

04;13

This Caribbean Civilization has adopted and adapted universal values, and called them our own. Within the free mark of dominant Creolized particularity which has been given life and meaning in our landscape and seascape. We have embraced the English language as our own but with a unique and distinct Caribbeaness. And we speak it and write it with a special flair rhythm, cadence and creativity.

43;11

We have arisen from this historic process as a whole, yet scarred peoples who are not merely tenants in but true owners of our patrimony in our being and our becoming. We are not migratory transients; we are not simply occupants of lands and seas in the Caribbean. We are permanent owners, who through pain and suffering, joys and celebrations, ups and downs, defeats and triumphs, setbacks and advances, have molded a civilization of uniqueness, legitimacy, and of possibilities, for further ennoblement despite our further limitations. It is in this context that we assert that we are not better than anyone else, but no one is better than us. Different in certain national characteristics or dispositions, not better, not worse. Accordingly any of the goodness or nobility which our civilization has lost through an aggressive cultural imperialism or through our own neglect.

2:01:16

We must reclaim particularly at this time of the two hundred and seventeenth anniversary of the death of our national hero, the right excellent Joseph Chatoyer, Chief of the Garifuna people. And the tenth anniversary of his elevation to the status of national hero.

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I agree with my friend Sinclair Lecock who spoke on behalf of the opposition. Essentially that this coming home to ourself individually and as a society is a certain spirit which is fundamental to any exercise in nation building, including constitutional remaking. Become competitive production of goods and services:

The education revolution, the reduction of poverty, the building of the Rabbeca Bridge, to link the Garifuna Country and the rest of St. Vincent., and the construction of the Argyle International Airport. So I agree very much with my brother that the spirit is reflected in all of these achievements, which we must celebrate today on national heroes day.

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These two unachievable enterprises have become real, they have happened or are happening before our very eyes. At their core, they are about self-belief. That spirit of self-belief, self-confidence, self-worth, and a profound sense of self mastery. The embrace of the idea that despite the limitations, we possess the possibilities to achieve the utmost, to improve our lives, in concert with our friends and our allies. Unfortunately in the referendum of November 2009, the majority of the people in this country rejected a reform constitution which in my view was a setback in the process of further constitutional de colonization and a block to our quest for self-mastery.

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This sense of self belief or self-mastery is not yet a fully tapped political virtue among our people. Including even, some of our leaders. I was very pleased to see some of our leaders

go to all of the events involving the royal visit not too long ago, including travelling from here to Bequia. I would have been equally pleased to have seen them or a greater representation of them today at this site. And I am sorry for the absence in pretty much the same with us (?) , Sinclair Lecock made that observation. And I am very thankful for the reminder.

06;25;12

Now, we must remember what the struggle was about. And I want to take permit me a little journey into history

06;50;14

I have written a speech and don't be worried, I wouldn't read all of it. I know the sun is getting hot. But I shall read enough to leave our National Heroes Day with some matters to reflect upon. And I shall publish it in the newspapers next week.

07;25;22

Now we know that when the British arrived, after the treaty of Paris in 1763, after the seven years' war. We know that Briton remained as the colonial power for two hundred and sixteen years till independence. Save and except for a few years between 1779 and 1783 when the French came back. So in over two hundred years the British were here. And I want these children to know this. Despite the fact they were here for two hundred and over two hundred years, two hundred and sixteen years, they built two secondary schools for us. One for boys, and one for girls. One for every century of colonialism.

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Today we have secondary schools all over the country. And well into 2001 when we arrived here as a government we has only 39% of the 12 year olds at secondary school- we now have 100%. Can you imagine if this government had it for two hundred years, what would they do. Just think about it, two hundred years they gave you two schools.- one for each one hundred years. You see the history before our eyes you know. But you have to take off the scales,? that's why you have to come home .

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Now immediately, as Britain took sovereignty of this country, the first thing they did was to declare that all the lands of St. Vincent and the Grenadines belonged to the Crown. Every piece, thereafter if anybody wanted any of it including the Garifuna, they had to ask them because they owned. Can you imagine they owned the whole place and people would come all the way from England, say it belongs to them, and then don't expect a fight?

10:39:17

Eh, I mean lets be practical: you come to take my land. Nowadays, a man trespass on one hundred square foot, of his neighbor land, they want to fight, you ending up in the lock wards. But they took one hundred and thirty-three square miles on main land of St Vincent. Seventeen in the Grenadines, totally over one hundred thousand acres, of land, including my forest now you don't expect me to fight for it. And when I fight for it, you call me "war like", when my name "Kalinago" meant "peacefull". Understand the history, you

hear what the governor is saying, you understand? You had better understand it, so when that vote time come for "yes" you know what to do.

12;03;23

The record is true that after they declared all the lands to be their own in 1763. Before, they went and declared the Botanic Gardens, which is a good thing they did, because in 2015, it will be two hundred and fifty years old. But before they did that, what do you do when you say the land is yours? You make sure that you have an idea about the size, and then set up the boundaries. So the first thing they did after that, they embarked on a land survey. They said "this land is mine, I want so be it".

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Just don't let history be in the sky you know. Don't plant your feet in the sky, be grounded. They took all the land. Now you tell me I must not get reparations? , .And I will show how much went into the British treasury in this story I am giving you here. And the story is not Anansi story, a story of truth. The records show that the British met one thousand three hundred French inhabitants, and two thousand seven hundred slaves. That's all the number of slaves you know. We come to the point of emancipation and see what there was. The French were allowed to remain on the occupied lands, which were largely on the western side. They were planting tobacco, they planted cotton, indigo, root crops, no sugar. Sugar was to come afterwards. After 1762, after they subdued the Garifuna. And after they subdued Chatoyer

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If Chatoyer and the Garifuna were not defeated, they wouldn't have had African Slaves here you know, we would have had a small number from the French. So remember this, the defeat of Chatoyer and the Garifuna, opened the way for the importation of African Slaves, and the cultivation of sugar. I don't know what they teach you in school but I am putting it practical for you never to forget it today. But they allowed the French to occupy the lands, but they said you could occupy only a certain size. And it became lease hold for forty-five years. I am sure some of these issues came up at the conference. They had a talk about land, we will have to have a session next time about land. Land! That's where it started you know, that's where it is about people and land.

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What did the British do with the bulk of the lands.? Occupied and owned, by the Kallinagos and the Garifuna, what did they do? The first, they gave their hero, because they had their heroes you know. They gave their hero of the seven years' war. The seven years' war between France and Britain. There is a chap named General Robert Moncton and he had captured St. Vincent and Martinique, they gave him four thousand acres.

16:10:20 And there it is. Even between Stubbs and Biaboo, I will tell you. Stretching what is now between Stubs and Biaboo, extending inland to the head waters of the river flowing from the Mesopotamia Valley. They gave it to Moncton - when Moncton didn't settle it, he sold it for thirty thousand pounds sterling. That is the equivalent today (I went into the

Internet to check it)- how much that would be worth today. They say four million pounds, or twenty million dollars, that's the first piece of change.

17:03:08 The first piece of money I remember, there were big press conferences, when our founding father Robert Milton came to and got a check of ten thousand, ten million dollars from the British as a golden handshake at the time of independence. Well that doesn't even come to the price of the land between Stubbs ? and Biaboo ? And of course if you were to cut that up, in lots, if you were to cut that up in lots, it would be billions of dollars. I want to remind you that what they gave Moncton for nothing is where we are building the airport, and just for four hundred acres, for the airport as the government had to buy including the houses there , we had to pay one hundred and thirty million dollars. I just want to bring it for you so that you as the Rastafarian say on the block you got over it.

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So when you see we this government and this Prime Minister says certain things and does certain things, its not because we are moving off the fly of our pants. We have given this study and thought and have documented it . Secondly, Moncton, remember his name Moncton, boys and girls, students, people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Secondly, they said they will give Moncton that piece but they said you know this is real good real estate, so we got to auction it off. So they auctioned off twenty thousand five hundred and thirty eight acres at a cost of one hundred and sixty two thousand and eight hundred and fifty four pounds sterling.

And Moncton 162 thousand and 8 hundred fifty four pounds sterling amounts to nearly twenty two million dollars in today's money. But that's just a value for these twenty thousand plus acres.

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But if you were to really check the amount of land and you check the square footage to give you some significance, it is nine hundred and four million square feet of land. Nine hundred and four million square feet of land. You cant get land in St. Vincent for two dollars a square foot. But if its two dollars, you are looking at two billion dollars or thereabouts. Just as a piece to auction off, that's the value. If you can find land in St. Vincent for two dollars a square foot, go and buy it. Because they don't have two dollars a square foot land anymore.

0021;01;01

Then they kept some they said for public purposes. We must remember that one third of the land was over the one-thousand-foot contour and that was not very habitable. They couldn't grow many things there. Thick forest, so as you can see not much land was left for whom they call the Caribs. But one third of the ninety thousand acres on the mainland is in forest. They gave Moncton four they auctioned off nearly twenty-one thousand square feet. You see almost half gone, what is there to occupy? Now they (the fellow who did the survey by they way) John Byres. As a man who they named a place in my constituency of the Byre. For his work, they didn't have money to give him, so they passed over four hundred seventy-one acres for him. So when you pass by there remember the man who surveyed the land- Mr. John Byers. Its there you know.

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Now I want to give you an idea as to why I say they needed to grow sugar cane, and

the consequences of the treaty which the Garifuna signed in 1773 was the legalization of the seizure of lands belonging to the Garifuna, beyond the Yambu River. So they had a new boundary, for what they call Carib country, after 1773. And I notice His Excellency and The Ambassador listening and traveling these roads and he doesn't know the history of them. I am bringing it alive because every people have their story Your Excellency. So when you reach Byer river which is at the heart of my constituency, that is where after 1773, there was a new Carib country. From Byer river and a line running from the head waters of the Byer River northwest to the upper reaches of the Walleyboo River on the east? Coast. So they run the line on the Byer River to the corresponding line, from the east over to the west. So the whole, that northern part now they said is Carib Country, Garifuna Country.

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But as you would know, like the devil you want more, they wanted more. The British wanted more. So these boundaries were ignored by the British, in fact the governor himself gave a parcel of land on the northwest coast to a Royal American officer, a fellow by the name of Lieutenant Colonial Etherin? Donne.

Because he was recruited to command a British garrison to protect the territory from French attack. But of course, Etherin Donne seemed like he was a Buccaneer, he wasn't really interested in defending the place he was more interested in working the land. So, as fate would have it in 1779 when the French arrived they captured St. Vincent without firing a single shot because Etherin Donne took his troops and was clearing his land. So when the French arrived men had cutlass and other farm implements but they didn't have gunpowder them.

25:48:00 They didn't do like Netanmaya ?? and the Jews when they were building the city wall around Jerusalem, having weapons next to them when they were building the Wall. Not Etherin Donne, he wanted so much out of his fellas. He had them cultivating land. Now remember you know, all this time, there is no French Revolution. And as Doc Adams would tell us that its heating up in Haiti. And of course we know that Garifuna didn't sit back and watch people taking their lands then. So even after the first war, they continued the Guerilla struggle until the defeat.

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After their defeat, the death of Chatoyer and the defeat of the Garifuna, and the deportation of persons and let us not mince words-GENOCIDE BY THE BRITISH. Let us not mince words. If you had the international criminal court then, those fellows would have been dragged before the international criminal court. The killed men women and children, indiscriminately, and there are many Garifuna and Kallinago, rather than being killed by the British, jumped off of cliffs, and went to their watery grave. Even to the last that was their resistance. So they sent them in an isolated path. Two hundred and thirty-nine acres.

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So in 1763 the Garifuna owned everything, except for a few French Settlers on the western coast. By 1800 all they have is 298 acres. You understand why is it the Garifuna people remain in that part of the country, among the poorest? huh? You understand? And

some of the same people who want to keep the British or who wanted to keep the British will blame others in respect of the poverty of them. Don't forget the history, the answers are there.

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In 1802, Henry Bentick the governor, was installed. I want the persons of Bentick to know that is what they call the place after, just north of my Constituency is called Mount Bentick. I don't know why Bentick should be celebrated, but that's how it is. The name is there. Don't know if you can change it. Someone might want to change it when they hear what Bentick did.

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Bentick permitted the British veterans to use 5,262 thousand acres. The whole area, North of from Byra going up was 16,648 acres. And large parcels of this land were granted to permanent planters after the passage of an 1804 law which formally stripped the Caribs, the Garifuna, the Kalinago of all their lands. It was in effect already from the time of 1763. Just in case you want to have any doubt to pass along And there is the fellow, an American Royalist from Georgia named Thomas Brown, was granted six thousand acres stretching from Byer River in the south and the Byer River in the north.

30:37 09 By 1805, remember, in 1763 there were two thousand seven hundred slaves, African Slaves. By 1805 when sugar now rampaging and the British are in control of the lands you have 16,500 slaves. And at the time of slavery termination it was 18,794. And to add insult to all injury, when the slaves were freed, their owners were compensated.

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And then of course after slavery we know between 1844 and 1850, 2002 Portuguese indentured servants from Madera came. And about 2,200 from Mother India came from 1861 onwards. And that is really the making, the foundation stone for our modern Creolized society.

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Now I want to speak to a few thing relating to the order of National Heroes. You have heard that story that in 2002 ten years ago, the Right Excellency Joseph Chatoyer was accorded as a national hero, person only one thus far. Recently however, and we thought it appropriate after ten years the decision to commence the process which hopefully by National Heroes Day next year would result in the declaration of one or more persons to be accorded the order of national heroes. In accordance with the national hero act, chapter five of the laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Now how do we proceed? The first step in which we are now currently engaged is the appointment of the National Heroes Advisory Committee. Everything I talk about this is in relation to the law. And this first step has already been put in train. And let us use it for uplifting and national reconciliation.

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Our nation has endured all this inner strife ? We have fashioned yet a neatly democratic society, tolerant, but grounded on a narrow economic base. Resident in our landscape and

seascape, and we have to improve that economic condition widen the base. We have come from our yesterdays, leaping from the oppressors hate, and the scorn, on ourselves. We have come to the world with scars upon our souls. Wounds on our bodies, fury in our hands. We turn to the histories of men and the lives of our peoples, and we examine the shower of our sparks and the wealth of our dreams. We are pleased with the glories and sad with the sorrows. Rich for the riches and poor with the loss. From our yesterdays we have come with our burdens, to the world of tomorrow we turn with our strengths. Those are words I have adopted and adapted from the poet laureate of Guyana now deceased. I want to thank you for listening, and the Almighty God? with you to bless us all.

the end..?