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SEE SPORTS SECTION E

KFCs stay closed as row escalates

Union hits back at action by company

By AVA TURNQUEST
Tribune Staff Reporter
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UNION chiefs yesterday accused KFC Nassau of intimidating workers and undermining labour laws as the fast-food chain remained closed for a second day.

The Bahamas Hotel Catering and Allied Workers Union was certified as the official bargaining agent for line staff by Minister of

Labour Dion Foulkes late last night. Management did not show up to open any of the nine Kentucky Fried Chicken locations on New Providence yesterday, according to staff, who were instructed to continue to report to work as scheduled.

Breaking a more than three-decades-old agreement, KFC Nassau moved to

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MINISTER BACKS UNION ROLE

By CELESTE NIXON
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AS the KFC labour dispute continues to rage, Minister of Labour Dion Foulkes reaffirmed that the Bahamas Hotel Catering and Allied Workers Union is the official bargaining agent for fast-food chain's staff.

On Monday, in a historic

decision, KFC management withdrew its voluntary recognition of the BHCAWU as the bargaining agent for employees. Following the announcement, KFC staff staged a sit-down forcing the temporary closure of the company's nine New Providence locations.

According to Mr Foulkes,

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PM'S STRONG SUPPORT FOR BRAN RIVAL



PRIME MINISTER Hubert Ingraham embraces the FNM candidate for Bamboo Town, Cassius Stuart, at last night's rally. Photo: Tim Clarke/Tribune Staff

By PAUL G TURNQUEST
Chief Reporter
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BRANDING Branville McCartney as a man with unbridled "ambition to achieve power", Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham said Bamboo Town now deserves an MP who is more interested in them, rather than "himself".

Opening his party's constituency office for his candidate Cassius Stuart, Mr Ingraham told party supporters last night the next

FNM government would need "reliable, committed people" on their "delivery team".

"We need Cassius Stuart. Even though still a young man, Cassius has earned his stripes. He has been in the vineyard for some time. This year here in Bamboo Town he will reap what he has sown in terms of his love for the Bahamian people. He will be the next MP for Bamboo Town.

"Cassius is a fighter. He desires to be of service to The Bahamas. He is making

that desire come true through the FNM. Cassius is a smart man, Bamboo Town. He has both a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree. He has a passion for youth development and business. This is the kind of young man who can help motivate other young Bahamians," he said.

Taking a swipe at the area's current MP, Mr McCartney, who heads the Democratic National Alliance (DNA), Mr Ingraham

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ROBBERY SUSPECT ESCAPES AS GUARD TAKES TOILET BREAK

AN ARMED robbery suspect escaped custody while receiving treatment at hospital yesterday.

Frederick Green, 29, made his escape from the Princess Margaret Hospital's chest ward after the prison officer assigned to him left to use the bathroom.

Green, alias Frederick Neely, was remanded to Her Majesty's Prison after he was charged with two counts of armed robbery. According to police, he had no prior convictions.

In a press statement yesterday, HMP maintained that the officer secured Green in restraints before leaving to

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PLP PUTS BLAME ON ZHIVARGO

By DANA SMITH
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PLP leader Perry Christie told Fort Charlotte constituents that finance minister Zhivargo Laing shares the blame for high unemployment levels and a bad economy.

Speaking at the opening of the constituency's PLP headquarters last night, Mr Christie called Mr Laing an "abysmal failure" and said everything he's touched has gone from bad to worse.

"The footprints and the fingerprints of Zhivargo Laing are all over your pain and suffering," he said.

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MURDER TRIAL JURY SPLIT

By LAMECH JOHNSON
Tribune Staff Reporter
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A HUNG jury has left the case of a man accused of sexually assaulting and killing a woman nearly two years ago open for retrial.

The Supreme Court murder trial of 29-year-old Phillip McCartney was expected to be completed yesterday afternoon when the 12-member jury left court to decide if the defendant was guilty or innocent of killing Chrishonda Swain.

However, the jury was evenly split on the issue with none of the jurors budging to

SEE page 9

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LOCAL NEWS

PM'S STRONG SUPPORT FOR BRAN RIVAL

If you see this FINE young lady today, wish her a very

Happy Birthday



Enjoy your day.



BAMBOO TOWN candidate for the FNM Cassius Stuart with his wife and daughter at last night's rally. Photos: **Tim Clarke/Tribune Staff**

from page one

ham said the FNM did send a 'young man' to Bamboo Town in 2007 – but misjudged him.

"He swore on to our team and you elected him as an FNM. We misjudged him. Behind his affable smile was unbridled ambition to achieve power. He proved not to be interested in delivering for you but rather, achieving for himself.

"Now he tells you the Bahamas needs new leader-

ship. Well in order to lead, you must first learn to follow. Anyway, show him what you 'gat plan for him this time," Mr Ingraham charged.

If re-elected to office, Mr Ingraham said his party would build an "Opportunity Society" by providing every major island with the infrastructure and services necessary to attract domestic and foreign investment.

This initiative, he said will also be geared towards attracting Bahamians to also

return to 'the island'.

"So, in our next term we will launch the "Back to the Island" initiative, which will provide additional incentives for those from New Providence who seek to return to the Family Islands to start businesses and create employment.

Already, the Family Island Development Act provides customs duty concessions for developments taking place in our less developed islands especially in the Southern Bahamas.

"In our next term in office, we will extend those concessions and introduce new incentives including microloans and other measures meant to spur on investment in all of our islands from Grand Bahama and Abaco to Inagua.

"New Providence is our capital island. But we have a whole country to build from Inagua to the Abaco Cays. Your FNM has begun this work. We will do even more in our next term," he said.



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APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD

Norbert Boissiere, Chairman of FamGuard Corporation Limited, is pleased to announce the appointment of Felix Stubbs, MBE, to the Board of Directors of FamGuard and its subsidiary Family Guardian Insurance Company Limited.

Mr. Stubbs is General Manager of IBM Bahamas Limited, a subsidiary of IBM International. He also currently serves as Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of Doctors Hospital Health Systems, Vice Chairman of the Salvation Army Bahamas Advisory Board, and Treasurer of the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas.

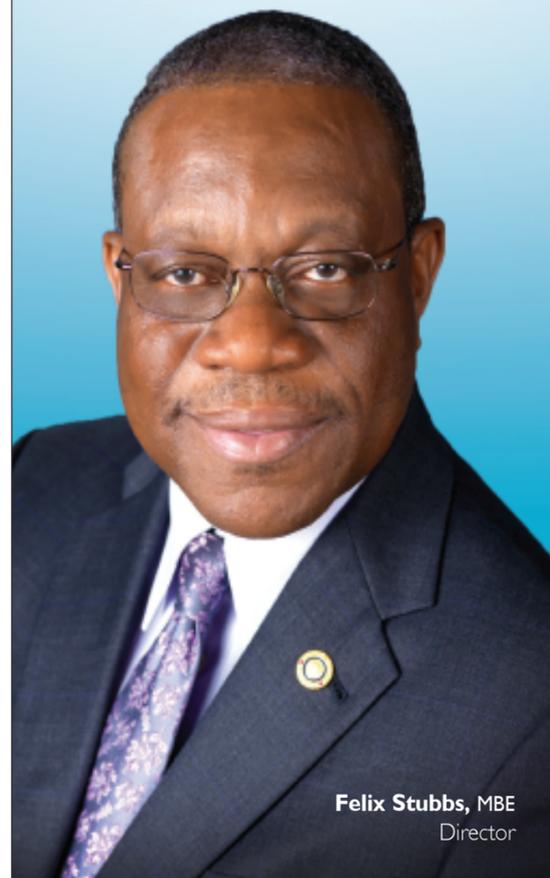
Mr. Stubbs' contributions to the growth and development of The Bahamas are numerous. He has served as Chairman of the Grand Bahama Port Authority, Chairman of Junior Achievement Bahamas, President of the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce, President of the Scout Association of The Bahamas, and has served on a variety of civic and government organizations including the National Insurance Board. An active Rotarian, he is currently serving as District Disaster Relief Chair at Rotary International District 7020 and is a Paul Harris Fellow.

In 1997 Mr. Stubbs was honored by Her Majesty the Queen for his services to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas when he became a Member of the British Empire. He is married and has two sons.

In announcing Mr. Stubbs' appointment to the FamGuard and Family Guardians Boards, Mr. Boissiere notes that the Company welcomes its newest Director and the wealth of experience Mr. Stubbs brings in the areas of corporate management, information technology, and community involvement.



SUPPORTERS cheer on the FNM and Hubert Ingraham last night.



Felix Stubbs, MBE
Director

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LOCAL NEWS

NEWS IN BRIEF

MAN DIES IN CRASH

POLICE are investigating a traffic fatality that claimed the life of a father of three.

The victim was identified as 31-year-old Delsworth "Bucket" Curry, of Wingate Drive, off Carmichael Road.

The incident took place around 4.45pm Monday on Inagua Way.

Eyewitnesses said the victim, who was driving a motorcycle while carrying a passenger, was riding down the street with his front wheel in the air when he was in collision with a south-bound white Nissan Sentra being driven by a woman. The victim landed on the hood of the vehicle, shattered the front windshield, then rolled onto and over the roof. He suffered extensive head and chest injuries and was rushed to hospital in a private vehicle. He died a short time later.

ROBBERY ARREST

A 21-YEAR-OLD Columbus Avenue man is in police custody in connection with the robbery of two people in the St Albans Drive area by a man with a handgun at about 9pm on Monday.

Moments later, several members of the community apprehended a man they believe has information about the matter, and handed him over to police.

Investigating officers conducted a search in the area and found an imitation handgun, and a cell phone they believe had been stolen. The man was still being questioned last night.

VICTIM SHOT IN HAND

A 24-YEAR-OLD Fox Hill man was shot in the hand on Monday. The incident occurred at about 10.30am, as the victim was walking on Bernard Road. He was approached by a dark Honda occupied by three men, one of whom produced a handgun and opened fire.

The victim was taken to hospital, treated and discharged. Police are investigating the incident.

Teenager refused bail over 12th killing of year

By LAMECH JOHNSON
Tribune Staff Reporter
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A TEENAGER was remanded to prison yesterday after being arraigned in Magistrates Court in connection with the country's 12th homicide for the year.

Thaddeus Williams, 19, of Hospital Lane, appeared before Chief Magistrate Roger Gomez in Court Six, Nassau Street.

It is alleged that he is responsible for the February 10 shooting death of 23-year-old Deshante Bain.

The Scott Street resident was shot and killed outside his home between West Street and Hospital Lane.

Williams was not required to enter a plea to the charge due to its nature. Chief Magistrate Gomez told the accused the prosecution would present him with a Voluntary Bill of Indictment on May 16.

The Bill, he said, would forward the case directly to Supreme Court for trial.

The accused was also charged with causing grievous harm to Anterio Demeritte on February 6.

He pleaded not guilty, on the grounds that he had acted in self-defence.

His attorney Murrio Ducille told the chief magistrate his client had been in police custody since last



THADDEUS WILLIAMS is escorted into court yesterday.

Photo: Tim Clarke/Tribune Staff

Thursday.

"He was severely beaten and you can see his face is all scratched up," he said.

Mr Ducille also claimed officers "tased" his client in the back and in the mouth.

He said Williams was only brought before the court

yesterday because his mother went to the Central Detective Unit to check up on him.

Williams told his mother he was supposed to be charged on Monday, Mr Ducille said.

Chief Magistrate Gomez noted the complaints and

ordered the accused to be taken to hospital for examination and treatment.

He then remanded Williams to Her Majesty's Prison until the completion of his trial.

The grievous harm trial begins on July 5.

ACCUSED DENIES COCAINE SUPPLY

By LAMECH JOHNSON
Tribune Staff Reporter
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

A SEVEN HILLS man was arraigned in Magistrate's Court yesterday in connection with a \$80,000 cocaine seizure in Nassau Harbour.

Antonio Baillou, 32, was remanded to Her Majesty's

Prison after being arraigned before Deputy Chief Magistrate Carolita Bethell in Court 8, Nassau Street, on the charge of drug possession with intent to supply.

It is alleged that on Sunday, February 19, while at the Bayshore Marina on East Bay Street, he was in possession of 10 pounds of cocaine, val-

ued at \$80,000.

Baillou denied the allegation and pleaded not guilty.

Deputy Chief Magistrate Bethell told the accused he was not eligible for bail due to the nature of the charge.

He will return to Magistrates Court on September 10 for trial.

ARREST OVER GUN FIND

FREEPORT – A 24-year-old Eight Mile Rock man has been arrested in connection with the discovery of a firearm.

Asst Supt Loretta Mackey said Drug Enforcement Unit officers took the man in for questioning shortly before 10am on Monday.

According to reports, the unlicensed gun and ammunition were found by a team of officers conducting a search in the Holmes Rock area just after 9.30am that day.

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UN climate chief turns to CEOs for action

AS GOVERNMENTS bicker over who should do what to slow the pace of global warming, the UN's climate chief is increasingly looking to business leaders to show the way forward to a low-carbon future.

Christiana Figueres told The Associated Press that her efforts to reach out to high-profile executives from companies such as Coca-Cola, Unilever and Virgin Group represent "a deeper recognition of the fact that the private sector can contribute in a decisive way".

Since the start of 2012, the Costa Rican head of the UN climate agency has met corporate leaders at the World Economic Forum in Davos and on a cruise to Antarctica organised by Nobel Peace Prize laureate and former US Vice-President Al Gore's Climate Reality Project.

"I'm hoping to accelerate what I call the push and pull process," Figueres told the AP in a phone interview Tuesday from her agency's secretariat in Bonn, Germany.

Governments act as a pull factor by shaping the policies that promote green technology and help renewable energy sources like solar and wind power compete with the fossil fuels that scientists say contribute to global warming through the release of greenhouse gases.

"But the companies, particularly these very, very high-powered companies that ... have the ear of many of the decision-makers and the opinion leaders of different countries, they can act as a push factor," Figueres said.

She mentioned Walmart, Coca-Cola and Unilever as examples of companies that have "looked at their own production and up and down their value chain" for ways to reduce their carbon footprints.

Underscoring the focus on businesses, the UN climate agency last month launched an online database showcasing examples of companies making efforts to help vulnerable communities adapt to climate change.

The heightened attention to the role of

corporations in addressing climate change comes amid a realisation that the two-decade-old UN climate talks are unlikely to achieve the goal of keeping temperatures from rising more than two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) above preindustrial levels.

Scientists predict further warming could lead to severe damage from extreme weather, droughts, floods and rising seas.

Last year, governments agreed to draw up a new climate pact by 2015 that would enter into force five years later.

But major hurdles remain, including the difficulty in getting the United States to sign up to legally binding emissions cuts.

The US doesn't want to commit to a binding deal unless it also imposes strict emissions targets on China and India, while the latter insist their targets should be more lenient because, historically, the West has a bigger share of the blame for man-made warming.

Figueres said it is up to the US electorate to decide in the presidential election this year "how they would like to see their national leadership treat this issue".

However, there are no signs from the presidential campaigns that the US stance is going to soften. Republican candidates have expressed doubt over, or flat-out rejected, the notion that human activities contribute to warming.

And Democratic President Barack Obama, facing Republican criticism for locking up the nation's energy resources, has embraced increased oil and gas production on the campaign trail.

"What is always astonishing to me is how the US citizen is willing to diminish the possibility that the United States has to be a leader in the technologies of the future," Figueres said.

"And it also has implications for the world. Because this world would profit from the technical and intellectual capacity that is in the United States."

This article is by Karl Ritter of the Associated Press

Is the PLP for the small man?

EDITOR, The Tribune.

Sea Hauler Tragedy

It was on that fateful day, the August 2, 2003, when the Motor Vessels United Star and Sea Hauler collided at sea. It was an August Monday holiday weekend and the Sea Hauler was full of passengers travelling to Cat Island. That day has been described as the worst in maritime history in The Bahamas; due to the collision, four persons lost their lives and 25 were injured, some seriously, losing limbs.

What did the Christie-led PLP Government do at the time to help the many victims and their families? Absolutely nothing!

In fact, more than three years later, the then Ministry of Transport & Aviation released a statement on the December 22, 2006, days before Christmas and another new year following the tragedy, stating among other things that,

"The government will continue to take all legal avenues to resolve this matter. All parties are encouraged to join with the government in seeking a resolution to this matter in a manner consistent with the law of the land."

In plain language, the PLP did nothing, and worse, intended to do nothing to, as they say, "wipe the tear from every eye" of the victims and their families. The PLP had an opportunity to give real meaning to those words and demonstrate care and compassion. Instead, they did nothing. The above statement by the then PLP government was in response, at the time, to demands for compensation by the families and the injured persons.

It was the FNM government, led by the Rt Hon Hubert A Ingraham, just a year after being elected on the May 2, 2007, that set up a

LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

fund of \$1 million to truly relieve some of the suffering of the victims and their families of the tragic Sea Hauler incident.

Not only did the compassionate and progressive FNM government make the \$1 million available to the victims and their families, it also agreed to have the past and future medical expenses incurred at any governmental health facility be paid by the government.

Straw Market

We are reminded of the Straw Market fire on the September 4, 2001, a mere eight months before the May, 2002 general elections. While the FNM was in government, in the months leading up to the general elections, the Christie-led PLP strongly criticized it for not rebuilding the market.

Ironically though, the Christie-led PLP won the May, 2002, election and for five years to the day, May, 2007, they failed to rebuild the market. Incredibly, they did not even commence its reconstruction! And they had the brass to make an issue of eight months!

Worse, the same make-shift and intended temporary arrangements the FNM government put in place for the straw vendors during the eight-month period, remained their workplace for the duration of the PLP's term from 2002-2007.

We all know that it was this compassionate and progressive FNM government, in this term, during the worst economic conditions the world has faced since the Great Depression of 1929, rebuilt the market for the straw vendors who had to endure the elements in the same intended temporary arrangement over

five years under the PLP government.

It is an irony, because in the main, the straw vendors (not all of them) are thought to be supporters of the PLP. But the PLP did nothing for them. It took an FNM government to wipe away the tears of every straw vendor and to bring true relief to all of them.

Education

The opportunity for tertiary education has been a thorny issue in this country because the prevailing view under the 25-year governance of the Pindling-led PLP, was that unless you were connected to the PLP in some way "you need not apply." Famous words of the PLP today.

Today, many qualified Bahamians regardless of party affiliation receive scholarships, funds that are not repaid. If you meet the academic criteria, you can receive at least \$7,500 and up to \$40,000 per year to study abroad for a four-year degree. No questions asked about who your family might be, or who you may know in the governing party. Due to the FNM government those days are gone, and thankfully so.

The Christie-led PLP government awarded a grand total of \$1.7 million in scholarship funds from 2002-2007. The current FNM government awarded, inclusive of the current school year, \$28 million in scholarships! In fact, this school year alone more than \$8 million has been awarded. That is almost five times the entire term of the Christie government and 20 times that of their last year!

So who's for the "small man"? The facts speak ever more loudly than all the PLP talk: Hubert Ingraham and the Free National Movement.

MICHAEL A FOULKES
Secretary General, FNM
Nassau,
February 8, 2012.

Keep a close eye on breaches of election law

EDITOR, The Tribune.

IN THE elections of the fifties and sixties, there were many complaints and allegations of election bribery. CID officers were kept busy investigating the reports.

I recall on one occasion a Member of Parliament called the commissioner to complain that we were harassing persons in his constituency with intense interrogations about bribery. The then Superintendent of the CID Mr Frank Russell, formerly of Scotland Yard, commended us for the work we were doing. He asked for assurance that we were being polite and discreet.

In one of those elections, there was an allegation that the winning candidate of the United Bahamian Party in an Abaco constituency had used a private aircraft from which five pound Bahamian notes along with his election campaign leaflets were thrown.

I was directed to visit Abaco and investigate. I spent a week in Abaco. I got a lot of support and information from voters in a settlement called "Fire Road".

I collected leaflets and some five pound notes from several persons from whom I recorded statements describing the incident. Employees at the Marsh Harbour Airport assisted me by identifying a private plane, which turned out to be the one used. Upon conclusion of the investigation I submitted a report, which contained information about the pilot and the per-

sons on board. A complete report was submitted to the Attorney General Mr LAW Orr, who commended my efforts and instructed that the UBP, MP... be arrested and charged. I completed my assignment by arresting and charging the MP as directed by the AG.

The MP was represented by that famous Bahamian attorney the late Eugene Dupuch, QC. The trial judge warned the witnesses that they were exposed to prosecution if they admit on oath that they accepted the bribes. As a result of the warnings the witnesses declined to testify and the case was dismissed.

I could not understand why the witnesses did not testify. They had our word, that they had done nothing wrong and in supporting prosecution they were not liable. I later learned, that on the evening before the trial the prosecution witnesses were in consultation with the defence attorney.

In the coming months, our police officers are likely to be called on to investigate all sorts of contraventions of our election laws. I advise that they remember the oath of office, be circumspect, dedicated, impartial and investigate intensively all reports made to them. Re-examine the election laws to be familiar with them and be ready for any breaches observed.

PAUL THOMPSON
Nassau,
January 27, 2012.

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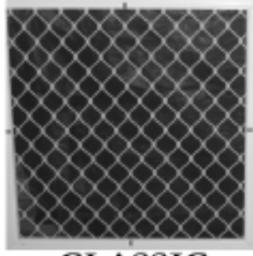
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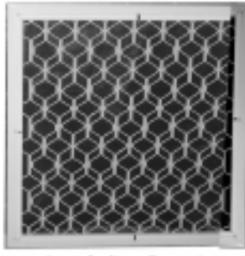
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PLP PUTS BLAME ON ZHIVARGO

from page one

Mr Laing "ran away" from Marco City to Fort Charlotte "thinking (constituents) wouldn't know about his failure" as a minister and MP.

"But you have to let him know that you know," Mr Christie said to constituents. "And you have to let him know that you're not interested in castoffs or cast-aways."

The opposition leader claimed Mr Laing helped the Prime Minister run the national debt up to "unprecedented levels" and has done the same with unemployment.

"One out of every three young Bahamians is now out of work. The economy is in an absolute mess. You can

thank Zhivargo Laing for being a major contributor to that. He needs to pack his political bags and clear out. The country has had enough of him and of Hubert Ingraham."

Mr Christie said it's time for the FNM to go as they are in denial of a Standards and Poors report that "shows they made the recession worse by stopping, reviewing, and canceling PLP projects".

In defence of recent FNM claims of corruption within the PLP, Mr Christie called the claims "recycled".

He said: "They want to talk about corruption? With both hands and both feet inside the cookie jar, they have the nerve, gumption, temerity and the hypocrisy to recycle false

and already disproved allegations against the PLP? Let me tell you something, my friends, they are going to regret it. They surely are."

These allegations mirror the FNM's 2007 campaign, Mr Christie said. At the last election they made a "wild bunch of allegations" against the PLP but couldn't find any wrong-doings, he claimed.

"Either their investigations turn up nothing, or they don't even bother investigating their own inventions and lies."

Mr Christie also told constituents the PLP is working to get a Public Accounts Committee report which investigated the roadworks "fiasco". The FNM has been "working overtime" to suppress the report, he said.



BERNARD NOTTAGE addresses the crowd at last night's rally in Fort Charlotte.

Davis says smears are to distract from crime



PHILIP DAVIS has accused the FNM of a smear campaign in order to shift the focus away from the soaring crime level.

By **DANA SMITH**
dsmith@tribunemedia.net

THE governing FNM's smear campaign against the opposition is nothing more than an effort to distract from the soaring crime level, PLP deputy leader Philip "Brave" Davis claimed last night.

Speaking at the opening of the PLP's Fort Charlotte constituency office, he said the opposition's "category five hurricane" of a campaign has the FNM on the run.

"They are ashamed of their record of running the coun-

try almost into the ground having held office for 15 of the last 20 years," Mr Davis said.

He said Mr Ingraham spent much of his time last week rehashing old stories and taking the low road, "all in an attempt to distract you the Bahamian people away from the real issues that impact your lives today."

Responding to the prime minister's statement that in his private capacity as a lawyer, Mr Davis "spends a lot of time defending those on the offending side of crime," the

PLP deputy leader said representing people charged with a criminal offence does not contribute to the crime rate.

The state of the economy, on the other hand, is "directly linked" to the prevalence of crime, he said.

"Only the PLP has presented ideas for reducing violence, for putting Bahamians first, and for expanding our economy," he said.

Should the PLP win, they will "modernise and upgrade" classrooms, create jobs for architects, engineers, and "green energy experts," and

start a Worker Retraining Initiative which will "dramatically expand access" to retraining programmes and work opportunities, he said.

Mr Davis encouraged the constituents to vote for PLP candidate Andre Rollins who "believes in safe streets" and investing in Bahamians.

He added: "Fort Charlotte, it is time to register. I need every one of you under the sound of my voice, whether by radio or at this rally tonight, who have not done so as yet, to do so now in order to get rid of the FNM."

OPPOSITION: 'WE CREATED 22,000 JOBS'

By **DENISE MAYCOCK**
Tribune Freeport Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT – Opposition Leader Perry Christie said by the time the PLP left office in 2007 it had created more than 20,000 jobs, and the Bahamas was among the labour leaders in the region with an unemployment rate of only 7.6 per cent.

"We created 22,000 jobs!" Mr Christie told supporters in West End last Friday. "In fact, that's a conservative estimate."

The PLP leader said Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham continues to attack the opposition unfairly and make misleading comments about the PLP's accomplishments in office.

"The Prime Minister said that the PLP likes to reap, not to sow. But when he denigrates my government's accomplishments, he denigrates the many great Bahamians who worked by my side, who contributed their talents and vision and hard work to their country," Mr Christie said.

He said labour survey statistics can confirm that 22,000 jobs were created during the PLP's term in office.

"Mr Prime Minister, put on your reading glasses – look at the labour survey of the Department of Statistics... You can look it up. We created that many jobs and more," Christie said.

He also stated that the PLP built 1,400 homes, a record number of classrooms, and invested tens of millions in Bahamian entrepreneurs.

According to Mr Christie, the PLP achieved big things and had more big projects underway in 2007.

In Grand Bahama, he said, the FNM reaped the benefits of PLP's achievements, including some \$40 million in stamp tax from the sale of

Vopak after much of the due diligence work on the buyer was completed and approval for sale granted by the PLP government.

He said the FNM also reaped the benefits of the construction of the College of the Bahamas northern campus.

Mr Christie said when the Prime Minister officially opened the Bahamas Brewery, it had already been approved and 90 per cent complete.

"My government sowed the seeds to expand educational opportunities for thousands of Bahamians," he added.

Mr Christie listed several major developments started under the PLP, such as the Ginn Sur Mer anchor project in West End, the I-Group project in Mayaguana, Bah Mar, and the \$400 million Lynden Pindling International Airport redevelopment.

Mr Christie said when the FNM came to office, it delayed PLP projects and contracts and came up with "phony" excuses for doing so. "Can you imagine they did this even as the global recession was tightening its grip on the Bahamian economy?"

"When Bahamians needed jobs more than ever, they stopped or delayed projects for political reasons," he said.

Mr Christie said the FNM made the recession worse and mismanaged the economy.

He noted that unemployment is well over 20 per cent in Grand Bahama, where one in three people are out of work. He said the middle class has suffered the most, as many homes are in foreclosure.

TROPICAL EXTERMINATORS FOR PEST PROBLEMS PHONE: 322-2157

'TURNQUEST HAS FAILED NATION'

By **DANA SMITH**
dsmith@tribunemedia.net

NATIONAL Security Minister Tommy Turnquest has "failed the entire nation" through his inability to stop crime, PLP leader Perry Christie said.

Speaking at a Mt Moriah constituency rally on Saturday, Mr Christie encouraged the crowd to vote for PLP candidate Arnold Forbes, who is running against the incumbent Mr Turnquest.

He placed blame on the FNM and Mr Turnquest for high levels of crime over the past five years.

"Not only has Tommy Turnquest failed you as your member of parliament, he's failed the entire nation as minister of national security."

"The statistics are terrible – murder records set in four out of five years, murders have doubled during this FNM term, hundreds of murders and rapes, thousands of armed robberies, violent crime up across the board," Mr Christie said.

"Every violent crime leaves behind a terrible legacy – shattered lives, broken families, an angry community. The worst thing is that this tsunami of violence sweeping our nation was never inevitable. Because you know and I know, an important reason

for the escalation of crime in the Bahamas is poor governance."

According to Mr Christie, the FNM played politics when they ended "pioneering, award-winning" PLP anti-crime programmes such as Urban Renewal, Swift Justice, Witness Protection, and School Policing.

"One sign a nation is in trouble is when a central government is so weak and ineffective it has no control over spreading criminality," Mr Christie said. "Tommy T has demonstrated time and again he is too weak and ineffective to put the brakes on crime."

He claimed Mr Turnquest blamed senior police officers for crime and caused "highly experienced" law enforcement officers to be sidelined when they should have been on the front line.

"Then he suggested we shouldn't be too concerned about the murders because it's all down to 'bad boys'. What kind of foolishness is that from the man who is supposed to be leading the nation's war on crime?"

"Does he even bother to find out about the murder victims – the pregnant woman, the pilot, the charity worker, the witness, the caring older brother, the struggling young mother... do those sound like 'bad boys' to you?" Mr

Christie asked.

Mr Turnquest also spoke Saturday at the Special Annual Service for Law Enforcement Officers and Civil Servants at Centreville Seventh-day Adventist Church.

There, he thanked law enforcement officers, as well as civil servants, for their service to the country.

"We must all continually offer encouragement and prayer for our law enforcement officers who we hold accountable for keeping and maintaining the peace in our society."

"These officers lay their lives on the line daily to keep our communities safe," Mr Turnquest said.

He also acknowledged the high crime levels and said it is up to the Bahamas as a whole to turn the tide.

"We are all aware of the unacceptable level of crime and anti-social behaviour in our society and our law enforcement agencies are indeed doing their part to stem the tide, but it is incumbent upon all of us to play our part," he said.

"Each of us must take our personal responsibility seriously, and those of us with children must accept parental responsibility. We must not condone wrong-doing in any form, we must not cloak criminals, and we must not accept

or purchase stolen goods.

"We must also not allow our children to roam aimlessly all hours of the day and night. Each of us, we have to do our part."

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LOCAL NEWS

Police stress hotel safety after theft case

By **KHRISNA VIRGIL**
kvirgil@tribunemedia.net

POLICE say they want to stress the importance of sufficient security at hotels in the wake of two tourists claiming money was stolen from their room at the Nassau Palm Hotel on West Bay Street.

Central Division commanding officer Supt Stephen Dean said the hotel's security measures are being examined as investigators continue "a process of elimination" to get to the bottom of the allegations.

He said: "What we are asking them to do is to put more security measures in place to prevent that sort of thing from happening, to in a sense safeguard themselves."

Last week, Mr Dean assured the public that that Nassau Palm Hotel had seen no recent or recurring problems with breaking and entering before the incident in question.

The last complaints of theft from rooms at the Royal Palm were in 2005 and 2007, according to press reports.

Tourism Minister Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace admitted that his ministry was concerned about the Bahamas'

reputation after the story went public – particularly as the victims were said to work for a popular vacation magazine.

He said: "Now that there is a story out there that says travel journalists got robbed in the Bahamas, we are very concerned."

Ministry spokesperson Clarence Rolle issued a statement this week saying tourism officials "take very seriously any complaint by guests of the islands of the Bahamas. The ministry also encourages our partners such as hotels to do the same".

He added that while assistance was offered to the robbery victims, police were not able to gather sufficient evidence to bring charges against anyone.

On Tuesday, February 14, Californian Sharon Cummings said her visit to Nassau quickly turned into a "nightmare" after \$900 was stolen from a safe in the room she shared with her husband.

This week, Mrs Cummings again contacted *The Tribune* by email to clarify she and her husband's relationship with various US-based travel websites.

She said: "We travel a great deal and seek out budget

sites. We focus on Mexico, Belize and Caribbean islands and nations.

"When we find exceptional values, beauty or issues, I submit our findings to various places; Budget Travel Magazine, Frommers, Fodor's and numerous popular websites."

This came after it was initially reported that she wrote for Budget Travel Magazine.

However, according to the Ministry of Tourism, the publication issued the following statement to local officials: "Sharon Cummings was not on assignment for Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel. In fact, we have no record of her ever having worked for the magazine."

In her email, Mrs Cummings listed the websites to which she plans to submit a write-up on the incident, including Trip Advisor, Travel Worm, Travelocity, Frommers, Fodors, Bahama.com, the US state Department website, and anyone else she can think of.

"The incident has already been submitted to Expedia, as they were our booking agent," she said.

Messages left for the management of the Nassau Palm Hotel were not returned before press time last night.D

Sanctuary Dedication

A SERVICE of dedication was held for the new sanctuary at the Evangelistic Temple on Collins Avenue and Fourth Terrace East.

The service was attended by the Prime Minister and a number of cabinet members, as well as the Governor-General, Sir Arthur Foulkes, and his wife, Lady Foulkes, *pictured right*.

The Prime Minister gave a speech during the service, praising the temple for its work.

Opposition leader Perry Christie was also present and gave a speech to the packed temple.



MINISTER OF YOUTH, Sports and Culture Charles Maynard poses with executive members of the Bahamas Hot Rod Association (BHRA). Pictured (from left): BHRA director Bertram Bowe; public relations officer Leslie Crawley; Sports Director Tim Munnings; Minister Maynard; BHRA president Elwood Donaldson and association directors Michael Sweeting and Clint Harding. Photo: **Eric Rose/BIS**

HOT RODDERS LOOKING TO BRING BACK RACING

THE Bahamas Hot Rod Association paid a visit to Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture Charles Maynard to discuss the construction of their new racing track.

The association's original track was one of the facilities demolished to make way for the Sports Centre Redevelopment Project.

Mr Maynard said the master plan for the sports centre includes a new track, which will run parallel to road Corridor 9.

"We are pleased today to welcome them to discuss the commencement of that part of the Phase 1 project and we expect that, within the next two weeks, work will begin on the new state-of-the-art hot rod facility that is going to include a number of new amenities," Mr Maynard said.

"It is going to be able to be internationally certified, thereby attracting international hot rod events to the

country, in pursuit of our development of sports tourism."

President of the Bahamas Hot Rod Association Elwood Donaldson thanked the minister and Director of Sports Tim Munnings for the meeting.

"We are appreciative in being a part of Phase 1, building us a state-of-the-art race-track facility," he said.

"Racing will soon be returning to the Bahamas. A lot of the local drivers and some of our international partners are looking forward to this."

"We thank the government for keeping us abreast of all the developments and assisting us in the development of our new facility."

Mr Maynard added: "We look forward to the project being started shortly and the facility being completed in the course of this calendar year."

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MINISTER 'UNAWARE' OF DIFFICULTIES FACED BY CITY MARKET STORES

DELINQUENT BEC accounts led to City Market stores across New Providence having their electricity turned off on Monday, but Minister of Labour Dion Foulkes said he is unaware of any difficulties the supermarket chain

might be experiencing. Yesterday, Mr Foulkes said as far as he knows all the stores are functioning properly. He said: "I am not aware of any difficulties City Markets is now having, I have not

been in communication with them for over a month." Speaking with *The Tribune* on Monday evening, BEC chairman Michael Moss confirmed the corporation had been in discussions with the supermarket chain, which was

"seriously" delinquent on a number of accounts. "I receive a report of all large delinquent accounts, and I do recall seeing at least four of City Market's accounts that had significant balances," he said.

City Market now operates four locations in Nassau: the Seagrape Shopping Centre, South Beach, Harbour Bay and Cable Beach. The Lyford Cay and Rosetta Street stores closed in August, their leases having

come to an end. Not long after that, the Freeport and Eight Mile Rock stores in Grand Bahama closed permanently. Up to press time last night, Mr Moss could not be reached for an update.



PUBLIC WORKS and Transport Minister Neko Grant outside the terminal, above, and, right, with contractor Fletcher McIntosh in front of the fire/crash rescue facility.



Airport for Abaco nears completion

THE \$27.3 million international airport terminal, air traffic control tower and fire/crash rescue facility under construction in Marsh Harbour, Abaco is nearing completion.

The old 3,315 square foot building is being replaced with a 24,000 square foot single storey structure immediately west of the existing terminal.

The state-of-the-art facility will have the capacity to process around 200,000 passengers a year.

"We have a lot to be done," said contractor Fletcher McIntosh. "In order to be finished there is some rough work that needs to be done."

The airport's design incorporates a taxi call-up and public parking area; offices for police, security and airport managers; concession stands, and a combined domestic and international departure lounge.



NEKO GRANT (first from right) and his team inspect drawings of the new international airport. Also pictured, from left, are: John Canton, Works director; Colin Higgs, permanent secretary; Cephas Cooper, Abaco administrator; and Fletcher McIntosh, contractor.

Minister of Public Works and Transport Neko Grant said it is expected that the \$4 million air traffic control tower will be manned by Abaco-nians.

"There is a recruitment programme going on as we speak so they can be trained in time to occupy the tower on completion of the building," he said.



CONTRACTOR Fletcher McIntosh makes a point to Minister Neko Grant during a tour of the new airport facility. Photos: **Letisha Henderson/BIS**

ROBBERY SUSPECT ESCAPES AS GUARD TAKES TOILET BREAK

from page one

use the restroom. However the accused was gone when the officer returned.

The police and the prison's internal affairs unit are investigating.

The last prisoner to escape from PMH was 28-year-old Dorian Ambrister, on December 13.

Ambrister was serving a 27-month sentence for stealing from a shop. Although he was

outfitted with leg restraints and on 24-hour guard, he escaped the healthcare facility by jumping through a bathroom window.

Ambrister was shot in the buttocks by prison officers on Dowdswell Street a short time later.

Inquiries placed to Superintendent Elliston Rahming over whether the latest escape has sparked possible changes to security measures for prisoners receiving medical treat-

ment were unreturned last night.

Green is a former resident of Carmichael Road and was described to have a medium build, dark brown skin, and height of 5ft 11ins.

Anyone with information that may assist in Green's recapture should contact police at 919, the Criminal Detective Unit at 502-9991, or Crime Stoppers at 328-TIPS.



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LOCAL NEWS

The history of migration

A NEW book by former Antiquities, Monuments & Museums Corporation chief Keith Tinker collates everything we need to know about regional migration to the Bahamas - from prehistoric times to the present.

Tinker, 57, is a historian who led the AMMC from its inception in 1998 until last year. Before that he was a civil servant in the Ministry of Finance and the Department of Co-operatives, also teaching part-time at the College of the Bahamas. He holds degrees in history from West Indies College in Jamaica, Florida Atlantic University, and Florida State University.

The Migration of Peoples from the Caribbean to the Bahamas was published last year by University Press of Florida. Unfortunately, although it is only 200 pages with no photographs, the hardback edition is expensive - over \$70 retail - which will limit its accessibility.

The entire history of the Caribbean is based on a series of migrations, and Tinker documents most of them. His interest was sparked by the relatively large West Indian



presence here - Trinidadian prison overseers, Barbadian policemen, Haitian tailors, Jamaican teachers and Guyanese surveyors - and the lack of available scholarship on the subject.

Tinker looks at Bahamian identity within a regional context, and includes a historical summary of migration from English-speaking countries in the West Indies since Emancipation.

He explores the influence of Spanish and British imperialism on Bahamian settlement since the 15th century, describing the indigenous population at the time of the "discovery". The Lucayans (as they were called) were themselves uninvited immigrants, their ancestors having island-hopped through the region from South America, arriving here in the 9th century AD, when the Vikings were rampaging

across Europe.

There is no definite evidence of any earlier human population in the Bahamas. And after the Lucayans were annihilated by the Spanish within a couple of decades, the islands were deserted until the arrival of English religious dissidents from Bermuda in the mid-1600s. This was the first of several waves of modern immigration, reaching forward to the present.

Those waves of migrants included white and black American loyalists who arrived with their slaves in the late 1700s, Africans liberated from slave ships by the Royal Navy in the first decades of the 19th century, and a series of lesser known migrations from within the region itself - which form the main subject of this book.

These included Barbadians recruited in the late 1800s as constables to replace the West

Indian Regiment troops stationed here, Turks Islanders who came to work in the lumber industry during the first half of the 20th century, West Indian artisans who filled labour shortages during the 1920s construction boom, increasing numbers of Haitian economic refugees from the 1950s, Jamaican teachers and Guyanese professionals recruited from the 1960s.

Tinker places migration to the Bahamas within a wider historical context of regional migration, explaining the influence of our close inks with the United States in forming anti-West Indian sentiment. He also concludes that "an official process of social acceptance and systematic assimilation could begin to solve the Haitian problem" and build a Bahamian identity that is more in tune with current reality.

After taking us through the familiar historical summary, Tinker offers some interesting insights into the experiences of immigrants, through little known anecdotes and interviews.

Beginning in the 1890s, there were three small waves of Barbadian immigration. Those recruited as constables to replace the West Indian Regiment were at first the objects of distrust and animosity among black Bahamians, until the Police Act of 1908 successfully amalgamated the local police and paramilitary constabulary.

During the 1920s, Barbadian artisans responded to opportunities created by the tourism and real estate boom of the prohibition years, working on the construction of new hotels, private homes and public projects. They contributed substantially to the apprenticeship system under which many Bahamians were trained.

The late politician, Sir Clement Maynard (father of Senator Allyson Maynard), was the son of one of these immigrants - a builder who came here after working in Panama and Cuba.

The third group were recruited as police and prison officers in the 1950s, and many subsequently transferred to other sectors of the civil service. Tinker reports that "the Barbadian experience in the Bahamas exemplified an unassuming modesty in the face of obviously significant contributions" to the development of their adopted country.

Jamaican immigration also became prominent in the 1920s, with most coming from

Cuba but others from the Canal Zone. Some were recruited as policemen, including the father of Sir Lynden Pindling, the first prime minister of the independent Bahamas. But many others entered illegally and were routinely deported after the economic boom collapsed in the 1930s.

Some 1800 workers were employed on the construction of the New Colonial Hotel in the 1920s, and most of the West Indians were Jamaican. Tinker reports that these men organized strikes when they learned that Cuban workers were being paid more for the same work. And Jamaican immigrants also helped to facilitate Marcus Garvey's appearance at a large political rally in Nassau in 1928.

During this time, the government recruited a number of Jamaicans as agricultural trainers, including a horticulturist named Leonard Jervis who organized the agricultural research station and plant nursery near Fort Charlotte, which later became the Botanic Gardens. Today his grandson, Tony, is a leading preservation architect in Nassau.

But most Bahamians will want to read this book for the comprehensive background it provides on the Haitian migration to the Bahamas - from the 1700s onwards.

"Until the 1950s, migration between Haiti and the Bahamas represented a reciprocal and constant flow of human traffic," Tinker says. After 1804, when the Haitians achieved the first successful slave revolt in history, a number of white and colored refugees resettled in the Bahamas for one reason or another.

Among the most successful were Edward Laroda and Stephen Dillett, who became the first non-whites to be elected to the Bahamian House of Assembly - "monumental accomplishments" in a period when slavery had only just been abolished.

In the late 1800s, Haitians began a small but constant migration to the southern Bahamas in search of work, and the Bahamian presence in northern Haiti was also high during this period. Some Haitians in Inagua married Bahamians and produced families, two notable issues being our current governor-general, Sir Arthur Foulkes, and the acclaimed actor Sidney Poitier.

Other common Anglo-French names like Bodie, Deleveaux, Dupuch, Duvalier, Godet, Moree and Marche attest to the large Haitian influence in the Bahamas. There is even a strong belief that former Haitian dictator Francois Duvalier was born in the southern islands.

The modern phase of Haitian immigration began in the 1940s, when some 5,000 Bahamians a year were recruited to work in the US, replacing Americans fighting overseas. A Haitian consul was appointed in Nassau in 1948, as Haitians flocked to fill jobs left vacant by Bahamian migrants to the US.

In 1955, Tinker reports that relations between Haiti and the Bahamas were cordial enough for Tribune editor Etienne Dupuch to lobby both governments to include Nassau in then Haitian President Paul Magloire's international tour. But Bahamian attitudes towards Haitians quickly hardened.

Sporadic round-ups and deportations began in the late 1950s - coinciding with increasing political instability in Haiti. As we became more prosperous and conditions worsened in Haiti under the Duvalier dictatorship, the familiar pattern of thousands of Haitian boat people seeking a better life in the Bahamas took hold. By 1960, the Tribune was referring to this influx as an "invasion".

In 1963, a new immigration act specifically targeted Haitian migrants, increasing penalties, giving immigration officers police powers, and requiring Haitian vessels to officially enter the Bahamas at Matthew Town, Inagua.

But when the predominantly black PLP replaced the predominantly white UBP regime in 1967 the talk turned to regularizing and integrat-

ing Haitians rather than expelling them.

Critics accused the PLP of seeking to create sympathetic Haitian voting blocs in out island communities - a charge which continues to be made today on both sides of the political divide.

This liberal attitude was short-lived, however, as the scale of popular anger against the migrants became clear.

After the PLP's re-election in 1968, the government began to crackdown on illegal immigration, with systematic raids on Haitian communities and interception of Haitian sloops at sea. By this time, even Premier Lynden Pindling was referring to the influx as an invasion.

In 1973, the independence constitution restricted the eligibility of many children born of Haitian and other foreign parents in the Bahamas to claim citizenship. As a result, Tinker says, "Many young Haitian-Bahamians became traumatised by their preclusion from participation in local social, economic and political activities". We are seeing the consequences of this play out today.

Tinker points to Bahamian complicity in this supposedly unwanted migration. "Many demand increased repatriation exercises, yet continue to hire the illegal aliens to perform menial tasks at low wages. It appears that as long as the Bahamas remains stable and Haiti continues to experience political and economic maladies the 'Haitian problem' will persist."

After Haitians, Turks Islanders are the largest group of West Indian immigrants to the Bahamas, mostly due to the fact that the two countries are geographically united and socially identical. This migration began on a small scale in the 1890s when men were contracted at Long Cay and Inagua to work on freighters sailing from the US east coast to the Caribbean and Central America.

Some also found work in the salt industry at Inagua, but most Turks Islanders were recruited to work in the American-owned logging industry, which began in the early years of the 20th century. By 1953 the logging camp at Pine Ridge (where Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham was born) was the largest community on Grand Bahama with a total of 1800 workers, most from the Turks & Caicos.

In 1968, the new PLP government discontinued unification talks with the Turks & Caicos and enacted laws to restrict the entry of Turks Islanders. They also began arresting and deporting those already here, especially from Inagua. At the time, many of these migrants were considered opposition supporters.

However, as Tinker notes, "although Turks & Caicos Islanders constitute the second largest West Indian immigrant group in the Bahamas their assimilation is so complete as to make them virtually indistinguishable from the average Bahamian".

Bahamian intolerance towards Haitians "is primarily an expression of fear that overwhelming numbers of Haitian immigrants will eventually supplant Bahamian culture", Tinker says. "Equally threatening to the average Bahamian are the increasing demands that Haitians place on social institutions."

He argues that Bahamian leaders - instead of fostering assimilation into a pluralistic society - have produced a society of separate and unequal ethnic groups. This is clearly demonstrated by the social inclusion of Turks Islanders and the social exclusion of Haitians.

In his summation, Tinker reiterates the fact that all Bahamians are descendants of immigrants, noting that "The balance of power may eventually, and perhaps irrevocably, shift towards dominance by present-day minorities. Bahamian lawmakers must begin the process of assimilating all West Indian migrants - including Haitians - into all aspects of national development."

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

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As the primary local representative for TNC to both internal and external audiences of the Program, including employees, volunteers, donors, government agencies/officials, partners, community leaders and other parties, s/he may also assist with negotiating and monitoring agreements between TNC and a variety of partners, governmental and non-governmental, to ensure conservation success. She/he will assist with the supervisory span of control of employees located in the (Bahamas) and may directly supervise certain individuals.

KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS:

- BA/BS degree and 7-10 years experience in conservation practice or equivalent combination of education and experience
- Demonstrated experience influencing, developing and implementing conservation policy and plans
- Knowledge of current trends and practices in relevant discipline(s) and regions
- Developing practical applications of scientific concepts and technical innovations for conservation purposes
- Knowledge of methods and standards of biodiversity information systems and initiatives
- Motivating team members, setting goals, and leading efforts
- Delivering practical, adaptable products and services to customers
- Knowledge of politics and society with respect to environmental affairs
- Managing time and diverse activities under deadlines while delivering quality results
- Communicating clearly via written, spoken, and graphical means in English and other relevant languages
- Demonstrated experience in fundraising
- Successful experience in developing, directing and managing multiple projects. Demonstrated success as an inspirational manager who has successfully motivated staff to achieve and sustain excellence
- Demonstrated leadership and visionary qualities and able to work effectively with and through others in a decentralized and geographically dispersed organization.
- Successful experience in partnership development (partners, community, government, etc) including extensive networking with high-level conservation contacts; political savvy.
- Proven interpersonal, communication, and negotiation skills

Interested persons should apply in writing with full details, including resume and cover letter to bahamas@tnc.org by February 29th, 2012



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KFCs stay closed as row escalates

from page one

rescind its voluntary recognition of the BHCAWU on Monday.

Although Mr Foulkes has maintained that there are no legal provisions that speak to the terms of voluntary recognition, union officials claim the decision disregarded due process and represented an outright attack on the 300 KFC workers.

Staff were given until tomorrow to accept new employment terms and conditions set by KFC Nassau or face termination.

BHCAWU vice president Darren Woods said: "The attorneys are dealing with it. We have a difficulty with what they have done. We don't see anything in law to support what they've done."

"[On Monday] they issued terms and conditions that if they don't sign by Thursday, they don't have a job? That's intimidation of workers. There are some things that you just don't do," Mr Woods added.

Restaurants Bahamas Limited, the Nassau franchise owner, declined to comment further on the matter yesterday.

The labour agreement between the two parties

expired on September 24, 2011, and negotiations on a new agreement began in December.

The "drastic" cancellation to break union ties followed five months of stagnant negotiations over crucial "financial points of contention", according to KFC Nassau spokesman, who explained the decision was the only option to save the Nassau franchise and employee jobs.

The fast-food chain has argued that its current wage and benefits package is "two times higher than all other fast food brands".

In a release on Monday, KFC Nassau stated that it has offered employees a package that maintains their existing wages and includes a guaranteed 7.5 hour work day.

However, Mr Woods said the union had already agreed to no salary increases and had identified benefits they were willing to sacrifice.

He added that the new package was never proposed at the negotiating table.

Mr Woods said: "The last meeting was two weeks ago. We sent them our position after speaking to employees and the manager said 'I will call you'. The next communication I got was the [cancellation] letter."

"[At the negotiating table] they wanted us to agree to a minimum of 4 hours for employees with the management to choose those hours. We couldn't agree to that, we are not prepared to take our people back," he said.

Last night, both Jennifer Isaacs-Dotson and John Pinder, presidents of the Trade Union Congress and Bahamas Public Service Union respectively, called for the strengthening of labour laws in the country.

Mrs Isaacs-Dotson said: "This has set bad precedent for workers in this country. How can you as an employer get up one morning and say 'ok I'm not getting my way' let's just take away their rights."

"Whether it is recognized voluntarily or through the minister, [the company] granted it, there's a process. How can you be that callous and cold with 300 workers?"

Mr Pinder added: "I think the quicker employers accept unions as partners and not enemies the better it will be for both sides."

"Too often companies look at unions as trying to dig into net profits but we're just trying to get the maximum benefits for our members."

MINISTER BACKS UNION ROLE

from page one

late Monday evening the union applied to be certified as the bargaining agent for KFC staff, which the minister approved on the advice of the Attorney General's Office.

He said: "I am hopeful that management will agree to meet with the union today and continue negotiations; from our point of view they are the recognised bargaining agents for the workers at KFC."

While the Industrial Relations Act requires management to meet with staff, Mr Foulkes said there are no provisions that speak to the legality of KFC cancelling their voluntary union recognition.

He said: "I want to make it clear. The law is silent on the point as to whether the action is legal or not."

As a mediator, Mr Foulkes said he cannot take sides on the matter. He is responsible for facilitating negotiations and "cannot dictate on either side what to agree to".

"I will continue to be engaged with both sides and I would like to encourage both management and the union to sit down and continue negotiations, to have the matter resolved quickly," he said.

In a press statement issued earlier this week, KFC Nassau explained the decision to break union ties followed five months of stagnant negotiations over crucial "financial points of contention".

The decision means that "KFC Nassau will no longer meet, consult or engage with the union on matters pertaining to the terms and conditions of the company's workers," the release said.

"As a result of the cancellation, KFC Nassau will be dealing directly with its individual employees regarding their terms and conditions of employment."

The labour agreement between the two parties expired on September 24, 2011, and negotiations on a new agreement began in December.

The fast-food chain has argued that its current wage and benefits package is "two times higher than all other fast food brands".

In an unusual move earlier this month, Restaurants (Bahamas) posted a newspaper advertisement detailing the staff's wage and benefits package compared to its competitors.

Staff salaries were said to be between 79 to 92.5 per cent

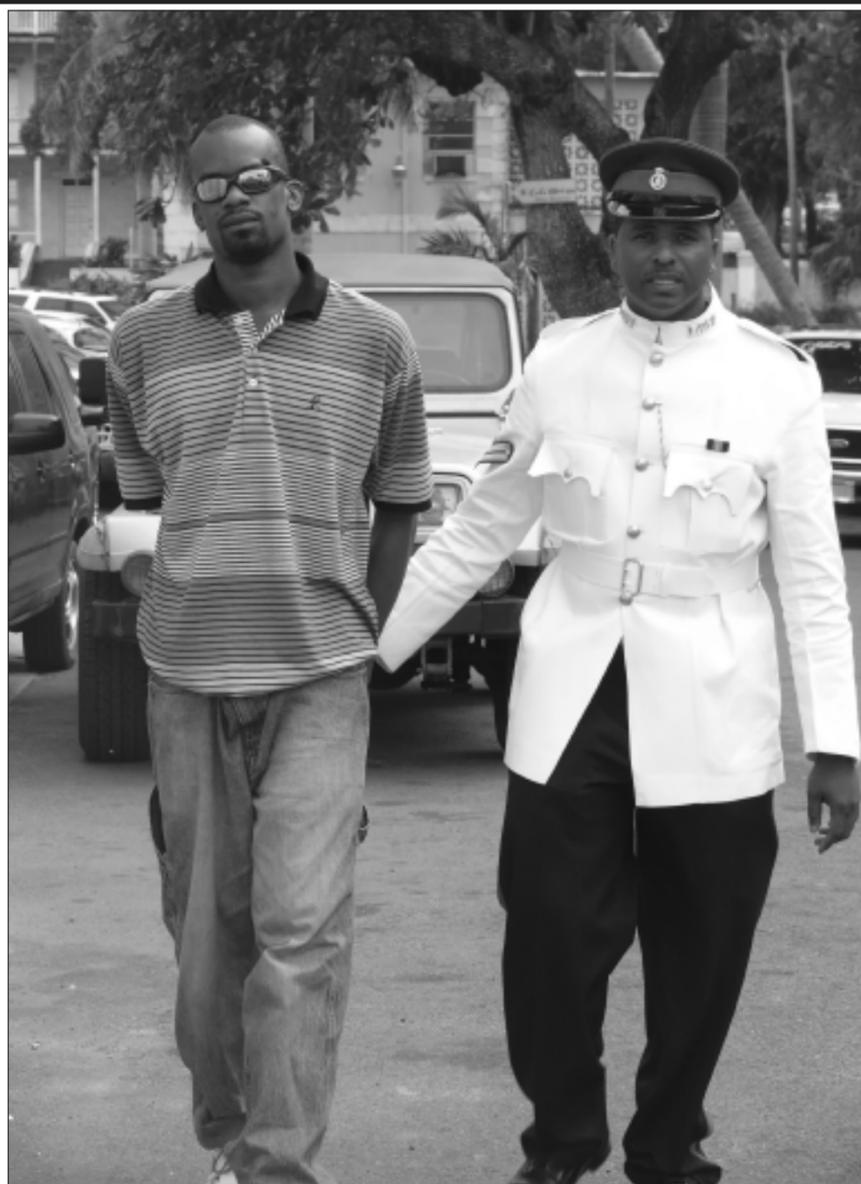
higher than its fast food industry competitors.

The notice also suggested that KFC employees enjoyed other benefits not provided by its competitors, including pension fund payments, health and welfare benefits, a Christmas bonus, paid birthday, long service payment and an employee aid fund.

While admitting that the cancellation was "drastic", a KFC spokesman explained the decision was the only option to save the Nassau franchise and employee jobs.

KFC Nassau said it is now "forced to unilaterally offer its employees an employment package that maintains their existing wages and a guaranteed 7.5 hour work day". It was also added that a voluntary severance package will be considered for staff that do not want to work under the new terms.

Mr Foulkes said he hopes that labour negotiations do not reach the point where voluntary severance packages are necessary, however, if new terms can not be agreed upon, the government will ensure that all the employees "get what is due to them" according to their contracts and the laws of the Bahamas.



PHILLIP McCARTNEY is escorted to court yesterday.

MURDER TRIAL JURY SPLIT

from page one

change position to tip the scale in favour of the prosecution or defence.

The prosecution alleged that on the morning of August 13, 2010, McCartney killed Ms Swain, whose body was found on a track road.

Ms Swain, of Thatch Palm Avenue, Pinewood Gardens, was found in an area off Faith Avenue South just after 7.30am that Friday.

According to testimony, the victim, along with two female cousins, had caught a ride from a club on Soldier Road with a man driving a Mitsubishi Mirage.

The cousins, who lived 10 minutes walking distance from Ms Swain in Pinewood Gardens, were dropped off. However, Ms Swain never made it home and was later found dead by police.

Testimony from pathologist Dr Caryn Sands revealed the cause of death to be "blunt force injuries to the head, torso and extremities".

The physician said Chris-honda had received multiple

cuts and bruises to her head, along with multiple skull fractures, muscle tearing and internal bleeding in the left eye and brain. The severity of the force injuries had caused her left temple bone to depress into her brain.

At the close of the trial, defence attorney Ramona Farquharson-Seymour contended that the prosecution had not proven its case against her client.

Mrs Farquharson-Seymour told the jury the only purported evidence against her client is an "alleged confession" and a "purported ID of Phillip McCartney's car".

She added that DNA evidence did not put her client near the body of Chris-honda Swain and contended her client is innocent of the crime.

Lead prosecutor Jillian Williams, assisted by Raquel Whymys, argued that the police performed well in their investigation considering the circumstances, and refuted suggestions the officers were not thorough or were trying to frame McCartney.

She noted that he was not

the only suspect questioned in connection with the incident.

Regarding the claim his confession was forced, Ms Williams said a videotape of McCartney's confession showed otherwise.

After Justice Bernard Turner spent five hours yesterday summarising the evidence given throughout trial, he excused the jury to deliberate and decide a verdict, which they did after three hours.

However, when they returned to court, the foreman announced the 6-6 guilty verdict. To be convicted of murder, the verdict would need to be a unanimous 12-0. Had McCartney not been found guilty of murder, the next possible charge would have been manslaughter. Though this was not to be as the jury were hung on the murder verdict, which would call for a retrial of the matter.

Justice Turner thanked and dismissed the two men-ten women jury. McCartney was remanded to Her Majesty's Prison.



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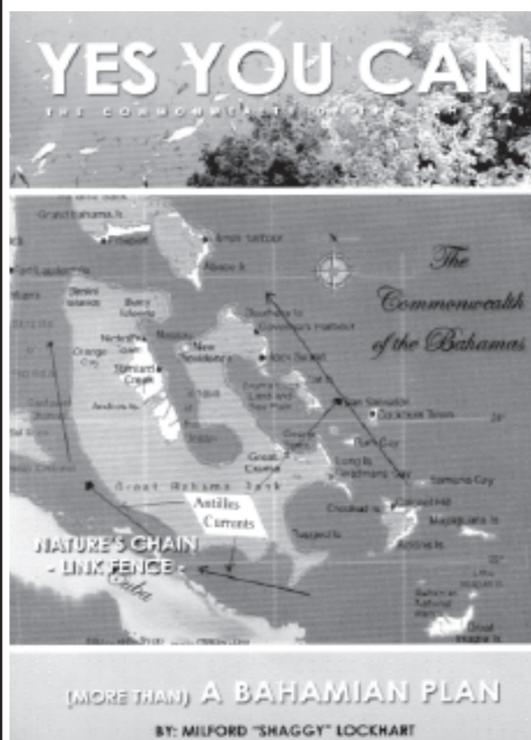
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