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# The Bahama Journal

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**THURSDAY - JUNE 21ST, 2018**

**75 CENTS**

# AG DEFENDS FIRINGS

# BUDGET "A Bitter Pill"

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK  
Journal Staff Writer

**T**he firings of three Free National Movement members of parliament was in keeping with parliamentary rules. This was expressed by a Attorney General, Carl Bethel before kicking off debate on the 2018/2019 budget in the Senate yesterday.

Two parliamentary secretaries and a board chairman being stripped of their duties after voting against the government's decision to up value added tax, was a move Senator Bethel said aligns with his party's track record of sternness, adherence to the rules and reconciliation.

Amid the furor in some circles about the course of action taken, Mr. Bethel sought to make it quite clear that as a Member of Parliament, one

has the alienable right to speak freely; but, on a matter of confidence – as the case in the vote on an increase in value added tax – that MP must tow the line and vote with the governing party on the matter.

"These are not Bahamian rules, these are the rules that are intrinsic to the parliamentary system of government, Bethel said.

■ See DEFENDS FIRINGS / page 2...



► Attorney General, Carl Bethel (Journal file photo)

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK  
Journal Staff Writer

There is a sincere attempt for the government to rise to meet the challenges which confront our young nation. Those were the words Attorney General, Carl Bethel, in the senate yesterday as he defended what is being called the 2018/2019 People's Budget.

The Attorney General added that the budget is an enormous exercise in fiscal and financial restraints. On the other hand, it's a poor national self-sacrifice and burden bearing.

■ See "A BITTER PILL" / page 4...

# PM: Grand Bahama Ideal For Tech Industry

BY LEAH COOPER  
Journal Staff Writer

Prime Minister Doctor Hubert Minnis says "Grand Bahama is the ideal location within The Bahamas that can support the establishment and growth of a technology cluster and block chain and other software companies that can jumpstart the technology industry in The Bahamas."

Dr. Minnis was giving the keynote address yesterday at the first ever block chain and cryptocurrency conference in Freeport, Grand Bahama.

The prime minister said that the government has made significant progress with the passing of the Commercial Enterprise Act.

He said, "in The Bahamas, we understand that establishing and growing a technology industry sector is not easy.

"The Bahamas is uniquely positioned to quickly become the jurisdiction of choice of technology



► **PM IS KEYNOTE SPEAKER** – Prime Minister, Dr. the Hon. Hubert Minnis was keynote speaker at the opening of the Bahamas Blockchain and Cryptocurrency Conference at the Grand Lucayan, June 20, 2018. (BIS Photos/Lisa Davis)

companies, particularly block chain technology companies and fintech solution providers."

Prime Minister Minnis also said that in order to make this endeavor a success in The Bahamas, several key components must be in place.

These include policies that encourage the vision, an educated and motivated workforce with access to higher education, professional development resources, a flexible immigration policy, and infrastructure that can support population growth.

He said that this will provide telecommunications services that are on par with the rest of the world.

He added, "Grand Bahama was designed and has infrastructure to support 250,000 residents. Today, it has a population of just about 40,000 residents. Broadband connectivity is of the highest quality in The Bahamas."

■ See IDEAL FOR TECH INDUSTRY / page 2...



► **GOVERNMENT AND PRESENTERS** – Prime Minister of The Bahamas, Dr. the Hon. Hubert Minnis (centre right), along with Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Peter Turnquest (centre left), Minister of Education, the Hon. Jeffrey Lloyd (eighth left), Minister of Transport and Local Government, the Hon. Frankie Campbell (fifth right) and Minister of State for Grand Bahama, Senator the Hon. Kwasi Thompson (sixth right), along with other Government officials and Senators stand with some of the conference presenters and international participants at the Blockchain and Cryptocurrency Conference, following opening ceremonies on Wednesday, June 20, 2018 at the Grand Lucayan.

# PM Confused On Firings, Says Davis

The Leader of the Official Opposition Philip Davis says that Prime Minister Minnis was confused in his firing of Members of his party for voting against the increase of Value Added Tax in the House of Assembly.

In a press statement Mr. Davis said, "The Prime Minister was confused in the House by calling the vote, one on which the whip was on, and threatening to fire anyone who dared not to vote for it. After having so declared that, he later contradicted himself in his own statement to the House when he said the budget actions of his government were something which moved his (the Prime Minister's) conscience.

■ See PM CONFUSED / page 2...



► Leader of the Official Opposition Philip Davis (Journal file photo)

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# VAT Increase Gets Mixed Views

BY TIA THOMPSON  
Journal Staff Writer

The topic of the increase in Value Added Tax (VAT) has been discussed throughout the country since the day the 2018/2019 national budget was first introduced to the Bahamian public. Members of the public interviewed by this Journal have given mixed reactions to the increase. While everyone offered different views, some people were expecting the increase in VAT.

Freeport, Grand Bahama resident,

Mr. Mcfall says that he has two kids; one attending the University of the Bahamas in Freeport and the other attending Mary Star of the Sea Primary school. He says that if the VAT increase eliminates the need for the countries dollar to devalue and assists in cutting down the deficit, he's all for it. But the increase came as no surprise to him. He expected VAT to increase to 15 per cent, so the 12 per cent is no excuse to fold. Mr. Mcfall says with all the other positive things they (the government) did for the Bahamian people with all the

exceptions, etc., this is a walk in the park.

Mr. Mcfall says that he doesn't feel as though his personal life and spending will change. His necessities will remain the same and no matter how much VAT increases, he will support his family.

However, chauffeur Shervin has a different opinion all around. He says that this will be a game changer for Bahamians and Bahamians have not seen anything like this since the mace was thrown out of the window of the House of Assembly. Shervin agreed

completely with the decision that the four MP's made to vote no and says that this will change things for his family.

54-year-old, Arnold Bullard was most willing and ready to give his views on the issue. He advises Bahamians to tighten up and shop more at home by paying taxes in our own country, pumping money back in, rather than shopping away and paying their taxes with no complaints.

He says that this is the time for Bahamians to save and invest more money. He encourages his five kids

to do so. He encourages the Bahamian public to do so also.

"I believe the VAT is necessary. Let's keep in mind that the PLP did implement the 7.5 per cent, the FNM came and implemented another 4.5 per cent. We can't blame the FNM for everything. Irresponsible spending over the years has caused the government to have no other choice but to come up with the money," says Mr. Bullard.

As many Bahamians that are furious, there are just as much that have accepted the change.

# Sin Tax Threatens a Local Industry

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT  
Journal Staff Writer

The Bahamas Premium Cigar Association says the government should embrace rather than stifle significant economic opportunity.

In a statement released yesterday BPCA President Michael Maragh said it came to their attention that the government is considering the imposition of both a sin tax and a new tobacco control bill.

The BPCA President said while they fully support all efforts to raise awareness of and protect the public from the dangers associated with inexpensive, mass-produced and widely available tobacco products, they must strongly oppose any attempt to

include high-end, premium cigars in the same category.

Study after study has shown these products to have nowhere near the same level of risk in terms of either health concerns or addiction.

In addition, with a prohibitive starting price of \$10-\$15 per cigar, there is no conceivable chance of widespread consumption.

Yet hundreds of Bahamians generate income from the sale of premium cigars to visitors, as these luxury items remain key to the mystique of the region as a destination.

He requested that the government exempt premium, high-end cigars from any sin tax to be imposed on other tobacco products and reduce the current 220 per cent tax

on premium cigars.

In addition, he said the industry should be exempted from the more onerous provisions of the proposed tobacco control bill, including prohibitions which would effectively end cigar smoking on golf courses, in luxury airport lounges and on casino floors.

He complained about restrictions on advertising, meaning that local luxury cigar producers would no longer be able to promote their products, even on their own social media pages, advise the public about rolling events, or demonstrate this skill at cultural festivals and other events.

There are prohibitions against purchasing and selling cigar branded lighters,

cigar ashtrays, cutters, cases, or humidors.

They also request that at least two members of the tobacco industry be named to the tobacco control board which is contemplated in the bill.

The BPCA encourages The Bahamas government to embrace this huge economic opportunity for Bahamians and allow it to flourish to the benefit of

local employers, workers, country's economy generally, the tourism industry and the

## Juvenile Arraigned for Murder

A 17-year-old male of Periwinkle Avenue, off Kemp Road stood before magistrate Koschina Marshall yesterday at 2pm. He was charged with unlawful harm and the intentional cause of death of Michael Johnson on Homestead Street on June 4th this year. Johnson was shot shortly while standing outside his home, when a dark coloured jeep pulled up and fired shots at him leaving him injured and eventually dead. The case was adjourned to August 9th.

## AG DEFENDS FIRINGS

Continued from / PAGE 1...

"This is what makes the parliamentary system of government, quite frankly, far more efficient as a system of governance than the biggest competitor around, which is the congressional system."

Now while the argument has been made that The Bahamas change its system, the Attorney General explained that the Westminster system of government is a lousy one, but it's the best yet devised.

"First of all, the congressional system is a very expensive system to operate, secondly, a congressional system is very inefficient.

"If the house decides they don't like the senate or none like the president, nobody does anything.

"We saw this for eight years with President Obama, where the system was able to be used to totally frustrate the work of people, by per-

sons in this congressional system.

"Is that what Bahamians would wish?"

"Well, the only other alternative is some form of a dictatorial system, and none of us would like that," said Senator Bethel.

The Attorney General expressed optimism that things will settle down and that in time, peace and harmony will be restored within the governing party at all levels.

"It is to be hoped, as I have said, that The Free National Movement will continue in its tradition of reconciliation and forward progress.

"I am happy to note, and to have heard, that [Pineridge] Member of Parliament McAlpine, [has] a commitment to the party. We have our differences, but he expressed a commitment to the party.

"Because at the end of the day, why do we run or seek to hold office in a government unless we have a basic level of commitment."

## PM Confused On Firings, Says Davis

Continued from / PAGE 1...

"It is clear that while he saw it as matter of conscience, he could not countenance the conscience of others. Only he is allowed to have a conscience.

"So one short year later, four people have been dismissed from their executive positions in the government because they dared to speak their minds and exercise their own deliberate judg-

ments and free consciences. More importantly, each consulted his constituents and reflected the wishes of their constituents in their vote in the House. This gives the lie to the assertion that the Free National Movement gives one wit about freedom of speech and about transparency and accountability. It is: "do as I say do or out you go", said Mr. Davis.

He said, "The PLP welcomes the vote by these men

of conscience. We think it is particularly egregious and galling that the man who the Prime Minister used to lure the youth to his side by electing a person in his early twenties to the House in one Travis Robinson has now had his political career lopped off for acting according to his conscience. The Prime Minister is now exposed for what he is: a political hypocrite," said the PLP leader.

## PM: Grand Bahama Ideal For Tech Industry

Continued from / PAGE 1...

The prime minister announced last Monday in his 2018/2019 budget communication the Government will be providing free tuition at the Bahamas Vocational and Technical Institute (BTVI).

He noted yesterday that the school offers degree programs Information Technology for all individuals interested in pursuing a career in the technology sector.

**GOT NEWS?**  
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## MINISTRY OF FINANCE

### PUBLIC NOTICE

The public is hereby notified that a Public Auction will be conducted by the Customs Department on non-entered goods at the places and times listed below:-

No.	LOCATIONS	DATES	TIMES
1	Airfreight (GFT)	18 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	9:00am - 12:30pm
2.	Airfreight LPIA (GFT)	18 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	9:00am - 12:30pm
3.	Airfreight Odyssey (GFT)	18 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	9:00am - 12:30pm
4.	Tropical Shipping - John Alfred Dock (GFT)	18 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	2:00pm - 5:00pm
5.	MSC - Arawak Cay (GFT)	19 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	9:00am - 12:30pm
6.	Mailboat - Arawak Cay (GFT)	19 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	9:00am - 12:30pm
7.	Betty K. - Arawak Cay (GFT)	19 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	2:00pm - 5:00pm
<b>VEHICLES (NEW PROVIDENCE) CUSTOMS HEADQUARTERS</b>			
8.	Betty K - Kelly's Dock - Arawak Cay (HQ)	20 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	9:30am - 12:30pm
9.	Inchape Shipping (HQ)	20 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	9:30am - 12:30pm
10.	Island Maritime (HQ)	20 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	9:30am - 12:30pm
11.	United Shipping (HQ)	20 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	2:00pm - 5:00pm
12.	R. H. Curry & Co. Ltd. (HQ)	20 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	2:00pm - 5:00pm
<b>ARAWAK CAY</b>			
13.	Mailboat - Fiesta Mail (Arawak Cay)	23 <sup>rd</sup> July, 2018	10:00am - 5:00pm
<b>FAMILY ISLAND</b>			
14.	George Town, <b>EXUMA</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	10:00am - 5:00pm
15.	Marsh Harbour, <b>ABACO</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	10:00am - 5:00pm
16.	Governor's Harbour, <b>ELEUTHERA</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> July, 2018	10:00am - 5:00pm
17.	Matthew Town, <b>INAGUA</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> August, 2018	10:00am - 5:00pm

The above goods will be sold under the Provision of Section 201 of the Customs Management Act and the Auction will commence at 9:00 am daily with the exception of

Tropical Shipping, Betty K. Agencies, Arawak Cay (GFT), which will commence at 2:00 pm.

Vehicles (New Providence) Customs Headquarters, will commence at 9:30 am daily with the exception of Fiesta Mail, Arawak Cay East which will commence at 10:00 am. United Shipping and R.H. Curry & Co. Ltd will commence at 2:00 pm.

Family Islands will commence at 10:00 am daily.

A list of the goods to be auctioned can be viewed at Customs Headquarters, Betty K. Agencies, Gladstone Road Freight Terminal, Air Freight, Arawak Cay East.

The right is reserved to accept or reject any or all bids tendered.

Marlon Johnson  
(Acting) FINANCIAL SECRETARY



**TRADEWINDS 2018 MILITARY TRAINING DRILL AT SOUTH BEACH POOLS**

► Tradewinds 2018 military training participants from the Royal Bahamas Defence and Police Forces, the United States and Mexico, performed the final exercise with the scenario of rescue and extraction of hostages on June 20, 2018, at the South Beach Pools, in Nassau, The Bahamas. Two Black Hawk helicopters and RBDF military vehicles assisted in the extraction portion of the exercise. Among the stakeholders present for the exercise were a number of leaders of local and international uniformed forces, including Commander of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF) and Chief of Defence for the Tradewinds 2018 Exercise Commodore Tellis Bethel, Assistant Commissioner of Police Ken Strachan, Acting Commissioner of Correctional Services Bernadette M. Thompson-Murray, and Major General Robert M. Branyon of the United States Southern Command.



► Tradewinds 2018 is an annual regional military training exercise that is being held in The Bahamas June 14-21; this year's exercise focuses on Countering Transnational Organized crime in the region. The main objective of the military event is to foster training for security forces that is "tailored for the region by the region," and is sponsored by the United States Southern Command. Twenty-two partner nations of the Caribbean region, wider Americas and Western Europe comprising over 800 troops are participating in the exercise. The Bahamas last hosted the event in 2009. (BIS Photos / Eric Rose)





► **OPENS BLOCKCHAIN CONFERENCE** – Minister of State for Grand Bahama, Senator Kwasi Thompson was one of the main speakers at the opening of the Bahamas Blockchain Cryptocurrency Conference on Wednesday, June 20, 2018 at the Grand Lucayan. (BIS Photo/Lisa Davis)

# MINISTER THOMPSON -- Gov't. to launch High Tech Summer Training Program

BY ANDREW COAKLEY

**FREEPORT, GRAND BAHAMA** -- The Ministry of Education, in partnership with the Office of the Prime Minister, will launch a program that will allow 150 students in Grand Bahama and Nassau to take part in an innovative High Tech Summer Training Program.

“Over the next three summers and before they graduate high school, they would have obtained IT certifications,” said Minister of State for Grand Bahama, Senator Kwasi Thompson.

“The certifications which they will obtain will be in Python Development, Website Development, Java Script, Linux Fundamentals, Network Certification and others. We are focused on training and capacity building for a digital economy.”

According to Minister Thompson, the program, which was the brainchild of the Prime Minister, will begin on the 27th of this month.

The announcement came during Minister Thompson’s address at the opening ceremonies of the first Bahamas Blockchain and Cryptocurrency Conference, at Grand Lucayan resort on Wednesday, June 20, 2018. The conference will close on Friday, June 22.

Minister Thompson told conference delegates that The Bahamas is in the final stages of completing its framework for blockchain and cryptocurrency and will closely monitor the discussions and recommendations from professionals and panelists at the 2018 conference.

“Over the next three days we seek to realize our goal of facilitating investments, starting and developing companies, and building business relationships with Blockchain technology companies,” said Minister Thompson.

“We hope that through this conference we see the establishment Blockchain, Cryptocurrency, and FinTech enterprises, which we anticipate will transform financial

services in The Bahamas and continue to do so globally.

The Minister said that the conference is truly a historic event and one that is in line with the government’s overall goal for Grand Bahama.

“Upon taking office last year, this government dedicated itself to making The Bahamas a premier place to do business. We firmly believe that Grand Bahama Island is uniquely suited to become an internationally recognized technology and innovation hub.

“As such, we have set out to establish Grand Bahama as this region’s Silicon Valley.”

Minister Thompson noted that in November of last year, the Office of the Prime Minister (Grand Bahama) hosted its first Technology Summit, which was instrumental in beginning the strategic planning process of building a technology sector for The Bahamas. He said that the government has since begun implementing recommendations of the Steering Committee.

The hosting of the Bahamas Blockchain and Cryptocurrency Conference is the coming to life of one of those recommendations.

“Over the past year, we have made significant progress on this Technology Hub initiative,” said Minister Thompson. “The Committee has met and has provided the government with a strategic plan on how we move forward.

“Our Prime Minister, who has been Grand Bahama’s champion, has led a delegation on a Tech Trade Mission to Austin, Texas, to meet with Tech Giants. The Commercial Enterprise Act has been passed and Technology companies have already been fast tracked and approved.

“We have formed an investment unit in the OPM Grand Bahama, focusing on investor white glove treatment particularly for technology companies. These officers are on site and ready to assist local and international investors. We are

focused on cutting down the approval time for applications with a goal of a 30-day approval process.

“The Ministry of Finance has embarked on a Digital transformation process of government which will bring immediate change for our citizens. We have also attracted major technology company conferences. For example Dell has communicated that over 1000 employees will be in The Bahamas for their 2019 conference.

“We have also seen the recent opening of GIBC Digital who has already begun hiring and training a total of 50 Bahamians and will officially open this month.”

Minister Thompson said it is his belief that Grand Bahama is well on its way to becoming ‘the’ premier place to do business. He welcomed investors to dialogue with the government to set up business on the island and find their second home in Grand Bahama.

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# BUDGET “A Bitter Pill”

Continued from / PAGE 1...

“We are all called upon to make sacrifices and to carry heavy burdens.

“Yes there are aspects of this budget that are a bitter, bitter, pill.

“But it is a bitter pill that we are all called upon to shoulder, to carry, to inwardly digest,” said the Senator.

Senator Bethel added that there are some serious struc-

tural problems which must be tackled because they are unsustainable and unsustainably damaging the bright future of the country.

Our reality, he said, is that we have to do more with less.

“We know the reality is that one can only usually do less, with less. That is the reality of where the nation stands today,” said the Senate leader.



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# The Rough Cut

By Felix F. Bethel

## “...paradoxically-fired...”

Bahamas, May 11, 2017 – Nassau – It is an historic defeat and it gave the Free National Movement the largest victory at the polls ever recorded for The Bahamas, unofficially taking 34 of the 39 seats.

Coming with that victory was one [Young] Travis Robinson who at the age of 22 resoundingly beat veteran, Dr. Bernard Nottage in Bain and Grants Town.

One of my colleagues who was a student of mine once upon a time recently reported that: -- The hatchet was in full swing, and Minnis was determined that heads would roll.

And thus today, I remember: -- When I was a boy in the long ago years, I would listen in as my parents and their friends would warn their brood as to how they should be careful with edged tools—and as I did, I figured out that implements such as knives, switch-blades and scissors could hurt you in a bad, bad way; and thus today—as I tune into how Prime Minister went about using [if only by way of useful analogy] a hatchet of his own devising as [perhaps in anger] he fired Travis Robinson, Reece Chipman, Frederick McAlpine and Vaughan Miller.

The hatchet was in full swing, and Minnis was determined that heads would roll; with all of this but anti-climax to that time when Travis Robinson beat the PLP's [prodigal-son returned] Bernard Nottage and when Reece Chipman beat the PLP's Perry 'The Gladiator' Christie!

**Trounced, I tell you!**

**Wiped out, I tell you!**

**Slaughtered!**

**PLP--ALL THE WAY--  
Beaten and humiliated--  
May 10th, 2017 by their  
nemesis in the Free  
National Movement [as led  
by Dr. Hubert A. Minnis.**

Incidentally – as I too would agree: -- An historic defeat and it gave the Free National Movement the largest victory at the polls ever recorded for The Bahamas, unofficially taking 34 of the 39 seats.

[Also] Coming with that victory was one Travis Robinson who at the age of 22 resoundingly beat veteran, Dr Bernard Nottage in Bain and Grants Town.

And thus, one short year later, I am told that: -- In

introducing the plan to raise value-added tax (VAT) from 7.5 percent to 12 percent, the government did so in the absence of consultation with key stakeholders.... In so doing, they proved to be a hypocritical, arrogant and tone-deaf bunch that refuses to listen to and engage the people.

Indeed, then: -- If memory [even if Google-aided] is good for anything, please beloved, pause and remember that time when FNM political copy read as follows: -- “The FNM continues to recruit and ratify exciting and well-qualified candidates that will serve their Constituencies well...”

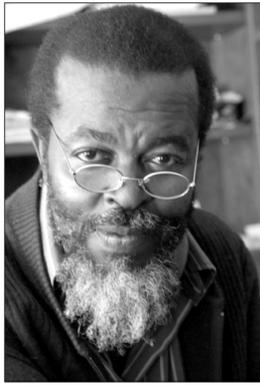
As they told us then: -- Leading the list of candidates is 21-year-old Travis L. Robinson, ratified to represent the Bain and Grants Town Constituency where he was born and raised.

And the ones who chose him said that: -- [Young] Travis Robinson was chosen for this constituency, as he knows first-hand the hardships that the Over-the-Hill Communities have faced under PLP representation, or lack thereof.

In that same vein, PR copy read as follows: -- Ratified to be the standard bearer for the Centerville Constituency is Director of the Public Workers Cooperative Credit Union Reece Chipman.

Now, dearly beloved: -- Guess what----My God-given sense tells me that Dr. Hubert A. Minnis would have done himself and his party in power a world of good had he decided to do nothing as regards the voices and votes of three of his own leadership driven choices as to who could or would represent the Free National Movement in The House of Assembly; with those chosen to carry the torch being none other than Travis Robinson, Reece Chipman [ the young twosome who trounced Perry Gladstone Christie and Bernard J. Nottage, respectively], Vaughn Miller and Frederick McAlpine.

As most of my friends would know, the late Bernard Nottage was not only a man I admired, but that he was also a political leader I respected to the max; and thus – to make what might run the risk of being a long story, please permit me to confess that when I met [young Travis Robinson and his [also quite young public relations man] I first laughed out loud to myself as they both addressed one of my classes



in the University of The Bahamas; this I did as I contemplated how BJ was going to trounce the upstarts--and lo and behold when the dust had really settled, my friend and hero Dr. Bernard J. Nottage had found the exit whilst [from Mackey Street to Mayaguana), the Free National Movement exulted in their People's Time victory over Perry 'The Gladiator' Christie and his version of the Progressive Liberal Party—and Travis Robinson had made history as the youngest member of parliament in this region!

Now guess again:--- [Young] Travis Robinson has been fired; and making matters even more galling, the firing thing was done him by none other than, the Hon. Dr. Hubert A. Minnis who –as the public now recalls-- was the very same man who once upon a time thought that [Young] Travis Robinson and [Young] Reece Chipman and [Not Young as they once were] Frederick McAlpine and Vaughan Miller had what it took then to help him become the Nation's Chief--- Evidently, they did.

There is a sense I have which tells me that Dr. Minnis might have done himself a huge harm by accelerating the political maturation of Chipman, Robinson, Miller and McAlpine.

This he did and as we know, having done the deed, there are men and women in the Free National Movement [with at least one I know who is in the Cabinet who – if only they were not so craven, so crass and so cowardly— would have joined in with the gang of four who voted as they did, notwithstanding the clear possibility that they would be subjected to the sweet touch of an angry man's hatchet.

Paradoxically, therefore there is today word in the wind suggestive of the conclusion that these four men might well find themselves called upon [when the time is just right] to help fire the Chief.

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Quo Vadis, Bahamas?  
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E D I T O R I A L

# BEWARE DESPOTISM

As our great neighbour to the north wallows in [and responds] to Trumpism tinged with echoes of fascism, we must pay attention!

What follows is an excerpt culled from the New York Times where we read that: -- **In Africa, the presidents who serve longest are often the most corrupt, multiplying the harm they inflict with each passing year. Meanwhile, the possibility that fascism will be accorded a fresh chance to strut around the world stage is enhanced by the volatile presidency of Donald Trump.**

**If freedom is to prevail over the many challenges to it, American leadership is urgently required. This was among the indelible lessons of the 20th century. But by what he has said, done and failed to do, Mr. Trump has steadily diminished America's positive clout in global councils.**

“On April 28, 1945 — 73 years ago — Italians hung the corpse of their former dictator Benito Mussolini upside down next to a gas station in Milan. Two days later, Adolf Hitler committed suicide in his bunker beneath the streets of war-ravaged Berlin. Fascism, it appeared, was dead.

“To guard against a recurrence, the survivors of war and the Holocaust joined forces to create the United Nations, forge global financial institutions and — through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — strengthen the rule of law. In 1989, the Berlin Wall came down and the honour roll of elected governments swelled not only in Central Europe, but also Latin America, Africa and Asia. Almost everywhere, it seemed, dictators were out and democrats were in. Freedom was ascendant.

“Today, we are in a new era, testing whether the democratic banner can remain aloft amid terrorism, sectarian conflicts, vulnerable borders, rogue social media and the cynical schemes of ambitious men. The answer is not self-evident.

“We may be encouraged that most people in most countries still want to live freely and in peace, but there is no ignoring the storm clouds that have gathered. In fact, fascism — and the tendencies that lead toward fascism — pose a more serious threat now than at any time since the end of World War II.

“Warning signs include the relentless grab for

more authority by governing parties in Hungary, the Philippines, Poland and Turkey — all United States allies. The raw anger that feeds fascism is evident across the Atlantic in the growth of nativist movements opposed to the idea of a united Europe, including in Germany, where the right-wing Alternative für Deutschland has emerged as the principal opposition party.

“The danger of despotism is on display in the Russia of Vladimir Putin — invader of Ukraine, meddler in foreign democracies, accused political assassin, brazen liar and proud son of the K.G.B.

“Putin has just been re-elected to a new six-year term, while in Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, a ruthless ideologue, is poised to triumph in sham balloting next month. In China, Xi Jinping has persuaded a docile National People's Congress to lift the constitutional limit on his tenure in power.

“Around the Mediterranean, the once bright promise of the Arab Spring has been betrayed by autocratic leaders, such as Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of Egypt (also just re-elected), who use security to justify the jailing of reporters and political opponents.

“Thanks to allies in Moscow and Tehran, the tyrant Bashar al-Assad retains his stranglehold over much of Syria.

In Africa, the presidents who serve longest are often the most corrupt, multiplying the harm they inflict with each passing year. Meanwhile, the possibility that fascism will be accorded a fresh chance to strut around the world stage is enhanced by the volatile presidency of Donald Trump; and thus it follows: -- If freedom is to prevail over the many challenges to it, American leadership is urgently required. This was among the indelible lessons of the 20th century. But by what he has said, done and failed to do, Mr. Trump has steadily diminished America's positive clout in global councils.

And thus we dare suggest: -- As but one of many small island developing states in the world, The Bahamas is what economists would describe as 'price-taker'. And thus then, it follows that they who would chart the way forward have very little room to manoeuvre.

But yet again, there comes with this realization that whilst we might well have become transfixed with all of that glut that comes with the American way of living and being that, we do not have the capacity to realize this idle ambition.

**THE BAHAMAS**  
Sun, Sand, Sea .... and the  
The Bahama Journal  
NO BETTER READING



#DORSETT 2018

# SANDYPORT'S OASIS FURNITURE LAUNCHES BRIDAL REGISTRY

The popularity of a summer-time wedding traces its roots to

ancient times when the celebrated Juno – the deity from

which the month takes its name – ruled all aspects of women's

lives, including childbirth and marriage.

Fastforward a few centuries and June brides have grown to legendary proportions not only in the global wedding market, a \$300 billion industry, but also in The Bahamas. Little wonder why Oasis, a furniture and home décor store located in the Sandyport Plaza on West Bay Street, is rolling out its bridal registry.

The store which recently celebrated its first anniversary aims to be the 'one-stop unique boutique' featuring everything from the basics like sofas and dining sets to the whimsical – one of a kind napkin rings, scented candles, copper chandeliers and hand-woven rugs from faraway lands.

"Couples choose a bridal registry based on two features that are important to them. First, they want to offer their guests options that reflect their taste and secondly, they want it to be easy for their guests to choose and purchase," said Brooke Phillips, who actually realized the value of local bridal registries in the most personal way, becoming engaged herself. In fact, her fiancé helps out in the store.

"Being a Bahamian entrepreneur we wanted to have our registry in The Bahamas, not in a chain store in the U.S. where people could shop online," said Phillips, a 33-year-old certified residential and commercial space stager.

"It is also important for a registry to marry taste with needs whether the pair is starting from scratch or looking to upgrade an existing shared space with modern necessities reflective of his and her style. We help ensure that your registry is comprehensive and easy for your loved ones to shop from."

There is no rush for a bride to make all her selections at once. Ms Phillips recommends making multiple visits to the store.

"Simply start with the basics and add to it as you go," she advises. "We tell our brides to use a wide price range in their gift selection so guests have options to match their price-point. We believe wedding guests also appreciate having lots of choices."

Ms Phillips stocks her stores with items as unique as each



► The Bahamas' newest bridal registry was launched this month at Oasis, Sandyport, headquarters of unique custom-crafted pieces and home décor from around the world. The registry includes a range of furniture and soft goods from sofas and dining room sets to nests of candles, pillows, rugs and woven baskets.

couple. She treks by foot, camel, horse, mule and more from Africa to the Far East, and across North America searching for one-of-a-kind finds to dot the Sandyport store downstairs from Club One Fitness Centre.

Oasis inventory features sofas, chairs, dining room and end tables, fine rugs, large mirrors, copper-lined chandeliers, stone sinks, hand-carved vases, lamps and other items

too numerous to mention.

It also provides the backdrop for the work of local craftsman Morgan McKinney whose unique hand-sculpted wood works of practical art, are on display exclusively at Oasis.

"We have scores of furniture and décor items to register for, to begin or complete a room," said Ms Phillips. "Couples are guaranteed to find pieces to love almost as much as they cherish each other."



## MINISTRY OF FINANCE

### PUBLIC TREASURY DEPARTMENT

The Treasurer of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas is conducting a new vendor verification exercise to prepare for an upgrade to its digital payment processing system on **June 15**. This will affect all individuals and businesses providing goods and services to the Government.

It is very important for all vendors to participate in this verification exercise so they do not experience any discontinuation of payments. Failure to participate in the vendor verification process will result in the discontinuation of payments.

Vendors must **submit or confirm banking information and email contact information** with the Public Treasury. This must be done by completing a Vendor Verification Form, available online (Go to [www.bahamas.gov.bs](http://www.bahamas.gov.bs), go to Forms top left click on vendor verification form and download).

For the past three years, the Public Treasury has been transitioning away from the use of cheque payments and other manual processes. This year, the Treasury plans to eliminate cheque payments all together. Payments will be made by direct deposit. And as of **July 1, all notifications of payments will be sent by email**. This will allow vendors to receive immediate notification when payments are sent to their accounts.

#### Vendor Verification Process

1. Download Vendor Verification Form
2. Complete Form and Email to [controlssection@bahamas.gov.bs](mailto:controlssection@bahamas.gov.bs)
3. Or Fax to 397-5098

Vendor verification forms can also be obtained at the Treasury Department in New Providence, Grand Bahama and Abaco or by request via email [controlssection@bahamas.gov.bs](mailto:controlssection@bahamas.gov.bs), and hand delivered at the Public Treasury, East & North Streets (opposite the Police Head-quarters, East Street)

#### Vendor Verification Information Required

- a) Banking Details
- b) Email Address
- c) Tax Identification Number (TIN)

For further details, please contact the Public Treasury Department at the following telephone numbers: 242-356-4219, 242-302-0534 or 242-302-0545 242-302-0525.

TREASURER, COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS

## Fidelity Bank Apprenticeship Program

Across The Fidelity Group, we are driven by a clear purpose – making a positive difference in the lives of our colleagues so they can make a positive difference in the lives of customers and in the communities we serve! Therefore, in keeping with our guiding principles, and in support of our continued growth, we are seeking to attract PHDs to join our team. Job applicants who are Passionate, Highly Motivated & Driven to Succeed and wish to become Banking and Finance Apprentices should apply.

What can Participants in our Apprenticeship Program expect and what will they be doing?

We have a reputation for being a training bank. So naturally, we will be providing great personal and professional development with the opportunity to advance to supervisory and managerial positions in an accelerated program.

We will help participants to develop an in-depth knowledge of our products, services and processes; enhancing their communication, leadership, and people skills.

Our Apprenticeship Program is comprised as follows:

- One year in Deposit Administration, Business Development, and Customer Service
- One year in Loan Administration and Lending
- One year in Operations, Compliance, and Special Projects

To service our customers while being trained, coached and mentored requires that participants in our Apprenticeship Program can work flexible hours in any of our branches in New Providence, Freeport or Marsh Harbour, and are available to work on Saturdays as required. Fidelity offers Saturday Banking at most of its branches.

We hire for attitude and potential, then train for skills. So what skills and qualifications will participants need? Because our training is extensive, participants will not need any previous experience in Banking or Finance. However, to succeed in this program requires that you already possess the following attributes:

- Ability to persevere and commit to a three (3) year program
- Ability to learn quickly in a fast paced environment
- Ability to receive constructive feedback
- Giving "EXTRA", with a passion for providing exceptional customer service
- Professional in demeanor, deportment, and dress
- High ethical standards in your work and personal life
- A passion for sales and solicitation in a strong sales culture

Additionally participants will need to possess either of the following qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree with a GPA of 3.0 or above or
- An Associate's Degree with a GPA of 3.0 or above, and four (4) BGCSEs with a 'C' grade or above or
- A High School Diploma with a GPA of 2.8 or above, and four (4) BGCSEs with a 'C' grade or above and five (5) years working experience in any capacity

Participants will be assessed on a quarterly basis and must meet all the requirements of the program to be retained in the Apprenticeship Program. Come Grow With Us! Because at Fidelity "We're Good For You!"



PLEASE SUBMIT RESUME AND TRANSCRIPT BEFORE: April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018

#### HUMAN RESOURCES

Re: Apprentice Program

51 Frederick Street | P.O. Box N-4853 | Nassau | F: 328.1108  
[careers@fidelitybahamas.com](mailto:careers@fidelitybahamas.com)

## TRADEWINDS 2018 – COMMUNITY OUTREACH AT BAHAMAS ASSOCIATION FOR THE PHYSICALLY DISABLED

Participants in the Tradewinds 2018 military exercise from the Royal Bahamas Defence Force, the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom performed community outreach at the Bahamas Association for the Physically Disabled school, on June 20, 2018. Commander of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF) and Chief of Defence for the Tradewinds 2018 Exercise Commodore Tellis Bethel and Major General Robert M. Branyon of the United States Southern Command joined with other officers and stakeholders in showing support for the initiative. Tradewinds 2018 participants painted, removed debris, cut down dead trees and assisted with general maintenance of the facility and property.



Tradewinds 2018 is an annual regional military training exercise that is being held in The Bahamas June 14-21; this year's exercise focuses on Countering Transnational Organized crime in the region. The main objective of the military event is to foster training for security forces that is "tailored for the region by the region," and is sponsored by the United States Southern Command. Twenty-two partner nations of the Caribbean region, wider Americas and Western Europe comprising over 800 troops are participating in the exercise. The Bahamas last hosted the event in 2009. (BIS Photos/Eric Rose)



### MINISTRY OF FINANCE PUBLIC TENDER

#### VESSEL FOR PURCHASE

The Ministry of Finance advises that the following vessel has been forfeited to the Crown following breaches of the Fisheries Resources Jurisdiction and Conversation Act and resulting in the selling by Tender:

Vessel	Description
Name of Vessel: Sheyla	
Manufactured By: Unknown	
Make: Cummings	
Model Year: Unknown	

**\*The Sheyla is a 67ft. single steel hull fishing vessel outfitted with a second top-deck located aft. This vessel is powered by a (K-19) 6 Cylinder Cummings Single Screw engine.**

Interested persons may view the vessel by visiting the Royal Bahamas Defence Force Base, located on Coral Harbour, between the hours of 9:00a.m. to 4:00p.m., Monday to Friday from May 28, 2018 to June 22, 2018.

Bids should be addressed in a sealed envelope to the **Financial Secretary**, Ministry of Finance, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Cecil Wallace Whitfield Building, West Bay Street by 5:00p.m. on June 22, 2018.

The face of the envelope should bear the words "Tender For Confiscated Vessel".

Each successful bidder will be required to make full payment to the Public Treasury, Nassau, The Bahamas by cash, certified cheque, or credit/debit cards for the vessel being purchased within ten (10) working days of being notified by the Ministry of Finance. The successful bidder will be responsible for making full arrangements for the removal of the vessel within two (2) working days after full payment has been made.

The Ministry of Finance reserves the right to reject any or all bids and the item is being sold "as is where is" with no warranty to be implied or inferred. For vessels that are not registered in The Bahamas no guarantee is given as to its eligibility for registration elsewhere.

**Marlon Johnson**  
(Actg.) Financial Secretary

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