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# The Bahama Journal

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# OECD ISSUES BOGUS REPORT

The Ministry of Finance strongly refuted news reports circulating in the press overseas that claim The Bahamas has been "blacklisted" by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Ministry in a statement yesterday said "this report is false and misleading."

The OECD published a report that includes a list of jurisdictions around the world, including The Bahamas, which operate Citizenship by Investment (CBI) or Residence by Investment (RBI) programs. "This report is not a blacklist," said the statement. (See



▶ Minister of Finance, Peter Turnquest (File photo)

■ See OECD / page 2...

## Bishop calls for politicians to focus on national advancement

The quality of political dialogue in The Bahamas and The Turks and Caicos Islands - both inside and outside parliament, continues to decline.

This view of Anglican Bishop, Laish Boyd was expressed on Monday night in his charge to the opening of the 115th session of Synod at Christ Church Cathedral.

He reminded Anglicans that politicians are role models and their behavior is not just their own business, adding that politics at its best is not meant to be only about partisan agenda, but more so to be about the good of the entire state.

Bishop Boyd called on politicians in The Bahamas and The Turks and Caicos Islands to remember this and to focus on national advancement rather than scoring partisan "brownie points."



▶ Anglican Bishop, Laish Boyd (File photo)

He said both countries should stick to their overall national plans, building one country and not a land of two or three partisan interest groups.

Touching on immigration in The Bahamas, the

Anglican bishop, called on the government to move toward the establishment of a citizenship commission or some other means of establishing clear procedures that

■ See BISHOP / page 2...

## BAHAMAS LISTED IN "GOLDEN PASSPORT SCHEME"

BY LEAH COOPER  
 Journal Staff Writer

The Bahamas is one of 21 countries said to be participating in "Golden Passport" schemes where foreigners sought citizenship in an

effort to evade taxes in their home country, the London-based newspaper The Guardian yesterday reported. This report was denied by the government of the Bahamas.

The daily suggested that

these golden passport schemes "threaten international efforts to combat tax evasion", and that this "fast-expanding" industry earned \$3 billion.

■ See BAHAMAS / page 4...

## Fire Destroys John Chea Food Store

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT  
 Journal Staff Writer

Fire resources were stretched, off-duty officers were called in, portions of Carmichael Road were closed off and there was a request to BPL to cut power

supply as fire consumed John Chea's Carmichael Road location after 11 a.m. yesterday.

Fire Director Chief Superintendent Walter Evans said that the fire department ended up having to get assistance from the airports fire

unit. "When the first unit arrived from police headquarters, just moments later we met smoke coming from the top section and the back section of the facility.

■ See FIRE / page 3...

## DEPUTY PERMANENT SECRETARY DIES

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK  
 Journal Staff Writer



▶ The late Mrs. Christina Brown, Deputy Permanent Secretary (File photo)

Cabinet Office has announced the passing of a Deputy Permanent Secretary in the public service.

A statement said "the Public Service has lost a dedicated competent officer in the person of Mrs. Christina Brown, Deputy Permanent Secretary, who passed away on Friday, 12th October, 2018."

Mrs. Brown joined the Public Service in 1973 as a Clerk at the Ministry of Education.

"During her service there her dedication and efficiency

were noted and commended and led to her secondment to the Cabinet Office.

"Twenty-six (26) of her forty-five (45) years as a Public Officer were spent at the Cabinet Office.

"As early as 1994 Mrs. Brown served as Secretary to the Senate where her habit of routinely working beyond the normal hours of work contributed to her steady rise through the Public Service.

"At the Cabinet Office she moved from Chief Executive Officer up to Deputy Permanent Secretary, all the while improving her aca-

■ See DEPUTY / page 3...



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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

# Police commission new cars

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT  
Journal Staff Writer

A new fleet of police cars commissioned by Commissioner of Police Anthony Ferguson hit the road yesterday.

The investment of over \$6 million according to the commissioner said will

assist in beefing up patrols in high crime areas.

"Basically it will in all of the communities, particularly in those communities where you have high criminal activities.

"We always talk about hot spots and we all know where they are and you know where they are. We

want to make sure you are safe when you're shopping.

"When you look around, we want you to see the patrol cars nearby. So the criminals will see them and deter them from taking any kind of action," he said.

The commissioner reminds residents that the community has a role to

play in the ongoing fight against crime.

"All of us live here in The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, each and every one of us and persons who visit The Bahamas love this place and I love this place.

"So it's very important that we come together as a team to make it very diffi-

cult for criminals to operate in our communities.

"You can expect to see more visibility. There are a number of vehicles on the road now, but can you imagine what can happen if we have more vehicles out?"

"That means more persons are mobile and they can move around quickly,

respond to an incident and cover a wide area. So it would act as a deterrent to criminals," Commission Ferguson said.

There are a total of 58 new cars, 11 of them were sent to the Family Islands and five were sent to Grand Bahama.

# PS Answers Critics Over PM's Haiti Comments

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK  
Journal Staff Writer

Press Secretary, Anthony Newbold has taken on what he called "the firestorm of controversy," stemming from what the government considers a misleading story in a local daily.

The Nassau Guardian last week published an article with the headline, "Minnis suggests no plan to send aid to Haiti," fueling fierce backlash on talk shows, from the opposition and even the Bahamas Christian council.

Reading a portion of the article to reporters at the

weekly press briefing, the press secretary, said the Prime Minister did not say he would not send any aid to Haiti.

"As a result the Prime Minister ended up having to call President Moise of Haiti, with whom he has a personal relationship, as does Mrs. Minnis and wife of Mr. Moise, to reassure the president that he had made no such statement and would always be willing to help in any way that he could, and The Bahamas could," Mr. Newbold said.

"So let me say again, a little more forcefully than I did last week, the Prime



► Press Secretary, Anthony Newbold (File photo)

Minister never said that he would not give aid or assistance to Haiti, never did he say that."

The Press Secretary argued that Dr. Minnis was only doing his first duty, and that's trying to ensure citizens are safe, adding that The Bahamas is willing to assist, but that there's a protocol involved in the way assistance is provided among CARICOM countries.

"CDEMA, CARILEC, both of them disaster agencies of the region, they're engaged and depending on the threat level, assistance is requested or not requested

as is usually the case.

"If it is requested, The Bahamas will participate, as we have and we've had assistance given to us through CDEMA and CARILEC, and we've participated in providing assistance as well, as somebody rightly pointed out, with Dominica, and we've done it with other countries participating in the CARILEC protocol for hurricanes," he said.

Haiti was struck with a magnitude 5.9 earthquake on Saturday October 6, killing at least 15 people and injuring many others.

# OECD ISSUES BOGUS REPORT

Continued from / PAGE 1...

story on this page)

It said, "Representatives of the Ministry of Finance, who are currently attending meetings in Paris, met with the Head of the OECD International Cooperation and Tax Administration Division, which published the report. The Ministry was assured that the characterization of the list as a blacklist is completely inaccurate. The Bahamas is under no obligation to take any measures to change its investment schemes.

"The OECD report provides practical guidance to financial institutions to undertake enhanced due diligence on clients that are citizens or residents of countries with CBI or RBI programs to prevent cases of CRS avoidance and tax

evasion.

"CBI/RBI programs are offered by over 100 jurisdictions around the world and allow foreign individuals to obtain citizenship or temporary or permanent residence rights on the basis of local investments or against a flat fee. Individuals may be interested in a CBI or RBI program for a number of legitimate reasons, including starting a new business in the jurisdiction, greater mobility thanks to visa-free travel, better education for children, safety and the right to live in a country with political stability."

The statement said, "In The Bahamas, Economic Permanent Residency gives the individual the right to reside permanently in The Bahamas and travel freely to and from The Bahamas unless status is revoked.

The program does not confer citizenship or the right to be gainfully employed in The Bahamas. The program also does not confer tax residency and the individual must still comply with the tax laws of their country of origin.

"The second home market in The Bahamas is a valuable source of investment in the country and promotes economic and cultural diversity. The Bahamas continues to welcome global citizens to our majestic shores to experience the stunning beauty of the islands and the rich culture of our people. This includes opportunities for second home owners to invest in The Bahamas and to enjoy the quality of life that our islands afford," said Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Peter Turnquest.



## NOTICE Addendum

The Royal Bahamas Defence Force invites bids to the Tenders Board for insurance coverage for The Royal Bahamas Defence Force's Patrol Crafts. In addition, the coverage must include the vessels transiting the Caribbean and the East Coast of the United States.

2. Specifications and schedules of assets can be obtained from the Ministry of Finance, Monday through Friday between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm.

3. The quotes must be itemized to show the following:

- The Hull and Machinery
- War Risk
- Increased Value
- Protection and Indemnity

4. In providing quotations, in respect to the Patrol Crafts for the Royal Bahamas Defence Force, the date for commencing coverage is the 31 October 2018 to 30 31 2020. The final date for submission is Tuesday 16 October, 2018.

5. All submissions are to reach the Ministry of Finance by 10:00 am on or before the above-mentioned date and to be addressed to the:

Financial Secretary  
Cecil Wallace-Whitfield Center  
P.O. Box N-3107  
West Bay Street  
New Providence, The Bahamas

# Bishop calls for politicians to focus on national advancement

Continued from / PAGE 1...

will achieve the regularization of persons who have unsettled immigration status, that is, once they meet certain criteria.

He added that this commission must be promoted and policed.

He also stressed the need for machinery that responds

to and processes requests in a timely and professional manner, as processes are still too long.

Bishop Boyd also called upon the government to have a transparent discussion on the issue of natural resources in the country.

He also addressed issues like climate change, financial strain, tourism, the economy,

the Royal Bahamas Defence Force, law enforcement, dead beat dads and crime.

In his conclusion, he said that this world needs the message and love of God more than ever, and those who call themselves Christians need to live for God and show the love of God more than ever.

# Fire Destroys John Chea Food Store

Continued from / PAGE 1...

"When that unit arrived, all of the available units in New Providence were called out and there was a request for a fire-squelching fire truck from the Airport Crash and Rescue Department.

"That unit was summoned and it assisted in the extinguishing of the blaze," said Mr. Evans.

As the fire raged on, there was the need for a significant amount of water, which had

to be trucked to the scene after filling up at a nearby hydrant.

"Based on the size of the structure, we had a home or the northern side we had to protect, we had a home on the northwestern side that we had to protect and there's a business that is just at the southeastern area of where this facility is," said the Fire Chief.

All of these were exposed, in addition to many other that were exposed here today. Wind played a major factor

because wind was moving towards the west and wind would have assisted in the propagation of this fire.

"So all of this coupled with the fact that the fire was on the interior played a factor. What the fire services had to do was make a conscience decision to ensure the safety and well being of our staff members.

"That building on the inside had excessive heat and for those persons on the outside would have felt heat waves coming from the

intensity of the flames and it is due to the kinds of products that were stored in the facility, such as ordinary combustibles; that is not unusual and is common in facilities such as this," he said.

Firefighters also had to deal with the wind shifting towards the west.

The massive fire highlighted the need for more manpower. Chief Superintendent Evans is certain though that relief is on the way.

He said, "a crew of 34 officers which are now in training are now training in Grand Bahama and within the next two months should complete their training.

"That would help to augment the resources that we now have and everyone must bear in mind that each shift requires a certain amount of officers and we have made a specific requirement that all off duty officers must come to the scene of this fire.

"Off duty officers, our reserved officers and our

Chief Fire Officer who is stationed in Grand Bahama who is in Nassau, when they heard the clarion call they showed up.

"Of course we have officers from the Carmichael Road Police Station headed by Chief Superintendent Bruce Arnette. We have officers from the mobile traffic division, the airport police division," Mr. Evans noted.

Two females were reportedly taken to hospital, presumably for smoke inhalation.



Images captured from yesterday's blaze as officials monitor the area. (Journal file photo)



## DEPUTY PERMANENT SECRETARY DIES

Continued from / PAGE 1...

demographic qualifications at the College of The Bahamas, culminating in a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Public Administration."

The statement added that "Mrs. Brown will be remem-

bered as the officer who was charged with responsibility for the Official Gazette, for assistance with National Events, for pending legislation and as Clerk of the Senate."

"Mrs. Christina Brown will be deeply missed by leg-

islators, senior colleagues and others in the Public Service and the entire Cabinet Office family.

"The Cabinet Office extends sincere condolences to the family of Christina Brown in their time of bereavement."

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**INVITATION FOR BIDS: SALE OF TUGBOATS**

The Government of The Bahamas is inviting bids on the following vessels owned by the Port Department, Ministry of Transport & Local Government.

-Sale of the Tugboat "Snapper" and Tugboat "Amberjack"  
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Interested parties may view the said vessels at the following location from 24 September 2018 to 5 October 2018 between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday thru Friday:

Port Department  
Prince George Dock  
Nassau, The Bahamas  
Telephone No. (242) 322-8832

Bids are to be submitted in triplicate (3) in a sealed envelope marked "Bid for the Sale of Tug Snapper and Tug Amberjack, addressed to:

The Chairman  
Tenders Board  
Ministry of Finance  
Cecil V. Wallace Whitfield Building  
Cable Beach  
P. O. Box N-3017  
Nassau, The Bahamas  
Telephone No. (242) 372-1530

No later than 5:00 pm on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2018.

Bids will be opened at 10:00 am on the 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 at the office of the Tender's Board, Ministry of Finance.

**THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS.**

E. Raymond King, EdD  
Commander, RBDF  
Port Controller (Acting)  
Port Department

# Zero Tolerance for Illegal Activity; & BAIC, BTVI, BAMSI Work with Department of Corrections to Rehabilitate



► Acting Commissioner of Corrections Mr. Charles Murphy sent out a stern warning to the public and officers of the Bahamas Department of Corrections of zero tolerance to any illegal contraband or illegal activity at that department, during a press conference, October 15, 2018. "Persons found making an attempt to bring in illegal contraband either in food, through officers of the department or by any other means will be subject to being prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law." Mr. Murphy (pictured speaking at microphones) said the department seeks to rehabilitate as many inmates as are willing to be rehabilitated, and therefore has programmes with the Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation (BAIC), the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI) and the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI). He said, "we wish to see these inmates released to become productive citizens of the country with jobs, careers and possibly their own businesses." **(BIS Photo/Derek Smith)**

## BAHAMAS LISTED IN "GOLDEN PASSPORT SCHEME"

Continued from / PAGE 1...

The report, issued by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), said, "while residence and citizenship by investment (CBI/RBI) schemes allow individuals to obtain citizen-

ship or residence rights through local investments or against a flat fee for perfectly legitimate reasons, they can also be potentially misused to hide their assets offshore by escaping reporting under the OECD/G20 Common Reporting Standard (CRS). "In particular, Identity

Cards and other documentation obtained through CBI/RBI schemes can potentially be misused abuse to misrepresent an individual's jurisdiction(s) of tax residence and to endanger the proper operation of the CRS due diligence procedures.", it added. The article said that

nations on this list offer foreigners citizenship or residency "in exchange for donations to a sovereign trust fund, or investments in property or government bonds". It also reported that countries like Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Dominica, Grenada, St Lucia,

and St Kitts and Nevis, sold "16,000 passports since relaunching its programme in 2006." The OECD also believes that this ease in obtaining another nationality "undermines information sharing", and explained that that these countries lure potential

investors with low income tax rates without requiring these individuals to spend a significant amount of time in that country. In an effort to combat this notion, the organization also published literature educating parties that can potentially become affected.

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# INCREASING CUSTOMER LOYALTY

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.

So a new competitor has arrived on the scene posing a threat to your business viability. If you want to be as savvy as fashion mogul Peter Nygard in addressing business threats, then you have to strategize effectively.

As previously identified, your (SMART) goal is either to 'maintain a business customer base of 150 current customers throughout the current fiscal year, or, 'increase the business income by 20% for the upcoming fiscal year'.

So what strategies can you employ to maintain your customers? Let's begin with looking at advantages or strengths you may have that will help determine strategies that can be effective.

Begin by asking yourself, what are we good at that we can leverage into an effective strategy? For example, you may have expert knowledge on a related area. You can leverage this advantage by finding a way to share it with customers.

Years ago, before it was common practice in the U.S., one real estate agent came up with the idea of studying school districts and providing information about the specific schools in an area where the agent was trying to sell a house.

That certainly would have given the agent a competitive advantage or garnered more referrals because of the added bonus she gave to her clients. Now, it is common practice for real estate agents to provide valuable information about the neighbourhood; but, every customer service practice began as a brilliant idea of one individual or one company.

In reviewing what others are doing to increase customer loyalty, two strategy examples stood out from an article, "25 Exceptional Customer Service Strategies, Tips, and Ideas" (fitsmallbusiness.com) that could be quite useful in your business. Here's the first:

## Build a Community With Your Store

Enhancing the in-store experience is critical, and brands and dealers need to come up with out-of-the-box techniques to elevate this experience in 2018. Recently, we've seen many successful businesses leverage their physical stores for community events, finding ways to connect with the customer beyond the shopping experience.

For instance, some auto dealerships have begun hosting community movie nights

## 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.

on days when the business would typically be closed. Others are offering their space to local charities or nonprofits for fundraisers or events.

By turning the dealership into a community space, dealers are strengthening their bond with current and future customers. Across all industries, retailers should emphasize the online and community experience in 2018 (Gary Galloway, Senior Product Marketing Manager, Netsertive).

One way to build a community is to keep your doors open for an extra hour (not for sales) and offer little bakery treats and a chance to chit chat. If you have a great cook or baker on staff, this is a great example of leveraging a strength.

The second example appears to be something you can't go wrong with:

## Surprise Your Customers With a Gift

Everyone loves to receive a gift. An unannounced gift with purchase can leave a positive sentiment and improve the customer's experience overall. If you are an online business, send a handwritten thank-you note with a pen with your logo.

Every time customers use the pen, they will think of their experience with your business. Alternatively, capitalize on the holidays as a time to improve your customer experience. Include custom-printed stress balls in holiday gifts to clients at Christmastime to de-stress the holidays (Rachel Stephens, Customer Behavior Analyst, Totally Promotional).

Since holidays are a common time of the year to give gifts, think of how much more meaningful your gift can be if it is done at other times of the year especially when it is least expected.

Stay tuned for more strategies.

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## E D I T O R I A L

# The Right Thing

Take note---as he should have from jumpstreet—Prime Minister the Most Honourable Dr. Hubert A. Minnis has been in direct contact with his Haitian counterpart, President Jovenel Moise.

In this he did the right thing no matter how long it did take him to just that!

And thus, let it be known that: "...In his conversation with President Moise, Dr. Minnis stated that The Bahamas would provide assistance after discussions, and in collaboration with other CARICOM partners..."

And with that we get this sweet set of words: "... The prime minister also noted in the call the longstanding relationship and friendship between Haiti and The Bahamas..."

Absolutely!

Here we know for a fact that: One of the more interesting gaffes routinely committed by people who should know different is that doozy of view which makes a distinction between so-called 'indigenous' Bahamians and men and women who are allegedly migrants.

Truth is totally otherwise; this being the case precisely because any and all human beings who might have been deemed 'indigenous' were all wiped out by Spanish conquistadors.

Evidently, every so-called 'Bahamian' is of immigrant stock, inclusive of tens of thousands of African-Bahamians whose ancestral links directly connect them with their African-Haitian kin.

And for crying out loud: were there not Jamaican, Haitian, Barbadian, Trinidadian connections which helped make the modern Bahamas what it is to this very day.

Simply, then, we should take a breather, chill and be reminded that home is where the heart is which if understood would take us to that sweet spot where The Bahamas could become a really great little nation, based precisely on its understanding that anyone can become a Bahamian.

Simpler still, anyone with a right to a Bahamian passport can and should be a citizen in waiting; and thus it is on this note we advise that instead of what seems a most

unnecessary draft of Haitian fear-mongering, we should be about the much needed business of understanding the value these people bring to their new home, The Bahamas.

Quite clearly, then, someone or the other did manage to get to our nation's chief with news and advise that he had put himself on a losing wicket as a consequence of certain strange remarks he made in an interview concerning Haitian prisoners who might be on their wicked way here in the aftermath of a recent earthquake in Port de Paix, in northern Haiti.

As reported and as we quote verbatim: "In the same interview, the prime minister expressed concern that the earthquake might lead to an influx in undocumented migrants.

"He also said he had heard reports of the earthquake compromising a Haitian prison and was concerned that "hardened criminals might be headed toward The Bahamas".

And then, this key revelation: "...No government official could substantiate the claim of a prison break, however..."

Truth is surely that there was never any real effort on the part of any such group of Haitian thugs and cut-throats to get to the Bahamas, whether by sea or air!

For our part, we thank God for the newfound breath of fresh air.

And thus, if only for the record, we are quite happy for Dr. Minnis now that he has assured President Jovenel Moise that the Bahamas would provide what support it could at this time.

In addition [and again for the sake of the written record] we note The Bahamas reiteration of its unwavering commitment to assist however possible our CARICOM member states affected by natural disasters.

Clearly, this includes [as it should] the Republic of Haiti.

In sum, then, we would strongly urge the current administration to be up and doing with making real this commitment; thus providing the Bahamian people and their Haitian kin to get and maintain a deeper and more positive understanding of what they have in common.

Their future and ours is indissoluble!

**GOT NEWS?**  
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**THE BAHAMAS**  
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NO BETTER READING

## E D I T O R I A L

Eneas Files  
By Godfrey EneasLocal Food Production: A  
Key To Non-Communicable  
Diseases

The Bahamas has not been totally engaged in the integration process of CARICOM. However, there are specific socio-economic areas which have been adopted by various governments of The Bahamas over the past fifty or so years.

One of the first areas in the integration process was when The Bahamas became a financial contributor to the University of the West Indies (UWI). UWI has been a major player in providing a range of professionals like medical doctors, lawyers, educators, social workers etc., for the country and it has become a melting pot for integrating Caribbean youth in an academic environment.

Another entity in which The Bahamas became a part of the integration process was the role it played in the establishment of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). CARICOM governments were responsible for the provision of "seed" funding and only Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and The Bahamas could provide the required capital. The Pindling government with the Hon. Carlton Francis as Minister of Finance took the decision to become a member of the CDB.

In recent years, the Agricultural Sector has been a catalyst for deepening the integration process with CARICOM. This past week, the fifteenth Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) was held in Barbados from October 8 - 12. The CWA has become an annual event and it was in 1999 when I attended the inaugural week in Trinidad and Tobago. The Bahamas has also hosted the CWA.

Apart from participating in the CWA, The Bahamas is now member of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), the premier agricultural research entity in CARICOM. CARDI has provided Bahamian agriculture with the research capacity it has been lacking for decades. CARDI has also been responsible for aligning Bahamian Agriculture with the seminal policy positions which are needed to advance our Agricultural Sector. With reference to the number one Agribusiness Sector -- poultry -- in CARICOM, The Bahamas, via Gladstone Farms, was one of the founders of the Caribbean Poultry Association (CPA).

In this Globalization Era, geopolitical blocs like CARICOM are the preferred mechanisms through which technical assistance and financial aid are funneled by entities like the European Union (EU). The Bahamas, in addition to being a CARICOM state, is also an ACP (African Caribbean and Pacific) State, thereby becoming eligible for EU assistance and funding via European Development Fund (EDF) and the various conventions i.e. Lome. Substantial development funds come to the ACP for a number of initiatives including regional agricultural projects trade agreements etc. CARIFORUM (CARICOM plus the Dominican Republic) is

another grouping which is used by the EU for technical assistance and trade.

The biggest challenge for Caribbean Agriculture is the subject of Climate Change. As a group of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), there are a number of common problems relative to food production stemming from Climate Change. The scenario is further compounded by the fact that the Caribbean is a food deficit region depending on others to feed us and the millions who visit us as tourists. This has resulted in a regional food import bill of around \$6 billion annually and for The Bahamas about \$1.2 billion.

The downside of food deficiency is the inability of our Agricultural Sectors to grow enough food to meet the regional demand. Because of this, there are segments of our societies for whom nutritious food is unaffordable causing our citizens to purchase cheap processed foods high in sugar, salt and fats, in some cases, outdated meats from countries where their slaughtering facilities fell short of WTO standards. Regional diets have become unhealthy creating an epidemic in non-communicable diseases.

During CWA which was hosted by the Government of Barbados under the theme: "Strengthening Agriculture for a Healthier Future in the Region" and in conjunction with the Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu, the following remarks were made by Mr. Barton Clarke, Executive Director, Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI):

"The Caribbean is in the midst of a health crisis!

It has been listed as the Region in the Americas with the highest mortality rates for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

Likewise, overweight and obesity in particular childhood obesity are of increasing concern and a growing challenge across CARICOM. Unfortunately, the Region also holds the record for having the highest rates of obesity in Latin America and the Caribbean. Particularly worrying is the statistics that one in every three children in the Caribbean is overweight or obese.

The transitioning of the Caribbean diet from predominantly fresh wholesome produce to heavily processed, energy dense, nutrient deficient foods rich in fats, salt and sugar has been identified as one of the causal linkages to this epidemic.

The agriculture sector holds the key to improving the health and nutrition of the peoples across the Region. CARDI is extremely pleased that the theme "Strengthening agriculture for a healthier future in the region" will bring to the fore the inextricable link between agriculture and health.

For too long the agriculture-health nexus has been overlooked.

We are optimistic that the practitioners and policy makers gathered here during the week together with our multi sectoral partners will work together to



develop concrete plans of action for jointly tackling these challenges in critical areas such as strengthening agricultural value chains especially for traditional commodities, food safety systems, education and public awareness, development of coordinated policies and a supportive legislative framework.

CARDI stands ready and willing to partner with all entities towards taking bold action for developing a productive and resilient agriculture sector. A healthy diet is key to a healthy lifestyle. We are committed to leaving a legacy of good health and nutrition to our future generations. Countries and by extension the region will reap the benefits of producing healthy children."

The ALLIANCE pointed out that:

The Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) is the premier event on the Regional agricultural calendar. It provides a forum for key Regional decision-makers in the public and private sectors to acknowledge the importance of agriculture and rural life to the economic, social and environmental stability of CARICOM Member States. It also affords major stakeholders in agriculture and related sectors an opportunity to forge a common vision for agriculture and the enhancement of rural life.

Established in 2001, CWA has been held under the aegis of the Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu ("The Alliance"). From inception, the main collaborating agencies were the Inter-American Institute for Co-operation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat. In October 2002, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) joined these two organisations to form a tripartite Secretariat for the Alliance. IICA, the CARICOM Secretariat and the FAO have collaborated on the convening and servicing of meetings of the Alliance as well as the activities of the CWA.

The CWA planning team comprises five of the key Regional and international agencies whose main mandate involves agriculture and rural development. These are IICA, CARICOM, FAO, Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA).

If the Caribbean Region is going to extricate itself from the scourge of non-communicable diseases, food production must drastically improve.

WARNING  
SHOT

By Jerry Hutchinson

## Remember You Too Are Mortal!

"Ancient societies had anthropomorphic gods: a huge pantheon expanding into centuries of dynastic drama; fathers and sons, martyred heroes, star-crossed lovers, the deaths of kings - stories that taught us of the danger of hubris and the primacy of humility." -- Tom Hiddleston

It is sometimes easy to get something wrong. Not because you are mistaken but because you believe that despite indication to the contrary, your success is due solely to your own efforts. Perhaps the passage below will explain what I mean:

"After every major military victory in ancient Rome, a "triumph," as it was called, was celebrated in Rome. It was a ceremonial procession granted to victorious generals who drove in a chariot drawn by four horses. One of the most interesting parts of the triumph was that behind the victorious general in the chariot stood a slave, holding a golden crown over his head, and whispering to him throughout the procession, 'Remember you are mortal' in the ears of the victorious generals as they were paraded through the streets, reminding him that he is a man even when he is triumphing". (Jan 23, 2017 Goran Blazeski).

In a democracy, voters have a dual role. They are the employers of the persons elected and they are also their customers. The voter is therefore able to judge first-hand how their employees are performing. However, it appears that over the years politicians either through hubris or ignorance have forgotten how much power the voters hold over their continued employment.

This hubris or ignorance or both, might explain why after an election the views of voters are disregarded and any suggestion from them for a change or rethink a policy change is given short shrift. We Bahamians tend to have a love hate relationship with our politicians. We hardly ever treat them as our employees. Rather they are treated like our friends and family. Thus, we are prepared to overlook their faults.

After all, they are human and have faults just like the rest of us. This ability to forgive but probably not forget has been extended to politicians of all parties. Even the UBP was cut some slack, although they finally overstepped the mark and had to be punished.

The power and ability to punish politicians for their errant ways is and has always been within the power of taxpayers who employ them. However, it is an accumulation of slights, disrespectful behaviour, incompetence and affectations which finally moves the electorate to action. In our system of government, these grievances tend to fester during a governments term in office. The current system does not allow the electorate to sack poor employees until their five-year contract is up.

However in between, these employees are being assessed for performance, demeanour and trustworthiness. We want to fire them; then we don't want to fire them; we vacillate between anger, hope and hopefulness.

After all, we elected them; our choices cannot possibly be that wrong! We will them to do better like we would with our own children and family. We give them the benefit of the doubt even though their behaviour and our experience tell us that we are wasting our time. But when Bahamians have had enough of the nonsense, we have had enough! Once we have decided after much prayer and meditation that our employees are useless, we wait in the proverbial weeds for election day to pounce.

Ironically, if we could fire them earlier we would and save ourselves and the nation a lot of grief. But since we can't we wait. But during that waiting period, we never miss the opportunity to let our employees know that they have upset us and will have to go. Indeed, as with the previous government, a decision to fire them came very early; some estimate within the first eighteen months of the administration. But, their Bahamian employers had to wait for the expiration of their employees' five-year contract to act.

So, what moves Bahamians from praising their political employees to cussing them? The

answers are complex but can be distilled into a simple admonition which is drilled into anyone who provides personal protection for wealthy persons; "never dress better than the boss". Put another way, we don't mind you being as good as us because that is a favourable reflection on employers. But don't you ever, ever act as if you are better than us, that gets you fired.

So, you may ask, what are those behaviours and affectations which are guaranteed to get employees fired. Let's explore them in the following paragraphs.

I know what's best for you: Mr or Mrs know it all, having struggled through high school and being minimally employed if at all, are now experts on every conceivable subject. So, expert that they are now publicly lecturing highly trained professionals on procedures which they haven't a clue about. Bahamians across the years have always expressed amazement at the rapidity with which some persons, especially those selected as Ministers progress from abject dunce to astrophysicist. This transformation causes consternation amongst employers who know that this is impossible.

Cool dude: Nothing wrong with being presentable and well dressed. Just remember that the salary that we pay dresses and feeds you and, it is unlikely that you can maintain your lifestyle if you become unemployed unless you are corrupt or inherit assets. And stop grinning; we paid for your braces too. There are numerous other examples of the behaviours which invariably lead to a political fall from grace but, no reason to belabour this point.

Mr/Ms Half-Moon Reading glasses: Employers usually express alarm over the sudden deterioration of their employee's eyesight. Employees who always enjoyed perfect 20/20 vision now peer imperiously at them over reading glasses perched on their noses. Employers often wonder how HR missed that. They are also suspicious that the employee is playing a prank on them. This suspicion is deepened when, despite the scholarly looking half-moon glasses, the employees still spout the same rubbish.

Poor customer service: This is the ultimate show of disrespect by our employees. After begging and pleading for a job one of the first things they do is change their contact numbers; they are hard to find; and run away when you approach them. Maybe they think that their new positions and prestige are unassailable. They are wrong on this. All it takes to correct a job recruitment mistake is an indelible pencil. Just think about it. We don't continue to buy chicken in the bag from a place with poor service and rude staff. Why should we put up with this from our highly paid employees whose continued employment by us is existential to them?

No financial accountability: One of the perks of the job is an expenses account, car and a phone. Employers are therefore astounded when an employee who had a reputation for his/her frugality is now a profligate spender. The reality is that Bahamians, whilst loathe to spend their own money have no problem wasting yours. Critically, employees do not like to account for their spending binges! Expense accounts when finally submitted are so obviously contrived that they might as well have been completed in crayon.

Bahamian politicians I have observed since the time of UBP, and this includes the FNM and PLP are a peculiar lot. Humility has always been in short supply amongst them no matter how humble their beginnings. Indeed, humility seems to have been deliberately substituted by them with hubris.

So, I conclude with what I said previously. Bahamians don't mind their employees being as good as them; but never, ever, let them suspect that you think you are better than them!