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THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 15TH, 2018

75 CENTS

Moultrie Says Sorry

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

House of Assembly Speaker, Halston Moultrie made a public apology yesterday during the afternoon sitting of the House, and classified his actions at being out of character.

"Notwithstanding my response from the chair was not an appropriate response, I am indeed very sorry that it occurred and that it precipitated the bitterness and resentment that followed.

"I was wrong for getting into the flesh, I used the scripture: "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and spirits in high places.

"But I allowed myself to get into the flesh and out of character on the 7th of February 2018, and I said things that I should not have said," Mr. Moultrie said.

Acknowledging his statements on February 7 may have been misinterpreted, Mr. Moultrie said that it was not his intentions to hurt.

"I realize now that some of my words were hurtful and some words opened the door to be construed in a way that they were not intended.

"And the member for Cat Island, Rum Cay and San Salvador, who knew me for years, we share a mutual best friend. He is fully aware that I didn't intend to attack his wife. That is just not the kind of person I am or want to be," Mr. Moultrie said.

"I am not a perfect man, but I am trying to get there. I've already expressed my forgiveness in the past few days to those who felt that I wronged them and my family and I, we are at a stage now where we recognize the value in relationships.

"My pride will not stand in the way of my love for the relationships that I've engendered over the years and my country this Bahamas. My pride will not stand in the way of God's purpose for my life," Mr. Moultrie said.

Mr. Moultrie then addressed the Progressive Liberal Party members and said that he wish them to work in unity.

■ See **MOUTRIE SAYS** / page 2...



► House of Assembly Speaker, Halston Moultrie (Journal file photo)

Speaker Wins Vote of Confidence

BY C. JILLIAN GRAY
 Journal Staff Writer

The Member of Parliament for Nassau Village Halson Moultrie remains the chair as Speaker of the House of Assembly after parliamentarians voted yesterday to defeat a motion brought against him.

The original motion which was brought forth by Opposition leader Philip Davis read: be it resolved that "this House has no confidence in Halson Moultrie as Chair/Speaker of this honourable House because he is inadequate in many respects, has failed to carry out his obligations as Chair/Speaker, (and) made decisions detrimental to parliamentary democracy."

In the morning session of the house, leader of government business, Renward Wells,

moved to have that motion amended.

He said, "After the first word "Whereas" delete all the words that follow and substitute the following:... 'Now be it hereby resolved that this House has confidence in the speaker the Honourable Halson Moultrie, and that he be invited to resume his chair.'

The amendment was seconded by Pinewood MP Reuben Rahming and in the evening session Deputy Speaker Donald Saunders called for a vote on the amended bill.

Seven parliamentarians were absent for the vote and the Deputy Speaker who presided, abstained from voting.

Twenty-six voted yes and the entire opposition voted no.

■ See **WINS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE** / page 2...

New \$4 Billion Oil Refinery For GB

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

The government of The Bahamas will sign a Heads of Agreement with Oban Energies for oil refinery and storage in Grand Bahama, paving the way for the bigwig project to take off.

Making the announcement, during the House of Assembly sitting yesterday, Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis said that the government has already approved Oban Energies and has completed negotiations which paves the way to start the project.

"In December 2016 the Government of the Bahamas approved Oban Energies to commence an oil refinery and oil storage

facility in Grand Bahama.

"My Government has successfully completed negotiating the Heads of Agreement which paves the way for the commencement of this important project.

"This agreement articulates how this development can proceed," Dr. Minnis said.

According to Dr. Minnis, the agreement lays out how the developer can proceed

"Oban Energies has [further] advised that first phase will consist of 4 million barrels of crude storage, a harbor, and deep-sea loading dock, to service large vessels and the construction of a 50,000 barrel per day refinery.

"In addition, Oban will build up to

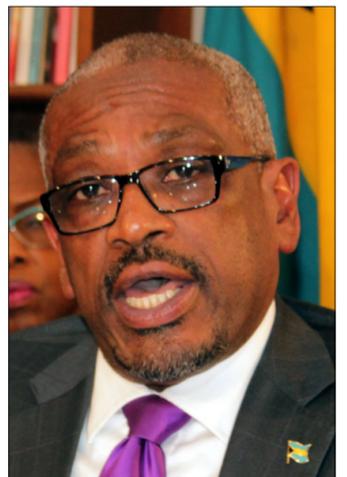
20,000,000 million barrel liquid bulk storage facility and a 250,000 barrel per day refinery," Dr. Minnis said.

Dr. Minnis revealed that the project will create job opportunities for those unemployed, and how it will revitalize Grand Bahama.

"Oban Energies has committed to creating 600 direct jobs and we anticipate hundreds of indirect jobs during construction.

"The oil refinery has an estimated project cost of up to 4 billion US dollars and the terminal has an estimated project cost of up to One Billion Five Hundred Million Dollars. This is a very significant development for Grand Bahama," Dr. Minnis said.

■ See **\$4 BILLION OIL REFINERY** / page 2...



► Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis (Journal file photo)

BAHAMIAN INTERNET SENSATION JAILED

BY ONIKE ARCHER
 Journal Staff Writer

One adult female and two males yesterday were formally charged in Magistrate's Court for drug possession.

Appearing before Deputy Chief Magistrate Subusola Swain were Alexious Rolle, Allano Noel and Kenneth Moncur. They were all charged with one count of possession of drugs with intent to supply.

Authorities, with a Search Warrant in hand, conducted a search at a residence on Smith's Lane off Andros Avenue.

There, police allegedly found Indian

Hemp, also known as Marijuana being flushed down the toilet, as well as packages made up of the drug.

The weight of the drugs was determined to be one and three quarter pounds.

Moncur and Rolle pleaded not guilty to the charges, while Noel pleaded guilty.

The matter was adjourned until February 27th. Moncur and Rolle were remanded to The Bahamas Department of Corrections until then and Noel was sentenced to eighteen months.

The woman charged became an internet sensation after making a viral video of her trip to Florida.

NHI APPOINTS A MANAGING DIRECTOR

The Board of Directors of the National Health Insurance Authority has (NHIA) announced the appointment of Mr. Graham Whitmarsh who assumes the position of Interim Managing Director effective 19th February 2018.

Mr. Whitmarsh will report to the NHIA Board of Directors and lead the expanded and accelerate implementation of NHI in the Bahamas. The Board expects a permanent Bahamian Managing Director will be appointed to lead NHI within

2 to 3 years.

Mr. Whitmarsh previously worked on NHI with PricewaterhouseCoopers and is familiar with the opportunity and challenges associated with expanding and improving health care in the Bahamas.

Mr. Whitmarsh has an exceptional breadth of experience in healthcare, finance, aviation and technology at the CEO level in both the public and private sectors.

■ See **NHI APPOINTS** / page 2...

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Moultrie Says Sorry

Continued from / PAGE 1...

"Honourable members of the minority party, you are an important point in our developing democracy.

"The parliament has voted an expression of confidence in your humble servant by majority and I think we are all reasonable men and women who are able to reason together in the best interest of the institution of this parliament and our nation.

"I have already forgiven you and I say let us now seek reconciliation together so that we can get on with the people's

business," Mr. Moultrie said.

Calling the entire ordeal a learning experience, Mr. Moultrie also expressed gratitude to God, family and the constituents of Nassau Village.

"I thank God for this learning experience. I thank the wonderful people of the Nassau Village constituency for electing me to this honourable place. To my wife and family, I am grateful for your love and support," he said.

Mr. Moultrie recognized spiritual advisors for the roles they played before his returning to the chair.

"There is wisdom in many

councils, and I want to thank Bishop Delton Fernander, and the Bahamas Christian Council for timely intervention and for spiritual advice on forgiveness, peace and reconciliation.

"I also want to thank our Chaplain, Pastor Wells and my best friend from Great Inagua, Archdeacon James Palacios and Pastor Mario Moxey for their brotherly love and advice," he said.

"Last and by no means least, I am indeed grateful to my parliamentary colleagues for your expressions and vote of confidence," Mr. Moultrie said.



PUBLIC NOTICE

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL PLANNING

The public is hereby notified that Site Plan Application (SPA/1/2018) on behalf of Mr. James R. Bain is being reviewed by the Department of Physical Planning for presentation to the Town Planning Committee.

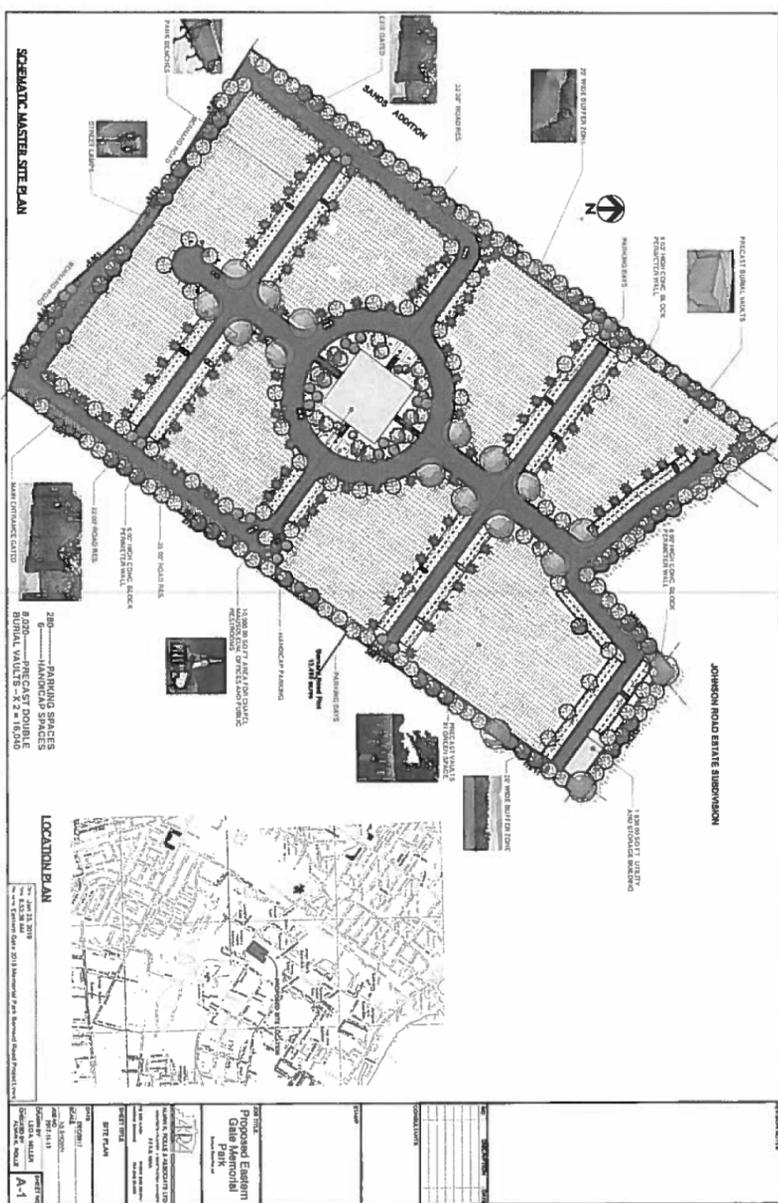
This proposed tract of land contains 13.504 acres and is situated on the northern side of Bernard Road, immediately east of Sands Addition and approximately 450 feet west of Adderley Street. The applicant wishes to develop a cemetery, construct a chapel and a mausoleum with related facilities on the property.

The preliminary site plan and file for the proposed development are available for viewing at the Department of Physical Planning, located in the Aventura Plaza on John F. Kennedy Drive during normal working hours.

Interested persons and organizations are invited to review the information on file and provide written comments to the Acting Director of Physical Planning within twenty-one (21) days of the date of this public notice.

Submissions should be made via P.O. Box N-1611 Nassau, Bahamas or via Fax: (242) 328-3206. Further inquiries should be made to the Acting Director via Tel: (242) 322-7550/2 or (242) 328-3202 or CHARLESZONICLE@BAHAMAS.GOV.BS.

Signed
Charles B. Zonicle
Acting Director of Physical Planning



LUXURY BOUTIQUE HOTEL HIRES FORTY MANAGERS

BY ONIKE ARCHER
Journal Staff Writer

Luxury brand, boutique hotel Rosewood has hired over 40 Bahamians as managers, Luigi Romaniello, Managing Director of the resort at Baha Mar stated yesterday.

Addressing a meeting of the Rotary Club of Southeast Nassau at East Villa, Romaniello said "Rosewood has been a very strong leisure company. We have a strong DNA for leisure clients. I know that we can bring a lot of clients to this Island.

"The other thing about Rosewood is our commitment to the community. We want to grow our associates, grow the destination and grow the people behind it. We just

brought on board, forty managers. That was very exciting to me.

"I think we will make Nassau better and that's really important to me," Romaniello said.

"I feel that as an expat, if I can't contribute then, I'm doing a disservice to this destination.

"Why should I take another person's job?" the Managing Director asked.

Excited and committed to be in The Bahamas, Romaniello also emphasized that community growth is one of the boutique hotel's main concern.

Rosewood has hotels in London, Paris and presently working on opening a hotel in Amsterdam.

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NEW \$4 BILLION OIL REFINERY FOR GB

Continued from / PAGE 1...

Dr. Minnis pointed to specifics of the Head of Agreement, specifically social demands that the developer will contribute annually to be used in development of East Grand Bahama.

"The Developer shall contribute funds in the sum of One Hundred Thousand (USD

\$100,000) per annum to be used for community projects and the development of East Grand Bahama. There shall be established a local community advisory board to determine the use of said funds.

The Dr. Minnis confirmed that the Heads of Agreement will be signed on Monday, and that over the following two weeks, two additional

Heads of Agreements will be signed.

According to the prime minister, the government has also approved in principle a recently announced project in West End and that it's on track to approve the sale of the beleaguered Grand Lucayan Resort, which closed its doors more than a year ago.

Speaker Wins Vote of Confidence

Continued from / PAGE 1...

Once invited back into the halls of parliament, Speaker Moultrie said to the opposition that his door is always open.

"I pledge to remain free from any partiality of any sort. My simple request to all members is that in your spirited discourse, please respect the chair and try to keep your provocations to a minimum," Moultrie said.

He added that his mic is always on and his ears often hear insults being 'hurled' at him, especially when they come from close proximity.

"When the authority of the chair is chal-

lenged, the parliament loses not only time, but the gravity of the deliberations. I would want members as we proceed forward to honour the rules and regulations of this house," Moultrie said.

He said the good to be gleaned from what transpired is the fact that they now have a chance to raise the bar and create an environment devoid of mudslinging and undignified insults.

This, he said, would open opportunities for more women to be a part of parliament.

"You have my solemn undertaking that I will do my humanly best not to repeat the incidents of the 7th of February 2018," Moultrie said.

NHI APPOINTS A MANAGING DIRECTOR

Continued from / PAGE 1...

Mr. Whitmarsh has held two of the most senior positions in the Government of British Columbia: Deputy Minister of Health and Deputy Minister of Finance and Secretary to Treasury Board.

Prior to his stint in the public sector, he served as a sen-

ior executive and President in the private sector both in Canada and the USA. He also served as Director of First Nations Health Authority.

Mr. Whitmarsh is a graduate of the University of Leeds, UK, and Dartmouth Royal Naval College. He has served on numerous Boards of Directors, including Public Companies, Not for Profits

and Government Committees. Mr. Whitmarsh began his career as a Submarine Officer in the Royal Navy.

The Board recognizes the contributions of the NHI Implementation Team who played a pivotal role in the launching of the Primary Care phase of the NHI program.



▶ A map shows the location of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla.



▶ People are brought out of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School after a shooting at the school on Feb. 14, 2018 in Parkland, Fla.

At least 17 dead in 'horrific' Florida school shooting, suspect had 'countless magazines'

A gunman opened fire at a South Florida high school today, killing 17 people and sending students running for their lives, according to two law enforcement officers on the scene.

-- At least 14 victims were being treated by Broward Health Hospitals from the incident at Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland; five are in life-threatening condition. Victims include students and adults, the Broward Sheriff's Office said.

-- The suspect, 19-year-old Nikolas Cruz, was taken into custody off campus. He slipped out of the school after the shooting by blending in with other students who

were trying to escape, according to two law enforcement sources and an eyewitness.

- Cruz had "countless magazines" and was believed to have an AR-15 rifle, the sheriff said.

-- The sheriff said Cruz had attended the school but was expelled for disciplinary reasons.

-- Students were seen sprinting out of the school with their hands up as authorities with guns drawn swarmed the area. Other students were seen lined up one by one, leaving the area in an orderly fashion. Some students were hysterical, reported ABC affiliate WPLG.

Student Michael Katz told ABC News that at the end of the day he "heard what sounded like a garbage truck like banging."

"Then also I hear, 'Boom, boom, boom.' I hear screaming everywhere," he said. "I just got underneath my teacher's desk."

"We had police invade the school, and we were taken

out," Katz said. "Fortunately, my father was there to pick me up."

One mother shaking with worry told WPLG her daughter said she was OK, huddled in a locked classroom.

"She's terrified," the mother said. "I'm glad that she's able to text."

View image on Twitter

Freshman student Samuel Dykes told the Orlando

Sentinel that he was on the third floor of the school when he heard gunshots.

Officers told students to look forward as they evacuated, but Dykes told the newspaper that he saw several bodies in a classroom.

Another mother told the affiliate that her daughter "keeps telling me to stay away. 'Be safe, Mom, stay away.'"

"I won't stay away," she said, telling her daughter, "I'm your mother."

Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel called it a "horrific homicidal act."

Investigators are probing Cruz's social media accounts for clues, the sheriff said, calling some of the things posted "very disturbing."

■ See LEAST 17 DEAD / page 7...

MCALPINE STANDS UP TO MPS

BY C. JILLIAN GRAY
Journal Staff Writer

Parliamentarians received a stern scolding from Pineridge MP Frederick McAlpine yesterday over what transpired over the last two house sittings.

McAlpine said the Bahamian people are upset with the conduct of the house and asserted that they must not give the appearance that they are bullying the opposition.

He added that while the opposition has a responsibility to follow the rules, they all have got some mud on them and two wrongs don't make a right.

"There needs to be today the spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness for things said on both sides. This is what the Bahamas really wants to see today on this love day," McAlpine said.

He said Bahamians did not elect them to act in such a manner.

"The public expects more from us and of us. They want more of the people's business done in this parliament. They want legislation coming out of this place that will improve their welfare, wellbeing, safety, environment and regional jurisdictions," McAlpine said.

He said he is not afraid of backlash and said that there was some immature childish actions from both sides which means all must improve.

The applause from his fellow parliamentarians to the speaker's actions he said was as a result of 'inexperience' and therefore he called for there to be training not on politics but on governance.

While he said he did not approve of what transpired in parliament, he said he still supported the speaker.

"The Speaker is also learning and we accept that and it's an on the job training. I don't think removing the speaker is what I would call a house atrocity to have him removed based on his actions. I think this should be a learning experience and I can assure you that I don't think the speaker will walk this road again," McAlpine said.

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PEACH STREET OFF MONTROSE AVENUE

'Culture and Youth in The Park' - Part of Community Outreach

BY ERIC ROSE

Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture the Hon. Michael Pintard said that the "Culture and Youth in the Park" event his Ministry held, on February 10, 2018, was a part of community outreach and a way to encourage and recognize the youth and culturally-minded persons throughout The Bahamas.

"Essentially, we believe that it is important to interact with our young people in positive ways," Minister Pintard said at the event, which was held on the George "Busta" Brown Park, in the Bain and Grants Town community.

"In other words, persons who are in the historic communities, like Bain Town or the Over-The-Hill community, their interaction with government should not be through the police and through Social Services and some of the agencies that suggest something else. We believe it ought to be positive engagement.

"What we are seeking to do, as part of the revitalisation programme forged by the Prime Minister (the Hon. Hubert Minnis), is to do similar types of programmes that have been done by (Ministry of) Labour, through Labour on the Blocks; through Urban Renewal -- through

the initiatives they have launched; and now we are bringing culture to the park as well as youth outreach -- where we are interacting with young people, talking about positive choices that they can make, opportunities that exist, and organizations that they can join."

Among those present for the opening ceremony were: Member of Parliament and Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation, Travis L. Robinson, the Ministry's Director of Culture Rowena Sutherland, Director of Youth and Acting Deputy Permanent Secretary K. Darron Turnquest, Project Co-ordinator Henry Higgins,

Founder and Chair of the Eneas Street Festival Bridgette Seymour, community activist Rev. Dr. C. B. Moss, Woman Police Corporal and founder of The Bahamas International Drill Team Keve J. N. Major, Junkanoo icon and cultural businessman Quentin "Barabbas" Woodside, and government and civic stakeholders.

"Many of the groups that are here are from Bain Town: we have the International Drill Team 'in the house'; we have the marching bands here, Barabbas and the Tribe, and Geno D will be coming through," Minister Pintard said.

He noted that Jr. Miss Galaxy

Bahamas Maleah Gabrielle Miller, marching bands, church groups, dance troupes, and a multitude of others came out to interact with the young people in the community at the park. Bahamian 'Limbo and Fire King,' Leroy "Sweet Boy Leroy" Butler also interacted with the children present and performed for scores of cheering "new fans."

"You can look at the enthusiasm of the young people who are here," he pointed out.

He added that the vendors at the event were also from the community.

■ See COMMUNITY OUTREACH / page 6..



▶ Member of Parliament and Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation, Travis L. Robinson speaks, on February 10, 2018, at the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture's "Culture and Youth in the Park", held on the George "Busta" Brown Park, in the Bain and Grants Town community. (BIS Photo / Eric Rose)

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NHI Authority Appoints a Managing Director

The Board of Directors of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) announces the appointment of Mr. Graham Whitmarsh who assumes the position of Interim Managing Director effective 19th February 2018. Mr. Whitmarsh will report to the NHIA Board of Directors and lead the expanded and accelerate implementation of NHI in the Bahamas. The Board expects a permanent Bahamian Managing Director will be appointed to lead NHI within 2 to 3 years. Mr. Whitmarsh previously worked on NHI with

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Mr. Whitmarsh has an exceptional breadth of experience in healthcare, finance, aviation and technology at the CEO level in both the public and private sectors. Mr. Whitmarsh has held two of the most senior positions in the Government of British Columbia: Deputy Minister of Health and Deputy Minister of Finance and Secretary to Treasury Board.

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The Board recognizes the contributions of the NHI Implementation Team who played a pivotal role in the launching of the Primary Care phase of the NHI program.

The Rough Cut

By Felix F. Bethel

“...pop their necks...”

Fayne Thompson is a fine, good and true Bahamian man---and so too, is Dr. Hubert Alexander Ingraham---and so too happen to be any number of powder-puffed-up BIG BLACK MEN!

On that puffy-note, [please note some of what one of my brothers has advised-- "...The murderous scumbags must be hung as that is on our laws. Hang, hung, whatever...pop their necks..."]

And with that hang, hung--pop their necks dripping from his esteemed lips, my brother explained: "Our economy will not grow until we solve the issue of crime...which requires multifaceted approaches (involving) the family, the church, civil society and the government. (They) must all join forces to combat this societal mess.

He then went on to say that:-- Just the other day, a young man was gunned down at the ATM machine. We must, as hanging is on our books, we must hang these criminals. These murderous scumbags must be hung by the neck until they are dead. The murderous scumbags must be hung as that is on our laws. Hang, hung, whatever...pop their necks."

Fayne T. is not a powder-puff man---Fayne is a gentleman; and so too is my good friend and comrade in the struggle---Frederick Audley Mitchell---

And so today, I do believe that Fayne T. is speaking truth when he explains that: It is legally impossible to whimsically think that Rony Jean-Charles who is not an 'illegal' alien can be dispatched from these shores for ANY REASON!

HE IS AN ARTICLE SEVEN BAHAMIAN.

And so too, must I say to Hallie Moultrie, the Great:___Come on dude, give me a break!

And please be reminded that Hector Brenton Smith---once upon a green-time a student of mine---was killed by a police man!

Yeahhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

POLICE shot and killed another armed assailant near a school playground yesterday, marking the 11th fatal police-involved shooting since November 2017.

Police said they responded to reports of gunshots in the area, and when they arrived they saw two men on a motorbike --- one of them

aimed a firearm in the direction of officers.

However, police could not say whether the man who was shot and killed was the one who brandished the weapon. There was no report that a weapon was recovered from the scene.

But yet, when I did wake fully not only to my recall of my self-assigned tasks for the day, I was minded to reflect on some of the nastiest of spoken brutalities to which I have been treated by some of the biggest, blackest, stupidest benighted negroes on this chilly side of Jordan river; [AND believe YOU ME]: HALSON MOULTRIE is really, really, really one of the biggest and most publicly distinguished of all in that NEGRO-WRECKING crew of both the knighted and all others such who are so woe-fully be-nighted---come on dude, get a grip---get a life and be done with all of that juicy goo as to how you are not a powder-puff man!

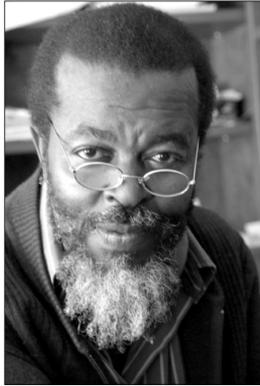
As for me and my house, we could not give a flying ten cents, one way or this other.

I make this point as I dig a little deeper on this blessed day into what I suspect is the really-real story.

From all that I know now and for that matter, all of those things that have preoccupied my mind for as long as I was able to sense that somehow or the other, there was this part of me that was mine, mine and quintessentially mine---and thus, as I grew in wisdom --- if not in stature in the mode of BIG-BLACK-HALLIE-the fact remains---I grew and as I did, the sap began to rise.

And in the fullness of time, I mated with the daughters men and thus began---the babies and thus also the coming of those sweetest of times when my babies grew and thus when---as the wheel turns and turned, my grandbabies came; and with them came not only joy exquisite---but also the bitterest of pain on that one fine sunny day when one of my grandbabies was gun-downed and thus also disappeared on what was ---as I once explained---a bright sunny day when --- as fate would have it---some armed one or the other, managed in what was a bright sunny --- red day --- to turn an infinity of tomorrows into a blood-drenched torrent of yesterdays.

It is legally impossible to whimsically think that Rony Jean-Charles who is not an



'illegal' alien can be dispatched from these shores for ANY REASON!

HE IS AN ARTICLE SEVEN BAHAMIAN.

And with this, we now share some really bloody stuff---The individual, the suspect, was able to elude the police and he dropped the firearm. The weapon was recovered.

POLICE shot and killed another armed assailant near a school playground yesterday, marking the 11th fatal police-involved shooting since November 2017.

ACP Fernander said: "What we have here is, about a week and a half ago, officers responded after receiving calls that an individual was on Homestead Street firing shots. Officers responded and gathered some information. An individual also made a complaint that some unknown male fired a shot at him. Based on that information, officers went to Peach Street which is just off Mackey Street where they found the individual who was responsible that time for the shooting. The individual, [the suspect] was able to elude the police and he dropped the firearm. The weapon was recovered. The officers, from then to now, were on the look-out to try and find this suspect. Yeahhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

POLICE shot and killed another armed assailant near a school playground yesterday, marking the 11th fatal police-involved shooting since November 2017.

Last month, a man who residents say was blind, was shot and killed by police, prompting an angry confrontation between residents and police in the Plantlot Street and East Street area where the shooting occurred.

And with that Article seven reminder---the bloody word in the wind now shouts: --- "Hang, hung, whatever...pop their necks...!"

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E D I T O R I A L

CONCERNING THE RATS

News reports coming our way say that:-- MORE than \$30,000 in repairs were ordered on mobile X-ray machines at the Princess Margaret Hospital due to damage caused by rodents last year.

There is also new information to the effect that:---Urgent concerns of an "extensive" rodent infestation were documented by technicians to hospital officials in May last year, which detailed repairs cost more than \$27,500 for just parts. The replacement cost of each of these Philips Mobile Diagnost is \$185,000 and each of the Affinity Ultrasounds is \$80,000.

And thus, this pithy conclusion to that matter concerning the PMH rats: ---The infestation of these rodents seems quite extensive and is continuing in that our engineers have found new and different evidence every time they remove the covers on either system.

This is so much bad news coming as it does in a time when things seem to be teetering on the edge of an abyss!

In short, then:-- That we are up-to-our eye-balls in crises piled upon the backs of even more social problems is brutally evident and to wit, also, factually incontrovertible.

And for sure, we would venture that however the cat jumps---this country's public health care delivery systems are in a state of stasis-paralysis meltdown!

And if such a sad state of affairs is not bad enough, the reality out-there reveals that there is also an attendant near-catastrophic fiscal crisis of the state.

Put simply, then, the times are hard and the money coming in is drying up!

It is thus against this dire backdrop we find that: Certain digital mobile x-ray systems) in Princess Margaret Hospital that were damaged by rodents (presumed to be rats).

These 'presumed' rats are costly---as discovered or recovered---parts ordered were found to cost in excess of \$27,500 and the costs of labor and travelling exceeds \$10,800.

Evidently, this costly rat-related business

comes with no warranty this being the case since no such arrangement will ever cover the damage posed by these nastiest of pests.

So there it now goes---as good money is thrown behind bad coin now perfectly lost.

But yet, we say:-- Thank God from whom all blessings flow!

We continue thus on this blessed Thursday --- as do so very many others who claim as their faith belief in the redemptive power which is ours thanks to His grace and mercy as expressed in the life and witness of Jesus Christ.

This we do precisely because as we reflect on the extent to which so very many Bahamians have escaped grave harm they run as they make their way through places that are chock-full of disease carrying vermin, inclusive of hundreds of thousands of mice and rats!

In this regard, then, suffice it to note that:-- Rodents, such as rats, mice, prairie dogs and rabbits, are associated with a number of health risks; that, in fact, rats and mice are known to spread more than 35 diseases.

These diseases, we learn can be spread to humans directly, through handling of live or dead rodents, through contact with rodent feces, urine, or saliva, and through rodent bites.

Evidently, therefore: Diseases carried by rodents can also be spread to humans indirectly, through fleas, ticks, or mites that have fed on an infected rodent.

And thus today we insist:-- Anybody with but an iota of good sense concerning rats and the challenge they pose would recognize, take to heart and heed the warning they get when they come across one rat dead or alive.

And thus this day, we do our level best as we think through a story concerning the extent to which some people go in order to get where they are on God's green earth and of course, also: Much of this is entirely connected one thing to the other!

In other words, when the rats are made lividly present and early, panic is on the foot!



'Culture and Youth in The Park' - Part of Community Outreach

Continued from / PAGE 4...

"We believe that when you are generating income it should be for those who are from the community, as opposed to people who are coming in, earning revenue and leaving," Minister Pintard said.

"We are excited to be here in this community," Minister Pintard said.

Director of Culture

Rowena Sutherland said, "Culture and Youth in the Park is a part of a wider initiative that the Ministry is embarking on to support creative and cultural artists in The Bahamas; and the Ministry seeks to uplift the various neighbourhoods throughout The Bahamas."

She added that it was a national plan the Ministry is executing, the goal being to go into every constituency and

empower them by finding out what their needs are, who are their cultural and religious leaders, and to give them the structural support they need; and then, in turn, have events and to create safe spaces for the residents to enjoy.

"Saturday's event in Bain and Grants Town was most successful," Director Sutherland said.

"Nearly all of the children in the neighbourhood came out and were very

engaged – they had a positive activity to engage in."

"We also had a lot of support from the leaders of the community in organizing the event; so that they felt that it was 'theirs'; and it was a beautiful outpouring of community, of art, and of love," she added.

Director Sutherland echoed Minister Pintard's sentiments, saying that the Ministry seeks to promote the creative and

cultural community and the Culture and Youth in the Park initiative will be a contributing catalyst in the development of the creative and cultural arts community. She also noted that vendors were able to sell their wares from 3 pm to 9 pm, providing for a large window of opportunity for sales that evening.

"We are going to move to Centreville," Minister Pintard noted. "We are going to be in

Englerston, Pinewood Gardens, Nassau Village -- we are going to be in every community in New Providence and, of course, by extension in the Family Islands."

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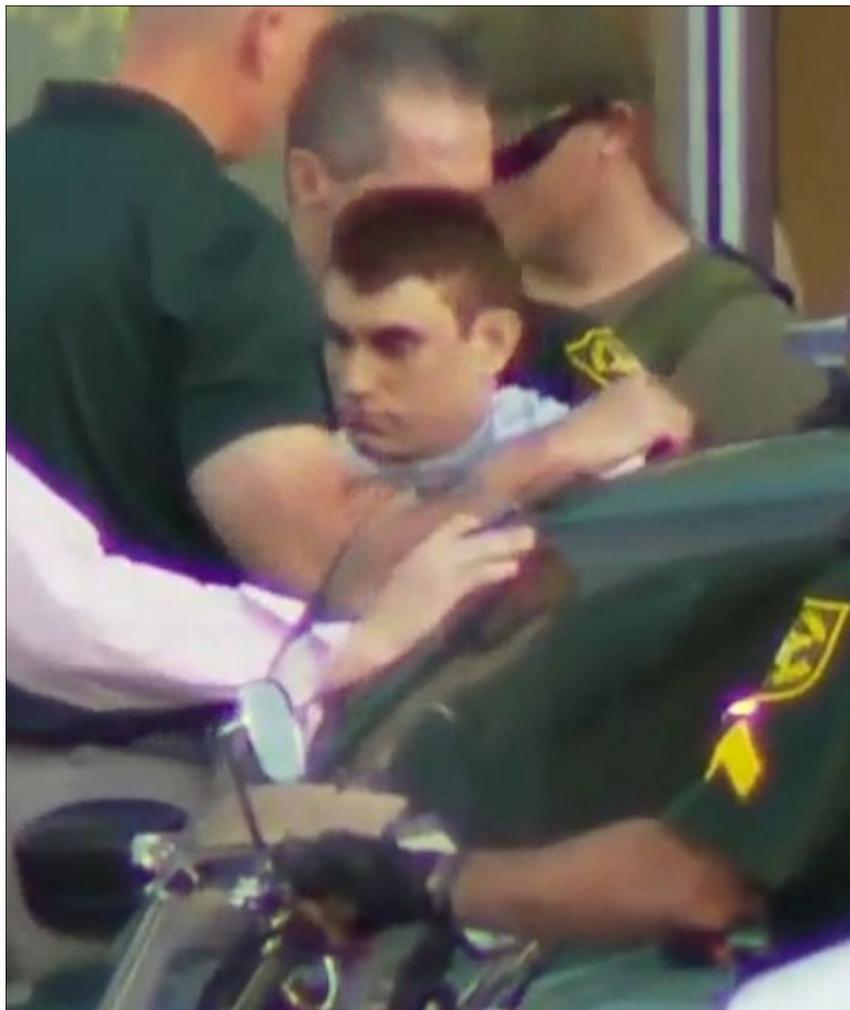
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▶ Nikolas Cruz, the suspect in a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., is escorted out of a hospital and into a police car.



▶ Family members embrace following a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, Feb. 14, 2018, in Parkland, Fla.



▶ Women embrace in a waiting area for parents of students after a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., Feb. 14, 2018.

At least 17 dead in 'horrific' Florida school shooting, suspect had 'countless magazines'

Continued from / PAGE 3...

"If you see something, say something," Israel said at a news conference earlier today. "If anybody has any indicator that someone's going through a behavioral change, on social media if there are disturbing photos, perhaps bombs or firearms or just videos or pictures that are just not right, please make sure law enforcement knows about it."

Israel said this evening officials were still working to identify the victims. He said a football coach was among the dead.

Pierre Jospitre said he was pulling into his driveway from work when he saw the suspect on the ground with an official on top of him.

Within seconds, several law enforcement officers swarmed the area, Jospitre said, adding that when the suspect was picked up off the ground, he was vomiting and was not walking right.

The school will be closed for the rest of the week, Broward County Public Schools announced Wednesday night. There are over 3,000 students at the school, according to its website. Broward County Public Schools superintendent said grief counselors would be available.

President Donald Trump tweeted, "My prayers and condolences to the families of the victims of the terrible Florida shooting. No child, teacher or anyone else should ever feel unsafe in an American school."



▶ Medical personnel tend to a victim following a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., on Feb. 14, 2018.





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