

# Independence Message 2014

**By The Hon. Hector John**

**Leader of the Opposition**

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## **Pride in country instills pride in self.**

In order to truly appreciate one's nation, a genuine sense of pride and patriotism must be consistently exhibited. This pride and patriotism can only be manifested when we make it our responsibility to be unyielding towards nation building. This unwavering responsibility must always have us standing on the side of our nation and its people. There should be absolutely no compromise, because a nation can only grow when its people are united towards a common goal.

This year we celebrate the 36<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our nation's independence under the theme, "Our nation, Our responsibility". This theme calls us to "do the right, be firm, be fair". We should demonstrate the highest level of patriotism towards ensuring a prosperous nation, by working in one accord. Working towards the betterment of country is also working towards the betterment of self. That is why it is incumbent upon all of us to put our nation before the selfish aspirations of a few individuals.

As citizens it is our responsibility to always look out for the best interest of our nation. During the independence celebrations, our rich and diverse cultural heritage comes into sharp focus and we should be both preservers and conduits in its continued pursuit towards authentic sustainability. As preservers, we should protect and maintain every aspect of our heritage. Our national wear, traditional dances, music, creole language and local cuisine define us as a people and we should guarantee their preservation. While as conduits, we are given the task to pass on this priceless cultural heritage from one generation to another.

We must express our gratitude to those who made it their responsibilities to add value to our cultural heritage. I would like to thank the late Premier Edward O Leblanc for being responsible for the introduction of the national day celebrations that plays a significant role in the preservation of our cultural expressions. Thanks to the late Prime Minister, Dame Eugenia Charles for taking up the responsibility to protect the spirit of volunteerism by the implementing the National day of community service during the Independence season. Also

thanks to former Prime Minister Hon. Edison James for being responsible for establishing the World Creole Music Festival. This festival is geared at preserving and promoting our creole music. As corporate citizens I would like to compliment LIME and the National Cooperative Credit Union for “Creole In The Park” and The Cadance-lypso competition respectively. Also, kudos to the National Development Foundation of Dominica for recently staging “Creole In The Streets”. The value of these activities towards nation building should not be over looked.

In order for our nation to excel, we must diligently perform our responsibilities in every aspect. We should stand guard and be resolute against anything that will jeopardize our nation’s advancement. It is our responsibilities to ensure that the Laws of the land are being adhered to. Our institutions of state should not be undermined but given the latitude to function fully in the interest of national advancement. Also, every political party should be given equal access to the national radio and television stations to promote their plans and programs. We will be abandoning our responsibilities if we fail to do what is right.

Pride in country instills pride in self and it our responsibility to always stand for our nation. As we celebrate this patriotic festive season we should all reaffirm our commitment towards putting Dominica first. Let us be the peace of our nation by taking up our responsibility towards making her the best place to live, the best place to work and the best place to enjoy life.

On behalf of the hard working, God fearing and culturally proud people of Salisbury, Coulibistrie and Morne Rchette, I would like to wish every Dominican a wonderful 36<sup>th</sup> Independence celebration.

May God continue to richly bless the Commonwealth of Dominica.