

Please note the below remarks delivered at Tucker's Point this evening by the Premier, Dr. the Hon Ewart Brown JP, MP.

An Address of Welcome by the Premier on the occasion of a State Visit to Bermuda by Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh

25th November 2009

Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness, Mr. Foreign Secretary, Your Excellency, Lady Gozney, Madame President, Mr. Speaker, Congressman Butterfield, ladies and gentlemen; my wife and I are honoured by the opportunity to host Your Majesty and Your Royal Highness this evening and to echo the genuinely warm welcome shown by the people of Bermuda on the occasion of your much anticipated visit.

After almost a year of celebrations marking this 400th anniversary of the settlement of these Islands, I speak for all Bermudians when I say that Your Majesty's visit is a most fitting way to salute those who made this celebration possible.

When the announcement of this visit was made public I was inundated with calls from individuals who recalled with fondness Your Majesty's previous visits and who spoke warmly of the interaction they had enjoyed at openings, dinners and parades on those occasions.

The relationship between the United Kingdom and Bermuda has withstood the test of time and as our democracies have matured successive Governments on both sides of the Atlantic have conducted affairs in mutual respect, recognizing the importance of the needs and the will of the people.

It was in the sixteenth year of Your Majesty's Reign that Bermuda gained its modern Constitution and now in this fifty-eighth year of that Reign, Your Majesty's Government continues to respond positively to the needs of the Bermudian people to evidence that document as a living, evolving manifestation of our system of governance.

Our American friends marvel at their proximity to this small slice of Britain called Bermuda. Our tourism has benefitted over the years from the customs of high tea at 4pm in most hotels and from such must-see sights as our World Heritage Site forts, the Royal Naval Dockyard even our red letterboxes that remain in active use today.

In fact, it is no coincidence that tonight we have invited Your Majesty to enjoy the elegant appointments of the first hotel to be built in Bermuda in thirty-five years. We are working incredibly hard to restore this Jewel of the Atlantic to its former prominence as a tourist destination of choice.

Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness, the tables in this room bear the names of the Parishes of Bermuda. This is important. We wanted you to know that as small as Bermuda is, it is not always easy for us to speak with one voice. Yet, tonight we welcome you in unison and offer our thanks and best wishes for continued prosperity on behalf of my wife and me and the Government and people of Bermuda.

Ladies and Gentlemen: the Queen.