



**PARLIAMENT OF
THE CAYMAN ISLANDS**

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

Special Meeting of 2022-2023 SESSION

*Special Meeting of the
Cayman Islands Parliament
in honour of
Her Late Majesty
Queen Elizabeth II*

**Monday
12 September, 2022**
(Pages 1-23)

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

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PRESENT WERE:

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

MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

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

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

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

ELECTED MEMBERS GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS

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

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, JP, MP	<i>Leader of the Opposition, Elected Member for George Town East</i>
Hon. Sir Alden McLaughlin, KCMG, MBE, KC, JP, MP	<i>Elected Member for Red Bay</i>
Ms. Barbara E. Conolly, JP, MP	<i>Elected Member for George Town South</i>

APOLOGIES

Mr. Joseph X. Hew, MP	<i>Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Elected Member for George Town North</i>
Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell, JP, MP	<i>Elected Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman</i>
Mr. David C. Wight, JP, MP	<i>Elected Member for George Town West</i>

**EDITED HANSARD
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS PARLIAMENT
IN HONOUR OF HER LATE MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II
2022-2023 SESSION
MONDAY
12 SEPTEMBER, 2022
3:08 PM**

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

PRAYERS

The Speaker: I will now invite Pastor Garrett Haylock to say prayers.

Pastor Garrick Haylock: 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, King Charles III; William, 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.

Before the benediction, on behalf of myself and my immediate family, I would like to say that we sympathise truly with the Royal Family at this time. We pay respects to our late Queen because she has led us well in these Islands. We do have a high appreciation for all of Her memories.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord makes 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.

The House has now resumed.

PROCLAMATION No. 4/2022

**(Summoning a First Meeting
of the 2022-2023 Session)**

The Clerk: Cayman Islands by his Excellency Martyn Keith Roper, Officer of the Most Excellent Order Of The British Empire, Governor of the Cayman Islands.

"WHEREAS section 83(1) of the Constitution of the Cayman Islands provides that the sessions of the Parliament of the Cayman Islands shall be held at such places and begin at such times as the Governor may from time to time by proclamation appoint:

"NOW THEREFORE, I, Martyn K. Roper, OBE, Governor of the Cayman Islands, by virtue of the powers conferred upon me by section 83(1) of the Constitution of the Cayman Islands HEREBY PROCLAIM that a session of the Parliament of the Cayman Islands shall begin and be held at the House of Parliament, George Town, Grand Cayman at 3 p.m. on the 12th day of September, 2022 and shall thereafter continue until such date and time as the Parliament may adjourn thereto.

"GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE PUBLIC SEAL OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS AT GEORGE TOWN IN THE ISLAND OF GRAND CAYMAN THIS 12TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-TWO IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HIS MAJESTY, KING CHARLES III".

**READING BY THE HONOURABLE
SPEAKER OF MESSAGES AND AN-
NOUNCEMENTS**

The Speaker: I have notice of an avoidable absence of Mr. Wight, the elected Member for George Town West

Cayman Islands Parliament

and Mr. Hew, the elected Member for George Town North. There is a possibility that Mr. Wight could get here before we adjourn.

Honourable Members, we gather today to give our tributes, and express our sincere and genuine feelings for the late Her Majesty the Queen and extend our sympathies to the Royal Family.

As a matter of protocol, let me firstly welcome to this hallowed Chamber of the House of Parliament all former Speakers. Former Members of Parliament and Clerks, the visiting Ministers from our region that we are privileged to have with us, other dignitaries and officials for this very Special Meeting for the passing of Her Majesty The Queen. We are pleased that you were able to join us for this memorable and unforgettable occasion.

It is most notable that during her reign, this very House transitioned from being a bicameral Legislative Assembly of Justices and Vestrymen, to being a Legislative Assembly in 1959 and finally, two years ago, to become a Parliament.

As a matter of housekeeping, we will try to have each Member's tribute delivered as quickly as possible, due to the other previously arranged events. We are mindful of the time constraints, and as a result, Members will be expected to rise without undue delay to offer their sentiments and condolences so we will be able to proceed and therefore attend our scheduled functions and meetings.

Before we formally start our tributes, we shall stand for a minute of silence in reverence and to show our respect for the Late Queen.

Let us all rise.

**~ MINUTE OF SILENCE
FOR THE LATE HER MAJESTY,
QUEEN ELIZABETH II ~**

The Speaker: Please be seated.

It is a privilege, as I said earlier, to have with us Honourable Ministers from the region, Ministers of Tourism and other responsibilities:

- Anguilla - Honourable Haydn Hughes, Minister of Infrastructure, Communications, Utilities, Housing and Tourism;
- Antigua - Honourable Charles 'Max' Fernandez, Minister of Tourism and Investment;
- Barbados - Senator Honourable Lisa Cummins, Minister of Tourism and International Transport;
- Belize - Honourable Anthony Mahler, Minister of Tourism and Diaspora Relations;
- Belize - Honourable Abner Perez, Minister of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation;
- Curaçao - Honourable Ruisandro Cijntje, Minister of Economic Development;

- Dominica - Honourable Denise Charles, Minister of Tourism, International Transport and Maritime Initiatives;
- Grenada - Honourable Lennox Andrews, Minister of Economic Development, Planning, Tourism, I. C. T., Creative Economy, Agriculture and Lands, Fisheries and Co-operatives;
- Martinique - Mr. Alexander Ventadour - Deputy Commissioner for the Martinique Tourism Authority
- St. Lucia - Honourable Dr. Ernest Hilaire, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism, Investment, Creative Industries, Culture and Information;
- Tobago - Councillor, Tashia Burris, Secretary of Tourism, Culture, Antiquities and Transportation; and
- Turks and Caicos Islands - Honourable Josephine Connolly, Minister of Tourism.

We are very pleased that they could be with us; we do know there are others who will be here and they will be welcome, of course, during their time in their respective conference.

Colleagues, it is with a heartfelt and sombre mood that I rise to render tribute to our Majesty The Queen. We have all seen over the past days that her passing has caused great gloom to many who have known or met her. The grief is unbearable at this time, but her passing also brings extraordinary solidarity across nations as we feel, collectively, a sense of loss and deep sadness. Her departure has left an unquestionable void. It is at this juncture that we more fully value what she represented and stood for. She has left a remarkable spirit of reconciliation and harmony that, at this time, is felt with particular poignancy.

Historically, when The Queen ascended to the Throne, the world was not in a stable position. She was then only at the tender age of twenty-five; but as she matured into her role, she shaped the Monarchy to what became revered and admired around the world. Under her leadership for seventy years, she demonstrated a strength of character and a wisdom that is worthy of emulation.

Undoubtedly, the Monarchy of the United Kingdom gained the confidence and trust of the world during Her Reign. That's why there is such an outpouring of grief for a universally lauded human being and Head of State. She was the embodiment of grace and she represented a continuity of purpose and a deep sense of service.

The Queen reigned with great humility, so it is quite understandable why she was highly respected throughout her realms, dominions and territories. She was a steady guiding figure and solidified the iconic stature of the institution she represented. Undoubtedly, she recognised and appreciated the separation of powers and authorities, generally, as it applied to her remit

as Head of State. She refused to express public opinions on policy matters, in keeping with a firm understanding of her role.

Our Late Queen of blessed memory espoused such values that enabled all the world to understand what good governance in the commonwealth meant. She was beloved for her exceptional care of that institution and her impact on it, and on the world beyond it, was profound and far reaching. She served selflessly and was caring for the concerns of many. During her reign, she was unwavering and resolute, particularly as it related to her faith and her commitment to the common good of all people.

Her Leadership was unique, unmatched, and unparalleled in the devotion she showed for the betterment of who she served. She was the model of decency and she reflected diplomacy and grace. She was majestic, and conducted herself exemplarily in all respects. Her adventurous passion, self-discipline, and sometimes playful sense of humour, identified our Queen as no aloof and superior figure, but as a real and genuine human being.

She embodied the very essence of peace and humility. Without any doubt, she was a stabilising force, a unifying figure, remaining steadfast and never exploiting her status or royal titles. She exuded and gave confidence to people in all circumstances. She was a Queen for the people, and this could even be seen in the way she signed her letters simply as: "*Your servant*". That speaks volumes of who she was.

Her personal deportment and decorum, the entire manner in which she conducted herself, was truly exceptional. She has left an impeccable record and made a stellar contribution that is exemplary and matchless. She was a consummate leader and a public servant with incredible integrity.

Even though she was adamantly disciplined and a stickler for protocol, she was minded to modernise and took measures that were transformational for our way of life; yet, even with such high calling and onerous responsibilities, our late Queen was also a loving wife, a mother, a grandmother and a great grandmother.

On a personal level, I met and interacted with Her Majesty The Queen on numerous occasions, at least six times in my ten terms here; and I was always in awe and wonderment at her wit and her ability to recall people she met here in Cayman—a small part of the many thousands whom she was apparently able to identify personally.

In 2010, she remembered the lady who asked her, "Ma'am, what happened to your arm?" And she replied—at Government House that was—"Oh, I fell [*sic*] my horse and broke it." And the late Julia Hydes, 106 years old at her death, said "Well, that must have hurt" and the Queen replied, "It sure did." At the opening of the sports centre in my constituency of West Bay, Julia asked her the same thing and she replied the same way, and as we walked off she said, "That lady asked

me about it last night"—and in 2010, she remembered that lady, and asked about her.

From a child going to school, specifically as I entered primary school at age six, Her Majesty had been on the Throne nine years then. I would say it was the beginning of my support of the Monarch, as we learned to sing "God Save Our Gracious Queen". And those of us all around in this House, and those who are listening otherwise, many, would have been doing the same thing, at that time, and at that age.

I am mindful that we paid our tributes to Her Majesty while she was still alive just last July. We came then and said our words of joy and celebration of her long and happy reign. It gave me pause, too, to reflect on my collection of items over the years related to my dealings with her, and those were on display for all to see, here in the halls of this Parliament House, as well as items from other people in our community and, of course, from officialdom and now, colleagues... this.

Our world has changed much since 1961, and we here have tried to keep pace and steady the good ship Cayman. As we look back, we may be criticised for what we did or did not do, and we can say there is yet so much to do, but we have come a long way and we give God thanks for his many blessings on us. We have come a long way in spite of many issues, many events, and sometimes, many disappointments. Nevertheless, we are here and we are still strong.

In looking at her life, if we all could emulate the ways of our late Queen and impart her ways to the youth of our Islands, it would be a better place to live, and move, and have our being. Her legacy will be multifaceted, and it will accordingly be a challenging undertaking for His Majesty, King Charles III, as he takes the Throne at this time, because of the high bar she has set; but she has also left the example for us all to follow.

Her death is painful and that sting remains with us. I know deep within, she still lives amongst many of us, and her spirit and grace will resonate with us because she devoted her life and made sacrifices for the United Kingdom and the wider world. Her interaction with the public has been enduring, and will remain a part of the fabric of lives here in the Cayman Islands and further afield in our Commonwealth—and indeed, the world.

She will be remembered and remain a permanent fixture in our lives. We have lost an amazing, great, and remarkable Queen. It seems to be the end of an era, as this iconic and stoic lady leaves us.

We believe in almighty God, the maker of heaven and earth, and we believe she is in a more serene and peaceful place now and we are ever mindful that life is but a vapour and we too, we too, only pass this way but once so, let the God she took throughout her life as her moral guidance, be our guide too.

On behalf of the people of my constituency of West Bay West, my family and friends, we express sincere condolences to all the Royal Family and the

bereaving people of the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

God save the King.

MOTION OF SUSPENSION OF THE HOUSE FOR ADMISSION OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

I rise to move a motion for the suspension of the House for the admission of His Excellency, The Governor to bring his tributes to the late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Mr. Speaker, before doing that I would join you in welcoming all of our honoured guests. We want to join you in acknowledging and welcoming them to this honourable Parliament on this occasion. We are very pleased to have them with us.

Now Mr. Speaker, in terms of the Motion, it is as follows:

“BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House do suspend to invite His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Martyn Keith Roper, OBE, to deliver an Address on the occasion of the mourning of a nation on the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.”

The Speaker: The question is: “BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House do suspend to invite His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Martyn Keith Roper, OBE, to deliver an Address on the occasion of the mourning of a nation on the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.”

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The House will suspend to await His Excellency the Governor.

Proceedings suspended at 3:35 p.m.

Proceedings resumed at 3:37 p.m.

The Speaker: I invite His Excellency the Governor to address this honourable Parliament.

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, MR. MARTYN K. ROPER, OBE

His Excellency The Governor, Mr. Martyn K. Roper, OBE: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Premier, Honourable

Members of this House of Parliament and visiting Ministers and Dignitaries from the region, good afternoon.

Today I stand before you all, with a heavy heart, feeling enormously sad, as so many in this Chamber, across our three Islands, and indeed, around the world, will no doubt have been feeling since learning of the death on Thursday, of our late Sovereign, Queen Elizabeth II. It is as though we have lost a cherished member of our own family—a matriarch. Her guiding presence was always felt. Her wise counsel we were comforted to know, she willingly shared, and whose love of God, and for all those over whom she reigned, radiated brightly with such warmth.

I want to thank Speaker Bush for convening this extraordinary session of Parliament to allow us all, whilst grieving the Late Queen's loss, to reflect on Her Majesty's extraordinary life of service; express what she meant to us individually, and share our personal memories of her that we will cherish. I am grateful and honoured to have this opportunity to address this noble House of Parliament.

Her late Majesty ruled for longer than any other monarch in British history yet, even before ascending to the Throne, she dedicated her life to the service of her people. In her now famous 21st birthday speech, she declared: “My whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service.” With those words, she set the tone for a lifetime of commitment to her people. I believe we can say, she fully succeeded.

In the course of her 23,000 days on the Throne, the Late Queen Elizabeth won hearts, not just in the UK, but around the world. Through her dedication to duty and quiet diplomacy, she also earned the respect of so many, from world leaders to ordinary people whose lives she touched. She said that she often drew strength from meeting ordinary people doing extraordinary things—volunteers, carers, community organisers and good neighbours; unsung heroes whose quiet dedication makes them special. She saw such people as an inspiration to those who knew them, as she, in turn, was an inspiration to them.

Her 70-year reign saw her travel more widely than any other monarch, undertaking over 260 official visits overseas, including 82 state visits. She was the best diplomat Britain has ever had, affirming old relationships and building new connections, and I have been incredibly proud to work for Her Majesty's diplomatic service for almost four decades.

No one did more than Her Majesty to strengthen the bonds of friendship, understanding and respect between the UK and the rest of the world. She met thirteen presidents of the United States, seven Popes, and countless other world and faith leaders. She was renowned for her intelligent questioning of world affairs and a detailed grasp of the issues. She famously left economists speechless after the 2008 financial crisis, asking simply why they didn't see it coming.

Through sharing her experience and giving words of support, she helped so many people over the years. That role was, of course, evident in the Late Queen's weekly audience with her Prime Minister throughout her reign in order to discuss government matters. In these entirely private meetings, Her Late Majesty, whilst remaining politically neutral on all matters, was able to advise and warn her Prime Minister as she felt necessary.

It is poignant to note that she 'saw off' her 14th Prime Minister, as Boris Johnson so characteristically put it, and received her 15th Prime Minister, Liz Truss, just two days before her passing. A remarkable demonstration of her duty and service to the very end. Under her watchful gaze, as Head of the Commonwealth, it grew to a family of fifty-four nations.

Historians have credited the late queen with having a great impact in building the Commonwealth as Britain retreated from empire. Between 1952 and 2015, when she ceased overseas travel, she visited every single Commonwealth country, except for Cameroon and Rwanda—two very recent members. During that same time period, Her Majesty only ever missed two Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings. She referred to it as "her beloved Commonwealth".

Throughout years of tremendous change in international affairs, the late Queen was a source of continuity and stability. From post-World War II Britain to post-EU Exit Britain; from a time when we had just a single broadcaster, the BBC, to the complex social media world of today, and from times defined by deference, to a period when all authority is questioned. She embodied the stability and continuity of the Monarchy when so much else was changing. She thus helped Britain, the Realms, the Territories, to weather the storm. She transcended politics and geography, touching the lives of millions of people across the world.

Poet Philip Larkin once said about her, **"In times when nothing stood, but worsened or grew strange, there was one constant good: She did not change."** She was arguably the greatest Monarch we have had and one of the greatest leaders the world has ever known. She was a remarkable figurehead for the UK and its overseas territories during times of enormous social change.

We were privileged to host Her Late Majesty twice in Cayman, in 1983 and 1994. I feel sure that some of the recollections we will hear today will be about those two wonderful visits. I was fortunate to meet Her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II three times during the course of my diplomatic career, once at Windsor Castle, and twice at Buckingham Palace; the last time, as Governor of these wonderful Cayman Islands.

She had a remarkable quality of putting people at ease. She had a magnetism that made you smile. Who can forget the James Bond and Paddington Bear sketches? They took our breath away; and she had a wonderful sense of humour. When Lissie and I saw her

at Windsor Castle, she told the story of a senior Foreign Military official who had said to her, "Ma'am, why do you build your castles so close to the airport?" (Windsor Castle being under the flight path of Heathrow Airport). I think she enjoyed retelling that one.

Her Late Majesty knew that for many, having an audience with her was a daunting, even frightening experience, but she ensured that it was relaxed, highly memorable, and fun. It has been said that she took her role very seriously but did not take herself too seriously. We can all perhaps reflect on that.

Her Late Majesty once said, "Each day is a new beginning. I know that the only way to live my life is to try to do what is right, to take the long view, to give of my best in all that the day brings, and to put my trust in God." How lucky we have been, as her loyal subjects, to have benefited from all that she did for us in that spirit. Her dignity, calmness, steadfastness, and incomparable dedication to duty set an outstanding example for all of us.

Who will ever forget the image of Her Late Majesty sitting alone, in black, at the funeral of her late husband, the Duke of Edinburgh? Her Late Majesty understood that grief is the price we pay for love. I must echo the words of her beloved grandson, the newly-titled Prince of Wales, who acknowledges that all of the sadness we all feel in the coming weeks, will be a testament to the love we felt for our extraordinary Queen and that she felt for us.

She was unquestionably the greatest public servant we will see in our lifetimes. A quite extraordinary lady who will be greatly missed.

While we may feel intense sadness at Her Majesty's passing, at the same time, we celebrate the proclamation of King Charles III as our new Monarch. It is a unique mix of complex feelings—sadness and joy, leaving many feeling unsettled, but it is part of the process of our Constitutional Monarchy. The strong links between parliaments and Monarchy go back centuries. The connective thread between one period and the next is the unshakeable fabric of our Constitution. It enables us to look forward with optimism and confidence here in Cayman and the UK.

I also know from my discussions with Her Late Majesty and our new Monarch that they share your pride in the enormous transformation that has taken place in our Islands over the Queen's Reign. Cayman is a remarkable success story and a beacon in the region. I am proud that links between Cayman and the UK, nurtured by mutual affection, trust and respect are in excellent shape. The Royal Family has played a fundamental and pivotal role in that.

As we look to the future, we were honoured yesterday at Government House to give the Proclamation for His Majesty, King Charles III. Her Late Majesty's longevity means it is probably the first time in history that we have proclaimed a new King in the Cayman Islands. It was a moving and historic occasion. Who did

not shed a tear as we sang for the first time in over seventy years, the National Anthem, "God save the King"?

I know that His Majesty's visit here three years ago, with the Queen Consort, is fondly remembered. Thousands of people came out to see them. We can be confident that his commitment and support for Cayman and the Overseas Territories is steadfast. As we mourn and deeply lament the loss of Her Late Majesty, we pledge our support to our new King as one era ends and a new era begins.

May God bless these wonderful Cayman Islands, may God receive his faithful servant Queen Elizabeth II, and may she rest in eternal peace.

God save the King!

Thank you.

Proceedings suspended at 3:50 p.m.

Proceedings resumed at 3:52 p.m.

The Speaker: Please be seated.

The House has resumed its sitting

MOTION OF THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

The Speaker: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, Leader of the Opposition, elected Member for George Town East: Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to move the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency, The Governor, which reads 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 Address delivered on this occasion of the morning of the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II."

The Speaker: Thank you.

Out of an abundance of caution, I think we better call for the Ayes and the Noes. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Motion passed.

CONDOLENCES BY MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

The Speaker: The Floor is open.

The Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you very much for the opportunity to rise and offer some reflections this afternoon on behalf of the people of the Cayman Islands and those in my constituency of Newlands, in particular, on the life and passing of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, to offer condolences to her family and to acknowledge and pledge our support to the new sovereign, King Charles III.

Mr. Speaker, Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II famously promised, as noted earlier, to dedicate her whole life, whether it be long or short, to serve the people of Britain and its Imperial Family; she faithfully, dutifully—brilliantly, kept that promise for seventy years and seven months.

Mr. Speaker, last Thursday was a day I shall not soon forget. In the days since Her passing, people here and around the world, from all walks of life, I think, have surprised themselves with the feelings of sadness and grief, some quite intense. Some described their initial feelings as unmoored, untethered, feeling generally out of sorts. With her death, we are faced with a deep sense of loss: the loss of a majestic and noble Queen. The loss of a dignified, decent and deeply respected world leader.

Mr. Speaker, I offer condolences to her family, her children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, her close friends and other Members of the Royal household. Her family have lost a devoted mother, grandmother, and great grandmother.

Mr. Speaker, Her Late Majesty was a calming constant over seven decades. She held steady steer through economic challenges, periods of geopolitical tension, climate change, personal challenges and yes, the COVID-19 pandemic. Through it all, she remained measured and dignified, becoming one of the most respected leaders in modern history.

Mr. Speaker, what might we as leaders—inside and outside this honourable House, in the region and around the world—learn from our Queen's legacy? The first thing we might take away is to focus on our purpose. We have in her legacy, an impeccable example of a leader who was crystal clear in her purpose and the purpose of her role. Her purpose was to ensure good governance and to be of service to the public.

Reflecting on her life of dedicated public service, I am reminded of the words in *Mark 10:45* in which we read the words of Christ, who said, **"For even the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve."** As public servants, it is our responsibility to others that must be front and centre of our decisions and our conduct; not our wants, not our passions, not our egos.

Mr. Speaker, the second take away that I would note, relates to our conduct as leaders. It is said the Queen decided early on to adopt the leadership principle of "actions speak louder than word", and to lead by example, rather than by rhetoric. In our late Queen, Mr. Speaker, we have had a global leader who embodied a deep respect for others. She practiced restraint. She

chose her words carefully, using her voice to encourage, support, and to give hope. She carried out her duties with an abiding faith in God and genuine humility. Her long record is clear, Mr. Speaker.

She was the leader who did not let her title or the privileges afforded to the lofty position of her high office go to her head, as we would say. She understood that public figures were going to be subjected to scrutiny and once said, **“Criticism is good for people and institutions that are part of public life. No institution, city, monarchy—whatever—should expect to be free from the scrutiny of those who give their loyalty and support, not to mention those who don’t.”** Perhaps most notable of all her leadership traits will be her integrity, Mr. Speaker. She was a leader whose personal and professional life were balanced on the fulcrum of integrity. She did the hard right, not the easy wrong.

The third take away, Mr. Speaker, might be in relation to her attitude. Despite her nobility, despite her privilege, despite all who glorified her, she embodied humility and selflessness. She was not self-centred or self-absorbed. She didn’t believe that it was all about her, her image, or her glory. The Queen, Mr. Speaker, encouraged us to be mindful of our responsibilities and to be deliberate about our attitudes. Our attitudes, Mr. Speaker, are of supreme importance. The way we show up, interact, engage and communicate with others at home, at work, and in the community defines us; as leaders, let us be inspired by Her Late Majesty’s life and legacy, and may we never confuse our position, or our office, as being about our personal identity.

Let us recommit ourselves to our purpose and to hold first and foremost the responsibilities of our roles. Let us commit our time, talent and treasure to improving the lives of the people we serve and in so doing, resist the impulsive pull of our ego which might tempt us to put ourselves first. We will all be better leaders, and dare I say better people, Mr. Speaker, if we deliberately choose to practice her leadership traits in our day to day dealings choosing purpose, humility, selflessness, dignity and, above all, integrity.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier this year during the special Church service held at Elmslie memorial to mark Her Late Majesty’s Platinum Jubilee, many Caymanians treasure the memories they have of meeting the Queen, when more than a quarter of the Islands’ population turned out in 1983 to greet the Queen and Prince Philip at Owen Roberts International Airport. It was the year she officially opened the Pines Retirement Home. She returned, as previously noted, in 1994 and knighted long-time Caymanian public servant, Sir Vassel Johnson, and officially opened the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park. Mr. Speaker, the visits to our beautiful Cayman Islands, and her willingness to meet hundreds and thousands of Caymanians endeared her even more to us. She was and forever will be our Queen.

From the announcement of Her Late Majesty the Queen’s passing on Thursday, 8th September 2022, the people of the Cayman Islands joined others around the world in mourning this incredible loss. Through a full slate of commemorative activities and events, we are remembering her great legacy during this period of national mourning, which ends on Tuesday, 20th September.

The Cayman Islands, together with the United Kingdom, other Overseas Territories and the Realms participated in the 96-gun salute, on Friday, 9th September.

We had the reading of the Proclamation for the new sovereign, King Charles III on Sunday, 11th September, and we will observe two minutes of silence on the day of the state funeral on Monday, 19th September, which I believe everyone is aware, will also be a public holiday. Across our Islands, we will remember and commemorate the life of Her Late Majesty in several other ways, including in some ways that are special to our Cayman Islands community. I will highlight just a few.

What started on Friday, 9th September, was a practice of having all ships leaving Hog Sty Bay harbour give nine short blasts on their horn as they leave, to remind us all of Her Majesty’s departure from the Cayman Islands on what would have been her last visit to our shores in 1994. She arrived and departed aboard the Royal Yacht *Britannia* via Hog Sty Bay. I pause here to note, that the civil service played a central role in organising that and other Royal visits, including in 2019 when we received His Majesty, King Charles III, then the Prince of Wales—an act of service of the highest honour.

Also from Friday, 9th September, the Government Administration Building, as well as the Clock Tower in George Town, which was constructed in memory of King George V, Her Late Majesty the Queen’s grandfather, has been illuminated in dark blue, a serene and calming colour which represents responsibility, integrity, stability and reliability—a fitting tribute to the Queen, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Cayman Islands, as we all know, have a strong Christian heritage, and churches and people of faith across our country are participating in national mourning activities, so on Wednesday, 14th September at 12:30, church bells will toll for 96 seconds—one second for each year of Her Late Majesty’s life. On the weekend prior to the state funeral, on Saturday, 17th and Sunday, 18th September, churches will include a special prayer in their worship service. Our period of national mourning will end on the morning of Tuesday, 20th September.

In recognition of the special relationship between the Overseas Territories and the Monarchy, representatives of the governments of the Overseas territories have been invited to London next week, to mark the solemn occasion and pay their final respects to Her Late Majesty the Queen.

The Governor and Mrs. Roper, along with my wife and I, and the Cayman Islands Government UK Representative in London, have been invited to the official Lying-in-State at Westminster Hall, and to attend a formal signing of the Book of Condolences at Lancaster House. Mr. Speaker, I hope to be able to offer a short tribute on behalf of the people of our wonderful Cayman Islands, which I believe will be recorded, I hope it will be recorded, on behalf of our Late Queen Elizabeth II. Of course, on Monday, the Governor and I will attend the Official State Funeral and immediately thereafter attend a Foreign Secretaries' Reception.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a time of great sadness—a solemn time; and I think it is fitting, absolutely fitting, that we honour and celebrate the life and the legacy of the Late Queen Elizabeth II.

Many of the elder leaders of our community will recall their meetings with Her Late Majesty. For some of us younger leaders, myself included, we have had more frequent interactions with the former Prince Charles, now King Charles III who, as we all know, was a very active Royal, working for decades, and who visited Cayman in 2019. We know he has been a passionate advocate for the causes which matter to him. He has long been a champion and advocate for important issues such as social justice, underprivileged young people, agriculture and even community development.

Nowhere has former Prince Charles, now King Charles III, been more outspoken than on the undeniable threat posed by climate change. Last year, Mr. Speaker, speaking at the Conference of the Parties (COP) 26 opening ceremony, he warned that the time for addressing climate change had quite literally run out. In order to tackle the problem, he said, we have to put ourselves on what might be called a war-like footing.

Naturally, Mr. Speaker, as the King, he will have to adhere to the political neutrality enshrined in the Constitution; but I for one am confident that King Charles III will meet, and exceed, the expectations the world has of him. He is well prepared for the burden and responsibilities of his role, Mr. Speaker. He has had the benefit of excellent tutelage over the course of a long apprenticeship. His late mother set an unquestionably stellar, excellent example, for him. All this will stand him in good stead to continue, as he leads as the sovereign of Britain and its Realms.

In his own words, Mr. Speaker, he said last week in a televised event, ***“As the Queen herself did with such unswerving devotion, I too, now solemnly pledge myself throughout the remaining time God grants me, to uphold the constitutional principles at the heart of our nation.”***

As this second Elizabethan era has come to a close, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government and the people of the Cayman Islands, it is my distinct honour to give this tribute to express our sincere gratitude and to convey our immense respect for Her Late Majesty's long life of distinguished service.

God save the King!

The Speaker: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, Elected Member for George Town East, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Good afternoon colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, it is about three short months since people across our Islands came together to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I am sure that like me, Members of this honourable Parliament will recall that summer weekend as a time of celebration and unbridled joy. Now, we in this Parliament, and the people across the Cayman Islands gather once again, Mr. Speaker, this time, however, it is to mourn and to grieve the passing of Her Majesty.

I am sure that like me, Members here will recognise this as a time of grief and great sadness. Yet, in our grief and sadness, we must look within ourselves and find the fortitude once again to celebrate. We must celebrate a life well lived, a life of immense dedication to duty, a life lived in the strength of faith and a life of love and of giving, from which all of us who have been her subjects have benefited so greatly. The Queen's dedication to her duty has been evident throughout all her life of public service. From her service in uniform during the Second World War, right up to the audience during which she invited her 15th Prime Minister to form a government just two days before her death. *Never* did that dedication waiver.

On Her Majesty's 21st birthday, she committed herself to a life of service and there can be few people throughout human history who have honoured such a freely-given commitment so fully through such a long life.

As Her Majesty herself reflected, Mr. Speaker, that sense of duty was rooted in her faith. As head of the Church of England, the Queen was required to participate in a variety of public acts of devotion, but her own faith was deeply rooted and personal. That faith gave her strength in times of trouble, and gave her humility during good times. In both good times and bad times, she set a very strong example for all of us.

Her Majesty's love for her subjects and the bond she created between Monarch and people have been no more evident than over the last few days. I suspect that we all experienced similar feelings last week Thursday. When first the news came through that Her Majesty's doctors were concerned for her health, and that her family was gathering at her bedside, we continued to hope and pray. It seemed impossible that the life of one who had been an ever-present reassurance in our own lives could be drawing to a close; but within hours, devastating news flashed around the world that Her Majesty had passed away.

Our initial disbelief quickly gave way to be replaced by the kind of sense of loss that we normally

experience when a member of our own close family is taken from us; a sense of loss that is being shared by billions across the world today. That sense of loss speaks to the person that Queen Elizabeth was, rather than simply the position that she held.

As our Monarch and Head of State, it would be easy to stand aloof, particularly at a distance of some 5,000 miles from us. Yet, Her Majesty felt a part of our everyday lives. It was in the early years of her reign that our predecessors made the deliberate decision to maintain our ties with the United Kingdom and to become what is now a British Overseas Territory. There is not a day that goes by, Mr. Speaker, that I am not grateful to them for the wisdom of that decision; but what that means, Mr. Speaker, is that throughout the more than sixty years that the Cayman Islands have grown and developed as a nation, our Queen has been a constant and unswerving presence. As we have been reminded many times, it was during her reign that we received our Coat of Arms and our first Constitution.

The commitment Caymanians made to the United Kingdom has been reciprocated in the love and affection that our Queen has shown for our Islands and our people. That was evident to all of us who witnessed Her Majesty's two visits to Cayman in 1983 and 1984 [*sic*]. Those were very special times for our Islands; and there are still many people for whom those visits are recalled with a strong sense of pride and a special place in our hearts.

It was not during those visits, however, that Queen Elizabeth held our people in her heart. I hope I am not betraying any confidences, Mr. Speaker, when I say that over the years, I have spoken to more than one Governor of these Islands who has reflected upon the Queen's keen interest in our people and our well-being, during their audiences with Her Majesty. It is small wonder then, Mr. Speaker, that the news of Her Majesty's passing has hit us all so hard. With heavy hearts, our thoughts now turn to the final farewell.

I do hope that some of those Caymanians currently in the UK will have the opportunity to say farewell in person during the coming Lying-in-State; however, whether in person or not, I am sure that each of us during the days ahead, will reflect on Her Majesty's life and mourn, yes—but also give thanks for all that she accomplished.

Even as we mourn the passing of our Queen, Mr. Speaker, our thoughts turn to our new King, for we are of course, never without a monarch and so, as soon as Queen Elizabeth II passed away, so King Charles III acceded to the Throne. A fact we marked here in Cayman only yesterday morning with the Governor's reading of the Proclamation of the new sovereign.

We all have memories of the King's last visit to all three Cayman Islands in 2019. During that visit, thousands turned out to show their respect and appreciation for the then Prince and his mother, the Queen and so, my first thought is not for Charles the King, but for Charles, the son. For it is after all, the passing of his

mother that we all mourn this afternoon. The Queen was, perhaps, first and foremost, a mother, a grandmother and great grandmother.

In our own grief, we must recognise the grief of the close family that Her Majesty has left behind, and on behalf of everyone in these Islands, I extend heartfelt condolences to the Royal Family and I hope that the thoughts and prayers of our people will offer them some comfort at this time.

For King Charles, this must be an exceptionally difficult time. Even as he grieves the passing of his mother, he finds himself swept up in a myriad of new duties that he must now take on and fulfil. I pray that his own faith and his belief in everlasting life will sustain him through this time of trial. The tradition of the immediate passing of the Crown from one head to another has given rise to the custom of marking the death of our Queen with the cry of "*God save the King*" both in recognition of his birth right and as a statement of hope for the future.

I add my voice to that cry, Mr. Speaker—God save the King! But I want to add to the statement of hope it conveys. I hope and I pray, that God will grant to our new King the wisdom that will be necessary to guide our family of nations through an uncertain future. I hope and I pray, that the bond between King and people will strengthen and flourish in the years ahead.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I hope and I pray that our new King will be able to draw on the same reserves of duty, faith and love that made Queen Elizabeth the wonderful person and the exceptional Monarch that she was. For King Charles, there can be no better example of how to rule than the example set by his mother, and our late sovereign, Queen Elizabeth.

May her example guide King Charles and give him the strength and fortitude he will need in the years ahead, and may her soul rest in eternal peace.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The Honourable Deputy Premier.

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

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the good, decent and hard-working people of Bodden Town West, who I am honoured and humbled to serve and represent in this honourable Parliament, I rise to add my voice in paying respects to the Late Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor, who was known around the world as Queen Elizabeth II and who, on the 8th September, 2022, slipped the surly bonds of earth to touch the face of God.

Mr. Speaker, when the Queen ascended to the Throne on the 6th February, 1952, my mother wasn't even born. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, none of us in this honourable Parliament was born.

Mr. Speaker, when I consider that not only did she serve for seventy years and 214 days, but also, just

two days prior to her passing, Mr. Speaker—two days, the Queen appointed her 15th Prime Minister, I cannot begin to comprehend her state of health at the time, Mr. Speaker, and I won't even try. Instead, I will thank the Queen, now of blessed memory, for being an example of duty, service and commitment.

Mr. Speaker, it is also not lost on me that some of the people whom I represent have mixed feelings with regards to the role of the monarchy in today's world, and there is nothing wrong with that, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this year, around the same time as The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, a poll was conducted and found that only 62 per cent of people in Britain feel that there should be a monarchy in the future, with 22 per cent saying "no" and the balance undecided.

Mr. Speaker, back in 1994, there was a speech delivered by the current UK Prime Minister Liz Truss, calling for an end to the Monarchy. That's not surprising, considering that when we look at the generational divide in Britain, 49 per cent of the people between the ages of 29-49 said that the Monarchy is not good for Britain. I say all of this to say, that despite what people felt about the Monarchy, during the same poll, the Queen was only disliked by 8 per cent. Her favourability rating was through the roof—92 per cent favourability rating, Mr. Speaker. It would be the envy of any politician around the world, to have those kind of numbers.

What does this say, Mr. Speaker? It tells us that the Late Queen Elizabeth transcended the very Monarchy that she represented. Not only did she redefined a Monarch in today's world, but she became a larger than life figure, so much so, that regardless of what you thought about the Monarchy, you couldn't help but admire and respect the person Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this year at one of the functions where we were celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, I told the story of an interview with Prince Charles when the interviewer asked him if he would ever be King, to which he replied, *"In order for me to be King, my mom would have to die. Why would I want my mother to die?"* UNVERIFIED QUOTE

Mr. Speaker, as we watched the events of the past few days, it says something about our monarchs; it says something about our Heads of State. Each of them came into Office at a sad time; they came into Office at a time of grief and sorrow, but we all expect them to do their jobs while still grieving.

Mr. Speaker, I am not afraid to say that I am a mama's boy, and I can tell you right now, that I for one would not have been able to do what I saw King Charles do following the passing of his mother—I would have been a total wreck.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders, Deputy Premier: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to have been alive during the reign of Queen Elizabeth II; I am happy to be alive

during the reign of King Charles III—and to borrow a phrase from Edwin Stanton: Queen Elizabeth **"now belongs to the ages"**, but we preferred when she belonged to us."

God save the King!

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Tourism.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, elected Member for George Town Central, Minister of Tourism and Transport: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Like you and the Honourable Premier, I want to first start by welcoming our visiting colleagues from the region, particularly those in aviation and tourism. As most Members are aware, we are the host for the CTO [Caribbean Tourism Organization] conference, so I welcome them, and I ask that they be allowed to excuse [themselves] when they see fit, as they prepare for proceedings later this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say thank you for quickly calling on this honourable House to give us the opportunity to share our condolences and sympathy, with respect to what transpired last week with our gracious Queen. On behalf of the good people of George Town Central that I represent, I stand here and express their love and appreciation for everything that she has done over her seventy years, but Mr. Speaker, as I suspected, many of the amazing historical moments on what she represents and has done, have been mentioned by your Honourable self, the Honourable Deputy Premier, the Honourable Premier and the Honourable Opposition Leader.

Thus, Mr. Speaker, I will put away these notes and share my personal opinion and feelings about the loss of the Queen and what it means to me as a human being, not as a politician.

The Speaker: Before you embark on that, can I ask the Honourable Premier for the Motion at this time?

Suspension of Standing Orders 10(2)

(To enable the House to continue beyond the hour of interruption)

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

I rise to move the Motion for the suspension of Standing Order 10(2) to enable the House to continue beyond the hour of interruption.

The Speaker: The question is that the House do continue after the hour of 4:30p.m. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it. The House will continue.

Agreed: Standing Order 10(2) suspended.

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister continuing.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before we took the suspension, I was about to talk about my personal view in respect to the Queen, because those who have spoken before me have the benefit of age, and understanding the historical nature of how our great nation came to where it is and what the British Empire and the reign of the Queen meant to the development of our country; but Mr. Speaker, I am a young pup in this business and, sadly, I may never fully appreciate what she has done as much as you do. The opportunities we all have in this room, and in this building; the economy that we have, is because of her strength, her leadership for seventy years.

There are some countries that don't have great leaders and, as a result, they don't have great economies, because of political instability, so not only do I owe her love and appreciation, but I owe her the future of my children, because today I live in a country where I can provide in a safe manner for my family, my loved ones, my community and my people, because of the things that she has done.

Mr. Speaker, when I heard about the Queen's passing, I was not sure what to do, whether to cry or to celebrate, and you've heard that feeling echoed in many people's delivery so far—mixed emotions.

How can you not celebrate someone so amazing? A woman that shone brighter than the sun. Her love across the oceans. We have seen countries salute her, for example, the Eiffel Tower has been shut off in celebration of her; the great statue of Jesus in Rio de Janeiro was lit up in the colours of the UK; we see that Australia has plans to have their monuments celebrated in her name. Countries will continue to hold many celebrations over the next days as we mourn her loss, and we're not talking only about countries that had allegiance to the Commonwealth, but countries that even had wars with the Commonwealth.

That's how much she has been respected and I am glad that I was born in an era to have witnessed it myself. I am also very happy to be able to say that I was one of those children who saw when she visited our Islands.

Mr. Speaker, in an effort to keep this short, I want to say on behalf of the good people whom I represent, and on behalf of my family, I send the greatest sympathy and give my condolences to the Royal Family at this most difficult time. I will never even try to comprehend it, because it's bigger than me, but I would want to share the Leader of Opposition's comments, with respect to sending our confidence in our new Monarch, our new Head—our King.

From the people of George Town Central and the Cayman Islands, I would say: God save the King and long may he reign!

The Speaker: The Honourable Member for Red Bay.

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

Mr. Speaker, at the close of his life, the Apostle Paul wrote to young Timothy: "...**The time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.**" 2 Timothy, 4: 6-8.

Mr. Speaker, as Thursday dawned in Cayman, the UK being six hours ahead, I started to awaken—unfortunately, I sleep with the television on all night—to the early reports that the Queen's doctors had indicated her health was failing and they were concerned about it. Those of us who have been around for a little while know how very discreet, the Palace is, about discussions relating to the health of any of the Royals so I, like many others, I am sure, feared the worst; and when the announcement finally came, Mr. Speaker, I was shaken.

I say, Mr. Speaker, without any exaggeration, that the closest thing I can relate it to was the loss of my own parents when I realised, on my father's death—who was actually the same age as Queen Elizabeth II, both being born in 1926—that I was an orphan. What I mean by that is, Mr. Speaker, the sense that someone who has been there all your life, a rock that you can lean on; a person on whom you can depend... is gone, and Mr. Speaker, for most of us—in fact, I believe for most of the world, we don't know of a time when Queen Elizabeth II was not sovereign, and that is going to take some getting used to.

I have no doubt Mr. Speaker, that His Majesty, King Charles III, will do all he possibly can to emulate his mother. He has said as much, in his handling of the affairs of state and in his recognition and respect for the Constitutional Monarchy that is the United Kingdom. He has had, as has been said here, a long apprenticeship. He is now 73, but I believe the shoes which he has to fill, will be very difficult for any other human being to fill.

Seventy years of service, of sacrifice. Seventy years of conducting herself with impeccable dignity and grace through all of the challenges—and more—than one would come to expect in a life so long lived, and at such a celebrity level. She has seen and experienced tragedy, trauma, sorrow, loss, disappointment, embarrassment, none of which caused by her, but she has steadfastly persevered and conducted herself impeccably. She has been, as His Excellency the Governor said earlier, the greatest diplomat, the United Kingdom has ever known. Her use of soft power requires a skill that no school can teach you, and for those who have paid attention to her life, she did not start out as one very outgoing or articulate sovereign.

A young woman aged 25, her father taken suddenly, while she was away with her husband. She left

Britain as a Princess and returned as Queen Elizabeth II. She too, like all of the rest of us would have had to learn, to grow into the job that she did, and over the span of those seventy years and seven months that she reigned, she grew into the most admired leader the world over; admired by virtually everyone, even shall I say a tyrant like Putin, even he has paid respect to her service.

Thus, Mr. Speaker, as I have said, her passing though inevitable, has left not just the United Kingdom and its territories with a deep sense of loss and feeling of uncertainty but that, Mr. Speaker, is a feeling I believe that pervades much of the world. Her absence from the global stage and therefore the lack of her presence, exercising that quiet power and diplomacy; influencing for the good many a situation, many a quarrel. Someone, Mr. Speaker, is going to have to step up and fill that void.

Mr. Speaker much has been said about many of the things that she has done and been part of, this morning. I have been glued to the television, quite frankly, ever since the first announcements came, and Parliaments all over the world have held sessions such as this, to pay tribute to this incredible woman—this incredible Queen.

Just today, the joint meetings of the House of Lords and the House of Commons did the same and King Charles III was able to address them and to receive their condolences and then later this afternoon in Edinburgh, Scotland they did the same; so Mr. Speaker it is only fitting that we, who are a British Overseas Territory, that today our Parliament does the same.

Mr. Speaker, not much has been said in the recent days since her passing about her incredible role as head of the Commonwealth. Mr. Speaker, to put things in perspective: World War II had ended in 1945, she ascended the throne in 1952. Her late father, King George VI, realising that independence of former colonies would result in a much smaller British Empire, and that the days when it was said that *“the sun never sets on the British Empire”*, were soon coming to a close, had conceived of the idea of the Commonwealth of Nations but, if memory serves me right, at the time of his death in 1952, there were only five or six Commonwealth countries. The Commonwealth has grown to 54 under her leadership.

It is an institution of which she was incredibly proud and extremely concerned about its future. Over the course of her long reign, and in the aftermath of the Second World War, more and more nations—former colonies—sought independence, including in this region; and as those numbers shrunk, the numbers of members of the commonwealth almost correspondingly increased. Mr. Speaker, at the time of her death, she was the Head of State for 15 independent countries. She had been Head of State of a total of 32 countries over the course of her long reign.

Mr. Speaker, when Her Majesty visited the Cayman Islands in 1983 and 1994, I did not encounter

her at all. I was a long ways from this thing called politics and I was too old to still be in school, so I never met her at all, but in the almost eight years that I had the honour and privilege of being Premier, I was in her presence on a number of occasions. The last, Mr. Speaker, was at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in London, in April of 2018.

As president of the British Overseas Territories Association at the time, I had the honour to be invited to the opening ceremony of CHOGM as it is called—the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, at which her Late Majesty delivered the main address. I was struck then, Mr. Speaker, at her concern about the continuity of the Commonwealth of Nations as an institution, for she recognised the way the plates had been shifting around the world, and the concerns that many people had about the continued relevance of the Commonwealth of Nations.

She made the case for why it was still a force for good in an ever-changing world and, in recognition of her age—she didn't say this, but it was clear once you thought about it—she made the case for why Prince Charles as he then was, should be chosen to become the head of the Commonwealth upon her passing. She was, until the very end, I believe, concerned about this institution which had been started by her late father, which she believed so much in, as I said, as a force for good across the world, continuing, and she knew full well the influence her words would have on the Heads of Government, as to who should succeed her as head of that institution.

Mr. Speaker, her loss is incredible, but she lived a long and incredibly productive life. My late father, who was also very philosophical about things used to say to us all the time, laughingly even, the young may die, but the old must and so, Mr. Speaker, we all grieve deeply the loss of someone so incredible—one who has been such a powerful force for good not just in the UK and its territories, but across this world.

We offer condolences to King Charles and all of her children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and wider family, and to our family in the United Kingdom and the other Overseas Territories, but Mr. Speaker, transitions like this must occur. It is the nature of life, the circle of life, and I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that in King Charles III, she has a worthy successor.

I have had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to spend considerable time with Prince Charles as he then was. I still wonder at the amount of time that he was prepared to give [to] the Premier of the Cayman Islands when he was here in 2019. I will be forever grateful to him, and to His Excellency the Governor, and the others who did afford those opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, I spent the best part of two hours with His Excellency the Governor, Martin Roper, and then Prince Charles at Government House, talking about a range of issues that affected not just Cayman and the Overseas Territories and the UK but, more

broadly, issues of climate change and concerns about the environment and various other matters.

I was struck immediately, Mr. Speaker, by his grasp of the issues that the world was confronting, and the fact that he had clearly taken time to be properly briefed on what issues were relevant immediately in Cayman, and to the people of Cayman. He thought deeply about how best to float this idea which he had been pushing, which hadn't really gotten much traction in years past, about developing a blue-green fund to be able to fund environmental projects across the world. He had concluded, based on advice that he had, that doing so through a Cayman funds vehicle, was probably the best way to go about it, and so we spoke about these and other matters at length, Mr. Speaker.

I also accompanied him on visits aside from Grand Cayman, to the Sister Islands Mr. Speaker, and I had the incredible privilege of flying with him and his Excellency the Governor, in one of our new helicopters from Little Cayman, and we landed at Clifton Hunter High School, on the football field. It's one of those experiences which will stay with me forever—seated next to the Prince all the way.

He treated us, here in Cayman, incredibly well. He was more than complimentary about the way that we had received him. He was, he told me, quite overwhelmed by the size of the crowd at Pedro St. James. He thought, he said, that I had organised just a small garden party and you would think he was quite taken aback when he came around the corner and saw the number of people that were seated there.

Mr. Speaker beyond that, in February of 2020 at his request, I led a Cayman delegation made up of myself and some lawyers and local accountants and my team. He invited us to his private residence at Highgrove, where we start for a few hours to talk about and to start to really develop this blue-green Cayman fund, which I am happy to say is now in existence.

Mr. Speaker, I believe those of us who have been watching television from his very first address to the nation following his mother's death would have been moved, incredibly, by how expressive he was of his love and affection for his "darling mama", as he called her. A level of expression of emotion that one normally does not associate with British Royalty, but I think through that, and the number of other speeches that he has made since her passing, it is clear that King Charles III understands what he needs to do to continue this relationship between the royalty and the people, and if I may dare say so, I think he is off to an excellent start.

The feeling and the emotion and expression of the British people, including the Scottish ones so far, has been one of deep-felt appreciation and love for the service of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, but they conclude always with a cheer and God Save the King. They have accepted without question, in my mind, the transition, and I believe that I join with people all across the United Kingdom and the broader world in wishing

King Charles III the very best as he starts out with what is, without question, going to be a very challenging period for however long the Good Lord permits him to reign.

Mr. Speaker, the scenes in Edinburgh today, well, throughout Scotland, really; the travel from Balmoral Castle all the way down has been just... I'm not sure what word I am searching for here, because I keep using incredible, but the Queen and others have obviously planned carefully, very carefully, how all of this would go. The Parliament, the First Minister in Scotland, they were all respectful, full of love and gratitude for the relationship between the Queen in particular, but indeed, the Royal Family and the people of Scotland, but make no bones about it: this is the period of mourning.

There looms the big question of how long Scotland will remain part of the Union and King Charles III will be, God sparing his life, the Sovereign who will have to deal with that, as his dear departed mother had to, when the first Referendum on Independence was held. That is but one example, of the challenges that the new sovereign will face; but he has said Mr. Speaker, and I believe we must believe him, that he, as his mother did before him, will commit the rest of his life to serving the people of the United Kingdom to the very best of his ability.

I believe I can speak for all Members in this Parliament Mr. Speaker, when I say that we wish him all the very best.

God bless the dearly departed Queen.

Long live the King.

The Speaker: Member for West Bay North.

Hon. Bernie A. Bush, elected Member for West Bay North, Minister of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage: Mr. Speaker, I stand in representation of the people of West Bay North in order to offer condolences to the Late Queen's family. Many of us have lost mothers or fathers, some of us both, and it is not a good feeling.

In this time of bereavement, we do wish that God will give them strength.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The Member for North Side.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks, elected Member for North side, Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure: Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness that I stand today on behalf of the people of North Side, and indeed these Islands, to express our deep regret on the passing of Her Majesty.

As the United Kingdom's longest reigning Head of State, Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth II was widely admired around the world for her devotion, dignity and dedication. Her Majesty devoted her whole life to service, which was a promise she made on her 21st birthday in April 1947, while visiting Cape Town, South

Africa. At the time, she said, **"I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong."**

Mr. Speaker, we are forever grateful for her commitment to those words and for her contribution to the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth, and the Overseas Territories. Her Majesty was deeply loved by the people of the Cayman Islands as she so calmly and sincerely demonstrated her respect for us as we managed our own affairs while still being very much a part of the United Kingdom.

My constituency in North Side has very fond memories of her two visits to Grand Cayman, where she conducted official duties accompanied by the late Prince Philip. In particular, in 1983, when she opened the Queen's Highway, the road that connects North Side to East End; and in 1994, when she officially opened the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park, which was named in her honour.

It is often said that heavy is the head that wears the crown; that may be so, Mr. Speaker, but Her Majesty did so with grace and dignity for over seven decades. The world will long remember her lifelong dedication and leadership.

On behalf of the people of North Side, I extend our condolences to the members of the Royal Family. We pray for their comfort as well as the people around the world who mourn her passing at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

May God save the King!

The Speaker: The Member for Cayman Brac East.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, elected member for Cayman Brac East, Minister of Education and District Administration and Lands: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my most sincere condolences on behalf of my Ministry—the Ministry of Education, Lands and District Administration; but in particular on behalf of my constituents of Cayman Brac East and the Sister Islands in general, on behalf of my colleague and friend from Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman.

Mr. Speaker, with your kind permission, I wish to briefly refer to Proverbs 31 commencing verse 10 and thereafter where the proposition was posed:

'Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. She looked well at her household and the bread of idleness she did not eat. Her family rise up and call her blessed and so did her husband who lovingly praised her in public. Many daughters have excelled and done well, but she exceeded them all.' Mr. Speaker, I believe it's no coincidence that she feared the Lord, made it a strong pillar in the foundation of her road to success, and admirably led the Church of England as its Head.

You see, Mr. Speaker, I submit her seventy years will be talked about for many generations to come, within and outside the gates. The Late Queen, as has been noted, was the longest-servant Monarch and indeed, she was a constant—a friend to many nations and leaders. It is said that she reigned over the time for some fourteen United States Presidents and met thirteen of them. As it related to her own country, she had the privilege and honour to humbly lead some fifteen Prime Ministers, from Sir Winston Churchill to the latest—which she carried out her duty admirably with Prime Minister Liz Truss, just a mere two days before her passing from this earth to the celestial realm.

Mr. Speaker, in addition, Her Majesty recognised what it was to "break the glass ceiling", as it were, as a female leader at a time where she had no immediate role models; but because she anchored her determination in the Lord Jesus Christ, I believe I can safely say that she had a majority because with Him all things are possible, and she exceeded many impossibilities in the sight of mankind. I believe that was her greatest accomplishment, and I was very relieved to hear now His Majesty, King Charles III, echo his commitment to the protection of the Church of England and the church generally, in his commencement remarks.

She was an exemplary ambassador for the country, a formidable force, a bonding force, in particular as it related to the Commonwealth and Mr. Speaker, I relate to that intimately. Having served on the executive of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) with the 54 members, I gained a magnificent appreciation for what it meant to have the Queen as the Head of the Commonwealth. There were many arguments and many aspiring to move away from the Commonwealth, but she had a way of quietly and diplomatically ensuring that the Commonwealth family came together and that is exactly what it was.

I say that, Mr. Speaker, because I see myself as a product of the Commonwealth. That's where I learned the parliamentary parlance, parliamentary procedure; and where I gained lifelong friends that we can still call on today—and I am privileged to see one of those friends sitting here today. I shan't call her name, but she knows to whom I refer. Isn't it an awesome God who orchestrates our beings? No one knew that this would occur during the tourism conference. No one knew that we share the same last name, in fact, and she is not Caymanian, she possesses Caymanian status, but that is just an example. I have not been to her country yet, it is on my bucket list.

After 1945, with World War II coming to an end, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's father, the Late King George, saw the need, appreciated the necessity, as the sun began to set on the great United Kingdom as it were, and countries began to mature, assiduously and diligently after gaining independence and becoming Republics, to have a common thread that bound these countries together. I am so glad that she carried on that King George legacy, because many parliaments have

benefited, many parliaments have actually just aspired to keep within the boundaries of democracy. It has been said, Mr. Speaker, that it is not the utopia of governments, indeed it's not even the perfect government, but certainly is the best form of government this side of heaven, and so, Mr. Speaker, I found a deep appreciation—and one may wonder: *how could one person have such an influence?*

As the first woman Minister in this jurisdiction, I remember my very first meeting. I walked into the Cabinet room and there was a majestic picture hung on the wall; it was the Late Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth and I just stood, because I hadn't seen a picture like that in my own home, and admired the way she stood. You know, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I will now reveal a secret publicly: I saw how she stood. Her hand was this way, her left fingers were this way, and from that day to now, when I stand in public for formal photographs or for formal situations, that is the pose I got.

As a young politician I didn't have a personal, one-to-one tutelage from her, but just the way she presented herself... That picture still hangs in the Cabinet room and I am often reminded, when tempers flare as they do in the Westminster adversarial system, that you keep your composure. You keep your poise because the greater good is to leave this country in a better state than we found it, and for that, I publicly wish to thank Her Majesty, the Late Queen Elizabeth II.

Mr. Speaker, I was also indeed extremely privileged to be graced with the honour of being in her presence, speaking with her, shaking her hand, in two occasions: once here, and once in the United Kingdom and I thank you for allowing me the privilege, Mr. Speaker, to attend Her Majesty's mother's funeral in the United Kingdom, as a Cayman Islands' representative.

Mr. Speaker, life has its ebbs and flows, and it is most unfortunate that with His Majesty, King Charles III could not have become King until the passing of the Late Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. However, as I sat glued to the television these past few days trying to see and appreciate what was happening, what impressed me most was that, in her protection and preservation of the Monarchy, self-aggrandising was not her mode of operation. She allowed the Monarch to be greater than herself whereby the transition, sad though it be, is a smooth transition of power.

If we learn nothing else, Mr. Speaker, I pray that all of us Members within the Commonwealth, would look at that. Replay it in our minds; go back to YouTube and see just how smoothly one of the greatest countries still in the world today, was able to take an iconic female leader and grieve and express it with the laying of flowers, with the signing of condolences records, with lining from Balmoral all the way now to London.

Even in these three little jewels in the Caribbean her influence was felt but yet, concurrently, a new, mushrooming appreciation, is beginning to rise for our new Monarch and so, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my

constituents, we wish His Majesty, King Charles III, God's richest blessing, excellent health, and an abundance of wisdom, knowledge and understanding, that he may continue to carry his mother's torch so that all of his subjects can gleefully and gladly say, "Long live King Charles III".

I so submit, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you for allowing this House, these honourable Members, the opportunity. You somehow seem to have the foresight to be able to do the right thing at the right time and this is one such occasion, so may the record accurately show that this was your brainchild—and I thank you.

The Speaker: The Member for East End.

Mr. Isaac D. Rankine, Elected Member for East End: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Pause]

Mr. Isaac D. Rankine: Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise this afternoon to record on behalf of the constituents of East End, just how deeply moved and saddened we are at the passing of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of blessed memory. Her Late Majesty the Queen deserves all the accolades received this afternoon and I wish to thank my honourable colleagues who have already spoken for their sentiments. I can truly say with complete admiration, Mr. Speaker, that I found them truly touching and inspiring.

Mr. Speaker, I was truly shocked and heartbroken when I learned of the passing of the Late Her Majesty the Queen. I was shocked because it was only back in February that I gave my first Queen's speech address, acknowledging her Platinum Jubilee. I could have never thought or imagined that a few months later, the only person I had ever known as "Queen" was no longer in this realm.

During my Queen's speech address, I reminisced on the two visits Her Late Majesty and her late husband Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh—both of blessed memory—made to our shores. As a young boy, in 1983, whilst I do not vividly remember seeing Her Majesty the Queen as she opened the Queen's Highway, I do remember the dramatic improvements the coastal road made for vehicular connectivity between East End and North Side. I can also remember waiting to see Her Late Majesty being driven through East End on her tour.

Mr. Speaker, we reminisce also and what life was like prior to the opening of the Queen's Highway; farmers and other landowners had to rely on access via catboats, walking or riding donkeys to reach their land. With the introduction of the new highway, farmers could access their land much more easily and improved access opened up additional acreage for farming, and land for residential use.

During the 1994 visit, Her Late Majesty and husband also commemorated the 200th Anniversary of the Wreck of the Ten Sails. The faithful event which

took place on the evening of February 8th, 1794—as history has it recorded—when a convoy of ten ships bound for the US and England struck the reefs off East End, and the residents valiantly set out to rescue as many as possible of the ships' passengers and crew. These are memories that are shared amongst the people of the district of East End, and which they hold near and dear to their hearts.

As we remember Her Late Majesty and her seventy years on the Throne, we join in offering our prayers and our best wishes to our new sovereign, His Majesty King, Charles III and all the Royal Family during this time of grief.

Mr. Speaker, His Majesty King Charles III also has great ties to the Cayman Islands. Under his previous Royal Title as Prince of Wales, the then Prince Charles visited in July 1973, acting in the capacity of an Officer on board HMS *Minerva*, and it was reported that he was well received by the public. More recently, on 27th March, 2019, the then Prince Charles and his wife, Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, now the Queen Consort, began a two-day tour that saw them greet hundreds of Cayman residents across all three Islands. It was during this tour that Prince Charles visited Cayman Brac, where he opened the swimming pool, attended a reception with the Governor and the then Premier of the Cayman Islands, and met with members of the community.

Mr. Speaker, it was my distinct pleasure and honour yesterday, to attend the Royal Ascension of King Charles III at Government House. I join in offering prayers for a long and healthy reign as we navigate life with a new Monarch.

All of us in this honourable House grew up knowing only of Her Majesty the Late Queen; we will miss her as our Queen and mourn her loss for a long time. In her memory, we should all challenge ourselves to model our lives after hers—a life of caring about our community, devotion to family, and grounded in faith.

May her soul rest in peace and rise in glory; may God bless these Cayman Islands.

God save the King!

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister for Health, the Member for Prospect.

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

Thank you for pivoting so quickly and arranging this special Sitting of our Parliament.

I rise to join with my colleagues in this honourable House to pay tribute to our much beloved and now departed sovereign, Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and to offer sincere condolences on behalf of my Ministry of Health and Wellness and Home Affairs, but also on behalf of the good people of my constituency, Prospect.

Mr. Speaker, before I proceed any further, I humbly seek your indulgence and thank my colleagues, the honourable Member of East End, Cayman Brac East and all the others who have spoken their sentiments before me. As we just reminisce, it's just amazing to hear our individual contributions, [as we] honestly impart the impact that one individual has left on everybody's lives.

Mr. Speaker, there are very few persons who have been able, in life and in death, to cause the entire world to stop and take notice. As we mourn the loss of our Late Majesty the Queen, we can agree that she was one of those special few individuals God blessed us with. Her legacy spans many pivotal shifts in how the world operated. She ruled through wars, through civil and political unrests, through economic prosperity, and times of poverty. She ruled through the rise of terrorism, epidemics and pandemics. She was indeed a Queen of all ages who was unafraid of changing tides, but instead kept the same stable poise and grace throughout her reign.

Mr. Speaker, she was a leader whose dedication, values and character transcended the rules of time. I think tenderly of His Majesty, King Charles III, and the entire Royal Family at this time, as they braved the media storm while battling their own grief. To us, she was Queen, to them, a loving mother, grandmother and great grandmother—they are human, just like you and I, so I pray that they cling to the special memories that only they possess at this time, of a woman who cherished them dearly, even when the world demanded she shifted her attention.

As I said during our Platinum Jubilee celebrations earlier this year, on this very same Floor, by which it seems only like yesterday, I am greatly inspired by the life of our dear Queen Elizabeth II, as a leader, as a mother, as a wife, and as a person with great allegiance to her country and its people. Her impact has shaped many women like myself, who challenge the status quo for those who cannot speak for themselves.

As I recall being the tender age of eight in 1983 and, in 1994, at the age of 20—you can work out my age, but I do have fond memories of both of those visits to our shores. At age eight, in my primary school uniform, practicing at school how to curtsy, in the event you have that one-on-one personal interaction. I can remember making sure I was in tip-top shape. Then in 1994, I joined the scores of people as we prepared our jurisdiction. I can recall the fresh smell of paint, and watching all the pomp and preparation being made just along Shedden Road. There were even debates—"What roads?"—but the pride that we took awaiting her arrival will resonate with me for the rest of my life.

As the Cayman Islands join the Commonwealth during these sombre days to recognise the Sovereign's contribution to our development as States during her ruling, we cannot take inventory of her achievements without noticing her advocacy for each of her Territories. We will continue to support the Crown, as

His Royal Majesty the King navigates his personal grief and his sovereign duty simultaneously. I convey to His Majesty, King Charles III, the words of Tagor:

**“Say not in grief that she is no more,
but say in thankfulness that she was.
Death is not the extinguishing of a light,
but the putting out of the lamp
because the dawn has come.”**

This is a bittersweet time for His Royal Majesty the King as he embarks on, and embraces his new role. May he lead with the same dignity, poise and grace as his mother, built on the strong foundation and principles of her tenure.

I am honoured to have borne witness of Her Late Majesty's work in my lifetime, and while she now takes well-deserved rest, she will certainly not be forgotten. She was a lady of humility. She was humble and wise. She brought so much confidence to the institution, but mostly, she ruled honourably and dignifiedly, giving a lifetime of service as she vowed from the very onset of her reign.

On behalf of the good people of the Prospect constituency, may she rest in peace, and God save the King!

The Speaker: The Member for South George Town South.

Ms. Barbara E. Conolly, Elected Member for George Town South: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay my respects on the passing of Her Majesty, the Late Queen Elizabeth II. I do this with a heavy and grateful heart, not only on behalf of myself, but on behalf of my family and my constituents of George Town South.

In remembering Her Majesty, I am struck not only by her long years of service to the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth, and the Overseas Territories and her unwavering commitment and duty to her country; but also, her ability to change and adapt over a reign that lasted for seventy years.

Her Majesty served not only as our sovereign, Mr. Speaker, but as the role model in which all persons who are in service to people and country should aspire. Her Majesty's life reminds us of the responsibility that comes with a promise of service made to others, her life and works reflecting with grace and dignity in every way, the vow that she had taken.

Mr. Speaker, I am and will always be in awe of Her Majesty's accomplishments which include, but are certainly not limited to:

- Her service in World War II;
- The calm, steady approach she brought during turbulent national periods;
- Her key and crucial role in the Commonwealth;
- Her role in the modernisation of the Monarchy;

- Her tireless charity work—raising over 1.5 billion for over 500 different charities over the course of her reign;
- Her support of racial justice in the Commonwealth; and
- What may be her greatest accomplishment, in being the longest-reigning Monarch in British history.

She served as a pillar of experience and strength to fifteen British Prime Ministers, from Winston Churchill—the Minister to whom she often gave credit for her political education—to the current Prime Minister, Liz Truss.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Her Majesty for the lasting imprint she left on these Islands, coming twice during her long reign to open our sports facilities, parks, highways, and our special Pines Retirement Home with great pride, but also by touching the Cayman Islands people as she accepted their bouquets, shook their hands, listened to their stories and in doing so, forever had their hearts.

Mr. Speaker, I will always carry with me the example that Her Majesty set as a woman, as a person in service to others, and as a mother, grandmother and great grandmother. Her Majesty led a life of service and she was a humanitarian; so much of her example is needed in the world today. She was respected and loved all over the world. I will always hold close to me, her words—and this has been said many times throughout the tributes delivered here this afternoon: **“I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong.”** It was a promise that she kept over more than seventy years.

Mr. Speaker, let Her Majesty's life encourage us to emulate her compassion and commitment at every opportunity. Her legacy will live on forever.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself, my family and my constituents, I wish to express heartfelt condolences to the Royal Family at this very, very sad, and difficult time.

May God bless the Late Queen Elizabeth II, may God bless these Cayman Islands, and I wish His Majesty, Charles III, a long and successful reign.

God save the King!

The Speaker: The Member for West Bay Central.

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks, Deputy Speaker, Elected Member for West Bay Central: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is with deep sorrow that I rise today to pay tribute to Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, on behalf of the people of West Bay Central.

This Sitting is very special, as we, the Members of Parliament of the Cayman Islands are able to pay tribute and also offer condolences to our new

sovereign, King Charles III, and I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for making these arrangements.

While learning of her passing, I was shaken and even a bit shocked, as it was only a few days prior to her death that we watched her receive her new Prime Minister, Ms. Liz Truss. This was, to me, such a powerful statement of true leadership. Our Late Queen passed only after she had received her new Prime Minister. It is beyond question that she served us with dignity and grace with her calming spirit, and she served right until the very end.

She reigned, as many Members have said today, with humility, despite her significant achievements and recognition. Her Late Majesty was a symbol of what leading with grace and integrity represents because she became a Queen at such a young age and the world knew very little about her personality and views before her ascension, and she continued to reveal very little thereafter.

She never uttered a controversial opinion in public, though supporters and critics would differ over whether it was simply because she had no opinion or whether she was a master of political neutrality. She once said, **"Of course, in this existence, the job and the life go together—you really can't divide it up."** UNVERIFIED QUOTE

To some extent, the person and the position were one and the same, yet not entirely. She kept much back. Though the masses caught an occasional glimpse of the private woman, she remained largely an enigma and will do so until the diaries, which in royal tradition she wrote daily, are made public.

Mr. Speaker, while attending the gun salute, I thought about those seventy years of service and what it must have been like for her. From all indications, she was a committed wife, a loving mother, a caring grandmother, and a passionate great grandmother and certainly, she was a Royal—an incomparable Head of State. To us as an Overseas Territory, she is our Queen, but to the world she is The Queen, and her death has created an emptiness in this world.

Her character was beyond reproach and the high standards she has said is worthy to emulate. Her desirable characteristics translated into her shaping what the Monarchy is, and how it is perceived today. The attributes and traits she possessed made her the anchor of the Monarchy. Her values and principles should be the road map and guide for all of us to follow, not to mention her loyalty to service and the respect she showed to all, are most admirable.

Our late Queen exhibited passion, and was the essence of love, and symbolised care for all human beings throughout her service. She has transcended time and made a significant and profound impact over the span of her reign; this is why she was revered internationally. She had the interest of all humans in all parts of the globe at heart. She was undeniably affectionate as her love was felt deeply and widespread. Her Late Majesty was an extraordinary queen who had a keen

sense of duty and responsibility. She was the heart of the United Kingdom and the wider Commonwealth community.

As a Member of this honourable House, representing the constituency of West Bay Central and the wider Cayman Islands, I solemnly share in expressing sincere condolences to our new Monarch, King Charles III and the Royal Family members, and by extension all the people of the United Kingdom.

We thank Almighty God for granting our Queen a long life. Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her.

God save the King!

The Speaker: The Member for Savannah.

Ms. Heather D. Bodden, Elected Member for Savannah: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to convey our most profound condolences on the passing of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. On behalf of the Commonwealth, the Cayman Islands, and more intimately, my constituents of the Savannah community, my family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, last week, September 8th, what began as a normal Thursday came abruptly to a halt for the world as an outpouring of prayers began for our beloved Queen having learned she suffered from an illness setback; because we watched her for most of our lives, I am sure many of us expected that she would rally through with unwavering strength and make a speedy recovery. Prayers continued throughout the day, but sadly, by the close of the day, her Late Majesty passed away peacefully to join her beloved Prince. At that moment, for many of us, the impact of devastation and grief was the same as losing one of our family members.

Mr. Speaker, the sudden death of Her Late Majesty reminds us that life is short and we must devote our moments of cherishing and spending time with those we love and focus on things we view as the most important. It is our purpose. I am sure we will continue to spend the remainder of our days with the Queen ever present in our hearts and minds.

Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II embodied the noblest values of society and was truly a foundation stone for the Monarchy. She was the epitome of distinguished leadership, offering precise insight, wisdom, grace, and humility, all with unyielding devotion to her undertakings, and as she promised, serving until the very end, Mr. Speaker—and she did.

During difficult times in this rapidly changing world, she always reminded us of encouragement and to stand firm and tall, as we press forward to run the good race. She was a Godly woman who remained grounded in her faith. She was admired by all and loved the world over. As we continue to see her portraits displayed throughout the world, her presence will resonate and her spirit guide us forever.

Now Mr. Speaker, as her son, His Majesty King Charles III steps into his role, his purpose, may he trust in the one living God and God alone to lead and direct as he, as the Monarchy, moves forward and make the Queen's legacy, and memory, be an everlasting blessing to us all.

God save the King!

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The Member for West Bay South, the Minister of Financial Services.

Hon. André M. Ebanks, elected Member for West Bay South, Minister of Financial Services and Commerce and Investment, Innovation and Social Development: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to record a brief tribute to Her Late Majesty the Queen, of blessed memory, on behalf of West Bay South and on behalf of the Ministries for which I have responsibility.

I rise, Mr. Speaker, with equal measures of sadness on one hand and inspiration on the other. Sadness, Mr. Speaker, which I see, first-hand, is felt locally; but I also had an opportunity to see it is felt internationally.

For example, Mr. Speaker, you and I were both in attendance at John Gray Memorial Church service yesterday, in which part of the service observed one minute of silence for Her Late Majesty. As part of the service, I was invited to read the first set of scriptures; before doing so I thanked Reverend [Donovan] Myers and the church, for that moment of silence, and before reading the scripture, I could look across the faces of the congregation and see genuine sadness, genuine feelings of being torn at the seismic event. Mr. Speaker, I was able to see similar reactions internationally.

As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, I had the honour last week to lead a delegation of about a dozen public servants to Nicaragua to update the Financial Action Task Force on our progress on anti-money laundering. Our meeting with the FATF Joint group just happened to be on Thursday, at 2:00pm so, prior to lunch we were in deep preparations as a team before going into that meeting, and around midday, everyone's phones got the same flash that Her Majesty had passed.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have all been part of meetings with these devices where news flashes, there is a momentary pause, we all look at each other for a second and say, "*Oh; well, that's a shame*", but then proceedings move on, and we don't mean to be disrespectful, it doesn't have the same magnitude; but, in these proceedings, we could not continue to work. Here we were, in intense preparation and focus, yet everyone had to stop. Everyone felt that they had to message at least one other person to say, "Have you heard this?" Everyone felt that they had to say a few words. It's one of those events, Mr. Speaker that I think you'll go back in history and say, "where were you when this happened?" That's how large, how enormous it was.

After a few moments we were able to gather ourselves and transported to the meeting with the FATF, but even then, after collecting ourselves, we were reminded again because, before the proceedings started with the FATF, the joint Chairs of the meeting each looked at me as Minister, and said, "*On behalf of all of this regional group, we want to convey condolences through you, Minister, through the Cayman Islands, and onward to the UK on this morning's development*", and every one of the countries in attendance that were there to examine us, each bowed their heads. That showed me all the evidence I needed to see, of the impact and the respect of our Late Majesty.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why I say inspiration on the other hand is because, even though it was sad, it stiffened our resolve to convey our points on our progress passionately, persuasively, yet with Her Majesty's dignity. I think that is her legacy, Mr. Speaker, and I hope and pray we did Her Late Majesty proud of the way we, as a team, conducted ourselves to honour her on that day.

Mr. Speaker, I also think it is fitting as other Members have, to say a few brief words of encouragement to our new king, King Charles III.

Mr. Speaker, as fate would have it, I'm in the middle of a book about former US President Harry Truman, in which he had to follow large shoes in the passing of the four-term Franklin Delano Roosevelt. As he tells it, he arrived to pay his first initial respects on his passing; and to offer words of comfort to Ms. Eleanor Roosevelt, he said, "*Is there anything that I can do for you?*" Ms. Eleanor, apparently without missing a beat said, "*No, Mr. President, is there anything I can do for you, because you are the one who is in trouble now.*"

[Laughter]

Hon. André M. Ebanks: So, if such is the impact and the weight that is going to be on a successor's shoulders after four terms of a US presidency, imagine the weight that will be on the shoulders of a new Monarch of an entire Commonwealth; so we pray, dear Lord, to grant King Charles III, wisdom and poise, and the same level of dignity in public service that his mother exuded.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of West Bay South, on behalf of the Ministries I have responsibility for, and honouring all of what has been said today by all Members, and [thanking you,] Mr. Speaker for making these arrangements, may Her Late Majesty the Queen, of blessed memory, rest in peace and God save the King!

The Speaker: The Member for Bodden Town East.

Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour, Elected Member for Bodden Town East: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to give my remarks on behalf of the people of Bodden Town and in particular, Mr. Speaker, Bodden Town East, the largest constituency

and first capital. I also would like to welcome our guests from overseas who have since departed the Halls.

As we honour the life of the Queen and in my honourable opinion, she was a beacon of the world, and as we see, the whole world is mourning. One of my personal desires, Mr. Speaker, especially as an elected Member of Parliament, was to meet the Queen, as she reminded me, like many have said before like my grandmother. I can only imagine the sadness of the Monarch, King Charles III, Prince William, Prince Harry, and the deep bond they held. I offer my sincere condolences to all the Royal Family, and I say to them Psalms 34:18: ***“The Lord is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.”***

Mr. Speaker, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II visited the Cayman Islands twice and with all the anticipation, fanfare, and excitement, we can wholeheartedly say the Cayman Islands loved their Queen.

Our official National Anthem was first performed in London in September, 1745, coincidentally to a pretender to the British Throne, Prince Charles Edward Stuart, and two hundred and seventy-seven years later, the actual words stayed true to our 96-year-old, Her Majesty The Queen:

*Long live our noble Queen,
long to reign over us*

And that, she did. The Queen dedicated her life to many initiatives throughout her long life, but the most important to me was her dedication in her personal faith in God. She made no secret of her reliance on the Bible and her faith in Christ being the primary source of the quiet strength behind the Crown. She carried out her duties with poise and grace, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I may add, of the average global population of the world in 2019, 26 per cent of the world was younger than 14; 8 per cent were older than 65, while half of the world's working population is in the bracket of 25-65 years old, so it's safe to say that more than 50 per cent of the world knows no other Queen or King than Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

I was fortunate enough, Mr. Speaker, to have met then Prince Charles, now King Charles, a few years ago in 2019 as I gave a speech as the Minister of Environment at the Queen's Botanical Park at North Side. After I spoke at the time, Prince Charles and I spoke at length, as he was interested in what we were doing here in Cayman as Minister of Environment. He was very interested, particularly, on the Ministry's initiative in increasing the Marine Parks, and I watched intently his interaction and love for our precious blue iguanas. My children, Tahiti and Dior, also shook his hand at that event.

Mr. Speaker, it has long been acknowledged by political leaders and commentators all over the world that the Queen handled her often difficult and delicate constitutional role with grace and remarkable, even formidable, political skill. Her wisdom and unseasoned

sense of duty meant she was widely viewed with a combination of respect, esteem, awe and affection which transcended nations, classes and generations. She was proud of Britain and its people, but yet in the end, Mr. Speaker, she belonged to the world and the world will mourn her.

How can we forget, Mr. Speaker, that she was an experienced car mechanic with the Auxiliary Territorial Service? The Women's Army Service meant that she could legitimately claim to have participated in what has been called the People's War. This experience gave her a more naturally common touch than any other of her predecessors had displayed. The world's Queen indeed, Mr. Speaker. The people mourn the loss. May her soul rest in peace.

Long live our King. We wish you success in your reign.

God Bless.

The Speaker: The Honourable Deputy Governor.

The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

It is with a heavy heart that I rise this afternoon to record on behalf of the civil service and the wider public service just how deeply moved and saddened we are at the passing of our Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Our much-loved Queen deserves all the accolades received this afternoon, and I wish to thank my honourable colleague from Bodden Town East for his eloquent speech.

It is on behalf of all of us in the Cayman Islands public service that I express my deepest condolences to the Royal Family, and to the government and people of the United Kingdom on the passing of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. The Cayman Islands public service has been steadfast in carrying out our charge of being in Her Majesty's service, and throughout her reign we have maintained an abiding respect and sincere affection for the Monarch.

Mr. Speaker, Her Late Majesty set the standard for public service and love of country. Her sense of duty, her good humour, her ability for reconciliation and compassion are unmatched. She was the best of us. Her commitment to duty was such that we believed that it would never come to an end. She was a remarkable Monarch.

Mr. Speaker in 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 crisis, I often wondered whether we would overcome the crisis. It was the words of Her Late Majesty that gave me comfort and helped inspire me. She said, "Coronavirus will not overcome us; as dark as death can be, particularly, to those suffering from grief, light and life are greater." Mr. Speaker, light does overcome darkness, and Her Late Majesty was correct. The Cayman Islands and the world overcame the darkness of COVID-19 and today we live in a bright light, although that light has been dulled by her passing.

Mr. Speaker, while I did not have the high honour of meeting Her Late Majesty, I met King Charles III when he visited our beloved Islands with his loving wife, the Queen Consort, in 2019. I was struck by his sense of duty and his love and care for the environment.

Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of the swearing in of the new Parliament early last year, Members of this honourable House took an oath to bear true allegiance to Her Majesty. We could never have envisaged that today, we would have a new oath of allegiance. Mr. Speaker, in closing, allow me to read our new oath:

I, Franz Manderson, do swear
that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to
His Majesty, King Charles III,
his heirs and successors
according to law, so help me God.

Mr. Speaker, may Her Late Majesty rest in peace.

God save the King!

The Speaker: The Honourable Attorney General.

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thanks to all honourable Members who have gone before and have spoken so eloquently and understandably.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a deep sense of sadness that I pay this tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Sir, as realists, really, we all know the inevitability of death, but for some of us, myself included, we somehow wished for a different outcome in this case.

Her Majesty was a quintessential monarch embodying a life of quiet dignity, civility, grace and commitment to public service. For many, she personified stability and continuity. She was an exemplary leader of the commonwealth who, through the years, has evolved into one of the world's most consequential leaders. She was the kind of leader that epitomizes great strengths and character—especially, Mr. Speaker, in times of great adversity.

Mr. Speaker, the enormity of her reign is best contextualised when it is considered that, as reported, more than 80 per cent of the UK's current population lived their lives with Her Majesty as the Queen. No doubt, sir, this puts into focus the remarkableness of the institutional nature of her reign. Her death, her passing impacts us directly, as it has impacted the rest of the world, in large or in small ways.

Mr. Speaker, you heard others speak about some of the changes but some of these changes will include for example: the Oath—as has just been taken by the honourable Deputy Governor; our envelopes, Mr. Speaker, our stationery. The prayers that we say in this Parliament, the title carried by some public office holders, among others things—things, Mr. Speaker, we have all grown accustomed to and took for granted over the decades, all now will change and so, Mr. Speaker,

we need not look far to understand the longevity of her reign.

Mr. Speaker, Her Late Majesty always had that ability to connect and understand people's circumstances. She at all times went about her role with a sense of purpose and quiet dignity. It should, therefore, come as no surprise that the late Her Majesty The Queen was so well loved and admired worldwide, as evidenced, Mr. Speaker. This became clear because of the overwhelming global outpouring of grief and sorrow at her passing.

Mr. Speaker, I had the good fortune, indeed the great privilege, of meeting and speaking with our Late Majesty during the celebration of the 800 Anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta on the 23rd February, 2015 at a reception hosted by her at Buckingham Palace. I was struck by her warmth and sincerity and the earnestness, Mr. Speaker, with which he asked me about the welfare of the Cayman Islands and its people. Indeed, Sir, no one will deny that her Late Majesty was a model public servant, greatly admired for her deep and abiding faith, a quiet dignity, and dignified composure. Even amidst the most unsettling events, she was always stoic and was a calming voice; may her soul rest in peace, and her memory live on in our hearts.

In closing Mr. Speaker, I offer my deepest condolences to the Royal Family as I pay my respect to the new king, King Charles III.

God save the King!

The Speaker: The Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move a Motion to send the messages that have been so eloquently articulated here this afternoon to His Majesty the King, Charles III; but Mr. Speaker before doing so, I would like to join in thanking the Governor, yourself and all colleagues, for the very poignant and heartfelt tributes and reflections that have been expressed here this afternoon. All, Mr. Speaker I have been very fitting, very positive and, certainly, one could never be accused of exaggeration.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard people talk about their experiences and the times in which Her Majesty visited the Cayman Islands, and where they were and what they did. We heard the Member from West Bay South express the circumstances in which he found himself at the time of her passing, and the fact that so many representatives of countries asked him to pass on their condolences through him to the Cayman Islands in particular.

Mr. Speaker, we had the Member from Red Bay, if I may be able to refer to him by his title and name, Sir Alden, certainly, in the blink of an eye, went from his title of Queen's Counsel (QC) to King's Counsel (KC). All of these things, Mr. Speaker, happened very quickly and we have certainly had positive expressions made her this afternoon and I think all have done

an excellent job in representing their own personal views, the views of the people of the country and, in particular, the views of the constituents that they each represent—and I am particularly proud of the way they have done so, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, thank you again for organising this meeting, as has been noted. It was certainly a great opportunity and one which I know you pushed and you cajoled until it happened, so thank you for that and given the circumstances, it has worked out very well and it was very nice of us to be able to have our visiting guests.

MOTION TO SEND MESSAGES FROM MEMBERS TO HIS MAJESTY, KING CHARLES III

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Mr. Speaker, with that being said, I move a motion as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House do herewith agree to send the gracious messages from the Members of the Cayman Islands Parliament as recorded this 12th day of September 2022, to His Majesty, King Charles III.

The Speaker: Before taking the Motion let me say too, I thank you all for your contributions so eloquently given. The genuineness and sincerity with which I feel they have been given; and, especially, your being here with a sense of duty and respect.

I also want to thank the Cabinet Office and the Protocol officers for doing such an outstanding job at such a short notice. I do thank His Excellency the Governor for his organisation of the State events under his remit. I do want to also thank Pastor Gary Haylock for his prayers.

The question then is: **BE IT RESOLVED** that this Honourable House do herewith agree to send the gracious messages from the Members of the Cayman Islands Parliament as recorded this 12th day of September 2022, to His Majesty, King Charles III.

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Motion passed.

The Speaker: The adjournment, Honourable Premier.

ADJOURNMENT

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. With all that being said, it is only

left for me to move the adjournment of this honourable House sine die.

The Speaker: The question is that this Honourable House do now adjourn sine die. All those in favour, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it. This honourable House stands adjourned sine die.

At 6:26 p.m. the House adjourned sine die.