

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT EXCERPT**  
**THIRD MEETING 2019/2020 SESSION**  
**THURSDAY**  
**30 JANUARY 2020**  
**11:14 AM**  
*First Sitting*

**READING BY THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER OF  
MESSAGES  
AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**The Speaker:** Honourable Members, today we meet for the first time in this Assembly for this New Year. On entering this New Year, 2020, I would think there were many who sat on the threshold of this year thinking: What of this New Year, this new decade?

On awaking Tuesday morning, how many thought—what awaits my day? And, as the day wore on, how many were struck by the thought of an earthquake? How many were just caught with a fright? And, how many of our people panicked?

I was in a restaurant at 2:10 pm, and when it hit, we just shut down, and, realising the quake, we rushed outside, as did the whole restaurant. It was like pandemonium; the world coming to an end. People looked in amazement as the drains spewed out its guts and on the road, traffic was like “we have to move and move now”, but ever, ever so slowly, going into Town on West Bay Road, and from Town going east, the same—chock-a-block—three hours in traffic going right, left, north, south, east and west in this town. There was no order, as people rushed to get children and to get where they needed to be. It was not the usual rush hour.

On my property, a 31 foot, 9 inch sink-hole with 23 feet of water and one 12 foot, but there was no other damage.

In all this, we don't need to ask, we don't need to ponder our God. There is a God and our God is real. His mercies are real and new every morning.

So colleagues, in this New Year, we as Members have every reason to stop and think just what kind of country we live in and how Almighty God has blessed us. No doubt, as Members of this honourable House, we are challenged but we ought not to take the challenges to tear each other apart. We must recognise that there are those on Facebook, on social media otherwise, doing that for us. Every time I think of the challenges we face as an Assembly, as a government, I think of the cures. I think of my responsibility to help build and not to tear down. Every time I am challenged by something someone else did, and I am tempted to respond in kind, I tend to come back to the realities: This is my Island, our Island in the sun and if I respond in kind, where then will it end? We are here

to do the people's work, not to fight or pick battles that do us no good thing.

Let us not waste our energies on petty battles. There are many issues for us to contemplate and find the answers to and for us to give the Government (that is, ourselves) the right hand of friendship and the pat on the back saying, *I know your perplexities, I will give you my support to move forward, or I will stand by your need to stand up against, if that is what is needed*; whether that is an issue of social or infrastructure development, or the good governance we are asked to establish in law for ourselves, or the moral questions we are now called to legislate. I think we can settle, especially moral perplexities, by doing the best that we can and waiting for further revelations of truth. Lincoln said, *“I will always do the best I can. You ought to do the best you can and if you do the best you can, and I do the best I can, then the world will be all right.”* [UNVERIFIED QUOTE]

Stresses we had on Tuesday on our building code, we recognise what they are. I do recall how much we were criticised for it, and I say, in all our challenges, we ought not to overly criticise for the sake of our own aggrandisement and political gain. The work that our Administration must do—and if we are tempted so to do—we can see that there are sufficient examples of things that have been criticised in our Islands that have proven to be exactly what it was said it would do by the Government. There is no greater example, because as I said, of the stress that we had on Tuesday, than our building code.

I do recall just how much the Planning Department and the Government were cursed for implementing our current building codes. I have been here that long. Our people ought to take stock for something that was cursed and an administration that was accused, oh so much, of putting into place a system (and you have heard these words a lot) to hinder Caymanians and make foreigners and ourselves (meaning, Elected Members) rich. You heard that. That is what we are being accused of. But that has been debunked—*debunked*, I say—by the 7.7 earthquake that hit us on Tuesday, with rarely any structural damage, that should prevail hard on the minds of us Caymanians, that what was done in implementing our building code was good for our Islands, and especially good for Caymanians.

In closing this message to you, Honourable Members, let me say in the most sincere way, I know that the vast majority of us as Members here, have

today, a legacy of service to humanity and compassion to our people. I know too, that when you search through social media in particular, you will not see that. You will not hear it from those who have their political agenda.

Yesterday, some Members of this honourable House were out in their constituencies giving assistance. What was the complaint? Photos! This is the mind-set of our people and we ought to say so because it is wrong. So, while we are accused, the facts are showing differently and rather than our accusers doing nothing to lead to a new dawn, they are busy doing what they accuse the Elected Assembly of; the entrenchment of old practices: accuse, belittle, black-guard and lie.

I will further say that our public ought to be more than careful, wary—*more than wary*—as the many complaints and talk of being young, and us being too old is not the panacea for political governance in our Islands with the challenges we face. Work, work, work, not make believe, is the order of the day.

As we enter a new decade in this our first Meeting for the year, let us call on our good common sense. Let us be thankful for the strides we have made as a country; be mindful that a pack of lies hurt the nation. It is easy to lie, defame and accuse but good, positive results of the challenges we face will only come from hard work, not talk—not talk on Facebook or under the almond tree.

Let us think of where we are. Just think how fortunate, how blessed we have been, that we were hit by a 7.7 on the scale and we lost no life. No buildings collapsed. Haiti was hit by a 6 and lost 250,000 lives, so we ought to think. We ought to think about so many things, but we have to be thankful. This did not come per chance because we have cared. We have had the foresight to build right and who was it for?—our own people because that is who we are building for.

May our young people, from early childhood to university, form experiences that will shape their consciences to encourage them to be more tolerant, more compassionate; friendly, family oriented without becoming a parent far too early. Be productive, be patriotic, be cooperative, and be law-abiding and self-reliant. It is what I want of my grand-children who are in college and high school, and it is what I want for the youth of this country.

Colleagues, I say all of this not because I want to seek any higher office, and let me debunk that; I am not. I say all this because of what I see, not that I am seeking to be Premier, God knows—and let me debunk that—not this McKeeva Bush. I turned 65 last Monday; do you think I want to face that as the Premier or as a Member of Cabinet? I say to my people: Not me. Oh, I will strive for the next seat, and I hope they carry that one. I will, God's willing, but not to be in Cabinet. So, let me say that to one and all. I say all that because I do want a Government of the

people, by the people, for the people and that hope, that hope of mine, is self-evident in our group in this House.

I know there are hopefuls out there. I am not saying, and let us get this clear; I am not saying that there are not good people out there, I say my hope is self-evident that we have good enough people on both sides, to carry the load that we need to carry, but we are going to have to do some of the things that I said here. Be supportive of each other.

I say all this too because I am the Speaker of this Assembly, for which agreement has been reached for it to be the Parliament of the Cayman Islands, and if we have not or cannot reach this kind of maturity that I am talking about, then when shall we? We have much to be thankful for and many that we owe thanks to—a good Civil Service. Thanks to the many government departments that responded so quickly and efficiently yesterday. I am not saying you cannot find fault honourable Members, I suspect you will, but we must give thanks where thanks are due. The civil service did well and is doing well. There is much being done for our people, that is not given credit and complainers continue. Just yesterday we heard GIS report that they had briefed over 2000 students about emergencies, earthquakes, et cetera. Nobody knew that, nobody heard it. Students heard it and so we give thanks to the Government and civil servants, as they are doing a lot for our people.

May God continue to bless our people again and again and may God continue to bless this House and our families. And, if you thought that my message was too long, just think on what I have said.

**An Hon. Member:** Well said!

*[Clapping and desk thumping]*