

Independence Message 2013

By The Hon. Hector John

Leader of the Opposition

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Respect for Self and Country

The love for country comes with unselfish, dedicated, and patriotic sacrifices. Sacrifices geared at the constant growth and development of country and its people. These unwavering sacrifices must be deeply rooted in the respect and true appreciation for the dictates of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Dominica. The Constitution should be uncompromisingly and meticulously followed and fulfilled. This provides us with the assurance that our democratic process is thriving successfully.

This year, we celebrate our country's independence under the theme "One Mission, One Dominica, Celebrating 35." This theme further strengthens the reasons why the Constitution should be held in the highest esteem. There cannot be One Mission or One Dominica when there are orchestrated and blatant violations of the Constitution. There certainly cannot be a United Mission or a United Dominica when we allow a few to create a rift between us by openly and shamelessly planting seeds of division. The celebrations cannot be harmonious when the public outcries of these unpatriotic behaviors are disturbingly loud.

The Constitution outlines the system of government and states the way that the country must run. It also safeguards the rights of the people and protects democratic values. This clearly demonstrates that our laws are geared at transparent management of state while empowering people. It further confirms that we are all equal, irrespective of our societal stratum. Simply put, that no one is above the law.

French historian Alexis De Toqueville gives credence to my point when he stated, "In the nations by which the sovereignty of the people is recognized every individual possesses an equal share of power, and participates alike in the government of the State. Every individual is, therefore, supposed to be as well informed, as virtuous and as strong as any of his fellow citizens"

This independence season, we should have one mission as we demand in one firm and nationalistic voice for the total respect of our Constitution. There should be unequivocally no compromise. Then and only then, we will begin the reawakening of true allegiance to the Nature Isle. This allegiance will help ensure a Dominica for all as we work towards the pursuance of economic stability and happiness. The economic stability and happiness in turn sets the foundation for nationwide celebrations of our proud cultural heritage and achievements.

Our new national dish of Callaloo will be the highlight of this year's independence celebrations and will add value to our nutritious creole dishes. It will be a festive spectacle as the Madras decorates the streets of Roseau with everyone displaying their diverse independence outfits. The authentic creole music will add rich melodious flavor to this celebration as we take a little bump on the patriotic bouyon song of WCK as we are proudly "representing 767".

Fellow Dominicans, in the midst of this year's independence celebrations we should not lose sight of the dominant importance of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Dominica. It will be to the detriment of the future of our sovereign state to give an iota of latitude to anyone bent towards its violation. We should all stand patriotically in accord to prevent any such tendency. This will send a stern message of national pride, respect and patriotism. The future of the Nature Isle depends on our collective national advancement and failure is not an option.

On behalf of the hard working and culturally proud people of Salisbury, Coulibistrie and Morne Rchette, I would like to wish every Dominican a peaceful and festive 35th Independence celebration.

May God continue to richly bless, the Commonwealth of Dominica.