



**PARLIAMENT OF
THE CAYMAN ISLANDS**

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

Second Special Meeting 2021/2022 Session
First Sitting

*Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's
Platinum Jubilee*

Sunday
6 February, 2022
(Pages 1-20)

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP, MP,
Speaker

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PRESENT WERE:

MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

Hon. G. Wayne Panton, JP, MP	<i>Premier</i> , Minister for Sustainability and Climate Resiliency — “MSCR”
Hon. Christopher S. Saunders, MP	<i>Deputy Premier</i> , Minister for Finance & Economic Development and Border Control & Labour — “FEDBCL”
Hon. Juliana Y. O’Connor-Connolly, JP, MP	Minister for Education and District Administration & Lands — “EDAL”
Hon. Bernie A. Bush, MP	Minister for Home Affairs, Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage — “HAYSCH”
Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, MP	Minister for Tourism & Transport — “T and T”
Hon. André M. Ebanks, MP	Minister for Financial Services & Commerce — “FSC” and Investment, Innovation & Social Development — “IISD”
Hon. Sabrina T. Turner, MP	Minister for Health & Wellness — “MOH”
Hon. Johany S. “Jay” Ebanks, MP	Minister for Planning, Agriculture, Housing, & Infrastructure — “PAHI”

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

Hon. Franz I. Manderson, MBE, Cert Hon, JP	<i>Deputy Governor</i> , ex officio Member responsible for the Portfolio of the Civil Service
Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, QC, JP	<i>Attorney General</i> , ex officio Member responsible for the Portfolio of Legal Affairs

ELECTED MEMBERS GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks, MP	<i>Deputy Speaker</i> , Parliamentary Secretary to FSC and EDAL, Elected Member for West Bay Central
Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour, JP, MP	Parliamentary Secretary to Labour, Housing and Transport, Elected Member for Bodden Town East
Ms. Heather D. Bodden, JP, MP	Parliamentary Secretary to T&T and IISD, Elected Member for Savannah
Mr. Isaac D. Rankine, MP	Parliamentary Secretary to HAYSCH and PAHI, Elected Member for East End

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, JP, MP	<i>Leader of the Opposition</i> , Elected Member for George Town East
Mr. Joseph X. Hew, MP	<i>Deputy Leader of the Opposition</i> , Elected Member for George Town North
Hon. Sir Alden McLaughlin, KCMG, MBE, QC, JP, MP	Elected Member for Red Bay
Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell, JP, MP	Elected Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman
Ms. Barbara E. Conolly, JP, MP	Elected Member for George Town South
Mr. David C. Wight, JP, MP	Elected Member for George Town West

SECOND SPECIAL MEETING 2021/22 SESSION
QUEEN ELIZABETH II'S PLATINUM JUBILEE
SUNDAY
6 FEBRUARY 2022
4:45 PM
First Sitting

[Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Speaker, presiding]

The Speaker: I will invite Pastor Woodley Scott to say prayers.

PRAYERS

Pastor Woodley Scott, Jr.: Let us pray.

Almighty God, from whom all wisdom and power are derived: We beseech Thee so to direct and prosper the deliberations of the Parliament now assembled, that all things may be ordered upon the best and surest foundations for the glory of Thy Name and for the safety, honour and welfare of the people of these Islands.

Bless our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth II; Charles, Prince of Wales; and all the Royal Family. Give grace to all who exercise authority in our Commonwealth, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety may be established among us. Especially we pray for the Governor of our Islands, the Premier; the Speaker of the Parliament, the Leader of the Opposition, Ministers of the Cabinet, ex-officio Members, Members of the Parliament, the Chief Justice and Members of the Judiciary, that we may be enabled faithfully to perform the responsible duties of our high office. All this we ask for Thy great Name's sake.

Let us say The Lord's Prayer together: *Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.*

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon us and give us peace, now and always.

Amen.

The Speaker: Please be seated.

READING BY THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER OF MESSAGES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Speaker: I want to take this opportunity to welcome all of you; Members of this honourable House and indeed, our distinguished guests, for taking time to attend this very historic and memorable sitting of Parliament. I want to recognise former Speaker Mrs. [Mary] Lawrence, and former Members of the Parliament; Justice Richards, Pastors and other distinguished guests.

This Special Meeting is an auspicious occasion for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 70 years of service. Her 70th anniversary on the throne is no easy feat. In this year of our Lord 2022, Her Majesty The Queen will historically become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee after 70 years of service, and because of this monumental and historic achievement, I believe we are all obligated—as an Overseas Territory and a member of the Commonwealth—to get involved and engage in celebrating Her Majesty's momentous reign on her 70th anniversary.

This planned and well-organised celebratory Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II highlights and duly demonstrates the recognition and her contribution to the Commonwealth. This Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II highlights and marks a momentous occasion in recognition of the Queen's ascension to the throne on the 6th February 1952—70 years today, to date.

Undoubtedly, since the Queen's ascension, she has been majestic and royal throughout her tenure and continues to serve us remarkably and with virtuous splendour.

There are a number of notable planned events internationally, particularly in the United Kingdom, which includes but not limited to concerts, parades, extra holidays, ceremonial displays and much pageantry with cutting-edge technology, the creation of jubilee medals and the lighting of jubilee beacons in every capital city of each Commonwealth country for the first time.

There will be a feature of a platinum strand of the Queen's baton to memorialise and venerate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee festivities. The Crown dependent territories will all be actively involved in this Jubilee celebration. Considering the significance of this anniversary as an Overseas Territory, should also demonstrate commemorating this landmark achievement in our own unique Caymanian fashion. It is therefore befitting of us to participate locally in both district level and national events inclusive of musical interludes and pageantry which hopefully, should all be broadcasted.

Having events at district level is beneficial as it reflects the involvement and interaction with the people, particularly the senior citizens of our Islands who revere the Queen and I do hope that Honourable Members will be in attendance whenever those are held. This is not about the Government. This is about Her Majesty the Queen.

The opening of the Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II commences at this House of Parliament with a proclamation in a few minutes from His Excellency the Governor. Here at Parliament, there is an exhibition of the Royal family and flags of countries which have the Queen as Head of State. There will be various lightings in the House of Parliament building later in the year. Noteworthy, the exhibits will remain in place for the duration of the celebration.

At the adjournment of this honourable House there will be a brief opening of the exhibition in the presence of His Excellency the Governor and we invite you all to attend. From all indications, we will be having a series of comparable events and activities locally during this celebrative jubilee which the Governor and the Government will expound further upon.

I will close by emphatically stating that from the genesis of the Queen's tenure, she has and continues to serve magnanimously. The Queen epitomises and is the hallmark of stability throughout our Commonwealth and this is augmented by her inspirational speeches and profound messages.

As we celebrate and participate in this august event, let us focus and be mindful of what the occasion means and represents. It is with earnest passion and dignity that we recognise Her Majesty and this Platinum Jubilee, Commemoration of Elizabeth II gives us that historical opportunity.

We revere the Queen for her relentless and dedicated commitment to enhance the lives of many in the diaspora.

The Queen has never capitulated nor did she undermine the sovereignty of jurisdictions. In 1986, at one of my first meetings; a Commonwealth meeting, I said to her, "I do hope to welcome you ma'am to our Islands soon and she said, 'I will be visiting.'"

I have had the pleasure of attending jubilee celebrations in 2002 and 2012. To have met her at least four times, inclusive of dining at her table. I'll never forget that because I was Minister of Health and the Duke said, "*My, you are a mighty big Minister of Health*", and he caught me off guard.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: We are in total admiration of the couple as they were. I found that she cares about people. She has an excellent memory and at Windsor Castle in 2010 she asked about persons she met in West Bay when she opened the Ed Bush Sports Field and I remember that well, because the late Julia Hydes said to her, "*Ma'am, what happened to your hand?*" And she

said, "*Oh, I fell off the horse.*" She said, "*Oh that must have hurt*" and the Queen said, "*It sure did!*" And on walking off she said, "*You know, she said the same thing to me last night at the Governor's residence.*" So she has an excellent memory.

If you see some of the photos and see the smiles on the faces of our elderly citizens at the time. Many of them, of course, have passed on, if not all of them, but she did ask about a few faces that she had met.

We are in admiration for her distinguished and stellar tenure as the head of the British monarchy. This commemoration is a worthy and justified series of events orchestrated in the form of a Platinum Jubilee in acclamation and appreciation of the Queen's historic achievement. It is worth mentioning (and you will see it in your programme) that in honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee for the first time in the history of the Cayman Islands, the parade contingency is comprised of all female officers of the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service (RCIPS) and we want to thank them for such today.

Last night as well, the standard bearers were all female officers of the Cayman Islands flag, the United Kingdom flag and the Governor's standard. We do thank the Commissioner of Police and his officers for assisting in this historic occasion. We honour and acknowledge her, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

God Save the Queen.

MOTION FOR THE SUSPENSION OF THE HOUSE

The Speaker: The Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Resiliency, Elected Member for Newlands: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

I take to my feet to move the Motion that this honourable House do rise to await the arrival of His Excellency, the Governor Mr. Martyn Keith Roper, OBE, to read the Proclamation in celebration of the 70th anniversary of Her Majesty the Queen's ascension to the throne.

The Speaker: The question is that this honourable House do rise to await the arrival of His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Martyn Keith Roper, OBE, to read the proclamation in celebration of the 70th anniversary of Her Majesty the Queen's accession to the throne.

All in favour, please say Aye. Those against,

No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

The House will suspend at this time and I ask Members to remain in their seats.

[Pause]

ARRIVAL OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

[National Anthem — Mr. Rudolph Myles, OMH, Cert. Hon.]

The Speaker: I think we shall be seated now.

His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Martyn K. Roper, OBE: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Premier, Honourable Members of Cabinet; Parliamentary Secretaries, Leader of the Opposition, Members of Parliament: It is an enormous honour and privilege for me to address you on this historic occasion.

Today I have two tasks, first of which is to read out the proclamation to commence our commemorations of Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Could I ask everybody to stand again, please?

PROCLAMATION No. 1/2022

Delivered by His Excellency the Governor

*Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye!
All citizens, residents and visitors
to these beloved Cayman Islands*

We are today, Sunday, the sixth day of February in the year of our Lord 2022, commencing our celebration of our glorious Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Elizabeth II of that name, our most beloved sovereign and head of the Commonwealth for 70 years. How apt that this should be the platinum anniversary of her coronation.

Platinum, that most noble of metals; more precious even than gold, and so it is in honour of this unique occasion that a Special Meeting of the 2021-2022 Session of the Cayman Islands Parliament has been called on this day, the 6th February, 2022 on this occasion of the celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in these Cayman Islands.

Let it be known in proclaiming this tribute to Her Majesty the Queen on her Platinum Jubilee, that we are one nation and one Commonwealth.

God Save the Queen!

His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Martyn K. Roper, OBE: Please be seated and thank you very much to the drafter of that document for the theatrical twist which I very much enjoyed.

Mr. Speaker, it is as I said just now, my great pleasure and privilege to be able to make some remarks on this historic occasion today but firstly, I want to warmly thank you for taking the initiative not only to hold this session today but also to organise a wonderful dinner yesterday evening.

I know that today we have embarked on a set of activities to mark Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the session today is a clear signal of your

own great respect and affection for Her Majesty the Queen, whom I know you have met on several occasions.

Honourable Members on this day 70 years ago while on an official visit to Kenya with her husband, a 25 year old princess Elizabeth heard the news that her father, King George VI had suddenly passed away at the age of 56. Although it must have been an incredibly difficult time for the young princess, we understand from reports that she was composed and purposeful on hearing the news and immediately decided to return to London. A clear sign of things to come. Always composed and resolute no matter what has come her way over the last 70 years.

Her Majesty returned to the United Kingdom still reeling from the Second World War. A war for which Her Majesty volunteered in the auxiliary territorial service at the age of 18, against her father's initial wishes. She was the first female from the Royal family to join the armed services as a full-time active member.

The following year, on 2 June 1953, three million people lined the streets for her coronation at Westminster Abbey but there were a further 27 million people in the UK alone and millions more around the world who crowded around television sets to watch the first ever televised coronation. Elizabeth was a popular princess and would become an even more popular and enormously respected queen and monarch.

Her Majesty is a link to the past she has witnessed an incredible amount of historic events over her lifetime and reign, yet it is incredible that we know so little of her views. She has worked with 14 Prime Ministers during her reign, including Winston Churchill and Margaret Thatcher. President Joe Biden is the 13th US President the Queen has met. She's made 260 official visits overseas. I am sure she would have a story or two to tell about these meetings and visits, yet it is quite remarkable that so little has emerged but speaking volumes about her integrity, sense of duty, service and devotion.

I have been fortunate to meet the Queen on three occasions; first, as a young Policy Officer in the Foreign Office in 1995 when I was responsible for planning the United Nations 50th Anniversary events in the UK, including events at Westminster Hall and Buckingham Palace. I had an audience of Her Majesty at Windsor Castle as a newly appointed Ambassador before my appointment as British Ambassador to Algeria in 2010.

Mrs. Roper and I met Her Majesty at Buckingham Palace early on in my tour as Governor of these wonderful Islands and despite the passage of time, Her Majesty recalled many details of her two visits to Cayman in 1983 and 1994. What was clear from my discussion with Her Majesty, was that she is very, very, proud indeed of the Royal family's links with the overseas territories and I believe she would be very proud of the extraordinary transformation of Cayman during

her reign from such difficult beginnings to the highly successful jurisdiction Cayman has become today.

Today is of course a moment of personal sadness for Her Majesty the Queen as she remembers Her father and we are told that she did spend the day quietly at Sandringham but today does mark the start of celebrations for the Platinum Jubilee across the UK, the Overseas Territories, and the Commonwealth. It's an opportunity for people across the globe to give thanks to Her Majesty for 70 years of service.

Her Majesty's reign has been dedicated to people far beyond the UK shores. The Queen as Head of the Commonwealth has a duty to almost 2.5 billion people of the Commonwealth. As Her Majesty's representative in these Islands, I am always struck by the enormous respect, warmth and admiration that exists here for Her Majesty. Indeed, it is a source of great pride for me as Governor that we are paying such a fitting tribute to our Monarch on this historic occasion.

I am grateful to see the many celebrations that the Platinum Jubilee Steering Committee under the very able leadership of Cabinet Secretary Samuel Rose is planning starting this weekend. This morning at 12:15 a.m. [*sic*] [this afternoon at 12:15 p.m.] we observed 70 seconds of silence and church bells rang out at the exact moment Her Majesty acceded to the throne in 1952. Other events will include a commemorative photo exhibition, a car show, the planting a tree for the jubilee initiative involving our schools, a long public holiday in early June, lighting a beacon at Pedro St. James and the Queen's birthday garden party parade at Government House with a firework display.

I am also delighted that we are bringing back the once popular air show to these shores. I hope we can lay down a legacy for future years with this and other events and I am sure there will be a great turnout by the community for these celebrations.

Mr. Speaker, this is a remarkable moment in Her Majesty the Queen's extraordinary reign but let's not lose sight of the fact that these celebrations come less than a year after losing her beloved husband, Prince Philip. Let us not also forget this remarkable woman is in fact the head of a large family that includes four children, eight grandchildren, two step-grandchildren and a growing number of great grandchildren.

As Britain's longest serving monarch she continues working well into her twilight years supporting her links with over 600 charities, military associations, professional bodies and public service organisations covering a wide range of issues from the environment to young people.

Her Majesty is a much loved and respected figure across the globe, thanks to her exemplary dedication throughout her long life of dedication. On her 21st birthday, in a speech recorded in Cape Town, the then Princess Elizabeth said, "I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service." I believe Her Majesty has kept her word. She is truly an inspiration to all of us.

I mentioned Her Majesty as a link to the past but she has also been a truly reassuring symbol of continuity and stability throughout some difficult times in the past and she has also magnificently supported her subjects over the years and through those difficult moments but she's also managed to capture a positive sense of hope and confidence in a brighter future for all of us.

Her Majesty has always set an example. She has always done the right thing. One enduring image of this coveted pandemic . . . perhaps the enduring image of the pandemic, will be that photograph of Her Majesty sitting alone at the funeral of the Duke of Edinburgh. Sitting there so courageously doing the right thing. A truly remarkable woman.

Mr. Speaker, let me finally give thanks again for all the wonderful celebrations that we are organising to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. I am grateful, and I look forward to hearing the contributions from Members shortly.

Long live Her Majesty the Queen and God bless these Cayman Islands.

Thank you.

Ms. Derri Dacres Lee: Please stand for the National Song.

[National Song — Ms. Derry Dacres, AICB, NP]

[Departure of His Excellency the Governor]

The Speaker: Please be seated.

As His Excellency the Governor leaves, Members are asked to remain in their seats.

[Pause]

The Speaker: Please be seated.

Proceedings are resumed.

MOTION OF THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

The Speaker: The Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to move a Motion of thanks to His Excellency the Governor, specifically as follows:

"BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Parliament records its grateful thanks to His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Martyn K. Roper, OBE, for the delivery of the Proclamation in celebration of the 70th Anniversary of Her Majesty the Queen's acceding to the Throne."

The Speaker: The question is: **"BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Parliament records its grateful thanks to His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Martyn**

K. Roper, OBE, for the delivery of the Proclamation in celebration of the 70th Anniversary of Her Majesty the Queen acceding to the Throne.”

The Motion is open for debate.

Members have been informed and we are asking to keep remarks as brief as you can.

The Honourable Premier.

STATEMENTS BY HONOURABLE MEMBERS AND MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are certainly grateful for the presence of the Governor to deliver those remarks and it is indeed a tremendous honour and privilege to join my colleagues in this House of Parliament for this Special Meeting on a Sunday afternoon as we mark the day when 70 years ago Princess Elizabeth acceded to the throne to become Her Majesty the Queen upon the death of her father, King George VI.

On that day, 6th February 1952, having taken the place of her ill father on the trip, Princess Elizabeth was in Kenya, then a British colony, enjoying the first stop on her tour of the Commonwealth with her husband Prince Philip. This 25 year old daughter of the King and Heir to the throne was deep in an African reserve on an adventure of a lifetime spotting wildlife from atop trees.

In the fateful moment of her father's passing, she ceased to be Princess Elizabeth and became Queen Elizabeth II. Jim Corbett, the naturalist and hunter who accompanied the royal couple to the Treetops Hotel is credited with writing in the visitor book. For the first time in the history of the world, a young girl climbed into a tree one day a Princess and after having what she described as her most thrilling experience, she climbed down from the tree next day, a Queen.

When this great moment in world history occurred, thousands of miles away, our three small jewels of Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman were home to a population of close to 7,000 people. The people of the Islands that time forgot, were experiencing our own moment of transition between commissioners; the predecessor to governors.

Commissioner Ivor Otterbein Smith was due to leave his post in January 1952 and Mr. Andrew Morris Gerard was to take up residence here in June of that same year. At the time, Mr. Albert Colonridge Panton, my grandfather, served as Assistant Commissioner of the Cayman Islands.

Mr. Speaker, I find it fitting that we gather in these hallowed Halls today to mark this occasion. Mr. Speaker, it was here 39 years ago on the 21st February 1983 that the Queen, accompanied by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh entered these very same

Chambers to deliver the Throne Speech during the first of her two royal visits to the Cayman Islands.

Today I will repeat some of her words to those in this Chamber and to the people of the Cayman Islands to give us all an opportunity to reflect on just how far we have come in 39 years.

The Queen said, “Although small in size and population, these Islands have forged ahead and are now a progressive and prominent community in the Caribbean region.” Indeed, we were then and we are more so now.

Mr. Speaker, at the time of Her Majesty's first visit in February 1983, we boasted a population of 18,005 people and this grew to 30,521 by the time of Her Majesty's second visit in February 1994. Today, in February 2022, by the measurements of my Government we claim a population of more than 70,000 people. We will know the actual numbers when the results of the 2021 Census are published in due course.

I believe that today the Queen remains—and has every reason to be even more so—proud of this small yet progressive and prominent community in the Caribbean region.

In her Throne Speech in 1983, she also praised the government and the people of the Cayman Islands for their generous donation to help in the short-lived 1982 Falklands War saying, “I was much moved by the message of loyalty and support sent to me by His Excellency the Governor at the time of the Falkland Islands conflict and also by the generous donation of five hundred thousand pounds sterling from the government and the people of these Islands for the South Atlantic Fund.”

The amount of money our Islands raised and donated in 1982, Mr. Speaker, would today be the equivalent of around CI \$2.1 million or just under. An extraordinary feat when one considers the demographics of our population at the time. Mr. Speaker, I should add that the fundraising effort was led by none other than the then Sergeant-at-Arms of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Burt Watler; a blessed memory. His sterling efforts typify the loyalty, dedication, and commitment of our Caymanian people to Her Majesty the Queen.

We have had and continue to enjoy an excellent relationship with the United Kingdom, so much so that during the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been through the efforts of the UK that we have been able to offer vaccinations and boosters against the disease to all residents of these Islands free of any cost.

Our gift to the UK's Falkland Islands War effort and the UK's gift of vaccines to us during the COVID-19 pandemic are but two examples of the mutual support and appreciation between the mother country and our Islands, a United Kingdom Overseas Territory.

In her 1983 Throne Speech the Queen also praised the efforts of the Civil Service which today is striving to be world class and I think doing an excellent job Mr. Speaker. She said, “I wish to express my thanks

to the Civil Service which over the years has developed into a body of which the country can be justly proud.”

Today we have a Civil Service that is dedicated to supporting the elected Government by providing caring, modern, and customer-centred public services and programmes which deliver value for money. For this Mr. Speaker I must thank the Honourable Deputy Governor.

Mr. Speaker, as we gather this afternoon to pay tribute to our Monarch and Her most inspiring life of service, I wish to pause to consider for a moment her incredible impact on the world.

In 1952, Europe was rebuilding. The world was still mending from the wounds of World War II and yet a young princess, Elizabeth bravely stepped into her role as Queen of the United Kingdom, the realms and the Commonwealth. Yes, she was being groomed and prepared for the responsibilities of sovereignty but she solemnly accepted and carried out her duties with rare humility, faithfulness and dignity.

In a world dominated by male Heads of State, Her Majesty has exemplified servant leadership, guiding her kingdom through economic challenges, periods of geopolitical tension, climate change and even this pandemic with an unwavering dedication to her subjects.

During her 70-year reign about 20 of the 54 or just over one-third of the Commonwealth Nations have appointed or elected a female Head of State or Head of Government. This includes two female Prime Ministers in the United Kingdom and female Prime Ministers or Presidents from Jamaica and Barbados in this region, to Malawi and Tanzania in Africa, to Singapore in Asia, to Australia New Zealand and Samoa in Oceania. Even within our own Caribbean-UK Overseas Territories, Her Majesty's governments have been led by female Premiers in the Turks and Caicos Islands and Bermuda.

Mr. Speaker, let me hasten to add (unless anyone thinks I am overlooking it) it is with great pride that I can include the Cayman Islands in this exceptional number thanks to the Honourable Member of Cayman Brac East who was our first female Premier.

Against that background Mr. Speaker, what a tribute to Her Majesty and ode to these outstanding achievements of women, reflected in the performance this afternoon of the first ever female Guard of Honour, made even more special by the fact that we have five women; the highest number ever elected as Members of Parliament in our country.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: These, Mr. Speaker, are some of the important strides in progress that have been made within the Commonwealth during the reign of Her Majesty the Queen and so as we commence our own local celebrations of life and her unparalleled longevity as our Monarch, let us take a moment

to be inspired by her deep care for humanity demonstrated by her patronage of more than 600 charities across the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth.

Let this remind us always of our duty to help those less fortunate and to commit our time, talent and money for worthy causes. Let us consider her passion for sustainability and protecting our natural environment. Her Majesty the Queen has long been a champion of conservation and has specifically requested that the Platinum Jubilee celebrations include the Queen's Green Canopy Initiative in which people around the United Kingdom the Commonwealth and the UK Overseas Territories, plant trees in her honour.

We will be challenging ourselves to plant 70 trees, including local mahogany trees, in each of our 19 constituencies around our Islands throughout 2022. By focusing on native and endemic plants with cultural significance, this initiative will support local biodiversity, enhance community well-being and help to combat climate change.

Let us also recall Mr. Speaker, the Queen's strength and leadership during the global COVID-19 pandemic. She provided reassurance and comfort to millions of people around the world during the early darkest days of the global public health crisis with the reminder that we will see our friends again and we will be together again.

More importantly, let us remember the Queen leading by example as she stepped forward to receive her COVID-19 vaccine at the age of 94 years. Let us join the rest of her loyal subjects around the world Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of unity, and in celebration of a remarkable period of partnership, peace, and prosperity, which have been the hallmarks of her reign.

In doing so, let us consider our journey as a Caymanian people from where we started in February 1952 to where we are today in February 2022. Let us also think about where we're going and what we want to be when we get there.

As I have said often Mr. Speaker, the vision of this Government that I wanted to lead is of a Cayman Islands that is held up as one of the most sustainable countries in the world; a trio of Islands where all of its citizens can thrive; a peaceful and prosperous place known for its resourcefulness, its diligence, its excellence and its innovativeness.

Mr. Speaker, again I reflect on the words of Her Majesty the Queen spoken to the Caymanian people right here in Her Throne Speech of February 1983. She prophetically spoke of continued economic development, betterment of agriculture practices, a strengthened health care system, improved potable water, an improving education system, airport facilities enhancements, a growing tourism industry and more.

Mr. Speaker, we have certainly achieved many of these important goals and as we continue to provide for our people and strive to achieve our vision and further improve the quality of their lives, may we do so in

a sustainable way that ensures the continued prosperity of future generations to come. Generations who will study the extraordinary reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and undoubtedly be inspired.

I will conclude with the ending of Her Majesty's words to this honourable House in 1983, "Mr. President and Members of this honourable House, Prince Philip and I have been very touched by the warmth of the welcome given to us by the people of the Cayman Islands. We shall take away with us the happiest of memories of our visit. I pray that the blessings of Almighty God will continue to rest on the government and the people of the Cayman Islands."

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government and the people of the Cayman Islands and my own constituency, the electoral district of Newlands, we too wish the blessings of Almighty God on Her Majesty the Queen as she celebrates this Jubilee of 70 years on the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, clearly I support the Motion.
Thank you.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, Leader of the Opposition, Elected Member for George Town East: Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to make this contribution to the proceedings of this Special Meeting of Parliament this afternoon.

In doing so Mr. Speaker, I join with the Premier in thanking His Excellency the Governor for his presence this afternoon in reading the proclamation and delivering a short speech to us on the occasion of this very noble gathering in celebration of the Queen's Jubilee.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the loyal Opposition and all of our constituents, I extend our congratulations to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on this most auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne.

Today we give thanks to our Lord for Her Majesty's 70 years of selfless service to our country and the Commonwealth. As we commence our celebration of this unique Platinum Jubilee, we fondly recall the occasion of on which Her Majesty visited our Islands in 1983 and 1994. For thousands of Caymanians who warmly greeted Her Majesty during those visits, the occasions provided both a special personal memory and a source of collective national pride.

For me it was her second visit in 1994 that I had the honour to attend a luncheon at Government House with Her Majesty and her late husband, Prince Philip, hosted by then Governor, Michael Gore. Mr. Speaker, what I remember most of all, was Her Majesty's genuine warmth charm and friendliness. The memories of that occasion remain fresh in my mind as if they

had taken place today and I will forever cherish the memories.

These past 70 years have been a time of tremendous change in our Islands; we recently celebrated the 60th Anniversary of our Coat of Arms given by Her Majesty in 1958, the 60th Anniversary of our first Constitution which came into being through Her Majesty's order in 1959. Through subsequent amendments we have maintained and indeed we have enhanced our status as a British Overseas Territory.

Today, we give thanks for the enduring relationship that we, as Her Majesty's loyal subjects, share with the Crown and with the United Kingdom. Mr. Speaker, ours is a bond that neither time nor distance can diminish.

The celebrations planned across our three Islands for the coming months to mark the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee, are a demonstration of the affection that we in the Cayman Islands feel for Her Majesty; they are an opportunity for us to give thanks for all that she has done for our people, and to reaffirm our own commitment to our future service to the crown.

Your Majesty: Please accept our heartfelt congratulations on this special occasion, and our fondest wishes for your personal happiness and well-being.

God Save the Queen!

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Health.

Hon. Sabrina T. Turner, Minister of Health and Wellness, Elected Member for Prospect: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

It is a privilege to rise this afternoon on the occasion of this Special Meeting of the Parliament to commemorate Her Majesty the Queen's accession to the throne.

On behalf of the good people of Prospect and by extension, the Cayman Islands, I too wish to record our very best wishes to Her Majesty the Queen on this momentous occasion of her Platinum Jubilee and express our sincerest gratitude for her dedicated and dignified service to her loyal subjects.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, Her Majesty was only 25 years old at the time of her taking her role. The world stood watch as she took on the responsibility of the Crown and all the pomp and circumstances it came with while internally, she mourned the loss of her father, the late, King George VI. In those initial moments, Mr. Speaker, I can only imagine the fear and trepidation she must have felt not knowing what lie ahead but Mr. Speaker, confident and poised, she took on her role.

I stand here in her honour today, 70 remarkable years later, applauding her for her life-long commitment and we can see how her efforts have shaped our country, the Commonwealth and the world at large. Her Majesty the Queen makes history today Mr. Speaker, being the first British Monarch to spend 70 years on the

throne. She is known for the modernisation of the monarchy from her televised coronation in 1953 that set the standard of what we know leadership would be and she is truly an outstanding leader.

Mr. Speaker, I was only eight years old when Her Majesty the Queen first came to our shores in February of 1983. I and so many others stood along our roadsides and many attended events in awe of a woman being given such a high level of respect and responsibility. I recall being in my red and white-checker [uniform] then, a student of Sir John A. Cumber Primary School, and it was with pride that I welcomed Her and shared being a young woman from Central George Town as all the streets were adorned with flags and waiting for Her to just pass by.

She demonstrated to women everywhere that it is indeed possible to be a wife, a mother and an exceptional leader at a far less progressive time than today. I was inspired by her then and I am inspired by her now; no longer that eight-year-old young lady but now a mature female in this most honourable position as a leader of the self-governing British Overseas Territory.

I can only hope that the young women of our own Islands will also look at Her Majesty's legacy should they ever feel limited by their gender.

In these present times, our connections to the United Kingdom has been invaluable in the face of COVID-19 pandemic. From expert medical advice from the United Kingdom Health Security Agency to being given access to vaccines to protect the Caymanian people from the deadly virus, we have been thoroughly supported and we are forever grateful and thankful for her leadership.

I wish her a long and healthy life. God save our Queen.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Tourism.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Minister of Tourism and Transport, Elected Member for George Town Central: Mr. Speaker, I rise on this historic occasion to say a few words in recognition of the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen.

While much of what I would like to say has already been stated, it bears repeating in observation of this occasion. Seventy years ago on the 6th February, Elizabeth II ascended to the throne and began a life of service dedicated to her people in the United Kingdom and throughout the Commonwealth. Today she has become the longest ruling British Monarch ever.

Although this Jubilee year will set a new record for the Queen, it will also be her first jubilee without her beloved husband of 73 years, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, who sadly passed away in April of last year.

One can only imagine how much has changed since Her Majesty's coronation which took place with 27 million people in the United Kingdom watching by TV, 11 million people listening by the radio and three

million more lining the streets to wave at the parade. Since then, even as the world has continued to change around her, technology has progressed and other world leaders have come and gone, she has remained a steadfast symbol of continuity, endurance, elegance, and strength.

In celebrating this historic Platinum Jubilee the Cayman Islands is proudly counted among the 54 countries that form the Commonwealth of Nations which includes the 14 UK Overseas Territories which recognise Queen Elizabeth II as Monarch and Head of State

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that the Cayman Islands continue to be counted as one of the United Kingdom's Overseas Territories and I am thankful for the benefits that it has offered to our sovereign nation. Although there have been many times that things have not always been harmonious between the UK and our three beautiful Islands, the relationship has endured.

We are fortunate to have Her Majesty's representative, His Excellency the Governor Martyn Roper, who is someone I truly believe has the best interests of the people of the Cayman Islands at heart and during his tenure the relationship has improved.

I am happy to be a Member of Parliament in this honourable House at this time when our interactions with the United Kingdom has not only been supportive and productive but also life-saving. I am particularly thankful for the support our Islands continue to receive as we navigate our way through this global pandemic.

I deeply appreciate, which I am sure we all do, the thousands of vaccines sent by the United Kingdom to safeguard the health of our people and to protect the most vulnerable and elderly among us because of our standing as a United Kingdom Overseas Territory. Having been united during the pandemic to fight against the COVID-19 virus, I am thrilled that we can also stand united in a spirit of celebration to honour and pay tribute to the remarkable legacy and reign of our Queen.

During the jubilee celebrations this year, it will be our chance to show appreciation to our Monarch with all the splendour and pageantry she so richly deserves. As duly elected representatives, we each take an oath to serve our people and we repeat that oath every four years if we are returned to Office.

If we so choose, we can decide not to seek office and can return to *civil life* so to speak but the oath sworn by Her Majesty did not have a time limit and an option for renewal. It was a solemn promise to be of service to her people for the rest of her life. On that auspicious day she declared, "I have, in sincerity pledged myself to your service as so many of you are pledged to mine. Throughout all my life and with all my heart, I shall serve to be worthy of your trust."

Mr. Speaker, what humbling and inspiring words. Through God's abiding grace, Her Majesty has continued throughout her life with all her heart to fulfil

her promise to her people. She has carried out her duties without with unwavering commitment and reigned with dignity, kindness and compassion devoted to service of others. Mr. Speaker, I cannot think of a better example of leadership from any cooperation industry or country than that shown by our beloved Queen.

Her Platinum Jubilee brings to mind the biblical verse from Psalm 90:10 which reads, "The days of our years are three scores years and ten and if by reason of strength there are before score years, yet is there strength, labour and sorrow for it is soon cut off and we fly away." Taken from the King James Version.

Mr. Speaker, in the three scores and 10 years of Her Majesty's historic reign, her strength has endured. She has seen changes, challenges and endured tragedies and yet she has remained as bright and as constant as the North Star. I say again Mr. Speaker, what better example of leadership could there possibly be than that demonstrated by our Queen Elizabeth II.

On behalf of the people of George Town Central and on behalf of the greater Cayman Islands, I congratulate Her Majesty on her 70th Anniversary of her accession to the throne and in the words of our National Anthem, I pray that she may be long to reign over us and that the almighty God continue to bestow his blessings upon her always.

God Save the Queen.

The Speaker: The Parliamentary Secretary for Planning and Agriculture; the Member for East End.

Mr. Isaac D. Rankine, Parliamentary Secretary to HAYSCH and PAHI, Elected Member for East End: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Motion before this honourable House in the celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Today marks a moment that we as a small and developing nation can pause and reflect on our history with Her Majesty the Queen and the relationships of our Islands with the United Kingdom.

It continues to be my pleasure and honour to serve as the Member of Parliament for East End and today I am proud to stand in this honourable Parliament to offer heartfelt congratulations on behalf of my constituents to Her Majesty the Queen on attaining her Platinum Jubilee which commemorates her extension to the throne and her centre years of service to her people.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to now offer some brief remarks on this Platinum Jubilee Anniversary of the reign of Her Majesty the Queen.

East End has what I consider a significant history with the monarchy and the UK. From the records of the well-known events of the *wreck of the ten sails* which I note remains a major historical site and tourist attraction spot in the district to the Queen's visits in February 1983 and in 1994. In 1983, the Queen opened the Queen's Highway; a coastal road which dramatically

improved the vehicular connectivity between East End to North Side.

Mr. Speaker, while I consider myself one of the young Members of this honourable Parliament, I am still old enough to remember and as yourself and other senior Parliamentarians may recall what life was like prior to the opening of the Queen's Highway. Farmers and other landowners had to rely on access via cat boats or walking or in some cases riding a donkey to reach their land. With the introduction of the new highway, farmers could access their land much more easily and improved access opened additional acreage for farming and land for first-time homeowners.

During her visit, Her Majesty and her late husband, the Prince of Wales, also commemorated the 200th Anniversary of the Wreck of the Ten Sails the fateful event which took place on the evening of February 8 1794, when a convoy of 10 ships bound for the US and England struck the reefs of East End and the residents valiantly set out to rescue as many of the ships' passengers and crews as possible.

In more recent times Mr. Speaker, our relationship with the United Kingdom has afforded us another type of opportunity. It is through a long-standing relationship with the Queen and the UK that has made possible the opportunity for dozens of young Caymanians to study in the United Kingdom to earn a tertiary education to allow them to return home and improve their lives and the lives of their families.

For far too long, tertiary education was out of reach for many Caymanians and their families because the cost of university tuition in the United States was simply more than parents and students could reasonably afford. Successive governments, along with the assistance of the UK through the Governor's Office sought to facilitate and support young Caymanians in pursuit of their higher education in the UK.

Mr. Speaker, today I renew the call to encourage young Caymanians to consider and take up opportunities to continue their education in the UK. In that vein, I also want to thank His Excellency the Governor for his role in helping our students and residents living in the UK. Since entering Office, I have found it a pleasure to work alongside His Excellency Mr. Martin Roper, the official representative of Her Majesty here in the Cayman Islands.

I have seen first-hand the efforts he makes to facilitate positive developments for us as a country and as a people. He celebrates all things Caymanian and works tirelessly to support our community. Just yesterday he was out in the beautiful district of East End at one of our attractions, the Parrot Sanctuary.

While there's talk that he is scheduled to depart later this year, while we are using this occasion to celebrate the Queen it seems fitting to also acknowledge and thank the Governor for his dedicated service as Her Majesty's representative. Mr. Speaker, wherever the future carries the Governor, the future will also be gifted with a mean Cayman-trained steel pan player. So

therefore, we must thank him for his smooth melodies as well.

Mr. Speaker, last week I also had the pleasure of meeting with UK's Minister Amanda Million who has responsibility for the overseas territories, was on her first trip to the Cayman Islands. I was delighted to hear her reaffirm the strong relationship between the Cayman Islands and the UK and even more pleased to hear and see her enthusiasm to further engage and strengthen ties with our Islands.

As I said to the Minister then and will say now, "As a Member of this Government I look forward to doing my part to support and strengthen the relationship between our two countries for the benefit of the people we are elected to serve."

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself and the good people of East End, I wholeheartedly extend good wishes, continued health to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on this, her 70th year of reign and express our gratitude for her dedicated and dignified service.

God bless the Queen and God bless these Cayman Islands.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? *[Pause]* Does any other Member wish to speak?

The Honourable Deputy Speaker and Parliamentary Secretary for Education; the Member for West Bay Central.

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks, Deputy Speaker, Parliamentary Secretary for Education, Elected Member for West Bay Central: Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise and give remarks this afternoon as the representative of the people of West Bay Central on the occasion of this Special Meeting of the Parliament to commemorate Her Majesty the Queen's accession to the throne on this day 6th February in 1952.

Her Majesty the Queen has visited the Cayman Islands twice and on one of those occasions in 1994, I too had the privilege of being one of the dozens of young school children lined up on the Ed Bush field to await the arrival of the Queen.

I remember the day like it was yesterday and I recall the excitement I felt to be so close to her as she walked by us. At that time I had no idea that I would be standing here today more than 30 years later as the Member of Parliament for the constituency where the Ed Bush Field is located.

Looking forward later this month I will head to the United Kingdom for my first official visit as a Member of Parliament and as Deputy Speaker. During the trip I will have the opportunity to visit the House of Commons and spend time studying the history, traditions and procedures of the House of Commons and by extension, House of Parliament.

That young teenager so excited to see the Queen will now walk through the House of Commons. While I can't say that the Queen inspired the 14 year

old in me in 1994 to become a leader, I can say however, that as an adult woman; as a working mother; a public servant and a leader, Her Majesty's 70-year reign serves as an excellent example for me and for all leaders.

During the past seven decades we see someone who has demonstrated selfless dedication to duties of her Office; who has modelled the importance of leaders remaining calm and composed and who is always measured in their approach. Her Majesty epitomises grace and dignity and I certainly hope that the history will show this Government—my elected colleagues in the PACT Government and I—conducted ourselves and the affairs of our small country in a similar manner; with selfless dedication to the duties of our office; with the calm composure fitting of a leader and that we were always measured in our approach.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the good people of West Bay Central, I extend our very best wishes to Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of her Platinum Jubilee and express our sincere gratitude for her dedicated and dignified service to her loyal subjects.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? *[Pause]* Does any other Member wish to speak? The Honourable Deputy Governor.

The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson: Mr. Speaker, I too wish to rise on the special occasion on the Special Meeting of this Parliament as we reflect upon the movement and history when Her Majesty the Queen acceded to the throne.

Mr. Speaker, please allow me a few minutes to speak about how Her Majesty the Queen has impacted my career in public service. I often listen to her speeches and the way in which she conducts herself and I am always inspired and motivated. However, it was the events of 2020 that really impacted me and I should say, *she* impacted me, in the way in which she carried her duties and the speeches that she made.

Mr. Speaker, in April 2020, the Cayman Islands like other countries, were in lockdown and persons were advised to stay home. The Civil Service was charged with quickly implementing the decisions of Cabinet and doing our endeavour best to save the lives of our people, this was by far Mr. Speaker, the greatest challenge that I faced as Deputy Governor.

While I am a very positive person and have great confidence in our talented public service and private sector, there were days Mr. Speaker where I questioned if we would ever overcome the challenges of the pandemic but I am very pleased to say that after listening to two speeches made by Her Majesty, my confidence was uplifted and I had no doubt that once again we would be back to normal.

Mr. Speaker, as of April 4 2020, Queen Elizabeth had only delivered three speeches in response to current events during her 68-year reign. One, about the

gulf war, the second, about the death of Princess Diana and third, after the passing of the Queen's mother.

On the 4th April 2020 she delivered her fourth. A calm, hopeful oration about the COVID-19 pandemic. The Queen spoke from Windsor Castle filmed by a single cameraman wearing protective gear. The message was broadcasted on the BBC but shared with the entire world and I can only imagine our Queen sitting in a room with a single cameraman wearing protective gear . . . how that must have made her feel but as His Excellency the Governor said in his message, she was always composed and she knew that her people needed to hear from her.

Please allow me, Mr. Speaker, to share a few excerpts from the speech that she made that really impacted me. She said, **“Together we are tackling this disease. I want to reassure you that if we remain united and resolute, then we will overcome it.”** She then recognised the magnitude of the moment in history and said, **“I hope in the years to come everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge; and those who came after us will say the Britons of this generation were as strong as any.”**; and I said that, that will apply to Cayman. That those who come after us will say that the Caymanians who fought the COVID-19 pandemic were as strong as any.

She said, **“The pride in who we are is not a part of our past, it defines our present and our future.”** Our Majesty went on to say, **“While we have faced challenges before, this one is different. This time we join all nations across the globe in a common endeavour. Using the great advances in science and our instinctive compassion to heal, we will succeed, and that success will belong to each and every one of us. We should take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return. We will be with our friends again; we will be with our families again; and we will meet again.”** And so we did Mr. Speaker, and so we did.

In her second speech, Her Majesty the Queen used her Easter message to encourage hope in the face of the coronavirus outbreak. She said, **“Many religions have festivals which celebrate light overcoming darkness.”** She went on to say, **“We know that coronavirus will not overcome us as dark as death can be. Particularly of those suffering with grief, light and life are greater.”**

Mr. Speaker, those words certainly inspired me and motivated me and those three words, “light overcoming darkness” have stayed with me over the last two years and I often still refer to it and keep it in my mind. No matter how dark things are, light will overcome.

Mr. Speaker, I am forever grateful to Her Majesty for her 70 years of reign and words of wisdom and the compassion and intellect that she has shown. Those words continue to inspire me. She continues to inspire me for public service.

I would also like to pay a tribute to Her Majesty's representative in Cayman, His Excellency the Governor and thank him also for his advice and support to me. Mr. Speaker, the Governor and I enjoy an excellent relationship. He says we are a good team and I agree. I am very much grateful for his support and advice that he gives to me on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Civil Service and the wider public service, I offer heartfelt congratulations to Her Majesty the Queen on attaining her Platinum Jubilee and wish to record our grateful thanks for her exemplary service to her loyal subjects.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?
The Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks, Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure, Elected Member for North Side: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise this afternoon on the occasion of this Special Meeting of Parliament to commemorate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II onto her throne.

Today marks a truly historic moment as Her Majesty the Queen becomes the first British monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee but it also is a historic moment for us as Parliamentarians to be able to celebrate a momentous occasion to pay our respects in this honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, I can't ever remember the House ever being open on a Sunday and it is with great pleasure that we can stand in this honourable House united to pay our respects and celebrate this magnificent achievement of 70 years on the throne. An unprecedented ring that has made the Queen a symbol of sustainability around the world.

Our Queen, Mr. Speaker, is the longest-serving monarch in British history succeeding her father, King George in 1953. Her Majesty is a role model and an honourable example of a true leader.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the good people of North Side, myself, my family, I extend our very best wishes to Her Majesty the Queen on this occasion of her Platinum Jubilee and I express our sincere gratitude to her and her dedicated service to Her loyal subjects. She has served us and served us well.

Long Live the Queen.

The Speaker: I think I saw the Member for Red Bay rise. *[Pause]* I think they are giving way to you Member from Red Bay.

Hon. Sir Alden McLaughlin, Elected Member for Red Bay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to begin by thanking your good self His Excellency the Governor, the Premier and the Members of the current Government, Mr. Samuel

Rose and I know the Clerk and the staff here at the Parliament and all others who have participated in us organising this ceremony and having this unprecedented Meeting of Parliament on a Sunday.

I think Mr. Speaker that there could be no more auspicious occasion for us to mark than the 70th Anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne. Mr. Speaker, she is a truly remarkable woman. In my estimation, I believe only Nelson Mandela comes close to the reverence which I believe we all ought to pay to her sense of duty; the sense of responsibility, honour, and the desire, the lifelong desire, to make not just their countries, but the world a better place.

Queen Elizabeth II is indeed very remarkable. She is the longest lived and longest reigning British monarch; the longest serving female Head of State in history; the oldest living and longest reigning current monarch and the oldest and longest-serving incumbent Head of State. She has been there with every Prime Minister since Churchill to Johnson and who knows how many more.

She has received visits from every American president from Truman to Biden, save LBJ, Lyndon Johnson, somehow he missed the cut. Incredible . . . Mr. Speaker, what makes that even more incredible is she holds a completely unelected post. The monarchy remains by the consent of the people yet, she wields incredible soft power not just across the United Kingdom and its territories, but indeed across the world.

A word from the Queen or an indication of how the Queen feels about a certain thing or event bears great weight in the global world of politics without question. She does so, Mr. Speaker, a mere five-foot, four inches in height but a giant in stature because of the respect which she has garnered over 70 years of selfless service duty and honour.

Mr. Speaker, when she came here for the first time in 1983, I was no longer in school but I was too young to be anybody that would get invited to any of these events, and so I didn't get a chance to wave flags as a school child when she arrived and in 1994, I don't know, I guess I wasn't in with the then government, I don't know but I was practicing law and doing other things so I never attended any of those events.

What I can say has been an incredible privilege, is that in the almost eight years that I served as Premier, I had numerous opportunities to be at events where the Queen was present and often when she spoke. My first such occasion was when all of the overseas territories leaders were invited by the then Prime Minister, David Cameron, to (and I am not sure how we termed that, I think we had to go to the meeting whether we wanted to or not) Downing Street and we also participated in the trooping of the colour at the Queen's birthday celebrations that year.

We were in very close proximity to Her Majesty and since that in 2018 at the Commonwealth Head of Government's Meetings (CHOGAM) in London, we were all invited to the palace for the opening at which

both the Queen and Prince Charles spoke. Those are two events that will remain with me for as long as I am alive.

Mr. Speaker, what is also incredibly remarkable, is that the Queen has had to oversee the departure of most of the United Kingdom's colonies during her reign. It is not an easy thing to preside over the dismantling of an empire. In the years since she acceded to the throne... as I said most of the UK's former colonies have become independent States, but she understood that in order to ensure that the monarchy remained and I think just as importantly for her, the Commonwealth, which was a creation of her father, she understood that to keep the nations close, the former colonies, they needed to loosen the apron strings.

She has presided over a transformation of what the British monarchy was and is and it is because of her wisdom over those years that indeed, the Commonwealth still survives. Questions remain Mr. Speaker, I hate to say this but I think I ought to be truthful, questions remain about the future of a Commonwealth without Queen Elizabeth II but we all, I believe who understand a bit about the importance of that organisation; that institution; that fraternity; that the future King, should God grant that, will have sufficient stature and respect across the world to keep the Commonwealth together. I certainly hope that to be the case.

I believe the Commonwealth is a force for good. I believe it is very important for the world, particularly for those nations which were former British colonies. And so Mr. Speaker I am honoured; I am privileged; I am pleased to be still in this honourable Parliament on this occasion and to have the opportunity to wish Her Majesty . . . she's already had a long life . . . a much longer life, good health and strength.

Long may she reign over us; God Save the Queen.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? *[Pause]* Does any other Member wish to speak? Last call, does any other Member—The Parliamentary Secretary for Housing, the Member for Bodden Town East.

Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour, Parliamentary Secretary Labour, Housing and Tourism, Elected Member for Bodden Town East: Thank you.

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to bring remarks on this most important day in our history.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, Queen Elizabeth became the world's oldest monarch on the 23rd January 2015 at the age of 88 years old, 277 days following the death of His Majesty King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia at the age of 90.

Today the Commonwealth in the world and its communities celebrate the Queen's historic reign. It is a most joyous and significant moment. Today, February 6 2022, we acknowledge Queen Elizabeth II at 95 years old acceded the throne some 70 years ago and

has since offered steadfast leadership in times of change, hardship or uncertainty.

As we celebrate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee, the people of the Cayman Islands and in particular, Bodden Town East, we send our warmest wishes. We also recognise that for this to happen some sadness had to come about and the Queen's father, George VI passed away on this day.

The Queen's accession message in itself is why I personally appreciate her. It states, "I hope this jubilee will bring together families and friends and neighbours and communities." Always about families and bringing people together for Her Majesty the Queen.

We can only imagine Mr. Speaker what the young Her Majesty the Queen had to deal with in 1952 in the UK and around the world. The great smog blankets in London causing transport chaos, with approximately 4,000 in 1952; a one shilling charge introduced for prescription drugs dispensed under the NHS; a post office van was held up in West Inn of London and £287,000 and what we would say in 2019 worth about \$8 billion was stolen; Britain's largest post-war robbery as to date and the robbers were never caught.

In 1952, Prime Minister Winston Churchill announced that the United Kingdom had an atomic bomb and if I should also mention, Newcastle United won the FA Cup for the record fifth time and they retained the trophy with a one-love win over one of the royal family's favourite teams, Arsenal at Wembley Stadium with the only goal of the game is scored by a Chilean and the first foreigner to score in an FA Cup Final.

King Farouk of Egypt is ousted by the Miller Military Coup, Greece and Turkey join NATO 1952.

Mr. Speaker, may I also add that today we also celebrate our own Caribbean icon Bob Marley's birthday, which he was seven years old when the Queen acceded to throne in 1952. Mr. Speaker, can I also add that our own Deputy Premier, the Honourable Christopher Selvin Saunders, a happy birthday to you today.

This is a day that many of us shall not see again. I want to thank the Honourable Governor, Mr. Martyn Roper for some of the 67 days or whatever the amount is, that he spent in the trenches during the pandemic lockdown with us, assisting the then Premier and our government and sourcing PPEs, vaccines, and anything else needed.

I remember the Governor came to me privately and said, Minister what do you think about me stop coming to the press conferences? And I said to him in one simple response, I said, 'Governor, let's not mess up a good thing.' I know the Governor remembers.

I want to say the story of the monarch and the Queen and our connection to the UK brings mixed emotions right here at home but I can tell you in my mind this is one of the best stories of all time and it became even more interesting when Prince Charles married Diana of sad memory.

Mr. Speaker, I must confess my first visit to Europe in 1997 of which I traversed through the same tunnel where she was brought to a fatal accident the same year. I say that to say I have always had high regards for the Queen and being proud to be a member of the Boys' Brigade who marched on her 1983 arrival, this young 14 year old at the time. This inspired me to appreciate the Queen.

The British royal history proves that with great power comes great responsibility, while the rule of the Crown in contemporary society is largely symbolic, messages of traditions passed down during the monarchy thousand-year reign are potent reminders of the past. Britain boasts one of the eight longest monarchies in the world and certainly the most famous.

It has outlasted most of its European counterparts, adapting to changing times and expectations and managing to maintain enough popularity to survive. I feel honoured Mr. Speaker, to be a part of the Commonwealth with all this rich history.

Mr. Speaker, over the seven decades of her reign, I've seen many changes, progress and turmoil and many Prime Ministers have come and gone but there has been one constant thing; Her Majesty has been the thread that binds us. I am most proud and very fortunate that the people of Bodden Town East elected me at this most wonderful and historic time.

God Save the Queen. God bless these Cayman Islands.

I thank you.

The Speaker: I want to acknowledge the presence of former Clerk, Mrs. Georgette Myrie [MBE], who is with us today as well.

Does any other Member wish to speak?
[Pause] Does any other Member wish to speak?
[Pause] The Member for Bodden Town West, the Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance.

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders, Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance and Economic Development and Border Control and Labour, Elected Member for Bodden Town West: Thank you very much Mr. Speaker.

I was a little bit mixed as to whether I should say anything on this day but after listening to the contributions of the Honourable Premier and my good friend the Member for Bodden Town East, I decided to weigh my comments.

Mr. Speaker, as a student of history it is very difficult for me to get up and speak about something or contribute to something where there is a personal difference and I'll explain why I said a "personal difference" from most of the people.

In July of this year the United States will celebrate, I think 246 years since their war of independence with Britain. The reason I raised that is because we're sitting in a democratic elected body and the system of government that we have today actually replaced the

monarchy, because prior to the American revolution everything was based on the monarchy pretty much and when you go back and read the United States declaration of independence, a lot of this stuff was *King George did this, King George did that* and so forth.

The very institutions that we have today actually replaced the monarch but as I was sitting there listening to the contributions and even the contribution of the Honourable Sir Alden McLaughlin, you couldn't help but wonder what the world would have been like had a person of Queen Elizabeth's stature was sitting on a throne during that period. Would democracy then have been what it is today? Would there have been an American Revolution War? Because there was a time where this planet was ruled by tyrants but then over the decades and centuries since, we have seen people become much kinder and much gentler. I believe that had a person of Queen Elizabeth's character been on a throne back in the 1770s what would have probably happened...

I say that to say past performance is always indicative of future behaviour.

Last night when you asked me to give a toast on behalf of the Caribbean region, we recognised that within 10 years and six months after her coronation, Jamaica was the first of the English-speaking Caribbean to go independent. Several weeks later, Trinidad followed and since then other Islands followed but what is remarkable is that many of those countries decided to have the Queen remain Head of State despite being independent and also become members of the actual Commonwealth. It says something about that person and when I rise today Mr. Speaker, it is more to pay respect to 70 years of public service by Queen Elizabeth II.

I am not one to sit back and say it's 100 per cent behind monarch system for the simple fact that the principal democracy does not—which our system has replaced to some extent—but you have to, in this day and age, recognise that level of longevity; that level of service and to think that you get a job on the passing of your parent . . . As I said last night, when they interviewed Prince Charles and they asked him if he thought he would ever be king, he said, *“For me to be king my mother would have to die. Why would I want that?”*

While we get up and can celebrate many things, no one stops to think what she goes through. I mean, it has been 70 years of service. Some people have not even lived that long and for anyone to sit in the limelight—and everyone know how serious the British tabloids could be—to have survived 70 years of British tabloids and live the lives that they have lived and be the example that they have, and I have gone through so much in so many..

Regardless of what you think about the monarch, you have to respect that 70 years of public service is a long time. Seventy years of seeing people around you coming and going is a long time and regardless of what you think and how you feel, you have to respect

that. You have to admire that. I mean she has carried herself with grace. She has carried herself with class and she has done it with a certain amount of strength that has even moved me, a person who doesn't believe in the monarch system, to get up and pay respects.

I also recognise Mr. Speaker that I represent the people who may not share my personal view and as a representative of the people, I have to get up on behalf of the people of Bodden Town West who do respect that form to also lend their voice to this level of occasion.

As a result Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Bodden Town West, who I am elected to represent, I would really truly like to wish the Queen a long life, a much longer life, good health, and may she continue to be that positive force that she has been around the world. She has been a good friend to the Caribbean people. She has toured it eleven times. She has been to Cayman twice.

From speaking to people who have met her, they have basically attested that she's just a downright decent person and on that basis I would really like to pay my respects on behalf of the people who I represent. Like I said, I do wish her a long life and hope that [Prince] Charles will never have to answer the question that interviewer asked him.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker; God Save the Queen.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? *[Pause]* Does any other Member wish to speak? *[Pause]* The Parliamentary Secretary of Tourism, the Member for Savannah.

Ms. Heather D. Bodden, Parliamentary Secretary of Tourism, Elected Member for Savannah: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I too wish to rise on the occasion of this Special Meeting the Parliament as we reflect upon the moment in history when Her Majesty the Queen acceded to the throne at the age of 25.

On behalf of the good people of Savannah, I offer heartfelt congratulations to Her Majesty the Queen on attending her Platinum Jubilee and wish to record our gratitude for exemplary service to her loyal subjects.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to reflect on Her Majesty the Queen's second June 1953 coronation speech and pay tribute to this occasion by recounting the humble words conveyed to her subjects when she expressed, *“Declaration of our hopes for the future and for the years I may, by God's grace and mercy, be given to reign and serve you as your Queen.”*

Mr. Speaker, by God's grace, Her Majesty the Queen has been blessed indeed with providing 70 years of selfless dedication to her duties with refined style, passion and stoic determination to ensure the best outcome for her people.

For this we admire and honour her today as church bells concurrently rang out at 12:15 p.m., followed by 70 seconds of silence that we may have the opportunity to resonate with gratitude and joy for each year she has given to her subjects.

We are most excited and we certainly look forward to a splendid celebration in June of this year befitting of this extraordinary milestone. May she continue to stand with unwavering strength of mind, open heart and unfailing health, and may her legacy continue for many decades to come.

Long may Her Majesty the Queen continue to live and may God continue to bless these beautiful Cayman Islands.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? *[Pause]* Does any other Member wish to speak? The Honourable Attorney General.

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I too wish to rise on the occasion of this Special Meeting of Parliament to commemorate Her Majesty's accession to the throne some 70 years ago today.

I consider it sir, an honour and indeed a privilege to be able to stand here to extend heartfelt congratulations to her and this remarkable achievement of her Platinum Jubilee.

Her Majesty has been and continues to be a living embodiment of dedication, grace, elegance and dignity to the Cayman Islands, the Commonwealth and indeed, the world. Her reign epitomises stability and continuity.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, throughout her 70 years as Head of the Commonwealth, she has been a passionate advocate for human rights, for law and order, and for social justice.

Mr. Speaker, I join with all others in praying for Her Majesty's continuing good health and her long life and may God continue to bless her; most gracious Queen.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? *[Pause]* The Honourable Minister for Social Development.

Hon. André M. Ebanks, Minister of Financial Services and Commerce and Investment, Innovation and Social Development, Elected Member for West Bay South: Just very briefly, Mr. Speaker.

I rise on this occasion to offer heartfelt congratulations to Her Majesty this Platinum Jubilee. I offer put on the record of this honourable House that on behalf of the constituency of West Bay South we recognise

the extraordinary level and dignity of service of Her Majesty. And, at an overseas territory level I will say that as a proof point, I have gotten some evidence of how dear the overseas territories are to Her Majesty.

One of the most humbling experiences I had as a representative of the Cayman Islands to the UK is to attend the Annual Diplomatic Ball in London which is held at Buckingham Palace and I am sure I speak on behalf of all prior overseas representatives that it is an auspicious occasion. It is a humbling occasion.

You're in Buckingham Palace in three different rooms with the entire diplomatic corps of probably over 100 countries; all jostling for position as Her Majesty proceeded through the halls and each trying to get in a word or two to catch her eye and us smaller territories trying to squeeze in amongst these bigger countries and I was told by a Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) officer, "*Don't worry, part of the reason that you all are here is because she wants you here.*"

You hear that and you think, '*Okay, I hope so*'; but, as she proceeded, and as all of us huddled to try to catch her eye, I noticed her look over and see us and I am guessing she recognised some of our faces and also our lapel pins and she was subtle, but it was just a nod, to let us know that she knew that we were there and that, more importantly, we belonged there. I have no doubt that we are important in Her Majesty's eyes.

Long may that continue; congratulations, Your Majesty on such an extended, distinguished service; God bless you and God bless the people of the Cayman Islands.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? *[Pause]* Does any other Member wish to speak? *[Pause]* Does any other Member wish to speak?

On a Motion it is usual for the mover to have a right of reply. I do not know if the Premier wants that right this afternoon?

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: And on a Motion we should also take a vote.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Before we move the adjournment, I want to say how much I appreciate Members' time and those of our distinguished guests who stayed with us until now.

As I indicated earlier, once the House is adjourned, there will be a short opening of the exhibition by our Cabinet Secretary in the presence of his Excellency the Governor. You are invited to stay and if you cannot, I hope you do find time to come back at some point and see the exhibition. It is a very interesting one.

Honourable Premier.

Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I join with you in thanking everyone: those special invited guests here this afternoon and our colleagues in Parliament who have spoken so sincerely and so eloquently in support of their views of the significance of this Platinum Jubilee for Her Majesty.

I want to thank all my colleagues on this side who have done so with such conviction and eloquence as well, including those who had their own particular experiences during the visits and my colleague the Member for West Bay South in sharing his experience while he was the representative in the London office. All very, very, telling.

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his comments and Sir Alden, as well. All very poignantly made.

Mr. Speaker, I also thought that I would at this point extend birthday wishes to the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Finance.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: I thought I would save it until this point since he could then look forward to immediately going home to his family and continuing his birthday celebrations.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: I did not hear that one, sorry.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Sing? No; I would have to pay for the damages to his ears if I did that.

[Laughter]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank everyone who participated in this.

I want to thank you, sir, for the excellent job you have done. All of the staff members of Parliament and the Cabinet Secretary for his excellent service as well on this auspicious—very, very, auspicious occasion. All of the comments have been sincere, and deservedly so for a lady who is an incredible role model to the world, particularly when the world needs such role models.

Mr. Speaker, with those words it only remains for me to formally move the adjournment of this honourable House sine die.

The Speaker: There are a number of people who we should say thanks to. We have been saying that from yesterday but the acknowledgements are included in the programme and I do just want to put on record my sincere appreciation to the Clerk; the Serjeant and the Acting Serjeant and all those who have made this beginning a memorable one.

It will go down in history from all that has been said, showing the appreciation and coming from everyone's heart and peace of mind.

Indeed it was historic.

I should say again, to have the whole parade contingency consist of women—I think it was something like 21—and then we had six or seven last night of the standard bearers. It says much about where our country has come from and we go back and we tell our children and we tell our grandchildren where we have come from and where we are today, hoping for the best of where we are going to be tomorrow. Thank you all.

The question is that this honourable Parliament stand adjourned sine die.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: This honourable Parliament stands adjourned.

At 7:11pm the House stood adjourned sine die.