



GRENADA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

(HANSARD)

**SECOND SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT**

**OFFICIAL REPORT**

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**SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
*(Joint Sitting to Commemorate Grenada's 50th Anniversary)*

TUESDAY 6TH FEBRUARY, 2024

***Sitting of the Senate and Houses of Representatives  
To commemorate Grenada's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence  
held on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2024  
at Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George***

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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 Evelyn 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 Claudette Joseph    | - | Attorney General and Minister for Legal Affairs, Labour and Consumer Affairs   |
| Senator the Honourable Gayton J. La Crette | - | Minister for Youth and Sports  |
| 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 Katisha Douglas     | - | Opposition Member of the Senate  |
| Senator the Honourable Neilon Franklyn     | - | Opposition Member of the Senate  |
| 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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**Attendance**

**PRESENT**

Mr. Speaker  
Honourable Leo Cato, MP  
*in the Chair*

Honourable Dickon Mitchell, MP <i>(St. David)</i>	- Prime Minister & and Minister for National Security, Home Affairs, Public Administration, Information and Disaster Management, Infrastructure and Physical Development, Public Utilities, Civil Aviation & Transport and Information and Communications Technology
Honourable Philip A. Telesford, MP <i>(St. George South-East)</i>	- Minister for Health
Honourable Joseph Andall, MP <i>(St. Patrick West)</i>	- Minister for Foreign Affairs, Trade & Export Development
Honourable Lennox John Andrews, MP <i>(St. Andrew South West)</i>	- Minister for Economic Development, Planning and Co-operatives, Agriculture & Lands, Forestry and Marine Resources
Honourable Tevin Andrews, MP <i>(Carriacou &amp; Petite Martinique)</i>	- Ministry of Carriacou, Petite Martinique Affairs and Local Government
Honourable Dennis Cornwall, MP <i>(St. Patrick East)</i>	- Minister for Finance
Honourable Kerryne Z. James, MP <i>(St. John)</i>	- Minister for Climate Resilience, the Environment and Renewable Energy
Honourable Ron Livingston Redhead, MP <i>(St. George North-East)</i>	- Member
Honourable Delma Thomas, MP <i>(St. Andrew North-West)</i>	- Minister for Mental Health, Wellness, and Religious Affairs, with a special focus on the Mt. Gay Psychiatric Hospital
Honourable Andy Williams, MP <i>(St. George South)</i>	- Minister for Mobilisation, Implementation and Transformation
Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith C. Mitchell, PC, MP, JP <i>(St. George North-West)</i>	- Leader of His Majesty's Opposition
Honourable. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, MP <i>(St. Mark)</i>	- Deputy Speaker
Honourable Peter David, MP <i>(Town of St. George)</i>	- Member
Honourable Kate Lewis-Peters, MP <i>(St. Andrew North-East)</i>	- Member
Honourable Emmalin Pierre, MP <i>(St. Andrew South-East)</i>	- Member

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**Prayers**

**The Joint Sitting of the Houses began at 9:12 a.m.**

**Madam President:** Honourable Members, warm and happy greetings to you as we gather for this Special Joint Sitting of Parliament to mark Grenada's 50th Anniversary of Political Independence. Congratulations, Grenada, and welcome all.

Honourable Members, the President of Ghana, His Excellency Nana Akufo-Addo, has joined us and is here to celebrate with us. Honourable Members, is it your wish that an invitation be extended to His Excellency to join us in this Chamber?

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Madam President:** Thank you. The President of...

**Mr. Speaker:** Mr. Clerk, would you please invite the President of Ghana?

**The Clerk bows and takes leave of the Chamber to invite the President of Ghana.**

**The Clerk returns to the Chamber.**

**The President of Ghana enters the Chamber, followed by the Aide-de-camp.**

**Madam President:** Let us pray.

**(Prayer was said)**

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

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Pray be seated. Honourable Prime Minister.

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**Motions**

**Hon. Dickon Mitchell:** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, good morning. I rise to read the following Motion standing in my name.

**MOTION FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GRENADA**

Madam President, Mr. Speaker.

**WHEREAS** Camahogne and her indigenous people, the Kalinagos, existed for many years as a sustainable and thriving order;

**AND WHEREAS** Camahogne was sighted in 1498 by the Europeans but was not colonised until 1649 by the French, due to resistance from the indigenous peoples;

**AND WHEREAS** on 10th February 1763, the French ceded Camahogne, which was renamed Grenada, to the British under the Treaty of Paris;

**AND WHEREAS** in 1779, there was a war between the British and the French over the possession of Grenada, with the French ruling Grenada from 1779 and Grenada being returned to the British in 1783;

**AND WHEREAS** from 1958 to 1962, Grenada was a part of the Federation of the West Indies, although remaining under British rule;

**AND WHEREAS** on 3rd March 1967, Grenada was granted full autonomy over its internal affairs as an Associated State;

**AND WHEREAS** Grenada attained Independence on Thursday, 7th February 1974 under the leadership of Sir Eric Matthew Gairy and became a Member of the Commonwealth of Nations;

**AND WHEREAS** 7th February 2024 marks 50 years of the Independence of Grenada from Colonial rule and both Houses of Parliament are desirous of marking this milestone;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** further endorsed at this Special Joint Sitting of the Houses of Parliament held at Mt. Wheldale, St. George, this 6th day of February 2024, is the sentiment of the Motion of 11th December 1973 by the House of Commons of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, which read, and I quote: "That the Grenada Termination of Association Order 1973, a draft of which was laid before this House on 22nd November, be approved.", and which took effect on 7th February 1974;

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**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Houses of Parliament of Grenada at this Joint Sitting record heartfelt independence wishes to all the citizens of the State of Grenada.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Prime Minister. Honourable MP for the Constituency of St. Mark.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Motion as presented by the Prime Minister and Member for St. David.

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

**Hon. Philip Telesford:** O' give thanks unto God: for his mercy endureth forever. To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth forever. Madam President, Mr. Speaker. I rise to register my support for the Motion as presented by the Honourable Prime Minister and express profound congratulations to the people of Grenada, both at home and abroad, on the occasion of our 50th Anniversary of Independence.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I stand as a proud Member of Parliament representing the constituency of St. George South-East, a constituency deeply rooted in the Grenadian history and culture.

At St. Paul's and the wider constituency, the Common Cheros Steel Band and Mass Camp punctuate our culture and heritage. Our churches, like the Roxborough Catholic Church, keep our spiritual values alive. The St. Paul's Community Centre serves as a hub for cultural activities and the unifying place where we all meet to skill train for the purposes of entertainment and cultural development. And yes, the St. Paul's Model School, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, served as a model for primary education here in Grenada for many years, now renamed the St. Paul's Government School.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, St. George South East carries a very rich

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history, Fort Frederick, Fort Matthew and Fort Adolphus as well as the Ministerial Complex, the Botanical Gardens, the Richmond Hill Prison, the Richmond Hill Home for the Age as well as the Chemin River which serves as a perpetual supply of water...

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable.

**Hon. Philip Telesford:** ... to farmers at the Hope Vale...

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable...

**Hon. Philip Telesford:** ... and surrounding areas.

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business. I want to let you go on, but I'll give you another time slot for you to finish. **(Laughter)** Is it okay? I want to let you go on, but I'll give you another time slot for you to finish. Is it all right? Right, so you will continue shortly.

**Hon. Philip Telesford:** Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

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

**Madam President:** Leader of Government's Business in the Senate, Honourable Adrian Thomas, you have the floor, sir.

**Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas:** Madam President, Mr. Speaker. I wish to associate the Senate with the sentiments of the Motion.

**Madam President:** Thank you, sir. Leader of Opposition Business in the Senate, Senator Norland Cox from the great paradise of Carriacou.

**Sen. the Hon. Norland Cox:** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I second the

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Motion. Thank you.

**Madam President:** Thank you, Senator Cox.

**Madam President proposed the question to the Senate.**

**Mr. Speaker proposed the question to the House of Representatives.**

**Mr. Speaker:** I now invite the Leader of Government's Business to continue his contributions. Let me also say that Members are asked to keep their contribution within three minutes. Right? So, try your best to keep your contribution within three minutes.

**Hon. Philip Telesford:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will only take two minutes. **(Laughter)** So, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, St. George South East carries a very rich history. Our fort, Fort Frederick, Fort Matthew, and Fort Adolphus as well as the Ministerial Complex at the Botanical Gardens, the Richmond Hill Prison, the Richmond Hill Home for the Age as well as the Chemin River which serves as a perpetual supply of water for farmers at Hope Vale and surrounding areas all tell colourful stories of our history within the constituency.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, the Richmond Hill Lawn Tennis Court, which was home to many local and regional Tennis Championships over the years, which saw the likes of Hayden Ashton emerge as a world-class player.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, the political landscape in St. George South-East has been dominated by two main political figures over the last 50 years, mainly Dr. Francis Alexis and Mr. Gregory Bowen. Mr. Carl Hood, though not for an extended period of time, has played a noticeable role in our political evolution.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, St. George South-East, is home to many noticeable calypsonians like David Aban "Chain", Cecil Belfon "The Flying Turkey", and many more.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, this 50-year Anniversary marks the end of one

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chapter in our history, but now turns a fresh new page, a blank page in this new book called "***Vision 75***". The vision has been clearly written and articulated by our Prime Minister. I ask Almighty God to bless "***Vision 75***", to bless our Prime Minister and all of us with the wisdom to live the vision with vibrancy and grace, recognising that it is not by might, nor by power, but by the spirit of the Lord that we achieve this vision.

I now take this opportunity once again to wish every Grenadian at home and abroad a Happy 50th Anniversary of Independence as we celebrate as "One People, One Journey, One Future", for greatness going up, up and up. May God bless Grenada. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. Thank you very much, Leader of Government's Business. I just want us to recognise the future of the Nation, our nation's high school students are here with us. **(Applause)**

Madam President and I have agreed that contributions would go this way, down the right side, of course, the Opposition Leader would not speak now. He and the Prime Minister would close. So the contributions go down the right side, and then we come to the left. Madam President and I have agreed to do this. So after the Leader of Government's Business is the next MP next to him. Thank you.

**Hon. Joseph Andall:** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, fellow Members of Parliament, Happy Newish Year **(laughter)** and good morning to all.

Mr. Speaker, it is a singular pleasure for me to say welcome to our host, His Excellency Nana Akufo-Addo, the President of the Republic of Ghana **(applause)** and his delegation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Motion put forward by the Honourable Prime Minister. Today, as we celebrate our jubilee, we must reflect on the journey that we have undertaken to get to this point. We must recognise that we had a great inheritance and that we have a solemn responsibility to pass on to future generations a better Grenada than the one that we have inherited.

Mr. Speaker, it is quite fitting that we have made this connection to the African motherland at the celebration of our jubilee. **(Applause)** Centuries ago, our

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foreparents were violently uprooted and transplanted to these colonies for the enrichment of Europe. And today, Mr. Speaker, I joined with my colleagues across the Caribbean in issuing the call for reparations. **(Applause)** Ghana, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, has always been a beacon of hope for us in the diaspora, and today we recall the memory of the great Kwame Nkrumah. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker, coming from the northernmost parish of St. Patrick, I am proud to say that we have inherited the traits of our African ancestors and also those of the Kalinago people, who were the first peoples to inhabit this island. Let us recall, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, that it was at Sauteurs that the Kalinago people made their last heroic stance against European invasion and colonisation. **(Applause)** And it's for good reason that St. Patrick is referred to as the "Historical and Cultural Capital" of Grenada.

Our sons and daughters have contributed immensely to the development of our country in every sphere imaginable, education, music, arts, politics, and business, and today I pay tribute to my predecessors who have served as Parliamentary Representatives in the great parish of St. Patrick. I'm happy to see among us here, Honourable Kenny Lalsingh. **(Applause)** I must mention my immediate predecessor, the Honourable Anthony Boatswain. **(Applause)** The Honourable Joseph Gilbert. **(Applause)** The late Honourable Wellington Friday **(applause)**, a member of that iconic clan.

And it is quite fitting, Mr. Speaker, that on the celebration of our jubilee, that the cultural capital, St. Patrick was able to produce the Calypso Monarch marking this occasion, so I pay tribute **(applause)** to my good friend Finley "Scholar" Jeffrey, and I take the opportunity also to pay tribute to his father, Mr. Augustine Hennessy Jeffrey, who is an icon in the Short Knee Movement. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the great people of St. Patrick, in particular St. Patrick West, I would like to wish all of us a very Happy 50th Independence Anniversary, and I again issue a warm welcome to President Akufo-Addo and his delegation from the Republic of Ghana. I thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable MP for St. Andrew South West.

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**Hon. Lennox Andrews:** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I stand to give support to the Motion that is before us as presented by our dear Prime Minister.

I wish to begin by expressing welcome to the President of Ghana and his delegation and to thank them for their decision to join us here for our 50th Anniversary Independence celebration, thereby being part of the glorious pages of history that are written here today.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, the view is widely expressed that what we have achieved from Britain on February 7, 1974, was political independence, but that political independence would have set the stage for us as a nation and as a people to work together to achieve our economic independence. Which means, Mr. Speaker, that as a nation and as a people we don't necessarily have to produce for ourselves the range of goods and services that we consume, but we must be in a position to be able to pay to pay for those goods and services that we consume but we do not produce. In the final analysis, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, what we hope to achieve with our economic independence is a continuous improvement in the lives of our people.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, our leaders then, Sir Eric, Ben Jones, Nadia Benjamin, which is here with us today **(applause)** Waple Nedd and others they thought that our relations with the Mother Country did not allow for the economic development of our homeland and that they were of the view that they were education enough, capable enough and committed enough to take the responsibility of leading and directing our country's development for the benefit of all Grenadians.

And therefore, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, with political independence came a sense of national pride, came a sense of patriotism, a sense of inward looking, a sense of belonging and a sense of love for one's homeland and for one's people. But given the good intentions of our early leaders, many would have asked, have we as a nation and as a people, really achieved that economic independence?

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the answer to this question, one thing remains clear. The search for our economic independence is a continuous commitment by the people of this country. Therefore, I want to postulate that to achieve economic independence, we must work and we must produce. In other

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words, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, we must have industry and pride. Our pride lies in our industry. Therefore, if we have no industry, we have no pride.

Therefore, as a Government, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, what we have to do is to put our people to work. As a Government, we must create the conditions that would give our people the individual freedom to work within the confines of the law and to produce goods and services for which there is a demand so that they can earn a decent income and achieve the economic independence and through the invisible hand, the economic independence of our country.

And in that regard, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, the next 50 years must be years of great expectations in which our people are collectively and conscientiously working together to achieve a particular outcome for the common good and that was eloquently and passionately enunciated and outline by our Prime Minister in his visionary and captivating **(applause)** discourse to the nation last night at the Grenada Trade Centre.

And so, Madam President, and, Mr. Speaker, I feel comfortable to say that today like the days of the Revolution, Grenada have a plan and Grenada also have the quality leadership that can guide the process of our development, **(applause)** **(sound of time bell)** that can bring out the best in our people...

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable, the bell says that your time is up.

**Hon. Lennox Andrews:** One minute?

**Mr. Speaker:** Give you one minute? All right. Try to close in one minute.

**Hon. Lennox Andrews:** ... That can unite our people in a common ideal and create the conditions for continuous social and economic transformation of our homeland and people, so that there will be no more poor and vulnerable in this country. **(Applause)** Thank you, Madam President, and Mr. Speaker.

And I wish that we will all have a meaningful and enjoyable 50th Anniversary Celebration of our Independence. **(Applause)**

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**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable MP for Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

**Hon. Tevin Andrews:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, and Honourable Members, I rise to give support to the Motion put forward by the Honourable Prime Minister.

Let me say that I am indeed proud to be part of history as we celebrate as a nation, 50 years. Grenada has indeed come a mighty long way from where we have been to where we are now, and I think as a people, as a nation, we can pat ourselves on the back to realise the achievements that we have made.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I must commend, acknowledge and give praise to our former leaders, in particular the former leaders of Carriacou and Petite Martinique Members of Parliament. I would start off with the great Herbert Augustine Blaize. **(Applause)** Mr. Speaker, Carriacou and Petite Martinique haven't only been making history, but we have been making history a mighty long time ago. Herbert Augustine Blaize, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, joined Uncle Gairy in England to seek our Independence. **(Applause)**

One of the things he fought tirelessly for was to ensure that Carriacou and Petite Martinique weren't left out in any shape or form, and he advocated that there should be a local government for Carriacou and Petite Martinique. **(Applause)** It is something, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, that we are advocating for continuously. We have it in some way or shape already, but it is to legislate, and it is going to come, Mr. Speaker. **(Laughter)**

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I also want to recognise a great mentor of mine, former Prime Minister and Member of Parliament for Carriacou and Petite Martinique, Nicholas Brathwaite, who has also made his contributions **(applause)** and mark. And you know, again, Carriacou and Petite Martinique continue to make history. We have two prime ministers coming from Carriacou and Petite Martinique. **(Applause)** We lead, others follow.

I also want to recognise the contributions and hard work of former Member of Parliament, Joan Purcell **(applause)**, who is also a mentor, and of course, she is in the Honourable House today. So I want to recognise her. She also went on to serve

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as the President of the Senate. So again, history is being made for Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

I also want to recognise the contributions of the late Elvin Nimrod. **(Applause)** One of the longest-serving Members of Parliament for Carriacou and Petite Martinique, who has made his contribution to Carriacou and Petite Martinique, and I dare say to Grenada as a whole and throughout the Caribbean. So he must be commended for the work that he has done.

I also want to recognise the contribution that my dear sister, Former Member of Parliament, Kindra Mathurine-Stewart, has made **(applause)** in her period as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am extremely happy and proud to be part of history. I want to use the opportunity to wish Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique Happy 50 years of Independence, and of course, as we continue to move this beautiful nation forward, we will continue to go up, up, and up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Madam President. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable MP for Carriacou and Petite Martinique. I now invite the MP for St. Patrick East.

**Hon. Dennis Cornwall:** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Motion presented here to us today. I also want to acknowledge the presence of our visiting delegation from Ghana, the President of Ghana and his delegation. Good morning to Members of both Houses. Good morning to Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

Let me say that my colleague from St. Patrick West would have actually spoken about the iconic characteristics of St. Patrick, and I don't want to repeat those and so on, but I want to add a bit to what he has said. St. Patrick is not only known for the cultural and historical aspects. We have a community that is rich in flora and fauna, and other iconic locations. For example, we have in St. Patrick East two ponds: the Levera Pond as well as the River Antoine Pond. At some other time, I will give you some more historical information on those two. We also have out there the Sulphur Spring that is based in River Sallee, St. Patrick. I want to say that basically, it's an

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area that is open to the general public, so we can go there and have a bath in the Sulphur Spring. I also want to place on record that our Belmont Estate is rising in its impetus right now to make sure that we have a place in St. Patrick where we can have lunch and dinner at some point in time.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to pay tribute to a number of persons who have become MPs over the years for St. Patrick East, and I want to begin with Honourable Oliver Raeburn, who was the first MP after the Independence of Grenada. He served from 1972 to 1979. Then there's a gentleman who is here with us today, Honourable Tillman Thomas. **(Applause)** He has served from 1984 to 1990, first and foremost, and again from 2003 to 2008 and from 2008 to 2013. He also served as Parliamentary Representative for St. Patrick East.

Let me also say something about this gentleman. He is one who stood for good governance and transparency in Government. **(Applause)** I also want to say that he was the first Prime Minister from St. Patrick. **(Applause)** I mean, we have not had one since, but we must recognise him for that.

I also want to pay tribute to Honourable Winston Frederick, also known as "Winty". **(Applause)** I remember in my days going to school, Winty used to basically make the nation very, very, very active with his commentaries and so on. So, kudos to him, he has now passed to the great beyond and therefore I had to mention him.

I want to basically pay tribute to Honourable Adrian 'Spaceman' Mitchell **(applause)** MP for St. Patrick East from the period 1995 to 1999 and then 1999 to 2003. This gentleman has recently passed, and we have actually had an official funeral for him in St. Patrick. Again, I want to say that this gentleman was not only good at Sports and Culture, but he was a good guy who made St. Patrick East a very popular place.

Today we talk about the Saraka in River Sallee. He was also behind that event, and so on. Today we have a very popular Saraka event in St. Patrick. I also want to pay tribute to Clifton Paul, MP, who resides in Rose Hill, St. Patrick, and he also made his contribution in sports and helped us in the St. Patrick area. And to my predecessor, Honourable Pamela Mosses, who also made her mark in St. Patrick East. **(Applause)** Ladies and gentlemen, I think all of these MPs would have made their contribution in

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one way or the other, some more than others, but notwithstanding, they were all standing proud in Grenada's history.

So, as we celebrate our 50th Anniversary of Independence of Grenada, I want to join with all my colleagues who have spoken before every Grenadian, here in Grenada, in the region and in the diaspora to enjoy a very happy moment and to be part of a historical making of Independence 50th Anniversary here in Grenada. I thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable MP for St. Patrick East. I now invite the MP for St. John to make her contribution.

**Hon. Kerryne James:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for granting me this momentous opportunity to address the Honourable House to commemorate such a historic occasion, Grenada's 50th Anniversary of Independence.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, through you, I recognise the presence of our esteemed ambassadors, special envoys, specially invited guests, our students and educators, and our exceptionally esteemed guest of Honour, President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, President Akufu-Addo, your presence today, 41 years later since the first visit of an African leader to our country between 1979 and 1983, symbolises the enduring friendship and solidarity between our nations.

It is a vivid reminder that our journey towards growth and prosperity is intertwined with the global tapestry of nations seeking peace, progress and sustainability. **(Applause)** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, it is with a heart brimming with pride and gratitude that I stand before you today in this spirit of unity and celebration. We gather to honour our past, revel in our present and dream collectively in our future.

As we reflect on our journey thus far, I pay homage to the illustrious lineage of predecessors from the St. John constituency: Mr. C Welsh, Mr. Herbert Preudhomme, Ms. Grace Duncan, Mr. Edzel Thomas, Ms. Claris Charles, Mr. Michael Church who is here with us today, Mr. Alvin DaBreo whose tireless service and visionary leadership

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have paved the way for young leaders as myself. **(Applause)**

Today, I stand on the precipice of our shared dreams, carrying forward the torch of progress, accountability, innovation and resilience. Our nation stands as a beacon of hope, unity and strength in this golden jubilee year. Our journey, marked by both triumphs and trials, is a testament to the indomitable spirit of the Grenadian people. It is a journey enriched by every citizen's contribution and guided by the wisdom of leaders, past and present.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, as the youngest Parliamentarian, I am profoundly aware of the responsibility that rests on my shoulders to inspire the next generation, to uphold the values of democracy and equality and to forge a path that ensures prosperity for all Grenadians. In doing so, I draw inspiration from the legacy of those who walked before me and the boundless potential of our youth.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, let's take this moment to look into the eyes of our children, to see the reflection of a future where education is their most powerful tool. Healthcare is a guaranteed right, and the environment is a cherished legacy. **(Applause)**

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, this is the Grenada we commit to building from this day forward. A country where opportunity is as abundant as the waters that surround us and where every citizen, regardless of gender, age or background, is an integral part of our nation's fabric.

In closing, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, here is to Grenada, to the next 50 years of soaring beyond our dreams, of breaking barriers and of creating a legacy that will outshine even the most hopeful visions we hold today. Together, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, we are unstoppable; together, we will build a future that will make the world stand in awe. Happy 50th Anniversary, everyone. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you very much, MP for the constituency of St John. I now invite the MP for the constituency of St. George North East to make his contribution.

**Hon. Ron Redhead:** Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me take the opportunity to recognise our guest of honour, the President of Ghana.

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Fifty years ago, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Grenada struggled with its identity. We struggled with beliefs, ideologies and personalities. The red, green and gold of our nation were born out of sacrifice, born out of labour and political gridlock.

Our people were divided not on Independence but on which group should chart our course forward post-Independence. Strikes, shutdowns and the committee of 22, despite this difficult fact, on February 7th 1974, Grenada was born, and today she celebrates her golden jubilee as an independent nation. **(Applause)**

So, condense with me in the next three seconds our history post-independence. We have had Revolution, Education, Invasion, Electrification, Politicisation and most importantly, Restoration. And now, at the quarter of this decade, and as we celebrate our 50-year anniversary, we see transformation by the young generation. **(Applause)**

“One People, One Journey, One Future”, a theme that captures the essence of our independence and one in which we can all relate to. Grenada will only go up from here. At 50, we must demonstrate that we have learned from the mistakes of the past so that we emerge stronger in the future. Once declared as the island of conflict pre-50, we must be known as the island of conquest post-50. **(Applause)** Vision 75 is a plan that we must all unite to achieve.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, as the Member of Parliament for St. George North East, I pay tremendous homage to all the people from St. George North East who have contributed to our development one way or another, building their community in culture, sports and the arts.

I particularly single out, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentarians who came before me and served this beautiful constituency, the Most Honourable George Ignatius Brizan. **(Applause)** His lasting legacy made be remembered for what he did and the service he provided to St. George North East.

Honourable Augustine John, Honourable V. Nazim Burke and the Former Leader **(applause)** of the Political Party, the National Democratic Congress and Honourable Tobias Clement. All of you, thank you from the bottom of my heart and all of the people of St. George North East.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I commend them on this occasion for their service to the country and our people. May God bless our nation as we mark 50 years

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and beyond. Happy Anniversary, Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. **(Applause)** We love you and may you celebrate your 50th in style. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable MP for St. George North East. I now invite the MP for St. Andrew North West to make her contribution.

**Hon. Delma Thomas:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I feel a sense of pride and humility to stand here this morning in history, making history. As I stand here, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be a part of this team in this part of our history. **(Applause)** Mr. Speaker, let me first recognise our delegation from Ghana, the President and his delegation, other specially invited guests, and Members of Parliament.

Today in our history, we mark 50 years of Independence. We are celebrating as a nation, and so we cannot celebrate 50 years of Independence without celebrating the people who came before us. And I'm proud to have sitting behind me, Mrs. Nadia Benjamin. **(Applause)**

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Nadia Benjamin was the first Parliamentary Representative for St. Andrew North West, a woman. **(Applause)** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Nadia Benjamin has made a tremendous contribution not only to the constituency of St. Andrew North West but also to the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. **(Applause)** She must be commended. She must be celebrated. You know, we like to wait until people are dead to give them their flowers. Mrs. Benjamin, we're giving you all your flowers today and as long as you live. **(Applause)** We thank you for the tremendous contribution you have made, and she is a woman from Paraclete, the place of my birth.

And so after Mrs. Benjamin, we had a sad part of our history. Another Parliamentary Representative was Mr. Innocent Belmar. He was the first political figure or the Member of Parliament and Minister of Government to be assassinated in office. It is not the history you want to hear, but it is the history that we need to know

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because we must know where we came from in order to go forward. **(Applause)** And so, what we must recognise is the work of Mr. Innocent Belmar.

And after Mr. Innocent Belmar, we had Basanto Fletcher, who also had roots from Paraclete, which happened to be a relative of mine. So it means in Paraclete, we make history. In Paraclete, we produce powerful politicians. **(Applause)** And we also have coming from Paraclete again, Honourable Alleyne Walker **(applause)**, one who served with pride and dignity and one of the longest-serving Parliamentarians for the constituency of St. Andrew North West. He made history, and I'm following in his footsteps. We want to congratulate Mr. Walker and thank him for the tremendous contribution he has made towards nation-building.

After Brother Alleyne Walker, we have from Paraclete again, so there is something about Paraclete producing politicians, and producing powerful women Parliamentarians, Mrs. Laurina Waldron. **(Applause)** And so we must recognise their contribution, because they have built and paved the way for people like me and others to serve our beautiful tri-island state of Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique.

As we celebrate 50 years of Independence, we must remember where we came from, but we also must know where we are going. And that is why I stand proud here this morning to be a part of the team that will take Grenada for the next 25 years **(applause)** in transformative growth.

Mr. Speaker, I say to the people of St. Andrew North West and on behalf of them, Happy Independence Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. I look forward to seeing many of you tomorrow, celebrating with us our 50 years of Independence. It is only up from here. I thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** I now invite the MP for St. George South, but before you come, Honourable MP, we have a number of the nation's students here. I must make this interjection at this point.

Students, especially, what you see happening here today is not normal. **(Laughter)** Right? It's an unusual day because I want you to go back to the school with the message. It's an unusual day. Usually, we do not allow clapping and applause to come from there; the noise must come from here only, but because of

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how today is running and the kind of day we have, we have allowed it. **(Applause)**  
It is not normal practice. Honourable MP...

**Madam President:** This is what the Speaker says; wait until I give my ruling.

**(Laughter)**

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

**Hon. Andy Williams:** I would like to start by asking everyone to give the Speaker a round of applause. **(Applause) (Laughter)**

Mr. Speaker, I rise to give my support to the Motion presented by our beloved Prime Minister. Mr. Speaker, I must start by saying how privileged I am to be in this position. In doing so, I must recognise those who came before me, and I want to pay tribute to:

- Nicholas Steele; **(applause)**
- The Honourable Alexandra Otway; **(applause)**
- Honourable Glynis Roberts; **(applause)**
- Mark Issac; **(applause)**
- Phinsley St. Louis; **(applause)** and
- Lastly, the man whom we call the "Father of Independence". **(Applause)**

Dr. Modest just said that I look like him, I walk like him, and I dress like him. **(Laughter)** But, Mr. Speaker, Sir Eric Mathew Gairy was born in St. Andrew, Dunfermline; but he ran in, not St. George South, the Great South, and he won. And, Mr. Speaker, we really give or we say thank you to Sir Eric Mathew Gairy for really giving us Independence.

Mr. Speaker, let me just give credit where credit is due. I also want to give thanks to the late Maurice Bishop, who inspired me to get involved in politics. I also want to, Mr. Speaker, recognise Dr. the Right Honourable Keith Mitchell for his contribution made over 23 out of the 50 years. **(Applause)** And, Mr. Speaker, I also

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want to give or say thank you to our beloved Prime Minister. Although he has been in office for one and a half years, he has worked as if he has been in office for 24 years.

**(Applause)**

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to leave with this message. To everyone, our flag, the colours are red, yellow and green. **(Inaudible comment by Members)** I was just testing you. **(Laughter)** The red signifies courage and vitality. The green signifies the lush vegetation. The yellow. **(Inaudible comment by Members)** I was testing you again. **(Laughter)** The yellow signifies warmth, or the gold warmth and wisdom.

Mr. Speaker, most importantly, when we put them together, we get people. We cannot have Government and politics without people. As the late Maurice Bishop said, "Government is supposed to be of the people, for the people and by the people".

**(Applause)**

Yes, we pay tribute to our past leaders, but, Mr. Speaker, I want to really thank the Grenadian people for standing with us **(applause)** in a time of a revolution, intervention, hurricanes, and disasters, Mr. Speaker. We were all here and they stood with us and we thank the Grenadian people for that.

While I was coming here this morning I heard something from a song which seems simple, but to me it was very profound. The song said, "The land of spice where everything is nice, Grenada, may God bless you". Happy 50th Anniversary. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you very much, Honourable MP for St. George South. I now invite the MP for St. Mark to make her contribution. As I said, the Opposition Leader and the Prime Minister would be the closing ones.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to be here this morning.

**Mr. Speaker:** Just hold. Someone's light is on, please turn it off. Thank you.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** It is indeed a pleasure to be joining my

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other colleagues on “Both Sides” in this very prestigious ceremony here today. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I want to join those who went before me in welcoming the President of Ghana and his entourage.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I want to specifically single out the children, the future of our nation. They are here, and I want to extend a welcome to them, but also to everyone here in the gallery, Mr. Speaker. I think it is really good that they are here because we cannot talk about 50 years or any achievements without speaking of the people.

Mr. Speaker, I single out to start with the people because as the past Minister for Tourism wherever I have gone or wherever I have engaged people in our country, what they talk most about are the people, the friendliness, the warmth **(applause)** which is reflected by the gold in our flag **(laughter)** and my friend and I have to talk about the yellow and the gold in the flag.

Grenadians are a wonderful people, and we have been resilient. We have overcome a number of things that were mentioned before, which two minutes doesn't allow me to mention, and I am especially happy that the young people are here so that whatever is mentioned, whatever is alluded to, they will research. They will seek truth, and they will seek knowledge in our history because we have a rich history. Mr. Speaker, I want to beg your indulgence to ask those on “Both Sides” and those in the gallery, let us give a round of applause for Grenada and Grenadians, please. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker, secondly, I want to also single out the women who have blazed the trail in Grenada for others like me and the younger ones to follow. We've had turbulent times, and it wasn't easy for women in those days, but our father of the nation managed to get a set of women who can set examples. And I may not remember all because those two minutes have me kind of... Yes.

However, right behind me, Sister Nadia Benjamin. We cannot forget to mention her. **(Applause)** I want to thank her not only for setting the stage for us together with Sister Waple Nedd and others, but also for the other contributions that were beyond her duties and what she has done for health and as a physician. I want to specifically thank you for the equipment and what you have done for health, especially in

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Mirabeau, but it's a part of our tri-island state. Thank you, Madam.

As I look around, I see many women who would have also been trailblazers; Presidents of the Senate and so on, and I want to honour them on behalf of the Grenada Women's Parliamentary Caucus. **(Applause)** Men, do not get jealous, but we have to.

Madam President, I just have time to speak about a few guiding principles that I researched in terms of history that I would like to share. They are not mine, but I would like to share them, and I beg your indulgence to quote, "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it". The other one is, "If you do not know your history, it is as if you were born yesterday, and if you were born yesterday, then any leader can tell you anything".

Mr. Speaker, one of the things I want to beg is that the Government in office and other leaders take time out to document part of our history that are little known, part of our history that is dubious and part of our history that is not spoken about at all, but we have to have a holistic approach.

When I think about the people in history that I learned about, I don't know how much it benefitted me like Hopkins and Drake and all of these people but I believe that delving into our history and documenting before the persons who really know our history are gone and cannot make a contribution, that will benefit our nation tremendously and this is one of the things that I beg.

Mr. Speaker, it will be remiss of me if I don't mention the "Father of the Nation", Sir Eric Mathew Gairy. Bringing us to Independence in 1974 was a tremendous feat because it was not... Today, we are all sitting calmly as we celebrate the 7th of February; however, back then, it wasn't a calm time for them. It wasn't a peaceful time, but he fought it and he achieved that success. **(Applause)** But, Mr. Speaker, I want to mention just a few things.

I want to mention St. George's University, a medical school that is now a university. One of the giant steps that this man took for our nation. I also want to mention land for the landless.

If Uncle didn't start it, I don't know who would have, but a number of persons who would have owned land and been able to pass it on to their children would not

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have been able to do so at that time. **(Applause)** I want to recognise that, Mr. Speaker.

Also Housing. A number of housing projects throughout the country, and I beg of this nation and through you, Mr. Speaker, I beg of the children, let's research where you live. In Frequete, wherever you live, just check it out, the number of projects he would have done.

Mr. Speaker, successive Governments **(sound of time bell)** would have made their contribution, I just ask you to wrap up in half a minute, made their contributions. Everybody did, but I cannot leave here without mentioning what was achieved under Dr. the Right Honourable Keith Claudius Mitchell. **(Applause)** The rural electrification and the digitisation of communication.

When Grenada had digital phones, people in the UK said we don't have that yet, you know, so we even passed some first-world countries, bringing water to communities, relentless pursuit of human resource development and scholarships. I'll just stop there because there is not much time.

But, Mr. Speaker, I just want to beg to speak one second for St. Mark that it has made its mark, and I want to mention our chocolate factory. I want to mention the nutmeg and the museum. I see the Senator not looking up. However, the Senator does know that we played a major role in setting up that museum, so our children can learn where nutmeg comes from. And there are a number of other things, such as accelerating waterfalls, and so on.

So I want to invite everyone to come to St. Mark, not only for those things, but on Friday, God's willing, Mr. Speaker. **(Laughter)** I want to invite the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, our dear Prime Minister and everyone to our breadfruit celebration, celebrating our own food **(applause)** and the various ways we could do it and all of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. Everything you could do with breadfruit will be there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable MP for St. Mark. I now invite the MP for the Town of St. George.

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**Hon. Peter David:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hope you will allow me a free advertisement at the end as well. My dear sister got a free ad.

We are here today, Mr. Speaker, to celebrate our Independence, and I want to start by supporting the Resolution. I want to recognise our visiting dignitary, the President and his team, Akufo-Addo, from Ghana. I want to recognise his team and welcome them to Grenada.

I also want to recognise some people I have seen around. I see former Prime Minister Thomas, Former Speakers, and former Presidents of the Senate. I also want to specially recognise the judiciary because we are here to talk about Independence, and without the judiciary, we have a Constitution, but without the judiciary, our magistrates (**applause**), that Constitution would be nothing. We will just violate, so I want to specially recognise our judiciary.

I see several people in the audience. I see Jumaane Williams from New York (**applause**), a Grenadian patriot in New York. He is what we call the "Public Advocate" in New York. We don't know much about that, but it is a very important role, and he pays tribute to Grenada in New York and others. The daughter of Ben Jones, my friend, Mr. Clouden, Former Senator and a special, special gentleman sitting over here, he is not looking at me, but our own Governor of the Central Bank. (**Applause**)

I think we need to pay tribute to our Governor Timothy Antoine. He is a man who has made us proud and a pillar of our Independence. I want to, Mr. Speaker, pay tribute to all of these persons here and, of course, to the children of our nation. And of course, Madam Nadia Benjamin.

Mr. Speaker, today we pay tribute to all the ancestors who brought us here. While we attained formal Independence in 1974, the struggle for our independence began long before then. We talk about the indigenous peoples who resisted colonial domination; they began that process. We can speak to the battles of Fédon, the slavery volts and all the battles against colonial rule.

Mr. Speaker, remember Eric Mathew Gairy, but those of us who speak here of Gairy's role in 1974. In fact, we must also recall Gairy's role in the fight for adult suffrage and workers' rights (**applause**), long before 1974, which to me was the significant struggle, because without adult suffrage and without those struggles,

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independence would not have come. So we must recognise him today.

Brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen, let us pay tribute to T. A. Marryshow. T. A. Marryshow fought for regional integration (**applause**), without which our independence would be meaningless. I mean, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to say he was NNP for the town of St. George, but that may have helped him to see the light for regional integration. But T. A. Marryshow must be recognised in all of these discussions.

So, brothers and sisters, we must pay tribute to our past leaders, Maurice Bishop, who was on the verge of having a new constitution drafted for discussion so that our independence can be more meaningful. My brother referred to 1974, it was meaningful versus meaningless independence, which was a big discussion. Former Prime Minister Tillman Thomas was part of those discussions.

So, brothers and sisters, we have to recognise these. We have to pay tribute to former Prime Minister, Dr. the Right Honourable Keith Mitchell, the longest-serving (**applause**) Prime Minister in our country and someone who brought referenda to the people twice in an effort to push further our independence, particularly with respect to the judiciary, and they tried to get us into the CCJ. (**Applause**)

I lament the fact that we are not there, but I do hope that at some point we will get to the CCJ. Without that, we would not have gotten to full independence. I recognise that when the President started, she spoke about our attainment of political independence, noting that political independence was not an accident, but she is alluding to the fact that we have a long way to go to real independence.

Mr. Speaker, the contribution of former Prime Minister Mitchell is evident all over Grenada and to you, Prime Minister and your team, we wish you well. We do hope that the vision of the future that you have, one that we hope that we will share when we have discussions, we will be able to move forward together.

One of the major difficulties is that the British, upon giving us Independence, gave us a divisive political system with the inability to change it because we need a 2/3 majority in a referendum. So they played a trick on us, they gave us a divisive system and an inability to change that divisive system, and I hope that if we come together, we can address those issues.

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Mr. Speaker, I want to say to our visiting brothers and sisters from the ancestral home, President Akufo-Addo and your team (**sound of time bell**), let us not forget your people's role in our independence process. Mr. Speaker, I ask for a minute or so. Let us not forget the names Kwame Nkrumah, (**applause**) Julius Nyerere, Samora Machel, Patrice Lumumba, Robert Mugabe, Nelson Mandela, Tawanda and all of those freedom fighters.

We in the Caribbean were inspired by your fights, your anti-colonial fights and without those, we would not have gotten to where we are. And Mandela spent 25 years in prison for the freedom of the people of South Africa. (**Applause**) Brothers and sisters, we joined our brother Bob Marley when he sang in the Zimbabwe Independence and sang the song Africa Unite. Just as in Africa, where there are vestiges of colonial rule that continue to ravage parts of the continent, Marley sang the song that the words of Haile Selassie, "We are confident in the victory of good over evil". (**Applause**)

We look forward to building strong bonds with the African continent in the hope that our Independence will be deepened and become more real. The discussions we must have with our people must not... the discussion on the future must not be in the 15 corridors of power, it must be with the people. We must move forward with the people, and we must deepen our independence.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I just want to wish all of Grenada a Happy Independence. I think we are coming together for Independence, but let us come together for our future. My good brother Osbert, in his sermon last week, spoke about that. Let us find a new construct, let us find a new way so that the British wish for us, which was divisiveness, does not continue. We are one people with one destiny. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I wish all of Grenada Happy Independence. (**Applause**) Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable MP for the Town of St. George. I now invite the MP for St. Andrew North East to make her contribution.

**Hon. Kate Lewis-Peters:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Madam President,

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Honourable Members of this House, our esteemed guests, our students, and, of course, the resilient people of Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique.

Today, we stand on the shoulders of giants as we celebrate this monumental milestone in the history of our beloved nation. And as the proud Representative of St. Andrew North East, and of course, I must recognise all those who represented St. Andrew North East before me. I am honoured to address this House, but first of all, let me extend a heartfelt greeting to all our Grenadians on this, the 50th Anniversary of Independence.

Fifty years ago, I'm trying to imagine 50 years ago, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, our forbearers embarked on this journey of self-determination, fuelled by a vision for our nation where freedom and sovereignty, on unity, formed the cornerstone for our society. Today, we are standing on the foundation that has already been laid. So if we have a strong foundation, there is only one place to go, and that is up.

**(Applause)**

And therefore, we owe a depth of gratitude to all these valiant souls whose sacrifices have been bestowed upon us, the gift of freedom and the right to carve our own destiny. Mr. Speaker, Madam President, as we reflect on the past five decades, we are reminded of our resilience as a nation. This is what defines us as a people: we have faced challenges from within and beyond our shores, yet our spirit remains unbroken. Our resilience is our inheritance, and that is a testament to the strength and perseverance of the Grenadian people. This resilience has propelled us forward, fostering a sense of unity and a purpose that transcends our differences.

It will be remiss of me if I don't speak directly to the young people of our nation, and I'm very happy to see the students here. You are the torchbearers of our future, and I bring a message of hope to each and every one of you as we celebrate our 50th Anniversary. Let us envision a future where every young Grenadian is empowered to achieve their fullest potential. **(Applause)**

Your dreams and aspirations are the fuel that will drive our nation towards unprecedented heights of success and prosperity. I therefore urge each and every one of you young people here today to embrace the values of hard work, dedication and community spirit that have been the hallmark of our journey thus far.

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As we look to the future, let us renew our commitment towards building our nation, one that is inclusive, progressive and resilient. A nation where every citizen, regardless of their background or party loyalty, has the opportunity to contribute to the collective success of this beautiful country. Grenada is a nation that stands as a beacon of hope and unity, and it is the pride of the Caribbean and beyond.

To my dear constituents of St. Andrew North East, I must extend the deepest gratitude to you for your continued support and faith in me. Together, we have achieved a lot. We have made remarkable progress as a constituency, and I use this 50th Anniversary of independence to pledge my continued support and hard work for you, the people of St. Andrew North East, and to ensure that we will continue to thrive as a constituency.

As we commemorate this historic occasion, let us look forward... **(Sound of the time bell)** 30 seconds to wrap up, Mr. Speaker. Let us look forward with optimism and determination. Let us forge a path that honours the legacy of those who fought for our independence, our Father, Sir Eric Mathew Gairy, building Grenada that is stronger, more united and more prosperous than ever before.

So, to every Grenadian at home and abroad as we celebrate this 50th Anniversary of Independence with pride and joy, let us enjoy this momentous occasion, and I wish everyone a Happy 50th Anniversary. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable MP for St. Andrew North East, and I think it's the MP for St. Andrew South East now to make her contribution.

**Hon. Emmalin Pierre:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Madam President. I rise this morning to use this very important opportunity to address those of us who are here on this very special occasion, and of course, those who are viewing and listening. Mr. Speaker, Madam President, Honourable Members of Both Houses of Parliament, I want to especially recognise our special guest today, the President of Ghana and his entire delegation. I also wish to recognise Dr Timothy Antoine, Governor of the ECCB, Dr. Didacus Jules Director General of the OECS **(applause)**

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all other Former Members of Parliament who are present with us today, Members of the Judiciary, other specially invited guests, Grenadians, Carriacouans and Petite Martiniquians who have gathered, good morning.

As I sat and I looked across the room, when I reflected, it occurred to me very strongly that in this House today, there are two Prime Ministers, still alive, present with us, and I want to pay tribute and recognise former Prime Minister Tillman Thomas. **(Applause)** And of course, I also wish to recognise the longest-serving Prime Minister of Grenada, Dr. the Right Honourable Keith Mitchell. As I also reflect on the Father of Independence, Sir Eric Matthew Gairy, I recognise a stalwart, someone who stood by his side, Sister Nadia Benjamin. **(Applause)**

And I use this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, to say that we ought not to forget or take for granted the significant contributions that many have made over the years. So to all those who have served, to all those who have toiled and sacrificed here and those who are not here, I pay tribute to you this morning. God bless you for your sacrifice. **(Applause)**

Let me also, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, use the opportunity to recognise the future of our nation represented by the children here today and to say to you, Grenada belongs to you, Grenada belongs to you. **(Applause)** The future of this country rests in your hands, and so you have an important responsibility in taking this country into the future.

I take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, to extend to all Grenadians at home and abroad a Happy Independence. As we celebrate let us take this moment to reflect on the journey that has brought us this far and this significant milestone while honouring those who have toiled and made tremendous sacrifices for our nation: may the good seeds they planted be watered and nurtured by all, may they bear much fruit for generations to come, may we remain ever conscious of God as we build and advance as one people. **(Applause)** And I say to God be the glory for what we have achieved.

And so in the spirit of unity, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, and the collective strength of our people, I urge us to also contemplate a very profound African saying, "Ubuntu". This saying fully encapsulates the essence of togetherness, reminding us

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that I am because we are. Let us embrace the Ubuntu philosophy as we journey forward, recognising that our destinies are intertwined and our unity as a people is our greatest asset. Together, may we move forward as one nation, making tolerance, mutual respect and understanding integral pillars on which we continue to build our Grenadian society. Let us uphold the principles of Ubuntu and tirelessly work towards a more prosperous, harmonious society. May we always be guided by God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses as we progress towards our destiny.

So, today, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, again, I pay tribute to all of those who have gone before us, those who have paved the way that we can now stand. I pay tribute to all of the people who have sacrificed in every sector of our society, not just our recognised leaders, but the ordinary men and the ordinary women who have helped to make Grenada what it is today. We salute them and we recognise them for their contributions. **(Applause)**

And so in closing, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, allow me as I end to recognise again the Father of our Independence Sir Eric Matthew Gairy, whose name cannot be erased from our history for the bravery, the courage the sacrifice that he made for the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. May God bless Grenada. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable MP for St. Andrew South East. And before I hand over to Madam President, who will direct "This Side", I just want to share with you something that perhaps you're not aware of. We have with us the students from our secondary schools, and there are too many to be housed in this Sitting.

I am sharing this with you because I think they are setting an example for us to follow. So they have decided to take turns in here. They have decided. **(Applause)** So when you see the movements of them going to the doors, they are going outside. They are missing what is happening here to give another child a chance, and that is commendable. **(Applause)** I now turn to Madam President, who will direct "This Side".

**Madam President:** Thank you, my colleague, Speaker of the House and without any ado whatsoever, I'm happy to invite Senators to make their anniversary

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contributions beginning with the Leader of Government's Business in the Senate, Senator Adrian Thomas, and the rule holds, you've got two minutes perhaps permitted to three. **(Laughter)**

**Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas:** Thank you very much, Madam President. I rise to support the Motion delivered by our dear Prime Minister. But, before I start, let me recognise our guests of Honour, His Excellency Addo, from Ghana, and I must say how much I am to be in your presence today. I can reflect on the last time we had an African Leader in Grenada I think was President Kaunda from Zambia and President Samora Machel, sorry if I don't get the name right, from Mozambique, today we have Addo from Ghana, and I am sure that in the future we'll have more African leaders visiting Grenada in particular and this part of the Caribbean. **(Applause)** So I want to say to you, welcome you and your entourage.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge also our esteemed guest, the school children in particular, and I also want to record that I like what I'm seeing here today. I see a sense of unity, I see a sense of togetherness, and Mr. Speaker, and I see a sense of people's participation in the development of the country. **(Applause)**

Madam President, 50 years is a big deal, and this is no mean achievement for Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. 50 years of Independence, 50 years of struggle, 50 years of resilience, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, we have achieved quite a lot and we will continue to achieve. As I'm preparing to pen one of my calypsos for this year **(laughter)** I want to remind this House, because the topic will be, "We have completed 50 miles and we have 50 more and many more", I am preparing for the next 50 also.

Madam President, to celebrate 50 years, the Grenadian people have a lot to show, and we must be proud of what we have. We must be proud of what we have achieved. When I listened to my dear Prime Minister last night, our vision for the next 25 years, he admitted that most of the issues identified by our Administration didn't come from it. Our Administration didn't come up with the ideas. But Madam President, it was the ideas of the people. **(Applause)** It was the ideas of the people that we're

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going to use to transform Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

Madam President, from Julien Fédon to our dear Prime Minister, Honourable Dickon Mitchell, and all the leaders there, I would not outline them because it's only three minutes. Madam President, our leaders have shown a sense of patriotism. They have led us in crisis when the world was feeling sorry for us, we have made it, Madam President, even though we have a long way to go still.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I want to challenge every individual here, if you have doubts about whether we have made it or not think about yourself those of us who were there in 1974 and where we are today and those of you even though you are 10 years, think about who you were one year ago or two years ago and whether you are moving forward. I think the answer must be that we have made strides and we continue to make strides, Madam President.

It has been a long struggle, and we have been searching for our identity. I think Grenadians can walk, whether locally, regionally, or internationally, and be proud of themselves today for what we have achieved and the distance we have covered.

**(Applause)**

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge and recognise those who were there before us, and I must call the name of Sir Eric Mathew Gairy. I must call the name, Madam President, of comrade Sir Maurice Bishop. I must call the names of Augustus Blaize, Nicholas Brathwaite, and Dr. the Right Honourable Keith Mitchell. **(Applause)** I just start to call names. **(Laughter) (Applause)**

But, Madam President, in calling all the names I must call, and I'd like to abbreviate it first, DATM. **(Laughter)** Dickon Amiss Thomas Mitchell. **(Applause)** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Grenada is in the hands of responsible people, Grenada is in the hands of an administration that will take us for the next 25 years to prosperity. **(Applause)** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, make no doubt about that, we have a vision for this country and we'll achieve **(sound of time bell)** what we outlined to achieve.

In closing, Madam President, I want to wish all Grenadians Happy Independence. My friends, my brothers and sisters in the diaspora, you are with us, and we are happy to have you be part of this celebration. Give yourself a round of

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applause. **(Applause)** "One People, One Journey, One Future". We are going up, up, up. "A luta continua". Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Madam President:** Thank you very much, Senator. I thank the Minister for Agriculture, Senator Adrian Thomas. I crave your indulgence in running a healthy Parliament, so we take a half-minute break. We stand, stretch and then we'll resume. Do not leave the room unless you have to. A very short break in the interest of your health. Stretch your legs. We are on recess.

**Houses adjourned at 10:56 a.m.**

**Houses resumed at 10:58 a.m.**

**Madam President:** Houses are reconvened. Please, have your seats. Thank you. Honourable David Evlyn Andrew, Minister for Education, you have the floor, sir.

**Sen. the Hon. David Andrew:** Thank you very much, Madam President. "One People, One Journey, One Future." Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I rise proudly to identify and associate myself with the sentiments expressed in the Motion as moved by our Honourable Prime Minister and spoken to by colleagues in this Honourable House in this Joint Sitting.

I take the opportunity to wish every Grenadian, everywhere on "This Side" in the Chamber at home and abroad, a very meaningful and Happy 50th Independence Anniversary. I want to give thanks to God, whose gracious keeping power has kept Grenada over the last 50 years. We've been through a lot as a nation, I mean as the song that we have as our 50th Independence theme speaks of it, from Revolution and Ivan and the natural disasters and all of these things that we've faced, pandemic even, God has kept Grenada alive and well and we are able to stand. **(Applause)**

I take the opportunity also to acknowledge the Father of Independence, Sir Eric Matthew Gairy. We can't call his name sufficiently, and all our former prime ministers and parliamentarians who have served this beautiful island. I must mention Sir Gairy. Yes. He is the Father of Independence.

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I think it's prudent also to mention Maurice Bishop, who came in that period immediately, that tumultuous period and then I want to give credit to Dr Mitchell **(applause)** for being the longest-serving Prime Minister, in that 50-year period. He has served the longest. 23 years, Dr. Mitchell, is a long time to serve and give your life to, and we acknowledge that.

But I must mention the current Prime Minister, because you see everybody has a leg to play, a leg to run. The baton has been passed and our Prime Minister now holds the baton and the charge is with you, our Prime Minister beloved, to run your leg.

As Minister for Education, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I want to speak to the nation's children just a bit. Students, the next 50 years in Grenada's history belong primarily to you. Most of us, you see, sitting in this Chamber may not be around, except God has some other idea, but the next 50 years belong to you. The Leader of Government's Business in the Senate is saying, I may not be around, but he probably has ideas too. **(Laughter)** So, students, I want you to begin to own and embrace Vision 75 because you will be a greater part of that than I would be. I want you to begin to reimagine Grenada and ask yourself, what kind of Grenada do you want to see? What kind of neighbour do I want to be as I go further?

I want to encourage you to celebrate and value the things that we have, and we have a lot of them. The peace that Grenada enjoys is something we need to celebrate. We came through a history where we've had periods of instability, but we enjoy our peace, we enjoy a violence-free society, primarily, comparatively speaking to other societies, we need to enjoy that, we need to value it and preserve it going forward.

To ensure the fertility of our soil, so that whatever we plant grows and thrives well, we need to value it. The hospitality of our people... These are things that we need to treasure and value going forward. Students value those things, they're inherited in Grenada, our pristine environment and how we preserve that because this is the space within which we live and if we degrade it and if we destroy it we can talk a lot about the next 50 years but we won't have any space to live in, so let's treasure that too.

I encourage you to learn, own and value our history. Not everything in our

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history has been pretty. Not everything in our history has been nice, but I assure you it's our history and we have to own it, and that's why I'm proud that under our Administration's watch. We have been able to introduce the formal teaching and structure of Grenadians history in our schools **(applause)** so that you can be aware of where we've come from as a people, the struggle from as far back as Africa and what our forefathers went through to where we are today and so that you can appropriately shape the next 25 the next 50 years.

**Madam President:** One minute, Senator.

**Sen. the Hon. David Andrew:** Thank you very much, Madam President. I encourage you in this season of growth, repositioning, and transformation. I encourage you to value the dignity and the value of work. It's something that has been under challenge. Sometimes, a lot of younger people struggle to appreciate the value and the dignity of work. I assure you, if you do value work that's a platform for an economic upgrade. It's a platform for benefit, and it's a platform for elevation through the next 25 to 50 years.

I encourage you, too, to value community spirit. In this season, I have seen so much community spirit in the 50th Independence Anniversary Celebration. I've seen people coming out and cleaning, people wanting to do, people wanting to be involved and young people. This is something you need to harness. This is something you need to keep. **(Applause)** This is something you need to build because this is our Grenada, it's your Grenada, and we want to encourage that.

In conclusion, Madam President, I wish every Grenadian at home and abroad, and I especially shout out to all of the Grenadians who live in the electoral district that I'm from, St. Andrew South East, a very happy and meaningful 50th Independence Anniversary. Happy 50, Grenada. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Madam President:** Thank you, Senator Andrew, and I call on Senator Britton. Quinc Britton, you've got the floor, Senator. Three minutes, Senator.

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**Sen. the Hon. Quinc Britton:** Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, I too rise to give support to the Motion as presented by our Honourable Prime Minister, and I welcome President Addo, from Ghana and his visiting delegation.

I bring warm and fraternal greetings from Sunset City, you know how I'm very boastful about where I am from. In particular, Madam President, the people of Victoria, we feel very proud to be a part of this celebration. We're also, everyone knows St. Mark to be the smallest parish. Even though we are small, we have made our contributions over the last 50 years.

I stand here proud to be a part of this historic moment, as 50 is really a big deal. As we reflect on the past 50 years, recognising the contributions of every Grenadian, it clearly demonstrates our ability to overcome the challenges and, no matter the circumstances, unite as one people. And it is without a doubt, Madam President, we are well poised to only go up from here as one people on this journey for our future.

As our MP rightfully said, "We have made our mark in St. Mark and we continue to make our mark". Let me recognise the many contributions of former Parliamentarians who have made their contributions over the last 50 years. As a nation, over the last 50 years, and in our parish and as a nation as a whole, their valuable contributions must never go unrecognised.

Though many of them have gone to the great beyond, permit me to recognise, Madam President, Honourable A. O. Forsyth, Felix Alexander, Mr. Willan Juice-Berry. Those who are still alive and are here with us, not so present here today in the Chamber, Honourable Malcolm Antoine, Honourable Senator Denneth Modeste, and last but certainly not least our dear MP, Dr. the Honourable Clarice Modeste-Curwen **(applause)** who has been the only female MP from St. Mark **(applause)** and she spanned a career over the past 25 years. That's a remarkable achievement. **(Applause)** So, Madam MP, through you, Madam President, I'm giving you your flowers. **(Laughter) (Applause)**

Home of the highest mountain peak, Mount St. Catherine, with many picturesque waterfalls and other nature sites and His Excellency President Addo, we are home to two chocolate factories in St. Mark, the Jouvay Chocolate Factory and

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the Crayfish Bay Organics Chocolate Factory. I hope you will get some time to visit because you know how Ghana and their cocoa and so on.

As it is a proud moment for all of us from the smallest parish in Grenada we, Madam President, we are also a home of the Traditional Mass, Vieux and on that note, Madam President, we would like to invite everyone to an event in the morning from 4:30 in the morning called "Rise", where we will be doing a re-enactment of how Grenada gained its Independence and we will have a fantastic display with drumming, poetry as well as the traditional mass, Vieux. So we invite everyone to be in attendance for that.

And as I close, Madam President, I would just like to wish every Grenadian at home and abroad a happy and meaningful 50th Anniversary. **(Applause)**

**Madam President:** Thank you, Senator Quinc Britton from the great small parish of St. Mark. Our next contributor is the Honourable Senator Claudette Joseph, Minister for Labour, Attorney General of Grenada. You have the floor, madam.

**Sen. the Hon. Claudette Joseph:** Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my unreserved support to the Motion before these Honourable Houses.

First, I extend a warm welcome to President Nana Akufo-Addo and his delegation from the Republic of Ghana in the motherland. To you students who are here I extend a warm welcome and just let you know because whenever there are students present the teacher in me comes out, so just let you students know that the majority of our ancestors, the strongest of the strong, who survived the gruelling middle passage actually came from that region of Africa which today we know as Ghana.

So let us all say a warm welcome to our cousins from the motherland. **(Applause)** I welcome too, our other visiting dignitaries from nations near and far and to our outstanding sons and daughters who have returned home to celebrate with us Governor Antoine, Governor Timothy Antoine, King James, Kirani James **(applause)** the widow of Maurice Bishop **(applause)** and the daughters of sir Eric Matthew Gairy, the Father of Independence, Marcelle and Jennifer. **(Applause)**

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Madam President, Camahogne, Camáhogne, Concepción, La Grenade, Grenada. These are the names by which our beautiful island has been called throughout what is known as its modern history and these names are the names given by Grenada from the Kalinago's who called it Camahogne or Camáhogne to we its current owners, I wanted to say inhabitants, but no, owners because inhabitants would be the term used by the colonizers to justify their colonization and settling on land that belonged to other people. They call them inhabitants; if they said owners, it would be harder to justify colonisation. So, we, the owners of Grenada, refer to our land in this way.

The various names by which our beloved land has been called throughout its history reflect the various periods of struggle and conflict of our people. Struggles and conflicts, one, because of the gruelling spirit, well, I should not say gruelling, the indomitable spirit of our people and their burning aspiration to be forever and fully free. Today, we enjoy a peaceful and democratic society. A society grounded on democratic principles and the recognition of the rule of law, and here I pause to recognise the presence of our judiciary, all of the Sitting Judges are present with us today. **(Applause)** We stand as a people deeply rooted in our rich ancestral traditions, stable, strong, resilient and poised for another 50 as we embark on this period of growth and transformation. Indeed, many of our Caribbean brothers and sisters envy us. Just last night, some Trinis were telling me that, so I'm not making it up, at the Trade Centre.

Today, we pay homage to our fellow countrymen and women who have served in these hallowed and Honourable Houses. Many of their names were already mentioned by the previous speakers, but I pause here to make special mention of a few outstanding women who served in these Houses of Parliament. Nadia Benjamin, welcome home, my sister. **(Applause)** Waple Nedd. Grace Duncan. **(Applause)** Cynthia Gairy, a lot of people forget that the wife **(applause)** of Sir Eric also served in the House. Sister Joan Purcell, our iconic sister. Mrs. Brenda Hood. Margaret Neckles. Leslie-Ann Seon. These are a few that I mentioned to add to those already mentioned.

While these great Grenadian daughters sacrificed and served in these Houses,

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other outstanding Grenadians have contributed tremendously to local, regional and international advancement. And we have contributed in academia, arts, culture and entertainment, public service and sports, and when I call these areas of contributions, we can now all immediately think of someone, whether it's Mr. Killa, Ricardo Keens-Douglas or King James.

Together with these talents and boneless energy and potential of our young people, I know that collectively we have the required ability, the required grit, the tenacity and the resources and resourcefulness to fashion our beloved country in the next 50 years and beyond. We will fashion a country that is healthy, that is prosperous and sustainable for all of its owners (**sound of time bell**), not inhabitants. One minute, please, Madam President, if I may?

**Madam President:** Half, please.

**Sen. the Hon. Claudette Joseph:** Half? (**Laughter**) We will fashion a country where our dreams and aspirations are realised.

Therefore, I wish every Grenadian at home and in the diaspora a Happy 50th Independence Anniversary. I especially extend anniversary greetings to the people of the Town of St. George, our capital city that was grown zero in the struggle towards independence and is now the hub of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations. So we of the town will be happy to host you for the remaining activities, the Military Parade tomorrow, the Cultural Extravaganza on Melville Street, Folk in the Town on Thursday and Pan 50. Well, you know the town is a pan, right? (**Applause**)

So as we continue on this journey into the future as one people with hope and optimism there is only one direction we can go from here and that is up, up, up. Thank you, Madam President. (**Applause**)

**Madam President:** Thank you for taking us forward. Remember, gentlemen and ladies, we have a distinguished guest waiting to speak. So I give the floor now to Honourable Brother, the Right Honourable, well, the Honourable... (**Laughter**) (**Applause**)

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**Sen. the Hon. Gayton La Crette:** Thank you, Madam President, and I receive it. **(Laughter) (Applause)** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, fellow Parliamentarians, well-wishers, and those of you who are sitting in the gallery, proud Grenadians, Carriacouans and Petite Martiniquians .

As we stand on the cusp of this kairos moment in history, I cannot help but sense that there is a very strong prophetic release over this nation. A very strong prophetic release that is shifting the trajectory of Grenada, I want to repeat that for emphasis. I cannot help but sense that there is a very strong prophetic release over this nation. A prophetic release that is shifting the trajectory of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. **(Applause)**

I cannot really speak, Madam President, I am from St. George North West and I cannot really speak of former Parliamentarians because **(laughter)** I am 40 plus, wait for it, **(laughter)** I am 40 plus but I've only known one Parliamentarian **(laughter)** **(applause)** in the person of Dr. the Right Honourable Keith Mitchell and I stand in this Honourable House this morning to Honour his parliamentary representation and sacrifice to the people of St. George North West **(applause)** and as Prime Minister of Grenada for the past 23 years as well **(applause)** and also to say thank you to him for graciously passing on the baton to me **(laughter) (applause)** to represent the people of St. George North West.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, as we will be celebrating our 50th Anniversary tomorrow, I want us to also remember that we must be ever conscious of God because it is the consciousness of God that is going to enable us to aspire, to build and to advance as one people. Happy 50th Anniversary. **(Applause)**

**Madam President:** I thank Senator La Crette and let... **(Sound of gavel)** Order. Thank you, let the record report that this is an unusual Sitting, please. **(Laughter)** And we offer the floor now to Honourable Senator Gloria Thomas, Minister for Social Development and Gender Affairs from the great parish of St. Andrew. Senator, you have the floor, madam.

**Sen. the Hon. Gloria Thomas:** Thank you, Madam President. I rise to offer

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my support to the Motion that was presented to us by the Honourable Prime Minister this morning. I wish to extend a welcome to the President of Ghana and his delegation, specially invited guests, students and all present.

I take this opportunity to join with the rest of the House in extending congratulations to Grenada on its 50th Anniversary. I must say I feel honoured to be part of this auspicious occasion, the Sitting of this Special Parliamentary Commemoration of Grenada's Independence.

As we reflect on 50, we recognise that many have gone before us, many who have given their service to this country to build this Nation, and so the work that was done before us laid the foundation for us to continue to build as we continue to move forward. We are fortunate to have Mrs. Nadia Benjamin here with us today, and as we know, she has been a pioneer working side by side with the Father of Independence for us to be celebrating here today. I must say that I feel honoured to be in the company of Mrs. Benjamin and other distinguished guests, for it is people like Mrs. Benjamin who have given us that form of motivation and encouragement to continue on the path that they have started. **(Applause)**

In our celebration here today, I want to pay tribute to the community leaders and builders who have been instrumental in keeping our society together, preserving our culture and laying the foundation that we are so happy to build on. We are fortunate to have so many distinguished persons here today, persons who have served in this House, and we are happy that they can share this moment with us.

Grenada has experienced its highs and its lows, but through it all, we have proven ourselves to be resilient, determined and strong. We have demonstrated the will to continue to forge ahead and to emerge even stronger. We are indeed proud to be an independent nation when we speak about independence we speak about nationhood, we speak about self-determination to make our own decisions in running our country, we are self-governing, we are independent, we are a sovereign state and although small we are still evolving and developing as a Nation and taking our rightful place amongst other nations of the world.

So, as we celebrate this golden jubilee, we must remember those who played their parts and those who have gone on before us. I want to specially recognise or

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mention Sir Eric Matthew Gairy, the Father of Independence, as we refer to him.

And at 50, some express the view that Grenada has become of age, some say we are still young, and she is not yet in her prime. **(Laughter)** Whatever point of view one may hold in expressing Grenada's growth and development, one thing is clear: we have come a long way, and we still have a long way to go. **(Applause)**

And so, as a nation, we must continue to make the concerted effort to work together, to continue to build together, to continue to develop this country as we move forward as One People on One Journey to attain One Future. Happy Independence to all Grenadians at home and in the diaspora, peace, love, and blessings. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Madam President:** I thank Senator Gloria Thomas, and I offer the floor once again with joy to Carriacou, the ancestral home of my grandmother, to Honourable Norland Cox. You have the floor, sir.

**Sen. the Hon. Norland Cox:** Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I wish to pledge my support to the Motion that is before these Honourable Houses this morning.

I want to also extend a welcome to the President of Ghana and his delegation, and just also to, through you, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, to just let... Just a little reminder for our Honourable Prime Minister that a visit to Grenada is not complete without a visit to Carriacou and Petite Martinique, so I just want to register that. **(Applause)**

I also wanted to just take leave, Madam President, just a little light moment as we have my dear friend and colleague, Governor Antoine, with us here I just thought that it'll be a good thing since he is responsible for the plate, for the new notes, I think maybe he could probably sneak his picture in there as Grenada's first Governor in this first 50 I think it'd be nice maybe Prime Minister can sneak his picture in there for... **(Inaudible comment by Members)** Meaning this time we still have some more to print, so I think it's a good opportunity for our country to recognise our people.

But, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I stand here today with a deep sense of

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humility and privilege not just as a Grenadian, but as a Kayak-Grenadian as we mark our 50th. This is a big deal. This is a big deal. Today, I stand here as a mark of service to this great Nation of ours and also as a messenger, a messenger of history. And I think, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, that is what we are doing here today, we are conveying a message to this Nation of our history so that we can remember it, we can cherish it as we move forward.

But, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, it is for those reasons I want to make my contributions around Former Senators who would have served or represented... who are Carriacouans and represented Carriacou in this Honourable House, Madam President.

I think it's instructive that I do that at this point in time. As a Senator from Carriacou, they have laid the pathway for me to be standing here this morning, so I think that is very instructive. While I want to do that, Madam President, it would be remiss of me not to mention our former Prime Ministers from Carriacou, the Honourable Herbert Blaize and Honourable Nicholas Brathwaite. **(Applause)**

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, what is very instructive about the tenure of the two prime ministers from Carriacou is that they became prime ministers of this country during difficult periods. It says something about the reserve and the resilience of Carriacouans, and I think it is something that we must pay attention to, Madam President.

Madam President, I wish they would recognise Senator the Honourable Michael Caesar from Petite Martinique, who is a stalwart and has given service to Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, and we need to recognise him for his contribution. **(Applause)** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, John De Roche, who also served as a Senator. **(Applause)** We have with us in our midst Senator the Honourable Joan Purcell, who served as a Senator before moving on to becoming a Parliamentary Representative. **(Applause)** So, we must recognise her contribution as a Senator and also as a Former President of the Senate.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Newton Noel, who also made a significant contribution in the area of Education. We must recognise him as well. **(Applause)** My dear friend and colleague George Prime, who always gives me problems every

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time we meet **(laughter)**, but fun problems. He, too, has served Carriacou and continues to do so in whatever capacity he gets an opportunity. We must recognise him.

Also, former Senator the Honourable Nigel Stewart, who played a significant role **(applause)** in steering the youths in his community, Madam President, Mr. Speaker. Jester Emmons, the late Jester Emmons and Madam President, for me, that is a touching one. It's because of his passing that I am standing here today. So we just want to really, really, really, really recognise his contribution, and our hearts go out to his wife and daughters. **(Applause)**

Madam President, the Honourable Elvin Nimrod. He too started out as a Senator, then moved on to be the longest-serving Parliamentary Representative for Carriacou and Petite Martinique, and I think we must recognise this contribution, which has gone way beyond what we would have expected and anticipated as Carriacouans. His service will continue to remain and his service has made significant marks which stand out today and will always be remembered and I really want to thank him on behalf of the Members of the Senate and of course, Carriacou and Petite Martinique for his contribution and service, may his soul rest in perfect peace.

**Madam President:** Close to the end now, Senator. Thank you.

**Sen. the Hon. Norland Cox:** Madam President, but I must make mention of some significant achievements that Carriacou has attained in the past 50. We must speak about Carriacou attaining a Ministry for Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs which is a significant achievement. **(Applause)**

- We must speak what a branch for TAMCC for Carriacou and Petite Martinique, Madam President; **(Applause)**
- Senior Citizens Home, Madam President;
- A new port of entry, Madam President, Mr. Speaker;
- Portable water for homes **(applause)** through reverse osmosis;
- Solar PV System, Madam President, Mr. Speaker;
- A mini-stadium;

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- Scholarships for our boys and girls, Madam President;
- Fishing centres;

We do have one that is being built now, Madam President.

- New schools, Madam President, Mr. Speaker.
- New roads, countless roads, Madam President, Mr. Speaker.

We believe all these achievements are quite significant and must be noted in changing the landscape of Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

And when we speak about Petite Martinique, the island of Petite Martinique has the largest longline fishing fleet (**sound of time bell**) in the State of Grenada, more than 90% of the fishing boats are from Petite Martinique. **(Applause)** We must recognise that investment, Madam President.

Madam President, I just want to close on two important things. One, we believe as Carriacouans and Petite Martiniquians that those achievements were in great part as a responsibility of the leadership of Dr. the Right Honourable Keith Mitchell. **(Applause)** And we want to say thank you for your contribution and service, and we look forward to this Government as they continue to build this country.

Madam President, I just want to close by saying I know that there is a lot of talk about the next 50, but I'm certain that the Parliamentary Representative would agree with me, we are going to start the next 50 by celebrating Kayak Mass 2024 **(applause)** this weekend. So to all... on behalf of all Carriacouians in the House, we are inviting everybody to come to Carriacou this weekend to enjoy Kayas Mass 2024.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, as our theme says, "One Nation, One Journey, One Future", we can do it. Thank you very much. Happy Independence, Grenada. **(Applause)**

**Madam President:** Senator. Thank you. Honourable Senator Katisha Douglas, you're next, madam, please, you have the floor.

**Sen. the Hon. Katisha Douglas:** Thank you. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, special welcome to all our visitors and special guests. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I would like to

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recognise our Political Leader, the Honourable Keith Mitchell, for making a significant contribution to our history. His contributions will never be forgotten. Thank you so much. **(Applause)** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, to all the other leaders who took us through this journey, I would like to acknowledge them, in particular, our Father of Independence, Sir Eric Matthew Gairy. **(Applause)**

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, my contribution today is centred on the women who participated in Parliament. In 1974, the thought of women being in Parliament was a far-fetched idea, but today women's participation has grown in some cases as much as 40%, and we would like that number to continue to grow as we continue to lay the foundation as we go up and up. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank those who have made it possible for us to reach this point in our history, we appreciate their efforts deeply.

Although Grenada has gone through many traumatic times, many struggles, we have had good times and we all need to walk with our shoulders high and feel proud, 50 years is a big deal. **(Applause)** "One People, One Journey, One Future," very profound.

I would like to end today by saying Happy 50th Independence to all Grenadians home and abroad and may God continue to bless us all. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Madam President:** Thank you, Senator Douglas. The floor is offered to Senator Neilon Franklyn, Opposition Senator you have the floor, sir.

**Sen. the Hon. Neilon Franklyn:** Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Motion as laid before these Honourable Houses by the Prime Minister.

Madam President, on this the eve of our golden jubilee, I thought it fitting to start my contribution this way. The drafters of the motto of this nation embedded the words, "Ever conscious of God, we aspire, build and advance as one people". The writer of our National Anthem saw it fit also to embed the words, "Heads, hearts, hands in unity to reach our destiny". Madam President, Mr. Speaker, one famous independent song bears the words, "If we learn to pull we have, do the little that we

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can, we could make Grenada a better land". **(Applause)**

"One People, One Journey, One Future". Madam President, I don't believe in coincidences. I believe, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, that these words were inspired to us by the Almighty to ensure that all of us, each and every one of us as Grenadians remember that in our history when Grenada faced its most difficult periods it was unity that brought us through. **(Applause)**

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, the contributions of all our leaders from Sir Eric Matthew Gairy all the way up to our current Prime Minister each leader before now have experienced a time of turmoil and a time of bliss, but in every moment Madam President, Mr. Speaker, unity brought us through it.

A number of the Members within both Houses reflected on the contributions made in the past and I urge all of us, Madam President, specifically to the younger ones, well I mean as the youngest sitting Senator I would speak to those younger than I am. **(Laughter)** Do not lose focus on what is important to all of us as Grenadians.

We are one, not separated by colours, or partisan politics, Madam President, but we are one. We will experience the next 50 years, most of us together. So will not make it to the 100, some will. And I urge all of us, Madam President, as we celebrate this moment in history, to not forget that unity is what is important. Madam President, I wish all Grenadians here and abroad a Happy 50th Anniversary of Independence. **(Applause)**

And, Madam President, before I end, as the Honourable Emmalin Pierre, forgive me for referring to a member in the "Other Place", mentioned in our presence today, and I think the Honourable Delma Thomas made reference to giving people their flowers while they are alive. In our presence today, we have two sitting former Prime Ministers, Tillman Thomas and Dr. the Right Honourable Keith Mitchell. Both men contributed to this country's development and specifically to Dr. Mitchell. 23 years at the helm. **(Applause)** 23 years leading this country, Madam President, should not go or forgotten.

It is imperative that we recognise all of our contributions, and I am told the Honourable Prime Minister, as you lead this country forward over the next few years, you have an opportunity to make your mark also. Let it be celebrated amongst all the

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men and women who have contributed before. Thank you, Madam President.  
**(Applause)** Mr. Speaker.

**Madam President:** Thank you, Senator Franklyn. Senator Mondy André Lewis, representative for Labour in the state of Grenada, you have the floor sir.

**Sen. the Hon. Mondy André Lewis:** Thank you very much, Madam President, and Mr. Speaker. Labour recognises the presence of His Excellency, President Nana Akufo-Addo of Ghana. Welcome sir. Labour has had the occasion to turn to the West Coast of Africa because colonialism has not left us. And in our fight, to represent our workers in one of our local companies, that still has its roots in Western, the West Coast of Africa, Arthur Daniel Mills, we had to turn to what is happening on the West Coast of Africa to actually guide us, for us to be able to bring to the table, those experiences to help us forward. And we thank you for that, as you continue to struggle for ordinary working people against the colonial powers that still exist today.  
**(Applause)**

Unity in diversity is what we have here. Labour pays tribute to the Trade Union Movement, and in particular, we endorse all of the colleagues who have been identified by the speakers before us. And in particular now, we wish to pay tribute to the former Labour Senator, Comrade Chester Humphrey **(applause)**, the longest-serving Labour Senator and the first Labour Senator in this House, the Senate. Probably second to Dr. Keith Mitchell, in terms of length of service to Grenada in the Houses. We thank you very much for the path you have laid.

We also thank Comrade Ray Roberts, who may not be here today, and we wish to take this opportunity to extend deepest condolences to him on the passing of his brother. And this may be one of the reasons why he's not here.

We use this opportunity here, also, to permit me to take precedence over those already established. Today is not a usual day, to recognise Comrade Brian Grimes, First Vice President of the Grenada Trade Unions Council. **(Applause)** To also note that the current Independence King, Scholar, was a Vice President of the Grenada Union of Teachers. Thank you very much for all that you have done. **(Applause)** But

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we sit, we come here today, the Motion that, there are two aspects of the Resolution, it has to do with the termination of the Association Order and also greetings to Grenada.

There will be times to discuss those matters, and in particular, the Termination Order. There's a lot we have to discuss about that. And as I look to my right, I look forward to the day when we will no longer have hanging over the heads of our colleagues, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. These two items hang over our heads when we're having something in Grenada. I look forward to the day, not too long from now, when we will say our pledge to Grenada, as I grew up in a Primary School.

And I wish that we could get that back in the Primary School, apart from our National Anthem, the Pledge to Grenada. I pledge allegiance to the flag and to the country for which it stands. This evokes a deep sense of patriotism in us. And look forward to that day when we will be giving our pledge to Grenada. As I said, the time will come for those discussions, but I must point out that while we are here today, the two aspects of the resolution have to do with the Termination of Association, and of saying Happy Independence to Grenada. I can't help but also mention my dear colleague on the "Other Side", the MP for St. George North East, just to extend or give recognition to former MPs, Comrade Unionson Whiteman, who was the first MP, post-Independence.

And I end by saying that as we move forward to the next 50, he says "Forward Every, Backwards Never", "Long Live the People of Grenada", "Long Live the Working Class". Thank you very much. **(Applause)** Happy 50th Anniversary Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Madam President:** Thank you, Senator Lewis. Thank you very much. And the floor is offered to the Honourable Senator Salim Rahaman. The Independent Senator representing business interests in the Grenada Senate. You have the floor, sir.

**Sen. The Hon. Salim Rahaman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, thank you, Madam

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President. I to rise to give support to the Motion moved by our Honourable Prime Minister. I begin in the name of God Almighty, the most gracious, the most merciful. I thank him for the service and dedication of our leaders today. And I thank him for the service, commitment and dedication of leadership of our past servants of the public, all those who gave of their time and their sweat, and some even gave their most valuable possession, their lives.

I thank our creator and sustainer for independence, which is something we should not take for granted. For our democracy, I thank him for freedom from the shackles and yoke of slavery. Freedom from the oppression of indentured servitude and freedom from the marginalisation and division of colonisation. I thank God Almighty for our esteemed guest of honour, the President of Ghana, President Nana Akufo-Addo and his delegation, and other Ambassadors and members of the Diplomatic Corps.

I recall President Ghana in a gathering speaking to European leaders, urging them and informing them that the cocoa that is produced in Ghana and advising them that they should relocate their factories to Ghana, because in the near future, their cocoa would no longer be sent to Europe. And I applaud him for that **(applause)** and for that thinking, to be able to stand up to his past colonial and our colonial leaders. Past colonial leaders.

It is my hope that the strengthening of relations between former colonies and the developing global south translates into greater opportunities for direct trade, freight and logistics solutions, new financing solutions and a shared future of combined success. I ask God Almighty to always guide us, all right as a people, and unite our hearts upon all that is pleasing to him. We may not always agree, but we ask for that divine intervention, so that the mistakes that we have made as a people in the past are not repeated.

I would like to acknowledge and thank those who came before me, representing the Business Sector, Senator DeAllie, who served in the Upper House for approximately 15 years, I believe. **(Applause)** The longest-serving private sector representative. And before him, Senator Darryl Braithwaite. I thank God Almighty for this Business Sector, which enables the continuity and economic stability of our

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country. And finally, I take this opportunity to wish you all here today, all Grenadians at home and in the diaspora, Happy 50th Independence. May God Almighty bless you and bless us all and bless our dear nation. Amen. **(Applause)**

**Madam President:** Thank you very much, Senator Rahaman. The floor is offered to our last Senator, who'll speak this morning, Senator Roderick St. Clair, representing Farmers and Fishers in the State of Grenada. Senator, the floor is yours.

**Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair:** Thank you, Madam President, and Mr. Speaker. Of course, my colleague Senators on "This Side" and, of course, Members of the Other House. Of course, special recognition to our honoured guest, the President of Ghana. Welcome. Your entourage and, of course, all the students here. I remember back teaching, today we would have been cooking oil down and eating those things, but I trust you'd have that later. And of course, to all those listening on the outside.

But most importantly, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I stand here because I have been privileged, if I want to say that, to be representing the voice of the farming and fisherfolk community in this Parliament. It so happens that I'm here at this important juncture in this country's history. And of course, the sentiments I would want to share here would be within the names. Of course, I'm not the first Senator; there are many others who have walked this path before me. Senator Dudley Andrews would have passed away, and his family may their soul rest in peace. Senator Keith Clouden, a longstanding stalwart in this House **(applause)**, is very powerful. Of course, while his stint was short, Dr. Dunstan Cambell, I wish you the best of health **(applause)**, and of course, Roderick St. Clair, speaking here right now. **(Laughter)**

Okay? But jokes aside, Madam President, for days now I've been trying to figure out how to speak. And I think about the stories of the agriculture sector, and we're moving away from the plantation system, and how Europe, if you want to say that, would have been utilising all the resources that we have in Grenada. Working with us, the ancestors of the great motherland, Africa. And of course, the point made by my dear Senator, dear friend Rahaman, in terms of Ghana trying to regain and

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move in that direction. I think that it's a key and a message, and a god sent maybe to say to us, Grenada, we have a new pathway.

Gone are the days when we had our foreparents struggling, fighting to feed ourselves, but you know, as we mentioned, the great leaders of the past, whom I wouldn't go through. And of course, the father of Independence himself, fighting along for the freedom of our great ancestors, working on the plantation. He must have known something then, to keep confident towards this vision of Independence, because we know, one of the key things in Independence, you must be able to feed yourself. We have achieved that.

We could do better, but we need to move beyond feeding ourselves, and we have to start making real money from our natural resources. And so, why it's convenient to speak today, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not like my good friend, the Leader of Government Business on "This Side", who is an established Calypsonian. My great-grand-uncle was Papa Edman, a great Calypsonian, but I didn't get his voice. I listened to my good friend, Scholar, the president, the Independence King, when he spoke about her. She is just 50, she's not yet in her prime.

This is very important, and I think about cricket, and when a batsman gets to 50, they say, well, his eyes just open and he's, he could see the ball better. And so, the unveiling last night of Vision 75 from the Development Plan 2035, I think positions us very well to move forward under, and I know the captaincy, to use the cricket term, of the current Prime Minister, and as such, we need to move steadfastly in that mission.

I want to say further, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, in the context of the good word of the Lord, we have seen a lot, we have gone through a lot. And I want to confront us today by saying we have nothing to fear, unless we forgot how God has led us in the past. And we know the past, I will not go there, but I want to say, I was also much more reassured when I followed the President of Rwanda, whom I have great respect for. And recently he was giving a speech, I think it's Rwanda Day.

President Kagame said, "You need to be doing the writings, the right way and at the right speed". You can go far and fast at the same time, and we know King

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James is around, and he knows about that. That's what our situation compels us to do, and we must think like that. That was his words. That gives me great inspiration for being able to stand up and speak today, because it's about doing it the right way at the right time, such that we can maximise all that is ahead of us.

So I, as I get to, towards the end of what I want to say, I was inspired further by the third place in the Calypso competition for Independence.

**Madam President:** Sir, you can have that. One more minute.

**Sen. the Hon. Roderick St. Clair:** Yes, sure. No problem. You'll take 20 seconds out of it. But it's okay. So she said, she said, let us celebrate, let's start on a clean slate. And she said, beyond 50, beyond 50, what we want to see. And I think this is what we need to leave here today, what we want to see beyond 50.

We want to see a better place. We want to see a more united Grenada. We want to see a Grenada whereby we can be independent economically. We want to be a Grenada where we can be proud. We want to be a Grenada, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, where the progress that we would have made and the progress that we would make in the next 10, 15, 20 years is never returned. That's the Grenada we want to see. And we say one people, one journey, one future. Happy Independence, Grenada. **(Applause)**

**Madam President:** Thank you, Senator, and Happy Independence to you. And gentlemen and ladies, we have completed our contributions on the Senate side. Thank you for your cooperation. We obviously have to reconvene to have more conversations. We pass the floor back to my colleague, the Speaker of the House. It's Okay to sir....

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you very much, Madam President. As I said at the beginning, our Honourable Leader of the Opposition and our Honourable Prime Minister would have the last say here. I invite now the Leader of the Opposition to make his contribution.

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**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** **(Laughter)** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I stand here today as the Father of the House of Parliament. **(Applause) (Laughter)** In other words, these are all my children, Mr. Speaker. And in that sense, there are two Members of this House whose father has been extremely close to me in a different place, a Member on the Opposition Side. When I had my first run as a candidate, Mr. Chasley David gave me my first transport to campaign. So that's why Peter is here today. **(Applause)**

There was a great Grenadian fast bowler, by the name of Peter Thomas, who, up to last week, we were at a social activity together, and we were talking about the past. One of the best swing bowlers Grenada has ever seen, having played Windward Islands with him, and he's the father of the Prime Minister of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. **(Applause)** So I am earning this title of "Father of the House" for more than one reason, Mr. Speaker, Madam President.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I assume we are here today as a symbolic gesture of this commemoration of Grenada's 50th Anniversary Celebration. I think it's important, and therefore I applaud the fact that we are doing this. But, Mr. Speaker, I just want to reiterate that the Grenada Termination of Association Order of 1973 and the Grenada Constitution Order of 1973 were both made on the 19th of December 1973, by Her Majesty in Council, to come into operation on the 7th of February 1974. By these two instruments, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Grenada was granted sovereign democratic status as a nation state and an independent member of the family of nations. The 1973 Constitution Order made on the same day, as the Termination Order established the democratic architecture of the new State of Grenada.

And, Mr. Speaker, because I've been around for all these years, from 1972 up to this period, I think it's important some things I say here today, is about the facts, not attempting to pacify anyone or to score any points, but to state history as they were. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, less we forget that the journey towards the event that we're celebrating today was tumultuous. Our independence was valiantly struggled for and negotiated by our Father of Independence, Sir Eric Matthew Gairy. And of course recognising him today is important.

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Sir Eric Matthew Gairy, the then premier, who was the name before Independence, faced fierce opposition from the opposition movement at the time in Grenada. Through island-wide strikes and social unrest, the opposition sought to delay Sir Eric's dream of independence or Independence Grenada. These are just facts. Amidst heightened violence and political polarisation, that dream still became a reality. Whether we like it or not, it is the fact, that it is key to the Grenadian story. And we must not water it down (**applause**) for our Generations before us.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, if we are to symbolically recognise and celebrate 50 years of Independence and sovereignty, as a nation I suggest a Motion should come to this House of Parliament. We said we're celebrating for a year, so nothing is wrong with that. It will be more fitting to have before the Parliament, a Motion that records the essence of our journey, since our Independence on the 7th February, 1974, to the present times, chronicling our challenges and triumphs as a young nation. Our people must be reminded that shortly after our democratic Independence was attained, it was interrupted in 1979. And these are just facts. Facts colleagues, facts.

The truly natural phase of Grenada's Independence, therefore, was recessed in 1984 with the restoration of the Grenada Constitution, facts, and Parliamentary Democracy, which was suspended in 1975 by the then Revolution. It was at this point in 1984, when a stable democratic government was once more re-established in Grenada since independence, and our social and political march forward recommends this in earnest.

In that context, we cannot forget those who served in that particular Parliament at that time. And the leader was not having the best of health, Herbert Augustus Blaize, who, most of the time, was seated in a wheelchair, was taking us through. Mr. Speaker, that time before that election in 1984, there were several prospective and excellent prospects for Prime Minister, but you know what people were saying then, they're fearful of the young guys like me. They want to go based on what happened in the Revolution with the youths, which we need. They wanted the old man.

They wanted the old man to guide that process. You understand the point, Madam President, (**Applause**) and, Mr. Speaker? (**Laughter**) The occasion, therefore, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, of the golden jubilee is a cause for all of us

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to pause and for our nation to reflect on the very serious manner of our developmental journey, from infancy to the proud member of the international community. It is a solemn and profound moment in time.

We ought to be especially thankful for the freedom we enjoy after the democratic institution that continues to protect our constitution, which clearly we **(applause)** know could be modified over a period of time. The enduring gift, Madam President, and Mr. Speaker, of our Independence throughout the years and throughout our challenges has been our Constitution. That's a fact.

For it was their Constitution to which we turned in the darkest times. And it is the very Constitution that has assured the continuation of our democracy, and the meetings of the Houses of Parliament, such as this one, we are here today celebrating. No other Order of 1973 could be of greater significance than the Grenada Constitution Order by which the Constitution of our Independent State was established.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, as I end my discourse on this very special day, I want to say this. We've had a lot of our people who have given tremendous contributions and service over the years to this country. And some of them have not got the recognition that they deserve. Sometimes we think politics only. But, Mr. Speaker, I say this. There's a gentleman named Theo "Papitette" Redhead. For those of you, some young ones probably won't know, that was one of the finest all-rounder the Caribbean has seen. But in those days, you could not enter the West Indies team if you came from a small Island.

A fast bowler who would have made it on the West Indies team today, a mid-fielder, a batsman, but difficult to get out. But not only cricket, Mr. Speaker, he was a Calypso King of this country. You heard the calypso "Monica Kaway"? Those of you remember that? "If you hear Monica kaway" **(Laughter) (Applause)** "Monica kaway". But, Mr. Speaker, he also represented Grenada and the Windward Islands at football. Yes. At football.

So I want to make this point. So I want to, before I close, say to my colleague who presumed that he was going to get the baton passed on **(laughter) (applause)** for... Mr. Speaker, I don't know if I have a baton to pass on in the first place. **(Laughter)** And if and when the baton is to be passed on, I will tell him, not him telling

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me **(laughter)**.

I remember my friend here said, they were one representative in North West, but there actually were two since Independence, George Holston, the former Minister for Finance during the period of the first Independence. And I remember he said to me after beating me in the election in 1972. And there was a celebration, and he said, "Keith, don't worry, you will be the next representative". In other words, he said that to me. I didn't say that to him. **(Laughter)**

Mr. Speaker, therefore, as we close, look, we could all make nice sounding statements and have a vision that sounds beautiful. My friends, it is not the statement by itself that counts; it's our actions in the streets and in the field. That is what counts. So, if you see a monument made to the past leaders, do not go and scrub it off and then claim you want unity. Remember, our children are looking at us. Let's do what's right. What our conscience tells us is right. We have a good chance, an excellent chance.

Of course, today I was nervous about what would take place, because I was concerned initially when I saw the Order, because I wasn't sure what the intentions were. But listening to colleagues here today, if we persist in that direction, Grenada would be **(applause)** a special place. But the verdict is not yet there. We have to see to it. So the Prime Minister has that challenge that he has to keep **(sound of time bell)** Bring us together, unite us and let's move Grenada, **(applause)** Carriacou and Petite Martinique forward.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. Thank you very much, Leader of His Majesty's Opposition. And I now invite the Honourable Dickon Mitchell, Prime Minister of Grenada, to make his contribution. **(Applause)**

**Hon. Dickon Mitchell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, distinguished colleagues of both Houses, former Prime Minister. Well, let me start a little again, Mr. Speaker. In addition to acknowledging the distinguished presence of all colleagues of both Houses, I would single out the Leader of His Majesty's Opposition, being the longest-serving Member of Parliament in the history of

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Grenada's Parliament, for uninterrupted service of almost 40 years, and I assume he will make the 40 years in December of this year, given the longevity and the genealogy that he comes from. **(Laughter)**

So, I want to single him out both for his distinguished and uninterrupted service to the Lower House of Parliament. I also want to single him out for his distinguished and longest service as Prime Minister of Grenada. And as we are in this noble institution of Parliament, it is fitting, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, if you would permit me, to ask all of us, in fact, to show appreciation to him for his yeoman service, by in fact knocking the table **(applause)** or clapping our hands.

And I'm happy, Mr. Speaker, that his apprehension as to what was to transpire here this morning has been quelled, because I want to extend profound gratitude to you, Madam President, and Mr. Speaker, for insisting that this session of Parliament be held. Many of us may not be aware that, in fact, we have to take ownership of this failing, which, to a large extent, led to the 50th Anniversary Independence Celebrations being planned with no reference to Parliament.

And both the Speaker and the President, on visiting me, coming from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Caucus in Uganda, made it clear to me that they would not have it. That the 50th Anniversary of Independence would pass and that there would be no formal sitting of Parliament to mark this occasion. And so, the criticism was readily accepted as being valid, and in short order, the Speaker and the President went to work. And so we are here, principally because of their insistence **(applause)** on this Sitting. I wish to thank all the Members for attending and for making the contributions that they have made.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, if you permit me to acknowledge the presence of the distinguished Members who are sitting with us in the Chamber. I particularly want to recognise:

- Former Member of Parliament and former Prime Minister, the Honourable Tillman Thomas **(applause)** and Mrs. Thomas;
- Sir Lawrence and Mrs. Lawrence; **(applause)**
- Mrs. Leslie-Ann Seon; **(applause)**
- Ms. Joan Purcell; **(applause)**

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Senator and I call him "President General", because he's been known as the President General of the Technical and Allied Workers Union for a very long time. So it's a title that sticks with him. **(Applause)**

- Former President, Mr. Chester Humphrey;
- Former Member of Parliament and former Government Minister, Mr. Kenny Lalsingh; **(applause)**
- Members of the Judiciary, our resident High Court Judges.

I want to make special mention and thank them for attending because when we talk about nationhood and we talk about statehood, let us not forget that there are three equal arms of the state: the Parliament - the Legislature, represented by this august institution and this symbolic building that we're in, but, the Judiciary which plays an equally fundamental role in safeguarding our democracy and the rule of law, upon which our Constitution is founded and upon which our nation is founded. So, please join me in extending a round of applause for the presence of our Judiciary. **(Applause)**

- Mrs. Margaret Neckles; **(applause)**
- Ms. Benjamin, who's with us today and who many have recognised; **(Applause)**
- I want to acknowledge the presence of the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Don McKenzie; **(Applause)**
- Members of the Diplomatic Corps who are here with us;
- Government Officials who are here with us;
- Mr. Jumaane Williams, public advocate for the city of New York, **(applause)** who's visiting;
- Former distinguished public servant, Ms. Banfield; **(applause)**
- Most importantly, our students who are here in the gallery and who are looking online; and
- Our citizens of Grenada, near and far.

Permit me to welcome our distinguished guest, His Excellency the President of Ghana and his delegates, who have travelled all the way from Africa, to be with us during this 50th Golden Jubilee.

I should point out that G is for Grenada and G is for Ghana. **(Applause)** I

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should point out that the red, gold and green which adorn our flag are the same red, gold and green that adorn the flag of Ghana. **(Applause)** I should point out that the father of Ghana's Independence was not just the "Father of Ghana", but in a sense the "Father of Modern Africa", of an Africa that led the way in the struggle against colonisation, and that stood, not just Africa, but the Caribbean, but India and many places around the world to take up the struggle for the liberalisation.

The liberty, the freedom, the equality and the human dignity of millions of persons who for several centuries had been viewed as second-class, third-class, unequal and in many instances subhuman. And so, someone asked me, "Why Ghana on the 50th Anniversary of Grenada's Independence?" And I say to them, "If not Ghana, who?" **(Applause)**

So, Mr. President, I want to express in the words of the Jamaican dancehall artiste, Koffee, "Gratitude is a must". **(Applause)** And so, I want to thank you immensely for accepting our invitation to commemorate and to celebrate Grenada's 50th Anniversary of Independence. We are immensely grateful, sir, for your presence. **(Applause)**

When Sir Eric Matthew Gairy obtained the mandate from the people of Grenada to obtain independence for Grenada. And I want to repeat this. When Sir Eric Matthew Gairy obtained the mandate of the people of Grenada, he was the premier at the time. There were elections, and his campaign was essentially a single agenda item, which was whether or not Grenada should pursue its right to become an Independent Nation.

He won elections, overwhelmingly, and he pursued that mandate from the people of Grenada. **(Applause)** So, I disagree slightly with my learned and distinguished colleague from the Town of St. George. Independence wasn't granted by the British; Independence was obtained **(applause)** by Sir Eric Matthew Gairy and the people of Grenada. And it was obtained because the people of Grenada gave the mandate to Sir Eric.

So, despite the fact that it was ushered in under the circumstances of a general strike, of political turmoil, of a complete island-wide blackout, it demonstrates that in the darkest of nights, all you need is a little light to shine the way. And that little light has led us 50 years later to this moment and this day.

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And so, unquestionably, all of us as citizens of Grenada owe our unique identity as Grenadians, our nationhood, our sovereignty to Sir Eric Matthew Gairy for his courage, his leadership, his grit and his determination in ushering a new dawn **(applause)** for Grenada. And all that has politically come thereafter, in one way or another, can be traced to Sir Eric Matthew Gairy.

There really would be no Maurice Bishop if there was no Sir Eric Matthew Gairy. **(Applause)** In a sense, there really would be no US Intervention if there were not Maurice Bishop. There would be no New National Party if there were no intervention. **(Applause)** We would not have the "Father of the House" **(laughter)** if we didn't have the old man Herbert Blaize. **(Laughter)**

There would be no Sir Nicholas Braithwaite if we did not have the collapse of the Revolution and the intervention that followed thereafter. There would be no National Democratic Congress if there was no NNP. **(Applause)** And so, all that has come over the last 50 years, at least politically, can be traced to the father of our nation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I, too, wish to associate myself with all of the sentiments expressed by all of my colleagues, particularly in paying tribute to all Parliamentarians, both in the Upper House and the Lower House, who have served in this institution. But it would be remiss of me not to add to that list, Parliamentarians from the East, the virgin parish of St. David. **(Applause)**

And I wish to particularly start with Grenada's first lady, first, first lady, Ms. Cynthia Gairy nee Clyne. **(Applause)** She gave long and distinguished service, not just to the Parliament of Grenada, but to Grenada in particular and in particular, in particular in the cultural field. Any quick read of our history and contribution will show that she played a tremendous role in preserving, encouraging and supporting the cultural arts in Grenada.

And although I'm a post-1974 child, I, too, remember the days of the Lancers and the other cultural groups and activities that were promoted by Mrs. Gairy. It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, Madam President, because Mrs. Gairy's ancestral home, the home of the Clyne, is two stone's throw away from where I grew up. So, on that said street, Mr. Speaker, it produced Mrs. Gairy, it produced Michael Andrew, former MP for St. David **(applause)**, it produced Michael Dennis Lett, former MP for St. David

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**(applause)**, and by happenstance, it has produced me. **(Applause)**

So it does appear, Mr. Speaker, that in that 400 meters of road, there's a high risk of being born or of having spent any considerable length of time growing up in Petite Esperance, because it has, in fact, given the people of St. David four Members of Parliament. **(Applause)** But, Mr. Speaker, I want to make special mention of two Members of Parliament who served the Constituency of St. David, who are still alive today.

One of them is with us present today, Mr. Joslin Whiteman. **(Applause)** The other one is not with us today, but not only did he serve as a Member of Parliament and a member of government, but he also had the honour of serving as our distinguished Governor General, Sir Daniel Williams. **(Applause)** So, Mr. Speaker, on my own behalf, and I think on behalf of the Institution of Parliament, I want to express my profound gratitude to them for the service that they have delivered to the people of St. David. Sorry, to the people of St. David.

And I've just been reminded, thankfully, or then I probably would not be forgiven for doing so, my good friend Mr. Oliver Joseph. **(Applause)** The immediate past Parliamentary Representative, who served for two terms, represented the people of St. David. I want to thank him as well for his service to the people of St. David, to Parliament and to the people of Grenada.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy that the "Father of the House", in fact, read out and made the proposal, since we are in fact marking our 50th Anniversary as a yearlong celebration, that there should be an opportunity for further Motions and further debates on what Independence means, on the journey that we have taken, on the need to make sure that we confront our history, good, bad, indifferent and that we do not belittle or whitewash or write out of history or the journey that we have taken over the last 50 years. **(Applause)** And so, I would be quite happy to support the Motion, and I would even dare say I would be happy to have him as the "Father of the House" introduce the Motion. **(Applause)**

So, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude by saying a little bit about our distinguished guest and why his presence has significance for us in Grenada, particularly given Grenada's history and its own challenges with the rule of law, with our history of having

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suspended our own Constitution, with our history of political experiment, with our history of at times political instability and disunity, but how we have managed to overcome that, and to have become is stable democratic society, and the role that this institution plays in that process.

So while a lot of our attention has been spent on recognising, rightly so, the contributions of individuals, it is important to us to remember that as a nation state, we must build our institutions. We must respect our institutions, because our history teaches us painfully so, that's the absence of institutions which create the checks and balances, that we will revert to the Law of the Jungle, to chaos, to anarchy and the rule of might, is right.

And so, we should appreciate the need therefore to support, strengthen and enhance our institutions such as Parliament, such as the Judiciary, because it is only when we do so that we can guarantee the fundamental rights and freedoms of our citizens, which is the bedrock upon which a democratic and free society is built. And I want to reemphasise that a free society is built. Because while we celebrate our independence, we must accept that we come from a long line of struggle and that no nation can call itself a nation if, within that nation, they are enslaved men and women.

And so, even the great United States, had to have its own reckoning with the fact, that despite the greatness of its Constitution, that in practice within its borders, it had a group, a class, a sect of persons who looked like me, and like many of us who are in here, who were not free. Now, until they were granted those rights, it could not call itself the great United States of America.

And so, we too need to appreciate that the foundation of our society is a free society. And that we need to ensure that our institutions will preserve our individual and collective freedom. So, Mr. Speaker, the President of Ghana has played a key role in his nation's struggle to ensure that the rule of law, democracy, good governance, and transparency were guaranteed to the ordinary citizens of Ghana. So permit me, Madam President, Mr. Speaker, to just do a very short bio of our distinguished guest.

He is the fifth President of the Fourth Republic of Ghana, and he was sworn into office for a second term on the 7th of January, 2021. And I want to highlight this

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paragraph. He has been a prominent champion of human rights, the rule of law, justice, freedom and democracy in Ghana. As a lawyer, he undertook many of the most important constitutional cases of the modern era in Ghana, which amongst other thing, protected the independence of the judiciary, the right of the citizens to demonstrate without police permit (**applause**) and the right of equal access of all political parties to state owned media.

So, he has the personal experience of standing up, to use modern language, to the man, of standing up to the powers that be for the ordinary man. I'm therefore heartened and deeply humbled that he would accept our honour, accept our invitation and honour us with his presence to be with us in Grenada, despite his hectic schedule. Thank you very much, Madam President. (**Applause**)

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you very much, Honourable Prime Minister and all the Members of Parliament who gave their contribution in this particular Sitting of the nation's Parliament. Having listened to all, I now propose the question.

**The Speaker proposed the question to the House of Representatives.  
Question put and agreed.**

**Madam President proposed the question to the Senate.  
Question put and agreed.**

**Motion approved.**

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

**Hon. Dickon Mitchell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam President, Mr. Speaker.

**WHEREAS** His Excellency the President of Ghana is here with us today, I move a Motion that both Houses of Parliament extend a kind invitation to His Excellency to address both Houses.

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

**The Speaker proposed the question to the House of Representatives.**

**Question put and agreed.**

**Madam President proposed the question to the Senate.**

**Question put and agreed.**

**Motion approved.**

**His Excellency Nana Akufo-Addo approaches the podium to address both Houses**

**(Applause)**

**President of Ghana, H. E. Nana Akufo-Addo:** President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, Honourable Senators, and Honourable Members of the Houses of Representatives, Resident High Court Judges, Ghana's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Members of the Ghanaian delegation, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, ladies and gentlemen.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much for the great honour done to the Ghanaian people, and I am the first Ghanaian Leader to visit Grenada, by inviting me to address this House in a Joint Sitting of the Houses of Parliament. I am doubly honoured as I believe that I'm the first African President to have been given this privilege in this long-established Parliament. I thank Prime Minister the Honourable Dickon Amis Thomas Mitchell, MP, warmly for the invitation to be the guest of honour at the 50th Anniversary Golden Jubilee of Grenada's Independence.

The Ghanaian people express to this House and the brotherly and sisterly people of Grenada their appreciation of the warm hospitality extended to their President and his delegation here in St. George's and convey their best wishes for the success of the valiant people of Grenada.

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I want to personally affirm my appreciation to the Prime Minister of this country for all the excellent arrangements he has made for our visit, and for the exceptional hospitality we've been accorded since our arrival. I look forward to returning this hospitality to him in Accra and he'd better hurry to come **(applause)** because I'm in the last year of my two-term tenure of 80 years as Ghana's President.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Honourable Senators and Honourable Members, I find myself very much at home here amongst you having been for 12 consecutive years a Member of Parliament for the Accra constituency in the Eastern region of Ghana. Indeed, some of the most interesting times of my political career were in the Chamber of Parliament. There, I say that is where, with the help of colleagues, we did some of the work with long-lasting effect on the Ghanaian Nation. I must admit that I do sometimes miss Parliament, especially the vigorous debates that ensue between Members of "Both Sides" in Ghana's vibrant Parliament. But, I believe none of you here will begrudge me if I told you I must prefer the position of President **(laughter) (applause)** for obvious reasons.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Grenada is a long way from Ghana, a long way from the West Coast of Africa, even in a jet plane and even on a planned, happy journey with a return ticket. It does not matter how often I make this journey to the Caribbean, and however different the circumstances that take me, my mind invariably goes to those journeys of more than 400 years ago that brought so many of our forbearers to the Americas and the Caribbean. Forced, unplanned, destination unknown and packed like sardines in unimaginably filthy conditions, they emerged into a life of bondage and indignity that was to last for centuries. I'm told that the 18,000 slaves represent 19% of all slaves who were brought into Grenada at the height of the barbaric, inhuman Transatlantic Slave Trade, who were frontiers from the Central Region of Ghana.

We in Africa, and I believe the same to be true for our kith and kin in the African diaspora, are united in our determination to help ensure that never again will Africa allow herself and her people to be subjected to such obscene, degrading and dehumanising circumstances. **(Applause)** Never again shall it be that a dozen or so armed foreign adventurers, with the connivance of a few of our own people, reduce

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Africans to traded commodities.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, they might have started the slaves, but the contributions of Africans to the development of the Americas and the Caribbean are matchless. **(Applause)** I do not refer just to the slave labour that built American railways and American industries and generally American infrastructure as well as those of the Caribbean, I refer also to the role of Africans in innovation, in science, in sports, in music in the arts, and the fashioning of the Americas and the Caribbean. **(Applause)** I looked up and identified a few of the inventions that Africans in the “so-called” New World have named after them, which have improved life for all humanity.

I cite these in no particular order of importance:

- Caller ID;
- Call waiting
- The fibre-optic cable;
- The pacemaker,
- The mop;
- Suspenders;
- Ice-cream scooper;
- Lawnmower;
- Ironing board;
- Blood bank;
- Folding chair;
- Automatic gear-shifting vehicles;
- Sanitary belt;
- Walker;
- Tissue holder;
- Gas mask;
- Traffic signals;
- World's fastest computer;
- Voice over IP;
- Closed-circuit television.

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**(Applause)**

Try to think what life would be without my random list.

In the sporting world, Africans in the diaspora have shown that they're not afraid of hard work and discipline: football, athletics, cricket, basketball and many other games have been taken to new heights thanks to the efforts of the descendants of those who were forcibly transported to the Americas and the Caribbean.

As a lover of cricket, I know the pleasure that Devon Smith, the highest run-scorer in the history of West Indian first-class cricket competition (**applause**), gave to many in his outstanding cricket career.

I also refer to Frederick Douglass, one of the greatest of all Americans, when he said, "Slaves sang best when they were most unhappy". If that is so, then the world has a lot to thank the black people in the diaspora for much of the music that has kept the world going in these past 300 years. Many of the great singers and entertainers of the past century acknowledge Africa as the source of the rhythm and lyrics of their music. Calypso and soca still cultivate, and reggae gets new converts every day.

We're happy in Ghana that Bob Marley's Rita has found a home with us in scenic Aburi. We were glad that Maya Angelou spent a considerable part of her youth with us in Ghana. We're proud that George Padmore, the Jamaican nationalist and Pan-African activist, found a home in Ghana and was buried in our soil.

In the 60-odd years since the majority of African countries, in the wake of Ghana's shining example in 1957 under Kwame Nkrumah's dynamic leadership, attained independence from colonialism and imperialism, it is true that we have not always lived up to the early promise of our forebears. Political instability and poor management of our economies have meant that Africa is being described as the "Scar on the conscience of the world", to borrow the words of a one-time British Prime Minister. Many of Africa's young people have resorted to desperate means to escape from the continent to find a better future for themselves elsewhere.

Today is not the day to go into the struggles that African countries have encountered since their Independence. It is enough to state that there's a new determination to make Africa work, and we are doing so. (**Applause**) Several of the

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countries in Africa are managing their resources better, engendering more rapid growth rates and greater prosperity for their people. Ghana belongs to this category.

**(Applause)**

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated at the beginning of my speech, the opportunity given to me to address this House has come at a timely moment in the history of the relations between Africa and the African diaspora, which is being designated as the sixth region of the African Union, AU. As we confront the effects of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, colonialism and imperialism, we need to speak with one voice about the importance of reparations.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, the effects of the slave trade have been devastating to the continent and to the African diaspora. The entire period of slavery meant that our progress economically, culturally and psychologically was stifled. There are legions of stories of families who were torn apart. Fathers who went out to fish or farm, boys who went out to play and were taken, never came back. Daughters who went to fetch water never saw their parents again. You cannot quantify the effects of such tragedies, but they need to be recognised. Africa and her people's lust grew tremendously during that long, horrifying period, and its ripple effects are still being felt right to this very day.

Reparations for Africa and the African diaspora are long overdue. **(Applause)** Predictably, the question of reparations becomes a debate only when it comes to Africans and people of African descent. When the British ended slavery, all the owners of enslaved Africans received reparations to the tune of £20 million, the equivalent today of £20 billion, but enslaved Africans themselves did not receive a penny. Likewise, in the United States, owners of slaves received \$300 for every slave they owned; the slaves themselves received nothing.

Haiti, for example, had to pay reparations amounting to the equivalent of 21 billion United States Dollars to French slaveholders in 1825 for the victory of the great Haitian Revolution, the first in the Americas in the Caribbean, which freed the slaves. It was a payment made under duress that has impoverished Haiti throughout the 19th century till today.

The 1833 Act of Emancipation, which freed some 23,600 enslaved people in

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***Deliverance of Speech***

Grenada, was made possible in part through the payment of reparations to Grenada's plantation owners, amounting at the time to £616,255, the equivalent of some £80 million today. It is astonishing to note that those enslaved received nothing, worsened by the fact that many continued to work on the same plantations as wage labourers.

Native Americans have received and continue to receive reparations. Japanese-American families who were incarcerated in internment camps in America during World War II received reparations. Jewish people six million of whom perished in the Concentration Camps of Hitler Right Nazi Germany received reparations including homeland grants and support.

So it is time for Africans and the African diaspora **(applause)**, at least 20 million of whose sons and daughters have had their freedom curtailed and sold into slavery, also to receive reparations. No amount of money can restore the damage caused by the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its consequences, which have spanned many centuries, but the payment of reparations will be an acknowledgement of the perpetration of evil. **(Applause)**

Surely, this is a matter that the world must confront and can no longer ignore and even before these discussions on reparations conclude the entire continent of Africa and the African diaspora deserve a formal apology from **(applause)** the European Nations involved in the slave trade for the crimes and damages it has caused to the population's psychic, image and character of Africans in the world over.

You in the Caribbean community of CARICOM, have unequivocally pronounced your demand for the payment of reparations. We in Africa are determined to work together with you to advance the cause of reparations. **(Applause)** Ghana has taken the lead in mobilising the African Union to join you in this noble endeavour, just as Ghana took the lead in organising the brilliantly successful year of return in 2019.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate that the call for reparations is not a plea for arms, but a valid demand for justice. **(Applause)** Reparations can rightly be paid to victims and descendants of the victims of the holocaust, so can reparations also be paid to the descendants of the victims of the slave trade? **(Applause)** It has been 400 years, and we want to bring this tragedy closer.

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Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I remain hopeful that in our time, Africans and persons of African descent on both sides of the Atlantic will come together in mutual solidarity to advance the interests of black people everywhere in the world. **(Applause)** Now is the time to engage each other positively and imbibe in ourselves a deep consciousness and understanding of the goals and history of the African peoples. And in so doing, in this era of climate change, we must pay particular attention to the special circumstances and vulnerabilities of the Small Island States of the Caribbean like Grenada.

As Members of the Commonwealth and the United Nations, with governing structures that respect human rights, the rule of law, and the principles of democratic accountability, Grenada and Ghana should continue to cooperate effectively at the international level to create a safer and more secure world. **(Applause)** The realisation of this will be contingent on a radical reform of the structures and methods of operations of global governing institutions, like the United Nations and its Security Council, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to engender a more democratic equitable and fairer international system.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, my delegation and I are grateful for the warm welcome we have received here in beautiful Grenada. May the Almighty bless the peoples of Grenada and Ghana and all the peoples of the Caribbean and mother Africa. And congratulations go to all Grenadians on this Happy Anniversary and congratulations to all the distinguished leaders some of whom are here with us in this Chamber who have helped guide Grenada to this joyous occasion.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much for your attention. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** We therefore thank the President of Ghana for his very thought-provoking and stimulating presentation to this Parliament. We are very thankful to you, sir, for provoking these thoughts in our heads and helping us clear our vision and our path as we take Grenada forward. Honourable Prime Minister.

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**Motions**

**Hon. Dickon Mitchell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I move the following Motion standing in my name:

**BE IS RESOLVED** that the Houses of Parliament record their thanks for the Gracious Addresses delivered to the Houses of Parliament by His Excellency the President of Ghana.

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

**The Speaker proposed the question to the House of Representatives.**

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

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Not the Prime Minister yet, sir. **(Laughter)** Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I just wish to echo the sentiments and to second the expression of thanks as given by our Prime Minister. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay. Honourable...

**(Applause)**

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

**Hon. Dickon Mitchell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before I put the Motion for leave for the Houses to be adjourned on and matters of urgent public importance, Mr. Speaker, permit me to simply acknowledge, because I do not think any of us actually did so, the distinguished presence of the Foreign Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. Amery Browne. **(Applause)** And although the President of Ghana mentioned it, I also wish to distinctly point out that we also have the distinguished presence of the Foreign Minister of Ghana, who is with us as well. **(Applause)**

I might be politically incorrect with what I'm about to say, but, Mr. Speaker, I will

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be publicly indicating that we have pledged to the President of Ghana that we will be supporting the distinguished nomination of the Foreign Minister of Ghana to lead the Commonwealth of Nations when that time arises. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker, finally if you permit me, we do have a message of congratulations from Congresswoman Barbara Lee of the United States Congress who has a long and distinguished relationship with Grenada and so, Mr. Speaker, if you permit me to find that message I will see your leave to simply read the message into the record.

**Mr. Speaker:** Permission granted, Honourable Prime Minister.

**Hon. Dickon Mitchell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

*"I send my heartfelt congratulations to the people of Grenada on the 50th anniversary of Independence from British colonialism. This significant milestone marks five decades of freedom for the Grenadian community, whose perseverance is both a testament to their past and a beacon of hope for the future. Grenada holds a special place in my family's heart. I've spent much time on the island. My son went to the Grenada Boys Secondary School. Grenada's natural beauty is only surpassed by the Grenadian people's welcoming, beautiful spirit. Thanks to the leadership, commitment and hard work, the regional security and overall well-being of the Caribbean have been announced. May Grenada continue to prosper, and may the spirit of Independence and resilience inspire future generations. Congratulations to Grenada on this remarkable milestone.*

*Sincerely,*

*Barbara Lee,  
Member of Congress  
California District 12"*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

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

**Madam President proposed the question to the Senate.**

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Motion approved.**

**Clerk:** Item 4 – Request for leave to move the adjournment of the House on matters of urgent public importance.

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

**Hon. Dickon Mitchell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I move the Motion that the House of Representatives stand adjourned *sine die*.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable MP for St. Mark.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I beg to second the Motion as presented by the Honourable Prime Minister.

**Madam President:** Leader of Government's Business in the Senate.

**Sen. the Hon. Adrian Thomas:** Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I wish to associate the Senate with a sentiment of the Motion.

**Madam President:** Leader of Opposition Business in the Senate.

**Sen. the Hon. Norland Cox:** Thank you. Madam President, Mr. Speaker, I second the Motion before this Honourable House. Thank you.

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**Madam President:** Thank you, Senator Cox. I think with this we've come just on the edge of the conclusion of our Sitting. It has been historic, it's been remarkable, and what's left is for the Speaker and I, to summarise and take you all to lunch or take yourselves to lunch. But we have the privilege of light remarks, and just as I have insisted on the two to three minutes at least of the Senators, let me aim to comply now that it's my turn.

And therefore I wish to make three points. I first want to express thanks. I thank God, I thank my country, I thank my family for the opportunity to be here at this particularly historic moment. I want to thank all the persons who have served in the Grenada Senate as Grenadian Presidents, not in 1677 when the Senate started, but in 1974 when Grenadians started to govern through the Senate.

And so I want to thank former President Joan Purcell, thank you, Senator Purcell. Thank Margaret Neckles, former President of the Senate. I wish to thank Leslie-Ann Seon. Former President of the Senate and my immediate predecessor and long-standing comrade in arms in the struggle for a better Grenada, Senator Chester Humphrey. All four of you have contributed incredibly to the management and development of the Office of the President, so I thank you all.

And I thank all those who have come to share with us this moment, whether you are Grenadian nationals, first or second generation, whether you are Timothy Antoine, Jumaane Williams, Lister Neckeles, Nadia Benjamin, Carol Benjamin, and so many of you have come home. I mentioned these names from St. Andrew, of course, that I know mostly Didacus Jules, King James Kirani, thank you all for filling out the crevices, perhaps of this historic gathering.

My thanks go to the President of Ghana, President Akufo-Addo, and your delegation, sir. It is a great pleasure to have you here with us, and it reconnects us in a very immediate and tangible way. Many of us who know our limited history know that West Africa and certain ethnic groups in particular were brought here, and so we are your sisters and brothers, your cousins waiting here. We hope to give you the best time, Madam Foreign Minister, and the rest of the delegation. Thank you for sharing this moment with us.

My second point is to join with all of you in thanking Senators, Members, and

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Parliamentarians broadly. I'll be very brief here, and you've mentioned so many that I had on my list. I do want to mention one or two names. I haven't heard Winifred Strachan, who served. **(Applause)** In fact, she was the Leader of the GULP at one point. She was the Leader of the Opposition. Sister Gloria Payne Banfield, who is also the Leader of the political party. **(Applause)** Pauline Andrews, Claudette Pitt and Jacqueline Creft. **(Applause)** Both of those women were in the Revolution and served in what was the Parliament of the people at the time.

My last point is that I listened to Reverend Osbert James. I listened to Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell last night. I listened to him this morning. I listened to all of us, and we are celebrating our journey. We've had a fabulous 50 years. I remember right after in 1976, this is a little bit of my story that you know, the fervent of the country where young people were rising up. Most young people were against the vision of Eric Gairy because it was felt that that vision was a bit limited for the times. It's a conversation we can have, and the New Jewel Movement was the happening thing at the time.

I remember going into an office on Lucas Street with Attorney Kenrick Radix and Attorney Maurice Bishop to join the NJM, and I tell the story just to tell you the time that it was. And I said yes, of course I want to join the NJM, and they said, "Well, you have to pay \$0.25 for a membership card to join the NJM". It was one of the most powerful movements post-independence, and we have seen since then the mobilisation of youth.

I want to encourage the young people in this inter-generational dialogue to join organisations, to be active in civil, civic and other organisations that could help **(applause)** to form you, that will help to give you values and as our democracy evolves as the world is really pivoting towards some of the known and some of the unknowns. I do hope that we are able to keep an open mind for the continuing expansion and evolution of our democracy in the spirit of a maturing quality and the possibilities of higher levels of being, politically and economically, as was proposed by our Minister for Economic Development and others.

So, thank you all for being here. This is a big deal, this is a big deal, and I dare say that it is not a final deal. We are on the road to Vision 75, up, up and up. Thank

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you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** It is now my distinct pleasure to give my final remarks. I know in 1974 there was a Joint Sitting of the Houses. What I do not know is whether or not the chemistry that I felt today existed then, whether or not the truth attendance and attention that we saw from our students and the gallery as a whole was the same in 1974.

Fifty years ago, we as Grenadians, our diplomatic core, other well-wishers, find ourselves at a juncture and an advantageous juncture because we happen to be the ones who can look back at 50 years and who can also look forward to the next 50 years.

So, as we celebrate our Golden Jubilee, let us be mindful that it is a golden opportunity also to try to ensure collectively that a better 50 years lie ahead of us. **(Applause)** It was the Prime Minister who made mention of our judiciary, and it's almost two years now since I'm sitting here as a Speaker, and it's the first time I am seeing our Justices sitting with us. Because even for that Arm of Government, we are in a very significant moment of the nation's history, and so I wish to say to you in the gallery as well. I attended the Ecumenical Service on Sunday because I did both, and at that Ecumenical Service, there was a young lad, in fact two lads, who brought me their prayer for Grenada, and I am sure several of my colleagues received prayers as well.

I read through all the prayers and the overwhelming theme in those prayers from lads who were not 12 years old, by my guess. They were asking for greater virtues and values. I still hold the prayers with me. They ask for more cooperation, more love, and more oneness among us; that was their prayer to God for Grenada as we celebrate 50 years.

As we contemplate the next 50 years for this dear land of ours, let me remind you that we will build a country, we will build our economy, but we cannot build those things properly if we do not bear in mind what these young people have asked us to do. For Grenada to go forward, for Grenada to move upwards, it requires all of us, not just the Government. We all have a part to play in the building of this nation.

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**(Applause)**

We give thanks to God for those past 50 years and we ask God to lead us through the next 50 as collectively sons and daughters of this dear land hold hands across political divides, hold hands, across colours hold hands so that even if some of us may not be around when the 50 is accomplished, let it be said that more was done than was said by those who say the first 50. **(Applause)** My best wishes to every Grenadian at home and abroad as we celebrate together our first 50 and as we plan together and forge ahead for a better next 50. I thank you. **(Applause)**

All right. I think it is now time for me to put the question of the adjournment to the House.

**Mr. Speaker proposed the question to the House of Representatives.**

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Madam President proposed the question to the Senate.**

**Question put and agreed to.**

**The Sitting of the Houses adjourned sine die at 1:31 p.m.**

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