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SPORTS: SWIMMERS SURGE TO HIGHEST GOODWILL GAMES FINISH

Baby's killing rocks Cabinet

300 FACING COURT OVER STUDENT LOAN DEBTS

By **KHRISNA RUSSELL**
Deputy Chief Reporter
krussell@tribunemedia.net

MORE than 300 people with delinquent Educational Loan Authority accounts will face "prosecution" and may have their wages garnished or valuable assets seized among other things, Education Minister Jeffery Lloyd told *The Tribune* yesterday.

He said while the response to the government's calls to repay the millions owed to the ELA has been "fantastic," there still remains hundreds of people who have been unresponsive or are reluctant to settle their debts.

Some \$156m is outstanding because many accounts remain delinquent, Mr Lloyd said.

SEE PAGE SIX

RETIRES COURTED IN TEACHER SHORTAGE

By **RICARDO WELLS**
Tribune Staff Reporter
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THE government has engaged a group of retired and soon to be retired educators, with the hope of contracting many of them to offset a potential shortage of about 100 teachers heading into the new academic year.

Education Minister Jeffrey Lloyd said yesterday the government has had a "great degree of success" in its attempts to invite teachers approaching or those who have reached the retirement age to consider contracted stints after formally retiring and accepting their respective gratuity and pension benefits.

SEE PAGE SIX

'BOGUS POLICE' KILLED OUR SON

By **NICO SCAVELLA**
Tribune Staff Reporter
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SUPREME Court jurors yesterday heard how home invaders allegedly feigned being members of the Royal Bahamas Police Force in their attempts to burglarise a Blair Estates home in 2014 when Blair resident Andre Cartwright was shot and killed.

Emma Cartwright, mother of the deceased, taking the witness stand before Justice Renae McKay, said she heard shouts of "police,"

SEE PAGE THREE

By **KHRISNA RUSSELL**
Deputy Chief Reporter
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HOURS after an eight-month-old baby was shot dead in his home, Prime Minister Dr Hubert Minnis met with the attorney general and Royal Bahamas Police Force (RBPF) officials to reinforce the government's "zero tolerance" approach to crime, stressing his commitment to provide the support police need to fight crime, Press Secretary Anthony Newbold said yesterday.

The baby's murder, he told reporters, has left "everybody really shocked".

However, while the family grapples with this tragic end to the infant's life, Mr Newbold said the country must understand there is no one solution to crime. He said a complex approach

must be taken to arrest this multifaceted problem.

The Minnis administration's crime plan or perceived lack thereof by some detractors has been the source of much criticism.

Asked to respond in this regard during his regular press briefing, Mr Newbold said: "Plans won't stop crime (or) certainly killings."

He continued: "The Minister of National Security (Marvin Dames) has spoken to plans. The police should also present a crime plan."

"As I also said, the prime minister has called for the formation of a ministerial subcommittee as well because crime is vexing and one plan or one element of a plan is not going to solve it."

SEE PAGE SIX

ARMED TRIO HUNTED AFTER SAFE SNATCH



THE REPORTED interior of Thompson Trading after the raid in images shared on social media.

By **SANCHESKA DORSETT**
Tribune Staff Reporter
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POLICE are on the hunt for three men who tied up, assaulted and robbed two security guards at a local high school and a neighbouring business early yesterday morning before making off with a safe "with plenty money" and two stolen vehicles.

The drama unfolded shortly after 5am off Shirley Street.

In the first incident, police said the three men, armed with handguns, approached a security guard at Temple Christian School and robbed him of his black Nissan Note before assaulting him and taking his personal items.

About fifteen minutes later, a security guard was at Thompson Trading Co Ltd when three men in a black Nissan tied him

up and robbed him of a cell phone, cash and his green 2009 Pontiac. The suspects also broke into the business and removed a safe before fleeing the area in both stolen vehicles.

Officers responded to the robberies, spotted the vehicles and a chase followed, ending off Homestead Street. The suspects abandoned the two vehicles and fled on foot.

SEE PAGE TWO

CCA WARNS POINTE PLAN APPROVALS 'URGENT'

By **NEIL HARTNELL**
Tribune Business Editor
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THE \$250m Pointe project's Chinese developer urged the Government to quickly provide construction approvals just days after Beijing unveiled plans to restrict overseas investments.

Daniel Liu, head of the China Construction America (CCA) entity behind the downtown Nassau project, wrote to the Minnis ad-

ministration on August 22, 2017, seeking "immediate assistance" for the Pointe's condominium and marina construction approvals.

The letter, addressed to Desmond Bannister, minister of works, was written just four days after China's State Council and its top economic planning body placed overseas hotel investments by Chinese companies - and especially state-owned ones such as CCA - in a "restricted" category.

FULL STORY - SEE BUSINESS

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THOMPSON Trading pictured after the armed robbery.

Photo: Shawn Hanna/Tribune Staff

Armed trio hunted after safe snatch

from page one

A safe was recovered from one of the vehicles.

Assistant Commissioner of Police Clayton Fernander said police suspect the men are responsible for several armed robberies, dating back to February, where security guards were tied up and businesses were robbed.

"This a trend that we have been noticing and based on the way these guys work, we suspect the same persons are committing these robberies," ACP Fernander said.

"These individuals are targeting business establishments in the early morning, tying up the security and robbing the place. It started with some schools a few months ago and now they are doing it to business. We believe it is the same group of criminals doing these robberies."

Perry Cunningham, Temple Christian High School principal, told *The Tribune* that nothing was stolen from the institution and

said everything is "in order" for the school's opening next week.

"We will be ready for Monday, we want the parents to know that everything is in order. "What happened was, we have a security officer that was attacked and sustained injuries to his face and head. He was taken to the hospital where he is not critical however the situation is still most unfortunate," Mr Cunningham said.

"There is no damage to the school itself like to the classrooms or the buildings. We are ready and set to have school on Monday. I think these people targeted Thompson Trading and just attacked our guard to get the vehicle or because he was a witness. There was no attempt made on the school at all. I don't want our parents to feel uneasy, the school is safe and we are ready."

The Tribune attempted to contact the management of Thompson Trading, a food and beverage distributor and wholesaler, but calls were not returned up

to press time.

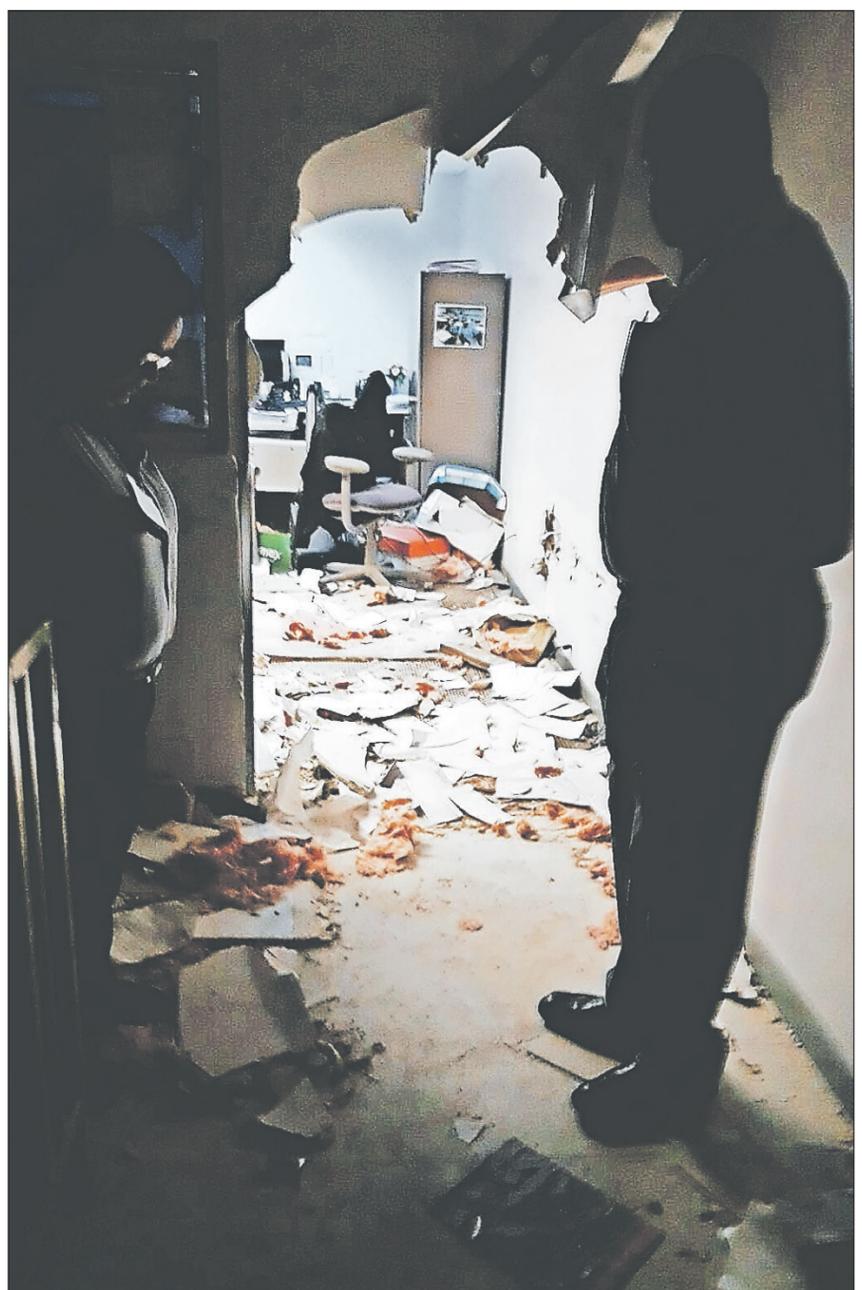
However, an employee who asked to remain anonymous confirmed that thieves broke through a wall that leads to the safe and dragged the safe out the building.

"There is a lot of damage to the wall on the inside, they broke in through a glass door and they knew what they were coming for. There was plenty money in the safe but not the \$2m that is circulation on social media," the employee said.

In February, two security officers at C C Sweeting Senior High School were tied up and held at gunpoint while four masked men robbed the school of cash and electronics before leaving them gagged and bound for nearly four hours.

A few days earlier, C H Reeves Junior School was also vandalised and security guards there were also tied up and robbed.

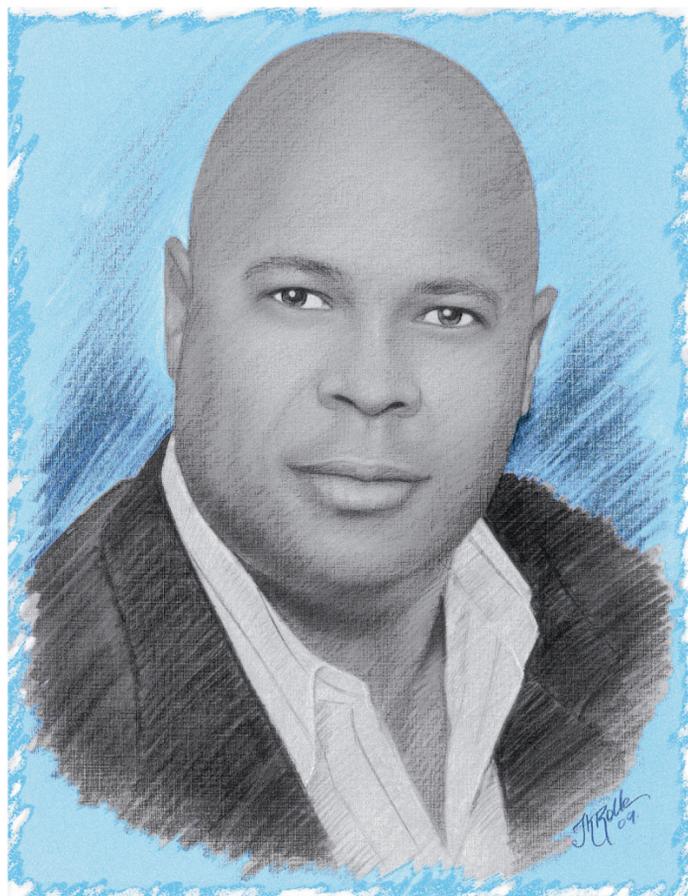
Anyone with information is asked to contact police at 911 or 919, the Central Detective Unit at 502-9991 or Crime Stoppers anonymously at 328-TIPS.



INSIDE Thompson Trading after the raid in an image circulating on social media.



AN IMAGE from video footage showing the stolen safe.



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'Bogus police' killed our son

from page one

police" from the other side of her home's interior door, which was being bashed in, just seconds after her son Andre, in a loud voice, commanded: "Stop! I have a gun."

So "authoritative" were the shouts of "police, police", Mrs Cartwright said she honestly believed RBPF members were on the other side of the door and that they might be on official business.

Glenn Cartwright, meanwhile in an emotional testimony that invoked sobs from family and friends of the deceased in the courtroom, described how shortly after 1am on the morning in question, he was awakened out of his sleep by loud "banging" and "crashing" noises coming from the direction of his home's front door.



ANDRE CARTWRIGHT

made it out of his bedroom when he noticed the inner door was being pushed in. According to Mr Cartwright, the inner door separates the bedrooms from the rest of the house. He said he always locks that door before retiring for the night.

When it became obvious the inner door would be compromised, Mr Cartwright said he pushed his

wife into the bedroom for safety. Mr Cartwright said his son then pushed him into the bedroom, and consequently got in between his parents and the compromised inner door.

Mr Cartwright said he heard a brief exchange of gunfire, and eventually came out of the bedroom to see his son Andre stumbling backwards into one of the doorways on their side of the inner door. He said he noticed that his son was in "distress" and holding his chest.

Mr Cartwright said he subsequently tried to resuscitate his son, but he had already died.

Mr Cartwright said he sat on the bathroom floor with his dead son in his lap for an unknown amount of time, before going out the front door, falling on the grass and sobbing until his son's body was taken away.

The testimonies by Mrs Cartwright and her hus-

band came on the first day of trial for Tiano D'Haiti, of Thompson Lane, and Kevin Andrews, of Montell Heights, in connection with Cartwright's murder which occurred October 28, 2014.

D'Haiti, represented by Jihraim Mangra, is accused of murder and attempted armed robbery, while Andrews, represented by Murió Ducille, is accused of murder, attempted armed robbery and burglary.

According to initial reports from police, Andre Cartwright, 44, was at his Blair Estates home around 1.40am with his mother and father on the morning in question, when three men kicked in the door of the house.

When he heard the noise, the deceased got his licensed shotgun and went to investigate, police reported. He encountered the three suspects, one of whom was armed with a handgun, police said.

There was a brief exchange of gunfire, which resulted in the victim being shot multiple times. He died at the scene. One of the suspects was also shot, however, he and the other men escaped in a silver coloured Honda Accord, according to initial reports from police.

Mrs Cartwright, in giving her testimony, did not specify whether she saw a silver coloured Honda Accord leaving the scene. However, she did say that in her attempts to get help from neighbours, and while in the middle of the street, she saw what appeared to be car headlights shining from behind her.

She said she spun around and waved her arms frantically in an attempt to flag them down and ask for help. However, she said the car drove around her and left the area.

A neighbour, Richard Sweeting, also testified

yesterday, saying after he heard what sounded like loud banging coming from outside of his home, he looked out one of his windows towards the Cartwright residence and noticed that their front door was open.

Mr Sweeting said he heard gunfire, and later saw two dark brown males leaving the home in a western direction "super fast." The first person he said, was about 5'10" with a medium build, wearing dark-coloured pants and something covering his head.

The second individual, Mr Sweeting said, was taller with a slim build, with dark-coloured pants, and also had his head covered with either a cap or tam. Mr Sweeting also said the second individual carried what appeared to be a dark-coloured handgun.

The trial continues today at 11am.



MP for Englerston Glenys Hanna-Martin pictured as she officially announced her leadership bid for the Progressive Liberal Party.

Photo: Shawn Hanna/Tribune Staff

FURTHER LEADERSHIP BIDS EXPECTED, SAYS PLP CHAIRMAN

By SANCHESKA DORSETT
Tribune Staff Reporter
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PROGRESSIVE Liberal Party Chairman Bradley Roberts said he expects "several more persons" to run for the leader of the party during its October convention, adding that the "competition" will only make the PLP stronger.

Mr Roberts' comments came one day after Englerston MP Glenys Hanna Martin launched her bid to become leader of the Official Opposition.

She is the first person to publicly announce an inten-

tion to challenge Cat Island, Rum Cay and San Salvador MP Philip "Brave" Davis for leader at the upcoming convention.

She is seeking to become the first woman to lead a major political party, having been elected as the first woman chairman of the PLP in 2008.

Mrs Hanna Martin said she would lead the party into an era of aggressive modernisation as PLP leader, embracing technological advancements while ensuring greater dialogue between members and party leadership.

"Democracy is alive and

well in the PLP and I expect that there will be others who will be putting their name forward," Mr Roberts told *The Tribune*.

"I know there will be more than her, I know that much. A lot of persons will offer themselves, there will be competition because the PLP is strong and fierce. In the end, the best person will get the job, may the best man or woman win."

In May, Mr Davis said he intended to run for the top post of the opposition party whenever it decided to hold a convention.

The Cat Island, Rum Cay and San Salvador MP said

the convention would help the party in its attempts at "resolving election issues."

As a result of the May 10 landslide defeat at the hands of the Free National Movement, former Prime Minister Perry Christie resigned as leader of the PLP days later.

Mr Davis, former PLP deputy leader, was immediately elevated to party leader, as mandated in the PLP's constitution.

The PLP held its last convention on January 24-26. At the close of the three-day event, Mr Christie won with 1,264 votes to 169 for Alfred Sears in a

leadership race.

When contacted last week, Mr Sears, former attorney general, said he was mulling his options now that it was clear a convention is happening.

Mr Sears, who also unsuccessfully ran in Fort Charlotte in May, added that with all things considered, he would "weigh all the options" ahead of him, as he remains "solely and completely dedicated to im-

proving the PLP."

Earlier this month, former PLP member of Parliament Philip Galanis said every PLP candidate rejected by voters on Election Day should be barred from contesting leadership posts at the party's October convention.

Mr Galanis told *The Tribune* the move would ensure that the party is in the best position to "return to the people".

BISHOP'S FAMILY HELD UP AT GUNPOINT

RELATIVES and an employee of Anglican Bishop Laish Boyd were held up at gunpoint by three masked men who robbed them in the driveway of their San Souci home on Tuesday morning.

According to a statement issued by the Anglican Diocese of the Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands, the incident took place at about 7.30am.

Bishop Boyd's three sons, their cousin and the bishop's personal assistant were all held at gunpoint, the statement said.

"The incident took place in the driveway of the bishop's residence in San Souci. The bandits took the bishop's car along with personal effects from the five indi-

viduals," according to the Diocesan statement.

The Anglican Diocese said Bishop Boyd was not at home at the time of the robbery.

However, he was expected to return yesterday from Antigua.

"Please pray for the bishop and all others involved in this most unfortunate incident. Let us pray also for the perpetrators of such crimes," the diocese added.

Police said the masked men robbed the victims of cash, cellphones, laptops, jewelry and a Toyota Camry. The car was later found by police abandoned on Jerome Avenue.

Police are also investigating two other armed rob-

beries which happened yesterday.

Shortly before 11am, a woman was at a business on Tonique Williams Darling Highway when a man with a handgun entered and stole her handbag containing cash and a cellphone. The

thief escaped in a Honda vehicle, police said.

Then shortly before 2pm, another woman was robbed at a business on Bernard Road. A gunman entered the business and robbed her of cash before fleeing on foot.

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By the weekend, the truth will out

"WE RISE", a new group claiming that it wants "something done" about "injustice, wrongful terminations and violent crime", has announced that it will call a protest march for the Southern Recreation grounds on Saturday. As far as they are concerned the new government is moving in the wrong direction.

However, there are "doubting Thomases" out there who believe that "We Rise" is the creation of the now opposition PLP, desperate to remain relevant as they attempt to bamboozle Bahamians into believing that the problems they now face had nothing to do with their five-year administration, but solely the creation of an inept FNM.

While the PLP have not openly endorsed "We Rise", the group, sporting the party's colours, and pictured at PLP headquarters, meeting with former Fox Hill MP Fred Mitchell, have given the game away. Now a senator, having lost his parliamentary seat, it is important that somehow Mr Mitchell moves from the shadows if he ever wants to take a last, desperate shot at realising his life-long dream and become – the Hon Fred Mitchell, Prime Minister of the Bahamas.

There are vehement PLP denials that any member of their party has anything to do with "We Rise" or for that matter any political movement against government. However, Ranard Henfield, now a senator, who led the peaceful, and effective, "We March" demonstration before the May 10 election, says otherwise. Senator Henfield says he has been privately called by senior PLP members to "rise up" against the Minnis administration. The calls, he said, have gone unanswered.

"I am not sure," Senator Henfield commented sarcastically, "which history books those persons read that said the abused returned to the aid of the abuser. I trust," he continued, "that Mrs Cherly Bazard and Mr Chester Cooper will purge that party (the PLP) by year's end."

Mr Henfield's movement endorsed

the FNM government, presenting it with a list of what it wanted addressed within the party's first 100 days if elected.

That list included jail for any politician found guilty of corruption, lower cost of living, term limits for prime ministers, the removal of Crown land distribution from the Office of the Prime Minister, an independent director of public prosecutions and the appointment of former Court of Appeal President Dame Joan Sawyer as attorney general, among other things.

Mr Henfield made it clear that if the new government failed to get these things done, they would take to the streets again and march.

However, handed a government in a worse financial state than imagined, Mr Henfield said that despite the "impatient, intolerant and radical" nature of his organisation, the group sees no need to march.

"We see progress on a number of our issues and appreciate that no administration can fix five years of plundering and mismanagement in 100 days," he said. "As long as we can see changes being made on our issues the 'We March' organisation can keep our black shirts on their hangers."

On Saturday, Bahamians will probably better understand what "We Rise" is all about. However, from our experience over the years of covering PLP protest marchers, when our reporters have tried to interview the individual protester to find out what they are protesting, they don't know why they are even there. A while back there was a rumpus on Bay Street with young men rushing upstairs to a certain office demanding to be paid what they had been promised for participating in a PLP protest during the Ingraham administration. We are not saying that "We Rise" is on that level, but we would advise that if there is any deal making, the terms and conditions should be firmly settled before the first step is taken.

Anyway, by the weekend the truth will out.



CRIME, CRIME, CRIME!



Still in love with Trump, Mr Symonette?

EDITOR, The Tribune.

WHEN he was a private citizen nobody cared that Brent Symonette found in Donald Trump a man with whom he was so enamored that he would have voted for him in last November's election if he had US citizenship.

More than a few Rotary Club members must have squirmed in their seats when Symonette made this declaration of solidarity with Trump in February.

Other than the obvious sucking of teeth and rolling of eye-balls by Rotarians whose guiding principles are service, diversity and integrity, the moment passed and somehow Symonette wasn't laughed out of the luncheon or rebuked for his naive utterance.

This man was our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Now he sits at the Cabinet table helping make decisions for all of us while Donald Trump sits in the White House making decisions that embolden racists, bigots, anti-Semites and white supremacists.

We don't have to lose sleep over whether Brent's fondness for Trump will somehow find its way into our foreign policy. His cabinet colleagues, led by our adroit new Foreign Minister Darren Henfield will shut him down before he finishes his thoughts.

But the public needs to know if our Minister of

LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

Financial Services, Trade and Industry and Immigration still reveres Trump, a man who seemingly hates minorities, non-white immigrants, Jews and women.

Brent's conscience probably won't dictate that he come forward and repudiate Donald Trump for his latest benighted outburst. Continuing with his full-blown assault on the American presidency, Trump went rogue again and refused to be a beacon of hope and a balm for a nation hurting after racists, neo-Nazis and white supremacists went on a rampage in Charlottesville, Virginia, birthplace of Thomas Jefferson, the primary author of the US Declaration of Independence.

It is true that Jefferson was a philandering slave owner, but the words he used when he drafted the preamble to that declaration were later used to extend equality to the descendants of slaves. Those words "all men are created equal" rang hollow on the sacred ground that was defaced by racist thugs.

Enter Symonette's hero Trump serenading the purveyors of hate and for the first time in modern history putting the presidency on the wrong side of a moral divide. Trump refused to appreciate that there were only two sides – good vs

evil. He was cool with evil.

The Prime Minister and the Cabinet make foreign policy and so we can all rest assured that after Charlottesville whenever Minister Henfield speaks in international fora he will leave no doubt in anyone's mind that the Bahamian people vigorously oppose racism and bigotry, anti-Semitism and any kind of supremacy.

Is Brent willing or ready to walk back his earlier Trump endorsement?

Brent is not the first man in history to fawn over a leader hell bent on his own destruction. But he chose to make public his esteem for Trump and so the onus is on him to state publicly whether Trump is still his man of business.

If he cannot distance himself from Trump then he dishonours himself, his colleagues and the Bahamian people.

This is not about politics. It's about character. It's about poor judgement. It's about morality and it's about the preamble to our own Constitution which tells the world that we abhor racism and slavery.

Brent must abandon Trump now before history leaves him standing alone, a poor pathetic figure who couldn't tell the difference between a statesman and a charlatan.

It's time for Brent to man-up.

THE GRADUATE
 Nassau,
 August 19, 2017

The problems with BPL

EDITOR, The Tribune.

BP&L - ZNS News report Sunday last. Wow if you believe one word of that release all our troubles with excessively high electricity rates have to be over - what a lot of garbage.

BP&L and the FNM are miles from the solution which is biting their toes. One could say dumb also but then we have to be kind to these inexperienced people. Hmm Ms Pam Hill is replaced by a 'sub-contractor' of PowerSource - got to ask so

what really does PowerSource bring to the table except we paid them or was it \$850,000.00 for our own business plan!

Mr Prime Minister when you eventually return to the House please Table that Business plan and the MOU of PowerSource - the People want to see!

Spelling - years ago journalists and alike mixed up 'council and counsel' now it seems honorary and honorary got to be BJSE English is so bad it is 'honorary' please ZNS in the case when referring to an Honor-

ary Consul. To laugh a little I saw a sign on Shirley Street of an Honorary Consul with honorary spelt 'honourary' - sign makers please note also!

BAIL ... when is the Attorney General going to insist all bail applications for accused murderers, rapists, persons with possession of guns will have to raise high value bails - we have to save their lives as they are dead otherwise!

W THOMPSON
 Nassau,
 August 27, 2017.

Alfred Sears should run for leader

EDITOR, The Tribune.

I ADMIRE that Alfred Sears had the courage to challenge Perry Christie at the last PLP convention. It is sad that the PLP did not have the good sense to get rid of Mr Christie and go into the election with a better leader.

Following Mr Christie was a bad, bad idea. The party nearly lost every one of its seats. Mr Christie even lost his seat, embarrassing himself.

What I liked about Mr Sears was he was talking about reform and changing the party. The PLP has too many stalwart councilors. Mr Christie kept naming them because he wanted to stay in power. He would

name people who were loyal to him.

The PLP also needs to think about putting term limits in place for its leaders. In 60 years, the PLP has only had two leaders - Mr Christie and Sir Lynden Pindling. Maybe make it where no one could serve more than 10 years or 15 years as leader?

Mr Sears is the best person to change the party. He is not one of the insiders. If the PLP stays with the same old group of people who have led the party from Pindling's time, nothing will change and the PLP will lose the next election.

People say Mr Sears can't be leader because he is not in the House of Assembly. That's not true. There is no rule anywhere that

says that. The PLP could have a leader in the House who serves as leader of the opposition and Mr Sears could be the leader of the party who changes it and makes it more relevant to non-PLP voters.

The PLP can't win an election with its base alone. It needs to attract swing and independent voters. The party needs a leader who is not linked to PLP misdeeds of the past. Bahamians respect Mr Sears and they do not associate him with the scandalous crew in the PLP.

I hope Mr Sears runs. I hope PLPs give him a chance.

MARTHA S GREENE
 Nassau,
 August 27, 2017.

Larry Smith is a big loss

RE: Larry Smith

EDITOR, The Tribune.

THE Bahamas has indeed

lost a fearless and excellent journalist. Larry Smith was one of the very best.

My condolences and sympathies to his family on his

untimely death.

FRED F GOTTLIEB
 Marsh Harbour, Abaco
 August 29, 2017.



POLICE at the scene of Monday morning's shooting, which saw two adults injured and an eight-month-old infant killed.

Photo: Terrel W. Carey/Tribune Staff

Baby's killing rocks Cabinet

from page one

"We have seen that certainly with the former administration and so (it's) a work in progress always.

"The police on one side and then social elements must be added. Whether it's the church and we have to pay attention to the recommendations wherever they come from and do the very best that we can to implement those recommendations."

Earlier in his presentation to the press, Mr Newbold said the Cabinet subcommittee was formed to

take a holistic view of the crime problem.

"The prime minister met yesterday (Monday) with the police and the attorney general to reinforce the government's zero tolerance approach to crime and to stress that he is still prepared to provide all the support that the police needs to get the job done.

"In fact the Cabinet subcommittee has been formed to take a holistic view of the crime situation and how the church and schools and other social partners can play a larger role in getting crime under control.

"Everybody is really

shocked by what happened (Monday morning) and we understand though that there is no one solution to crime. It's a multifaceted problem and so there must be a multifaceted (approach) to getting it under control."

Police believe the infant, Shelton Delano Tinker was killed in an act of retaliation toward the baby's father. Police initially said the child was 18-months-old but yesterday clarified the baby's correct age of eight months.

The boy's mother and father were also shot during the incident. They are both listed in serious condition

in hospital.

Shortly after the tragic killing, police said they wanted to speak with 19-year-old Anthon Stevens, aka "Bigga," for help with the investigation.

Mr Stevens later turned himself in to the Central Detective Unit with his lawyer around 4.05pm in connection with the investigation, police said.

The shooting took place shortly after 3am on Monday and took the country's murder count to 90 for the year, according to The Tribune's records. It was also the second murder in less than 48 hours in the capital.

Assistant Commissioner of Police Clayton Fernander said the adult male victim, the father of the baby, was about to enter his home off Rupert Dean Lane when he was forced into the residence by a gunman who he knew.

"The adult male just got home and he was about to enter his home, north of Dunmore Street when he was approached by a gunman known to him, who lives in this general area. "The gunman forced him into the home," ACP Fernander said Monday.

"The home is a single structure home, where the

victim lived with his girlfriend and their . . . baby boy. The individual fired a number of shots resulting in three persons being shot. The male victim, his girlfriend and the baby were shot to the body. The infant died on the scene, the male and the female were transported to hospital by ambulance and they are listed in serious condition. The man is in more serious condition than the woman."

ACP Fernander said the male victim and the suspected gunman had an argument the night before, which police believe led to the shooting.

300 FACING COURT OVER STUDENT LOAN DEBTS

from page one

"The response has been fantastic because people now face the possibility of prosecution and obviously nobody wants to be prosecuted," Mr Lloyd said yesterday.

"However, unfortunately, over 300 will have to be prosecuted because they have been unresponsive or they have been reluctant to respond and that process is ongoing.

"But I am grateful that there are many who took the invitation to bring their accounts up to date to repay their loans or to work out some financial arrangement with the authority as to how they will repay that loan."

Asked to explain the penalties which may be possible should people face the court over the money owed, Mr Lloyd said: "It is a civil offence. It is a civil action.

"You are obviously going to be found in breach of your contract.

"You will then be required to pay on certain terms as the court may determine. The court may impose other remedies as requested by the applicant that could be seizing personal assets, depending on the amount (or

that could be a garnishing of your wages.

"But most people don't want to go through that process. Most people want to deal with some means of repaying whatever it is that is outstanding. So we are confident that even those who have been served with writs will somehow fall in line as it were with the ambitious intentions of the authority and just come to an agreement."

He added: "We are not trying to put people in jail and all that kind of stuff or really make life difficult. But at the same time, it's the taxpayers and the taxpayers deserve to have their monies repaid."

Last month, Mr Lloyd revealed that scores of scholarship applicants were set to be turned away by the Ministry of Education in the coming weeks as the government continued its push to cut government expenses.

At the time, he revealed the Minnis administration had hoped to recover a portion of the \$156m in delinquent student loans in order to aid its scholarship programmes until the government was in a better financial posture to fund the initiatives.

In June, the South Beach MP, during the 2017-2018 budget debate, warned those owing the ELA to pay up or face "grief."

The loan programme was established in 2000 to assist persons pursuing tertiary education, either locally or abroad.

However, it was suspended in August 2009 due to its high delinquency rate. When contacted by *The Tribune* recently for an update on the situation, the South Beach MP indicated his ministry has commenced the dissemination of written requests to the more than 4,600 former loan recipients, requesting some form of repayment.

Similar letters were issued during the Christie administration.

The issue of delinquent student loan payments has been ongoing for some time.

In March 2016, then Minister of Education Jerome Fitzgerald said the ELA was owed \$155m in outstanding loan payments for its student loan scheme.

At the time, the Progressive Liberal Party Cabinet minister urged delinquent borrowers to arrange repayment methods or face court action.

RETIREES COURTED IN TEACHER SHORTAGE

from page one

The South Beach MP was responding to concerns raised over a potential shortage of teachers as public schools are set to re-open for the 2017-2018 academic year next Monday.

While Mr Lloyd speculated the public school system could see a deficit of approximately 100 teachers, he said that number could increase based on the number of teachers who reach retirement age in the coming days.

Mr Lloyd said the common practice among educators is to formally announce their plans to either retire or stay on in the month of August.

"Well, we are continuing to address the teacher shortage issue," Mr Lloyd said.

"As you know, teaching as a profession is not one

of the most attractive options for students coming out of high school or even college. That I expect will change."

He continued: "For any number of reasons people don't see it, though it is regarded as one of the more elegant and some describe it as the profession of professions which I absolutely agree, some don't see it as one of their first two, three or fourth choices, not to mention the first choice. That, I hope again, will change because as you know, teaching, teachers, education is the bedrock of any society.

"What we hope to do and have done and I think to a great degree of success is to invite those teachers, those educators who are approaching or have reached the retirement age, to invite them to consider (putting off) retirement for a year or two or more, so that they

would be able to assist us particularly in the primary area with the understanding that they would be allowed to officially retire, get their gratuity and their pension, but to be returned on contract."

He added: "Many, I am grateful to say and I am happy to say, have accepted that particular provision. But, there is no question, we have to address this issue of perennial teacher shortage."

Earlier this month, Bahamas Union of Teachers President Belinda Wilson insisted that the recent recruitment of Cuban teachers doesn't satisfy the worrying shortage the country faces.

Mrs Wilson said she continues to be concerned about the potential shortage and how hiring and recruitment of new teachers is being outpaced by retirements.



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WARNING OVER HIRING OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

By DENISE MAYCOCK
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AN immigration official has warned that the hiring of persons residing illegally in the country is an offence and is calling on citizens to inform the Department of Immigration of suspected illegal immigration activity on Grand Bahama.

This caution comes after 12 illegal Haitians were taken into custody in Freeport last weekend. Half of them were reportedly working without work permits.

Immigration officer Naphthali Cooper reported that the immigrants - all males - were discovered by immigration officers last Friday and Saturday. He said six of the men were allegedly working illegally, while the others were arrested at an apartment complex in the Freeport area.

During the Department of Immigration's investigations, Mr Cooper said it was found that nine of the men claimed to have entered TBahamas illegally by boat from Haiti earlier this year.

He said the other three had possessed legal status at one time which has since expired, and they had not submitted requests for renewal.

The men were processed at the Department of Immigration in Grand Bahama and flown to New Providence, where they are being detained at the Carmichael Road Detention Centre to await repatriation to Haiti.

Mr Cooper said: "The Immigration Department would like to remind Bahamians that it is an offence to hire persons to work for them who are without legal status in the country. Also, it is an offence to hire a person who may have a work permit for somebody else other than the individual who hires them to work for them."

"Citizens are invited to continue calling the department with any tips they may have regarding illegal immigration activity that they may suspect," he said.

Mr Cooper stated that the Department of Immigration is committed to ensuring that the immigration laws are enforced and that persons who are in the country illegally are arrested and dealt with according to the law, as well as Bahamians who seek to engage illegal immigrants in their employ and those who seek to harbour undocumented persons.



THE GRAND LUCAYAN RESORT

Talks still ongoing over future of Grand Lucayan

By KHRISNA VIRGIL
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PRESS Secretary Anthony Newbold said officials are still in talks over the Grand Lucayan Resort's sale more than a month after Prime Minister Dr Hubert Minnis revealed the government was negotiating to become temporary joint owners of the hotel in Grand Bahama.

Last month during his national address, the prime minister said the move was in a bid to boost the hotel until it can sell off its equity.

However, during his weekly press briefing yesterday, Mr Newbold said

there was no update in this regard except to say talks were continuing.

He said: "Everybody is happy that those conversations have been positive because you could be talking and you rowing all day."

"The conversations have been very positive and again the prime minister is committed to right that situation down there. That is why the conversations continue."

Dr Minnis at the time of his address did not give specifics about the plan and it is unclear what amount of investment the government is willing to make in the resort.

The nation's leader previ-

ously said his administration has identified "a number of integrated travel and hospitality companies that can bring quality brands to Grand Bahama but also much needed air transportation."

"The government is now involved in negotiations with the owners of the assets of Grand Lucayan in Grand Bahama and related assets for the joint ownership of those assets in partnership with a number of investors," Dr Minnis said last month.

"As was done by the United States during the 2008 Great Recession, my government's intent is to resuscitate and grow business to

the Grand Lucayan as rapidly and as sustainably as possible, and thereafter sell its equity to one of the existing partners or other investors."

"We have no intention of remaining as an owner in the hotel business for any extended period of time. All signs point to the beginning or renovations at the resort within the next month with the facility ready for business for the winter season," Dr Minnis said last month.

Mr Newbold also commented yesterday on the arrests and charges brought against former politicians. He said the prime minister does not consider these distractions.

"Talking about finances, I have been asked about arrests and charges brought against various people, including politicians, some consider it a distraction," Mr Newbold said.

"... For the good of the country, Prime Minister Minnis has vowed to smash the cycle of corruption. The prime minister believes it is important to emphasise to the public, that anytime a person takes from BEC or from the Ministry of Works or from the (Public) Treasury, it increases the likelihood that you, Joe Public, will eventually have to pay more taxes. Why do you think we need value added tax?"

MAN WHOSE WIFE VANISHED AT SEA ACCUSED OVER \$100,000 IN STOLEN COINS

A BRITISH man whose wife vanished at sea 30 miles off The Bahamas appeared in a Florida court

yesterday charged with transporting as much as \$100,000 worth of coins believed to have been sto-

len while he was first mate of Kitty R in May 2016.

In a hearing yesterday that lasted about ten minutes, a United States judge ordered Lewis Bennett be held in advance of a bond hearing set for Friday.

Reports on Tuesday indicated that federal prosecutors are asking he be held without bond, which is done when the government fears a de-

fendant is a danger or a flight risk.

In May, Bennett was the last person to see his wife, 41-year-old Isabella Hellmann, alive.

The pair, on a belated honeymoon sail through the Caribbean, struck something 30 miles west of Cay Sal in The Bahamas.

Bennett said he awoke that morning to discover his wife missing and the cou-

ple's catamaran taking on water.

When rescued by the United States Coast Guard on May 15, authorities noticed that Bennett loaded a suitcase and two backpacks on to his raft but had taken only one backpack with him when he was pulled from the raft by the Coast Guard swimmer.

The Coast Guard later recovered the life raft and

took it to Key West.

Reports have indicated a suitcase, a backpack, unexpanded parachute flares, buoys, 14 gallons of water, a second ePIRB homing device, and nine plastic tubes which were found to contain some 225 of the stolen coins, were all discovered aboard the raft.

A four-day search to locate Hellman was called off on May 18.

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MURDER PLOT TRIAL ADJOURNED AGAIN

By NICO SCAVELLA
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THE Supreme Court trial of three men allegedly involved in a murder plot that was executed in June of last year was again adjourned yesterday due to issues with the empanelment of the jury.

Senior Justice Stephen

Isaacs delisted the trial for Daran Neely, Jahamaro Edgecombe and Sean Brown, as the court had only managed to empanel some 28 jury members, not nearly enough given the number of accused men on trial.

The trial was adjourned on Monday to yesterday also because of issues with empaneling the jury. It is

unclear when the trial will begin.

Both Neely and Edgecombe are charged with murder and conspiracy to commit murder while Brown is charged with accessory after the fact.

It is alleged that Neely, on June 16, at New Providence and being concerned with others, plotted to murder Kenyari Lightbourne.

On June 21, Lightbourne was shot multiple times while walking through his neighbourhood of Woods Alley, off Market Street. He died at the scene of the shooting.

Neely is represented by Geoffrey Farquharson and Jomo Campbell, Edgecombe is represented by Ian Cargill and Brown is represented by Nathan Smith.

17 CAREER OFFICERS IN FOREIGN SERVICE RECALLED

By KHRISNA VIRGIL
Deputy Chief Reporter
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SEVENTEEN foreign service career officers will be recalled and some of these posts will be replaced according to foreign service regulations, Press Secretary

Anthony Newbold said yesterday.

"(They) will be rotated in their postings and this pertains to officers who have been posted overseas for three or more years," he said.

"Seventeen of them will be recalled and replaced,

two officers will be transferred from one office to another and four of the officers who are being recalled will not be replaced. One of those officers is from the Miami office, two from New York and one from London. They will not be replaced.

"These are not people who were posted to be ambassadors or consul general," Mr Newbold added. "These are people who actually work in the foreign service. They work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and every three years they are just routinely rotated."

The problems are obvious, now it's time to act

YOUR SAY
By RICHARD COULSON

THE new FNM government of PM Doctor Hubert Minnis has enjoyed the usual grace period of 100-plus days. Now the hard questions begin. When does the page turn to change course from a PLP regime guilty, at least, of gross incompetence?

In the very act of getting elected, with an overwhelming majority, Doc Minnis and his FNM colleagues did a great service to the nation, simply by removing a passel of cronies who ran their Ministries like blind-folded cowboys. Campaigning was not easy, even in the first phase when the struggle was inside his own party, and his determination and hard work deserve great respect.

No better example of the mess he now faces was the sight of new Immigration Minister Brent Symonette glumly eyeing the boxes cluttering his Hawkins Hill office, stuffed with thousands of files that had never seen a computer, and worrying whether the toilets were safe for use.

This had been the empire of Nassau's debonair voyager, Fred Mitchell, now found pontificating from his new Senate seat. Rather than devote any of his five-year term to tedious managerial tasks of reducing the delays and petty graft endemic to his Ministry, finicky Fred preferred constant travel for diplomatic palaver around the world.

One trip to the Middle East was publicised as his personal effort to raise funds for the Treasury. Did



CLOSED Businesses downtown on East Bay Street.

Photo: Terrel W. Carey/Tribune Staff

he bring home enough to cover his first-class air fare?

The Doc's first mission was to clean out the Augean stables, and he seems well on the way.

The general message of austerity has become a clarion call in every department, and Minister of Finance Turnquest is squeezing each line-item of the budget in his campaign for a 10 percent expense reduction. Excess staff, often hired as a last-minute PLP election ploy, are being pared, notably by the Minister of Tourism. Corruption prosecutions are part of the judicial process,

not the executive, so the PM cannot take credit for the recent perp walks of arrested one-time magistrates, but clearly he leaves the police, prosecutors and judges free to do their jobs without political hindrance.

While necessary, these steps are, corrective not creative. In lowering our rating forecast from stable to negative, Moody's found stability but no signs of growth. The big issues clamoring for solutions have not been addressed. One hundred days are not long enough to accomplish hard results, but give enough time to outline

basic programmes leading towards change. Instead, we hear windy generalities like "we are still looking into it", and "we will do better".

Here are specific urgent needs that citizens demand to be met, not overnight, but within a realistic timeframe:

Electric Power

The dismissal of CEO Pamela Hill by a newly decisive Board of Directors was purely a band-aid for an open wound. The appointment of Power Secure as manager of Bahamas Power & Light last year was doubtful from day one – a small specialist company acting purely as advisor with no equity interest or commitment of funds. Their role is now in tatters and is likely to be terminated. Neither then nor now has the elephant in the room been confronted: the estimated \$650m needed to pay off legacy debt and build new oil-fired generating plants.

Ownership by a major foreign utility company may be the solution, despite "loss of sovereignty" objections. Or alternatively, reduce oil dependence, and for the first time look seriously at renewable energy potentials: sun, wind, and thermal. Or consider the offers of LNG, or the mobile barge often promoted in The Punch. The answer will not be immediate, but Government has not yet given the slightest hint of which way it is looking. We certainly want to avoid another "consultancy committee", while years of high tariffs and outages continue, a major drag on our economy and obstacle to growth.

Waste disposal at the landfill

It's hard to know who was more inept, PLP Government itself or their chosen contractor, Renew Bahamas, but we know the disastrous results. For the moment, we are avoiding fires and clouds of toxic smoke, but the eruptions are merely dormant and far from extinct. Meanwhile, Government dithers.

An experienced and well-financed Bahamian consortium made its bid, but was put on hold. Apparently new RFPs, "requests for proposals", will be sent out, but how long before they are prepared, the results analysed, and the winner goes to work?

Meanwhile, the Stellar Waste venture keeps renewing its proposal to convert garbage into electric power, an accepted technology but not in the form promoted by this unproven company.

VAT

Reduced rates on "breadbasket" items have been mooted but none announced. Our many low-income families are entitled

to know whether they can expect some relief from this food-counter burden, or whether they must keep their belts tight to preserve the Treasury's budget integrity. Admittedly, a tough decision for Government, but one that must soon be made and explained.

Postal service

The failings of our post office seldom capture the limelight, but are pervasive and insidious. How can we pretend having an efficient commerce platform when mail takes a fortnight to traverse a 21-mile island, and weeks longer internationally?

Several new sites to replace our collapsing and unhealthy central building have long been identified and are being "studied", but no decision seems imminent to start the transfer.

Ease of doing business

This admirable principle gets lip-service, but where are the practical steps? No announcement has been made about creating a verifiable property register, long urged by lawyers and real-estate experts, and now more achievable with modern computer technology.

And what about easing the expensive administrative burdens of filing "tax compliance certificates" for multiple Government transactions?

Bank of The Bahamas

The PLP sank \$100m of citizens' money to save it, and the FNM is apparently committing another \$160m. Where is any hard evidence that this will convert it to profitability without further rescues?

Why not simply shut down and transfer what's left – including some doubtless excellent staff – to one of our proven commercial banks?

The guiding principle should not be "Save the name BoB at any cost", but rather "Provide Bahamians with the best banking services at the lowest cost."

The same principle should apply to BahamasAir and other state-owned businesses eternally dependent on subsidies.

Downtown Nassau

The most visible failure of Government policy is the deplorable state of downtown Nassau, as the Ministry of Tourism itself laments. While the responsibility extends back many years, the "new broom" administration of Doc Minnis has not yet said a single word to resolve this national disgrace.

It cannot even give a straight answer about the fate of "The Pointe", the ambitious scheme owned by a Chinese Government company and currently blocking a stretch of prime waterfront.

Originally scheduled for completion in 2017, no construction activity is visible. Have our authorities disapproved the plans? Is the Chinese contractor too busy completing Baha Mar? Or has Beijing decided to pull back, as part of its retrenchment from foreign resort projects? Nothing is said. Nearby, Arawak Cay, aside from the efficient container port, remains an industrial junkyard.

More serious is the fate of the Bay Street zombie zone east of Rawson Square. Ever since the departure of commercial shipping, these blocks have featured acres of bare cargo docks and vacant warehouses, shuttered shops or empty window displays, and the grim façade of a long-closed hotel, all shunned by both tourists and natives.

The few property owners who prepared development plans were stymied by Government silence and absence of any sensible zoning rules. The Chinese owners of the BC Hilton hotel allegedly prepared a master plan for Mr Christie, which was never published.

A master plan will certainly be required – some form of public-private joint venture including compulsory seizure of abandoned tax-delinquent properties.

More than a "plan", it will need firm financial investment commitments to assure action not simply more talk.

This will not be an easy project, but the New York World Trade Center, demolished at 9/11, is finally being rebuilt through tough negotiations between sparing parties the City, two States, Washington, and a feisty private owner. The same should be feasible for our little Nassau, but Government must take the lead in supporting the objective.

The efforts of the well-meaning but ineffective Downtown Partnership have not resulted in a single new construction. Only the Prime Minister can announce the initial impetus.

No country can thrive if its capital city remains infected by dereliction. Perhaps the new American Ambassador, with a track record of invigorating the San Diego waterfront, will stimulate new thinking. Foreign ideas are always welcome, but the responsibility will stay with Bahamians, just as Britons restored London after the Blitz and Germans raised Berlin from the rubble left by the Russians.

Doc Minnis can take the initiative on all the above issues—but he had better start moving, or his reservoir of good-will could start leaking away. September's next parliamentary session will be none too soon.

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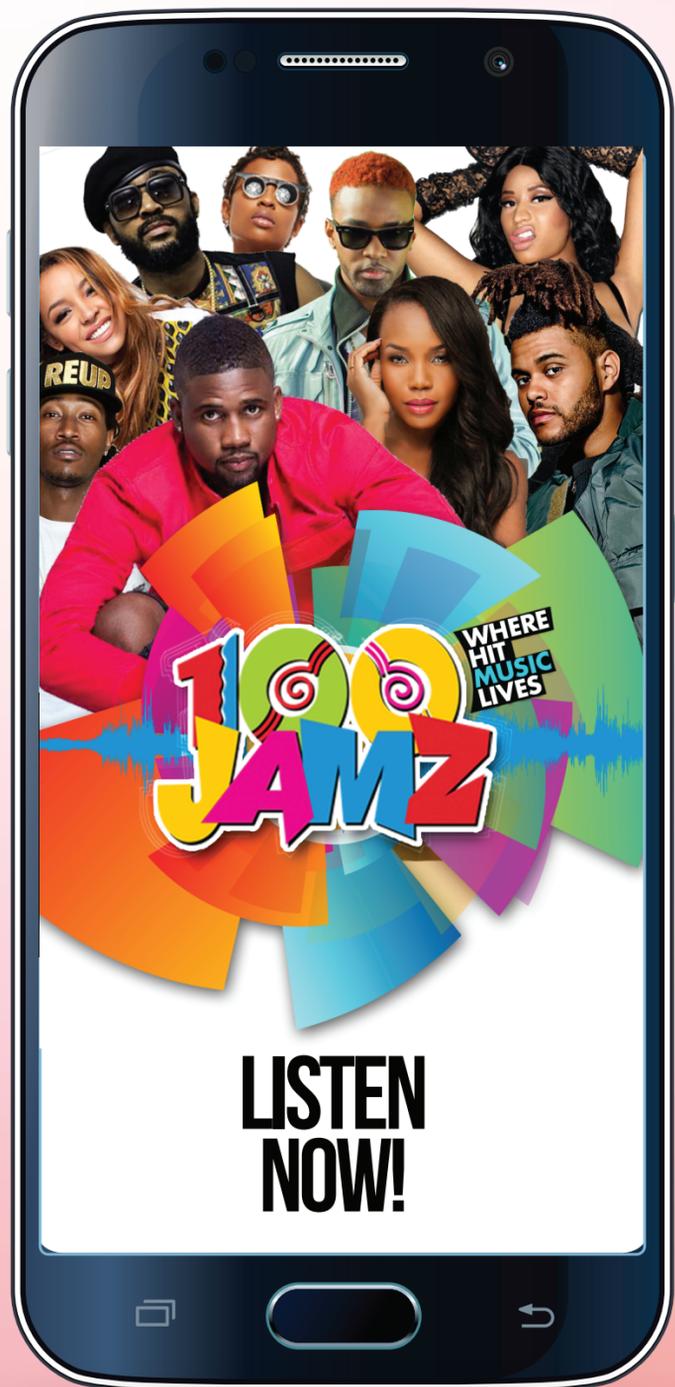
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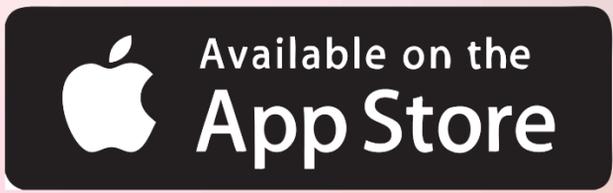


MP for Bain and Grants Town Travis Robinson partnered with Sandy's Ltd in a new initiative and brought more than 200 children to the store from the Bain and Grants Town community to shop for school supplies, including clothes, bags and more. Mr Robinson said each child would have sufficient money to purchase two pants, two shirts, socks and a necktie. Photos: Shawn Hanna/Tribune Staff



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