



THRONE SPEECH 2016

Delivered by

His Excellency Governor, Dr. John Freeman, CMG

On the Occasion of the Opening of the

**Of the First Session of the 11th Legislature of the House of Assembly
of the Turks and Caicos Islands**

Thursday, 29 December 2016

Opening Sentences

His Honor the Speaker, His Lordship the Acting Chief Justice, Hon. Premier and her Cabinet, Hon Leader of the Opposition and honorable members of the Opposition, Hon. Appointed members, Commissioner of Police, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, distinguished and honored overseas guests, other invited guests in the Gallery and members of the Clergy.

Mr. Speaker, my Government is committed to the advancement of the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands in freedom, equality and with justice for all and will work hard to ensure that this is achieved.

My Government has set as its top immediate priorities the growth and expansion of our economy for the benefit of all along with the creation of jobs and poverty reduction, crime and policing, immigration and youth.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

My Government believes that planning, enforcement and empowerment are the pillars on which we must build the Turks and Caicos Islands that we wish to see. Resources are critical to advancing any plans and my Government intends to be careful and strategic in its use of the country's resources. To this end, my Government remains committed to the drafting and implementation of a National Development Plan with national goals that all can unite around. My Government is committed to continuing the initiative undertaken by CDB to create a Vision Station for Medium Term Development Strategy and hope to continue consultations with a view to its completion by late Summer 2017.

Repositioning TCI for Growth

My Government is committed to repositioning the economy for growth through new investments, traditional and new sectors, revival of stalled projects where possible and support for small business. My Government is committed to marketing TCI as open for business and where persons can do business in an investor-friendly environment. These are immediate strategies to be employed by my Government.

Special Support for Small Business

Mr. Speaker, my Government will have an unwavering commitment to diversifying the TCI economy, through to the growth and development of small businesses across all sectors and all genders with particular emphasis on Women and Youth- Owned businesses. My Government considers this sector the engine of sustainable growth now and indeed into the future. Anyone travelling throughout this beautiful archipelago, is moved by the creativity and resilience of the small business sector and my Government will seek to strengthen this entrepreneurial spirit by creating an enabling environment not only for investors to do business, but also to ease the burden of doing business for micro, small and medium local business owners. Whilst my Government is grateful for the efforts of Invest TCI and the Centre for Entrepreneurial Development in supporting this sector, my Government is also mindful of the challenges of the present SME Ordinance as echoed by MSMEs and is committed to reviewing the Ordinance taking into consideration known concerns and development goals.

TCI Private-Public Business Forum

My Government through the Ministry of Finance will co-ordinate activities of the Turks and Caicos Islands Government (TCIG) and the private sector agencies to improve the business enabling environment throughout the country and will aim to encourage various sectors to form themselves into groups/associations for furtherance of shared goals.

My Government believes that this will provide a platform for effective open and candid dialogue between the business community and Government, facilitating information-sharing and a better understanding of respective contributions that will support and promote policy initiatives of common issues and complementary interests.

The objectives for this platform will be as follows:

- (1) To bring together the different groups, public and private and use the forum as a mechanism for sharing ideas amongst stakeholders toward the implementation of sustainable strategies and initiatives that are feasible and align with Government policy.
- (2) To provide feedback on various Government policies affecting the private sector with cross-sector or/and multi-stakeholder coverage.
- (3) To provide feedback on draft Government laws and regulations that could affect the private sector.
- (4) To support and encourage investigation and research into problems relating to doing business with the aim of removing the barriers that businesses face regarding entry and exit.
- (5) To promote and support key sectors and industries which are viable in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Initial Review of the Capital/Development Programme

My Government will continue the support for a review of the Capital/Development Programme and move this exercise to a Final Report as a matter of urgency.

Business Transformation Project

My Government will continue the support for the Business Transformation Project in an effort to make TCI a more business friendly environment. My Government is committed to streamlining processes and to ensuring that all systems and laws are adhered to as it relates to employment. My Government will ensure that staffing plans are current and updated and that our people are positioned to be a part of the growth. We are committed to ensuring that there is fair treatment and opportunity on the job for the people of the Islands.

Service Charge Review

My Government remains committed to the Service Charge Review and have received its initial Report. My Government expects recommendations for the enforcement to follow shortly.

Settlement for the Repurchase of the TOLCO Non-performing loan portfolio and Home Ownership.

My Government remains committed to providing relief for those whose properties are in foreclosure and will make immediate steps to address those affected under the Agreement of TOLCO.

My Government is pleased to say that at its first Cabinet Meeting we will have included on our Agenda a Paper to waive the stamp duty for first time home owners.

Establishment of an Inland Revenue Department or Revenue Authority

My Government is committed to identifying new streams of revenue that will not be a further burden on the people of these Islands and are equally committed to the enforcement and collection of existing taxes. My Government will create an Inland Revenue Department or Revenue Authority with a view to establishing a one stop environment for persons to conduct related business with TCIG and pay for services, taxes, etc. This initiative would provide the Ministry of Finance with more autonomy over revenue collection and strengthen the authority/powers of the Revenue Department.

Exchange of Information

My Government will continue to support initiatives that keep us in good standing internationally and will support the work of the Exchange of Information Unit. Of immediate concern for my Government is Beneficial Ownership and a Central Registry which is a live issue with the UK and CDOT's. My Government will keep our people informed on this issue as it develops.

Review of Statutory Bodies and Full Financial Report

My Government will conduct an initial review of the Statutory Bodies and will present a full report on these Bodies together with a full report on the state of finances during the next meeting of the House of Assembly. My Government is committed to openness, transparency and accountability and these will be among the tenets of my Government.

CRIME AND POLICING

My Government remains steadfast in upholding the rule of law and is committed to the fight against crime.

My Government will ensure that the fight against crime is given national priority.

My Government recognizes the need for manpower, equipment and training for our Police Force and equally recognizes the need for the best possible working relationship between the Police and its greatest partners in crime fighting, the people of these Islands. My Government will therefore do what it can to assist in enhancing this relationship.

My Government recognizes that the matter of crime is bigger than every individual, bigger than any political party or institution and requires all hands on deck.

My Government will make strong representations to the governing bodies and will encourage the focus of our resources on prevention and intervention with a strong focus on enforcement and rehabilitation.

My Government believes that its 12 Point Plan sets the basis for a comprehensive National Security Strategy and will commit to resourcing and agitating for a comprehensive National Security Plan.

MINISTRY OF BORDER CONTROL AND EMPLOYMENT

My Government is committed to providing the resources necessary to create a safe and secure Turks and Caicos society where citizens, residents and visitors alike are able to carry out the normal routines of caring for their families, conducting successful businesses and enjoying the simple pleasures of what the Turks and Caicos Islands has to offer.

It is my Government's firm belief that when the country's borders are strengthened, the Island's reputation as a safe haven for persons who seek to abuse our system, and persons who do not bring benefits to our country, will change for the better, and change for the better it must.

To achieve this, my Government will start by establishing in concrete terms who are the current inhabitants of this country. Towards this end we will capture key information about all persons, including their skills, as well as their immigration status in the Islands, and store it in a manner that is easy to retrieve and accessible to agencies that require them to perform their duties to society, effectively and efficiently.

To further effect change we will give unprecedented support to agencies that protect our territorial waters and implement clear policies to guide decision makers, thereby holding them more accountable for decisions regarding legal entry and stay in our country.

Recognizing that people and skills are central to productivity and the economic health of any country, my Government will support them in new and existing business ventures, and make it easier for job seekers to have access to decent work, sustainable employment as well as opportunities to learn new skills.

Through the National Skills Audit and a progressive National Development Strategy my Government will establish through consensus what this country's industries of the future will be, and clearly articulate a population policy, an investment policy and training policy that complement each other for a prosperous Turks and Caicos.

My Government will modernize service delivery and empower customers to access information at their convenience and introduce service standards to ensure that realistic expectations are held by all.

Regionally and internationally, my Government will forge and deepen relationships and partnerships that will lay the foundation for participating countries to respond to common challenges and pursue opportunities that bring mutual benefits.

Jobs

My Government is committed to the creation of jobs and ensuring that those who are willing and able to work are able to. My Government is committed to removing the barriers to job seekers be it young persons, unskilled workers, holders of criminal records. My Government is committed to all through the provision of programs, policies, training and skills provision to aid those affected. My Government is committed to ascertaining the rate of unemployment and to the holding of a nation-wide unemployment drive to ensure that much needed data is

collected. My Government is committed to the provision of short term employment for those Island economies hardest hit and those individuals who are ready to work.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

My Government is committed to addressing the challenges head on in the healthcare sector. My Government has inherited a financially challenged National Health Insurance Plan and a Hospital Contract that has not yet been reviewed after 6 years in operation. My Government has inherited a primary health care system that too has its challenges. My Government is committed to the review of the NHIB as well as the Hospital Contract and will seek to have these reviews completed as soon as possible. My Government will refocus TCI Government's attention on prevention and will strengthen primary health care and re-establish itself as the leader in healthcare. My Government will within 60 days provide a review of healthcare management in these Islands.

It is often said that the **“Health of the Nation is the Wealth of the Nation.”** My Government recognizes that the sustainability of the health care system in the Turks and Caicos Islands is constantly under threat as Governments struggle to find funding for Crime prevention, Education, and other much needed Social programs.

To address these concerns, my Government have committed to doing the following;

1. Accessibility and affordability of quality health care are at the cornerstones of my Governments vision for the health sector. This will be achieved through reform to ensure that all persons, particularly those most in need of services have access to the care they need and deserve.
2. My Government will launch a comprehensive review of the National Health Insurance Plan (NHIP), with a view to looking at structural reform, improved efficiency and service delivery while at the same time looking at avenues to reduce wastage and ensuring the sustainability of the scheme. My Government has already commenced the work to source the additional \$4M which is urgently need to ensure that the NHIP continues to function and provide the much need services to the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands.
3. The review of the Hospital Contracts will be a matter of priority for my Government.
4. My Government will strengthen primary health care services through ensuring that investment is made into this area and by focusing on some of the lifestyle diseases which have plagued this great nation. Diseases such kidney failure, cancer, heart failure, hypertension and diabetes can be addressed effectively once a system is in place which encourages early detection and treatment. Addressing lifestyle diseases through school nutrition programs among other initiatives will result in the reduction of deaths and morbidity from chronic non communicable diseases. My Government believes that the health of our nation hinges on the strength of primary care.
5. My Government will put in place and fund a comprehensive special needs program for adults and youths in need of these services to ensure that they are fully included.
6. My Government is committed to the fight against Zika and other mosquito borne illnesses. My Government believes that the general untidiness of these Islands serves as breeding ground and will expand efforts to conduct massive clean ups.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH, SPORT AND LIBRARY SERVICES:

Mr. Speaker, my Government believes that a nation which fails to invest in its youth is a nation without a future. As that is the case, my Government intends to place high emphasis on the education through policies and practices in educating all its people.

- **Education Early childhood To Community College:**

Mr. Speaker, Education for the development of this country is a key priority for my Government and it will focus on the modernization of education through initiatives at all levels of the education sector, including Early Childhood Development, Special Needs Education, Alternative Education for those incarcerated or who may have had to drop out of our school system, Post-Secondary Education through the Community College and Adult learning opportunities within our communities.

Mr. Speaker, during the next year the Government's focus will be on alleviating overcrowding in all schools and improving the school environment, through the continued upgrading of primary and secondary schools. The Government is committed to the indicators set out in the 11th European Development Fund action document that aims at the building of a new primary school on Providenciales.

Mr. Speaker, among many other things, the security of our nation's schools and school children is very important for my Government. My Government will review with an aim to strengthen the current arrangements for day and night time security at schools to ensure that our investments are protected and our students, staff and community are safe and secured. Improvement of protective measures will include the provision of sidewalks in communities where students have to walk to and from school and ensure proper designation of bus stops for drop off and pick up of students.

The Government will ensure that the current curriculum review addresses public speaking and strengthening of the arts. My Government will develop affiliations with regional entities for the furtherance of skills training in the areas of tourism, environmental and agricultural sciences.

Mr. Speaker, the Community College remains the key institution for the provision of post-secondary education in our Islands. My Government will take measures to implement the erection of a purpose-built Turks and Caicos Islands Community College on Providenciales. Along with that will follow the establishment of a technical and vocational institute that focuses on key skill areas, identified through the results of the National Skills Audit currently on the way.

My Government will employ the latest technologies to extend enrollment at the College across all Islands.

- **Development Through Sport:**

Mr. Speaker, all of us are aware of the benefits of sports to the development of an individual, community and country. Through various sports, nations obtain recognition, individuals find sustainable careers and nations become healthier when they are engaged in physical activity. My Government believes that there are many individuals who can excel internationally. To

this end the Government will invest in the athletic development of athletes and secure more scholarships for outstanding athletes.

My Government will also begin measures to re-introduce the Sports Commission as a critical element to the development and management of sports in the Islands.

My Government will also improve the condition of the National Stadium and promote more athletic competitions to increase activity among athletes. The recently concluded five-year strategy will be reviewed to ensure it is compatible with the vision and mission of my Government when it comes to sport development in the TCI.

It is my Government's aim to strengthen partnerships between and among all Non-Governmental Sporting organizations and federations to propel the further involvement of the community and strengthen grass roots programs across the islands.

Sport development is one of my Government's key priority areas and their 10 point plan will re-introduce the TC National Track and Field Championship between the islands and begin planning for the erection of a High Performance Sports Center to help with talent development in our Islands. My Government will promote sport camps to expose our young people to opportunities in sports.

My Government recognizes the importance of representation at international events. This year the country joined in celebration as the first person from TCI participated in the Olympic Games. My Government will work steadfastly to ensure that TCI meets the necessary criteria that will ensure that in the future our athletes can participate as Turks and Caicos Islanders in the Olympic Games.

- **Youth Affairs:**

Youth Development, as mentioned will be a key area for development of my Government with a mission to mainstream Youth Policies and Programs supporting the development of youth-related policies and programs in all ministries.

In the coming year my Government will introduce a Youth-Better You Program that will have at its heart a national volunteer service.

Through existing agencies, my Government will encourage Youth Entrepreneurship and ensure real access to start up and expansive capital.

Creating job opportunities for our young people will be a key initiative for my Government in the upcoming year. My Government will create partnerships, through policies that will bring government and the private sector together to ensure students find placements on return from study. This initiative will also extend to securing apprenticeships for young people to be exposed on job sites for experience and skills development.

- **Library Services:**

Mr. Speaker my Government believes our libraries are an important part of our communities. Our library services will be developed to ensure that they are a part of the overall development of all citizens. Libraries will be outfitted with the latest equipment for research for both adults and young people. Resources will be provided to build our National Library

Service which will target the review and development of school libraries, community libraries and those at the college and private institutions.

My Government will review all current library spaces with a view to expanding, updating and strengthening both physical and human resources in our libraries. The aim will be to ensure that each child and adult has an opportunity for a ‘decent shot’ in life.

MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE, GAMING & CULTURE

Mr. Speaker, in terms of its focus on the Ministry of Tourism, Environment, Culture and Heritage, my Government will highlight some of the key initiatives that are ongoing and are set to take place in this important Ministry.

Within the first 100 days of taking office, my Government will update our National Tourism Strategic Plan and present to the country a clear vision for growth of this important sector. They will conduct a situational analysis of the industry to ascertain the current strengths and weaknesses as tourism is a dynamic industry that requires constant monitoring.

The National Tourism Policy and Strategic Implementation Plan, piloted and developed by “KPMG” in consultation with various stakeholders including the Turks and Caicos Tourist Board, and TCHTA among others, conducted a situational analysis of the industry and focused on five strategic pillars with recommendations and an implementation plan for each critical pillar. The Change Manager position which came as a result of the KPMG report will play a leading role in the implementation of the Tourism Policy.

Mr. Speaker, as my Government focuses on product development, by encouraging existing visitors to try new activities, it will encourage multi-island visits – where tourists will visit our family Islands on day trips or overnight stays. My Government will focus on Cruise Ship passengers returning as land-based visitors across our archipelago. My Government will aggressively seek to expand water sports activities across our country as the underwater world of the TCI is second to none and has been an anchor attraction for this destination for many years.

Mr. Speaker, it is also the intention of my government to expand the activities of Team TCI whose principle task along with Invest TCI and members of the Private Sector will be to position the TCI as a premier destination for investment and vacation activities and to communicate clearly and unambiguously that the Turks and Caicos is open for business.

Department Of Culture

Within the first 100 days my Government will begin the formulation of “back to our roots national campaign”. Through comprehensive marketing campaigns across the country, my government will instill within our youths, an understanding and love for the culture and heritage of our country. My Government will promote our culture and ensure that our young people know who they are and where they are going as Turks and Caicos Islanders. The Government will support cultural initiatives that will enhance and instill a sense of national pride for our young and old.

As you are probably aware Mr. Speaker, October has been designated National Heritage month. During this period several activities are held throughout the country to draw attention to this country’s rich heritage, it is my Government’s intention to expand on these activities

moving forward. All activities will be geared to our deeply rooted culture in the form of culinary, creative and visual arts.

The Department of Culture is currently in the process of developing a cultural policy for the TCI and my Government will ensure that this initiative is given priority. This policy will seek to garner support and highlight the historic courage and vision of our forefathers and our people. Additionally the policy will aim to foster the participation of all our people and promote investment in national cultural development. Finally my Government will support the introduction a Teacher Liaison Program in all schools throughout the Islands. This Teacher Liaison Program will be introduced in phases. The program will include the training of two/three teachers in each school in the area of Culture and Heritage.

Maritime Department

My Government will introduce a Maritime policy, which will focus on the development and growth of the yachting and transient boat traffic traversing the Americas. It is our view that this initiative will foster yachting traffic within our family islands; it will serve as a stepping stone in increasing the registration of vessels which is a diverse sector.

Mr. Speaker, my Government will establish critical priorities in an effort to quickly address environmental concerns. They will focus largely on education and awareness, protection and conservation, and sustainable use and development of the environment.

DECR

The Department of Environment and Coastal Resources will continue to conduct public awareness on the importance of the TCI's environment through education, outreach and other initiatives. My Government will ensure that DECR continues to work jointly with the National Trust and the Tourist Board in carrying out its mandate. My Government will continue to support DECR's strong presence in our schools and communities and that it continues its work with civic groups and stakeholders to increase awareness, and sensitize our people on environmental issues. Mr. Speaker, my Government will continue the Junior Parks Warden Program.

My Government will also focus on strengthening the DECR to help protect our banks from illegal poachers and will review the fisheries regulations to ensure that they are protective but also practical.

My Government will position and strengthen DECR to improve the system of protection for the environment and address emerging threats, so that the environment may serve future generations of Turks and Caicos Islanders. Critical partnerships with the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force will be central to marine protection.

Gaming

Mr. Speaker, I turn now to the Gaming Sector. It is the intention of my Government to ensure that our laws governing this industry are revised consistent with international standards and requirements.

This could aide in the expansion of the international standards which will ensure that the industry is credible.

MINISTRY OF INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND PLANNING

Under my Government, the Ministry of Infrastructure, Housing and Planning will play its critical role in developing the necessary guidelines and policies to enable Ministries, Departments and other bodies to operate effectively and efficiently. This Ministry will be resourced so that it can fulfill its objective to provide strategic direction, policy, planning and administrative support to the development of infrastructure and housing in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

My Government is committed to several critical initiatives including but not limited to:

1. An aggressive road and Government buildings repair program;
 2. Initiatives to reduce rent costs;
 3. A comprehensive study of sea defences on both Grand Turk and Salt Cay;
 4. A comprehensive study on the construction of a spine link road that would connect the Caicos Islands, ending in South Caicos;
 5. A comprehensive study on the construction of a deep water Harbour Drafting and implementation of legislation;
 6. Implementation of the Flood Risk Reduction Report (budget provision) as well as the increase in the number of drainage wells through-out the TCI (addressing flood prone areas);
 7. Installation of street lights in key areas, identified with the assistance of the Police Department ;
 8. Review the privatization of garbage collection and street cleaning; and
- **Review and amend the method of vehicle inspections to ensure better efficiency and effectiveness especially during the peak period January to March 2017.**

Energy Department

My Government remains committed to the goal of the Energy Department for the continuous improvement and excellence in energy and utility regulation to support the development of the requisite infrastructure to ensure universal access and to engender confidence and trust by all of the stakeholders. My Government will continue efforts to reform the legislative and regulatory framework of the energy sector. My Government will conduct a national audit and inspection of petroleum storage and handling facilities across the TCI will be conducted as part of a qualitative risk assessment of the sector. My Government remains committed to cooperation with Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories for the planning and Implementation of Sustainable Energy Initiatives Amongst the 12 States.

Planning Department

My Government remains committed to a comprehensive review of the Physical Planning Ordinance, the TCI Building Code and the TCI Development Manual. My Government will set as priority the containment of illegal Development, the increase in human resource needs especially in the areas of monitoring and compliance, and the completion of a National Physical Development Plan.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION

My Government will ensure that the Ministry of Home Affairs, Transportation and Communication continue to fulfill its mandate to provide safety and security for all persons living in or visiting the Turks & Caicos Islands, to promote safe and humane custody, protect the indigent, orphans and juvenile delinquents.

My Government is committed to:

1. A modern Road Safety Department;
2. A more profitable Philatelic Bureau;
3. An efficient Central Purchasing Unit;
4. A Prison that focuses largely on rehabilitation with a real partnership with the Justice System and the private sector to allow for successful reentry into society by former offenders;
5. Programs that seek to reduce poverty;
6. Support for the indigent and orphans;
7. ensuring TCI meets the highest international standards for child safeguarding;
8. A repositioned and strengthened Radio Turks and Caicos;
9. A strengthened Gender Affairs Unit;
10. A strengthened Domestic Fire Unit;
11. A Juvenile Home that meets the needs of those who would enter ; and
12. A well – resourced department of Disaster Management.

CIVIL SERVICE

My Government believes that a happy civil service equals a productive civil service. My Government intends to meet with the representatives of the CSA within the first 30 days to hear their concerns. My Government is committed to creating a more conducive environment for work and for the effective and efficient delivery of services. My Government believes that the civil service is critical and central to a more vibrant and expanded economy.

LEGISLATION

My Government will embark on a legislative agenda that will immediately seek to strengthen crime fighting and for the management of our borders, manage our lands, strengthen sports development, protect our environment, set standards for imports of goods, institute local government, regulate the public transportation industry, modernize our Police Force, among other priorities which will be communicated to our people.

RELATIONSHIP WITH BRITAIN

My Government will renew the constitutional talks with the UK and will expand those talks to include internal and external security issues.

My Government committed to our people and will ensure that this country is ready for Post-Brexit. My Government has already agreed the attendance for a Post-Brexit JMC Meeting in London and will ensure that these Islands are positioned in the best way possible for the impact.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR and CRITICAL MEETINGS TO BE HAD

My Government will also seek an early meeting with the Clergy of this country in an effort to hear their concerns and seek an agreement as to how they may aid in the development of this country.

My Government has already met with the Senior Management of the Public Service and have had the pleasure of presenting them with the Change Document that will guide and set policy for the vision ahead. My Government has already met with members of the NHIB and have agreed several initiatives. My Government will continue meetings with key government personnel as a matter of urgency including the hierarchy of the Police Force, the AG's Chambers and the DG's Office. My Government will seek to meet with the CSA representatives and the Civil Servants, civic organisations, professional and trade associations and the business community.

My Government is committed to conducting a Listening Tour among our youth as a matter of priority.

My Government believes that strong private sector partnerships is key to our success and will not shun any investor. My Government believes that their success is this country's success. My Government will meet with key investors and will set clear priorities in an open and transparent manner and will seek to ensure that a safe and conducive environment to doing business is maintained. My Government looks forward to strengthening private sector ties in the furtherance of the people's agenda.

CLOSING

My Government is encouraged by the goodwill gestures and the advice already offered to them and will ensure there are forums for this to continue. My Government believes the Government that governs best is the one that governs closest to its people. To this end, it will maintain active dialogue with the people through regular addresses in all media platforms, Press Conferences and Town Hall Meetings.

My Government has been given a clear and convincing mandate from the people and is committed to ensuring that this opportunity to effect real change with real plans through real leadership is not squandered neither.

My Government is ready to lead together with the people of this country and to deliver on The Change Document.

My Government believes that there is a new and exciting time ahead and that our best days are yet ahead. With God at the helm, they are convinced TCI can only soar. To this end, it is my Government's plan to hold a series of Thanksgiving Services around the Islands and will invite the people of this country to come together in a spirit of thanksgiving and a spirit of cooperation.

My Government will continue to work for the betterment of all the peoples of these Islands.

May God bless our Island Home.