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FRIDAY - OCTOBER 5TH, 2018

75 CENTS

Ministers Defend BMC Evictions

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

Former Chairman of The Bahamas Mortgage Corporation, Dr. Duane Sands is blaming the Christie administration for the majority of the BMC's toxic loans.

Based on Dr. Sands' timeline and calculations, most of the loans fell into default during the five year period of the first Christie government.

"From 2002 the FNM was voted out of power, the sinking fund deficit was \$50 million by 2007 it was \$101, million," he said.

According to Dr. Sands, there are a number of rea-

■ See MINISTER / page 4...



► Minister of Health and former Chairman of The Bahamas Mortgage Corporation, **Dr. Duane Sands** (Journal file photo)

Six Arraigned For Traffic Fatalities

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

Six Bahamians have been arraigned in the Magistrates Court all in connection with separate traffic fatalities.

In the first instance 26-year-old Taylor Pratt was charged with one count of killing in the course of dangerous driving, one count of failing to remain stationary

after an accident and one count of driving whilst not covered under a third party insurance.

According to reports, on Friday September 21st while at New Providence, Pratt drove a vehicle east along Tonique Williams Darling Highway in a manner dangerous to the public thereby causing the death of Marvin Pinder.

Pratt pleaded guilty to the first two counts. With regards to count one, Pratt was fined \$10,000 or two years in prison.

On count two, Pratt was fined \$500 or 6 months in Prison. He will return to court on November 12th to determine if she will be charged for count three.

■ See ARRIGNED / page 2...

Doctors moving ahead with strike vote

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK
 Journal Staff Writer

The Consultant Physician Staff Association (CPSA) plans take a strike vote on today, even after the Prime Minister Doctor Hubert Minnis met with them to hear for himself

■ See DOCTORS / page 8...

Junior Tourism Minister Competition

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK
 Journal Staff Writer

Eighteen of the Caribbean's tourism youth leaders yesterday, competed for the chance to become the official Junior Minister of Tourism or Junior Commissioner of Tourism, for the entire Caribbean.

According to Committee Chair for Youth Congress, Samantha Cartwright, the representatives presented on topics important and relevant to the tourism sector.

"We have here today representing The Bahamas, hailing from Forest Heights Academy in Abaco, our

Junior Minister of Tourism, Khalea Richard," she said. "And you would find that she is representing not just Abaco, but each student, each youth, across the length and breadth of this great Commonwealth of The Bahamas," she added.

"And so we're excited today, to be able to play host to 18 plus delegates or 18 students representing their countries, and their parents and chaperones."

While the students are already winners in their respective countries, Mrs. Cartwright said winning the competition means repre-

■ See JUNIOR / page 2...

PM PAYS RESPECTS TO THE LATE MR. EARL THOMPSON, FORMER PARLIAMENTARIAN



► Prime Minister, Dr. the Hon. Hubert Minnis paid his respects at the Lying-in-State this morning of Former Parliamentarian, the late Mr. Earl Thompson, Sr., at the House of Assembly, Parliament Square. Also paying respects were Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance the Hon. Peter Turnquest and other Cabinet Ministers, Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Philip Davis, President of the Senate the Hon. Katherine Forbes-Smith, Speaker of the House of Assembly the Hon. Halson Moultrie, and other officials. (BIS Photos/Letisha Henderson)



DONATE A DOLLAR FOR BREAST CANCER WITH BAF IN OCTOBER
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YOUTH CONGRESS AT THE STATE OF TOURISM INDUSTRY CONFERENCE (SOTIC) 2018



► Hosted by the Islands of The Bahamas, SOTIC of the Caribbean Tourism Organization puts forward the theme: 'Rejuvenate. Recreate. Reconnect. New Directions for Caribbean Tourism.' The conference was officially opened by Bahamas Prime Minister, Dr. the Hon. Hubert Minnis, and addressed by Bahamas Minister of Tourism & Aviation, and CTO Chairman, the Hon. Dionisio D'Aguilar. **(BIS Photos/Kemuel Stubbs)**

Continued from / PAGE 1...

sending the entire Caribbean.

"Not only would that student represent their country on important matters or youth related matters of tourism, but representing the

entire Caribbean.

"And so this is a very important competition today and we know that it's a very important part of our conference, and persons look forward to participating and attending each year to hear

exactly what our students have to offer and what they have to say and what they're thinking relative to the tourism and hospitality sector.

"We understand that these are our future leaders

of tourism and so having all of them here it assures us that the future of tourism is bright in the Caribbean," she said.

Cartwright encouraged to those who may be interested in becoming The Bahamas' next junior tourism minister,

to go for it.

"To those students across the islands of The Bahamas, remember that all of us have our part to play, if we continue to work hand in hand, we will do what needs to happen and ensure that it continues

to remain better in The Bahamas.

"But we have to do our part and so yes, we have 18 students represented today in the youth congress, who knows next year it could be one of you," she said.



► Winner of the Congress, Bryanna Hylton of Jamaica

Six Arraigned For Traffic Fatalities

Continued from / PAGE 1...

Forty- one year-old Eddy Paul who was in the car with Pratt at the time of the fatality was charged with deceit of a public officer. He pleaded guilty and was fined \$3,000 or three years in prison.

Forty- seven -year-old Terrance Ferguson was charged with one count of killing in course with dangerous driving and one count of failure to remain stationary after an accident, he pleaded not guilty.

It is alleged that Ferguson

on August 7th driving west along Graham Drive in a manner dangerous to the public caused the death of Candino Rudent.

His bail was set at \$8,000 and he was remanded until November 12th.

Thirty-seven -year-old Kareem Bowe was charged with one count of killing in the course of dangerous driving and one count of driving whilst not covered against third party insurance.

Bowe is being charged with the traffic fatality that caused the death of Jean Lubin on Foster Street, Chippingham.

Bowe pleaded guilty to all counts. He was given a fine of \$10,000 or 6 months in Prison regarding count one and a \$100 fine and 5 days in jail regarding count two.

Twenty-six- year-old Christin Reckley was charged with two counts of killing in the course of dangerous driving and one count of driving whilst not covered against third party insurance.

She is charged in respect to the double traffic fatality on Marathon Road which occurred on September 16th.

She pleaded guilty to all counts and was remanded until October 10th.

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GOVERNMENT NOTICE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TENDER FOR SCHOOL/FACILITY SECURITY SERVICES

NOTICE

The Ministry of Education invites sealed bids from eligible persons to provide security services at the following schools in New Providence:

SCHOOL/FACILITY

Anatol Rodgers High School
C.C. Sweeting Senior High School
Doris Johnson Senior High School
D.W. Davis Junior High School
T.G. Glover Primary School

Tender documents may be collected from the Ministry of Education in New Providence between the hours of 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

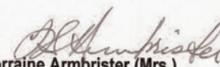
All bids are to be submitted in duplicate in a sealed envelope bearing no identity of the bidder and clearly marked as follows: "Bid for Security Services – Ministry of Education." Companies must provide two officers per shift – 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight and 12:00 midnight to 8:00 a.m. – for all locations.

Bids must also be accompanied by copies of a valid Business License and a Letter of Good Standing from the National Insurance Board.

Bids may be delivered in person or sent mail/courier to the following address: **The Chairman, Tenders Board, Ministry of Finance, Cecil Wallace Whitfield Centre, West Bay Street, P.O. Box: N-3017, Nassau, The Bahamas, Telephone Number: (242) 327-1530.** All hand delivered bids must be deposited in the Tender Box provided in the Ministry of Finance not later than 4:00 p.m. on or before **5th October, 2018**. Bids sent by mail/courier must also be received in the Ministry of Finance not later than 4:00p.m. on or before **Friday, 5th October, 2018**. Late bids will be rejected and returned unopened.

Bids will be opened at 10:00 a.m. on **Tuesday, 9th October 2018** at the Ministry of Finance, Cecil Wallace Whitfield Centre, West Bay Street, Nassau, New Providence, The Bahamas. Bidders or their designated representative(s) may attend the opening.

The Ministry of Education reserves the right to reject any or all bids' submissions.


Lorraine Armbrister (Mrs.)
PERMANENT SECRETARY

Bahamas Developers Association Meets with DPM

Issues Resolved to Clear \$1 Billion+ on Drawing Board

With more than \$1 billion in real estate development pending from Abaco to Exuma and concerns about recent changes in tax policy, the newly-formed Bahamas Developers Association met this week with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Peter Turnquest.

"There was a grave concern among developers about a change in the ability to claim back costs on VAT returns when the budget that took effect July 1 was announced," said a spokesperson. "It was a right every other business had and suddenly developers and builders were deprived of that. The change created immediate alarm and threatened to impact construction jobs, real estate and investment. Given that there is such a small profit margin in development, a sudden increase of 12% with the elimination of credits for material outlay was enough to bring sections of the industry to a grinding halt. We had been seeking a meeting to try to resolve the issue so some of the projects that were on hold and others that were considering scaling back could move forward. We got that meeting on September 27 and it went well. We now await specifics and timelines."

According to the organisation's statement, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Peter Turnquest and Financial Secretary Marlon Johnson agreed to amend the wording, which they said was an 'inadvertent accidental oversight.' "It is not in our interest to stand in the way of your suc-



► Members of the Bahamas Developers Association met with the Hon. K. Peter Turnquest, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Finance to discuss concerns impeding major developments. Although industry principals welcomed his assurances, they await specifics of implementation and timelines.

cess," Turnquest, who was Acting Prime Minister at the time of the meeting, told developers and real estate professionals. "We look forward to a good and harmonious relationship. You have my commitment and the commitment of my government to do whatever is in our power to encourage you. We recognize and appreciate the significant role you play in the economy of The Bahamas."

While the meeting with developers was not until late September, the DPM had acknowledged concerns and maintained contact throughout the summer, a fact that the association said provided temporary comfort, but it was not until the face-to-face with representatives of some of the largest projects in the country took place

that developers breathed a collective sigh of relief. Among those in attendance were representatives or principals of Albany, Arawak Homes, Sterling Hurricane Hole and Sterling Global Developments, Aristo (ONE Cable Beach, Balmoral and THIRTY SIX), Palm Cay, Baker's Bay, Passerine at Abaco Holdings, Starfish Construction, Children's Bay Cay and Williams Cay, Exuma, two attorneys and a real estate accounting specialist.

Christine Wallace-Whitfield, President of the Bahamas Real Estate Association, and Heather Peterson, a member of the BREA board, also participated. Together, their existing projects totaled well over \$1 billion and for some, the value of develop-

ment was in the multi-billions.

"My technical team and I stand by to assist and you will be pleased to know that we are making changes in the DIR (Department of Inland Revenue) to expedite and facilitate payment of the VAT credits which you are due," the DPM assured industry reps.

"All we were asking for was the same thing every business has, the right to claim back costs on VAT returns. Without that, costs would soar so high that some projects underway would have been in jeopardy for completion. New projects were put on hold or sent back to the drawing table for reconsideration," said the spokesman. "It was like a tsunami of development costs coming in on a tide of

trouble so we are greatly relieved that resolution was achieved and the industry can move forward but we do need confirmation of processes along with the welcome assurances of remedy."

The wording of the July 1 budget denied the right of builders and developers to include the cost of construction on VAT returns. That, along with long delays in VAT credits that some were experiencing, including one Bahamian condo developer who was owed millions, had thrown the industry into a tailspin and prompted the creation of an association to represent what had been individual and competitive entities. The group met several times over the summer.

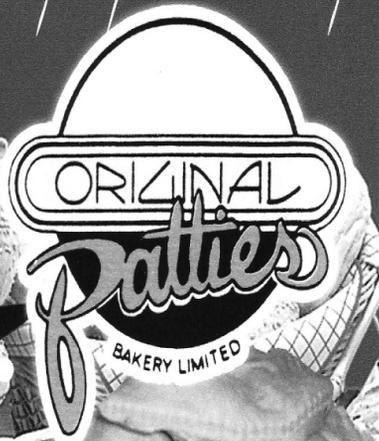
The positive meeting cleared the way for Palm

Cay, which had put its \$100 million One Marina project on hold pending resolution of the VAT implications. A date for that groundbreaking is expected to be announced shortly. And a Bahamian developer who has held off on a high end mixed-use project on 12 acres said the resolution of VAT-related matters on development "revived enthusiasm" about those plans. That project, he said, would create several hundred construction jobs and be a boost to the economy for several years.

Developers, attorneys and real estate professionals offered to assist government going forward to make information available at the time of transaction closings about Real Property Tax obligations.

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GOVERNMENT NOTICE 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 12th day of October, 2018.

Bids will be opened at 10:00 am on the 16th 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

BID FAREWELL FROM DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER



► Bid Farewell from Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance the Hon. K. Peter Turnquest to Former Parliamentarian the late Mr. Earl Thompson, Sr., who lies in state in the Foyer of the House of Assembly today. The public is invited to pay their respects throughout the day. There will be a State-Recognized Funeral for Mr. Thompson at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral tomorrow morning. **(BIS Photo/Letisha Henderson)**

Ministers Defend BMC Evictions

Continued from / PAGE 1...

sons as to why the PLP allowed the indebtedness to happen. "The side opposite has run the Mortgage Corporation into the ground by incompetence, by mismanagement, and by a simple lack of caring. "They have booked loans

that should have not been booked; they have awarded mortgages as rewards to the party's faithful.

"They have refused to bond the sinking fund as they should and as a consequence we are all paying for it now," he said.

Opposition Leader, Philip Davis denied all of the accusations.

The BMC however has issued vacant orders on homeowners, who had become delinquent with their loan payments.

This comes just one week after BMC officials served eviction notices to persons in Millennium Gardens.

Housing Minister Romauld Ferreria and Dr. Sands defended the eviction, saying some borrowers have failed to pay their loans for decades.

He added that like other businesses, the BMC aims to reduce the amount of bad loans on their books.

The Housing Minister told Parliament that when a borrower becomes delin-

quent in mortgage payments, the BMC first, serves a demand letter requesting payment of the arrears in 30 days and inviting the individual to come and speak with them as stated in the to the Homeowners Act 2017.

If there is no response, six months after the documents are prepared and a writ is served on the client to pay the money that is owed.

Minister Ferreria added that when vacate orders are issued, the recipients always have ample time to respond.

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PREPARING TO FIGHT THE COMPETITION

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.

Communicating your strategy to staff is one thing; identifying it is another.

Before you can set the right foundation by sharing business goal and strategy with employee partners, you have to get your goal and business strategies right.

Your SWOT analysis (assessing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats), is a good barometer for deciding what to address or what direction you should head in.

Reviewing the example from fashion mogul Peter Nygard, remember one threat he faced was losing business or being destroyed by the 2008 recession that caused the downfall of many other business. We don't know the exact wording of the goal he set, but we do know that the sentiment was to not join the others who were being impacted by the 2008 recession.

One thing we can say is that knowing Peter Nygard, you can bet your bottom dollar it was a SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timebound—as some describe it) one. Nygard is known to be extremely detailed oriented and a perfectionist. So every step would have been carefully planned in working toward his goal.

We can say that a part of his goal involved decreasing cost and or increasing the bottom line. We can say this because while lots of people were suffering during the 2008 recession, Nygard shared that he experienced business growth to the tune of 25%.

A common threat to many businesses is new competition. If this is a threat you want to address, you have to set a specific goal and a 'SMART' goal and come up with a strategy for achieving it.

Forbes business publication features a specific approach to handling competition in an article that might prove helpful. To get you thinking about how best to deal with the competition, here are some tips from the article.

Entitled, "5 Proven Tips To Beat The Competition", writer Adam Cronenberg shares the following:

Stay One Step Ahead Of The Enemy

Have a holistic understanding of your business. Investigate the environment where you are working, including the players. Understand their strengths and weaknesses....

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.

Prepare A Strategic Battle Plan

Your knowledge of the business terrain and the competition is important in determining how to capture your market. Use this business intelligence to formulate a winning battle plan. Map out the competitor's strengths and weaknesses to take them down....

Seize All Opportunities

If you prepare a well-thought-out battle plan, you will be able to forecast future events. Seize on all possible opportunities that will open up for you. If there are none, then create these opportunities yourself....

Be Smart In Fighting For Your Product Or Service

You must believe in your own product or service. This will serve as your motivation in fighting for it....

Know How To Choose Your Battles

You do not have to fight every battle that comes your way. By taking stock of your business' strengths and weaknesses and arming yourself with business intelligence, you will be able to choose your battles....

(Forbes.com: April 2018)

There is one example that comes to mind with respect to 'fighting for your product'. If you recall, when fashion mogul Peter Nygard's product was at risk at being squeezed out from department stores who wanted to follow the latest trend, he didn't just fold. He knew his customers loved his product. So, he found a way to continue offering it to his customers and it yielded great financial results for his company.

So how can business people repeat Nygard's success? Stay tuned.

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E D I T O R I A L

Violence & Power

"...We do men a disservice when we only condemn the violence they direct towards women, while normalising and naturalising the pervasive violence men visit upon each other every day..."

And thus on this blessed Friday, October 5th, 2018, we comment on that deadly link extant between violence & power.

That we live in a time and in a place where hate of the purest kind now runs amok is—as truisms go—a statement of fact.

In this regard, we cite as but example of hate on the loose, the sad case of an extraordinarily brutal encounter between two Bahamian men, with one being a youth-man and the other, a very senior man who at the age of 64 found himself bludgeoned by the younger one who wielded a conch-shell!

Here we need only recite some recent news where—as we learn—A Supreme Court jury yesterday convicted a 24-year-old man for beating a 64-year-old man to death with a conch shell three years ago.

Note also that: The jury found Ashley Hield guilty of manslaughter by a vote of 10-2 for striking John Frazier multiple times to the head with the conch shell on August 24, 2015.

Ronald Scott was the Crown's key witness.

It is said that: Ronald Scott saw Hield from a distance of about 25-feet as he exchanged words with Frazier.

In that same space, then, Scott witnessed Heild as he bashed his victim with a conch shell multiple times in his head; also said he saw Hield as he pursued his quarry up a street and mercifully, he was also witness to hurt on the hoof after—wonder of wonders—pursue him up a street shortly after two bystanders stepped in to separate them.

What a bloody mess!

It is precisely this kind of face-to-face brutality which precisely because it is so directly right up there in your face, we no longer can see the connection between this kind of raw-violence expressed and those other forms of violence and wrong-doing embedded in the very fabric of what we oft-times mistakenly describe as the socially-accepted norm.

But yet, this much is clear: One of the

more interesting aspects of life in today's deeply challenged Bahamas has to do with that large extent to which so very many Bahamians go as they lament the high and rising incidence of criminal wrong-doing in their once-peaceful Bahamas.

Indeed, we would humbly suggest that they who would and who did get away with wrong-doing were precisely those people high up enough on the social ladder who could and who do manage to evade both detection and punishment.

Not so for the poor sufferers.

It is from these ranks we get report after dread report concerning the hurt and terror the so-called poor routinely heap upon each other's bowed heads.

As Professor Linden Lewis beautifully expresses: "...Violence was always an exercise of power which pitted strength against weakness, affluence against poverty; 'capital against labour and men against women..."

Lewis goes on to suggest: "...Patriarchy is fundamentally about power, not only power of men over women, but power of certain privileged men over other categories of men and furthermore Lewis claims: We do men a disservice when we only condemn the violence they direct towards women, while normalising and naturalising the pervasive violence men visit upon each other every day..."

Whilst this might well be true enough; the fact remains: We yearn for the soon-coming of that day when all who break the law, whether rich, poor or in the middle, can expect—if and when they break the law—to be treated with dignity and respect and who—if found guilty in open court—would pay the price for their wrong-doing.

But even as we make this point—albeit tinged-with-aspiration—we still cling to hope as we imagine the coming of such a great day in the morning!

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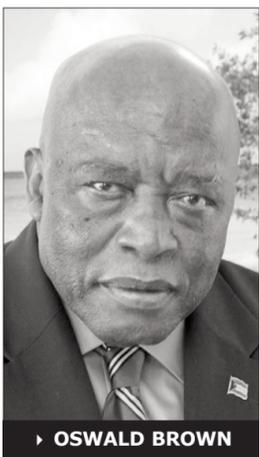
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NO BETTER READING



EDITORIAL

GOVERNMENT'S PURCHASE OF THE GRAND LUCAYAN WAS A GREAT DECISION



OSWALD BROWN

To fully understand why Prime Minister Hubert Minnis and the Free National Movement (FNM)

Government's purchase of the Grand Lucayan Resort in Freeport, Grand Bahama, was a significant and indispensable decision, it is first necessary to reflect on some of the reasons why a once booming city awash with prosperity is today an economic graveyard.

Some background information on the early years and the growth and development of Freeport is necessary to put the current moribund state of what was once known as "The Magic City" in perspective.

What we know today as Freeport was part of a pine forest when Sir Stafford Sands, then head of the Bahamas Development Board, arranged for American financier Wallace Groves, a

client of his law firm, to purchase 50,000 acres of Crown Land in Grand Bahama for one pound sterling (the equivalent of \$2.80) per acre, resulting in the signing of the Hawksbill Creek Agreement on August 5, 1955. Over the years, additional acreages were acquired by the Grand Bahama Port Authority as Freeport mushroomed into the second most populous city in The Bahamas.

Groves's idea for his new land acquisition was to develop an industrial area. As noted in this excerpt from Wikipedia: "...House of Assembly member Stafford Sands served as Wallace Groves's lawyer and helped pave the way for his business interests. In 1955, Groves secured the seminal Hawksbill Creek Agreement with the colonial government, ceding to him 211 square miles of Grand Bahama Island upon which to develop a free-trade industrial and resort zone. (Groves obtained supplemental agreements in 1960 and 1966.) The agreement freed the Grand Bahama Port Authority from paying taxes, tolls, and excises for 25 years (since extended to 2054), and exempted it from other Bahamian laws, notably immigration laws. By 1965, 416 companies operated under license to the main exempted company. The zone

gradually became the most modern, well-run, and prosperous part of the colony, although it was described as only nominally Bahamian."

After internal self-government was granted to The Bahamas in 1963, Wikipedia notes that Groves "further secured the right to operate gambling establishments at Freeport, using the services of Stafford Sands. At the same time, Sands and other high government officials received payments exceeding \$1,000,000 from the Grand Bahamas Port Authority. The complex system of continuing payoffs to almost the entire Bahamian elite (known universally as the "Bay Street Boys") was detailed by the Royal Commission of Inquiry of 1967..."

Freeport was really an exciting place to visit in the early 1960s. After the opening of the Monte Carlo Casino adjacent to the Lucayan Beach Hotel in 1964, Freeport was a boomtown with nightclubs jammed to capacity nightly and some restaurants remaining open all night. There are differing opinions as to what precipitated the end of the "glory years." There is a body of opinion, however, that a hard-hitting "bend-or-break" speech at the opening of the Bahamas Oil Refinery in Freeport in August of 1969 by Prime Minister Sir Lynden

Pindling, in which he alluded to the open racism that existed in Freeport at the time, may have been the reason why some investors had second thoughts about their investment projects and some actually left Grand Bahama.

Be that as it may, Freeport continued to flourish for the ensuing decades, thanks in no small measure to the genius of the late Edward St. George during his tenure as Chairman of the Grand Bahama Port Authority (GBPA).

Mr. St. George, who died in December 2004, and Sir Jack Hayward — whose late father, Sir Charles Hayward, was an early co-investor with Groves in Freeport — purchased the outstanding shares held by Groves in the GBPA in 1979. Along with Sir Albert Miller, whom they hired as President of the GBPA, Freeport's growth and development continued at a phenomenal pace.

A decision had been made earlier to focus on tourism simultaneously with Freeport's industrial development goals to bolster the city's economy. The availability of casino gambling, which at the time was not as widespread in the United States as it is today, proved to be a magnet for tourists who were habitual gamblers as well as fun-lovers who enjoyed the excitement generated by games of chance.

Flights by Laker Airways, a no frills low-cost airline founded by British entrepreneur Sir Freddie Laker, and a variety of chartered flights from destinations in the United States used to be filled to capacity with Grand Bahama-bound tourists coming to the island to gamble. Of course, they also enjoyed first-rate entertainment in venues where the casino was located as well as the various nightclubs around the island.

Aside from the fact that there has been a proliferation of casino gambling in the United States over the years, resulting in several failed attempts to successfully operate a casino in Freeport in recent years, Freeport's lure as a tourist destination declined tremendously in the aftermath of two monster hurricanes, Francis and Jeanne, that devastated Grand Bahama in 2004, resulting in the closure of the Royal Oasis Resort and Casino.

Approximately 1,300 workers became unemployed because of the closure of the Royal Oasis Resort and Casino, and although the Grand Lucayan Resort — owned by Hutchison Whampoa, a Chinese conglomerate with huge investments in Freeport — remained open, my understanding is that it was only able to so because its operations were heavily subsidized by

Hutchison Whampoa.

There are reports that Hutchison Whampoa planned to close the Grand Lucayan after plans by The Wynn Group, a Canadian company, to purchase it were abandoned. Faced with the prospect of hundreds of Bahamians adding to the high level of unemployment in Grand Bahama, it would have been almost criminal if Government did not intervene and purchase the hotel. However, there seems to be a consensus among Bahamians with operational knowledge of hotels that Government should not be in the hotel business, so an aggressive campaign should be launched to find a buyer to operate it.

In the meantime, an all-out campaign should also be launched to find an operator for the now closed near-by casino, and restoring the excitement once generated at Port Lucaya Marketplace nightly should be a top priority. Of course, since the closure of the Royal Oasis, the downtown area of Freeport has been allowed to deteriorate considerably and a determined effort should be made to reverse this trend.

The bottom line, however, is the Government did the right thing in purchasing the Our Lucayan Resort and the focus should now be on encouraging more "stop over" visitors to fill its rooms and those of the other hotels in Grand Bahama.



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Teens Feel The Pressure

Psychologist brings insight on important, overlooked mental health issue

A growing number of teens are suffering in silence having come to believe that stress and high-risk behaviors are normal, according to Dr. Valerie Knowles, a 20-year practitioner of child and adolescent psychology, who began her career in the School Welfare Department of the Ministry of Education.

It's not uncommon for adults to miss or dismiss the signs of an overloaded teen, thinking, "Wait until they're older, then they'll really know stress."

"In some of our minds, only adults can legitimately be expected to feel pain. Adults have bills and responsibilities and so only they can claim to be angry and stressed and make demands on others," said Dr Knowles, a licensed clinical psychologist with the Health Professions Council of The Bahamas.

"For some people if you are my child, I can tell you anything that I feel like, curse about your private parts and publicly accuse you of the most vile and degrading acts and expect you to accept it, given my adult status.

"I can 'tear your head off' if you make me mad and if you say something I don't like, I can slap your face green in the front of your friends and you dare not feel anger. I can take your clothes and give it to someone else to wear and expect no complaint. I can regularly ask you to stay home and mind your younger siblings while I go to a movie or go

out socializing and you dare not be upset."

This Youth Month as World Health Day fast approaches, the former section head of the Psychological Services Unit of the Ministry of Education's Special Services Division said few people really know and respect the heavy psychological loads many youths carry on their shoulders every day, some masking their pain behind a smile.

Born into cracks

"While many of them are resilient there are others still smiling but who have emotionally disconnected themselves from the demands being placed on them by a society of adults for whom they have little respect," said Dr Knowles.

"Many are discouraged because they perceive they cannot live up to the standards expected of them by those important to them. To avoid feelings of guilt and inadequacy they disconnect and stop trying. There are few models for the behaviors that they are expected to show. In many instances, they have to live in, and cope with elements of this society that have little or no respect for the role that positive childhood experiences can play in stemming the tide of criminal behaviour that we see today."

Illustrating her point, the psychologists pointed out some of the self-defeating ideas some parents have taught children, the low lev-

els of expectations for attaining high behavioral and personal standards that exist; the premature sexualization of children and teens; and adults using verbal and physical violence as default methods of solving problems and expecting their off-springs to learn to restrain themselves when in similar situations.

Some children don't fall between the cracks in our society, they are born in them and spend their lives trying to climb out, said Dr Knowles.

"A crack is deciding to have more children than we can afford and expecting older children to parent younger ones. We parentify them and force them to wipe up our adult messes and then become confused when these children think they are adults and have trouble deferring to adult authority," said Dr Knowles, a former psychologist at the Juvenile Detention Centres in the Bahamas

"Our cracks are our disorganized families. There are children and adolescents who have practiced situational ethics from as long as they can remember. There is nothing wrong with stealing, lying if you don't get caught. No behavior to them is of itself 'wrong.' That is a crack."

One of the keys to remedying the downward spiral is adult education designed to help parents take responsibility and make better decisions about what they do in their own lives as well as understand the process of

child development more fully.

"It is so easy to blame youths and to expect them to be more disciplined than the adults in the society," said Dr Knowles who has conducted numerous teacher training and parenting workshops, community education and training seminars and delivered presentations on psychological and educational concerns.

Add to normal mood and emotional swings, school failure, crushing workloads, at times unreasonable teachers and parent expectations, underachievement or other pressure to excel could leave youths feeling depleted. Difficulties in handling stress could lead to mental health problems such as depression and anxiety disorders.

"There are youths with gender identity and orientation issues. The suicidal thoughts are strong in this group. There are youths who experience intimate partner violence. There are those coping with substance use and abuse, economic deprivation, learning disabilities, violent and or mentally ill parents, some of them are mentally ill with chronic and acute symptoms," she explained.

"There are youths who cut themselves on a regular basis. Some have experienced pregnancy terminations. Some are involved in violent gang activities. Some must work to take care of themselves and their parents. Any child you see on any day could be coping

with one or two of these challenges at the same time."

Even children in structured homes are challenged to stand strong in the onslaught of so many distracting and predatory influences.

"Anger, depression, suicidal thoughts, some our children learn to wrestle with these very early in life and many them are resilient," said Dr Knowles. "Others use alcohol, sex, gambling, violence and other drugs to self-medicate."

Strong support

Outlining a few strategies to help adolescents with their stress, Dr Knowles said parents should be intentional about actively placing "strong positive memories" in their children's memory banks. Ultimately the emotional memory of great childhood experiences become a source of strength and inspiration for adolescents when their world looks bleak, helping them to cope emotionally with a challenge they may be going through.

"Limit the amount of personally stressful information you share with your children. Too, it is counterproductive to use blame, shame, guilt, self-righteousness, as disciplinary tools. The child's 'no-good pa' or 'no good ma' is not their fault. The child did not choose their 'no-good' parents. They did not choose where they live or their

physical features," said Dr Knowles.

"Humanize your disciplinary tactics. Slapping a child in the face, kicking a child to the ground is dehumanizing behaviour. Something is wrong when stray dogs and children receive the same form of training. Accept the fact and the responsibility that adults are role models whether they have children or not. If your life and decision-making skills are just as disorganized and immature as the child being disciplined, seek help from those who can assist.

She noted the strong trajectory between childhood trauma and juvenile and adult criminal behaviour.

"Let's work together to reclaim our vanishing childhoods. When we interact with talented, competent Bahamian children (of which there are many), a sense of pride easily envelopes us," said the psychologist who works with corrective rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders.

"Let us support them all so that we can see strong, healthy egos emerging from the turbulence of their childhood and adolescent life experiences. Help them as they struggle to attain better control of their impulses and establish stronger intellectual control over their emotions. It takes a village to raise mentally healthy children but the adults in the village must be mentally healthy with the ability to rise to this challenge."



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6. Up to date Insurance Certificates
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All Franchise Holders with a fleet of five (5) or more vehicles are invited to submit their packages to the Road Traffic Department, Franchise Unit Section 3 Eastern Grandstand of the Thomas A. Robinson National Stadium. All Packages will be processed on a first come first serve basis.

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GG PAYS RESPECTS AT LYING-IN-STATE OF THE LATE EARL THOMPSON, SR.



► Former Member of Parliament, the late Mr. Earl Thompson, Sr. lies in state in the Foyer of the House of Assembly, Parliament Square, today. Governor General, Her Excellency the Most Hon. Dame Marguerite Pindling paid her respects this morning. There will be a State-Recognized Funeral for Mr. Thompson at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral on Friday morning, October 5, with interment at the Monastic Cemetery at St. Augustine's. **(BIS Photo/Letisha Henderson)**

Doctors moving ahead with strike vote

Continued from / PAGE 1...

their concerns, as promised.

The Journal spoke with CPSA President Dr. Locksley Munroe, who gave insight into how that meet up went.

“Primarily, we spoke about the financial chal-

lenges that government and the PHA have, we spoke about the financial challenges that the senior physicians have and the terms and conditions of their service, that has not changed for more than 12-13 years,” he said.

“He was very accomo-

dating and understanding of our position; he asked us to understand their position,” he added.

“His suggestion was that we make a priority list and our concerns will be addressed in that manner,” said the CPSA leader.

In terms of finances, Dr.

Munroe said the government argues that its financially strapped.

“In other words, what he was saying is, they cannot meet all of the high demands, but if we organized them in a particular manner, then the request for reasonable things will be met.”

Coming out that meeting, according to Dr. Munroe, there’s still no guarantee that there will be significant change.

“The fact that he said that is one thing, but whether or not the whole administration and the managers, if their attitude would change to syn-

chronize with his statement, that is still going to take a lot of work to ensure that his approach and his attitude is synchronized and in line with the approach and attitude of the PHA board and the other administrators. So there’s still work to be done,” said Dr. Munroe.

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