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The Bahama Journal

Quo Vadis, Bahamas?

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Blacklisting Jitters

• DPM Surprised By EU Move

BY AMAJAHL KNOWLES
Journal Staff Writer

The government is disappointed to have learned that the European Union (EU) Code of Conduct Group (COCG) will be making a recommendation to the Council of the European Union this week to include The Bahamas on the EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes.

It is understood that a high level delegation from the Ministry of Finance is to be in Paris, France this week to plead the case against the country being blacklisted.

In a statement Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Peter Turnquest said The Bahamas has consistently been engaged with the Organization for Economic Cooperation

and Development (OECD) and the COCG on the EU listing criteria – including as late as last week. Therefore, this latest move was particularly surprising.

"In December 2017, The Bahamas signed onto the Inclusive Framework for the implementation of the Base Erosion Profit Shifting (BEPS) initiative with the OECD. This solidified our international commitment to comply with measures to avoid tax planning strategies used by multinational companies to exploit gaps and mismatches in tax rules to artificially shift profits to jurisdictions where there is low, or no actual economic activity. As of March 2018, a total of 113 countries and territories have joined the BEPS inclusive framework.

■ See BLACKLISTING / page 2...



► Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Peter Turnquest
(Journal file photo)

COOPER CALLS BLACKLISTING "MIND BOGLING"

BY AMAJAHL KNOWLES
Journal Staff Writer

Progressive Liberal Party Deputy Leader I Chester Cooper has called the European Union's decision to blacklist The Bahamas mindboggling and an unfortunate series of events.

In a statement Mr. Cooper said the shifting goal posts of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the illusory criteria the EU Code of Conduct Group have imposed without giving The Bahamas any real voice are a threat to our livelihood.

"It is mind-boggling that all that has been done by The Bahamas in recent years is not enough to satisfy these international bodies.

"But there can be no question that the national interests in the security of The Bahamas' offshore financial center are paramount.

"And the PLP is sincerely interested in helping the government navigate the process of delisting and will avail ourselves for consultation and to pass emergency legislation if required, to adequately respond to this attack.

"We have a wealth of expertise and have no illusions that delisting is a national priority to preserve our financial services industry and correspondent banking relationships, which have already suffered enough.

"However, simply achieving the short-term goal of delisting is not enough, as these international bodies will likely move the goal posts again, " Mr. Cooper said.

Mr. Cooper added that a proactive course of action and a national non-partisan plan is needed to improve ease of doing business and to create incentives for real international business to create economic substance in The Bahamas.

He added that meaningful consultation with industry stakeholders, particularly the Bahamas Financial Services Board, and the opposition on these issues is a must.

■ See COOPER CALLS / page 2...

PLP Calls WSC Audit "Half Baked"

BY AMAJAHL KNOWLES
Journal Staff Writer

The Progressive Liberal Party has branded the forensic audit at the Water and Sewerage Corporation by accounting firm Ernst and Young as "half baked".

In a statement from the party, the PLP stated that the report is replete with errors, misstatements and has violated the very basic tenets of natural justice, often repeating salacious, tendentious material and leaving half-baked and misleading innuendoes in the public domain,

adding that it has also violated the right to privacy of many private citizens.

"The Ernst and Young report does not meet the basic professional standards and it is quite a shame that a professional firm would allow itself to be used like political

hacks by an FNM administration desperate to find dirt where there is none. This is simply providing a pretext for the FNM's lack of capacity and lack of ability to govern.

■ See WSC AUDIT "HALF BAKED" / page 3...

REMAINS OF MISSING TOURIST FOUND IN ELEUTHERA

BY AMAJAHL KNOWLES
Journal Staff Writer

Family members of 19-year-old Johnathan Brussow have confirmed that the remains discovered by a fisherman in Eleuthera are that of the missing tourist.

According to Police reports, shortly after 11am on Friday, a local fisherman while in the area of the 'Sand pit', near the coastline behind Daddy Joe's Restaurant, discovered partial human remains, including a leg, and femur bone.

■ See FOUND IN ELEUTHERA on PAGE 3...

Culmer Blasts Davis Over WSC Mismanagement

BY AMAJAHL KNOWLES
Journal Staff Writer

Free National Movement Chairman Carl Culmer has taken Progressive Liberal Party leader Phillip "Brave" Davis to task over his alleged nepotism and special favours for PLP supporters during his tenure as Minister of Works.

In a statement released on Sunday Mr. Culmer lambasted Mr. Davis for gross mismanagement and using the WSC

as his own "personal campaign account".

"The facts are that while Bahamians suffered under the disastrous PLP Government, Brave and his cronies lived lavishly and used the people's money desperately attempting to cling to power. Yet now with his back against the wall, Brave Davis – true to form – points fingers and places blame, even going so far as claiming a witch-hunt.

■ See CULMER BLASTS / page 4...

■ See FOUND IN ELEUTHERA on PAGE 3...

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FARRINGTON ROAD BEING RECONSTRUCTED

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK
Journal Intern

The Ministry of Public Works and Baha Mix are working diligently to reconstruct Farrington Road.

The road project, which begins at the six-legged round-about and ends at Boyd Road, started on March 5th.

Director of Public Works, Melanie Roach, said the project would take about 10 week days before completion.

She explained the process of getting the road to its proper state.

"In order to prepare the old surface to receive new asphalt, we go through a process called milling where the top inch and half is scraped off, which creates a rough surface that will then allow a new layer of asphalt to be laid and bond with the old surface."

"The mill material is taken away and stored and can then

be used for various purposes, such as a fill for holes, trenches, or to surface walking tracks on parks."

According to Roach, the cost of repairing the road is approximately \$730,000. However, \$10 million per year is allocated to road work.

"What we look to do is to spend at least 10 million dollars a year on road work, and so we just keep going until that 10 million is exhausted, sometimes we ask for more," she said.

When asked, why the road work had to completed in the day rather than at night, Roach said that working at night is extremely expensive.

"We try to be as careful with the government's money as we possibly can, because the extra money we would spend to do over time work, we can use that to pave another road," she said.

General Manager of BahaMix, Ryan Rahming, further explained why it was

best to complete the project during the day.

"Ideally it would be perfect to deal with this sort of work at night when it's off peak times, but one of the things we have to keep in mind is paving, the lighting situation is different at night, illumination tends to put different shades on the ground at night and you want to be able to see perfectly when laying asphalt so we can maintain levels."

Next on the ministry's agenda for repairing, are the areas of Culbert's Hill, Sea Breeze, Lynden Pindling Estates and Palmdale, once utility companies - BEC and Water and Sewerage give the clear.

The Farrington Road project is expected to be completed by Friday March 16, weather permitting.

Until then, The Ministry of Public Works advised that road users avoid using Farrington Road between the hours of 9am and 2pm.



► Director of Public Works Melanie Roach speaks to members of the media on Friday, March 9, 2018 at the intersection of Davis Street and Farrington Road. Ms. Roach gave an overview of the current road works being carried out at the site. She said that in order to prepare the road surface, workers were 'milling' the road, which means that they were scraping the top layer of the road before new asphalt is applied. That top layer will be recycled into other road projects. The new paving exercise will extend from the intersection to the six-legged roundabout. Roadworks are projected for: West Bay Street from Blake Road to the roundabout at Old Fort Bay, Village and Soldier roads from Shirley Street to Baillou Hill Road, East Bay Street from the bridge to Montague, roads in Palmdale and Firetrail Road and Culberts Hill. (**BIS Photos/Derek Smith**)

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PEACH STREET OFF MONTROSE AVENUE

Blacklisting Jitters

■ Continued from / PAGE 1...

"The Bahamas has taken immediate steps to reiterate its commitment to the European Commission with respect to the non-facilitation of offshore structures and arrangements in the jurisdiction aimed at attracting profits without real economic substance for the purpose of profit shifting.

"Legislation is currently being drafted to give effect to the implementation of the BEPS minimum standards and to address gaps in our current regulatory regime identified by the COCG. We anticipate that this legislation will be laid in the House of Assembly by April 2018.

"Discussions were held today with the Secretary General of the COCG responding to their specific concerns, followed by

formal letter. We believe the discussions were positive and remain hopeful that our efforts to address their concerns will result in the favourable consideration of The Bahamas as a cooperative tax jurisdiction.

"We will continue to demonstrate our commitment to international regulatory standards and initiatives, thereby ensuring that the Bahamas remains a clean, compliant and cooperative jurisdiction," Mr. Turnquest said.

According to a report from Reuters, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Saint Kitts and Nevis are also set to be added next week to a European Union blacklist of tax havens.

Some states on the blacklist are Barbados, Grenada, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Lucia, Samoa and Tunisia.

COOPER CALLS BLACKLISTING "MIND BOGLING"

■ Continued from / PAGE 1...

"Waiting for the OECD, and now the EU, to come up with further hoops for us to jump through will not do.

"We must also have a comprehensive approach to economic growth by generating

better financial conditions in which entrepreneurs can thrive.

"As we have previously suggested, a local economic czar, designing more and easier access to banking services, deeper investment in food security through local private

public partnerships, local and foreign investment in expanding industries in which more Bahamians can participate and wealth creation are just a few things that can begin immediately to ensure the sound financial future of The Bahamas," Mr. Cooper said.



BAIN TOWN HOME-COMING



From L to R: Mr. Fred Munnings, Rev. CB Moss and Mr. Wendal Jones, C. E. O. of Jones Communications.

In our continuing effort to contribute to the development of the Bain Grants Town District, the Bain Grants Town Advancement Association is pleased to announce that during 2018, several major initiatives will be launched:

These initiatives will include:

REMAINS OF MISSING TOURIST FOUND IN ELEUTHERA

Continued from / PAGE 1...

Police said that DNA testing would now be done to verify the identity of the partial remains – a process which could take up to six months, as it is currently done out of country.

In the statement from the family obtained by The Bahama Journal they confirmed that the remains belonged to Brusso.

His relatives in the statement made an analogy between a straight-line wind storm that happened on the day of Jonathan Brusso's birth on May 31, 1998 and the March 5 storm in Eleuthera that swept him into the sea.

"God brought Jonathan in with a storm and took him back in a storm," according to the statement.

When he was born, he was dubbed "storm trooper" in an article in the Rockford Squire about the straight-line wind storm and the family's adventure getting to the hospital through debris.

"As a family, he was known as Jonathan "Stormy" Brusso," the family's statement said. "He named his dog Stormy. For those that knew him, they knew he lived his life with a storm of passion and a smile that would light up a room."

Family members also offered thanks to everyone who gave prayers and support since Monday.

Brusso was on vacation on the island of Eleuthera, when he and a friend were both knocked off their feet by a rogue wave while near the bridge.

PLP Calls WSC Audit "Half Baked"

Continued from / PAGE 1...

"We also have warning for Carl Culmer, the Chairman of the FNM, who seems to be a candidate for "lamb of the year to the political slaughter". The fact that you are Chairman of the FNM does not make your comments immune from suits in defamation and libel. The latest release by Mr. Culmer makes assertions of fact about corruption about the Leader of the PLP which are not only false but are defamatory. He sought to rely on the deficient Ernst and Young report to ground his facts, but he should be warned that the report is not worth the paper it is written on. The report itself though laid in the House does not have the protection against defamation laws.

The PLP further stated that their lawyers are looking at this matter with a view to having the report be the subject of Judicial Review and struck out for want process and breaching the rules of natural justice, and that Ernst and Young itself should be warned that the legal consequences of the report will be substantial.

- A Public Safety Forum
- An Economic Conference
- A Cultural Festival

Today we should like to formally announce the first of these major initiatives the "Bain Town Home-Coming Week" scheduled for April 22nd – 28th 2018.

March 6th 2018, marked the 206th Anniversary of the birth of Alexander Bain 11 Co-founder of Bain Town, and in commemoration Bain Town will celebrate "Founder's Week" in the form of the "Bain Town Home-Coming."

Designed to reconnect and unite past and present residents, the "Back To Bain Town week will be filled with religious, sporting, youth, educational, Cultural and Entertainment activities.

A special event will be the official opening Ceremony on Monday April 23rd at which the Prime Minister, himself a Bain Town Man, and other national leaders have been invited.

There will be games for the young and not so young as Bain Town will come alive; indeed Bain Town will be jumping,

Former residents who now reside across the Bahamas and around the world are warmly invited to return to Bain Town during the week to attend and participate in the many activities.

We are also extremely delighted to announce that Jones Communications Network has consented to be a Partner in this Project. Over the years JCN have demonstrated a strong commitment to developing communities and the nation through projects such as Love Your Country. JCN has pledged to make all of its facilities available to ensure the project receives the widest promotions. Rev. Moss thanked Mr. Wendal Jones for their generous support.

Also speaking was Mr. Fred Munnings a member of the Association, and Mr. Wendal Jones.

In response Mr. Wendal Jones, C. E. O. of Jones Communications said once acquainted with the Project, he was very happy to endorse it and put the full support of JCN behind it. He also expressed the hope that this project would encourage other communities to engage in community building activities, for strong communities build a strong nation.

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2018 NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS OPENS

► Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture the Hon. Michael Pintard spoke on behalf of Minister of Education the Hon. Jeffrey Lloyd and the Government of The Bahamas at the Official Opening Ceremony of the 2018 National High School Track and Field Championships, on March 9, 2018, at the Thomas A. Robinson National Stadium. Among those present were Member of Parliament Mark Humes, Senator the Hon. Jamal Moss, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Education Donella Bodie, Director of Sports Timothy Munnings, and other sports and education stakeholders. More than 900 athletes from about 67 school teams -- including some 30 Family Island schools and a number from home schools -- are competing in the event, which is free to the public and will serve as a CARIFTA qualifier. (**BIS Photos/Derek Smith**)

Cooper Accused Of Conflict Of Interest Over WSC Vendor

BY AMAJAHL KNOWLES
Journal Staff Writer

The opposition leader not the only one implicated in the Water and Sewerage Corporation's scathing forensic audit, there are also accusations that Progressive Liberal Party's Deputy, I. Chester Cooper might be involved in a conflict of interest.

Auditors discovered that two members of the executive committee - senior and seasoned engineers - had business relationships with the owners/executives of current WSC vendor, Cash N Go a subsidiary of BAF Global

which is owned by Exuma and Ragged Island MP Chester Cooper.

The Chairman of WSC Adrian Gibson told members of the House of Assembly recently, "These persons jointly hold shares in an entity called Infinity Enterprises Holdings Ltd (Infinity) with the Member for Exuma and Ragged Island. The Member for Exuma is the owner of BAF Global Group Limited and its subsidiary Cash N Go. Now, here's the kicker, Cash N Go performs bill payment services for WSC, charging a premium for their services - being paid some \$150,000 to date!

"Infinity is developing the Southern Dreams subdivision. In 2013, WSC installed the water infrastructure in that subdivision at a cost of \$32,000. As if that wasn't enough, Infinity - whose shareholders are, in part, senior WSC managers - attained a loan from BAF, the parent company of Cash N Go, in 1997. The current balance of that loan is about \$430,000 and WSC Executives are among the guarantors of that loan.

"What is jaw dropping, is that we discovered that a current WSC vendor performed construction services in that subdivision and, the proposal

for the works that that vendor carried out, was negotiated by a WSC executive on Infinity's behalf!

"Disclosure of these business relationships either never happened or only happened when approvals were sought," Mr. Gibson said.

The Long Island MP added that one of the aforementioned Executives was also involved with the Member for Exuma and BAF in another subdivision venture. Negotiations were handled by this executive who was deemed as the paid project engineer/inspector for that entity (from August to December, 2014) and who

negotiated with another WSC contractor on behalf of the venture.

The subdivision received a new water main in 2013 at a cost of \$13,000 to WSC.

Culmer Blasts Davis Over WSC Mismanagement

■ Continued from / PAGE 1...

"For the entirety of the 2017 campaign, Prime Minister Hubert Minnis made it clear that transparency would be coming to government, that audits will be conducted on all parts of the government to shine light on every aspect and action. He also made clear that if there was any wrong doing those responsible would be held accountable - as it should be. The people clearly responded, giving the FNM an historic mandate in the past election. They wanted responsiveness and transparency from their government - and they wanted results.

"And now we are seeing the results of these audits, with egregious behaviours and actions coming to light. Brave Davis and many of his cohorts in the PLP may not like the results, but they must understand that they reap what they sow. Transparency and accountability are what is needed to start taking the steps we need to turn our country around after five years of corrupt, disastrous leadership under the PLP. No longer will government officials and elected leaders receive special treatment or hold themselves above the people they should be serving.

"The simple truth is also that as much as Brave Davis and his underlings scream and shout, rant and rave and cry witch-hunt, none of them have denied these findings of what the audits have discovered. What the country has learned from these audits is that under Brave's leadership as the Minister of Works, he turned the WSC into his personal gift shop, using it as a de facto campaign headquarters - ordering some of his top allies to stop doing their jobs in a scheme to benefit the PLP's re-election efforts," Mr. Culmer said.

Mr. Culmer further stated that Mr. Davis can act the part of victim all he wants, but the real victims are the Bahamian people that were forced to struggle everyday as he abused his position and the taxpayers of this country.

He added based on Brave Davis' sense of entitlement and habitual avoidance of any semblance of responsibility, Bahamians everywhere understand this will probably not be the last time we hear of his wrongdoings.

Admitting to being a guardian angel to many people over the years, Opposition Leader Philip "Brave" Davis branded the EY audit into operations at the Water and Sewerage Corporation as nothing more than a "witch hunt" that has wasted taxpayers' money.

On Wednesday evening, before tabling EY's report of the water provider, its Chairman Long Island MP Adrian Gibson repeatedly suggested there was an "angel" in high places who ensured a company called Nassau Island Development not only received a hefty contract for work with WSC, but saw to it that certain rules were relaxed.

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HOW IS PETER NYGARD'S 50-YEAR SUCCESS POSSIBLE?

The 2018 series salutes fashion mogul Peter Nygård's Golden Jubilee detailing his rags to riches story and incredible business success over these past fifty years. The Clifton Review will take an inside look at how he did it.

THE CLIFTON REVIEW

By P. J. Malone

The Clifton Review is a bi-weekly column that examines the question of the Clifton project along with the evolution of the war between two billionaires, the links to unsavory characters, the use of the courts for personal agendas, the involvement of the Government opposition party (the FNM), and the attacks on the Government of The Bahamas.

Imagine if you could know all the secrets of how someone becomes a multi-millionaire. Imagine if you could break those secrets down and understand each of them.

That's what we have been doing over the last few weeks. In looking at fashion mogul Peter Nygård's fifty years of business success, we have dissected the factors that contributed to it and examined them individually.

When you put them all together, it's all too obvious how he could take a struggling 800-thousand-dollar business and turn it into an 800-million-dollar enterprise.

So let's put it all together and start with the foundation:

Peter Nygård grew up believing nothing is impossible after watching his grandfather do farm work and climb stairs with both legs cut off and only one arm. He also watched his father chase down a truck over several days to get a job.

In believing that nothing is impossible, the world of opportunities was open to him. When nothing is impossible, everything is possible. No matter what his business needed, Nygård found a way to deliver it.

Peter Nygård has an advantage from his Finnish culture—a Sisu Spirit, which encapsulates bravery, resoluteness and determination. So, in believing nothing is impossible and having a determination to see things through, Nygård could achieve anything he wants.

Also, he has a competitive nature that makes him always want to be the best. How do you become the best? There are several approaches to making this happen. Nygård's philosophy is one of them that says it all.

'If you want to become successful at something, you read everything about it, you learn everything about it, you know everything about it; you find out who the best person is, and you take what they are doing and make it even better'.



NO BETTER READING

Letter to the Editor EU moves the goal posts yet again

Mr. Peter Turnquest, Deputy Prime Minister announced in Parliament recently that "The Bahamas is set to be blacklisted as a tax haven by the European Union (EU) next week."

But everyone knew this would come. The EU and OECD and the other alphabet soup entities have been doing this to The Bahamas and other tax havens now for decades.

It is a bit of a joke that the European Union could even consider blacklisting countries for tax compliance issues. They have one of the world's largest tax havens on the continent and the EU can be considered a tax haven

itself. I understand if you work there or "serve" as a Member of the European Parliament you pay no taxes. What a contradiction.

What it all amounts to is these countries, the US included, do not want to expend the effort to resolve their own tax laws that make people want to preserve what they have earned for their family.

To quote P.J. O'Rourke "Don't Vote, It Just Encourages The Bastards." But in the case of the EU they are an unelected group of people enforcing rules and regulations on countries. We didn't even vote for them!

"For libertarians, who believe in economic and individual freedom and limited government, the tyranny of excessive centralized control by unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats is anathema. It should be resisted as undemocratic and against the interests of a country's citizens."

One thing you can be sure of, comply with this and something else will surface in the near future that the EU is concerned about with tax havens. It's their MO.

**Yours in Liberty,
Rick Lowe
www.weblogbahamas.com**

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Wendall K. Jones
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EDITORIAL

BEYOND TIT-FOR-TAT!

Dr. The Honorable Duane Sands declares as follows:-- "...I want you to imagine the build out of a clinic at a cost to the Bahamian people of \$6.6m to see five patients a day... My ministry is prepared to ensure that all people in The Bahamas have access to excellent health care but it doesn't mean we should build out expensive edifices that we can ill afford to maintain."

And then as follow-up, we note that:-- Dr. Sands [also] insisted that the decision did not follow the advice of the ministry's technical team, and projections show the expensive build-out of the clinic would have served an average five patients per day.

In deliberate and clever response, we learn that:-- Cat Island MP Philip Davis countered that the former minister would have been advised by the same technical team as Dr. Sands, and at the time those recommendations were based not just on current data but the projected use given proposals for the island like the PGA tour.

And thus, that old and now tired tit-for-tat PLP-FNM blame game!

We are quite tired of this foolishness!

In truth and in fact that:-- There is no doubt today that misery tinged with sorry and distress is now pervasive in The Bahamas; and for sure, there is no doubt that, our people are in need of solutions relevant and consonant to the problems now extant on our shared agenda of things that must be done.

Evidently, such challenges are such that Church, State, Civil Society, Business and Workers' Organizations must -- for the sake of now and the future -- work together in aid of rescuing this nation.

Sadly, such a sweet state of affairs is not evident.

But yet, we are optimistic and -- too -- we are ever-hopeful for the soon-coming of a prosperous and flourishing day for the Bahamian people and the strangers in their gate.

But yet again, we do confess that we are also simultaneously that:-- One of the truly sorry matters which infests policy-level discussions has to do with the really-really sorry extent to which a newly-minted Free National Movement and its nemesis-counterpart a newly Philip 'Brave' Davis' Progressive Liberal

parties are so deeply mired in a brand-new version of their accustomed game of tit-for-tat.

Quite frankly, this game is today somewhat comparable to that same-old-same-old foolishness sometimes done by children and silly old fools!

In truth, then, we would have our leaders know that games of tit-for-tat are quite passé in a time when, things are tough and therefore where and when all hands are needed -- so to speak--on deck!

Whilst this is as true as true can be in times like these, we are convinced that:-- Things are bad and -- as these bad things unfold--things seem fated to go from bad to worse.

Not only are we facing a major fiscal crisis of the State but clearly facts available suggest that very many of our people are hurting like nobody's business.

In truth:-- For as long as we can remember our political leaders --whether identified as PLP or FNM--have busied themselves with bickering and busying themselves with demonizing each other!

And sadder yet, the same kind truly sorry also attends some of our Church families!

And saddest of all, there are all those after-school affairs where far too many of our nation's youth wage war on each other!

Evidently, stuff like this portends a bleak future ahead!

And thus, in these sad times we recommend that:-- All who would come on over and help re-build our beloved land should be big enough to bury their petty jealousies, deep-six their plethora of angry anxieties and --in the fullness of time-- they should be big enough to understand that what really should matter to all Bahamians is that this set of islands, rocks and cays can yet become the greatest little nation in the world.

Reflect Dear Readers on the fact that:-- For weeks piled up on even more wasted weeks, THEY shouted, fussed and fumed on and about what some of them saw as flaws most egregious exhibited by Their Speaker, Mr. - Speaker Halson Moultrie.

And when They were all done with their fussing and fuming, THEY SHOUTED that THEY HAD CONFIDENCE IN their MR SPEAKER, SIR!

This is all so very sad!



A6The Bahama Journal
Monday - March 12th, 2018**NationalNEWS**

ROBERTS CHIDES GOV'T OVER BRIDGE

BY AMAJAHL KNOWLES
Journal Staff Writer

Former Progressive Liberal Party Chairman and Minister of Works Bradley Roberts has questioned the government's proposed solution to the problems with Eleuthera's "Glass Window Bridge".

In a statement Mr. Roberts said the \$40 million tagline to fully repair the impassable bridge is not cost effective.

"I understand that they have some ferry services. Obviously,

the Ministry of Works has to take it very seriously and see what we can do about creating a safe passage for people in that community." So said Works Minister Desmond Bannister to the media in response to media reports that extreme inclement weather conditions have negatively impacted mobility on the island of Eleuthera, its economy and the residents' general way of life.

"This environmental, public infrastructure and socioeconomic nightmare gained national attention when video footage made the rounds on social

media of water gushing across Queen's Highway, eventually splitting the main Eleuthera artery in two at a location in an area popularly known as the sandpit.

"As an aside and as for the Glass Window Bridge, the government has expressed concerns about its state and a long-term solution that Minister Bannister says could cost tax payers as much as \$40 million, some seven hundred percent more than the \$6 to \$7 million quoted by coastal engineers to construct a causeway on the

calm side of the bridge when I served as works Minister between 2002 and 2007. Bannister said the solution was not in the government's current budget.

"The only thing we can do is look at the bridge and see whether it is structurally sound and if it is then we will do whatever we can to make it passable. The reality is the long-term solution to building a new bridge which could cost \$30 to \$40 million. Here in the capital where debris was pushed into the road due to extreme weather, the

public works minister says teams are cleaning up."

"I am constrained to ask why the government would consider rebuilding the Glass Window Bridge when experts have advised the Bahamas government that its replacement cost is prohibitive and a causeway on the calm side of the bridge is more cost effective and would serve the same logistical and economic purposes for Eleuthera's residents and its economy," Mr. Roberts said.

He added that the name of the company and owner/oper-

ator of the sandpit dredging operations will be very helpful and in the public interest to know.

Additionally, he said the minister will do well to ascertain whether the owner/operator was in possession of the requisite and valid government issued permits for this type of operations.

Early reports indicate that businesses are struggling in Eleuthera due to the bridge being inoperable.

Five people were severely injured just this past week trying to pass over the bridge.

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► International Women's Day 2018 speakers and audience at University of The Bahamas Harry C. Moore Library on March 8, 2018. (BIS Photos/Derek Smith)

Achievements of Rural Women Saluted at International Women's Day

BY SYDNEI L. ISAACS

Under the theme, "Challenges and Opportunities in Achieving Gender Equality and Empowerment of Rural Women and Girls," the Women's Forum was held at the Harry C. Moore auditorium at University of The Bahamas in honour of the 44th Annual International Women's Day.

Women of different nationalities and backgrounds from parliamentarians to students, teachers, farmers, straw vendors gathered Thursday morning, March 8, 2018 to -- according to Chairperson of the National Women's Advisory

Council Carolie Adderley -- "recognize all women regardless of race, nationality, political status."

Minister of Social Services and Urban Development, the Hon. Lanisha T. Rolle, MP welcomed everyone and urged them to "make the best of this moment." She thanked the following speakers: Winisha Saunders, who represented the Junior Parliamentarians, Diamond Pearson of the Debutante Foundation and Kendira Rahming, an independent speaker from Cat Island.

She recognized the remarkableness of several women including the Hon. Janet Bostwick, Condoleezza Rice, Cynthia "Mother Pratt",

Hillary Clinton, and Her Excellency Dame Marguerite Pindling.

Minister Rolle challenged women and girls to be positive, optimistic and to see that silver lining.

She also brought focus to the admirable resilience of women on the Family Islands who face adversities such as natural disasters, limited health care, limited mobility on the islands, and limited flights to and from the islands.

Minister Rolle asked all women over 60 years old to stand so that she could salute them on behalf of all Bahamian women for being the matriarchs who set a strong foundation for other

women to build upon.

She recognized the presence of the wife of Leader of the Official Opposition Philip "Brave" Davis – Mrs. Ann Marie Davis.

She also thanked the few men present for their strides in history.

In closing, Minister Rolle wished everyone a happy International Women's Day and requested that we "build upon the foundation that has already been made."

The audience was able to hear from panelists including: Dr. Nicola Virgill Rolle of the Economic Development Planning Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister; M. Kenrica Hepburn, a farmer and office manager at the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources in Cat Island; India Wells, a talented student at NGM Major High School in Long Island; and Charles Moss, a Family

Island Administrator at the Department of Local Government. Each panelist highlighted the many great accomplishments of women throughout The Bahamas.

A slide show was also presented to the audience to show appreciation for several different female leaders, while paying special attention to rural women on the Family Islands who make great strides with and without the help of technology.



GOVERNMENT NOTICE

**MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

AN INVITATION FOR TENDER

The Government of The Bahamas is hereby inviting Tenders for the necessary Operation and Maintenance of the following Family Island Landfills and Transfer Stations:

1. The North Eleuthera District Landfill, Transfer Station and Barging Services
2. The Great Exuma Regional Landfill and Transfer Station
3. The North Andros Sanitary Landfill
4. The Bimini Regional Landfill and Barging Services
5. The Great Abaco Regional Landfill
6. The San Salvador Sanitary Landfill
7. The Man-O-War Cay and Hope Town Collection and Waste Barging Services
8. The East Grand Bahama Transfer Station

Interested parties may obtain further information including eligibility to participate and may collect the bidding document upon payment of a non refundable fee of \$200.00 dollars per document as of February 12th, 2018 at:

**The Accounts Section
The Department of Environmental Health Services
Farrington Road
Nassau, The Bahamas
P. O. Box SS-19048
Telephone: 1-242-322-5150, 322-8037**

Between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00p.m. Monday to Friday.

The method of payment will be certified cheque or cash. Tenders are to be submitted in triplicate (3) in sealed envelope(s) addressed to:

**The Tenders Board
C/O The Financial Secretary
Ministry of Finance
Cecil V. Wallace-Whitfield Centre
P. O. Box N3017
Nassau, N. P.
The Bahamas**

No later than 4:30 p.m. on the 19th March, 2018.

Tenders will be open at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday 20th, March 2018 at the office of the Tenders Board, Ministry of Finance, West Bay Street.

The Government reserves the right to reject any and all tenders.