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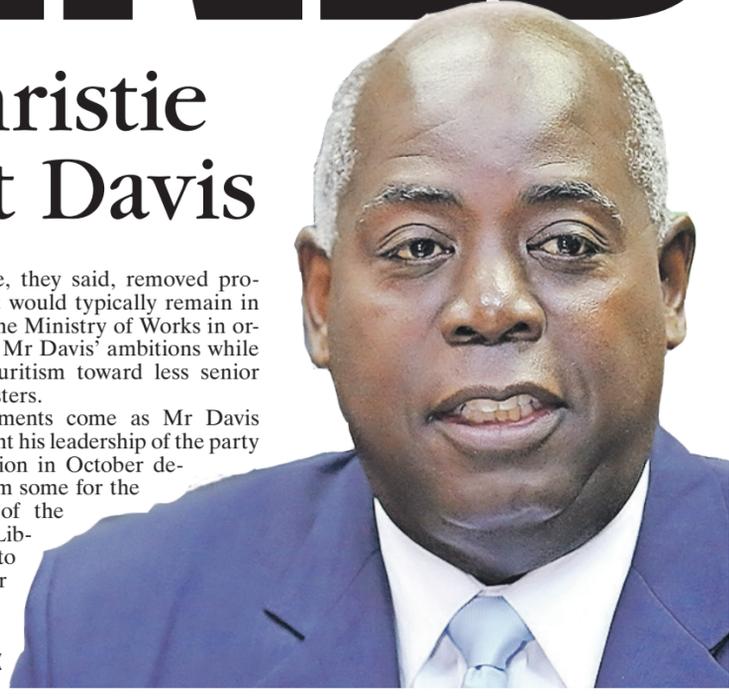
MPs reveal Christie turned against Davis

By **RASHAD ROLLE**
Tribune Staff Reporter
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THE missteps of the Christie administration should not spoil Philip "Brave" Davis' leadership ambitions, former parliamentarians Philip Galanis and George Smith said, telling *The Tribune* yesterday Mr Davis was "out of the loop" in the administration after former Prime Minister Perry Christie became "insecure" over his leadership threat and began undermining him because of this.

Mr Christie, they said, removed programmes that would typically remain in the remit of the Ministry of Works in order to wound Mr Davis' ambitions while showing favouritism toward less senior Cabinet ministers. Their statements come as Mr Davis seeks to cement his leadership of the party at its convention in October despite calls from some for the "old guard" of the Progressive Liberal Party to make way for politicians untainted by

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MIGRATION POLICY 'MUST BE CHANGED'

By **AVA TURNQUEST**
Tribune Chief Reporter
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GRAND Bahama Human Rights Association President Fred Smith yesterday condemned the Carmichael Road Detention Centre as an illegal facility with no basis in law as he railed against the country's "militaristic and inhumane" approach to irregular migration. Mr Smith, QC, urged legislators to instead consider the implementation of a parole system, which he believes could save millions and cut down on the department's costs shouldered by taxpayers. He was responding to a series of articles published

by *The Tribune* on the processing of migrants at the Carmichael Road Detention Centre (CRDC). "The whole approach to immigration in The Bahamas needs to change so that it's not a military and criminal exercise," he said. "The migration of human beings from country to country, unless it's human trafficking, is not criminal in nature. It's driven by social, economic and political considerations as we very well know with the Cubans and the Haitians, and others that come through The Bahamas. "Unfortunately we have adopted this aggressive militaristic approach and you'll

SEE PAGE FIVE

MILLER: HILL DESERVED TO BE FIRED FROM BPL

By **SANCHESKA DORSETT**
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PAMELA HILL being fired as the CEO of Bahamas Power and Light was "long overdue and necessary," according to the electricity company's former Executive Chairman Leslie Miller, who claimed that "Ms Hill did not know what the hell she was doing." In an interview with *The Tribune*, Mr Miller praised BPL's new board executives for "doing the right thing" and said he hopes they take it a step further and terminate PowerSecure's management contract of BPL. Mr Miller served as executive chairman of the Bahamas Electricity Cor-



poration (BEC), now called BPL, until late 2015. He was removed from his post at the utility provider shortly after the government announced that a transition services agreement had been signed with PowerSecure.

SEE PAGE SIX

NEW BENEFIT PROGRAMME SUSPENDED

By **AVA TURNQUEST**
Tribune Chief Reporter
aturnquest@tribunemedia.net

THE Department of Social Services' Conditional Cash Transfer project has been suspended for at least two months, *The Tribune* has learned. A senior official yesterday confirmed that the project was suspended; however, it is not clear how this affects existing programmes as the CCT was intended to consolidate existing initiatives that

SEE PAGE FIVE

BOB OPENS FOR BUSINESS IN BIMINI

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

THE Bank of The Bahamas opened a branch in Bimini on Monday restoring banking services to that island for the first time since the Royal Bank of Canada pulled out on August 2. There was a long line of residents at the bank in Alice Town to do their banking. Residents are happy and relieved to have services restored.

SEE PAGE SIX

DRINK VIDEO COPS DEMOTED

By **AVA TURNQUEST**
Tribune Chief Reporter
aturnquest@tribunemedia.net

THE two officers caught drinking on video while riding in a police squad car were demoted, according to an order obtained by *The Tribune* yesterday. The Royal Bahamas Police Force order was signed

by Police Commissioner Ellison Greenslade on August 22, and said to have taken effect the same day. One officer, a corporal, was demoted to the rank of constable while the other officer who held the rank of constable was also reduced in seniority. The demotions were confirmed by police in a press release yesterday.

The video in question went viral last month. In the video, one officer is seen holding a bottle of Kalik while they appeared to ignore a call from the Police Control Room. The officers were suspended and given 14 days to show cause letters.

SEE PAGE THREE

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MEMBERS of the Cabinet meeting.

Photos: Yontalay Bowe/OPM Media Services

Cabinet committees set up to tackle crime and reform

THE Cabinet Office has announced the formation of various Cabinet committees to facilitate the work of the government, including groups to focus on crime and public sector reform.

“Recognising that government works best when each ministry plays its role and that the many challenges facing the Bahamas are multi-faceted, the Cabinet is intent on fostering and/or deepening – inter-ministerial collaboration and co-operation,” a statement released Tuesday night noted.

“This has been done through the composition of Cabinet committees to address such issues as public sector reform and the vexations problem of crime.”

The statement noted that Cabinet ministers will renew and address the relevance of government policies and processes that govern the delivery of public services.

This will include the leg-

islation, skills analysis, use of information technology, management of human resources, rewards for excellence, consequences for infractions and promotion of innovation.

“With regard to the issue of crime, the Cabinet committee will conduct research and must focus its attention on the youth employment and positive social and civic activities, the environment, strengthening literacy skills and consolidating the various apprenticeship programmes,” the statement said.

Each committee will be mandated to report within a specified period of time.

“As education is also of paramount importance, ministers and members of Parliament generally, have been encouraged to assist schools regularly to remain conversant with the status of school repairs to ensure that schools open on time.

“With this said, there

must be the recognition that some ‘repairs’ are effecting much needed transformation of schools that should not only assist in the delivery of education but protect the health of teachers and students alike,” the statement noted.

The Cabinet Office also announced the following movements of senior officers in the public service.

The Secretary to the Cabinet Camille Johnson is currently on leave and Elise Delancy, permanent secretary in the Ministry of the Public Service and National Insurance, has been appointed to act in her place for the period of leave.

It was also announced that there will be several appointments to acting permanent secretary to fill posts created by retirement. These appointments will become effective September 1.

Further, in accordance with Prime Minister Dr



Hubert Minnis’ announcement at the swearing-in of ministers, several permanent secretaries will also be redeployed as of the same date.

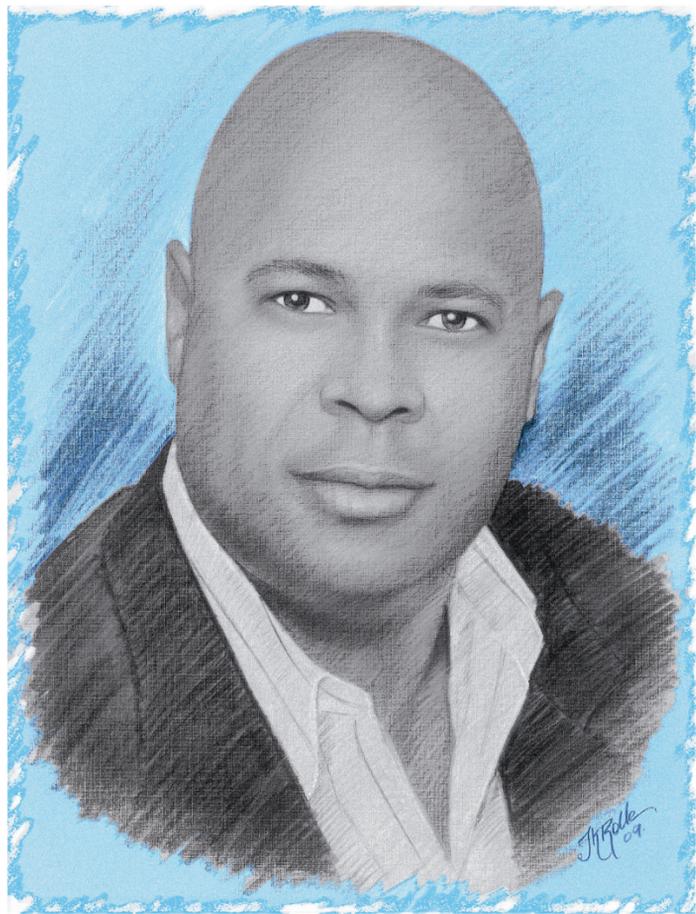
In addition, the move-

ment of other senior officers will take effect on September 11.

“These movements are all intended to strengthen ministries for greater effectiveness in the delivery of

services,” the Cabinet Office said.

“Again, to fill the posts left vacant by promotion and retirements, there will be promotions to the post of first assistant secretary.”



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It's finger lickin' good

'Witch hunt' talk a bid to prevent investigations

By RICARDO WELLS
Tribune Staff Reporter
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THE assertions from some critics that police probes into alleged corruption on the part of public officials are "witch hunts" are nothing more than baseless attempts to quell intensive investigations, according to former Royal Bahamas Police Force Assistant Commissioner Paul Thompson.

In a letter submitted to *The Tribune* Tuesday, Mr Thompson said it was "quite clear" the actions taken and the stances mounted by naysayers in recent weeks have been nothing more than a ploy to slow down the efforts of law enforcement to address alleged corruption.

The 90-year-old suggested instead of yielding to the calls of those opposing arrests and prosecution of those suspected of alleged corruption, RBPF officials should increase the staff complement now allotted to Assistant Commissioner of Police Paul Rolle at the recently established Anti-Corruption Unit.

"The police are under attack by attorneys and others for what appears to be efficient and effective probing being done and the arrests of persons allegedly involved," he wrote.

Following the arrest and arraignment of three prominent PLP members, Official Opposition Leader Philip "Brave" Davis insisted that there are plans to file civil lawsuits against the government over the investigations.

Mr Davis said the party has received calls from people in the region who have voiced concerns over whether The Bahamas has been reduced to a "banana republic".

His comments came one day after Bishop Neil C Ellis lamented the "inhumanity" shown to former Cabinet minister Shane Gibson before his recent arraignment, claiming that the former MP's treatment as he was led into court was inconsistent with the concept of "basic respect for human dignity." Mr Gibson, who had hurt his foot in an earlier boating accident, was handcuffed as he walked into court, and was seen hopping up the court's steps



FORMER Assistant Commissioner Paul Thompson.

Photo: Shawn Hanna/Tribune Staff

without his crutches.

Yesterday, Mr Thompson defended the police force and their methods.

"As a police, I was trained by experts such as Mr Salathiel Thompson, Sir Albert Miller and Mr Stanley Moir; I had the opportunity to attend many institutions overseas for training," he wrote. "I have read the Bahamas Constitution, the Criminal Procedure Code and other laws of The Bahamas.

"A provision of the Constitution that is relevant is

where the police officer has reasonable grounds for believing that the persons arrested have committed crime or about to commit crime.

"The detention of such persons would occur if the officer has reasonable grounds for believing that the persons arrested will interfere with or harm the evidence connected with the offence or interfere with or cause injury to other persons, has reasonable grounds to believe that the persons arrested will alert

other persons suspected of being involved in the same crimes, who are yet to be arrested or has reasonable grounds that the persons arrested will hinder the recovery of property obtained as a result of the crime."

Mr Thompson added that the Constitution provides for the denial by police to permit an attorney to interview an accused person if the investigating officer is satisfied that such a meeting would interfere with the investigation.

He also noted that police can detain an accused person for up to 48 hours prior to making a formal arrest, with an option to increase that window on application to a magistrate.

He continued: "Our police force has been involved in investigations of political figures in the past. A government minister, UBPF, was arrested and charged with election bribery . . . two MPs were arrested for stealing and fraud at government institutions and

an MP was arrested and charged for attempting to bribe a magistrate."

Mr Thompson added: "I recall in the latter case, Cabinet ministers, party leaders and bishops attending the Magistrate's Court. Their presence did not influence the custodial sentence imposed by the magistrate."

Mr Thompson ended his letter by imploring police to be "honest, fair and work to preserve the legacy" of the force.

DRINK VIDEO COPS DEMOTED

from page one

In the video, the officers appeared to ride without seatbelts on and they ignored a call from the control room because as one said, they were "(expletive) getting drunk".

The video appeared to be recorded by the driver on his cellphone who said in the expletive laden recording: "Don't send this video out you know."

It was viewed and shared thousands of times on Facebook, prompting widespread condemnation and calls for the men to be fired.

Key details, such as when the video was recorded, were still not known up to press time.

Shortly after the video surfaced in July, Minister

Officers suspended over booze video



IN these screenshots taken from a cellphone video, officers are seen driving with a bottle of Kalik and seemingly ignoring a call from the control room.

from page one

both officers once he receives their written responses in hand." Over the weekend the video, which was viewed and shared thousands of times on Facebook, prompted widespread condemnation and calls for the men to be fired.

Key details, such as when the video was recorded,

the driver on his cellphone who said in the expletive laden recording: "Don't send this video out you know."

For many observers, the video and what it captures was the latest incident to cast some law enforcement officers in a negative light.

In recent weeks, several

weapons related charges before the courts.

On Saturday, Commissioner Greenslade, who is said to be on vacation, responded to a posting of the video on Twitter, saying: "This is being investigated as I text."

Meanwhile, a man on Facebook claimed the video was part of an "incom-

forcement officers, and I can continue to say this, to be upright, to be role models, to be respectable, to come with the highest level of integrity," Mr Dames told *The Nassau Guardian* last month.

"These are the expectations which are not very low. I make no apologies about it, we are seeking to clean up our law enforcement agencies and the good, hard-working, decent officers in the Royal Bahamas Police Force, Defense Force, corrections department and other areas, expect that. They don't want to be impacted by the few bad apples. They don't want the perception to be 'oh they are all that way.' So we have our work cut out for us," Mr Dames had said.

SUSPECT ACCUSED AFTER GUN DISCOVERY

By DENISE MAYCOCK
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A 27-YEAR-OLD Freeport man was charged with firearm and ammunition possession in the Freeport Magistrate's Court on Monday.

Emmanuel Fox, of Amberjack Street, appeared in court two before Magistrate Charlton Smith charged with possession of a firearm and ammunition.

He pleaded not guilty to the charge and was remanded to the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services until December 4.

HOW The Tribune reported the video when it was first revealed.

of National Security Marvin Dames described it as

"disgusting," and not what anyone should expect from

police officers.

"We need our law en-

\$500 FINE FOR MAN WHO THREATENED TO KILL EX-GIRLFRIEND

By NICO SCAVELLA
Tribune Staff Reporter
nscavella@tribunemedia.net

A MAN was ordered yesterday to pay a \$500 fine or face three months at the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services for threatening to kill his former girlfriend over three months ago.

However, Barry McPhee, 28, of Lexington Avenue, told Magistrate Subusola Swain that he was the one that had his life threatened

by the complainant's current boyfriend on April 13, and not the other way around.

McPhee stood before Magistrate Swain facing one count of threats of death for threatening Stadelka Ramsey on April 13. He pleaded guilty to the charge.

It is alleged that around 7pm on the day in question, the complainant was standing on Andros Avenue talking to her current boyfriend, when McPhee

approached the two and threatened to kill her.

According to the prosecution, McPhee also lifted his shirt, revealing a chrome object in his waist area which the complainant perceived to be a firearm, prompting her to notify the police.

However, McPhee told a different version of the story when prompted by the magistrate.

McPhee claimed that while walking home from work after being dropped off on Market Street, his

ex-girlfriend's boyfriend allegedly pulled a gun on him from his car and demanded that McPhee leave the area.

McPhee said he ran in fear of his own life to his mother's house and told her about the incident. He said his mother advised him to go to the police. However, McPhee said out of fear of not wanting to be labeled a "snitch," he decided not to report the matter to the police as his mother had advised.

However, Magistrate Swain still ordered him

to pay \$500 or face three months in prison. She also

ordered that McPhee's conviction be recorded.



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Dames not playing games

ON Monday, August 21, shaken by the third murder in two days, Minister of National Security Marvin Dames convened a meeting of senior police officers, including the current but reportedly soon to be erstwhile Commissioner of Police Ellison Greenslade. He asked them to reveal their strategy for fighting violent crime and the criminal activity that ends in murder or attempted murder. We have no doubt that the senior police officers in that room gave the National Security Minister the best briefing they had to offer.

Mr Dames, a former high-ranking and extremely well-educated officer himself, listened intently and acted. Without hesitation, he instructed them to redouble their efforts. He also ordered 24-hour senior command attention. A 24/7 scourge cannot be treated by a 9-5 job clock. When Mr Dames emerged from the internal meeting, he addressed media and announced a stepped up effort by police and a crackdown on crime, pledging that he would make it "very uncomfortable" for anyone engaged in a life of criminality. He chose his words carefully, sending a warning "out to all those persons who continue to live a life of crime - moving forward we intend to make your life very uncomfortable," he said. "We will use every resource at our disposal to ensure that you are made to account for your wrongdoings. This is a promise."

It is a very provocative promise and a very tall order. But if Minister of National Security Marvin Dames performs on the promise he made, he will be remembered in history as No-Games Dames. More importantly, he could change the future of The Bahamas. This is serious business and we believe that if anyone can succeed, Dames is the right man for the job but what a task he has ahead of him. He can put the fear of God into many, but how will he change the underlying culture of crime that pervades The Bahamas like a cancer that rejects the treatment that could cure it.

The country is riddled with crime. From the petty thief who walks out with candy in his pocket to the Cabinet minister who extorts cash to award a contract, from the 11-year-old on the block who readily accepts a few dollars for delivering a package of what he knows is marijuana to the man who has Armani suits in his closet and runs a series of houses where prostitution, drugs and parties are weekend regulars, crime is everywhere. Crime knows no geographic or socio-economic borders. Its impact is felt in every community, its fear or its reality touching nearly every single person living in The Bahamas.

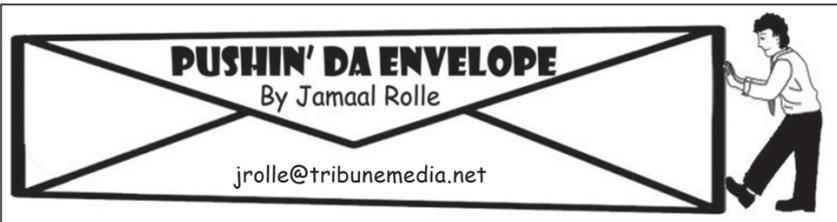
Mr Dames has no recourse but to identify, blame and shame offenders, many of whom are going to be in the

Royal Bahamas Police Force. Reports come to this newspaper on a regular basis of police-involved parties with prostitutes. Witnesses and neighbours are afraid to report the activities for fear of retribution so they continue unabated in otherwise respectable neighbourhoods like Skyline Drive, Eastern Road, Winton where suspicious activities are not suspected. Police are reluctant to rat on their own and they may not even know who is present at these sordid events with undocumented women largely from Jamaica, Cuba and Dominica of their own accord, or who is raking in some of the money and who is their undercover. Rooting out corruption within the department is going to require outside eyes and assistance. The life of any officer who points a finger at another will be in jeopardy and so long as that is the case, there will be little or no whistleblowers in blue, white or khaki.

Mr Dames is the first and most critical step in ridding the country of the crime culture. The Justice system under the Attorney General's office and the anti-corruption unit is of equal importance. While no one revels in the sight of a former Cabinet minister in handcuffs, the law must be allowed to take its full course without political interference of any kind. We hope that in the cases where there is a conviction, the guilty will be made to pay retribution and required to do community service that involves physical labour and public soul-searching. A once high-flying hot-shot who is now dressed in overalls on his knees, digging holes in the ground, assisting with a farming programme at a school will be a warning to others who might have considered bribery or extortion as a way to do government business.

We will not be so presumptuous as to suggest whether the courts should dole out prison sentences to those who once governed but we do believe that, if convicted, they should be publicly and repeatedly shamed. Photos of those who learned the hard way now doing 'time' as repentance or penance will send a powerful message. Their lessons of greed must not be buried or forgotten because they are embarrassing. They must become part of Bahamian history, taught in schools and preached from pulpits.

It is one thing to make a promise and another to deliver. It all starts with you, Mr Dames. No-Games Dames, a lot is resting on your shoulders. We wish you every success and the strength it will take to change this nation so that random killings and drug-infested shacks begin to disappear, replaced daily by random acts of kindness. We know that most Bahamians are good in heart and soul and this country is begging for a recovery from the cancer of crime.



KIDS GO BACK TO SCHOOL



Stop this tax plan on rentals

EDITOR, The Tribune.

LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

STOP!
 I understand the government needs revenue, but it must stop for a moment to get a clear understanding of the vacation rental industry.

The industry regulates and polices itself through a very sophisticated global software programme that invites guests to review the property they stay in.

Consistent good ratings mean bookings. Poor ratings mean no-one will book. There's no one to pay off to get licensed and so no possibility of corruption.

Unlike the hotels, the money stays at home as far as Bahamian owned rentals are concerned. Cleaners, gardeners, maintenance workers, cooks, car rentals, taxis, super markets, art and craft stores, liquor stores and local restaurants benefit from vacation rentals.

The typical Airbnb guest wants an affordable, authentic vacation and will not stay in a hotel. They are keen to patronize local vendors and local excursions as opposed to holing up in an artificial hotel environment.

The typical Airbnb host does not intrude on his or her guests, but makes it clear they are available should the guest need help with anything or if the guest just wants to have a chat over a nice piece of guava duff or rum cake!

In doing so, most guests forge a fantastic connection with the Bahamas and become ambassadors for the country, recommending the Bahamas as a holiday place and even returning themselves.

The biggest DANGER to the Airbnb industry is CRIME.

A number of guests have been followed to vacation rentals in respectable areas and robbed at gun point, although these incidents don't seem to make the papers.

These incidents are then reported in the reviews which rate a property. Presto, no-one will book that property anymore and a small, but important source of revenue for the property owner and those people who work with the owner to deliver a superior product has disappeared.

Before taxing and introducing the nightmare of bureaucracy to this Mom and Pop industry, the government must deal with the vexing crime problem.

M. JOHNSON
 Nassau,
 August 22, 2017.

We Rise just a PLP response

EDITOR, The Tribune.

WE Rise is nothing more than a PLP idea to piggy-back on Senator Ranard Heinfeld's We March Bahamas - an organisation which was a thorn in the Christie administration's side. This fact alone reveals that the PLP lacks innovation. Whoever the organisers are, they are copycatting Senator Heinfeld.

We Rise's insistence that it is not affiliated with any party is one more glaring example of the PLP taking the Bahamian people for fools. If We Rise is not PLP, why did group members visit the PLP headquarters of all places last week? Why did the group pose for a photo with PLP Senator Fred Mitchell, who is by far the most vocifer-

ous anti-FNM in The Bahamas? What role, if any, does Mitchell have with the organisation? Had the PLP won the May 10 general election, would We Rise have been in existence today? Or was the organisation formed solely to protest the FNM? And why is the PLP's official colour of yellow featured prominently on the black T-shirts of the organisation?

We Rise has done everything possible to display its political persuasion to the Bahamian, while telling the media otherwise. The group's planned September 2nd protest against the newly formed Minnis administration is ill-timed.

The FNM has only been in office for three months. Yet this PLP offshoot wants to raise hell as if PM Dr

Hubert Minnis and co have been in office for four plus years. We Rise organisers did not utter one peep regarding the many scandals to have rocked the Christie government, yet now they want to give the government a hard time which is only in its rudimentary stage? Are these PLPs serious?

The Whistleblower is hoping that the We Rise planned protest is a massive flop. PM Minnis must continue his good job of steering this country away from the precipice of disaster that We Rise's parent group, the PLP, led us to. We Rise is nothing more than a distraction. Its existence is utterly meaningless.

THE WHISTLEBLOWER
 Nassau,
 August 22, 2017.

There's no free lunch

EDITOR, The Tribune.

TOTALLY supportive of a capitalistic economy, but I am against a free lunch which is what it seems, users of AirBnB - Home Away from Home seem to wish. What next Government to give them a tax incentive?

This comment prompts the obvious - if payment in full of Real Property Tax, would be a qualifier for the tax exemption - how many of the property owners could qualify? I am sort of long in tooth. In other words over 60 and I recall that rental property for years, required registration and the payment of annual

fee at the Ministry of Tourism...So why change?

We have to be exceptionally careful! Are these properties all up to a reasonable standard? How many rooms are they renting, how many beds are they renting to the ratio of bathroom space?

Check one enterprising person off Village Road, they are renting the grass in front of their home, for a pop-tent for \$20.00 plus per night. Are there sanitary facilities - I very much doubt the Property Covenants allow for this. Should we care? Of course, because just like operating a hotel, a negative incident the whole

Bahamas Tourism is hurt.

How many of the current renters are paying, or charging VAT - (might be they charge and pocket it)?

Yes, this extremely positive service has saved many, who had very large mortgage payments coming out of 2008, and have been saved - but they need to consider the other side of the coin and pay something to the National Economy.

Free lunch no - a sensible tax base and required registration and inspection the minimum.

W. THOMPSON.
 Nassau,
 August 22, 2017

Migration policy 'must be changed'

from page one

see the immigration officers wear battle fatigues, they carry machine guns, they at times shoot people and the whole approach is to intimidate and treat the immigrant almost as a non-person presumed to be guilty as opposed to being innocent," Mr Smith added. "This is reflected in the continued existence of the CRDC. It is an illegal facility, there is no law which provides for its existence, it does not fall under the new act which replaced the Prison Act. It is not governed by any law."

In recent weeks, 12 migrants who were held in long-term detention at the CRDC were released. Of those men, detention times ranged from two to eight years. The facility also experienced severe overcrowding in July due to back-to-back apprehensions that saw the number of detainees swell to over 400 persons - double the maximum capacity.

Mr Smith argued that the implementation of a parole system would allow for migrants to get bail and instead be interned at the expense of family or friends. He hit out at the routine apprehension exercises and raids undertaken by officials which profile persons based on their physical appearance.

"There are yellow buses and smaller ones that just drive around on routine exercises and raids, just stopping and picking up people because they look or sound different, or because when challenged they don't have



THE CARMICHAEL Road Detention Centre.

Photo: Shawn Hanna/Tribune Staff

some satisfactory identification. Often the people taken into custody, within a few days get their family or friends to bring papers and are released.

"The whole process of it being acceptable in our country, that immigration buses stop, search and question people, and arbitrarily arrest them and put them in these camps is completely

contrary to the rule of law.

"I urge the new FNM government to stop this. Prime Minister (Hubert) Minnis said at his inauguration that his administration was going to be a government that was going to abide and respect the rule of law."

In seeking to emphasise the experience of migrants detained at the CRDC, Mr Smith drew parallels to his-

torical internment camps like those undertaken by the United States for Japanese Americans during World War II.

"The [CRDC] is only designed for a small number of people," he said, "but at times it has 400 to 700 people in overcrowded and degrading inhumane conditions. It also degrades defence force and immigra-

tion officers that have to work in those conditions."

He said: "If we can convert from criminal activity to social issue, focus on humane treatment, there would be no need to illegally incarcerate people.

"We create criminals without even giving them due process. The Immigration Act only allows detention for a short period for

the purpose of deportation. Many judges have repeatedly said indefinite detention is illegal, that is why there have been a lot of habeas corpus where people have been released.

"Why subject them for years to inhumane and degrading positions without due process and subject the Bahamian taxpayer to foot the bill?"

NEW BENEFIT PROGRAMME SUSPENDED

from page one

address social assistance, inclusive of housing grants, grocery allowance and educational help.

Minister of Social Services Lanisha Rolle could not be reached up to press time, and her permanent secretary did not respond to The Tribune's inquiries yesterday.

The ministry's RISE public relations campaign, and the CCT project, was launched in June 2015.

Dialogue for the creation of the project commenced in 2004 after an Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) study revealed that social assistance programmes in the country operated with little social

safety nets to prevent abuse and misappropriation.

An agreement was reached between the government and the IDB in August 2012 resulting in the implementation of a \$7.5m social safety-net reform project or the Renewing, Inspiring, Sustaining, Empowering (RISE) initiative.

As a part of the RISE initiative, families with children attending primary school must make certain that the child attends at least 90 per cent of prescribed school days and keeps up a 2.0 grade point average (GPA).

Families with children in secondary high school must meet these same conditions and ensure their child graduates.

If these conditions are not met, the child has to take part in one of a number of remedial courses in order for the grant to be maintained.

At its 2015 launch, officials from the Department of Social Services indicated that more than 1,000 beneficiaries had registered at the department's Wulff Road centre.

The RISE programme followed the introduction of the pre-paid debit card in conjunction with Bank of The Bahamas (BOB) in November 2014.

At the CCT launch, more than 4,000 residents of New Providence were said to be part of the Department of Social Services' modernised food assistance programme.

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Funeral Service

ESTHER ANNE WILLIAMS, 80



of Mount Vernon, will be held on Thursday, 24th August, 2017 10:30am at Christ Church Cathedral, George Street. Officiating will be The Very Reverend Patrick L. Adderley, Dean of Nassau, assisted by The Most Reverend Drexel W. Gomez and The Right Reverend Gilbert A. Thompson. Interment will follow in Christ Church Cathedral Columbarium, George Street.

Esther will always be missed and lovingly remembered by her **husband**: Edward Patrick I; **Two Sons**: Edward Patrick II & Peter Neil; **Two daughters**: Celeste Antoinette & Karen Jacinta; **three Grandchildren**: Nicholas Alexander, Falon Patricia Angela-Anne, Gerald Augustus; **daughter-in-law**: Elizabeth Anne and **her adopted**: Ryka.

Her siblings include: Ayres Neely, Weston, Lowell, Philip & Joan Mortimer and Ann Whitehead. **In-laws include**: Gloria, Delores, Elaine & Linda Mortimer and Tracey Whitehead; Carleton & Katherina Williams, Iva Williams, Jacquelyn Smith, Shirley Francis, and Rodney & Frances Williams. **Numerous Nieces, Nephews, family and friends.**

In Lieu of flowers those who wish may donate to The Altar Guild of Christ Church Cathedral, P.O. Box N-6538, Nassau, The Bahamas.

Please visit our website: www.bethelbrothersmorticians.com to share your memories and condolences with family and friends.

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TUNE INTO TODAY !!!

Sidelined: MPs reveal Christie turned on Davis

from page one

its recent history.

Though allies of Mr Christie pushed back against their characterisation of the relationship between Mr Davis and Mr Christie yesterday, it was backed by at least one former Cabinet minister in the Christie administration who spoke to *The Tribune* on the condition of anonymity.

“(Mr Christie) did stuff to prevent projects from starting and in essence that’s one of the reasons we lost the election,” the former Cabinet minister told *The Tribune*. “Everything had been postponed to the last minute. Davis was minister of works and almost all of these things would’ve been a bad reflection on him because people wouldn’t say the Ministry of Finance held up the money, they would say ‘Brave’ didn’t do his job. It was a concerted effort to discredit him. It started to happen probably in the second year, and the closer we got to the date for Christie to (expectedly) retire the worse it got. If he had allowed Davis to do his job, the unpopularity of that government would’ve



FORMER Prime Minister Perry Christie with his then deputy, Philip ‘Brave’ Davis, now leader of the Opposition after the PLP’s defeat in the general election.

been assuaged.”

During his contribution to the budget debate in May, Works Minister Desmond Bannister hinted that Mr Davis was undermined as minister of works.

While criticising the former administration’s management of public private partnerships, Mr Bannister said: “(The member for) Cat Island (Mr Davis)

can’t help us to unravel this puzzle. They stripped him naked starting in 2015. His own people started taking power away from him. Took all the roadside and park contracts. Didn’t let him know about the public private partnerships. Cat Island has got to be feeling good that he’s back here while the fella who stripped him is gone. I know I won’t

hear a point of order on that.”

Meanwhile, Mr Smith’s comments came after he told *The Tribune* he doesn’t support Obie Wilchcombe for chairman of the PLP because he’s a part “of the old guard”.

Asked how he could then support Mr Davis for party leader, the former Exuma MP said: “Davis gets a pass in terms of being blamed because they kept him out of the loop. Yes there’s a concept of collective responsibility and everyone should shoulder some blame. But in terms of being active, Mr Davis wasn’t that. Christie felt insecure and he gave the impression that he was uncomfortable with Davis’s ambitions. That’s how he ran his Cabinet. “Ryan Pinder resigned because he didn’t like the way it was being operated. Damian Gomez got out because he also didn’t like the way it was operated,” Mr

Smith said.

For his part, Mr Galanis, a former senator, said: “Mr Christie was so insecure in his position as leader that because ‘Brave’ decided to challenge him he decided to ostracise him. He had a fear that he may not win and I’m happy that kind of leadership is gone. It began around September 2015 when I came out very much in support of ‘Brave’ to be leader to take us in the next election. So Mr Christie began not sharing information and sometimes even became belligerent with persons who suggested they would support others and not him.”

Mr Christie, sources said, believed the Ministry of Works allowed Mr Davis to develop relationships with many people seeking contracts and opportunities, relationships that could have proven politically beneficial.

“By stripping him of his powers in that ministry,

the people who have contracts with the government would otherwise not meet ‘Brave,’” the former Cabinet minister said.

Latrae Rahming, a former press aide to Mr Christie, disagreed with such characterisations of Mr Christie’s relationship with Mr Davis yesterday.

“I think it is disingenuous to suggest that the former prime minister would isolate ‘Brave’ from key governmental decisions,” he said. “Brave was a part of Christie’s kitchen Cabinet and often chaired Christie’s Cabinet in his absence. He was always consulted and the then prime minister always admired his counsel. The conclusion to remove items outside ‘Brave’s’ portfolio was grounded in the fact that the substantive ministry was large and roads and parks were removed to a newly created Beaches and Parks Authority under the Ministry of Environment. The public private partnership operated outside of the Ministry of Finance given the nature of the process and the Ministry of Works was consulted for engineering work.”

Among the Christie administration policies for which Mr Davis had responsibility were the construction of the Bahamas Agriculture & Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) and oversaw the selection of PowerSecure to manage Bahamas Power & Light (BPL).

PowerSecure is off to a rocky start with the Minnis administration, with BPL’s board demanding this week that the company “cure all deficiencies and/or breaches” of its agreement with the government at a time when Bahamians have been displeased with the company’s service.

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W/R P.C. 900 MICHELLE CLARKE-CAMPBELL, 53

of Golden Gates #2, off Baillou Hill Road, will be held on **Friday, August 25th, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. at Annex Baptist Church, Wullf Road**. Officiating will be Rev. Willard Cunningham. Interment will follow in Lakeview Memorial Gardens & Mausoleums, John F. Kennedy Drive and Gladstone Road.

Loving memories will always be filled in the hearts of her loving **Husband:** Lenworth “Dennis” Campbell; **Stepson:** Dane Lenworth Campbell; **Stepdaughter:** Lashan Clarke; **Sisters:** Princess Storr, Rose-Marie Bain, Marva Cleare, Monique Sweeting, Marcia Neymour and Linda Roker; **Brothers:** Prince Clarke, Charles Rodgers and George Rodgers; **Mother-in-law:** Marjorie Brown; **Father-in-law:** Sydney Campbell; **Sisters-in-law:** Carolyn and Tawana Rodgers, and Marcia Loney, Sharline Campbell, Amaril Campbell-Moyston, and Katika Campbell of Jamaica; **Brothers-in-law:** Cedric Storr, Francis Bain, Anthony Cleare, Kevin Sweeting and Cleveland Neymour; **Nieces:** Ladeedra Ceasar of Orlando, Fl., Patricia Clarke of Boca Raton, Fl., Dana Lockhart, Sophie Parker, Lashann and Dara Clarke, Laurice Cash, Varel Davis, Veronique Gibson, Nadia Cambridge, Nia Thompson, Karissma Robinson, Sasha Bain, Alyssa, Marissa and Anthonyse “Cookie” Cleare, Emma Sweeting, Ashlee Neymour, Indera Clarke, Donella “Kelly” Rodgers, Janice Bowleg, Keisha Rodgers, Lisanda, Coramae, and Monique Taylor, Rose Richards, Sandra, Paula and Dedrie Rodgers, Cheryl Brown, Charmaine Rodgers and Charlise Rodgers, Deborah Dorsette; **Nephews:** Otis, Tamiko and Pedro Clarke Jr., George, Vacaro, Garrison, Prince Jr., and Lazal Clarke, Cedric Jr. and Antoine Storr, Francesco and Lazal Bain, Travis Clarke, Seth Sweeting, Ashton Neymour, Dwayne Rodgers, Shervin, Kenwood, Glenroy and Justin Kerr, Kermit Strachan, Darin Rodgers, Jason and Edmond Rodgers, Marvin Richards, Carl Jr., Gregory, Darren and Perez Rodgers and Hartman Brown Jr., Andrew Dorsette; **Aunt:** Melva Bastian, Vincent, Frederick and Trevor Harris; **Cousins:** Whitney, Larry, Dennis, Delroy, Derrick, and Kenny Bastian, Brenda, Harriet of Fl., Christine and Marilyn Bastian of Freeport, GB., Barbara Stewart of Pembroke Pines, Fl, Cora, Lynden, Ted, Theo, Paul, and Gerard Bastian, Rita King, John Green, Minister Priscilla Dean, Orman, Marie, James and John Bastian, Elvina Bastian, Lorraine Jones, Rev Ronald Bastian, Rev. Francinna Bethel, Judy Symonette, Ruthiema, Essiema and Kermit Bastian; **A Host of other relatives and friends including** Martina “Munchie” Barrymore of Jamaica (whom she cared for like her own daughter), the Rodgers family, **numerous grand nieces and nephews, 14 godchildren including** Melissa Williams, the Campbell family of Jamaica including Neville Brown, Mizpah Davis, Paula of Jamaica, Trevor Clarke and family, Mavis Pratt, Lillian Clarke, Doralyn Stuart, Karen McKinney and family, Holliday Thompson, Crystal Stewart, Erica Douglas, Sophia Rolle-Seymour, Charlene and Kelvin Rowe, Michaela Whyllly, Michelle and Marley, Asst Sup. Fernander, Sgt. Green, staff of the Criminal Detective Unit of the Royal Bahamas Police Force, RBPF Police Reserve, staff of the East Street South Police Station, Glenva Evans and Don Hanna, Jermaine Kennedy, Maxine Brown, Camille Watkins, Danise Christie, Mr. Townsend, Stefanie and Clyde, Yvonne Moss, Ruby Morley and family, Danette Edgecombe and family, The Shirley Club family including, Audley Hanna, the Seymour family, the Annex Baptist Cathedral family, A. F. Adderley Class of 1981, Jeffery Gardiner and family, the community of Golden Gates #1, the Tigers Den Family, the Farmer’s Market Crew, the Saint Mary High School Past Student Association, USA, the Switchboard Department of the Rand Memorial Hospital and others too numerous to mention.

Viewing will be held in the Foyer of The Paul H. Farquharson Conference Centre, Police Headquarters, East Street from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 24th, 2017, and at the church on Friday from 9:30 a.m. until service time.

MILLER: HILL DESERVED TO BE FIRED FROM BPL

from page one

On Monday, Ms Hill was given notice of her termination with immediate effect.

The announcement came less than a week after the company fired three junior employees in connection with a more than \$2m fraud scheme uncovered earlier this year.

“Please, someone show me tangibly what Ms Hill and that company did for BEC,” Mr Miller said. “When the old board left, electricity was 31 cents per kilowatt hour and now it is 43 cents.

“When we left, Clifton was running at full capacity and now it is operating at less than half. Let’s be honest, Ms Hill never had the capacity to run that company and they put

her there because she was black and PowerSecure was dealing with black people. She was their token black person.

“This woman had little to no experience, they sent her here and she did not know what the hell she was doing,” he claimed.

Mr Miller congratulated the new board and said, “so far they (are) on the right track.”

“I want to thank them for their efforts and what they are attempting to do and hopefully they will implement a new generating system and they can get the light bills lower,” Mr Miller said.

“Now I just need them to get rid of PowerSecure. Why would you keep a company that allowed BEC to get ripped off? Okay, so the senior person is gone

but why keep the company? All of them should have gone one time. Should they not suffer the same fate? They need to send everyone packing. Good riddance to Ms Hill, the sooner all of them get on a flight, the better The Bahamas will be.”

Ms Hill was named chief executive officer in May 2016.

She replaced Jeff Wallace, who resigned citing “personal reasons” weeks after the government finalised its deal with PowerSecure.

PowerSecure’s five-year management services agreement, reportedly worth as much as \$25m, was promoted by the former Christie administration as being the answer to sub-par electricity service and high electricity bills.

BOB OPENS FOR BUSINESS IN BIMINI

from page one

“We are happy there is a bank here,” said a resident who identified herself as Shanny. “I have not been in yet, but I understand that the line was crazy out there yesterday (Monday).”

Residents were disappointed and concerned when they learned that RBC, which had operated on the island for some 50 years, was closing its branch there.

The financial institution notified its clients and customers that it was merging its Bimini branch with its RBC Freeport branch in Grand Bahama, leaving residents, businesses, and visitors without access to banking services.

When *The Tribune* spoke with Ashley Saunders of the Dolphin House on July 4, he described the pullout

by RBC as “the biggest let down” for the island of Bimini. He stressed that residents were very disgruntled over it.

When this newspaper spoke with Mr Saunders on Tuesday, he said said he was pleased BOB stepped in to offer banking services.

“It opened yesterday (Monday) for the first time, and it is going pretty good,” he told *The Tribune*. “People are in and out; people are very pleased to have a bank back in operation here again.”

“We are relieved and back to normal, thanks to Bank of The Bahamas. It has been very busy with people going in and out, and especially on a day like today (Tuesday) which is National Insurance day,” he said referring to pension payouts.

Mr Saunders said residents are very appreciative and

happy to have BOB there.

Sue Duncombe, of Sue & Joy’s Variety Store, was also very grateful even though bank cards and debit machines were not in operation yesterday.

“I was there Monday, but I was only able to get my account number. The cards and debit machine are not working. But I think they will have us sorted out by the end of the week.

“We needed a bank so badly, and the way Royal Bank pull out on us we have to be grateful,” she said.

West Grand Bahama and Bimini MP Pakesia Parker-Edgecombe had indicated earlier that she and the government were committed to bringing resolve for her constituents in Bimini.

“I will stop at nothing to have my government attract a viable and suitable option,” she had said in July.



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About National Health Insurance (NHI) Bahamas

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The Managing Director is responsible for the overall management of NHIA and implementing the strategy for the organization in its mission to deliver modern, affordable and accessible health care to Bahamians through NHI Bahamas. The Managing Director is a dynamic leader, and as such will require a comprehensive understanding of the health care system to oversee the management of business operations and collaborate effectively with a network of diverse internal and external stakeholders.

This position is the leader of the Executive Management Team of the NHIA, and as such, will require a University graduate degree in economics, law, medicine, public policy or other relevant field and experience in health care, health care management or related field, at a senior level. Candidates with a Master's Degree, with a minimum of a Bachelor's degree, in a relevant academic area will be given priority consideration.

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The Deputy Director of Strategy, Legal and Policy is responsible for overall strategy, legal, policy, and communication activities for the NHIA. The Deputy Director of Strategy, Legal and Policy reports to the Managing Director, and has a strong understanding of the health care system and the various branches of the organization to enable decision making based on NHI's strategic direction.

This position is a member of the Executive Management Team, and will require a minimum post-graduate degree and/or professional certificate in law, policy or related area and 10 years' relevant experience.

Deputy Director of Finance and Accounting

The Deputy Director of Finance and Accounting is responsible for the overall financial management, planning, budgeting, forecasting, policy development and reporting of the finance and accounting branch. The Deputy Director of Finance and Accounting is a dynamic leader with a thorough understanding of the health care system, and requires a strong comprehension of the finance and accounting function, as well as the laws that govern finance and accounting in The Bahamas.

This position is a member of the Executive Management Team of the NHIA, and as such, will require a Bachelor's degree in Accounting or Finance, and 8 years' relevant experience, preferably in medical billing or insurance billing in the health care field. Candidates with a Master's degree and certification as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) professional (or the ability to obtain the certification within twelve months) would be given priority consideration.

Further information about NHI Bahamas can be found at www.nhibahamas.gov.bs. Complete job descriptions can be found at www.nhibahamas.gov.bs/careers. If you feel your competencies, experience and personality characteristics match the postings, please submit your resume with a cover letter, quoting the role for which you are applying by **Aug. 31, 2017** to careers@nhibahamas.gov.bs.



Extra 30 days to submit records

By RASHAD ROLLE
Tribune Staff Reporter
rrolle@tribunemedia.net

THE Minnis administration gave the Bahamas Christian Council a 30-day extension on the obligation for churches to produce their financial records in accordance with non-profit organisation regulations, *The Tribune* was told.

It is not clear if this extension was given to all non-profit organisations (NPOs), not just churches.

BCC President Bishop Delton Fernander told *The Tribune* yesterday his organisation met with Prime Minister Dr Hubert Minnis and discussed the matter with him. He suggested Dr Minnis sympathised with his concerns.

"He kind of agreed that some churches were called and others were not, that the list was a bit biased," he said, referring to the fact that a notice published in newspapers demanding that non-profit organisations comply with the regulations listed only some churches and not others from certain denominations.

Bishop Fernander said the BCC will meet with Attorney General Carl Bethel

on Thursday to get an update on how the administration will handle its concerns about bias.

"Some churches were given state status through acts of Parliament and so it means they are not answerable to this legislation," he said. "That's what's being said to us. But we need to create a level playing field because you have a few denominations that don't have an act of Parliament. How do we remedy this?"

In April, the Registrar General's Department said the planned review of all non-profits on the registry "is important to ensure that we are in compliance with our international obligations, preventing the use of non-profits in The Bahamas as vehicles for international criminal activity, including terrorism, and protecting our financial industry which is vital to our national development."

Then in July, the department listed in newspapers hundreds of NPOs, including such organisations as the Bahamas Historical Society and the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and Employers Confederation, that must submit information that show their

purpose, objectives and activities, the source of their annual income, the identities of the people who own, control and direct them and annual financial statements or other financial records that show while also explaining their transactions in and outside The Bahamas.

"...The notice is not intended to allege that any or all NPOs in The Bahamas are engaged in any form of terrorism financing," the Registrar General Department said.

Nonetheless, Bishop Fernander said at the time that other mechanisms already exist that provide oversight of church finances, adding that the government has no need to see the financial records of churches that do not accept money from the state.

"The church has to work with the state but the church will not allow the state to dictate what the church will do," he said. "In this case, it's clearly crossing the line. Usually the state is able to ask for financial records when it takes state funding. If you do not take state funding I don't see how the state should be asking for financial records."

MP INSPECTS SCHOOLS AHEAD OF START OF THE NEW TERM

By DENISE MAYCOCK
Tribune Freeport Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

PINERIDGE MP Rev Frederick McAlpine visited all of the public schools in his constituency to inspect the progress of school repairs ahead of the new school year.

There are five schools in the Pineridge constituency and contractors are on site at those schools to carry out the scope of works.

Rev McAlpine is confident that the schools will be ready in time for the opening of the new school year.

During his visit, he said he was happy about the work that has been done, but that the schools' lawns required some manicuring.

"Today as I am taking a view of the schools they are not fully manicured. I will take into account that

my government is so responsible enough to know it would be properly manicured and that the grass is cut before school begins," Rev McAlpine said.

He thought that all MPs should visit the respective schools in their constituencies to ensure that they are properly repaired.

"As the MP, I am taking the initiative in doing it for myself; no one is going to call me and say this was not done. I see for myself, and I think that is what every MP should be doing," he said.

The Pineridge MP was also pleased that contracts for school repairs were awarded to both young and veteran contractors.

"I am happy we have been able to strike a balance; we had contractors very young, and some contractors settled," he told ZNS. "Often-times, people say we need

to get rid of all the old folks and bring in the young. No, we need youth, and we need experience, and that strikes a balance."

Young contractor Franco Miller, of Freeport Construction, was pleased that he was given a chance and awarded the contracts for Hugh Campbell Primary, Jack Hayward High, and the Beacon School.

According to Mr Miller, school repairs are about 95 per cent completed at the schools.

He said: "Hugh Campbell was more difficult because there were roofing repairs needed, tiling, cabinetry work, repairs to doors, locks, and a lot of painting. We also did a lot of extra work because we saw the school needed it."

"I think it is good they give us a chance to prove we can do the work, it feels good," he said.



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Time for the FNM to live up to their promises



PRIME Minister Dr Hubert Minnis with Jeff Lloyd, South Beach MP, during the FNM parade from St Barnabas Anglican Church to the party's headquarters.

Photo: Shawn Hanna/Tribune Staff

THE Bahamas saw a change in administration in May 2017 with the landslide victory of the Free National Movement, and Bahamians had high expectations.

As expected, citizens have relaxed, believing the FNM-led government will fulfil its promises and all will be well. Most of the fo-

cus seems to be on anti-corruption — the buzzword of the year — but what about everything else? Do we remember what the FNM promised us? Were there specific, measurable, time-bound goals that can be used to assess government performance to date? The FNM Manifesto is hardly helpful, full of rhetoric and generalisations, light

Culture Clash

By ALICIA WALLACE

on actionable items. Let's take a look at some of the

promises.

In his national address of January 2017, Leader of the FNM and now Prime Minister Dr Hubert Minnis said the government would "get our credit rating back to investment grade in short order". This promise, he said, could be taken to the bank. He did not say how the government intends to improve the credit rating, nor did he propose a timeline. The government has a five-year term, and we have no indication of when we can expect the turnaround, or the measures being taken to guarantee it.

Most of this administration's attention is on curbing spending and fighting corruption, evidently in ways that create a public spectacle and distract from other pressing issues. A Fiscal Responsibility Act was referenced in the national address.

In April 2017, Dionisio D'Aguilar stated at a regional candidate launch that a Fiscal Responsibility Act and Freedom of Information Act would be a "day one" initiative for the FNM government. It is disappointing that we have heard little more about them and their implementation.

We were treated to a Facebook live feed of Minnis' walk through the Office of the Prime Minister to meet staff, but still have no information about the "day one" initiatives. There have been no efforts to consult with the Bahamian people, provide opportunities to learn about them, or timelines for implementation. We are not only past day one, past the hundredth day, and it is about time we get answers about timing.

Other notable initiatives mentioned in the national address include the Building Bahamian Entrepreneurs programmes, job creation, and land ownership. A commitment was made to expedite all Crown land applications, yet the only new information on this is Minnis' agreement to give

Crown land to the Bahamas Christian Council for its headquarters. The address repeated the promise to introduce legislation on a two-term limit for Prime Ministers, recall system for Members of Parliament, and local government in New Providence among other items. These were key components of the FNM campaign ahead of the 2017 election, and plans to action then should be made and shared with the Bahamian people.

Regarding the brain drain and inequitable access to education, Minnis said all Family Island students would receive assistance with accommodations as well as stipends to attend University of The Bahamas. Has this been offered to students for the 2017-2018 academic year?

There have been no reports on government assistance for students moving from the Family Islands to attend University of The Bahamas. What progress has been made toward offering free education at University of The Bahamas to qualified Bahamian students?

Crime is always a front-of-mind issue in The Bahamas. It has been politicised by all political parties, yet no administration has solved the problem, nor has any Opposition presented potential solutions.

In his January 2017 address, Minnis said, "We will attack crime at its roots. In collaboration with parents, church leaders, educators, social workers and community leaders, we will seek to arrest this menace by working together to make sure that our children grow up knowing the difference between right and wrong."

He said special programmes would be introduced for at-risk youth. An "efficient crime fighting machine" that could prevent, detect, and prosecute was promised over seven months ago, before the current government was elected.

In July 2017, National Security Minister Marvin Dames said the grand plan to reduce violent crime was enforcement of the death penalty.

While this should be no surprise to anyone who read the FNM Manifesto which focused on a "zero-tolerance" approach, it is certainly indicative of a misguided view and lack of understanding of the difference between prevention and punishment.

Whether or not we have a party or colour of choice, we need to be able to look critically at the state of our country. Even if we have

short memories, it is imperative that we look back at news reports, national addresses, and campaign material to properly assess any administration.

Are they delivering what they promised? Do we understand what they have promised? Can we see what they are doing to ensure their promises are kept? Are we doing our job, as employers, to hold them accountable and remind them of their jobs, constituents, and commitments?

The past few months have been a long, hard lesson in civics and governance. We realized our individual and collective power in many ways, and activated it on several occasions, including election day.

Now is not the time to relax. It is time to be vigilant. To be demanding. To get involved. If this government is going to grow the economy, create jobs, reduce public debt, reduce poverty, create a safer country, and increase access to education, it will not — and should not — be without us.

If it is truly the people's time, we can't wait for the government to do what we expect. We can't let another 100 days go by. We can't wait for a march to be organised. We can't keep giving them more time "because they just got here." They fought for their win, and said they were ready.

When we hear great ideas, we must not get caught up in the imagine future. We have to ask the difficult questions. How will we achieve this? What will this cost? Who needs to be a part of the process? How long will it take? What, if anything, will we lose? Where do we begin? What is the role of elected officials, and what is the role of the people?

We can't continue to accept the same old rhetoric. We have to demand a plan and insist that we are a part of it. We have to create the country we want and deserve, and that requires work. That takes more than listening to what they say and watching to see what they do. It's time for us, as a people, to change the way we think about governance and the role we play in it. The people we elected are not our leaders. They are our representatives and our employees. Most of us have been misinterpreting "the people's time" all along. It's our time to participate, challenge, and assess from the beginning to the end of this administration's term. There is no vacation from citizenship, and if there was a post-election honeymoon, it's time to declare it over.



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BEAUTY queens taking part in the Elite Global Earth pageant during their visit to Freeport and, below right, Kenisha Bethel who is ambassador for the event.

Ambassador for beauty

By DENISE MAYCOCK
Tribune Freeport Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

GRAND Bahama's Kenisha Bethel was crowned as an ambassador for the Elite Global Earth Pageant and will travel with the organisation to Las Vegas, Nevada, to join its team there.

Ms Bethel was awarded the title by executives of the pageant franchise, who came to Freeport with more than a dozen of its beauty queens on board the Carnival Ecstasy on Friday for a fun-filled day in Grand Bahama.

Ms Bethel, a guest services representative with the Ministry of Tourism and

Aviation, had organised the day-trip for the Elite Global Earth Pageant and its 15 beauty queens not knowing that she too would be recognised for her hard work.

According to the ministry, the trip was presented as a gift from the organisation to its reigning queens for their success in the franchise's most recent pageants.

Present to welcome the group on their arrival at Freeport Harbour on August 18 were several local beauty queens, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation.

After a brief welcome reception, the group was taken on a tour of the island and enjoyed an afternoon

on the beach at Manta Ray Beach Club.

In addition to their visit to Grand Bahama, the group came with the intention of crowning Ms Bethel as their newest Elite Global Earth ambassador.

Pageant executives commended Ms Bethel for her hard work, dedication, organisational skills, and warm spirit.

Surprised by the gesture, Ms Bethel said: "For me, I wasn't expecting this, it was a really, really good surprise; they got me good. I enjoy doing what I do and helping people, so I'm grateful that they've recognised me for all the work that I've been doing."

The Elite Global Earth Pageant was created to celebrate the "success a woman has achieved as a wife, mother, daughter, friend, and community advocate." The pageant allows both married and non-married contestants, with or without children. The age group is from 14-70 years old.

Ms Bethel said that she is grateful for the opportunity to work in close collaboration with the organisation. She said she looks forward to "promoting the sisterhood of pageantry, awareness for special causes, and the preservation of our Mother Earth," which is mandated by the Elite Global Earth Pageant.



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MEMBERS of the Boys' Brigade at a summer camp in Antigua recently.

Antigua mission for Boys' Brigade

WITH all the negative news surrounding the state of young men in the Bahamas, The Boys' Brigade is committed to its mission of developing boys into Christian men who are upstanding citizens.

This past July, a Bahamas contingent travelled to the organisation's Caribbean International Camp in Antigua. More than 14 Caribbean countries were represented, as well as Zambia and Denmark. The two-week camp was filled with sporting activities, arts and crafts and outdoor pursuits.

Twelve-year-old, Shane Oliver, a student at St Augustine's College and Boys' Brigade member for the past four years was a participant.

"Boys Brigade can take you across the world," he said. "I met people from Denmark and Trinidad and Montserrat."

About the various activities, the youngster said: "We went hiking and zip-lining, visited stingray city, a nature park and the beach. There were drills and group competitions and training in first aid, nutrition and outdoor survival skills."

Additionally, Bahamian Boys' Brigade captains Ekron Pratt and Fernley Palmer were honoured for their long service to the organisation.

Captain Henry Curry, chairman of the Western Caribbean Regional Fellowship and leader of 23rd Company based at St Barnabas Anglican Church, said: "It's important for our boys to travel and connect with the wider Boys' Brigade community. Activities like these allow for both the boys and the officers to better understand how the organisation is making a difference in the lives of so many across

the world."

In addition to the regional camp, Boys' Brigade had a busy summer. The New Providence Battalion held its annual Men & Boys Conference in June. Captains and officers of the New Providence battalion companies participated in the Ministry of Youth leaders certification course, and boys from different companies within the New Providence battalion participated in the Commonwealth Youth Games opening ceremony. A number of boys have also been recognised for their academic and sports accomplishments this past year.

"Boys' Brigade serves the community as a guide to young men on how to grow up to be well-rounded citizens," said Captain Jamicko Forde, long-time Brigade member.

"As the only interdenominational organisation focused on the mentoring of boys across the Bahamas, Boys' Brigade offers a safe, structured environment, balancing strong leadership, life skills, Christian principles and fun," said Captain Forde. "This mentoring is exactly what the Bahamas needs."

Boys' Brigade begins its registration for the upcoming school year in September. Interested parents can contact the various companies: 1st Wesley Methodist, 4th St Agnes, 13th St John's Native Baptist, 14th Zion East Street, 15th Bethel Baptist, 21st Mt Moriah, 23rd St Barnabas, 30th Abundant Life, 50th New Destiny Baptist and 55th First Baptist. Boys' Brigade companies are also located on Grand Bahama, Hatchet Bay Eleuthera and Inagua. Application fees and dues are nominal and vary by company.



A BOYS' Brigade member zip lining.