Question put and agreed to.

Chairman's Report adopted.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Madam President, I beg to move that the third reading of the Bill be taken at this time.

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Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): A Bill for an Act shortly entitled, the Grenada Tourism Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Item 16 – Public Business.

Item 17 – Adjournment.

Madam President: Senator Thomas.

Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas: Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I stand to move the adjournment of this Honourable House *sine die*.

Question put.

Madam President: Senator David Andrew.

Sen. the Hon. David Andrew: Madam President, thank you very much. I rise on the adjournment just to bring to the attention of this House and to our nation, words of commendation to all of the students who have been successful in the just-concluded Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment Examinations.

This year we had, and pardon me, I had all of this on my computer, and it just decided to reboot. **(Laughter)** Yes, it decided to reboot and upgrade and all of that. So, I'm just going to try to share briefly from my memory. **(Inaudible comment by a Senator)** Yes, I have a hard copy. That's good. **(Laughter)**

But I want to congratulate all of them. This year we had just about 1801. Just about 1,801 students wrote the exam. There was an internal component and an external component. I think 1797 wrote the external component, that's the CXC administrates, and of those 1700 and 1797, 1693 students all scored above the 50th percentile. Right?

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So, that reflects a 94, just about 94% success rate above the 50th percentile here in the CPA examination. **(Applause)**

We are going to continue to support the students, given our policy for universal secondary education and the fact that all of those students will be placed and are being placed in a secondary school, in keeping with our policy. We'll continue to work with those students. We'll continue to train our teachers. We have the summer institute coming up in the first couple of weeks in July, this month, so that we can continue to work with teachers and give them strategies and even work with the groups of students.

But more importantly, we'll continue to focus on the challenges of literacy and numeracy, where we need to address them earlier rather than later. In fact, I can share in a recent symposium, with the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange for Latin America and the Caribbean, in Guatemala, we had a declaration made, the declaration of Antigua where we committed, in that little antique little city in Guatemala, where we committed to getting rid of all of the illiteracies and lack of numeracy in Latin American and Caribbean. We are committed to doing that.

Some very innovative strategies will be utilised, and one of them would have to do with a concept popularised by an Indian professor that speaks to teaching at the right level. And as simple as it sounds, it speaks to not teaching based on age, but teaching based on the fundamental concepts. So, whether you're in grade one, grade two, grade three, grade four, if the competence is number recognition and you don't have it, you pull it all together. And so that's part of some of the strategies that we are going to pull in. But we're committed to doing that.

So we commend all of the teachers, all of the schools, the principals, parents and all those who have worked with our nation's children to see them reap this degree of success. At the Ministry of Education, I commend the team there. I know sometimes our people get very excited about getting the scores and getting results quickly, but we have to administer the scores.

In some territories, once the CXC releases the results, they have nothing else to do because parents have to go and scramble to know where their children are going, in

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some territories. So when you hear it released in some other territories, it's because they don't have any particular guidelines as to how children are placed. So parents have to go now and try to find out how their children are doing, where their children are, and if they can get a place somewhere. But we have a policy, a zoning policy, that allows for children to be zoned in the schools nearest to where they belong to facilitate the survival of schools in those districts and ease of access to continue education without sending the children far away from where they live. So we have to administer the exams and commendations to the team that worked feverishly to have those processed.

I also bring to the attention of the nation our upcoming math symposium. The Ministry of Education, as part of its clinical look at the pervasive problem we've had with math over the decades, has taken on the mandate to have a math strategy put together. How are we going to deal with this issue of math and the terrible performances in math and literacy, too, across Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique?

There are a number of interventions. Among them, we've commissioned research analysing the practices, people's attitude towards math, whether it's among teachers, among students, among parents and the actual performances over time. That's been analysed by one of our local doctors, Dr Andre Martin. So he's been doing that for the last couple of months. He's ready with the results. **(Applause)** Yes, that will form... Yes, he is from Victoria, my comrade. Yes, that will form part of what's going to be presented. The findings will be officially presented at that math symposium. It's carded for the 15th and 16th of July. We have invited academia from the region, the University of the West Indies, and the Chair of the Joint Board of Teacher Education, because all of these things have implications for how we prepare people to deliver mathematics education going forward.

So this symposium is just one. We have invited all stakeholders, former educators, mathematicians, retired persons, opposition personnel, and so, too, you are invited to be part of that conversation, because the mathematical challenge is a challenge for the whole nation. **(Inaudible comment by Senators)** Yes. It affects businesses. **(Inaudible comment by Senators)** Yes, and so, we invite the Business Community. We invite

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everybody because it affects every walk of life. And so, to be part of that conversation, as we continue to find our tune and shape the strategy that we will eventually get approved by Cabinet to reflect Grenada's approach to treating mathematics.

But I can tell you, though, off the bat, apart from the research that we commissioned and apart from the symposium that we are going to have, we are also going to commence specialist teaching of mathematics at the primary level. Right now, that does not happen in every school. It might happen in one or two schools, but what happens is that every primary school teacher teaches all the subjects. And so whether or not you're strongly competent in math, you still teach math, and that could, in some way, contribute to some of the crystallising problems that we have in mathematics.

So, as we review some of the practices that we don't feel work well, we want to make some of those changes. So, come September 2025, we are going to move towards specialist teaching of mathematics in a select number of primary schools. **(Applause)** We're not going back. The plan is to continue to roll that out into other schools.

Now, the truth is, there are some implications for how we redeploy staff, and there are workloads and all of that, so we just have to incrementally do it without displacing our human capital, but we have to train them. And that's why the conversation with the Joint Board of Teacher Education has to come in, because there will be robust training of our teachers. How do we teach this mathematics stuff? To make sure it becomes relevant, practical and that our students at the primary level could develop the right attitude in this position towards mathematics.

So I'm excited about all the things we have ahead, the symposium. All are invited to be a part of the conversation, July 15 and 16, and we look forward to rolling out specialised teaching of mathematics in schools, eventually, to all of the primary schools, and the same will follow for literacy as well, eventually, sooner than later, all of our strategies and attempts to stem and to deal with the sickening, low performances in literacy and numeracy across our education sector. Thank you very much, Madam President. **(Applause)**

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Madam President: Congratulations on your accomplishments with the exam and elsewhere in the proposal around teaching math, Senator. Thank you for reporting. Is that Senator Joseph? You requested the floor?

Sen. the Hon. Claudette Joseph: Yes, Madam President. I think I will be remiss if I do not, on this adjournment, take this moment to update this Honourable House and the nation on the matter of Grenada's participation for a consecutive year in the International Labour Conference just ended on 13th June. That participation, for a second consecutive year, was after a hiatus of 27 or so years, and it will perhaps come as a surprise to some Members of this House and the public that participation in the International Labour Conference is actually one of the treaty obligations of Grenada. We were not honouring our treaty obligation for about 27 or so years.

So I thought it would be good to apprise this House and place on the Hansard that we were able, sponsored by the Government, to attend the International Labour Conference, 2nd to 13th June, with a full delegation comprising our Member representing Labour in this Honourable House, Senator André Lewis, of course, representing workers at the conference. We had Ms. Sabina Peters representing employers, the Employer's Federation. We had the Labour Commissioner and I, representing the Government, and we were fully accredited as the tripartite arrangement was fully represented.

Last year, when we attended, it was more to get a sense of the lay of the land and to make sure that we came up to speed and in compliance with all our treaty obligation, like filing reports in relation to conventions that we have ratified, and also to develop a strategic working relationships with the ILO and its technical specialists, that would have helped us in meeting our reporting requirements and taking advantage with some of the matters offered by the ILO.

So, in the year since last year, we took time to do that, and I think we did that quite well, which allowed us in this year's conference to take an active and participatory role in the proceedings and, in fact, to emerge as one of the leading and more vocal CARICOM countries attending the ILC. In fact, in the lead up to the conference, and I imagine base

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on our participation in labour matters at CARICOM level, in the last year, I, in fact being the Chair of the ²COHSOD, the CARICOM grouping, Grenada was given the responsibility so to speak to be the lead on behalf of CARICOM on the agenda item relating to standard setting on decent work on the platform economy. Platform economy meaning online workers, and that's an area that the ILO is now looking at with a view to setting standards, whether by conventions, recommendations, or both.

So we were able to do that, I would say, ably so, myself as Government representative, and Senator Lewis addressed the plenary and spoke to the Director General's Report. And I think that for both of us, that was a first and indeed a proud moment, standing on the international stage alongside 186 other countries, speaking on behalf of our country.

I am told I did a decent job, and I heard Senator Lewis, and he did an excellent job as well in advocating. **(Applause)** And, of course, we had the Labour Commissioner making interventions and also addressing the plenary on behalf of CARICOM at the closing of the conference because I had by then already departed.

So, some of the conclusions we drew from the ILC are that our appearance for a second time demonstrated meaningful progress in transitioning from compliance and reintegration into the ILO System to effective participation in global labour governance. Our voice was indeed heard through all the participants of the tripartite arrangement representing Grenada.

Secondly, Grenada's leadership in the Standard-setting Committee, on realising decent work in the platform economy on behalf of CARICOM, significantly elevated CARICOM's visibility and influence at the conference and regional coordination mechanism, particularly through GRULAC. GRULAC, being the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean, and CARICOM, prove effective in consolidating shared positions and enhancing the region's negotiating power.

I must make that point, because at the ILC, it's a lot of lobbying and collaboration and grouping of Latin American countries and CARICOM countries, I think we did a good

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job at that and influenced the deliberations. I think on all levels. And then technical cooperation opportunities with ILO remains essential to building institutional capacity and implementing agreed labour standards and since last year we were able to tap in the technical cooperation offered by the ILO, and I would expect that we would be able to do so more in the coming year given our attendance at the ILC and our visible and active participation therein.

Thank you, Madam President. I just thought I would share with this Honourable House and my colleagues here. Thank you. **(Applause)**

Madam President: Thank you, Senator, for the work that you did at the conference and for reporting on it. And I know the partnership with Senator Lewis and other members of the Labour Committee and its leadership here in Grenada. Thank you. Other comments before we go to adjournment? Good. Hearing none, I have a little.

I want to remind us... There is a hand, André Lewis. You have the floor, Senator Lewis.

Sen. the Hon. Mondy André Lewis: Thank you very much, Madam President. I wish to use, following the contribution of Senator Andrew, in relation to the pointed approach to addressing some of the challenges, certainly in the math and then literacy just in case you have not done, and I expect that you did, it is important as your ministry addresses these matters, and as you seek to redeploy the resources that you have, there should be out going discussions with the Grenada Union of Teachers.

I didn't hear you mention it, but I didn't want the opportunity to pass, yes, and we just rely on it because these things are important. Right? We are absolutely convinced, as you will be aware, of the total commitment of teachers as a unit, and as we seek to address these issues, it must not be top down, but we can get valuable contributions. So that is my expectation, but I just raised it anyhow.

And then, inference to the point raised by Senator Joseph in relation to the ILC that although last year Grenada attended, the government is speaking as a separate

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partner, labour is speaking as a separate partner, and employees are speaking separately. So, that will last year most of the focus, and I know that was not what you intended, but just for the listening public and because you indicated that last year you were more active than this year, you ought to be clear. This is a Government, not Grenada, because Grenada is tripartite, but certainly, labour represented.

My colleague, comrade, Bert was directly involve an actively involve and all of the relevant discussions and so for the listening public, I didn't want you to come across as though well the tripartite; labour, Government and private sector went, or employers went and this year there were more participation relative to last year, because last year the time was spent by the three parties trying to come up to speed with some matters.

I just thought it was important to expand and to, yes, recognise that for the second time in 20-something years, Grenada, and I look forward to the continuation, and the minister knows that we have to get involved in some or continue some discussions as we sort some things out, which is not here obviously. I mean, I wouldn't know that. Yes. But just recognise the importance.

At this level you are taking on, certainly from labour's perspective, and well, the parties that is where decisions are made, to govern international labour relations, and it isn't much different to when we sit around the negotiating table. Minister, when you sit and you're trying to mediate in a matter, in our case, as that in a ministry, you played a role of mediating, but certainly when we are outside there, labour and employers were going at it because, and to be brutally frank, we confronted capital at the highest level. We spent five days before. No fault of the Government, let me just make the point.

We spent five days addressing a matter in the platform economy, and having to discuss over 200 or 300 proposed amendments to the document that was originally discussed when we last met, I think, in Guyana, the document. We were not able to come to an agreement on one single item until about the last day, last night. Why am I saying this?

I'm indicating this so that colleagues would appreciate that the battle for workers' rights is real. The battle. It is not just locally because the people that you are confronting

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are the owners, the movers and shakers who know that conventions, and that is why, Minister, there was a battle. An actual vote to have the platform economy fall under a convention because a convention is legally binding, enforceable, regulations are persuasive, etcetera. Right? And, you know, these battles are fought even against, because Government is the largest employer.

Government is the large employer, and countries, as was shown by our African comrades, African Governments, who are in the platform economy, have the greatest share of the level of exploitation, yes, the greatest the greatest share of the level of exploitation where these platform workers, and we have in Grenada too, who don't have any rights. So yes, these battles are important.

And just to recognise our attendance, Grenada's attendance, and the independence of the tripartite arrangement. So, the private sector or the employers are expected to speak independently. Labour is expected to speak independently and Government is expected to speak independently in, what we call, the need for social dialogue because if one party cannot make it, then even if the Government of Grenada goes, they would not be able to officially take part in any discussion and it would have to answer as to why the three parties are not represented. Yes. So, Grenada.... Yes, but it is based on the tripartite arrangement, as the minister has indicated.

And just also recognise her chairpersonship of the COHSOD arrangement. You know, for us, I guess in Grenada, we don't really pay much attention to that. When I say we don't pay attention, because it's just part of duty calls. Yes, and to join the Minister and others who spoke in congratulating all these successful students who have started a new journey, well, not a new journey, a new level in the journey, and to really make an appeal to make that connection between education and upward mobility—education and getting out of poverty. Education.

It is quite possible that many of us went to school. School was just part of the everyday occurrence, and many of us may have done well. But what is important, Minister, and for all of us to keep doing, is to speak to the younger people in school about the connection between education and living a better quality of life. Yes, there will be

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battles because the capitalists and bourgeoisie tried to get more for themselves, yes, it becomes a struggle. But there is a correlation between education and achievement.

And here, let me quickly clarify. I'm not speaking of the traditional education of what we call academics, but skills and all the different trading that are available, and as they enter the new world of secondary school to know that the parents and the teachers much more will be expected of us, yes, and for all of us to look out for each other and it comes to mind again the decision taken by the current administration to have at least, as an objective, one student, one university student per house hold, which I really want to also place on record again importance of these.

In places like Jamaica, because I know studies were actually done, and therefore, I'm expecting the same to happen in other areas. It has been found that as a result of the University of the West Indies over the years, and just the fact there are these academic, and I guess academic and higher learning, so let me say higher learning, and so it is not just the pure academic the positive impact it had on the immediate community; not just in terms of the economic opportunities that were presented, but in terms of real estate etcetera, but in terms of the quality of the discussions and the interests through the interaction of these institutes of higher learnings and immediate community; the positive impacted it had for the immediate community, and therefore, as we seek to enhance the secondary school experience and the tertiary experience, it most result in positives for our society.

So I wish to close and to wish workers all the very best, because it is the working-class children, mainly, that will be going to secondary school. We form the larger section of the economy. In some instances, these opportunities will bring more challenges, because I can tell you, and most of us will know, that even in our primary schools, you have to spend hundreds of dollars to get your books. Yes, secondary school will be much more expensive. Therefore, there'll be a higher...

As our workers' salaries remain, more or less the same, with a 3% increase here and there, which is really insignificant, yes, in the scheme of things, 4%, we don't expect to get 4% this year, we got 5% and we don't expect to get less than 5%. We introduce it.

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I happened to see through the side of my eyes, when I said 3%, one of my colleagues on the “Other Side” said, “No, it’s more than 3% it is 4%”. I am saying it is 5% and we don’t expect to get 5% come January, next year. We will cross that bridge when we get there.

But there will be more. So, for instance, even Senator David, and I know it is a challenge. As we zone, and I say “we” collectively, as a people, zone the student. You may find there are instances where it might be more challenging or costly to keep a child in a particular parish or area. Because of our skewed development, based on the way that our society has developed, especially with the downturn in the rural economy, most of our rural people have had to come to the town to work, and as they come to the town to work, their children have to come with them. Even in cases where a number of the children...

I am not faulting the system, colleague David. Senator David. I’m raising these things so that we can continue to give collective thought. Yes? Because there are a number of instances at the primary school level, the children are coming down with their parents, who go to the primary school. But now, because they are now entering secondary school and their arrangement is to zone them, and for all good reasons, I’m saying that there will be fallouts.

Therefore, the question as to... Well, a secondary level is not day care. The importance of community centres. The importance of centres where we can come together, yes, begs itself. Parents will now be scrambling. How do I... And there will be a lot of requests for transfers. And I know the ministry will not be able to accommodate everyone. Therefore, some schools may become bare. But these are challenges that workers will face, and this happens every year.

But because we are now speaking about August into September, we, every year, we will speak of it and see what can be done to help minimise and reduce these challenges, because when the parent has to continue to come to town to work because that’s where our development, unfortunately, has been, because we are yet to get into a serious and meaningful way to tell investors that when you come, if you want certain deals part of that deal you have to go to St. Andrew, part of that deal go to St. Patrick. We are

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yet to do that.

So rather than giving certain hotels or certain of the sweetheart arrangement that... Do you remember that bank that came recently, which was already signed, and we were trying to figure out who could sign an argument like that, in terms of everything that was given to them? It is okay to give those things, in my view, if you make certain demands, and one of these is the development of our rural economy. What has happened is that, as parents who have more challenges coming into town, it falls back on the teachers who know themselves after becoming parents. The role of the teachers, as we know, has been much more than just passing down what we call academics, and those kinds of things, with parenting.

So, through you, Madam President, I'm saying let us all give thought too. But, Minister David, as the Minister for Education, has a direct responsibility as a leader of the system to spearhead ongoing discussions, to see what can be done, to help minimise the challenges that every new term presents. Thank you very much.

Madam President: Thank you, Senator Lewis. Senator St. Clair

Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair: Thank you, Madam President. I won't be long. Sorry, I told him that today was going to be a short session, but today, it wasn't me. Very good. I like to see Senator Lewis' performance because I was getting very concerned about your tenacity, but it's all good.

Madam President, I want to just speak about three things. It's a very quick mention. Praedial larceny, you know, is a big issue, and, of course, notwithstanding, we may not see direct results in the morning. I must say that I was happy to see the 40-plus lieutenants, I would call them, under new arrangements within the Ministry of Agriculture, going through a graduation ceremony to which I attended sometime around the 5th, I think, or the 4th—sometime just before I travelled, at the Trade Centre Annexe. They would be deployed in different areas.

In fact, I'm seeing them. To me, almost every corner I turned these days, I'm

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seeing this Ministry of Agriculture van, and I'm seeing them in this uniform somewhere. So, we from the end, want to tell them to keep up the mission that they are committed to, and we trust that Inspector Daniel will do what he has do.

I had a briefing with the PS of Agriculture recently, with some thoughts, and we look forward to seeing the results. I know one of the main things that we discussed is the whole issue of ensuring that the vendors are registered, and that is a major important area of strategy. If you can reduce the potential of vendors purchasing illegally, then of course, you would help in that area. Notwithstanding, the other aspects they would walk on. So this we would monitor, and we trust that they will receive the support they need, and also, the collaboration from the police directly will be given in a timely manner. I know a good friend, Commissioner Cadet, is a very cooperative and supportive person, understanding those challenges himself, and we look forward to the improvement in this area.

Another important matter, Madam President, farmers are very concerned right now with, I wouldn't say where are we going with MNIB or what is the state of MNIB, but they are concerned that the market for their products, of course, you'd see some resurgence as we mentioned after Hurricane Ivan with various support and good weather and all of those things, and there is some concerns pertaining to that in terms of the market. Of course, you would say, well, they should know what they are marketing, run their thing as a business.

But we know, at the same time, we know at the same time, if you have an institution that's supposed to be doing something, let it do it well. Whilst you fix what needs to be fixed and not just let it go away, you know. So, you know, it's like the boy who knows he's expecting a shoe from his aunt or grandmother, and so, the ones he has, he's just letting them go down and not even taking care of them. At the end of the day, he may get the shoes, but he may never even get the shoes, and he has to be barefoot.

So in this situation, we don't want our farmers to be left with no options. That is an important area. In fact, there is a case where farmers are concerned with the sales of pineapples. That is a big issue in terms of how the whole marketing arrangement is

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established. I wouldn't go into too much detail at this stage, but this is an important area of concern.

And the last point is one announcement. It's political. The announcement is that last week, on Thursday, the 26th of June, the GCNA dedicated its complex at Beaulieu. Most people saw it on the news. We had different agro-tourism, agro-processing and other activities at that compound, and we also had the former Prime Minister, Minister for Agriculture and MP for the immediate area, who has actually been an advocate for value added and has spoken and written a lot about the Nutmeg Industry. And so the board in its wisdom decided to dedicate that complex in his name in collaboration with the family, because if the family didn't agree, they couldn't have that idea.

So I say this here for a particular reason. The sector, the agro-tourism linkage, but more so the late George Brizan, himself, who walked through these walls in all capacities; politically, and for that, the record shall show that he has been honoured by the association for his work and contribution with the endorsement of his family.

Of course, we had almost 200 persons in attendance, including the Minister for Agriculture, Prime Minister, designated speaker, the Ministry of Finance, Minister Cornwall and, of course, the MP for the area, Honourable Ron Redhead, and, of course, our Gracious Governor-General, who was there to cut the ribbon.

So, I put this here on the record as a mark for him and the contribution he has made to this country and the example that he left for us to all follow, and with these remarks, I say thank you.

Madam President: And I say thank you to you, and the GCNA for paying tribute in a meaningful, sustainable and developmental way to one of Grenada's stalwart leaders in so many fields, as an author, an agriculturalist, teacher, political leader, family man, just a wonderful son of the soil. Thank you for honouring him, and we ought to publicise the George Brizan Centre, is it? The George Brizan Exhibition?

Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair: It is the George Brizan House of Nutmeg.

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Madam President: And it is permanently based at the Beaulieu GCNA?

Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair: The Beaulieu facility is that physical facility, so the name of the building now is the George Brizan House of Nutmeg; the whole complex. So, in addition, what is happening, we would have a whole programme throughout the year that would define, maybe have lecture series, different things that would be taking place. So, the name of the area is the “George Brizan House of Nutmeg”. That’s the official name. Senator Lewis, and my good friend here, and Senator Seville Francis, I am happy that you all were able to make it to the session from this House here. Thank you.

Madam President: Thanks to all the Senators who attended, and thank you, Senator St. Clair and the GCNA. Any other comments?

So in closing, let me just say that on the 1st of July, 2025, all the people of Grenada, the State of Grenada, especially the parishes of Petite Martinique and Carriacou and St. Patrick, who was so devastated by Hurricane Beryl, we remember and we continue to stand with you and we are proud of the resilience that you and your families have shown, and we encourage you to continue.

I also want to congratulate all the students and the team led by the team leader, Minister for Education, for their success in the CXC examination and trust that your experiences in secondary school will bring out the brilliance, the joy, the happiness and the transformation of one university student in each household over the years to come through you.

And to say that I am proud of the Senate, the direction of travel in which we are heading with the two Bills passed reveals a good partnership in facilitating the state in its version of going forward, moving our nation forward. We have the, what Senator Gloria Thomas called, a new day, Emancipation Day, now August 1st, a day of, as she said, and I quote, “Reflection, education and mobilisation”, quite a bit that population can do within that framework.

And as the presenter of the Bill, Leader of Government’s Business, Senator Adrian

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Thomas said, “The struggle for our emancipation continues; a luta continua”. Our struggle for full emancipation continues. But we are beginning now, to own ourselves through our history and how we celebrate it and also the other Bill through the ownership and be able to charge fees for our natural product.

The report on the Formation of the Environmental Conservation Caucus is very good news. I want to thank you, Senator St. Clair, while you were in Nice, I was in Berlin, and it was the very same thing that we are called upon to act actively and focus, in this case, nationally determined contributions to reduce emissions, as is your case in the larger framework of conservation, land and sea.

So the Senate, in fact, while I was there attending that meeting, I’m still in negotiations for Parliament to become involved in the environmental movement and the environmental agenda, globally. There is some interest on the part of European countries in supporting Grenada’s completion of its NDC 3.0. NDC is not what we know; NDC is the Nationally Determined Contribution, and completing it by having the Parliament become involved. So we hope that comes through, and we will be leaning on the Conservation Caucus for support.

Regarding the meeting that will be held in Grenada towards the end of the month, the seminar for Caribbean and African Investment Collaboration, thank you for reporting on that, Senator Rahaman. It’s a major opportunity for us to consolidate our Emancipation, isn’t it, through friendships, through investments and trade generally? I do hope that there is an opportunity for those persons who are coming both from the Caribbean and from Africa, to move beyond St. George and see Grenada in its totality. So we wish for success for them and for Grenada.

All other Senators and points of contributions are highly appreciated, and with your permission. The Motion on the floor for the adjournment of this session, July 1, 2025, session of the Senate, is proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

The Sitting of the Senate adjourned sine die at 2:26 p.m.

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