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ARTS
**CONTESTANTS LINE UP FOR
CULTURE PAGEANT**



SEE ARTS SECTION C

SWIMMING
**ARIANNA WINS 200
FOR TIGERS**



SEE SPORTS SECTION E

Gas prices up again

Gasoline up 10¢, diesel to rise by 15¢

By **SANCHESKA BROWN**
Tribune Staff Reporter
sbrown@tribunemedia.net

GAS prices are expected to rise after the government announced yesterday increases in gas and diesel margins for petroleum retailers.

In a press release, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development said that after consultation with the Petroleum Retailers Association, it was agreed to increase the gasoline and diesel margins.

This change in the margin will result in a ten cent per gallon increase in the retail price of gasoline and a fifteen cent increase in the retail price of diesel. These changes take effect today.

Oswald Moore, president of the Bahamas Petroleum Retailers Association (BPRA), said an increase in the margins means that gas will go up but not by a significant amount.

"Gas prices have been going down. In fact, there is one chain of stations that is below five dollars now. In the near future, gas prices will go down even more, it'll be about 60 to 80 cents less," he said.

"So the 10 to 15 cents increase will not burden the

'Gas prices have been going down. In fact, there is one chain of stations that is below five dollars now. In the near future, gas prices will go down even more, it'll be about 60 to 80 cents less.'

**Oswald Moore
BPRA president**

public like if gas prices were still high. Gas will go up but it will still be lower than it was a short time ago."

Mr Moore also thanked the government for "recognising the retailers' plight."

He said: "We appreciate they have considered our situation and understand our struggle. This is the first increase for diesel in 30 years and in 10 years for gas."

"The public needs to understand that when the price of gas goes up and

SEE page 2

TWO CHARGED OVER PIPE METAL THEFT



MARK CAMPBELL is seen going to court along with Nickolo Cartwright yesterday where the pair faced charges of stealing pipe from a Water and Sewerage plant. Photo: **Felipe Major/Tribune Staff**

By **LAMECH JOHNSON**
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

TWO men were arraigned in Magistrate's Court yesterday

afternoon in connection with a major pipe theft from a Water and Sewerage plant five days ago.

Nickolo Cartwright, of No.

31 Dignity Gardens and Mark Campbell of Cowpen Road appeared before Magistrate

SEE page 6

BRAN AIMS 'TO TEACH INGRAHAM A LESSON'

By **SANCHESKA BROWN**
Tribune Staff Reporter
sbrown@tribunemedia.net

DNA Leader Branville McCartney is willing to sacrifice his own political career to teach Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham a lesson in humility.

Speaking with *The Tribune*, Mr McCartney said he is strongly considering running in North Abaco if only to show the Prime Minister that he is a "force to be reckoned with" even if it means he'll lose his seat.

"Running in North Abaco is a strong possibility. Because I am the leader of the DNA, I determine where I want to go."

"If I were to go in North Abaco, even if I were not successful, the amount of votes I will get will cause the PLP to win," he said.

"Right now, I am only waiting to see what the boundaries commission comes up with before I make the decision of where I am going to run. Of course, I would prefer to stay in

SEE page 6

EXTRA STAFF AT DEPARTMENT OF PROSECUTIONS

By **CHESTER ROBARDS**
Senior Reporter
crobards@tribunemedia.net

THE Department of Public Prosecutions recently increased its staffing levels with the addition of several Assistant Counsel and a Senior Counsel, Attorney General John Delaney announced yesterday, also revealing that its staff levels remain below what is optimal for the office to function at its peak.

SEE page 6

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LOCAL NEWS

POTCAKE SAYS

The Bahamas' own street philosopher



SEVEN MAN REMANDED OVER DRUG CHARGES

By LAMECH JOHNSON
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

THREE Bahamian men and four Haitians were arraigned in Magistrate's Court yesterday afternoon on multiple drug possession charges.

Bahamian nationals Quinton Smith, 37; Glenroy Fox, 34; and Kylon Arnette, 30, went before Magistrate Carolita Bethel in Court Eight, Bank Lane facing eight charges.

These men were also charged with helping four alleged accomplices, all Haitian men, land in the Bahamas without authority from the Department of Immigration.

Renest Michel, 29; Lionel Sylvestre, 25; Jerry Saint Louis, 25; and Johnny Pierre, 34; along with the Bahamians, were charged with:

- possession of Indian hemp and cocaine with intent

to supply;

- importing Indian hemp and cocaine;

- conspiracy to possess Indian hemp and cocaine with intent to supply;

- conspiracy to import the two dangerous drugs.

Michel, Sylvestre, Saint Louis and Pierre were also charged with illegally landing in the Bahamas.

The prosecution alleges that these offenses occurred on Friday, October 7, at the Crossing, Great Inagua.

Smith, Michel, Fox, and Arnette pleaded not guilty to all charges brought against them while Saint Louis and Pierre only pleaded guilty to illegally landing in the Bahamas.

Sylvestre, also known as Lionel Francois, pleaded guilty to possession of Indian hemp and cocaine with intent to supply and importing Indian hemp and cocaine.

However, he pleaded not guilty to the charges of conspiracy to possess and import the dangerous drugs.

Magistrate Bethel adjourned the matter to Tuesday, October 18 for a bail hearing and a detailed report of the incidents – as the prosecution indicated that they had not yet received all the relevant information.

The prosecution estimated that 59 pounds of marijuana was seized along with four pounds of cocaine.

Attorney and Member of Parliament V Alfred Gray represented Quinton Smith, Lionel Sylvestre and Kylon Arnette; while Tecoyo Bridgewater appeared for Glenroy Fox.

The other accused men were not represented.

They were all remanded to Her Majesty's Prison until next week's hearing.



THESE MEN were charged in court yesterday for marijuana and cocaine possession

Photo: **Felipe Major**/Tribune Staff

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GAS PRICES GOING UP AGAIN

from page one

down nothing extra comes our way.

"This extra money will help us try to stabilise our business and deal with the many institutions to which we are indebted."

These margin changes only apply to retailers.

In August, petroleum

retailers voted unanimously for strike action after the months of negotiations with the government stalled.

Retailers were asking for an increase of 30 cents per gallon on gasoline and 20 cents per gallon diesel.

Although the government has agreed in principle to an increase, retailers claimed

they were given no clear timeline despite the urgent need for action.

After the strike vote, Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham said the government would revisit the issue when fuel prices go down and even consider deregulating the sector entirely.

The association represents 85 per cent of gas retailers.

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RIVALS SAY THEY DO NOT FEAR RISK OF LOSING TO DNA

By **SANCHESKA BROWN**
Tribune Staff Reporter
sbrown@tribunemedia.net

THE PROGRESSIVE Liberal Party and Free National Movement candidates for Bamboo Town said they are not concerned about the possibility of losing to incumbent, Branville McCartney.

When asked what they thought their chances were in Bamboo Town, Renward Wells, the PLP candidate, and Cassius Stuart, the FNM candidate, both said DNA leader Mr McCartney has no chance of retaining his seat.

Mr Wells said: "I don't think its going to be a close race at all. In fact, I am going to win by more than 50 per cent of the vote. Mr McCartney will be pleasantly surprised."

"I know Bamboo Town has been FNM since 1987 but that was because of Tennyson Wells. Mr Wells convinced them that FNM was the better party and now I will convince them that PLP is the way to go."

"Cassius Stuart is my biggest competition, we are both cut from the same cloth. Mr McCartney will be easy to beat."

Mr Stuart agreed that Mr McCartney is no competition and said he won't even get one per cent of the vote.

"Everyone who stood with Mr McCartney now stands with me. He has some support but it is nothing significant," he said.

"The people are tired of persons being elected on the FNM ticket then abandoning them for their own personal interests."

"They always knew Mr McCartney had an ulterior motive because he painted his constituency office green and not red."

"I am going to knock Bran out. The only running he'll be doing is out of Bamboo Town."

The comments from both men came after Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham said Bamboo Town is a "test case" to see which one of the men will emerge as the winner.

He said: "I have taken two

gentlemen who wanted to be leaders and put them up as candidates."

"There is another member there, in the person of the Member of Parliament for Bamboo Town, who wants to be a leader."

He added: "We have asked them to fight in their league down there to see which one of them is eligible to be leader. You have to win first."

For his part, Mr McCartney said the fact that the three men, two of whom were at one point leaders of third parties, are running in the same constituency is no coincidence.

He said: "The whole thing is a ploy for Mr Ingraham and Mr Christie to get Renward Wells and Cassius Stuart out of the way to stop them from joining forces."

"They planned this whole thing from the beginning to put us against each other."

The prime minister has indicated that he will not cut the boundaries of Bamboo Town – even if the Boundaries Commission recommends it.



DNA LEADER Branville McCartney, whose chances of retaining his Bamboo Town seat have been dismissed by his would-be rivals, PLP candidate Renward Wells and FNM candidate Cassius Stuart

OPPOSITION MPS ACCUSE GOVERNMENT OF 'SINISTER PLAN' TO PRIVATISE WATER COMPANY

By **KHRISNA VIRGIL**

OPPOSITION MPs are accusing the government of concocting a "sinister plan" to privatise the Water and Sewerage Corporation which will result in a monopoly on water supply in New Providence.

In a press statement issued yesterday, PLP chairman Bradley Roberts said top government officials are rushing a deal that will grant a new southwest New Providence water franchise to the Consolidated Water Company (CWC).

Mr Roberts claimed the move fits with a track record

of gross mismanagement and neglect that has caused the Nassau water supply to be rationed and a host of other problems in the Family Islands.

Noting the high level of unemployment, Mr Roberts said Bahamian taxpayers are carrying a heavy financial burden in the form of the huge subsidies being given to WSC.

"This government has decided to clandestinely cede control of the corporation with the greatest potential for financial solvency and positive national social impact to yet another foreign-led entity," Mr Roberts claimed.

He said negotiations are

underway that will bind the WSC to Consolidated Water on a long term basis.

Such an agreement would authorise the CWCO to provide water for Western New Providence, including Lyford Cay and the Old Fort Development, he said.

The agreement will enable CWCO to provide an estimated 1.8 million gallons per day to New Providence, causing them to be the sole provider of potable water, he said.

Mr Roberts said: "The PLP views this move as a brazen attempt by the FNM government under the leadership of Minister (Earl) Deveaux and

Jr Minister (Phenton) Neymour, to complete its improper giveaway of \$332 million worth of WSC contracts."

He added that the PLP believes that as water is a national security issue, the government needs to set in motion its "stop, review and cancel" process to discontinue a deal that is almost done.

Attempts to reach Mr Neymour were not successful.

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FNM and PLP prepare for an election

ON MONDAY, Prime Minister Ingraham announced the appointment of the Constituencies (Boundaries) Commission, which is expected to make its recommendations to Parliament by the end of this year with voters' cards ready for issue by early in the New Year.

By October 7, 134,000 voters had already registered in the 41 electoral constituencies for the 2012 election. They are still registering. However, the Boundaries Commission now has sufficient numbers to study the shifts in population in the various constituencies, and make recommendations to government on how the boundaries should be drawn for this election.

The Constitution provides for a minimum of 38 House members. Presently there are 41 (one extra seat added by the PLP in 2007), and so, if the population shifts warrant it, at least three constituencies can be eliminated and merged.

What a difference five years can make with a decisive prime minister at the helm.

At this time five years ago, then Prime Minister Perry Christie was still dithering. He had not yet announced the close of the register, because of the poor turnout of citizens. By November 2006 just over 63,000 voters had registered in New Providence out of a projected 120,000 voters.

According to Mr Christie, he could not close the register because Bahamians were not registering fast enough, which resulted in him not being able to appoint a Boundaries Commission to decide electoral boundaries.

On March 22, 2007 Mr Christie said that there were compelling reasons why the work of the commission had to be delayed, which had nothing to do with inaction by the commission or the government.

"Instead," he said, "the delay, regretfully as it was, was the direct result of the very slow process of Bahamians registering to vote."

By comparison, Mr Ingraham announced this week that by the first week in January 2012 the Parliamentary Registration Department is expected to start the distribution of voters' cards. By the same time five years ago Mr Christie was still begging Bahamians to register so that the Commission could make a decision on the boundaries.

Apparently, Mr Christie refused to recognise that many Bahamians are very much like him — slow to decide and even slower to act. Although Mr Christie was

advised to announce a closure date early in 2006 for the 2007 election — as Mr Ingraham had done earlier this year for the 2012 election — he refused to do so. He was told that the only way to get Bahamians to move was to fix a date — the floodgates would open, and registration offices would be filled. This seemed to take an extra long time for Mr Christie to compute and so three months before the 2007 election the Boundaries Commissioners were still floundering — still nothing to report. It was only on the morning of March 19, 2007 — two months before the election — that Mr Christie presented the House with the Boundaries report.

It did not take a genius to predict that the 2007 election was going to be one of confusion. Up to that point political candidates were not even certain of their districts. First Bahamians were blamed because they were too slow to register. And naturally at the end of the day, someone else had to be blamed for the inevitable confusion that was to follow when voting did start. Naturally, the poor Parliamentary Commissioner, through no fault of his own, had to be the fall guy for the indecision at the top.

Here it was March 19, 2007 with Mr Christie standing before the House with the Boundaries Commissions report to be presented. One of the Commissioner's signatures was missing — that of Brent Symonette, the only Opposition member on the committee. Mr Symonette had refused to sign because the PLP members had shunted him aside, treating his opinion with complete contempt. This will not happen this year as Mr Symonette, again appointed to the Commission, is one of the two members representing the government.

At this point in 2007, the Constitution was closing in on Mr Christie. If he didn't do his famous two-step shuffle quickly, on May 22 Parliament would automatically dissolve itself without him.

It was a huffing and a puffing to the finish line, which was eventually announced for May 2. The results were inevitable — the FNM won 23 of the 41 seats with the PLP winning the other 18. And now five years later Bahamians face a new election with a decisive man at the top. It is now up to the electorate to decide whether they are going to entrust their future to a leader of indecision, or one of decision.

It is only a matter of months before Bahamians are called upon to make that decision.

Anti-crime measures not enough

EDITOR, The Tribune.

With 104 persons slaughtered thus far for the year, and with eight months to go before general elections must be called, the Prime Minister finally gave a national address outlining what his government intends to do in order to arrest the ever-escalating rate of crime, especially serious and violent crime. And I must be impressed? I certainly am not!

In his opening sentence, Mr Ingraham referred to crime as "the most pressing issue in our nation". My thinking is that the government must certainly know that crime did not just become the "most pressing" malady affecting this country, so why is he just making this speech?

He proposed a number of amendments that will be quickly made to the penal code designed to keep violent criminals in jail and/or strengthen bail and sentencing guidelines.

Admittedly some of these measures may actually prevent more murders. So why wait until 104 of our family and loved ones are already in the graveyard? In fact, why wait until the 300 plus who were killed over the past four years of this administration are pushing up daisies?

Could it be that this government, just like the previous one and all the others in my life time, continue to be 100 per cent reactive rather than proactive? They do nothing to prevent the mess, but have all manner of wonderful "solutions" to clean up the mess after we are all knee-deep in it, especially if general elections are near.

The government is proposing a mandatory minimum sentence of four years imprisonment for anyone convicted of illegal possession of a firearm. If I were a criminal, this would not deter me at all.

Guns were manufactured to do one thing, and that is to kill. And obviously if I have one illegally in my possession I have one intention, I probably have been to prison before, and the prospect of spending four more years in Fox Hill will not prompt me to dispossess myself of my weapon. If the mandatory minimum sentence for this offence was 15 years, I might think about that before deciding to carry a gun. The government is proposing an amendment to our law making the death penalty applicable for persons convicted of murdering any member of the security forces, Customs, Immigration, Prison Service and the judiciary.

What happens if my sister's boyfriend with premeditation, murders her because she wanted to abandon the relationship?

LETTERS

letters@tribunemedi.net

I will then be forced to pay for his room, board and protection while ensuring that he receives free cigarettes and internet probably for the rest of his life at a cost of \$18,000 per year. Not only is this insane, but it tells me that the government places more value on the life of a police officer than it does on the life of my sister. This is the kind of foolishness that emanates from a reactive government that just wants to show that it is doing something.

If the government were truly serious about capital punishment, it would abandon the Privy Council forthwith, respect the will of the vast majority of Bahamians and hang all murderers. Every last one!

The bottom line is this: it defies logic how any government can pretend to be serious about implementing capital punish-

ment while holding onto the Privy Council. That is simply not a credible proposition. But again this is the kind of farce that happens when a government is engaged in window-dressing.

Mr Ingraham said that the government will provide \$1 million to Urban Renewal-type programmes geared toward saving our inner-city youth who might be inclined to go astray into a life of criminality.

To put this into perspective, over the past ten years, our governments have probably spent more than \$500 million on roads for us to walk and drive our automobiles on. But \$1 million is supposed to be sufficient to invest in our young people? My true feelings on this cannot be printed in your esteemed publication. So the question is: Was I impressed by the Prime Minister's national address on crime? Absolutely not!

WELLY FORBES
Nassau,
October 7, 2011.

Time and tide wait for no man

EDITOR, The Tribune.

WHEN I saw Mr Perry Christie making up his face and whining outside the beautiful brand new Straw Market I remembered the old saying, "Time and tide wait for no man." This includes Mr. Christie and the PLP who spent the last four years complaining about just about everything Prime Minister Ingraham has done.

I want to congratulate the Government for the very attractive new home for the straw vendors. As a Bahamian I am so proud that we finally have a new Straw Market thanks to Mr. Ingraham, and no thanks to Mr. Christie. Mr Christie seems to believe that the world will forever wait for him to make up his mind. The Bahamas doesn't have the luxury of waiting for him to stop being late on just about everything.

Thank God Mr Ingraham came back and got the country moving again with the new airport, roads, Baha Mar and so many other things. God help us if Mr Christie was in office when the world economy went down. It is very unlikely that we would have gotten a new prescription drug benefit, the unemployment benefit, new job training, many more resources for the courts and the police, and better water pressure and clean water from Grants Town to Marathon.

While Mr Ingraham lives by the motto, "Time and tide wait for no man," Mr Christie seems to live by the belief that time and tide will wait on him to make a decision, any decision.

Now, a word to the straw vendors. There are many wonderful vendors who work hard and do us

proud. But there is that group of ungrateful vendors that this country apparently can never do enough for. They are spoiled and think that this country owes them something. They better realise that most Bahamians are tired of their constant complaining. This new Straw Market belongs to all of us and not just them. We want them to keep it clean, pay their fair share, behave properly and show more manners to their customers. The country has now spent millions to provide them with somewhere to make a living. Most other people have to pay far greater overhead and expenses to run their business. Instead of complaining show some gratitude and thank Mr. Ingraham.

Some people are so hypocritical. For five years some vendors remained absolutely quiet when Mr. Christie was in office. They remained quiet even though he never built the new Straw Market. They remained quiet when former Minister Leslie Miller suggested that the price for the new Straw Market was padded and said that a new Market could be built for less than the price tag the PLP came up with.

Now, even though they have a new Market built by the FNM, these same people with their loud mouths are complaining. Instead of cheering on Mr. Christie when he went to look at the new Market, they should have said, "Thank you for coming to visit, but when Papa come we'll have to thank him for keeping his word and giving us this new home we can call our own."

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SANDALS DEVELOPMENT 'LIKE A BRAND NEW HOTEL'

By **TANEKA THOMPSON**
Deputy Chief Reporter
tthompson@tribunemedia.net

EXECUTIVES at Sandals Royal Bahamian Resort are excited about a \$17.5 million upgrade which will turn the property into a "brand new hotel".

The improvements include the gutting and renovation of an historic 144 room structure, The Manor; overhaul of the property's three pools; and upgrades to the decks and the hotel's original lobby.

Aside from the 144 rooms which are closed for renovations, the hotel is currently at full occupancy, said Butch Stewart, founder and chairman of Sandals Resorts.

It is a trend the hotel boss expects to continue when those rooms are re-opened to



BUTCH STEWART, chairman of Sandals Resorts, said the hotel is at full occupancy

guests on March 1, 2012.

"We're less 144 rooms, but it's full and it'll be full on the first of March," he said.

The building, which was constructed in the 1950s, was last refurbished in 1995 but the ongoing renovations will make the building more modern and add expansive seaside

balconies to 44 rooms.

"We've gut it to the bone, taken out all the plumbing, all the electrical wiring, all the fire safety equipment and we're going to rebuild it, make it more spectacular. We're going to change the actual architecture, actually improve it dramatically from the outside.

"We're putting enormous balconies on the bedrooms that never had balconies facing out to sea - it's all beach-front accommodation.

"There were 44 rooms that I believe never had balconies, they're going to have great big balconies that can accommodate butler service and room service," said Mr Stewart during an interview in the Piano Room on the ground floor of The Manor.

Sandals is also putting in a



AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION of the Sandals Royal Bahamian Resort upgrade

new insulation system which should slash its energy consumption by as much as 45 per cent.

It should also lower electricity bills which Mr Stewart compared to a monthly natural disaster.

"We're putting in what they call an EIFS (exterior insulation and finish system) which wraps around the building.

"It insulates the building so that the air-conditioning can

cool better and by doing that, the electricity consumption will go down.

"And, we have just installed a brand new air-conditioning chiller which is water cooled, which is 20 odd per cent more efficient than air-cooled (systems).

"Along with the styrofoam wrapping and better insulation, we hope to be about 35 to 45 per cent less in (energy) consumption by having a

more efficient system.

"Now, the electricity bills are so high every time we get a monthly bill it's like an earthquake," said Mr Stewart. At the end of August, Sandals Royal Bahamian closed for four weeks to address structural and other damage caused by Hurricane Irene.

The property, which has more than 400 rooms, re-opened for guests on September 28.

POSTGRADUATES SAY THEY CHOSE EDUCATION TO HELP THE NATION

By **CELESTE NIXON**
Tribune Staff Reporter
cnixon@tribunemedia.net

NEW postgraduates on Grand Bahama say they decided to further their education in an effort to help enhance the country's number one industry.

Over the weekend, three Grand Bahamian tourism executives obtained Master of Management degrees in Hospitality and Tourism through Revans University/IMCA.

Graduates Raylene Gardiner, Shamine Johnson and Carmel Churchill want to focus on the challenges that face tourism in the Bahamas and in particular Grand Bahama, and explore untapped and underdeveloped areas of the industry.

Shamine Johnson, a manager with the Bahamas Hotel



POSTGRADUATES in Grand Bahama have earned degrees in hospitality and tourism

Association and Marina Operators of the Bahamas (MOB), also announced that she received confirmation that she and her fellow postgraduates will travel to Trinidad and Tobago in January 2012 to present their collaborative

paper, "Tourism, Culture and the Creative Industries: Exploring the Linkages".

A press statement said: "The news was the icing on the cake for the three Grand Bahamian hospitality professionals who submitted an abstract for approval to the scientific committee for the upcoming international conference."

The event is being hosted by the University Of the West Indies in collaboration with the Ted Rogers School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Ryerson University in Canada and London Metropolitan University.

It will afford the Grand Bahama contingent an opportunity to showcase the potential for cultural tourism in the Bahamas.

The graduates said they hope to expand the country's main industry and have

already conducted research and made suggestions on how to further develop the industry.

According to research conducted by Carmel Churchill, a group sales manager at the Grand Lucayan Resort, 40 per cent of overnight visitors to Grand Bahama come to the island on a cruise.

She said: "By enhancing services and offerings at the resort, an increased demand would be generated for the island of Grand Bahama, thus resulting in increased air travel over the next one to three

years and beyond."

Raylene Gardiner, association manager for Old Bahama Bay-West End Resort, said there is a growing trend in the Bahamas of visitors using condo resorts, and enhancement of managerial policies and procedures is needed in order to see further development in this area.

Shamine Johnson said: "The island of Grand Bahama is strategically positioned to be the hub of maritime activity for the region.

"Despite fluctuations in the global economy, the maritime industry's growth is evident in terms of employment, entrepreneurial activity, and tax revenue generation."

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LOCAL NEWS

TWO MEN ARE CHARGED OVER PIPE METAL THEFT

from page one

Derence Rolle-Davis in Court Five, Bank Lane to answer to a charge of stealing and receiving.

The prosecution alleges that the accused men – being concerned together on Friday, October 7 – stole 29 18"x18" metal pipes property of the Bahamas Water and Sewer-

age Corporation. The two were also charged with receiving these metal pipes on the same date in question.

After Magistrate Rolle-Davis read the charges to Cartwright, 38, and Campbell, 26 – who both pleaded

not guilty to the offences – he informed them that their charges were “selectable”, allowing them to have their case tried before his court or the next highest one.

Both men chose the Magistrate’s Court over the

Supreme Court. The judge then raised the issue of bail. However, prosecution offered no objection to the defendants receiving bail, seeing that both men had no previous convictions or pending matters before the courts.

Magistrate Rolle-Davis granted the men \$15,000 bail, each with a surety. They will return to court on Tuesday, January 10, 2012 when trial is expected to begin. Four witnesses are listed on the court dockets.

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MARK CAMPBELL, centre, and Nickolo Cartwright outside court yesterday

Photo: Felipe Major/Tribune Staff

EXTRA STAFF AT DEPARTMENT OF PROSECUTIONS

from page one

Despite the shortage of manpower, Mr Delaney commended the Department of Public Prosecutions for its ability to implement several new initiatives while operating with a “complement of prosecutors below needed levels.”

Speaking at a press conference at his office, Mr Delaney introduced the seven new

Assistant Counsel, as well as nine attorneys from the Royal Bahamas Police Force.

“These additional manpower resources will now enable the department to better staff the specialized practice groups, advise police during early stages of investigations of serious matters, implement criminal case management review of files for prosecution, and execute other initiatives,” he said.

“There is considerable demand for legal services in the Department of Public Prosecutions. We estimate that there will continue be a need for additional capacity in the Department of Public Prosecutions.”

He added that the department has yet to fill the rank of Chief Counsel, who will head

one of four special prosecution teams. These special prosecution teams were recommended and introduced by the new Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Vinette Graham-Allen when she took office last year.

Ms Graham-Allen said yesterday that she also introduced the witness care programme, criminal case management and the prosecution teams.

“My role is to bring structure to the department of public prosecution,” she said. “The members of the public will see that they have already started feeling the effects of it.”

The DPP also added that there has been greater cooperation between the police and the Department of Public

Prosecutions since the beginning of the year. The police have been receiving legal advice from the department that will assist in the prosecution of cases, she said.

“You will not see us on the scene of a crime that is not our responsibility,” Ms Graham-Allen said.

Mr Delaney contended that with the implementation of several new directives aimed at strengthening the judicial process, especially with regard to criminal matters, there should be fewer incidents within the system.

“The more capacity we have, the better we are able to meet those demands,” he said. “I sincerely hope that there is a lesser incidence of there being any case of unpreparedness.”

BRAN AIMS ‘TO TEACH INGRAHAM A LESSON’

from page one

Bamboo Town, but running against the Prime Minister is an option. He refused to come to me, so I’ll go to him.”

Mr McCartney’s comments came after Mr Ingraham said in the House of Assembly, Monday, he would not eliminate the Bamboo Town constituency, even if the Boundaries Commission recommended it. He said he would rather see the three men vying for the seat “fight it out to see who is eligible to be a leader.”

Renward Wells (PLP) and Cassius Stuart (FNM) are running against Mr McCartney, who won the Bamboo Town seat in 2007 as an FNM.

The Prime Minister, in referring to Mr McCartney, commented: “When I was younger, I had hard mouth, but I could back it up. I wasn’t just arrogant and biggety. I was able to back up what I said.”

Laughing off Mr Ingraham’s comments, Mr McCartney said the Prime Minister did not “back up” any of the promises he made to the Bahamian people.

“He did not back up what he promised to do with crime. He did not back up what he promised to do with illegal immigration and he did not back up what he promised to do with the road works.



BRANVILLE MCCARTNEY, left, leader of the DNA, is aiming to oust Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham, even if it costs his own political career, he says



“He is a dismal failure in all of these areas. If he really wanted to back up something he would run against me in Bamboo Town, leader against leader.”

Mr McCartney also said the Prime Minister’s premature statements means that he sees him as a threat and “his waters are obviously running.”

“I am not arrogant. The DNA has only been in existence for five months, but they got my name in their

mouths, left, right and centre.

“Why is he worrying about me? He needs to focus on the country and not what I may or may not be doing.”

Mr McCartney added that while he respects both Leader of the PLP, Perry Christie and Mr Ingraham, they both need to retire before they completely destroy “what little legacy they may leave behind”.

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LOCAL NEWS



GRADUATES are congratulated as they receive their certificates in the 7th annual apprentice graduation ceremony held by the Grand Bahama Shipyard. The ceremony was staged at the Grand Lucayan Resort

LATEST GROUP OF APPRENTICES GRADUATE FROM GRAND BAHAMA SHIPYARD TRAINING



THE GROUP of graduates showing off their awards after the latest in-house training scheme by the Grand Bahama Shipyard

FREEPORT – The Grand Bahama Shipyard graduated another eight apprentices from its in-house training initiative, which the company said aims to help lift the skill level of the island's workforce.

The 7th annual apprentice graduation ceremony was held at the Grand Lucayan Resort under the theme: "Embracing an exciting future with wisdom, pride and responsibility."

Chairman and CEO of the shipyard Carl-Gustaf Rotkirch said of this year's graduates: "They should never settle for less than excitement at work, always reach for goals that give reason for pride, and their wisdom will develop."

He said they now have the basis to become real tradesmen in the ship repair business.

Fifty-six Bahamians have now graduated from the apprenticeship programme and taken up key positions at the shipyard.

The programme offers a four-year certificate course to eight students each year.

Top students were also recognised during the evening. They were:

- Shaunley Kemp – CEO's Award
- Wellington Wildgoose – Most Outstanding student
- Whitfield Bain – Manager's Award
- Ashley Burnett – Most Improved

The guest speaker for the event was Grand Bahama Port Authority vice-president Ginger Moxey, who congratulated the graduates on behalf of the executive team of the GBPA.

"We commend and applaud you for your discipline and dedication to broadening your base and finding your abilities."

"The time and effort that you have invested will produce fruits."

"You are preparing yourselves to meet the market demand for skilled labourers and for the countless opportunities that will come as a result of your training," she said.

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LOCAL NEWS

BRITAIN LOOKING FOR A NEW PLACE IN EUROPEAN POLITICS AS DEBATE SWELLS

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FUNERAL SERVICE FOR

Olive Rowena Chestnut-Knowles, 83



of Sandilands Village died on Tuesday, 4th October, 2011 at Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre will be held on **Wednesday 12th October, 2011 at 11:00am at Restview Memorial Mortuary and Crematorium Limited, Robinson and Soldier Roads.** Officiating will be Pastor Hugh Roach.

Interment will follow in Woodlawn Gardens, Soldier Road.

Left to cherish her memories is her **2 sons:** Geno and Gregory Knowles; **1 step son:** Gregory Major and Family; **1 sister:** Mrs. Florence Carey; **2 grandsons and 1 granddaughter;** **1 daughter-in-law;** **8 nephews:** Raymond and Paul Carey, Mark, Peter and Gary Carroll, Ted, Andrea and Ivan Chestnut; **5 nieces:** Mrs. Helen Roberts, Mrs. Cathy Cartwright, Michelle, Charlene and Caroline; **numerous other relatives and friends including:** the Nurses and Doctors of Thompson Ward Geriatric Hospital, especially: Dr. Jagadeesh; Ann Ingraham and Family, the Goodman Family of Nassau Village, Andrew Smith and Family, Sharon Ferguson and Family, Leslie Smith and Family, Audie Smith and Family, Thomas Axel Knowles and Family and others too numerous to mention.

Viewing will be held in the **Irenic Suite at Restview Memorial Mortuary and Crematorium Ltd., Robinson and Soldier Roads** on Wednesday from 9:30am until service time.



BRITISH PRIME MINISTER David Cameron has stated that the threat to the UK economy from the eurozone crisis is now as serious as the banking meltdown of 2008

Opinion By PETER YOUNG

THE growing public clamour in Britain for a referendum on the nation's membership of the European Union should come as no surprise.

The current eurozone sovereign debt crisis has helped to bring the issue to a head even though Britain did not adopt the euro when it was introduced in 1999.

While the Conservative-Liberal Democratic coalition government seeks to convince the markets that its own deficit reduction programme is working, prime minister David Cameron has stated that the threat to the UK economy from the eurozone crisis is now as serious as the banking meltdown of 2008.

But, alarming as that is, the concerns of the general public – as well as the political class – go far wider.

In 1975, British people voted in a referendum in favour of continued membership of the then European Economic Community which dealt with trade and social matters. At the time, this was important for Britain as a major trading nation.

Successive governments signed the Single European Act in 1986 establishing the single market (elimination of restrictions among member countries on trade and free competition but short of a single economic area); the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992 (creation of the EU and paving the way to political integration); and the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007 (in all but name a new EU constitution with greater powers) which was another significant step towards the dream of the founding fathers to build a supranational federalist Europe.

Despite these major developments, which radically changed the nature of European cooperation, there has been no formal test of British public opinion on the issue by means of a referendum for some 35 years.

Traditionally, in Britain's parliamentary democracy voters expect their elected representatives to reflect their views and to protect their interests, though a referendum may be held on a major constitutional issue.

In the view of increasing numbers of eurosceptics, Britain has been drawn progressively in to an EU monolith, which, through its unelected Commission in Brussels, has imposed excessive influence and control over its member states and seeks to regulate them to an unacceptable extent; in particular, the ever greater social burdens imposed by the EU bureaucracy on employers through unaffordable consumer protection, health and safety measures and environmental rules. There is also major concern about the repercussions of free movement of people within the EU.

Indeed, such interference from Brussels in its bid for harmonisation is at the core

As the eurozone crisis deepens, with the President of the European Commission describing it as the worst in the EU's history, expert opinion is now beginning to accept that this common EU currency cannot work without a common economic policy and fiscal integration

Peter Young

of its ultimate ideal of full political integration – and, as one of its few law-abiding members which adheres faithfully to EU directives and legislation, Britain is penalised more than others. Another major irritant for Britons arises from interpretation of human rights. The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) was created under the Council of Europe in 1950 and was signed at the time by Britain.

It represented an attempt to prevent repetition of the atrocities and other human rights violations of the Second World War and to strengthen the rule of law and democracy in Europe.

Although it predated the EU, adherence to it now appears effectively to be a condition of EU membership.

More recently, the UK's Human Rights Act (1998) gave further effect in domestic law to the rights conferred under the ECHR.

Increasingly, however, interpretation of the law has seemed to protect the so-called human rights of undeserving people; for example, failed asylum seekers and convicted terrorists whose deportation to their own countries has been prevented.

At the Conservative Party's recent conference in Manchester, Home Secretary Theresa May is reported to have told delegates that human rights laws were making a mockery of the way Britain deals with asylum seekers and tries to deport those convicted of terrorist offences. So there is growing pressure to scrap the Human Rights Act and replace it with a Bill of Rights which protects people but recognises that with rights come responsibilities and obligations.

As the eurozone crisis deepens, with the President of the European Commission describing it as the worst in the EU's history, expert opinion is now beginning to accept that this common EU currency cannot work without a common economic policy and fiscal integration among the 17 of its member states in the eurozone.

While disenchantment with the EU increases in parts of Europe – witness the public opposition to the Lisbon Treaty in France, the Netherlands and Ireland and

now the reluctance in Germany to bail out Greece – the goal of full political integration in a union of nearly 500 million people in 27 countries remains. But this likewise cannot be achieved without some form of effective economic and fiscal union.

It is clear that Britain will not allow herself to be forced into a European state which does not command the support of her own people.

Assuming that the EU does not implode as a result of a collapse of the eurozone, the likely way forward is a split between those member states which are prepared to accept greater fiscal union and more social harmonization and others who will still adhere to the Single European Market because they wish to continue to trade within the EU on a preferential basis.

Such diversity is not necessarily fanciful. Denmark, Sweden and others (as well as Britain) are not members of the eurozone, and Britain also does not, for example, participate in the open frontiers Schengen Agreement.

For the immediate future the Coalition argues that a referendum on the issue of full EU membership would bring no benefit, would damage economic confidence and would not be in Britain's overall interest.

It follows that it would be better not to risk complete withdrawal from the EU but rather to seek to repatriate more powers from Brussels, including control over immigration from other EU countries, while at the same time opting out of any further integration.

As the issue is likely to remain at the top of the political agenda, government ministers need to draw a distinction between full membership – involving further interference and demands from Brussels together with more political integration – and more limited cooperation on trade and other matters.

There is to be a one-day debate in the House of Commons sometime before Christmas on whether to hold a referendum about leaving the EU.

Our political leaders need to protect Britain's overall interests. But they would do well to heed the growing strength of eurosceptic public opinion.

Tribune Trivia

Yesterday's Question

What sport did bronze medal winning high jumper Trevor Barry quit after sustaining an ankle injury?

Yesterday's Answer

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Yesterday's Winners

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LOCAL NEWS

HATS OFF TO A NEW DESTINATION



THE MAN in the Panama hat atop Gamboa Rainforest Resort observation tower overlooking the Panama Canal near the Chagres River.

Photo:
Derek Smith

PANAMA CITY, Panama – Except for the eponymous straw hat, Panama has never been on my personal radar.

Years ago I knew it as a nexus of American imperialism – a colonial enclave carved out of Colombia in 1903 to facilitate the US construction and operation of that engineering wonder known as the Panama Canal, the world's most strategic waterway.

The Canal Zone was a source of friction between Panama and the United States for decades, culminating in the 1964 riots that were suppressed by US troops. As a result, in 1977 the US agreed to transfer the canal to Panama with effect from 1999. American troops were used again in 1989 to topple the military dictator Manuel Noriega, who was later imprisoned in the US and France on drug trafficking and money laundering charges.

So it was an entirely unexpected experience for me to visit a stable, prosperous and democratic Panama for the first time via Copa Airlines' new direct flight between Panama City and Nassau. The \$514 roundtrip flight has enjoyed passenger load factors of more than 80 per cent since its launch last June, with most arrivals staying on Paradise Island but 10 per cent going on to Grand Bahama and/or the out islands.

Today, Panama's military has been replaced by a 15,000-man police force, and General Noriega is about to be extradited from France back home, where he is expected to serve at least part of a 20-year sentence for human rights abuses committed during the 1980s. This should complete Panama's transformation into a modern, globally connected, democratic state.

The country's tourism motto – where the world meets – is more apt than might at first appear. Over six million passengers transit through Tocumen International Airport here each year, making it one of the busiest air hubs in Latin America. And some 38 ships a day make the 10-hour journey through the canal – in fact, they are lined up like taxis at the misty Pacific coast entrance overlooked by our hotel.

And since Panama occupies a three million-year-old land bridge linking North and South America, the isthmus is a biodiversity hotspot that has become a magnet for international scientists. This is reflected by a vast national park system that takes up about a quarter of the country, as well as by the presence of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institution, one of the world's elite biological research centres.

But though it is a year behind schedule, the star environmental attraction here is the \$96 million Panama Biodiversity Museum now under construction. Conceived and designed by acclaimed architect Frank Gehry, whose buildings – such as the Guggenheim Museum in Spain – are legendary tourist attractions, the museum is expected to receive some 600,000 visitors a year when it opens in 2012.

Built on 70 acres of reclaimed land on the



Amador Causeway at the Pacific entrance to the canal – just a few blocks from the main cruise port – the museum will trace Panama's incredible biodiversity through a series of eight open-air pavilions on two levels protected by immense architectural canopies. This structure will be surrounded by a botanic park and is expected to generate revenues of \$60 million a year.

I visited the project's headquarters in the old US Officers Club at Fort Amador, next to the construction site, where architectural models are on display. Nearby is a marine field station operated by the Smithsonian, and a 30-minute bus ride towards the interior delivers you to the stunningly beautiful 55,000-acre rainforest of Soberania National Park.

The more obvious meaning of the slogan – where the world meets – refers to the canal itself, a 50-mile waterway blasted through the mountains from Colon on the Caribbean coast to Panama City on the Pacific coast, that transformed global trade when it opened in 1914. More than 26,000 workers died building the artificial lakes and channels, and three sets of locks on each end of the waterway, which raise and lower ships some 27 metres. Some of those workers were Bahamians.

The Miraflores locks, on the Panama City end of the canal, are a major visitor attraction in their own right, featuring restaurants, shops, a theatre and museum. From the observation deck you can watch massive container ships towed by electric locomotives as they begin their passage to the Caribbean. Not far away is the imperial canal headquarters building, an imposing edifice built by the Americans that resembles something out of the British Raj.

On the Caribbean side of the canal, near the Gatun locks, is a huge tax-free zone that describes itself as a "hub in the globalized economy". The Colon Free Zone encloses 1100 acres of warehouses, showrooms, shipping and transit systems, and its 28,000 employees break down endless container loads of goods for resale – handling more than \$16 billion of merchandise a year and a quarter of a million visitors. This is the as yet unfulfilled vision of a major commercial distribution centre that the Grand Bahama Port Authority has for Freeport, and in fact both ports are operated by the same Chinese company, Hutchinson Whampoa.

"The free zone is strictly wholesale for re-export," our guide told us, "but some shops will sell retail to foreigners. You just have to know which ones and you have to tip the security guards on the way out." It seemed like organised hustling to me, and the steamy, dirty, congested streets are certainly not designed for retail shopping. Our visit was more of an advert for trade, as well as an interesting cultural experi-

ence. Our mandatory guide, for example, was part Jamaican and able to switch effortlessly from street Spanish to yardie English.

Panama's tourist industry is still relatively small – accounting for about 15 per cent of the gross domestic product of \$44 billion. Some two million visitors are expected this year (compared to the Bahamas' 5.2 million last year), but Copa Airlines is a major player in western hemisphere travel. One of the industry's top earners, it flies to 59 destinations in 28 countries from Canada to the tip of Argentina, boasting a 90 per cent on-time record with a fleet of 70 Boeing and Embraer jets that have an average age of under five years.

"The Bahamas route is the most successful launch in our 60-year history," claimed Copa's vice president of planning, Joe Mohan. "This was completely unexpected because the Bahamas is not well known in Latin America. Our first flight to Nassau had some 10 nationalities on board because of our wide network, and load factors continue to be high although there are concerns about the lack of Spanish speakers in the Bahamas."

While Copa is expected to bring some 14,000 plus Latins to Nassau this year, only about 320 Bahamians have made the reverse trip so far, according to Tourism Authority chief Gabriella Antelo. But this is sure to change as Panama becomes better known to Bahamians. And a stop-over promotion with Copa Airlines lets passengers visiting other destinations stay in Panama City at no extra fare, and benefit from special hotel and activity rates.

English language skills are well developed here and the US dollar is legal tender just as it is in the Bahamas. Moreover, the shopping opportunities are enough to make any red-blooded Bahamian swoon. Albrook Mall, on the site of an old US air base near the canal, bills itself as the largest in Latin America and it is certainly the equal of any American emporium in price, presentation and selection. Casinos are also a popular attraction and international hotel brands are well represented in Panama City.

The country's dollarized economy rests on a well-developed service sector centred around the canal with GDP growth projected at 13 per cent this year. Panama is a regional base for a range of well-known corporations like Hewlett Packard, Procter & Gamble, Sony and Caterpillar. Major investments underway in the capital include a \$5.2 billion metro rail project, the \$96 million biomuseum, a \$1 billion port expansion, and a \$10 billion expansion of the Panama Canal that will almost double its capacity by 2014.

Panama City's soaring skyline, well-maintained infrastructure and sophisticated financial services could give a false impression to travellers

who don't venture into the countryside. More than a quarter of the country's population of 3.4 million lives in abject poverty, and the political system is still dominated by a wealthy elite.

Despite a relatively low jobless rate (about 5 per cent), most of the population earns less than \$800 a month. But military coups are a thing of the past and economic growth has dampened social discontent.

The centre-right president, Ricardo Martinelli, is a super-market tycoon of Italian ancestry who won only 5 per cent of the vote as head of a new party in 2004, was swept to power in a landslide five years later, but who has seen a sharp drop in support – his vice president recently joining the opposition. The leaders of the two main traditional parties – Martin Torrijos (the son of General Omar Torrijos, who negotiated the canal transfer) and Mireya Moscoso (the widow of three-

time president Arnulfo Arias) – were elected prior to Martinelli. The constitution prohibits consecutive terms, and the next presidential election is set for 2014.

There is one more meaning of "where the world meets" that is worth mentioning. It relates to Panama City's eight-acre Atlapa Convention Centre near the airport, which can seat over 10,000 people and features two theatres with the latest audio-visual equipment, 10,000 square-feet of exhibition space, 19 meeting rooms, and a six-language translation system.

According to Gabriela Antelo, this superb facility is available free to groups of more than 500 who stay a minimum of three nights. Also included are air tickets and hotel rooms for three speakers plus a welcome reception with a local show.

Another of Panama's key target markets is the yankee baby boom generation.

Eighty million of them are now reaching retirement age, and Panama is listed by Forbes Magazine and Businessweek as one of the world's top places for retirement living. Incentives include duty-free imports, tax exemptions and service discounts, plenty of direct flights, modern medical facilities, and a cost of living one fifth that of the United States.

Although the Nassau route is doing well, we are not Copa's only Caribbean destination. Our competition includes Jamaica, Trinidad, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Haiti and St Maarten. For Bahamians interested in travelling to Panama, I found the service excellent during the two-and-a-half hour flight to Panama City, and the 140-seat Boeing 737-700 aircraft was in good shape.

•What do you think? Send comments to larry@tribunemedia.net or visit www.bahamapundit.com.

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