



**CAYMAN ISLANDS  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT  
ELECTRONIC VERSION**

**2013/14 SESSION**

**10 October 2013**

*Second Sitting of the Third Meeting*  
(Throne Speech and Budget Meeting)

*(pages 87–134)*

**Hon Juliana O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MLA**  
**Speaker**

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PRESENT WERE:

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Juliana Y O'Connor-Connolly, JP

**MINISTERS OF THE CABINET**

Hon Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MLA	<i>The Premier</i> , Minister of Home and Community Affairs
Hon Moses I Kirkconnell, JP, MLA	<i>Deputy Premier</i> , Minister of District Administration, Tourism and Transport
Hon D Kurt Tibbetts, OBE, JP, MLA	Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure
Hon Marco S Archer, MLA	Minister of Finance and Economic Development
Hon Osbourne V Bodden, MLA	Minister of Health, Sports, Youth and Culture
Hon G Wayne Panton, MLA	Financial Services, Commerce and Environment
Hon Tara A Rivers, MLA	Minister of Education, Employment and Gender Affairs

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET**

Hon Franz I Manderson, Cert. Hon, JP	Deputy Governor, ex officio Member responsible for the Civil Service
Ms Jacqueline Wilson	Temporary Attorney General, ex officio Member responsible for Legal Affairs

**ELECTED MEMBERS**

**GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS**

Mr Winston C Connolly, Jr, MLA	Fifth Elected Member for George Town
Mr Joseph X Hew, MLA	Sixth Elected Member for George Town
Mr Alva H Suckoo, MLA	Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town

**OPPOSITION MEMBERS**

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, OBE, JP, MLA	<i>Leader of the Opposition</i> , First Elected Member for West Bay
Mr Bernie A Bush, MLA	Third Elected Member for West Bay
Capt A Eugene Ebanks, JP, MLA	Fourth Elected Member for West Bay

**INDEPENDENT MEMBERS**

Mr D Ezzard Miller, JP, MLA	Elected Member for North Side
Mr V Arden McLean, JP, MLA	Elected Member for East End

**APOLOGIES**

Mr Roy McTaggart, MLA	Second Elected Member for George Town
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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT  
THRONE SPEECH AND BUDGET MEETING  
THIRD MEETING 2013/14 SESSION  
THURSDAY  
10 OCTOBER 2013  
11.00 AM  
Second Sitting**

[Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, Speaker presiding]

**The Speaker:** I recognise the Honourable Premier who will grace us with Prayers.

### PRAYERS

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin, Jr.:** Good morning. Let us pray.

*Almighty God, from whom all wisdom and power are derived: We beseech Thee so to direct and prosper the deliberations of the Legislative Assembly now assembled, that all things may be ordered upon the best and surest foundations for the glory of Thy Name and for the safety, honour and welfare of the people of these Islands.*

*Bless our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth II; Philip, Duke of Edinburgh; Charles, Prince of Wales; and all the Royal Family. Give grace to all who exercise authority in our Commonwealth, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety may be established among us. Especially we pray for the Governor of our Islands, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Official Members and Ministers of Cabinet and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that we may be enabled faithfully to perform the responsible duties of our high office. All this we ask for Thy great Name's sake.*

Let us say The Lord's Prayer together: *Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.*

*The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon us and give us peace, now and always. Amen.*

**The Speaker:** Please be seated.  
Proceedings are resumed.

### READING BY THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER OF MESSAGES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### APOLOGY

**The Speaker:** I have received an apology from Mr. Roy McTaggart who is travelling overseas due to a death in his immediate family. The House, I am sure, would like to convey their deepest condolences to the McTaggart family.

### STATEMENTS BY HONOURABLE MEMBERS AND MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

**The Speaker:** I have not received an indication of any statements from Honourable Ministers.

I indicated when we met last that I would be dealing with the Speaker's guidelines today. I am going to ask for the indulgence of Members and the press to allow me to do that tomorrow morning as the final draft is still in the preparation stage. But it will be tomorrow morning, God willing, at ten o'clock.

Thank you for your indulgence.

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

#### BILL

#### SECOND READING

#### APPROPRIATION (JULY 2013 TO JUNE 2014) BILL, 2013

**The Clerk:** The Appropriation (July 2013 to June 2014) Bill, 2013.

**The Speaker:** I recognise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

#### PROCEDURAL MATTER

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you.

Madam Speaker, I am merely rising on a matter of procedure. I wish for it to be clearly understood . . . and you, being in the Chair and in charge of this House, I think that is going to come clearly from you.

We have the Budget and the Bill that we are about to debate being moved last Monday by the Honourable Minister of Finance. I understand, some-

what, that you are going to have two people winding up this Budget debate, and I want to find out, Madam Speaker, if that is so. It is unprecedented and it is a departure from what is normal, but I do want to find out clearly what the process is.

**The Speaker:** I recognise the Honourable Premier.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for raising this issue and see if we can reach some clarity in relation to the matter.

This would be, I think, thirteen times that I have been involved in the process of the presentation of the Budget and Throne Speech. What has evolved since I have been here, and which was initiated by the Leader of the Opposition himself, [is] the practice of the Leader of Government Business when delivering a policy statement on behalf of the Government, which, fleshes out what is contained into the Throne Speech.

In the early part of my tenure in this House, the Throne Speech and Budget Address were delivered separately. It came to be understood by all of us that this did not make a great deal of sense because the Budget is the economic underpinnings for the Government's policies. The Throne Speech is the articulation of the Government's policies by Her Majesty's representative in the Islands. And so the practice became—and I can't remember precisely when this occurred—that the two things (Throne Speech and Budget Address) were debated simultaneously.

It required a specific motion and resolution by the House for that to be done, otherwise we would wind up with one debate on the Budget Address, and each Member being able to speak to that, and another separate and distinct, but related, debate on the Throne Speech. So, I think quite sensibly we agreed in this House that the two should be debated simultaneously.

When the now Leader of the Opposition became Leader of Government Business in 2001 he adopted the practice of delivering a policy statement on behalf of the Government in addition to, supplementary to, and complementary to, the Throne Speech. And that is fine from my standpoint.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Supplementary from the Budget.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** No, separate from the Throne Speech.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Complementary to the Budget.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** So, Madam Speaker, that practice has evolved.

When we moved to having a Minister of Finance under the 2009 Constitution, the now Leader of

the Opposition became Minister of most things, but particularly Minister of Finance as well as Premier. So he delivered both the Budget Address and the Government Policy Statement.

The Throne Speech began to shrink in length as a result. And that is quite proper. I'm not complaining about that. Indeed, I can say, Madam Speaker, that the present Governor takes the view that policy is very much the province of the elected Government and, therefore, what is said in the Speech from the Throne should only really be the broad outline of Government policy. The articulation and detail of the Government's policies for the fiscal year should be articulated by the Government and in the person of the Premier. And that is why we saw the way things were dealt with on Monday.

Her Excellency delivered an outline which lasted only 17 minutes. On behalf of the Government I then fleshed out that outline and set out in some detail what the Government policies for the ensuing year are to be. That was then underpinned by the Government's economic policy and the Government's financial position as set out by the Minister of Finance. So, all of these things together tell Members of the House and the public generally where it is that the Government is proposing to go and how it is proposing to finance the various policies, projects and so forth.

Having taken the view that the Premier should not be the Minister of Finance, I have given that responsibility to another Member of the team. And so what we have today to deal with, and the Order Paper states that, is the "Commencement of debate on the Budget Address and the Throne Speech." And the Motion, which was moved by me, and the resolution of this House was that the debate on the Throne Speech, the Policy Statement (delivered by myself), and the Budget Address are to be dealt with simultaneously.

So, before the House this morning is not just the Appropriation Bill and the Budget Address. The other two documents are very much part and parcel of this debate. There is nothing unprecedented about that. That is the way it has been since I can remember.

The distinction this time is that I am the person who is articulating Government's policy, principally, and who is, therefore, responsible for listening, collecting and collating what the concerns, criticisms, observations and the issues are as identified by Members of this House. The person charged with responsibility for conduct of the Appropriation Bill and the defence of the Budget Address is a separate and distinct person. Therefore, both of these issues, though debated simultaneously, will require a response. The Minister of Finance is not in a position to respond on behalf of the Government to the policy issues. That is my constitutional responsibility as Premier. And so, both of us have separate and distinct, although related, responsibilities in the conduct

of this debate. And the Minister of Finance and Economic Development will respond at the appropriate time to what is said in relation the Budget Address and to the Appropriation Bill. I, on behalf of the Government, will wind up the debate in relation to what is said about Government policies.

Each Minister has responsibility for a discreet area and each of them will spend the appropriate time going through their responsibilities and their subjects. But the overall response to what is said about the Government policies in the context of this Budget Address and the Throne Speech will be done by me, as Premier.

Madam Speaker, I know I've gone on a little while, but I thought it was important not just for Members of the House but for the general public to understand what is being contemplated. It cannot possibly be right, Madam Speaker, to say that the Government and the Premier should not have the opportunity to hear what all Members say and to respond appropriately and conclude the debate on what is essentially an examination of the Government's policies for the ensuing year.

I hope that helps, Madam Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Madam Speaker, the historical picture is somewhat factual up to the point of the giving of the Throne Speech. The Premier said that I gave a policy statement, as I did (and he opposed it then, but I have no problem with him on that point today).

But the point and fact is, Madam Speaker, that, only arose because there was no Minister of Finance. We had a Financial Secretary, and Government took the position that our policy should be put forward by the elected body. And so when the Financial Secretary was to give his Budget . . . which also carries policies you know, or all the time it did. And I think even to this one, as brief as the Minister tried to make it, carried some policy statements and it follows a position.

Madam Speaker, I have never heard about a Budget having two people winding up on it. Never! And it does not mean anything to me anymore than I want to know what is going to be set down as procedure. The main point is that there is an Appropriation Bill. The person moving the Bill to the Budget and the policies underpinning the Budget—no matter who gave them—is also the person winding up the Budget debate. I don't know that we can abridge the rules to allow two people to wind up.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Well, we are making up the rules, then, as we go along.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** There are rules.

The Minister gave a statement and so that is what we are expected to debate, I guess, Madam Speaker. But we can refer to anything when it comes to . . . we can give a response at any point to anything during this Meeting, which is the Budget and Throne Speech debate. And that is what I want to get clear, because we are setting down some things for history here and other speakers to come and others will have to take cognisance of this new procedure.

Let's get the facts straight. When I gave the policies, or some of the policies underpinning the Budget, it was because we had a Financial Secretary and not a Minister of Finance. And the day I became Minister of Finance, it stopped. Not because I was Premier, Madam Speaker. That is not so. And I must say that is where the Premier and I take departure here. It was not because I was Premier; it was because I was Minister of Finance and I was giving the Government's policy with the Budget underpinning the Budget.

We never had any difficulties except that the other years before that the current Premier (although he was not the Leader of the Opposition but he was leading everything else) took objection to it. Today he says he finds it convenient that he should do that. I am not going to belabor the point. I just want to have it set down correctly so that I understand what is going to happen, Madam Speaker. There have never been two people winding up the Budget debate.

And as for me, [him] being minister of everything, I will take his jibes, Madam Speaker. He has the majority of House slaves that will come behind and boost him up, so let him go ahead. And I will refer to that point, Madam Speaker, since he made it. We only had five Members of Cabinet, so I had a huge portfolio. It has taken four of them, now, to do so. But that's the way the Constitution was set up.

#### SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Leader of the Opposition. Thank you, Honourable Premier.

Obviously, all Members are fully cognisant that our Standing Orders are lagging way behind in the modernisation of our Constitution which was accepted by the 2009 Order. When we look at Erskine May there is not an exact precise set of circumstances, as I can find. The closest I can find is that with the address or reply to the Queen's speech. By practice the last two speakers are allowed some latitude in replying to the debate on the whole, at page 161 of the 24<sup>th</sup> Edition of Erskine May's *[Parliamentary Practice]*.

I believe that the devil is in the details, and the intent of this honourable House, until the Standing

Orders can be amended, based on the Motion that the Honourable Premier was allowed when we met on the last Sitting of the House, was that they would be debated simultaneously.

Members are also cognisant that from a historic perspective (page 161, 24<sup>th</sup> Edition of Erskine May) . . . traditionally we could have debated the Throne Speech and Budget which Members deemed a long time ago was a colossal waste of time; hence the Motion to debate simultaneously.

It is the order from this Chair that we will debate the Throne Speech in accordance to the Motion and the Budget Address. The Statement was made as a statement. Members had authority if they so wished, under Standing Order 30(2), to ask brief questions. They didn't.

The Honourable Premier standing on his feet verbally sought to make an amendment to that which was passed by the majority of the House. There were some implied dissidence to it, but it was not recorded by negative vote. Hence the Motion was carried. As far as the Chair is concerned, with those circumstances, although not utopian, we will allow the Premier to respond to the Throne Speech and the Minister of Finance to respond to his economic policy. That is the ruling from the Chair.

I would advise that this is just yet another lacuna within our Standing Orders that needs to catch up with our Constitution as soon as possible, Members need to commit themselves to the Standing Orders to bring them up to date.

Whilst that is the case, I believe that it would be the best intent, and the overriding factor in the interest of the House, for the country to hear a response from both of the pieces of evidence before this House. I do not believe it would be in the best interest of the country to just hear from the Minister of Finance without the Premier, regardless of who the Premier is, having a response to the wider policies of Government.

We will now continue with the Second Reading of this debate.

Does any other Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

#### **CONGRATULATIONS—APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Madam Speaker, before I move on to my short (I hope) address or remarks to the Budget process, I want to extend and put on record my congratulations to the Third Member for West Bay on having been appointed by our United Democratic Party to be the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and to publicly say

thanks to Her Excellency the Governor for having agreed and carrying out that appointment yesterday.

He is new, he will find this intriguing. He already knows that politics is a hard taskmaster and he will learn. What he has not learnt already, he will find out in short order what politics can and will do.

#### **COMMENCEMENT OF DEBATE ON THE BUDGET ADDRESS AND THE THRONE SPEECH TOGETHER WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY STATEMENT**

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:**

Madam Speaker, the Government has produced a Budget. As leader of the Opposition, it is not my policy, nor do I think good for my country to nitpick or to find an opposing view to everything. Madam Speaker, we have had enough of that destructive attitude in the past several years.

The Budget brought no surprise to me. No surprise! My position is that where something done is good it will get my support, either by the spoken word or by silent consent. Where something is not right then I shall have my say. And I see some of that already, but I promised to give the Government the widest possible berth, and so I have ignored certain matters. I will wait and see how long the conflicts will last.

Madam Speaker, if nothing else, I think the song by Ernie Smith should resonate now with all of us. And I will take time out of my speech to quote what Ernie Smith had to say. Madam Speaker. The fussing and the fighting I don't think I'm going to make that my long suit.

What Ernie Smith had to say, and what he penned many years ago is true. That's why I have said, Madam Speaker, my Opposition cannot be the same old, same old. I hear the jives, Madam Speaker, but I am old enough and have been here long enough to . . . at least I will try to ignore them. I will try to ignore them, because you don't make it this far in politics and take the licks that I have taken without learning something. The experience is there and they cannot take that away. Try as hard as some of them have to move me by all kinds of means, they have not succeeded. It is not God's will—not yet!

We are one Cayman, Madam Speaker. We have nowhere to go. Those of us with one passport have nowhere to go. And so we must work to build, not to tear down. We are here to offer sensible ideas. Even though some people will think it not sensible and some will criticise you for it. We are here to offer good ideas, not to mash down and throw cold water on whatever is being attempted for the betterment of our people.

So, what did Ernie Smith actually say?

*And as we fight one another  
For the power and the glory  
Jah Kingdom goes to waste*

*We de people want fi know  
Just where we're going  
Right now we hands are tied  
Tied behind we back while certain people  
If and buttin'  
Where do we stand?*

*We have too far to go  
Not to really know  
Just how we getting there  
And if we getting anywhere  
We have too much to change  
Not to know the range  
Of possibility  
And changeability*

*Violence and crime is commonplace  
Within these sad times  
No man walks free  
Prophecy comes closer to fulfillment  
In ya disya dread times  
Why should this be?*

*And as we fight one another  
Fi de power and de glory  
Jah Kingdom goes to waste  
And every drop of blood we taste  
A fi we own disgrace  
Can't build no foundation  
'Pon an if and a but  
Are we building a nation  
Or are we building a hut?*

He goes on, but then he repeats:  
*Can't build no dreams 'pon a fuss and a fight  
Me no care who a do it  
Jah say dat no right*

*And as we fight one another  
Fi de power and de glory  
Jah Kingdom goes to waste  
And every drop of blood we taste  
A fi we own disgrace  
Can't build no foundation  
'Pon an if and a but  
Are we building a nation  
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*Can't build no dreams 'pon a fuss and a fight  
Me no care who a do it  
Jah say dat no right*

And he went on to repeat:  
*And as we fight one another  
Fi de power and de glory  
Jah Kingdom goes to waste  
And every drop of blood we taste  
A fi we own disgrace*

This song, as I said, should resonate with all of us. We are human. And there are those who have not learnt yet, who still think that throwing the hardest punch, or throwing punches, are going to cure it. Per-

haps they did not look at that song either "One Tin Soldier." They hadn't seen that before they took office or before they attempted to even talk about it.

"Listen children to a story written long ago about a kingdom in the valley and the valley people below."

It all happened they were fighting and they were fussing and when they went all it said was "peace." One tin soldier, the song said rode away.

My purpose, Madam Speaker, is to work. Madam Speaker, I am a worker and if I cannot be given a chance to help, I won't be a hindrance. I have noted some of the things and have written it down as the euphoria of just being elected.

Madam Speaker, years ago when the Governor came to our district, no matter what side you were on you had a chance to . . . they said where they were going to visit and we would pull our ideas together and that was done. Not so this time. And I am not saying so to berate anyone. I'm just saying that that is how things work out. Bear in mind what I said. If I can't be given a chance to help in the most-simple way, I still won't be a hindrance.

Madam Speaker, as I said, the Budget brought no surprises. I knew there would be a difficulty to put a Budget to this House, and they had a difficulty. As much as is being said about the FCO [Foreign and Commonwealth Office], the FCO was not going to change no matter how much the Premier talks about the relationship he has with them now. They are who they are and have been so for over a thousand years. And his grinning and picture-taking with them are not going to change that. The only master, Madam Speaker, I have, is the one through God and then the Caymanian people.

So, Madam Speaker, I knew he wasn't going to have any easy time. If we had been there it would have been the same. They promised you, I think, Madam Speaker, as the then Premier, that they would up the overdraft, I believe, by some \$30 million to help us through those times when we are leanest in the revenue. But they were going to hold our foot to the fire. And as I walked and paged through the [Annual] Plan and Estimates and the annual Budget Statement, particularly, we can see some of where they went. I haven't added the figures yet to see if anything has been cut. But we do have a process in Finance Committee. So I will reserve my thoughts and questions to that time.

Madam Speaker, the cuts and costs to businesses, in particular, that were promised in the campaign (the campaign being what it is) cannot take place. It can't! We knew that. This piece here and piece there but . . . when we had to put the budget together, Madam Speaker, the time, the days they told me to go ahead and then they came back and said no you can't go ahead and so as Minister of Finance I was given the blame. But those within government who can't speak—the civil servants—they know. We

had the budget to where they agreed and then they came back and said, *No, no, no. We want you to find this much more revenue.* And so that was the position. That is the truth. Fact! They wanted to make it difficult.

Did I believe that we should have had this year, thirteen, fourteen, a hundred million dollars in an economy that is as difficult as it is? No, I didn't. And I told them so. This is just too much for the country to bear because of what our economy is like, what it does. It's too much. They didn't pay any attention to that. They set their benchmark and said, *You must live to this.* And so that is what we had to do.

Cut? Oh, of course, they wanted us to cut more. They wanted us to cut scholarships; they wanted us to cur budget for social services, because that is what they had to do and I said no. I won't even go far back, Madam Speaker, because I am not here to tread over old ground. That is not necessary. What has happened has happened. The people have chosen a Government and the people get the Government that they choose. So, I am not going to go over that. The records are there and if nothing else one of these days my book will be finished and they won't be able to contradict that.

So, the promise about the cost of businesses cannot be done right now. We know that. It has not materialised. Even if they want to do so (and I believe they do, like we did) it can't be done at this time. The \$100 million in surplus, Madam Speaker, comes from the fees I had to introduce in August, September, November last year—\$60 odd million in surpluses as of June this year. And the director fees that were not finalised to be put in place are expected to be in the region of \$30 [million] to \$30-odd million. So, that is roughly \$100 million, and that is where that surplus will come from even if something else is a little bit more or a little bit less and they put in something, and they did, I understand from the Minister of Finance, make some savings.

Madam Speaker, as I said, when we get to the Budget in Finance Committee I have some questions because I have seen some things there that need some explanations. I will repeat here once more, as I have been doing in the past eight years, this country cannot survive unless we have outside investment—simply put. We will not get outside investment without having outside people.

Our people must have jobs, jobs, jobs. And now, get the projects. The country needs the projects talked about in the Budget. Get them done because those are the jobs that I am talking about. That is what we were elected to do; get the business done so that our people can maintain a good standard of living. If we don't, we will simply become the crime capital of the world. And there is no question I don't think from anyone of us what obtains in what is happening around us. We know. We all agree. We need to stop.

No matter how many captures they make, what needs to be done is to stop that from happening.

I think we all agree on that. That is one point we agree on. It is good enough to get up in the papers, smile for a picture and say, *Oh, I've caught him. I caught that one and the next one.* How do we stop it from happening? We cannot become the crime capital of the world with 54,000 people.

Madam Speaker, I am not sent here to crucify anyone. I am not sent here to do things to cause embarrassment to anyone for spite, and then do it in the name of doing good or to pacify some force somewhere, whether that is the Auditor General or whoever they are. No! We have just gone through a period of Duncan Taylor's spite. And that will be proven too, Madam Speaker.

I often wonder you know, how we can spend funds to maintain a full grown man and give him security to guard and protect him on and off Island, our car to carry their dog to the vet, but that is all right. There's no conflict, no abuse. He's the Governor, don't you know? And they spend time with the people they have control of, to try and destroy anyone who stands in their way.

A cow cod should perhaps have been used all right. But in this country where prejudices run deep, where a certain few think they can get, or do one thing, but the minute someone else does it, or someone else says, *I want the same privilege,* it is crooked or it's abuse. But our guards, our security that we pay for, can be used for them, their grown child. I speak of these things, Madam Speaker, because it is a fact. We already know what obtains. Ah, but time will tell.

Madam Speaker, there are few things I see happening in this Assembly which relate to the Executive Arm of Government and us as the Legislative Arm. Madam Speaker, I believe this matter of cost cutting is going to the degree that it affects matters which seem to be laughable. For when staff is told here that they can't have a bottle of water to drink or a Pepsi and that they must bring their own, I think is absolutely ridiculous. We have staff here who have given 30, 40 years, maybe more (I'm not sure) of their life to the work of this Assembly.

Madam Speaker, cuts and where we can save need to be done; no two ways about that. We all agree on that. They have cut to the extent that the three West Bay Representatives who have an office must now put in money to help pay for our office to be run. I don't think that is fair. I've asked the Deputy Governor to look at it, but I don't know if I am going to get any answer back on that point. I got one back on the cost of the cell phones.

And here I want to draw, Madam Speaker, a reference, an example. All of us carry these things called cell phones. Some people have two or three and still not enough to deal with the people who call us that we have to email, that we have to text or answer back on Twitter or Facebook, because those are the people that we serve. They elected us so that they contact us. And whether we are abroad or whether we



are here on this Island, they want to be in touch, and I tell you this: it's my way of being in touch with my constituents and the people of this country.

I get dozens of calls, dozens of emails for the week. And don't ask about the number of text messages. So, we have to pay for that out of our pockets.

But now the House goes ahead and produces iPads—Mm-hmm. So we must sit in here, don't look at one another, don't see what each other is doing, we must go and get iPads, or they already got them; whatever, for us to do work. But you can't help me with my bill to deal with my people.

Well, if they give me an iPad to stay here . . . I have one. I have my own. I like the paper. Sometimes one touch and you will lose everything on that iPad or the computer sometimes. But this is the day of technology, Madam Speaker. I will never forget, and I use this example a lot. When I first came here the budget was that thick, that big, and you see what we have today?

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Half!

Well, Mr. Miller, the Member for North Side was here. We came in here together.

And then they said they were going to computerise government and boy you should have heard the glowing report to us in Finance Committee. In those days Finance Committee was held in secret in the committee room. Yes, the first bill was \$500,000. The whole of government was going to be computerised. Five hundred; I will never forget. And boy that seemed a big sum of money to me in the Budget. And [they told us, *Don't worry we are not going to have to get no paper after this and the record is going to be immaculate and all the reports are going to be done on time* and everything that was good.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Yep. And look at where we are today.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Millions and millions of dollars in computer software.

And I am not saying that that is not needed because I don't know how we could operate without it. Technology is what it is. But cost is not going to ever seem to go down there because this morning you got one new piece of software and by twelve o'clock somebody comes out with a different piece and convinces you that you have to buy that piece. That is how it operates.

But, Madam Speaker, government is what it is and it is not getting easier—although somehow the

private sector thinks so—for civil servants and elected people to run the country. If you listen to some people in the private sector they will tell you, *Man, we could do this with our eyes closed. You all stay home and we could run this country.* Yeah, right!

So, Madam Speaker, I hope that those in charge will pay some attention to what I am talking about. How do we represent our people?

Madam Speaker, it is a fact, and I believe every one of us, those new ones here, but I know those older ones have been confronted with it year after year. We get a salary but do you know how much of that we give away? Ha, ha, ha. They don't know how many loans we help to pay.

Madam Speaker, there are things that I do not ever talk about publicly because I do not think it is the place for it. If I am here to help people I just help them. My door is open, my gate is open, my office is open, and so I don't need to talk about who I give and who I help. But they ought to know that all of us give and give until it hurts. So, asking us to pay towards our office to represent the people . . . and the three of us has to do so. I don't know about anyone else. But certainly, those two matters, the cell phones cost needs to be looked at, or something given so that we can carry on being in contact.

Now, some people might not want to be that much in contact with the people. I will tell you this: I don't know that you can represent the people any longer without having that cell phone to be able to be in contact with them. You might say this is not a big issue in regard to what we have to face for the country, but it is big enough.

Madam Speaker, there has to be an understanding that the elected Members of this House are sent here by the people. In today's world you must be equipped to help do that. And so, Madam Speaker, I don't know when this is ever going to happen. We all said we agreed and it never did happen. But it is time now that this House be separated from the Executive Arm of the Government. I hope that that will soon be achieved. As I said, we talked about it and we said we would do it. We did not get down that road but it needs to be done now.

**Mr. V. McLean, Elected Member for East End:** Aye!

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Madam Speaker, looking back at some of my four years, in spite of the worst global conditions the developed world has ever seen, we did accomplish a lot.

We did not get everything that I wanted to get done. Certainly not! But there are a number of solid achievements that have kept this country afloat and whether this Government, or the news media, or anybody else doesn't want to say so, that is their business. But the facts are the facts. And if it had not been that we took those steps, you would not come in here

. . . you would be producing a different kind of budget. Certainly!

And so, Madam Speaker, there are a number of things. The UDP Government successfully had the Cayman Islands removed for the OECD's grey list and onto its white list by negotiating and signing Tax Information Exchange Agreements (TIEA) with the OECD [Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development] countries as required for us to be on the white list. We have signed something like 28 (I believe) TIEAs with the G-20 and G-8 countries. And I need to point out, Madam Speaker, that these agreements are negotiated individually. These agreements, I don't think, are templates by anyone. And they are of immense importance to our financial industry.

Madam Speaker, what this meant, together with efforts to not put in place or be bamboozled by the Foreign Office at the time to put in taxation, as they were trying to do with me . . . and they will never forgive me for it because they thought they had us, you know. They thought they had us. And some on the other side, whether they know, might never admit the kinds of problems that we had. But they thought that they had us where we had to put in income tax and property tax.

They thought they had me too where I had to cut 500 civil servants. I was told to do so until I said to them, *Show me the Constitution, show me the law where I have to do so. No, no, it is you Governor and it is you Deputy that if you want that done you should do so. Don't come to the elected body with this. We've got that power.*

But they tried those efforts, Madam Speaker, together with the efforts to keep a stable government budget. And they can say anything they want. They can say that you didn't do a good job! And they told the people that. They said that. *You did wrong!* And they said that too. But the fact is we did keep the Government Budget stable as best as we could, given what we had to deal with.

And, Madam Speaker, if we had not done that to keep a stable Government Budget, and to maintain and improve our regulatory regime where the international world knew that what we were doing was right, where would we have been? We did not, Madam Speaker . . . and that is not just giving credit to us, but we had a lot to do with it because we did have a good foundation to work with.

We did not lose one financial institution due to the fallout. Not one! There were amalgamations throughout the world and so international companies here amalgamated. Because of some of the changes we had to make with the OECD, I think some of them are moving, but when we lose one we gain another one. We did not lose one financial institution.

You should be writing this down. Put it on your front page.

**The Speaker:** Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** I'm talking to you, Madam Speaker.

*[Laughter]*

**The Speaker:** In that case sir, I am writing it down.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Sorry?

**The Speaker:** In that case, I am writing it down.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** I know you are.

Madam Speaker, we kept our Aa3 plus rating! Don't they know that? Or has that somehow slipped and nobody knows about it? We kept ours, Madam Speaker, while the United Kingdom, the USA and the bigger countries, France, and so on, lost theirs. Of course! Telling us what to do, while they lost theirs! So, we do have a lot to crow about if we care to.

Madam Speaker, but we do not rest on those laurels now. The new Government still has a lot of work to do and I encourage them and I support them when they are going to do those right things.

We issued a directive that certain businesses are reserved for Caymanians only. Examples, such as trucking, commercial fishing, painting, auto repair, radio stations, electrical and plumbing, beauty salons, office supplies, transportation and water sports, real estate businesses—just to name a few. And I think while the implementation of that directive awaits the revision of the Trade and Business Law . . . by the way, which we also left . . . and I don't know how much revising had to be done with it but there was one. But the Board certainly did not take any applications for such, or at least that is what I was told. I don't sit on those boards.

Madam Speaker, we signed an agreement that will facilitate the establishment of medical tourism and provide some tertiary medical care for Caymanians. There was an HPV vaccine programme launched; a cancer registrar was appointed.

Financial, Madam Speaker, in some cases logistical support was provided to a number of international sports events such as CARIFTA, the Cayman Open 2010 Squash Tournament, the Cayman Islands Sailing Club race, Cayman 2010, and the NORCEA [North Central American and Caribbean Confederation] Beach Volleyball Championship. These are all good. And I know my friend, the Minister of Sports, is going to build on them.

We restructured secondary education to all through high school. The National Employment Passport programme was launched. And I think it is a good programme which was launched with Passport2Success for young people.

The University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI) was stabilised and a new college President

appointed. The absconded president, don't know where he is at. He's gone with \$300,000 plus of our money though, on credit card that he did not pay back—buying cars and jewelry for girlfriends, they say.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** You *ga* take blame for some of that too.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Oh yes, I guess . . . blame me if you will. But I wish they would do something about the situation.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Mm-hmm. Behave yourself.

Madam Speaker, we began the restructuring of the National Pensions and Labour Relations Office.

We fully started the low cost housing programmes. The Young Parents programme, the National Parenting programme and the Women's Resource Centre was integrated as a family resource centre which has eliminated duplication of some services. A Youth Therapeutic programme was established at Bonaventure House for young people with behaviour problems.

We completed the construction of the Government offices accommodation project. You never hear that you had to spend money on it you know, but we did. That's where the money came from.

We changed the catastrophic insurance policy to include all areas of the Cayman Islands, and I think there were some more changes made to it.

We have tried to help our people, Madam Speaker, by giving various duty concessions, whether they purchased a piece of land or they started a business. We gave as much as we could in CIDB (Cayman Islands Development Bank). There was effort with a \$10 million injection to CIDB.

We stimulated economic activity by facilitating the construction of condos on Seven Mile Beach.

Madam Speaker, we employed over 800 persons with the PRIDE cleanup programme for three years straight. And if they believe that that was not helping people at that time, they are making a big mistake. It did! I heard one radio host saying, *O-o-h, he is going to make them pull bush*. Well, I will tell you what, whether it is pulling bush or picking up trash or whatever it is doing, if someone gets a day's work today they ought to be thankful because they need it.

I think, Madam Speaker, there was a property acquired to house the Watering Place Post Office that was destroyed by Paloma. I think that was done in that time, the last four years, at Watering Place, the Creek.

Money was invested for a number of district roads.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Never got any in East End.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** They didn't?

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** No.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** I saw them build one whole highway up there.

I think they commenced the construction of MRCU Hangar; they upgraded the public beaches, including Smith Barcadere and Coe-Wood.

I think the public consultation of the Prevention of Gender Discrimination Bill was undertaken, and I believe passed.

We created a national weather service and even created ministerial councils. Boy, wasn't I criticised for that move being unconstitutional. What licks I took. Ha ha. How many you have today? Ha ha!

Madam Speaker, as I said, I could go on and on about accomplishments, but the record is there and politics is what it is. But people know.

Madam Speaker, tourism, in spite of taking it from, I think, \$29 million in 2008/09 Budget, \$29 million under the department, we've cut it down, I think to [\$]21 [million] or [\$]22 [million]. We had to live by that. But there were some cuts and some innovation. And I congratulate young Mr. Scott and his efforts.

And, tourism, I think, is still the best it has been in twelve years. It is still doing good. We depend on tourism, Madam Speaker, and so it is vital that a person's vacation to these Islands should not consist of imprisonment in a hotel. An excellent hotel should be the springboard yes, for the maximum involvement and enjoyment of the vacationer in our Islands. Golf courses, art galleries and art shows, restaurants and nightclubs, local cultural events, theatres, watersports and other sports events should all be conscientiously reinforced, developed so that the person on vacation becomes involved in all that is most attractive in our local culture.

Madam Speaker, some people complained. They complained that I was not doing anything about it because we did not have a Batabano every day of the week. But Cayman will never be that kind of destination. There's a lot more that needs to be done. But it will never be one such as Trinidad and Tobago, or even Jamaica, with all of their historical and cultural offerings.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** But, Madam Speaker, I still think that more advantage should be taken of Cayman's spectacular interior, and we do have that—our Botanic Park, Barkers National Park—where visitors can enjoy an attractive and unique environment. But also where small industries . . . small restaurants and such can spring up as valua-

ble additions to the economics of the industry and of the areas that they would be located at.

But coupled with facilities—programmes and development of tourism, Madam Speaker, must be proper training of our people so they can take advantage of this tourism industry I am talking about. And so we created the Tourism Council and asked people to serve on it to give me advice on how to move forward.

Madam Speaker, that was done and a report was made. And I added a few cents on liquor and cigarettes to be able to get funds specifically for training of our people and to give them a stipend monthly to really help them during their course of training. That was what that was all about. And I trust that the Minister is moving in that direction sometime soon. Training in industry, Madam Speaker, with some hands-on, a curriculum that includes a tourism programme and the educational component at the University College and perhaps a summer internship for high school students, Madam Speaker, is where we need to head now.

I first thought that we would be doing a separate institution but when the Council reported, they recommended the [University] College and training at the various hotels. My one concern was that you do not get the same training at the Westin (let's say) as you would get at the Ritz. So, there had to be some regularising of how that was going to be done. And they came back to me and said that could be done and so we made the agreement. That was going to be the programme and we would continue to build on it and ensure that the programme goes as wide as possible.

As I said, I believe we were collecting, or expected to collect, some extra \$3 million from the increase in fees on cigarettes. Someone saw me a couple of days ago (a visitor too) and said it was the highest they have ever paid for a pack of cigarettes—\$12.00. I said, *Are you going to stop?* They said, *No sir, I am still going to smoke.* I said, *That is what I suspected.* I wish I had put it to [\$]15.

So, Madam Speaker, I am hopeful that in those things that I am talking about in this way, training and development of facilities, our people will come increasingly to feel that they have a stake in the tourism industry, both from an economic point of view and in the sense that no exclusivity behind high walls, a good hotel, attaches to the vacationer.

Madam Speaker, we realise that the Cayman Islands' economy is based on services and the efficient and cost effective delivery of these services. We have competitors around the globe with new ones emerging every day. I keep saying that all the little islands that we used to talk about doing agriculture, are now are into international finance. They are now into tourism and they are probably trying to get it better than us. Not probably, I know they are. They are adding more and more to what they are doing.

So, in order to compete we ought to have work places of resilience, tranquility and productivity. The employer must deploy best practices of human resource management and the employee must also play their part by showing interest and commitment and also offering value for money as a critical input, which is their labour, to our economy. The current fragmented system that we have for labour, training and succession planning in these Islands, I think is tired. I think it is ineffective and has to be comprehensively overhauled. I am hoping that is the direction that the Government takes.

In order to achieve the goals stated above I think that we must immediately attend to a few areas, provide sufficient resources for the Department of Labour so that it can also assume the previous role of job placement as an interim measure along the long term strategy determined. Job placement is now performed by the new NWDA [National Workforce Development Agency]. They need to update the register of unemployed persons by doing district tours to register and meet with unemployed persons; amend the Immigration Law which is being done to rationalise the roll-over policy and do away with the key employee requirement; assess the strategies for ensuring security of tenure for expatriates and professionals while also ensuring that able and willing Caymanians are given the opportunity and development for upward mobility.

And that will take some doing. Madam Speaker, when we get to the Immigration Law we will see and hear more about that.

Madam Speaker, I think it would be good to host a national human capital symposium, a one-day event which will be open to the public, be broadcast by the media and will be a frank and honest conversation by a broad cross-section of stakeholders in our Islands. And if they need to bring anyone from outside, well, they do that to talk about any new kind of strategies that we might not be employing. But I think that it could be arising from the input and recommendations of any such symposium or meeting, whatever they want to call it.

There should be an amalgamation and the restructuring of the Labour Department to include the work permit secretariat of the Immigration Department. And I still do not think it should be left to one person. As I said, I will speak about that on the Bill itself. But that would put all subjects dealing with labour relations, workplace compliance, training and career development under one roof as opposed to the current system where sometimes the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing.

Some existing staff and computerised platforms and support systems of these two departments, Madam Speaker, I think can be joined where technology could be leveraged and proper senior leadership should be empowered to integrate that new and long overdue organisation, including inspections and enforcements. Immigration doing enforcement is not

working to that extent. Yes, they do a job, a good job. But I think put it all under one as far as I am concerned.

We need to upgrade our technology systems and immediately improve access to and the integrity of labour market information data. We must work with all of the stakeholder groups, including the Chamber of Commerce. Yes, I am including them—as hypocritical as they can be. Also, relevant professional and trade associations and the employee and worker representatives, the media, the Cayman Islands Society of Human Resource Professionals, and the existing regulatory agencies. This would be confirmed, I think, in a symposium that I am talking about.

We should initiate a national training initiative and seek international funding and resources to assist us with that. We should examine all options to provide incentives to all companies that participate and support the new human capital strategies and goals. And some of these incentives may include cutting red tape, Madam Speaker. But that needs to be done too. And so, in a holistic fashion to support this comprehensive thinking, we should embrace existing and new programmes, such as the Top Employer and Best Places to Work Initiative of the CISHR professionals, the Investors in People Programme, and the proposed Employer Accreditation System which was proposed by the IRT [Immigration Review Team] last year.

Madam Speaker, we ought to know we have to move forward with capacity building of our people. Working with all stakeholders and drawing on international best practices expertise as necessary, we should develop strategies to retool and transform Caymanian workers—again, to be the best in the world, in order to ensure the competitiveness of the Caymanian economy and also to ensure that businesses can profit and remain in Cayman for the long term. In developing the capacity of Caymanians we should devise strategies to build a better work ethic, better life and family planning skills of our young people.

Give them a zeal for training and development, a spirit of competition and resilience and a passion for excellence, Madam Speaker. That strategy should also require a new mentality and up-skilling of human resource managers and practitioners to give them the best practices and cutting edge tools to manage people and to bring out the best in them.

This new environment I am speaking of, Madam Speaker, coupled with the training initiative and [funding of] an employer accreditation system, which I already mentioned, will create the bulwark for a holistic and effective workforce and workplace, as well as an investor-friendly economy with a workforce which is ready to compete in an ever-increasing global market place.

We should also put in place, Madam Speaker, various measurements to test the effectiveness and value for money or return on investment of this new

and important national human capital development strategy.

So, Madam Speaker, there is much thought today given on the matter of work permits and the matter of labour relations and how do we train our young people. What I have said here, Madam Speaker, I think we need to pay some attention to it. Not to say that they are going to do everything that I ask or anything at all, but I hope they can get some sense of what I am talking about.

Madam Speaker (before I close because I am just about there), there has been a letter to written to persons selling coconut water, conch shells, drinking water, sodas, et cetera on the dock. And that has been going on for some time. Having written them they asked for them to be licensed and to have public liability insurance.

Madam Speaker, I have no problem with some kind of license, but certainly getting a \$2,000 annual premium insurance policy, public liability, surely it is not helping them. While we say, *Well, they should have that*, the fact is that the Port has some public liability and they could easily incorporate those people in that because they licensed them or they allowed them to operate there.

Madam Speaker, these are the smallest of business operators. We know some of them. And this is all the income they have. And where there needs to be proper regulation, it should be minimum and not as strangulating as that. I know people that that is all they live on. If they sell 20 coconuts a day at \$3, that is \$60 a day; \$300 a week if they do it every working day. And they can only on the days that the cruise ships are there. We are not helping them when we put strenuous regulations for them to comply with.

Madam Speaker, to try to help them there was a proposal to do that in the former Ministry of (I think) District Administration that had responsibility for parks and so on. And the scope of that was to deal with the Seven Mile Public Beach, the West Bay Public Beach and Coe-Wood Beach Bodden Town and those different places where people have taken their little carts (if you want to call them that) to operate.

And they have been told (and we don't want that to happen) . . . they say they don't want it to look like Jamaica. Well, it is not looking like anything. That really is no hurt to anyone because the truth is those persons do not get up into people's faces. They are there trying to sell coconut water or a soda. They are not pushing themselves. We did have a few problems, but that was straightened out and we made them understand that if they wanted to work and operate there that they were not going to operate in a bad way and damage our cruise tourism or our tourism product as it stands.

So, I think, Madam Speaker, introduce an enforceable licence arrangement and see how that works. Yes. Prepare and enforce a code of conduct, including disciplinary and grievance procedures. Yes.

Ensure that quality of services and of goods on offer by vendors are of an acceptable standard and quality. Yes. Carry out regular patrols of all locations to ensure high standards are being met at all times. I don't know who would do that. When you try to do that the Auditor General says it is not good governance, no matter how you get it done.

Anyway, Madam Speaker, those are the kinds of things I think those small operators can live with. And ensure at all times that traders comply with Trade and Business Licensing requirements and that their staff meet all Immigration requirements if they have Immigration requirements, and, of course, to comply with all applicable health and safety requirements for their respective business operations. These persons, Madam Speaker, if you see and know them, you understand that they are not big-time business people.

I know some businesses will say, *I got to get a licence and these people are stopping me from making any business*. Nah! Not so! Selling a few bottles of water down there and selling a few coconuts . . . who, out in those jewelry stores, sells coconut water unless it came from Taiwan or Thailand? Who? Nobody! It is a simple local business that some of these people who have nowhere else to turn . . . it simply, in fact, 'a hand-to-mouth operation', as the old people would say. And so we need to look at it to offer them some help.

Madam Speaker, I understand that . . . and, Madam Speaker, I know that some people approached others and some have been talking to some officials, I think, in talking to the Councillor for Tourism and he might . . . I think there is one company . . . because when I checked into it, some companies did not want to offer any public liability. They said that was a bunch of foolishness and to make the Port Authority do it and you pay them something. And I think that is what should be done because finding \$2,000 for some of them, not for all of them, it is difficult.

They manage to get from one company through the efforts, I think, of the Councillor. But I know when I inquired into it most of the companies said, *Nah, can't work. We don't want this*. And it is the cost that I am talking about. They are operating on the dock so they are part of the dock operations. It is easy I think, to add them to the dock's public liability insurance.

Madam Speaker, I understand that there is a more formalised system of asking civil servants to leave, and that is now in force. We know that over the years some people have been taking up the opportunity to discuss with the civil service machinery for them to go. There are people, Madam Speaker, who are 60-years-old that are not ready to go. They still have a lot left in them. And, Madam Speaker, when we have teachers who people already know, who feel, live and have their being with us, and you are pushing them out and you are taking in, Madam Speaker, someone of the same age or with less qualifications . . .

. I don't know about the classes. When you are doing that, Madam Speaker, I don't know how well that is going to bode for our country—to get rid of people whom we know, whom you can deal with. We already know their makeup to getting other people that you do not know.

Again, that is something I will talk about, because, one of the things we need to do is to have a real good check on [those] who are being given permits. That is one of the things that really have to be scrutinised seriously, because we have enough of our own bad people. We don't need anybody who is cantankerous to come here with all kinds of old *feyah-feyah* ideas to disrupt us from where we know we ought to be.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Selling numbers. That's all you hear about, selling numbers.

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** I don't know that. But—

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** I know it!

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** It is something, as I said, not for this discussion but for the one to come.

But I do say, Madam Speaker, that I am surprised, and I certainly cannot condone what I am hearing, because, it does seem that some curry favour is going on somewhere about. If they like you, you have an opportunity to stay whether you are 62 or you are 61. If they don't like you, they can't wait until your 60<sup>th</sup> birthday comes and you are going.

Now, what I hear, what has been told to me—some of which I do know myself, Madam Speaker—if that is what I am hearing, then, I hope that somebody will root it out. I do know of cases where it has happened. People at 60 have commitments.

The one thing about Cayman is that some people started to get something in life, Madam Speaker, very late in life. And some people at 60 still have serious mortgages. And if they can meet the requirements to do their job, they ought to be given that opportunity. That's all I say. You can't push people out when they don't know what is going to happen to them. Some of them still have children in school. They started late in life. And so, we have to examine it.

I don't know all the facts; I guess there are those who do.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** There are those who started over again. [Inaudible]

[Laughter]

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Madam Speaker, I opened by quoting Ernie Smith and

his song: "And as we fight one another for the power and the glory, Jah Kingdom goes to waste".

This here is my country where I was born, where I was raised, and where I hope to rest my bones with my ancestors when that time comes. I have nowhere to run to. I have one Cayman passport. So, Madam Speaker, I want to do what I can to help. Not to be a hindrance to anything or anyone. We all need to be cognisant that this country cannot afford four more years of fussing and fighting. We need sustainable development so that the hundreds of children coming out of school can get a job.

I only have one child now, Madam Speaker, and he is over 30 years old. And I never use my children as an example. I try to keep them away from the cut and thrust of politics. But he is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. But I have three grandchildren whom I am also responsible for. Your children, mine, and the thousands on the outside deserve an opportunity in the future. We must build the foundations that can ensure that we have a solid base for them, for as the years come and go, Madam Speaker, they too will have their issues. They too will have their problems, the good, the bad and the ugly of a Cayman Islands of the future.

Every time I see a child, every time I talk to a child, every time I am confronted with problems pertaining to a child, I remind myself of my responsibility to them—to do all I can for their betterment. Importantly, it is the here and now that we must improve and the Government has announced some things that I am very well in tuned with and support. But more so a solid foundation for their future; and that takes some work. But that must start now, for:

*And as we fight one another  
For the power and the glory  
Jah Kingdom goes to waste*

*We de people want fi know  
Just where we're going  
Right now we hands are tied  
Tied behind we back while certain people  
If and buttin'  
Where do we stand?*

*We have too far to go  
Not to really know  
Just how we getting there  
And if we getting anywhere  
We have too much to change  
Not to know the range  
Of possibility  
And changeability*

*Violence and crime is commonplace  
Within these sad times  
No man walks free  
Prophecy comes closer to fulfillment  
In ya disya dread times*

*Why should this be?*

*And as we fight one another  
Fi de power and de glory  
Jah Kingdom goes to waste  
And every drop of blood we taste  
A fi we own disgrace  
Can't build no foundation  
'Pon an if and a but  
Are we building a nation  
Or are we building a hut?*

*Can't build no dreams 'pon a fuss and a fight  
Me no care who a do it  
Jah say dat no right*

Yes, Madam Speaker, this song should resonate with us.

My purpose here is to work. I am not part of the Executive, I am the Opposition. But I am going to do my part to be a help, not to be a hindrance, for this *ya yard* is my yard and I have nowhere else to go.

**The Speaker:** Does any other Member wish to speak?

I recognise the honourable Member for the district of North Side.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller, Elected Member for North Side:** Madam Speaker, I do not normally quote scripture or Bible verses to start my debate on any subject in this honourable House, but since the Premier used Proverbs, followed by Socrates, followed by the PPM Manifesto, let me sum up my experience here on Monday by quoting John 11 verse 35: "Jesus wept."

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** I believe Caymanians are going to weep over this *ya Budget* that we are debating today.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** I thought it was good.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Madam Speaker, let me first of all congratulate Her Excellency the Governor, Mrs. Helen Kilpatrick, CB, on her able and fluid presentation. But oh, Madam Speaker, how I miss those white suits and those hats with the feathers in them!

Also let me offer my congratulations to the Honourable Premier, both his Policy Statement and Throne Speech were very powerful and loud messages to the people of these Islands—Caymanians who we are privileged to represent in these Chambers—not so much for what they articulated, but more importantly, what they did not say and what they ignored.

Crime is not mentioned in the Throne Speech until page 9, and [not mentioned] by the Premier until

page 7. And only as a kind of afterthought or interjection by the Governor's speech, I quote: "**The Royal Cayman Islands Police Service will continue to target serious crime through a variety of strategies, including a proactive task force that patrols vulnerable locations.**" I guess, Madam Speaker, I now understand why the pleas of the Member for East End and I go unheeded and we cannot get improved police coverage in North Side and East End.

Madam Speaker, our [communities] are under siege by a few burglars and robbers and a few teenagers tearing up the district in their cars with loud mufflers or no mufflers and just disturbing the tranquility of the good citizens and their private space and property. These have now become daily occurrences in my community. Even the police station got robbed.

[Laughter]

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Listen carefully to what I said, Madam Speaker: Even the police station in my community got broken into!

Why? Because that expensive asset owned by the Government is sitting there idle, unoccupied, unattended to. Here is the attention they pay to it: It is my understanding, Madam Speaker, that the police often work 12-hour shifts. And during those 12 hours a car might drive through East End, come into North Side, drive into the police yard, make a U-turn, go to the Kaibo, make a U-turn and come back through Frank Sound to Bodden Town, never to return again on that shift even if summoned by a constituent member of mine.

The residents, Madam Speaker, no longer bother to call the police. It is a waste of time. They often don't come. Most recently in one house they were robbed twice in one week. Before the police could do anything about the first robbery, they had the second robbery. They didn't bother to report the second robbery to the police. If you not doing anything about the first, you really think they are going to do anything about the second?

Madam Speaker, you would be hard pressed in my community today to find a single resident who has any faith, hope or confidence in the police. And, Madam Speaker, that might not bother the rest of us up in here because we are only concerned about *serious* crime. I try to meet with the police on a regular basis to offer them whatever help I can from the community or whatever support I can offer, and I am often told that they have limited resources and they have to deploy those in areas like West Bay and George Town where they have *serious* crime.

Madam Speaker, I can remember when West Bay and George Town had no crime. I do not wish to have my community go down the same route. We need—we want—adequate police coverage.

Madam Speaker, one police driving through the district in an air-condition car with the windows up

every 12 hours can hardly be described as adequate police coverage. I have been trying for four years! When they turn Frank Sound or when they cross the Queen's Monument coming from East End, turn the windows down. I don't care whether they keep on the air condition or not, I simply want them to be able to hear the members of my constituency asking for their help!

I have tried, Madam Speaker, to get the attention of one of those police [officers] who are in the car. And they wave as they pass on by on their cell phone. I have asked them to stop and talk to the people in the community. If they don't have the confidence of the community they cannot solve the crime.

Madam Speaker, the North Side community has tried very hard to assist the police. We went out and raised money and put up cameras to help the police before we had this humongous expenditure on cameras at a national level. We put the monitoring equipment in the North Side Police Station. It would be out for weeks and the police did not know because they did not go to check it! I asked them. All the seamen in North Side told me that the simple thing is to put in a log book.

That is how they ran the ship, right Arden?

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Yes!

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** You on watch, you better write your name down into that log book.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Yes!

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Just have each shift go to the police station, log the time they went into the building, log the time they checked the cameras, log whether they are working or not. It never happened!

The North Side District Council and I have organised extensive neighbourhood and watch programmes in all areas of the district. We have one district coordinator for the whole district. She does a great job. We have asked the police to let her sit in the police station from 10.00 until 3.00 so that there is a warm body there. She can use that time to communicate with her area coordinators to improve the neighbourhood watch programme. We've had some success.

Madam Speaker, it would take me the rest of day to tell you the rigmarole they have put this respectable woman through! All she is going to do is to answer the phone and if somebody shows up she will take a note and call Bodden Town or George Town and report what is going on.

Can't get it done!

We offered to help them create a Special Constable Force in North Side. The only requirement we wanted was that these people are for North Side. We would help police North Side. We don't want to be assigned to any other district. Madam Speaker, I



wonder how many Members of this Parliament ever asked for and looked at the application form to be a special constable. It is many, many, many pages long. I took the time to fill it out. They turned me down on the basis that I was a politician!

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** You are no longer qualified to hold a job in Cayman, boy.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** My understanding, Madam Speaker, from the most recent meeting with the hierarchy on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September, is that the Commander of the Eastern Unit—that is Bodden Town, North Side and East End, and remember now he is coming down to Spotts Newlands—has to bid!

Did you hear what I said? *Has to bid for resources for the eastern districts!*

And based on the crime statistics and the serious crimes that are going on in the other two districts, he does not stand a chance of getting anything!

The most recent success of capturing the armed robbers of Chisholm's Store . . . What it is they call that unit again—"Special Uniform Support Group"—that has the guns and the flapjacks and stuffs? They *nah* get there yet! The policemen from that Bodden Town Police Station had to go and arrest those people without any protection whatsoever, knowing that they had just committed an armed robbery!

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Drink your water and tell *um*.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** No, I lick salt; I don't drink water.

Madam Speaker, when the last Government disrupted the proceedings of this House to go into that committee room and meet with the Chief of Police and the Governor to determine what we could do to help solve the crime matters, and we agreed to provide them with large . . . I think it was some \$30 million if I remember correctly, in resources. One of the conditions [on which] the Member for East End and I supported that \$30 million, was that we were going to have a uniform support group assigned and committed to the eastern districts.

Nothing has happened!

Now, Madam Speaker, the only thing left for the people of North Side to do is to form our own police force. And I must tell you, Madam Speaker, that that is under active consideration.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** East End too!

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Because we the citizens of North Side do not intend to allow our community, because of lack of resources, to go the way that the other districts went!

The Chief of Police asked me what that meant. I said, *Sir, I am trying to convince them to only tie them up with some top thatch leafs until you get there. But I don't know what it means.*

Madam Speaker, what the people of North Side want, what the people of North Side need, what the people of North Side desire, and what the people of North Side must have, is police stationed at the North Side Police Station 24/7 to provide our community with security, protection, crime prevention and arrest and conviction where and when necessary!

Madam Speaker, I am tired of meetings and talking. The time for action is now. At least, if we take over the police station they are not likely to rob it if we are there.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Madam Speaker, I had hoped to see in the Throne Speech the announcement of some new strategies, including punitive measures for crime—like three strikes and you are out. And, Madam Speaker, you should be out for at least 10 years you know.

We have criminals in our community who have multiple convictions being given community service! And [they are] placed on electronic monitors. Madam, Speaker, I don't know where they are buying those electronic monitors and I don't know how much they are paying for them. But I know they are *nah* worth—as the old people would say—the paper they are written on. Because, Madam Speaker, the criminals have already figured out . . . All they do is to wrap them up in foil paper and go out and commit more crimes.

And we have people sitting in offices who are supposed to be monitoring these people, and they are quite comfortable that they have not moved from the spot for the last five or six hours so they must be sleeping. There are no police around to go and check. They know as well as anybody else that they have already made the trip to the Kaibo and gone back to Bodden Town because they have to come all the way down to Savannah too, you know! So, they know when to come out and they know when to stay in.

**The Speaker:** Honourable Member, is this an opportune time to take the luncheon break?

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Any time you wish, Madam Speaker, you are in charge.

**The Speaker:** We will suspend now for the luncheon break and reconvene at 2.15 pm.

**PROCEEDINGS SUSPENDED AT 1.00 PM**

**PROCEEDINGS RESUMED AT 2.17 PM**

**The Speaker:** Please be seated.

The House is resumed.

I will call on the honourable Member for the district of North Side to continue his debate.

**DEBATE ON THE BUDGET ADDRESS AND THE THRONE SPEECH TOGETHER WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY STATEMENT**

*[Continuation of debate thereon]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

When we took the break, Madam Speaker, I was having a few words to say about crime and policing and I had reached the point where I was talking about the monitors that they put on these convicted criminals to supposedly keep track of them and to deter them from committing other crimes.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** No, no this one was convicted. The one I am talking about was convicted and given community service, which was about at least his tenth offence over the last several years for burglary.

Now, Madam Speaker, he not only wrapped foil paper around it so that they cannot read the signal, he puts a plastic garbage bag over his foot and goes and get conchs and come to always sell them to me.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** You're the best soul to sell them to.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** No, I tell him I can't break the law.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** And, Madam Speaker, that might be kind of flippant but it is a fact. And when the people in the community see this kind of thing happening they blame me. They hold me responsible as their representative to make sure that we get some resources for policing our community. They tell me that is what they elected me to do.

They do not accept the fact that the police in, their superior judgment, gold command or silver command (whatever they call it) believes that it is more important to look at serious crime, such as murders, drug importation and distribution. And, Madam Speaker, I am not in any way trying to negate the fact that we have to deal with those. But in my community we need to nip this crime in the bud and we need to do something about it.

Madam Speaker, I know of no crimes committed that are not *serious* to the victims. And I feel safe in saying that what we are doing is not working to the satisfaction of the citizens we represent.

Madam Speaker, they say it is a matter of resources. Well, I believe that the good people of Cayman Brac would rather know that the people of North Side and East End, where their families and friends live, had a few police officers than spend \$550,000 to further upgrade their playing field which is already FIFA certified.

Now I feel comfortable that our neighbours (because we are the closest to them, geographically) would be quite willing to defer their playing field upgrade and give us a couple of police in North Side and East End to live in our police stations. And, Madam Speaker, I have even gone as far as to suggest to the police that since we have so many non-Caymanians in the police force, to give them the two police stations in North Side and East End to live in free. At least, if they know a policeman is living they are not likely to break in.

Maybe he might answer the door, or she may answer the door; or, if they are sitting in the kitchen looking through the back window at that area where we know and they know that the crime is being committed, they might see something and might catch somebody. But not even that will they do.

Madam Speaker, I was really hoping to hear more from the Premier, or at least the Governor in the Throne Speech, make some reference to something that will be done, some kind of proposals and legislations to increase the punishment for crime like robbery and burglary. And, Madam Speaker, neither made a single proposal and a review of the legislative measures for the 2013 Annual Plan and Estimates. Pages 31, 32 and 33 do not include any such legislation.

Now, Madam Speaker, I am going to deal with the judicial system later on, but just in case I run out of time, let me say here and now that I see the Governor lamenting the workload of the judiciary and that they need a new court house. Well, I am willing to help them with the workload. Send some of these thieves to jail for 10 years so that they are not back there again next year to give them more work.

Madam Speaker, what has the National Security Council been doing for the last several years? Just sharing gossip and cocktails?

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Because certainly, they should be aware of what is going on. Of course, we say with the statistics being published that burglaries and robberies are going down. Of course, they are going down, because the people in North Side are not reporting them! They are tired of wasting their time reporting them.

Madam Speaker, there are many in our community who holds the view that crime cannot be separated from the employment woes of Caymanians and their increasing feeling of being marginalised from

economic opportunity, particularly jobs, employment opportunities, and hope and faith in the system. The belief by my generation was that hard work, ambition, and determination could get us everything we wanted in life. Our young people today have lost hope, Madam Speaker, and are turning to crime to get what they want. And the first legislative action of this Government is to amend the Immigration Law to secure jobs for 1,500 expat workers and give them the opportunity to get PR and Caymanian status will not help build confidence and hope in Caymanians.

Madam Speaker, I will have a lot more to say on that Bill if and when it is tabled because I am still hoping that the Government will have a Saul-to-Paul moment and withdraw the Bill and let the people depart from here on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October. Because, Madam Speaker, bad management that creates an emergence for itself, should not allow us to raise their self-inflicted difficulties and problems to national emergencies.

These people knew two years ago what was going to happen. And for us to backtrack at the request or lobby of somebody—because I don't believe, given the campaign, that the Government is doing this all of its own initiative and violation . . . somebody is pressuring somebody do so something like this.

Madam Speaker we heard the Premier and the Governor say how they intend to help Caymanians with job placement and regulate employers. But a review of the Annual Plan and Estimates (APE) tells me something different: Job placement and employment services have gone up by [\$]200,000 only; employment regulatory services gone down by [\$]500,000. Something's wrong. Increased assistance to Caymanians to find jobs and increased control of the employers to employ Caymanians doesn't jive with reducing the budget by \$.5 million.

They say they are going to improve and increase immigration enforcement and make it harder to get PR status. But again, the APE says otherwise. Immigration enforcement reduced by [\$]21,000 over last year's vote. Processing of status and PR, up by [\$]140,000. That tells me we are going to reduce enforcement but we are going to increase the grants of status and PR. Or at least we are ramping up the resources to allow it to be done.

Madam Speaker, I heard the Governor say that they are going to reinvent the National Workforce Development Agency again. What a fancy title. I went there. I pressed that buzzer until my hand got tired. I changed hands and that hand got tired. I pressed it with the other finger until it got hot. Finally, somebody—who was a client to the agency was sitting inside looking into a folder—got up and opened the door for me so I got inside.

I got inside and hung around for 15 to 20 minutes and no receptionist, no staff member, came to ask me what I wanted. Finally, I saw one get up in the back and I said, *Hey, hey, hey, you work here?*

They said, *Yeah, but I'm going for lunch, somebody else will deal with you.*

'Someone else' came out and took a simple request. *I want to see the list of unemployed Caymanians related to what we call common labour. I need somebody that will dig fence poles, cut bush.*

[They replied], *We don't have any list of unemployed Caymanians.*

I said, *Certainly, you must have a list of people who are registered with you for unemployment.*

[They said], *No, no, no, but have you registered for a job with us?*

I mean this person was rather perturbed that I had actually disturbed them to ask them to do something. Not happy about that at all.

I said, *No, I only need the person for a couple of months.*

[They said], *Well, you don't understand that is not how the system works. You have to register it.*

[I replied], *I don't want to register it. I just want a phone number and a contact number for a couple of Caymanians who I can call to offer them this job to work for me.*

[He said] *No!* And he handed me a bundle of papers and said, *You go home and register this thing on the computer and if you do that today maybe we will get an answer for you in two weeks, and dismissed me.*

Every Government since the '80s has reinvented this wheel, renamed it, called it something else and it is worse today than when it was originally set up with Mr. Banks as a sole director and one clerk in terms of offering assistance to people in this country about employment. And we have spent hundreds of thousands if not millions of dollars.

All that we have heard for the last four years was: *Oh man we are getting this thing computerised. We got to have this thing a database that everybody can access. We are going to be able to match jobs to people.* Now we are going in because we have to reinvent it again. You know what the sad part is, Madam Speaker? The effect is very likely to be the same. Because until we as legislators are willing to commit to law what needs to be done, and to insist that it be done, we are always going to have these wonderful agencies of bureaucracy.

Mostly what they do is reduce peoples' confidence in their own competence by requiring them to fill out all of these forms.

You know, Madam Speaker, one of the things that I have done in my community on a regular basis is to have what these people in the private sector call "job fairs." I always invite the government department to send somebody out and, boy, they come and they have the forms piled up. And every one of those North Siders fill out the forms, gives them their passport, gives them their police record. I don't have knowledge of a single person being re-contacted to be offered a job by the agency. And it is the same people who say,

*But I filled this out six months ago. [And they are told], Oh, but you need to fill it out again.*

The last time I came I said, *Well you couldn't bring something to offer the people. At least you could have brought Friday's Compass which has some ads in it. And you could see if any of these people qualify for any of these ads and maybe you might help somebody.*

[They replied], *Well, now, Mr. Miller, you don't understand this thing. You know it don't work like that sir. We have to take this back to the office and put it into the system and we got to do this and got to do that and we got to do that and we got to do this.*

And it is like McKeeva's good friend from West Bay told the Planning Department. When they told him he needed a plan, he said: *A plan? I got plenty of them. What I need is a house.*

The people do not need to register, they need a job!

[Laughter]

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Right?

And, Madam Speaker, I spend time with some of these young people. Some of them I have found five jobs for in the last three years. Very difficult to work with, but we have to spend time with them.

I heard that a certain establishment in North Side was looking for some waitresses or waiters. I heard it by the by that they were getting ready to apply for some work permits. I spent a whole week with five young people teaching them role playing. We taught them how to dress for the interview, we taught them how to go on the Internet to find out about the institutions that they wanted to go and work with. We did all this stuff with them.

One kid was very concerned because he had just come back from the US with some IT qualifications, and he really was not interested in being a waiter but he needed a job. So, his concern was that should he tell them that he wanted to be an IT. I told him that of course he had to tell them that because if you lie it would be obvious in your countenance and the people will write you off.

Madam Speaker, if you were to see the glowing reports that the HR person who interviewed these five people sent to me, you would have to say that they would have to get a job. Everyone showed up on time, everyone was properly dressed, everyone answered the questions at the interview, everyone was very respectful, and everyone had sufficient knowledge for the job. Not a single one was offered a job.

When I started—and all those in here who don't like me to go on *Rooster* and talk, sorry but *un-nah* got to live with it—to expose it then, you know which one they called and offered the job to? The guy with the IT qualifications! Now ask yourself why. Because they knew he would leave as soon as he found

an IT job because that is what he wanted to do. He told them so! So when he leaves now they will go running to the Immigration Board and they will say, *We tried this Caymanian and he did not work out and we need ten permits.* And if you go down there now they got all of their permits. And the young people are getting fed up. The young people are getting discouraged.

At the last meeting I had in my community concerning crime and these same burglaries I was talking about a while ago, one of the persons in the audience who lives in Chicago, but is of Cayman descent, told the residents who live in the Cayman Kai area, that they needed to interact with these young people, they needed to show them respect, they needed to offer them employment because that is why they were reacting the way they did.

Not me. One of their own told them that.

And when they go down there and see all of these people enjoying the fruits of our land and they can't get into the door, what do we as legislators expect them to do? And that is not confined to the wage earners, Madam Speaker. That is the whole spectrum of employment in this country.

Up until last night I got an email from a person who was interested to be the CEO of Lime and basically they ignored his application.

I got an email from a Caymanian who is on a government scholarship, qualified in phlebotomy and labs [has] a master's degree in hospital administration—can't come back to Cayman because they can't get a job. We should be bending over backwards. We should be sending a charter plane for them! Those are the kinds of Caymanians we need back!

And if time permits I am going to deal with the HSA (Health Services Authority). I will guarantee you this: They need all the help they can get when it comes to administration. Here's a Caymanian who we should have brought back yesterday and made them VP up there in charge of support services. Has the technical background, has the management qualifications and we are giving them the run around.

You know, Madam Speaker, since I started this opposition to the Immigration Bill, and I have been meeting with people at my office, it is depressing and heartbreaking to listen to some of these Caymanians and what is being done to them by employers, you know.

I had one very articulate young lady who only wants to be a receptionist. Had a good job as a receptionist working in the medical field. But our government sees fit to import a specialist—when we have a Caymanian qualified as specialist who they wouldn't deal with, with their referrals. So she got laid off as staff because she cannot afford to keep receptionist. It tells me that she goes to these places, because she went to school in Jamaica, she talks like a Jamaican. I thought she was a Jamaican when she came to see me first. And everything in the interview is going per-

fectly good and normal until they asked her if she needs a permit and she said, *No I am a Caymanian*. The attitude changed right away.

Madam Speaker, if that was an isolated case we could say it is the individual involved. Sadly, Madam Speaker, that is not the exception to the rule. That is the normal rule applied to Caymanians today.

Madam Speaker, I told somebody a couple of weekends ago when discussing this same thing—before I was upset by the wonderful blond lady at my friend's dinner table who was brave enough to brag how she got a job as a bartender in Cayman and never worked a bar in her life ([she] bought a book in Miami airport about how to bartender and came here and got a job)—that one of my biggest regrets in politics is that the Leader of the Opposition fought and I so hard in the '80s to create labour legislation, partly to prevent labour unions because we believed, at the time, that if we had adequate labour legislation that protected Caymanians there would be no need for labour unions, and that the Caymanians would be all right in the workplace. But the same employers who were calling the police to put me and him off of their property, have abused and misused the labour law and successive Governments have allowed them to do so to disenfranchise Caymanians.

The employers have their associations. They can make their demands. They have their lobbies. And all we are hearing about is what the private sector—and when they say “private sector” now, Madam Speaker, that is not including employees, you know; that's the bosses.

So, Madam Speaker, what the Caymanian worker needs now is collective bargaining and support, not a new bureaucratic structure to intimidate them and challenge their confidence in their competence. We need a workers' association to do what the Government should be doing, and that is bargaining and legislating for supporting and providing opportunities for Caymanians in the workplace, and not for the employers.

In the absence of Government doing what it should, in my view, Caymanians have no alternative now but to form a Cayman labour association and do these things for themselves. Because they can isolate, they can pick off one or two of us (that is why they could run me and the Leader of the Opposition off of their land because it was only two of us). But if it is 500 or 1,000 of us, they can't do much about it. And some of these institutions around here are only going to understand industrial action because most of their management that is all they understand because that is where they come from. And that is the only thing that changes anything where they come from. And because we don't have it here, they have no generosity in them to provide better for the workforce.

Madam Speaker, another thing that was missing from the Budget Address, Throne Speech and the Statement from the Premier was any mention of doing

anything about these banks and their practices particularly when it comes to mortgages in Cayman.

Madam Speaker, again, when you see people coming to your office to talk to you about the situation they find themselves in, when they are losing their home that they have worked all their life to get, they have been paying their mortgage on time every month for 10, 12 years. Because of the economic situation, either they got laid off or downsized so therefore they had to take a job paying less and they can no longer make the payments on the mortgage. And the banks are doing only one thing—putting them on the street. They are foreclosing on their homes and taking them out.

I don't expect them who have done so well in this country to do anything socially or generously to help Caymanians. After all, they have a contract. The client signed the contract. Most of them never had any alternative at the time but to sign the contract. So, Madam Speaker, I believe we in this Chamber need to do something about these banks. And we need to, at the very least, legislate alternatives for the judges to use rather than simply foreclosing and that is the only option they have.

I believe that because of the situation we are finding ourselves in. Some of this, Madam Speaker, not only goes to the person, the mortgagee and their employment situation. Several of these people have mortgaged their house to send their kids to school. The kids are back, they have been back two years or a year with bachelors' degrees, masters' degrees but they cannot get any work. They cannot contribute to paying off the mortgage so the parents are about to lose their house, the grandparents are worried because when they lose a house then they do not have anywhere else to go but to move back in with them.

Madam Speaker, I understand that even the Government may be in trouble through the Development Bank with some of their people who genuinely got loans, genuinely could service the loan, if only the qualified Caymanian could get a job. What are we doing? Changing the law to let 1,500 (or whatever portion thereof) stay, and convert the glass ceiling to a concrete steel reinforced ceiling. Because the kinds of people who are going to qualify are the kind of people we do not want to qualify because we want upward mobility for Caymanians! We want to create Caymanian wealth! And opportunity!

The banks could take equity in the peoples' homes rather than foreclose so that if they foreclose a couple of years from now, when it is sold the bank will get paid its equity portion of the house, but at least in the meantime the people will have an opportunity to stay in their house and they and their children will not be on the street. And, Madam Speaker, none of these options increase the risk to the bank. In fact, most of these improve the opportunity for profit, granted over a longer period of time.

Many of these people are of the age that they could simply extend, renegotiate a complete mortgage and give them another 15 years and reduce the payment to something they can manage. What are we doing? Nothing! Not mentioned in the Budget Address, not mentioned in the Throne Speech, not mentioned in the Premier's Statement. I don't believe, Madam Speaker, that the only person they are complaining to is the Representative for North Side.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** The other thing is this, Madam Speaker: These banks . . . we have to do something about this asset that you have to put up because they will take everything you have plus anything your grandfather intends to give you. Then they want your personal guarantee.

And then you get people in a situation where the court will set the price on the mortgage for what the property can be sold for. The bank will then turn around and negotiate a private sale for some of their friends or otherwise, sell the person's assets for less than it is valued, for less than the balance that is owed on the mortgage, and hold the person personally responsible for the balance.

Now, Madam Speaker, I don't know of any bank in town that gives you any more than 80 per cent on the value of any assets when you are looking for a loan. Most of them are less. We are not in this situation that America and their housing finds themselves in where our people have mortgages that are worth more than the house itself. We can't possibly get above 80 per cent that I am aware of. But yet they insist that a person must give them a personal guarantee along with the asset which covers it by greater than 20 per cent you know.

So, where is the risk?

We as legislators, I believe, Madam Speaker, need to bring legislation to correct what I believe are inadequacies being imposed on our own people by these class A banks in this country.

Madam Speaker, I like the fact that the honourable Financial Secretary is addressing the spread on the money within government owned companies and statutory authorities. But what I don't understand, Madam Speaker, is how our Cayman Islands dollar can be fixed to the United States dollar and we allow the banks to charge more for it.

Now it is either fixed or it is not fixed. Now it is not fixed against the Euro or the Pound or the Jamaican dollar or the Trinidad dollar, except for variances on a daily basis. I speak subject to correction and I am not a banker or an accountant. But I always understood that the Cayman Islands dollar carried a fixed rate to the United States dollar, and it is more than. I was always told that a US dollar is worth 80 cents CI. I go into any bank in town with a one dollar bill and they will give me 80 cents. If I change my mind at the door

and come back and I want the one dollar back it is 84 cents.

Now the bankers have explained to me that . . . and I've been fighting this thing a long time, Madam Speaker. They started this in 1968, I believe, when they brought in the Cayman currency. The excuse then was that the Cayman Islands currency was a risk. It was a new currency at that time so it had to have protection. And, of course, the Government jumped on the bandwagon because if they convert the US at 84 cents they get more duty and send the cost of living up.

I believe if the honourable Financial Secretary took this thing one more step and say that Customs must convert—

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Minister of Finance. I'm sorry. Thanks for correcting me, I always need to be corrected and kept straight you know. I will wander at times.

[If the Minister of Finance] changes that to put in place, that Customs converts it at 80 cents, government revenue is going to go down but cost of living should go down a bit too.

Madam Speaker, I believe we have to stop accepting everything that the banks and the financial industry put in our laps as being good for us and we just accept it and our people suffer.

You know, Madam Speaker, I can remember when Sir Vassel [Johnson] was the Financial Secretary. In on every one of his Budget Addresses in the '70s and '80s this Gallery was full. Every lawyer in town, every banker in town was here. Sir Vassel did not go and ask them what they wanted. He decided what he was going to take, and they had to come here that morning to hear it. And they better had been here to hear it. How many of them you saw here on Monday when the Honourable Minister of Finance was delivering the Budget Address?

I never saw any.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Well the civil servants are always here.

The point is, Madam Speaker, that they must be very comfortable that nothing is going to happen down here that they have not already approved and sanctioned and agreed to.

And while, Madam Speaker, there's always room for consultation, there comes a point in time when the Government has to govern. And we are elected to govern on behalf of the citizens—and the Caymanians in particular—in this country, and not on behalf of the financial industry. We have been elected specifically to help our people, and we need to start doing it.

Madam Speaker, another glaring omission from all of this documentation delivered here on Monday is any reference to the Legal Practitioners Bill. What happened? [Is it] too hot of a potato for the Coalition Government?

What is the Government going to do about the 30-plus legally qualified Caymanians who cannot get articulated? Just forget about them and ignore all of those who are making money—millions—illegally employing persons who are not Caymanian lawyers to work overseas and send the money here?

Madam Speaker, it is unacceptable to me as a legislator, that successive Governments, for at least a decade, have allowed the political action groups of the large legal firms to hold the introduction of proper discipline, ethical and professional standards in the legal profession HOSTAGE to their economic game in other jurisdictions. And we plan to do nothing about it.

I wrote the DPP [Director of Public Prosecutions] in August last year. I quoted a section of the law that I thought they were breaking. [The DPP] passed the buck to the Attorney General who is responsible for disciplining them. I haven't heard from him yet.

But they are quick to run North Side when somebody calls them to say that somebody is taking five conchs out of the water. Or they are quick to run Cayman Brac with all kinds of resources if they hear a ganja boat is coming in. All good, all good, all good, all should be done. But we cannot turn a blind eye on what else is being done in this country at the expense of our own people!

Madam Speaker, have we all forgotten—or am I the only one that it troubled—the statement by the Chairman of the Cayman Islands Law Reform Commission at the opening of the Grand Court? We just threw that statement away, forgot about it, letting the lawyers go on their merry way, making their millions of dollars. And we have no concern about the potential reputation of this country, but we have almost \$7 million in the Budget to assist the financial industries when at my children's primary school the teachers have to ask the PTA to buy books for the teachers to teach from.

Madam Speaker, here is what I recommend to the Government—let's be a Government. Bring the 2012 Legal Practitioners Bill without the outsourcing and pass the law! Instruct the Attorney General to place before the DPP all persons who we believe are breaking the Cayman Islands Legal Practitioners Law now, and prosecute them. Let the courts decide. And such application should include their disbarment. That is what happened to that genius they had from London advising them on Tempura. Right? He got disbarred for the same thing. No?

That's okay! He was not involved in this thing that was making millions and millions and millions and millions and millions—billions according to the Chairman of the Law Reform Commission.

And here is the second thing they should do: Today place a moratorium on all work permits for lawyers until every Caymanian who is academically qualified as being articulated has a job. That's easy to do!

You all are the Government, do something about it!

Surely, Madam Speaker, following the Arab Spring, where the people demanded a part of their process and a share in the wealth of their country, it is time for the Cayman Autumn, to let Caymanians have a say and a share in wealth of this country. But we *ga* do something about it.

Madam Speaker, I am tired of reading emails from lawyers on the Legal Practitioners Law, pro and con. Not even the Conservation Bill was around as long as this. And, Madam Speaker, until we are prepared to govern these people and not let them govern us—who were elected to govern—the situation is not going to change. It is only going to get worse. It is getting worse daily, and we are just brushing it under the carpet, moving on down the street, hoping something will happen.

All of us and all of the Caymanian lawyers who are working, they are okay. But what about the ones . . . and, Madam Speaker, you know some of these people are our most brilliant people.

I happen to know of one young lady who has an undergraduate degree distinction from Brown University in Liberal Arts. Honours Degree from Cayman Law School. Did a PPC in England, and can't get articulated. And those are the kinds of people that we, as a Government, should be encouraging to get into the judicial field. We need some Caymanian judges. But, of course, our Caymanian lawyers go and apply there [and are told], *Oh well, you don't have enough experience, you don't have this and you don't have that.* But we bring them from anywhere about. And they practice their libertarianism on us by sending the multiple convicted criminal for stealing in North Side back to North Side on community service with an electronic monitor that does not work.

Now, Madam Speaker, I am not one who believes that the success, efficiency, effectiveness or goodness of a Government should be measured by the size of its projected surplus. I believe a large surplus can be an indication of over-taxation or denial of service, both to staff and to the general public.

Madam Speaker, I believe a \$100 million surplus is too much. But I will also subscribe to strict expenditure control which can produce such a large surplus. But, Madam Speaker, what I would like to see us do here with this Bill is amend this Appropriation Bill to ring fence [\$]75 million out of that [\$]100 million in cash reserves. Because if we do not do that, we know what is going to happen. Either the Cabinet, through the privileges it has under the PMFL to spend up to 10 per cent of the expenditure, is going to allocate it to those departments that deliberately or incompetently under budgeted and need supplementary, or they are

going to spend it on their pet projects. That's politics. Nothing wrong with that!

But we know that for compliance to the PMFL we need to substantially increase our cash reserves. So, let's be bold. Let's be brave. Let's think about our people. Let's ring fence [\$]75 million to [\$]100 million and add it to the cash reserves at the end of the year so that it cannot be spent by the civil servants who may have under budgeted (for whatever reasons) just to help balance the Budget, because we know that they would spend it.

Madam Speaker, I heard that they spent some buying some iPads for us Members here, long before the rules could be changed to allow us to buy them. In my view, that is misappropriation of money. I don't recall any funds being authorised in any Budget to buy iPads for Members of this Assembly. And I can promise you, Madam Speaker, I am going to write the Auditor General about it and demand an investigation.

I have said and put it in writing, Madam Speaker, that if the Parliament agrees to go to laptops in here, I will do with my laptop what I do with my paper, pencil and book—buy my own. Because these are the kind of things that add up and rope us all into wrongdoing. There are processes to be followed. We cannot, on the one hand, be complaining that everybody else is not following processes, but we are not setting an example by doing the right thing ourselves.

Now, Madam Speaker, another omission from the Throne Speech, the Premier's Statement and Budget Address was any reference to the separation of the Legislative Assembly from the Executive. We, as Representatives on behalf of the people we represent, need to get the people's House in order. This is a fiasco. This is being run like a fish shop. The rules are being ignored. We understand the separation of powers doctrine, Madam Speaker. But that does not just refer to the administration and the judicial; it talks about the legislative arm of government being independent as well.

I am ashamed to be a Member in this House the way we are running this. And we have no commitment to make any changes! Not mentioned in the Throne Speech. They talk about good governance? The only phrase more used than that in Cayman is, "I love you." And that has about that much meaning.

It has to be a disgrace, Madam Speaker, that we as 18 Members cannot sit in a week or less and make our Standing Orders compliant to the 2009 Constitution. We have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars over the last decade travelling all over the world studying Standing Orders, making reports and what has been done? Zero! zilch! Nothing! We need to separate the Legislative from the Executive and the Judiciary system.

The only checks and balances on a runaway Executive is this Legislative Assembly. But the Executive in the Civil Service is running this entire Parliament at its convenience and under what rules it

dreams up today. We are not talking about rocket science nor are we talking about reinventing the wheel. There are many countries that have legislation we can adopt. We can sit down in that committee room in a week, two hours a day, and make the necessary changes and bring the legislation to separate the Legislative Assembly from the Executive—and we should have it done to start 1<sup>st</sup> January. But no attention is being paid to it at all.

Madam Speaker, the now Premier and myself complained for the last four years up in here about the way things were being done. I voted, as the Leader of the Opposition can tell you, against every suspension of Standing Orders that came down here to bring a Bill forward. The Standing Orders say I must be here at ten o'clock, I am here at nine; I leave at 4.30. They come here . . . this month it didn't start until something to eleven. And then I hear at 4.30 this evening that *unnah* going to suspend Standing Order to go onto seven. Why?—because it is convenient.

We can't even sit down as the 18 of us and decide on four meeting dates for this Legislative Assembly for the Session. We get notice that is sent out totally ultra vires of the existing Standing Orders. Questions require 10 days, motions require 5 days. I got a notice for this Meeting, three working days. And we have been planning this Budget Meeting from June. Right?

We have a whole slew of legislation in here, but no dates, no timetable.

Madam Speaker, how can anyone in Government, or others, function effectively and efficiently without target dates which drive their timeframes and the critical paths for policy development to address issues and establish legislative timetables to turn policy into laws to effect change for our people? I'm tired of hearing, *Well, it has been done that way for the last two administrations so I don't see why I can't get on with it too.*

We owe it to ourselves and to the people we represent to run the place efficiently and effectively. How is the staff of this place supposed to plan their vacation when we just arbitrarily decide that, *Oh we are going to have a meeting next week.*

It is not too difficult to sit and say we are going to meet the 14<sup>th</sup> February, the 2<sup>nd</sup> May, the 15<sup>th</sup> September, and then you can plan your ministerial work. If you want to bring employment legislation, your target date might be March. You know what your timeframe was working back, what time you need your policy in place, what time you have to have your drafting instructions approved by Cabinet, what time you are going to bring legislation back to Cabinet for approval, but it has to be published 21 days before as required. Nothing we have before this House has gotten 21 days. None!

The Constitution is very specific. It says 21 days before the start of the Meeting. The Meeting started last Monday. Unless somehow we are going to



work here, finish the Budget debate, we have to finish Finance Committee, we are going to finish the report on Finance [Committee] and we are going to terminate this Meeting and start another Meeting before the 28<sup>th</sup> October to deal with Immigration legislation. Maybe that is why you all want to work late. I guess again, the other government did it until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning so why can't we.

None of us, Madam Speaker, can do justice to anything put on our desk after six, seven or eight hours work which we are working. And none of us can do justice to the people whom we represent down here, twelve, one, two, three o'clock in the morning talking about we are reviewing legislation or budgets.

Madam Speaker, I know I am going to get another lecture from the Premier on his inclusiveness and my selfishness and me abrogating my responsibilities because I dare to mention these uncomfortable truths of the 21 days' notice of the Bills as a constitutional requirement. But, Madam Speaker, what people are going to say about me does not bother me. I learnt [from] a long time in politics how to deal with that. And, Madam Speaker, it is time to do the right thing.

There is no national emergency in immigration legislation. The employers have created a problem for themselves, let them sort it out. But no, they come knocking on the door, we open it wide, we let them in and we give them everything that they want to the disadvantage of our Caymanians.

Now, Madam Speaker, I do not know under what condition the Premier has appointed his councillors. But I know that it seriously affects the authority of Parliament. I do not know whether or not they are bound by collectively responsibility or not, but seven and four is eleven, and the eleven out of seventeen with one sitting in the chair, is totally impossible to get a two-thirds of the majority to vote against them.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** The previous Government, Madam Speaker, told me that they were using section 54(6) to appoint their councillors. And, Madam Speaker, they appointed two. I objected, and the Leader of the Opposition (now Premier) objected that it was not authorised by the Constitution under the section that they claimed. Right? But what have we done? We have now doubled the transgression. We appointed four.

Madam Speaker, I want to read what section 54(6) of the Constitution says, and I quote: "**A Minister charged under subsection (1) with responsibility for the conduct of any business of the Government may be assisted in the discharge of that responsibility by a board, committee or other similar body consisting wholly or partly of persons who are not public officers, and established by a law made under this Constitution, or by directions in writing given by the Minister concerned; and**

**any such body shall have such advisory consultative administrative functions as may be conferred by such a law or directions, but, in exercising any such functions, the body shall be subject to the directions of the Minister concerned."**

Madam Speaker, you noticed that I did not mention the word "councillor" I had assumed that the Ministers were doing it by directive as opposed to by creating a law. They can do that. But it has to be a body. And I don't think in this Constitution . . . again, I ain't a lawyer. They have plenty more lawyers here than me. But a body usually means more than one person or it would say "the person."

Now, Madam Speaker, I only have one question: How do those people who accepted these appointments as councillor, reconcile their oath of office as Members "according to law so help me God" in the 2009 Constitution as the highest law in the land?

I will say this, Madam Speaker: I do not really blame the four people who are newly elected people who have gotten appointed as councillors. But they have enough experience over there on that bench which should not be guiding these people wrong. Now, Madam Speaker, let me make it clear. I support the appointment of junior ministers. But let us do it properly by amending the Constitution to properly authorise the Premier under section 49 to appoint up to four junior ministers. And in order to retain some form of balance and authority for the legislature, make it clear that they do not sit in Cabinet and they are not bound by collectively responsibility.

Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, seven and four is eleven. And if they are all bound up under collectively responsibility, there is only one person left over there to vote against them if he sees fit. And that cannot be good, Madam Speaker, for democracy in this country, or for good governance.

Madam Speaker, the most glaring thing left out of the Throne Speech, the Premier's statement and the Budget Address is any mention whatsoever of the introduction of one man, one vote, and single member constituencies. Now every person in the present Government campaigned to bring this in as the first order of business; got to have it done.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Right?

Now . . . well this is your first year. This is for this whole year. These are the plans for your first year and it is not mentioned so you have no intention of doing it in the first year. And then when we get to the second year we will hear another story and then the third year, *Oh it is too close to elections now, we can't change it again, because we like that block vote.* Every electoral district in this country except one voted largely in favour of one man, one vote.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** We need a referendum.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** My district voted six to one. We already got it.

But, Madam Speaker, you see, I hear. The press has come to me and said that the Premier has said that he cannot bring it in now because he has to do another Boundary Commission before he can bring it in. Now, Madam Speaker, if that is true, that is the lamest excuse you could ever hear, because every new voter who was registered for the last election was registered to a constituency. No need to complicate things. No need to delay. No need to not do it because you need another Boundary Commission. Totally unnecessary!

But again, the fact that it is absent from this, I question the commitment of the Government to bringing in single member constituencies, one man, one vote, for the next election, which, by the way, Madam Speaker, I would prefer to be held in November 2016. I am prepared to give up my six months.

Everybody else up in here [who is] prepared to give six months, raise your right hand.

I only see three . . . four.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Franz did not raise his hand.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Because, Madam Speaker, the reason we changed the government's financial year was because the election was in November and the financial year started in January, and there was always this problem to get a budget done.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** I don't have a choice, just November.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** I could say that I would prefer November 2<sup>nd</sup> because that is my wife's birthday, but I would not be so presumptuous.

But we changed the financial year because of the conflict with elections. We all know that having it in May was because of Hurricane Ivan. It is time to go back to November . . . because it has to be cheaper to move the election than to move the financial year.

And we have to admit that what we are doing now is what we try to correct by moving the financial year—at great expense to this country—to try and correct. But again, only four persons put up their hands that they are willing to give up the six months.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** I'm just getting started old boy. Go and get something to eat. It is going to be a while

this evening. I haven't started to deal with what I support in the Budget Address yet. I am just dealing with what is missing.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Madam Speaker, another urgent matter that is not addressed or mentioned in passing in any of this documentation, is any commitment to the introduction of a minimum wage. Madam Speaker, you and all Members know I support the introduction of a minimum wage as a matter of urgency and one that I believe is of great national importance and significance. The Government must take legislative action to stop the importation of poverty. Caymanians are quite capable of growing our own poverty. And without the minimum wage, that is exactly what we continue to do.

Madam Speaker, I do not know what a livable wage is or how one will be calculated, nor am I aware of any modern developed democracy that has a living wage in lieu of a minimum wage. I know what a minimum wage is—it is the figure below which no person can be hired. And I do not know of any modern developed country that does not have one.

But all of the opponents are quick—particularly the business people—to oppose it because it will be inflationary and increase the cost of living. This may be so. However, Madam Speaker, in my humble view, any employer paying their employees less than \$5 per hour to increase their profits, is less than worthy. Because all of us know that you cannot live any kind of decent existence in Cayman making \$5 an hour.

Madam Speaker, what is being ignored by the opponents of the legislative induction of a minimum wage is the deflationary effect on Caymanians' salaries and wages because employees are allowed to import cheaper labour through the work permit process. Madam Speaker, this is happening both in the professional levels and in the skilled wage earners.

Ten years ago we were advertising accountants at \$50,000 a year. Today you will see ads for \$30,000. That is the kind of deflationary effect that not having a minimum wage has on the community. Thirty to 40 years ago we were paying and advertising waiters and bartenders at \$8 to \$10 an hour, and if you gave them a dollar they would put it in their pocket; it was theirs, they were not sharing with anybody. Today it is less than C\$4.

And, Madam Speaker, when they were making \$8 to \$10 an hour as bartenders, a beer was \$1 and a mixed drink was \$1.50. Today a beer is anywhere from \$6 to \$8 on Seven Mile Beach. A mixed drink is \$10 and up, and we are paying less than C\$4 an hour. Something's wrong with that picture.

We all know that a gallon of milk, a steak, a can of corned beef, anything at the supermarket cost one hundred times today than what it cost in the 70s.

But, Madam Speaker, while the cost of living is constantly increasing and eroding Caymanians' disposable income there is no pressure on the employer to increase wages for salaries to retain Caymanian talent. They simply ignore and mismanage the Caymanian talent because they can then use their mismanagement of the Caymanian talent to convince the Immigration Board to grant them more work permits because the Caymanian workers are not working out. And they simply get a permit for a cheaper person.

You can have this discussion with people, and they can't understand why somebody would go and take out a permit because the permit costs money. But when you look at the difference in the salary of what they pay the work permit worker and what they would have to pay a talented Caymanian, you understand why. Because their savings and their effect on the bottom line by hiring the cheaper labour is greater than trying to keep the Caymanian, because, to start with they do not have to pay pension for them for the first nine months you know. So, that is 10 per cent of the salary saved right there.

What are we doing? We are proposing as a Government to allow the TLEPS to stay beyond the 20<sup>th</sup> October, of which they all were well aware under the law that they had to leave.

Now, Madam Speaker, let me turn to some of the things in the Throne Speech that I can support and that I like. But I don't like this one.

Madam Speaker, one of the most alarming things said by the Governor here on Monday morning was her statement earlier in her presentation where she declared that the Economics and Statistics Office has reported the largest increase in the cost of living since the start of the global recession in 2008. And, Madam Speaker, that is particularly alarming, given the current economic climate, and given the erosion of peoples' income, as no employers are making any effort to help Caymanians maintain their level of disposable income. Rather, they prefer to maintain their bottom line, even if they have to import cheap labour through the work permit process.

Madam Speaker, what I do not see in all of this documentation is any commitment by the Government to look at the cost of living and the erosion of Caymanians' disposable income, and whether they are going to get some salary increases, or otherwise, to assist them, and the owners make a little less profit but the whole economy grows because the person has a little more disposable income that they can spend in the economy.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** If it takes it, yes.

Madam Speaker, I like the Honourable Minister of Finance practicing practical prudence. I believe that some of the things he has in this Budget will prevent Government having to contribute further to the

rising cost of living through increased taxation. And I think that is a good thing.

Now, Madam Speaker, another matter that the Governor raised in her Throne Speech was the judiciary and the need for a new courthouse. Madam Speaker, while I agree with the need for a new courthouse, there has to be something wrong with the equation where this country could build a new courthouse when we had about 10 lawyers struggling to make a living. Now we have 500 lawyers making millions of dollars per year but we cannot afford a new courthouse. Yet, in many respects they benefit directly from the image and standard of our judicial system and its functioning in an effective and efficient way. And in order for it to function in an effective and efficient way, it needs good physical plant or a building to work from.

You hear of them retiring with millions and millions of dollars but you do not hear about any of them having any social conscience or commitment to Cayman to want to set up a foundation to build us a courthouse—from which they are going to profit, not the ordinary citizens of the Cayman Islands.

As I said earlier, Madam Speaker, I can help them with the workload. All they need to do is to put that liberalism in their back pocket and sit on it. When those thieves from North Side come to them, give them 10 years so that they do not have to deal with them for another 9 or 10 years. Do not give them a year, they get out in nine months for good behavior, they steal again and they are back before the year is out. Most times they deal with twice in one financial year. In the meantime the community is being held hostage by them. And everybody is afraid to leave their door open and everybody is afraid to come out of the house because they do not know what is going to happen. And these people are riding up and down the streets with their electronic monitors on wrapped up in silver paper and the police do not know where they are.

Madam Speaker, I agree with the proposal by the Minister of Community Affairs to review the Poor Persons Regulations and the proposed separation of the services provided by the DCFS [Department of Children and Family Services], especially in the Needs Assessment Unit, because something has to be done to quantify these 8,000 to 9,000 people. This country cannot sustain that kind of thing.

The only thing I would like to recommend to the Minister responsible is that we introduce a back to work programme for all of the people who are on the dole from Government. And, Madam Speaker, I will confess this is not something that is their problem only. I faced this as a minister in 1989. When I went to the Social Services Department they showed me how they picked people apart and how they provided them with help, but nobody never showed me how to put them back together to get them back into the community as productive workers.

We have now created over that span, this dependency mentality where some people tell me quite frankly, it is better for them to be on social services than it is to work, because they are better off. I had one guy tell me that he is living like a king. I said, *How do you mean you are living like a king?* He said, *Well, the government is giving me \$550 a month to buy all the liquor I want. I get three meals a day from the best restaurants in the eastern districts. You telling me that is not living like a king, paid for by government?*

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Don't need any.

So, Madam Speaker, I support the review of that. We need to set some targets of the things that we need to achieve. And Social Services support should be timed barred with requirements to get back to work on assistance to get a job. But you see to get them a job you have to step on the toes of some of these people who lobby the Government to get more permits because it is cheaper and it is more profit in having permits than having Caymanians work for them.

And, Madam Speaker, here it comes again—the Government is promising us a review of the Public Management and Finance Law (PMFL) and the Financial Regulations. Now, I don't know of anything that has been studied, has been promised amendments, and has created more problems in a country than the Public Management and Finance Law. And yet, Madam Speaker, we cannot seem to sit as parliamentarians and make the changes that we know need to be made.

I brought a motion three years ago. The then Premier (now the Leader of the Opposition) told me not to worry. [They told me to] sit down and shut up, they were going to do it by June. Nothing was done. They brought in a Mr. Luck (I think his name was). His report has not seen daylight. We have at least two, if not three, civil servants who have done their masters' degree thesis—

**The Speaker:** Honourable Member, you have 15 minutes remaining.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** —on the problems of the PMFL.

But the only amendments we have made to date are, in my view, worse than it was before we started.

Madam Speaker, we all know that it is not working. What is the proof that it is not working? We haven't had a set of accounts from the Government since it was implemented. We have spent millions of dollars on personnel. We have spent millions of dollars bringing in staff to help them. We have spent millions of dollars on implementing it. We have not produced a single set of government financials that could be audited and get a certificate unqualified from the

Auditor General. If we need any more evidence than that, that something is not working, then, Madam Speaker, I don't know what else we could possibly do.

Now, Madam Speaker, I also see that the Governor says that we are going to have a new focus for the Cayman Islands National Insurance Company on eligibility and medical software. Madam Speaker, that is not the problem with CINICO. They could give them every computer programme that Microsoft or Apple ever wrote but the problem is in the existing health insurance legislation.

A year ago when I told the then Minister of Health that what he was doing to the Health Insurance Law was going to be inflationary, it was going to double the cost of insurance and it was not going to help the people, he told me that I did not know what I was talking about. They waited until I went to East End and they passed all of the laws when I was not here so I could not debate them.

Until the Government is prepared to correct the National Health Insurance compulsory legislation, we are going to be spending millions and millions and millions of dollars. While we allow the private health insurance companies to take off the *crème de la crème*, make the profit and when you get 60 you become a ward of the government and we got to cover you.

And then we allow them to refuse to insure persons who are uninsurable. The excuse they gave me in 1990 that they could not do it was because the parent company in America did not do it. Ask them if they heard about "ObamaCare." They are doing it over there now. They can't use that excuse anymore. We allow them to throw out the high risk people and government willingly takes them into CINICO. And we are satisfied with (what's it?) a few dollars (I don't remember the exact number) . . . five or ten dollars depending on whether it is a group or individual or family, to cover the high risk people.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Well, if they can't cover it for a premium of \$450 to \$500, or \$600 or \$700 that they are charging some families, I know of some instances of where a family is now paying \$1,500 a month for health insurance—

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** They can't pay for that. You can rest assure that government cannot handle it for \$10.

Madam Speaker, that is nonsensical. There is no need to do that. Put the onus on them and make them practice proper group health insurance. Most of the people they have insured in the private sector companies are below the age of 40; healthy people. And they get one Caymanian who get diabetes or high blood pressure or need a heart treatment and they

throw them to the side and tell them they cannot renew their premium and they have to go to government. It is no wonder that the government is going broke paying for overseas healthcare.

But you listen to the lobbies of the private health insurance companies, making no money. You know, Madam Speaker, I went to their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, and I listened to how they were all losing money and everything else. So during the little coffee break I went to the big presenter and said to him: *I really need to know if that stuff you have up on that board there and if losing all of this money is true, because my family and I have shares in that company and if you are losing money I want to sell them today.*

*[He replied], Oh no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, you have to understand you know that the company is making money. But you know we can't let this thing get out of hand.*

And, Madam Speaker, the whole point of insurance is spread risk. Most of the people you have are healthy. We got one or two people . . .

You know when I introduced national health insurance in the early 90s—of course, they threw that out, along with pensions—the plan was that the two would dovetail. Part of your retirement benefit would be that you would stay on your employer's health plan because you would benefit from having the reduced risk of having the young people who are healthy working in the company. And even if they took 50 per cent of the health insurance premium out of your pension, you would still be better off to having no insurance at all or becoming a ward of the state.

Madam Speaker, I see where the Minister of Health is going to look for a partner for the HSA to improve what the HSA can offer, and to upgrade the training. I left that in place in 1992, because we had one institution that we were dealing with for overseas tertiary care. We had a contract. Part of the contract included them training Caymanian physicians, nurses and technicians at their institutions, and it included them coming down here at least once a month to provide seminars et cetera.

But, Madam Speaker, I think they are going to need a long powerful spyglass to find a reputable medical institution that is going to want to come and partner with what we have up there now. That is high risk. And this utopia of chasing after accreditation is expensive and is not going to solve any problem—wrong road to go down.

Things we need to do: We need to introduce pay review medical audit. We need to reduce privileging the physicians according to their credentials. That means that the surgeon who is a qualified board certified surgeon, not doing obstetrics. The person who is board certified in obstetrics is doing obstetrics.

We need to release the medical and stop paying them fixed salaries. Privilege them and credential them and put them on a fee for service. They tried it sometime ago. They were in the right church but in

the wrong pew. We have to make some changes to what we are doing.

Anybody invited up there now to look at that institution, the amount of mould and cobweb on the outside of that, they are going to turn back from the parking lot. And, Madam Speaker, our people deserve better. We are spending the money, but without pay review, without medical audit, without credentialing and privileging we are always going to be settling lawsuits for that institution—with the gag order. Because they know that once they put the gag order on it, the general public knows not what happens. Therein lies a risk.

And, Madam Speaker, I do not talk about things that I do not know, because my most recent experience with that institution is hopelessly, hopelessly terrible where they wrongly diagnosed a patient, scheduled them for surgery to remove their organ and the next week, with a very flippant dismissal—*Oh it will not be that life-changing, you will only have to eat six small meals a day instead of three.* Luckily, she was connected to me. And I went up there and I said, *No, no, no, no, that is not happening,* and insisted that she must be allowed to get a second opinion.

And this is where, Madam Speaker, pay review would cause people like them who do those kinds of things, and medical audit, to lose their licence and go back home.

We need a proper medical staff organisation where the chief of staff is elected from among the staff so that he commands a respect of the staff. He is not a civil servant who is paid to ride roughshod over the physicians up there. And, Madam Speaker, as I told the new chairman of the board, I am not the greatest expert in healthcare administration that ever lived, but I've been around it a little while. And if I could be of any assistance to them I would be. I told the last minister that. He paid me no mind. I'm telling this one now publicly. If I can give him any advice, if he asks me, I will give him my best professional advice. It might not necessarily be what he wants to hear or what those people up there are telling him, but if he asks I am going to tell him. But I am also going to tell him that he is not going to get the free ride the last one got.

I am going to hold his foot to the fire, because, Madam Speaker, when I sit here knowing how myself and others who went into the medical field in the early 70s and 80s worked so hard to raise the standard of healthcare in this country . . . to see it destroyed in one fell swoop by an amendment to legislation to suit one investor—who is only doing what they are doing for profit . . . And, Madam Speaker, they passed it when I was not here. But we are going to revisit it in the very near future, that organ transplant legislation.

I don't intend to sit here idly and let people embarrass my beloved country internationally just for their own gain, because, Madam Speaker, trading, buying and selling of organs is frowned upon anywhere in the developed world.

Madam Speaker, let me now turn specifically to the Budget Address—

**The Speaker:** Honourable Member, your time is up so if you would find a convenient time to conclude the next thought—

**Motion to suspend Standing Order 32(6)**

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Madam Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 86, I ask the House to suspend Standing Order 32(6) to allow me an extra half hour to complete my contribution to this debate.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Do you have a seconder?

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Madam Speaker, I beg to second the Motion by the Member for North Side. Give him another half hour or 45 minutes.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Another half hour. Four-thirty I am leaving here.

**The Speaker:** Is that a seconder or an introduction of an amendment to the Motion?

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Either one you wish to take because it is going to be more than a half hour if you take it as an amendment. No, Madam Speaker, I just wish to second it for him to get his half hour.

**The Speaker:** Does any Member wish to speak to the mover's Motion. Does the mover wish to speak himself as to the justification for the additional time?

Member for North Side.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** No, Madam Speaker, I do not wish to speak to the Motion. I just wish the vote on it.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Does any other Member wish to speak before I put the question?

Honourable Premier.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin, Jr.:** Madam Speaker, just to say in the 13 years I have been here, I have never heard such a motion. But if we walk down this road . . . Members have two hours in which to address this matter. I outlined the Government's policy position in an hour and a half. And two hours is more than sufficient for any Member to address these issues.

I am not wishing to seem uncharitable, but if we walk down this road with 20 Members of this House able to speak, we will be here, I think, well beyond the 31<sup>st</sup> of October, and we still have Finance Committee to deal with—not just the debate—and that can go on extensively. The Member for North Side as well as all other Members will have ample opportunity explore issues, concerns, relating to the budget and government policy in the context of Finance Committee, and on that basis, Madam Speaker, we cannot support the Motion.

**The Speaker:** I recognise the Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Madam Speaker, are we having an opportunity to debate the Policy Statement, since you are going to have two different windups of it?

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**The Speaker:** I believe there was an informal response to the inquiry.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**The Speaker:** The question is that Standing Order . . . Sorry, I recognise the Member for East End.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

This is giving me an opportunity to speak on this Motion.

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Yes.

**The Speaker:** On the Motion to suspend Standing Order 86?

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Yes.

**The Speaker:** That's correct.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Thank you.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** No, I said 32(6).

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** I think it is 32(6).

Madam Speaker, I hear the Premier when he says that . . . I guess he and I came in here at the same time. I am a couple of hours longer than him. I got elected in East End the night before him.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** But that being what it is, we all came in here together, and in the almost 13 years we have been here I've never heard of it either. But the

fact is that the provision is there. And it is customary that when one has extended debate in other parliaments throughout the Commonwealth, that that provision is used.

Now the fact that it has not been used before does not mean that it should not be used now. And I think it is unfortunate that the Government would sit here and because a Member—

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** And have two windups.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Because a Member wants to extend his debate and they are prepared to truncate that Member by shutting him down when it is for 30 minutes.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** That's true.

#### AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Now the Premier talked about 20 of us being in here. I hope the Attorney General and the Deputy Governor are not going to stand here for two hours. And it does not ring true that everybody is going to do additional time, or two hours, for that matter.

The Leader of the Opposition, as much as he talks, he did not get to two hours, you know. As much as I do, I do not think I will get to two hours. So, now, Madam Speaker, what I will do since the Member for North Side has not completed, I will move an amendment to the Motion that he takes 30 minutes of my time.

Thank you very much.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Same thing.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** That's how you [INAUDIBLE] I ain't saying anything further.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** He has moved an amendment. The amendment has to be put separately. Yes.

**The Speaker:** An amendment has been moved by the honourable Member for East End, that he is prepared to give up a half hour of his time. The amendment is open if any Member wishes to debate for that to happen.

Honourable Premier.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Madam Speaker, with that amendment we would be fine and prepared to accept it on the basis that we are not then faced at the end of the Elected Member for East End's debate with a similar application for his to be extended again.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**The Speaker:** The question is that Standing 32(6) be hereby suspended to allow the Honourable Member for North Side to have an additional half hour, which is to be subtracted from the two hours of debate by the Member for East End.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Speaker:** The Ayes have it.

**Agreed: Amendment to the Motion to suspend Standing Order 32(6) passed.**

**The Speaker:** The Elected Member for [North Side], your motion as amended has been duly passed. Please continue for 30 minutes.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Nah you, me.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Old boy, you go ahead. Now is the time to drink your water and beat Alden [SOUNDS LIKE].

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** It is typical of their inclusiveness—

**The Speaker:** Member for East End, did you catch my eye?

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** No Arden, you are not speaking.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** No, Madam Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Okay.

The amendment has been duly approved, so the substantive Motion as amended requires a vote. So, I put the question that the Motion as amended by the Member for East End be voted. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Speaker:** The Ayes have it.

**Agreed: Motion as amended to give half an hour from the debate time of the Elected Member for East End to the Elected Member for North Side passed.**

**The Speaker:** Member for North Side, please continue.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I note from the Throne Speech that the Minister of Financial Services, Commerce and Environment plans to review the legislation for liquor licensing, trade and business licensing, special economic zone and licensing of local companies. And, Madam Speaker, as you would be aware, I voted against the passage of the special economic zone on the basis of it being exclusive.

Madam Speaker, I am very concerned that this new sector of our financial industry was given exclusivity, which means that only one company has the right to do so. And you will recall that the Schedule to the Law carries their name in it and only they and they alone, can have that designation. Imagine, Madam Speaker, if in the infancy of our financial industry we had given W.S. Walker exclusivity, what it would be like today. Imagine in our dive industry, had we given Bob Soto exclusivity, what would have been the state of the industry today.

When we create these kinds of opportunities, as we did in Medical Tourism—which I objected to as well—we need to allow what built Cayman to rise to the forefront: Caymanian entrepreneurship. And any Caymanian who was able to negotiate with another foreign country to come here should be able to do it on their own volition and not just come through the Special Economic Zone. And through FOI [Freedom of Information], Madam Speaker . . . I don't have the response here with me today so I won't try to be specific to the figures. But this economic zone has cost the government treasury substantial amounts of money while not contributing very much to government treasury in company fees, work permit fees.

I think on work permit fees the FOI response was somewhere in the region of \$300,000. And, Madam Speaker, that is not a small amount of money to be worried about. And I am glad to see that the Minister of Financial Services is willing to look at this Special Economic Zone, because I really believe it is going to work. It needs to be released to Caymanian entrepreneurship and allow Caymanians to benefit from it.

I have at least two persons in my constituency who could benefit from such an opportunity, if given it. They are involved in computers and computer programming, et cetera. And they have interactions with the companies overseas, et cetera. Originally, I approached them and said: *Look, the Government is getting ready to create this economic zone, you think about it because I know that you are sending stuff to*

*India and places like that to have done, and you are doing stuff for American companies offshore and it may be an opportunity for you to get somebody to come in under this and grow your business. Of course, the exclusivity limited that.*

And you will recall, Madam Speaker, the beautiful picture of the buildings and the "campus" (I think was the word they used to describe it) that they were going to build. And when I was brave enough to say that the man himself told me at breakfast that he was not building anything for at least two years because it was going to be plenty space around town to rent when the Government Administration Building became available and people moved in there. And everybody told me, *Oh you are just opposing stuff, you don't want to see anything happen.* So said, so done! You noticed they have not put up any buildings. You noticed they are renting spaces that are becoming vacant around town and going to Cabinet to have them declared economic zones.

So, that is not all that is being spun as benefits to the country. And one of the things that need to be specifically addressed is their reduction in government fees that they enjoy because that is costing the treasury valuable and sizeable amounts of money.

The Liquor Licensing Law, Madam Speaker, I tried to get the last Government to review that. That desperately needs to be reviewed. And, Madam Speaker, the one thing that any review must do is remove the opportunity for people to apply when we have infrequent short-lived spaces of lifting the moratorium and all of the friends can go and get licences for places that do not even exist, and then they can sell them and rent them to people.

As I understand, a liquor licence is based on the facility, not the person. The facility has to meet all of the requirements to get the licence. How then can somebody be walking around town with a liquor licence in their pocket and a piece of paper that they can sell to somebody for \$75,000 when they paid government peanuts to get it? Or they can rent it to somebody at an elaborate exorbitant amount of money and punish Caymanian entrepreneurs who try to make a business.

When the owner of the new Marina at the end of North Sound, called the Barcadere, told me that he had to rent a liquor licence . . . how ridiculous is that? Any Caymanian who wants to open a business, meets the criteria, should get the licence. We are creating a black market, and it is not our people. When you look . . . there was a thing in the *Caymanian Compass* a couple of weeks ago, with who had the most liquor licences. Quite revealing, wasn't it?

The Liquor Licensing board needs to be disbanded. And if you want a liquor licence you apply to the same business licence authority, they tick the boxes, you get your environmental health inspection, you get your other inspections that are needed, you meet your Planning approval and you open your res-



taurant or your Bar. And this business about telling a particular type of business in Cayman what hours they “shall” open (you know, because it is not that they “may”; they “shall”—or their licence is at jeopardy) is ridiculous in this day and age!

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Exactly!

You should have the freedom in any business to cater to your clientele. And if your clientele wants you to be open until two o'clock in the morning, be open until two o'clock in the morning. If they want you to open at six o'clock in the morning, open at six. They may want you to close at three, so close at three. But it should be a business decision based on the requirements of your clientele, not on some arbitrary board that decides you have to open at eight o'clock in the morning and have to close at six o'clock. Or you have to open at ten o'clock and you have to close at ten o'clock at night. That just does not make any sense. We need to modernise it and just get on with it.

I see, Madam Speaker, that, he is going to bring the National Conservation Bill. The Governor says they are going to open it for public consultation, but the Premier says no. So, I don't know who to believe. But anyway, I kind of believe that there has been quite a bit of consultation on that Bill too. Right? We just need to get it done.

And, Madam Speaker, I can publicly give the Minister my commitment to support the National Conservation Bill if it contains the amendments that my constituents have asked for when it was originally circulated. And key among those is that there cannot be any provision whatsoever for any compulsory acquisition of anybody's land for any reason. And if that is not in it, and a couple of other changes I recommended, like that they change the “council” to “committee” because it think it is just a little more acceptable to people and it does not sound as forceful to the landowners. Right? And one or two other changes but . . .

You see, Madam Speaker, I met with the DoE and made these recommendations. Unfortunately, the last Minister of Environment prohibited them from showing me what the amendments were. So, I kind of want to take the current Minister on his word, but I need to verify. I would like to see the draft of the amendments before they are circulated, just to give myself the comfort that they are in there. And I don't think that is too much to ask to give my support to the Bill.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** We *ga* change it. That's part of it.

Now, Madam Speaker, I don't want you now to believe that I am anti-Cayman Brac. But we are

kind of treating Cayman Brac a little too good in this Budget compared to North Side.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Oh, I understand all of that. And I would hope that . . . as I said earlier, Madam Speaker, I believe the good people of Cayman Brac would like to see us get some policemen and leave their playing field for another time. And I will make an attempt to do that when it comes to Finance Committee.

Now, Madam Speaker, the Minister of [Planning], Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure . . . and please note, Madam Speaker, I am following Standing Orders, I am not debating the Premier's Statement. I am debating the Throne Speech and Budget Address and I refer to his statements where I don't like of the statements, but I am not debating the Statement. I don't think he has a right to reply to the Statement but I accept your ruling.

**The Speaker:** Honourable Member, I don't think the House is going to be so lenient as to give another 30 minutes, so I would not advise you to challenge the Chair out of the existing 30 minutes.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** No Ma'am, you know I don't challenge the Chair. I always accept the Chair's ruling.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** She has already added that back on.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Oh, you mean I got the nomenclature wrong.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** No, that is the one I want to talk about. That is why I left it out.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Yeah I know but I'm getting to it now. Anyway, you don't use up any of my time now you know.

The Department of Planning, Madam Speaker, says it, “. . . **aim to increase the efficiency of the Planning process of both the department and industry-wide levels.**” You know, Madam Speaker, I think the time has come in our country to move away from boards making decisions. I support the dismantlement of the Immigration Boards. I believe it should be an administrative procedure, tick all of the boxes, you get the thing. I think it should be similar for the Planning Board.

I think it is time to do away with the Planning Board. We have sufficient, I believe, professionals licensed in the architectural business, plumbing business, electrical business. They need to be held responsible by the Government for compliance. And we should not have to send people out to inspect a house in every single stage of its building. They should do random checks. If an architect is found that he has not included something, the liability must fall on him and he must be disciplined. If a plumber on an inspection is doing something wrong, the plumber who is licensed should be held responsible. And the same thing [should happen] with an electrician.

It is aggravating for the builder, it is aggravating for the homeowner to have to wait sometimes days and weeks for one of these inspectors to get on the schedule to come and check something before you do it. And I think we need to amend the Planning Regulations to place a lot of the liability and the responsibility on the professionals and the skilled people who are licensed by the government to do these things. And I think that would bring more efficiency with it in trying to improve the functioning of the board.

Madam Speaker, while we are talking about boards, one of the things that I would like to see happen to the appeal process from all boards is that we set up a quasi-judicial appellate body that sits Monday to Friday, nine to five, and deals with all appeals in a judicial settlement on a regular basis, instead of having to wait on a couple of volunteers to find time to come to occupy a room and pass judgment on appeals.

I think most people who are going through the appellate process do not believe and do not perceive that they are getting justice in that kind of environment. I think a kind of quasi-judicial body that is properly resourced would do a much better job and people would have more confidence in the process.

The Postal Department: The Minister has my permission to close the North Side Post Office on Saturday because I think it is just burning electricity, air conditioning and paying staff, because I do not really think there is any income coming in on Saturdays.

The Water Authority in [Grand] Cayman, Madam Speaker: We have a unique problem with old subdivision roads. The Water Authority will not normally extend pipe water on a road that is not gazetted. In my constituency we have several subdivisions of which the roads were never gazetted and the people are having great difficulty getting piped water brought to their houses and they have to come to me and the Minister and everybody else because of the rule. I believe that the Water Authority should consider amending that rule to providing piped water on any road that has more than three or four customers—because it is their investment to get the money back to pay for the pipes—rather than punishing people who can't get access to piped water because the road

is not gazetted. And the Minister will know some of the situations that I am talking about.

Similar thing with the NRA and these roads: because they are not gazetted, the NRA really has no legal authority to go in and fix the roads—

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Although they do, and quite rightly so. Because the people using them—and they are usually multiple users—are paying taxes like the rest of us. And it is not the fault of the homeowner why the road is not gazetted. That is the fault of government that did not gazette it. Because when you put in the plans you had to provide the road access.

Again, Madam Speaker, I am a little concerned with the Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA) about the 36 megawatts of electricity from fossil fuels. Because if the Minister of Health is going to get the waste-to-energy off the ground and this contract is issued prior to that, it is going to reduce the interest in the power plant buying the electricity that waste energy might produce. So, I would hold up this thing until the Government decides what it is going to do about the waste-to-energy.

If they are going to waste-to-energy you tell the power company that they have to buy that energy. Because we have to govern! Because the only way we are going to reduce the cost of electricity in this country is to produce it cheaper. We can produce it cheaper from waste-to-energy. We cannot reduce the cost of electricity if we allow them to buy more diesel engines.

If they get this diesel engine it is unlikely that whatever price it is being offered at from the waste-to-energy, they will have an interest in buying it. In fact, I think we should go further. I think we should tell them that they should invest into the waste-to-energy to produce the energy for themselves so as to send the price down.

**Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts, Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure:** You really want it to go up now.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Well.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** But they are required to do that; they had tenders out for that a long time.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** They were asking for solar and stuff. There's a good opportunity to get alternative energy. And I think we have to look at these things.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** But they can speed it up if they invest in that instead of investing in this.

I think that we, as a Government, have to change the way we are doing things. And we have to stop worrying about what is better for the private sector and their profit margin and do what I believe we are responsible to do, and that is what is best for our people. And I believe that when it comes to electrical generation waste-to-energy, which will reduce Mount Trashmore and produce cheaper electricity which will lower the cost of electricity to customers, has to be the more correct thing to do, than simply allow them to bring in more diesel engines.

#### **MOMENT OF INTERRUPTION—4.30 PM**

**The Speaker:** Honourable Member, we have reached the hour of interruption. I believe it has been intimated that we wish to work beyond the hour of 4.30 pm.

I recognise the Honourable Deputy Premier to move the suspension of Standing Order 10(2).

#### **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 10(2)**

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell, Deputy Premier/Minister of District Administration, Tourism and Transport:** Thank you, Madam Speaker,

I would like to move the motion to suspend the relevant Standing Order [10(2)] for us to continue [the business of the House beyond the hour of 4.30 pm].

**The Speaker:** The question is that Standing Order 10(2) be suspended to allow the business of the House to continue until 7.00 pm. I will repeat it, so that Members know what they are voting on. The question is that the House be allowed to work until 7.00 pm through the suspension of Standing Order 10(2).

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes and one audible No** [Mr. D. Ezzard Miller]

**The Speaker:** I believe the Ayes have it.

**Agreed: Standing Order 10(2) suspended.**

**The Speaker:** Member for North Side you have 10 minutes remaining.

[Inaudible interjections]

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** I am nearly finished, man.

[Inaudible interjection]

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** I don't need to say anything to him; he said it all to himself.

Madam Speaker, earlier I congratulated the Minister of Finance on his new approach to the Budget Address. I particularly like the economic values that

he is bringing to the table. I would take the time to remind him that one of the things we really need, though, is an economic development plan. And whether we link that to a physical development plan or not, I believe that if we are going to create sustainability in our economy, the Government has to lead by producing a five-year economic plan with the last year rolling, so that we are always planning five years ahead. And then any inward investment, any development must take place in context with what we have agreed as our economic plan for the country.

I think it is too risky, both to the economy and the environment to just take what comes off of the plane. And because it is going to be an investment or offer some jobs, we gallop it up and hope for the best, and invariably what happens is we just lead to more work permits and the wages leave the country, the profit leaves the country. I think we need a five-year economic plan coupled to a physical development plan to meet the economic plan, and, therefore, the country has a plan going forward and we can make sure that the environment is protected and that there is some sustainability in the system.

As I said earlier, Madam Speaker, just to repeat one of the most important things of what I have said in my debate, if any of it is important, I believe that the Minister of Finance needs to ring fence [\$]75 million of the projected [\$]100 million surplus and put it to the cash reserves in order to make sure that we are progressing towards compliance.

Madam Speaker, with those few remarks, I thank you for the opportunity, and I thank the House, in spite of the Premier's objection, for giving me the extra half hour.

Thank you all very much.

**The Speaker:** Does any other Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Honourable Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell, Deputy Premier/Minister of District Administration, Tourism and Transport:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I rise to make a short contribution to the Throne Speech presented by Her Excellency the Governor, the Budget Address delivered by the Honourable Minister of Finance, and the Policy Statement "Getting Back on Course," delivered by the Honourable Premier. And I take this opportunity to congratulate all three of them on a job very well done.

In Her Excellency's Address she outlined the major policies and objectives that will be undertaken by the Government during the 2013/14 Financial Year.

In my contribution here today I will address the focus and specific initiatives of my Ministry, which includes District Administration, Tourism and Transport. I believe we have been charged with growing job opportunities and improving the quality of life for Caymanians. It is with this filter, Madam Speaker,

that we should evaluate and prioritise all of our policies and programmes.

During the 2013/14 financial year, Madam Speaker, the emphasis will be placed on facilitating private sector investment throughout the Cayman Islands, improving and growing the public infrastructure of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, and the commencement of island wide piped water on Cayman Brac; the preliminary works for the conversion of the multipurpose hall on the Bluff to the new campus of the Layman Scott Senior High, and improving infrastructure directly related to our tourism product, namely our three airports and the cruise berthing project in Grand Cayman.

As stated by Her Excellency, my Ministry will also be implementing various cost-saving methods through increased efficiencies, enhanced coordination and effective use of resources. In other words, we focus on breaking down government silos and creating an environment that we all work together for the betterment of the Cayman Islands—“doing more with less.”

Madam Speaker, in the Budget Address the Honourable Minister of Finance described a prudent, disciplined plan. As we all know, the country's budget defines the investments from which the Government's outcomes are realised. In the current economic climate the Cayman Islands Government has put forward a budget that does “more with less.” Madam Speaker, doing more with less is precisely what this Budget has been about.

In my Ministry we have been, and will continue, scrutinising each dollar spent to ensure we get maximum benefit with the people's money. The pledge to do more with less is evident in the policies and programmes we have already begun in the first few months. They demonstrate our commitment to improving efficiency and ensuring value for money investing for maximum return. We believe we enhance benefits by facilitating the private sector investments that create jobs and improve the lives of our citizens. This facilitation includes prudent policies, infrastructure investment and good governance to improve investor confidence—simply put, creating an environment for success.

Madam Speaker, I will first outline the plans for one of the most important areas for which I hold responsibility: District Administration.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** You're leaving? Don't leave.

District Administration is much more than a department of subject area. Having constitutional responsibility for District Administration would mean that that Minister, as you well know, has responsibility for sustainable development of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman while being sensitive to the Islands' unique characteristics. This is a responsibility that is near and

dear to my heart, and one I wholeheartedly welcome. I am committed to increasing job opportunities and improving the quality of life in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman and throughout the Cayman Islands.

My Ministry, and by working with my colleagues in other Ministries, these two objectives require the development of infrastructure that is fit for purpose and the resolve to judiciously develop programmes and policies that incorporate the talents and assets of all three Islands. This, Madam Speaker, is my commitment to the people of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman during my term as Minister to do the very best I can for those two Islands and for the Cayman Islands.

The first initiative is the establishment of a Cayman Airways reservation centre on Cayman Brac. It is common knowledge, Madam Speaker, that a reservation centre can be established almost anywhere because of the advances in technology. Through the work, the Ministry, together with Cayman Airways, this facility will be established shortly. This initiative will promote job growth on Cayman Brac and disaster mitigation efforts for Cayman Airways. The reservations facility will be coupled with a Cayman Airways cargo facility which will also create stable employment on Cayman Brac as well as other services that will add to long-term sustainability in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

We are also in discussions at this time, Madam Speaker, with Mr. Cleveland Dillbert, the owner of the Alexander Hotel, concerning his application to build a marina on Cayman Brac, and hope to be able to make an announcement very soon.

Another example of thoughtfully developing programmes that incorporate the talents and assets of all three Islands is the work of the Cayman Traditional Arts Initiative. The Ministry will be supporting this initiative that was brought to us through the Ministry of Education to ensure that every Caymanian child knows who they are and where they come from. The Cayman Traditional Arts Initiative gives our next generation a deeper understanding of our heritage and culture taught through history and art traditions of the Cayman Islands. Madam Speaker, this is an example of ministries working together, because there are three ministries now working on this programme, to make it a programme that we could afford for all of the Cayman Islands.

The Initiative is employing local people skilled in our traditional arts and crafts in order to pass on these priceless traditions and preserve our culture. This is an excellent example of how we can wisely use our resources to provide jobs while investing in our most valuable asset for competing with other jurisdictions in the tourism industry. This, of course, is our people and our culture which creates the charm that attracts visitors, brings them to our shores and keeps them coming back.

Madam Speaker, an initiative that I know that is near and dear to your heart, that we have both worked on together, is the cruise ship initiative for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. We have been able to book the Clipper Ships, which are called the tall ships. They will be calling on Cayman Brac and Grand Cayman starting early in the year, like January. The route to be sailed is Grand Cayman, Southern Cuba and Cayman Brac, and back to Grand Cayman. These tall ships will bring adventure-minded tourists to experience the unique qualities of each Island. This is another example of thoughtfully developing programmes that incorporate the talents and assets of all three Islands.

This initiative will benefit employment on Cayman Brac through the transportation of cruise visitors on various tours. The types of tours envisioned are the general island-wide tour, a historical island tour and the caves tour. There will be opportunities for cruise visitors to take scuba and snorkeling excursions. Additional expressions of interest regarding potential sites to be visited are the Lighthouse on the Bluff, the Public Beach and the Brac Reef Resort, Madam Speaker. I am in full support of this initiative which leverages opportunities in the cruise industry to promote the experiences offered through a combined vacation, including both Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac.

And, Madam Speaker, as you well know, the struggle that we have always had in Cayman Brac is the safe anchorage and not having a leeward side to the Island. I believe that this is the opportunity. If this will ever work, it will work with these ships because the adventure-minded cruiser on these vessels will be tendered by Zodiacs and prepared for an adventure, rather than coming ashore and believing that it is going to be something that is very stable or needing to get next to a dock. So, we hope for success. In the winter months the captain and one of the owners has been to Cayman Brac and has looked at the different anchorages, north side and south side and certainly realises that in the winter months with a northerly that you would have to look on the south side for a lee. So, we are optimistic.

Madam Speaker, I will now outline the Ministry's plans for the infrastructure projects that will be started on Cayman Brac and then Little Cayman. Her Excellency and the Honourable Premier have highlighted some of these plans, and I will seek to elaborate.

First, the enhancement of the Charles Kirkconnell International Airport with the Cayman Islands Airports Authority: This expansion was started nine months ago. It includes an area for whole baggage screening which will include an X-Ray machine for checked baggage. This improvement will allow for the processing of international flights in Cayman Brac. With this increased capacity in place in Cayman Brac it will allow flights to go directly into the United States,

Tampa, Miami, and it will also allow for routes to be flown from Miami to Cayman Brac and on to Cuba and back through Cayman Brac, which is using your assets to maximise their potential. With the airport in Grand Cayman being so overcrowded we can take some of the stress off of that and provide connections into the Brac and also connections onto the route into Cuba, which are doing quite well at this time.

Further phases of expansion to the Charles Kirkconnell International Airport will include an expanded departure lounge facility and a large arrival facility. This will help to relieve again some of the stress on Owen Roberts Airport.

In Little Cayman efforts are underway by the Cayman Islands Airports Authority to plan the building of an airport that will be in compliance with International Aviation Standards. This proposed facility will be constructed on land that is owned by the Cayman Islands Airports Authority. The first phase of the project is to have it surveyed and cleared. We can then look and value what it will cost for the runway. The justification for this project is that it will allow for more cost effective turboprop aircraft to service Little Cayman.

Madam Speaker, as you well know, the airport in Little Cayman right now is operated under an exemption. So, we must face this issue that we have because we have to continue to give Little Cayman a connection through Cayman Airways routes. Other strategies for Little Cayman, Madam Speaker, include plan for a new boat ramp and a dock on the north side; the continuation of road improvement programme and ongoing dialogue with the tourists and partners on Island to maintain and enhance their vibrant tourism offering.

Madam Speaker, the Member for North Side was talking about the sports complex and the playing field on Cayman Brac. In last year's Budget I know how hard you worked to get the money there for the lights that have just been put up. It is a continuing project and I believe that we all know sports are a very, very strong building block. It creates teamwork, it builds character and it gives us the platform to stand on as we grow into adults. So, I really do not believe that the Member meant that he did not want Cayman Brac to get the playing field or the money in the Budget.

I believe that what he wanted to say was that he was happy that Cayman Brac was getting that.

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** And that he would be happier if he got some money for North Side for some other policing.

So, we're all here to work together. And the way I look at things . . . I am very happy to get money for North Side for more policing and the improvements that are needed there, and that is why I say I am convinced that he is very happy that we are getting the

money in Cayman Brac for that playing field. And at some point I am sure he will visit and I will be happy to show him the success we have had with that budgeted money.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** You know I support Cayman Brac; I always have.

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Mm hmm.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** [Inaudible] Cayman Brac is my friend. And that is why I asked them and not West Bay because I know they would.

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** But you know building the platform through this sports complex means we will need less money for policing because of how it builds citizenship into the community. And the other part we all realise is that we cannot drive to George Town from Cayman Brac. We have to have a field there that is giving our young people opportunity for success.

Madam Speaker, the Cayman Brac certified FIFA Pitch on the Bluff is to be improved with amenities which include changing rooms, bleachers, perimeter fencing and flagpoles. These improvements will allow for international football matches to be played in Cayman Brac. Essentially, Madam Speaker, this project will be the impetus for the beginning of sports tourism through CONCACAF [Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football].

As recently as yesterday, we met with the CONCACAF representatives to discuss along with the Sports Ministry how they could use this field in Cayman Brac for further tournaments. And with the commitment of the tournament in August, we look forward to hosting them and other international tournaments.

Madam Speaker, I believe that together we have certainly worked to try to bring this to fruition and I think it will be a very good day when we see those international teams playing in that field.

In addition to enabling the sports tourism that will create jobs, the sports facility will provide our young people with facilities to develop their talents and build character through team participation.

Madam Speaker, the high school building on Cayman Brac is 45 years old and it is need of some upgrading. But, in the spirit of doing more with less, the multipurpose facility on the Bluff is nearing completion and the repurposing of that building will minimise the cost of building a new school by using the structure already built and taking advantage of the opportunity. It is a purpose-built secondary school. During emergencies it can still function as a hurricane shelter thereby serving as a dual purpose facility. Madam Speaker, as you know, it adjoins the sports field giving our students immediate access to a world class facility, eliminating the cost associated with

building a separate field for a new high school on another part of the Island.

This project will be undertaken in phases with the initial concept drawings being currently discussed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of District Administration, and the Public Works Department. I would like to share some of the initial thoughts in the first meeting of the concept being developed.

It is envisioned that the main building of the project, as it currently stands, will serve as a multipurpose hall (the heart of the school, if you will). The upstairs of the current main building will serve as an administration area, and it is also envisioned that the classroom blocks can be built out from the existing main building in order to suit the educational needs of the students. I look forward to updating the public, especially those in Cayman Brac, as I receive more specific information to share regarding this project which will help to ensure the long-term sustainability delivery of education to our students on Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

Madam Speaker, the affordable housing programme is positioned to begin building four houses before the end of the year, and we look forward to this for the needed employment.

The last infrastructure project, I would like to summarise is a realisation of piped water throughout Cayman Brac. Currently, Cayman Brac has two of the three major utilities provided—electricity and communications, which includes telecommunications, data communications and television. The third service/utility of water is currently available only on a limited basis. However, this year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Water Authority and the Board of Directors has approved the continuation of pipe water throughout Cayman Brac. Work is scheduled to commence in November and is expected to create at least eight new jobs. I am intently looking forward to this service which will add to the long-term sustainability of creating a thriving community in Cayman Brac.

District Administration: Madam Speaker, the initiatives and programmes that I have outlined, have a single focus, the sustainable development of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. Each of these projects showcases this Government's commitment to grow job opportunities and improve the quality of life in a way that is sensitive to the character of each Island. This focus will continue to be my underlying basis for all future initiatives over the next three and a half years.

Tourism: Madam Speaker, while on a global level the effects of global recession are showing signs of abating, here at home the cries of our people are being heard more loudly than ever. In recent years unemployment has spread across our Islands and has proven to be no respecter of name, gender, class or profession. Madam Speaker, this Government is keenly aware that for a country like ours the tourism sector is not only a major contributor to the growth of

the economy, but a generator of employment opportunities as well.

As such, we are committed to addressing this challenge on several fronts in order to facilitate inclusive growth to all sections of the population. I am keenly aware that tourism works in synergy with government acting as the catalyst for infrastructural growth and development. And it is for this reason that we are seeking to establish an environment that will lay a foundation and provide greater chances of success for entrepreneurs who embrace the Caymanian dream to be successful.

Enabling entrepreneurship incorporates many factors, including the allowance of healthy competition which, in turn, leaves to product innovation. In this regard, Government will rightly assume the responsibility of positioning the major building blocks required to underpin our future success. However, we also remain committed to breaking down silos so that the participation of various stakeholders can be encouraged in order for the best opportunities to take hold.

Madam Speaker, since the onset of the recession the Department of Tourism has redefined its strategic objectives and conducted research to gain a deeper understanding of precisely who our customers are and exactly where they come from. These actions, along with the incorporation of innovated projects, promotions, and marketing initiatives, have delivered dividends. I, like the Department of Tourism, am cautiously optimistic that this positive trend will continue. However, we cannot rest on the past. To the contrary, Madam Speaker, this Government has a clear vision for the future which includes several major building blocks that I am personally committed to accomplishing during my term.

The first building block I would like to expound upon is a robust and equitable framework in order that Caymanians are better able to take advantage of the benefits of a thriving tourism property. To address this requirement, the Department of Tourism is collaborating with the Ministry of Education to ensure that tourism education is included in schools and scholarships are available in areas that align with private sector needs.

Madam Speaker, the First Elected Member for West Bay spoke earlier about a programme that he started. This programme is a partnership between the CITA [Cayman Islands Tourism Association], the Education Ministry, the Department of Tourism, the Ministry of Tourism. This partnership has strengthened and we are now in a position, by working together, to announce the Cayman Islands Hospitality School which will begin in September 2014.

It will provide opportunities for Caymanian school leavers and individuals who have worked in the industry for years, with an opportunity to receive the City and Guilds Certification in specific core area study. In addition, associate and bachelor degree programmes will be available as the provision of tertiary

certification is the first key that will provide Caymanians with the opportunity to assess the wide variety of opportunities available in the tourism sector.

And what happens with this programme in partnership with the members from CITA (which are the restaurants and the hotel sector and all of the tourism operators) . . . you will go to UCCI [University College of the Cayman Islands] and take your class work there. Then you will basically have a job where you go and work in the industry, and, at the end of that period, [through] the selective courses that you take, you will then get your certification through City and Guilds. I believe that we all agree it will be an excellent programme for the Cayman Islands.

Madam Speaker, on a more immediate basis, [a programme] to further effect to provide employment for Caymanians is underway. The Department of Tourism offers its support to the Cayman Islands Tourism Association on their tourism employment drive which is being rolled out in every district during the month of October. I am sure most of us have heard the ads on the radio. This initiative is aimed at building awareness of both job opportunities and training available to prepare workers for these jobs.

Through the Department of Tourism's PRIDE [Personal Responsibility in Delivering Excellence] promises work shop we prepare workers for employment in the tourism industry. This includes exposure to the basic customer service and their own role in creating positive visitor experiences. The workshop also highlights facts about our culture, history and heritage. The workshop prepares participants to share historical and cultural features of our three Islands and our people. The ultimate goal in these initiatives is to provide the appropriate types and levels of training to shift the balance and enable Caymanians to be qualified for jobs which are currently, to a great extent, performed by work permit holders.

Creating opportunity: In terms of entrepreneurship, Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Tourism will be setting up a framework through the Department of Commerce and Investment, working with the Ministry to provide assistance to entrepreneurs giving them the best chance of success. By way of example, assistance and technical advice will be given for the development of business plans which, in turn, will assist in securing loans for financial institutions. Help will also be given with website development, social media marketing and working with the Department of Commerce and Investment in this manner to offer education, training and support.

It is an inexpensive and readily distribution channel that will allow smaller businesses to have a better chance at achieving success. And, Madam Speaker, I make note again that this is breaking down a silo and cross-ministries working together.

The relative success of our tourism sector has highlighted the fact that we have reached the point of diminishing returns if we do not improve our product,

with consumers being increasingly more aware and discerning about how they spend their hard-earned dollars. Value for money and quality of service, a good experience is essential. With the Department of Tourism working hard to increase visitation, negative experiences at entry and exit points (our air and seaports) completely disrupt what our tourism product tries to offer when they are here on Island.

For more than a decade, Madam Speaker, the country has repeatedly been told that we are fighting against fierce competition, particularly from destinations with enhanced cruise berthing facilities. At the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association Conference [FCCA], which I attended last week, it was once again confirmed and we received a further reminder of the product enhancements that our competitors have already completed, along with information on new facilities that are under development. If the Cayman Islands do nothing to address the absence of cruise berthing we will, over time, lose our cruise business edge.

Madam Speaker, the business case by Price-waterhouseCoopers will be presented to Cabinet for approval next week. This acceptance then drives the next phase of the procurement in public consultation. This comprehensive study started and looked at three models. It looked at the port facility staying exactly as it is now, status quo, with tendering. It looked at the possibility of half tendering with one pier, and it looked at the model of two piers. The number of 2 million cruise passengers was basically put on it as a number that is what you would need as a throughput of people to be able to pay the debt service on two piers.

It is my belief that the one pier will not work because there would not enough business left for the tenders, and their model would not work in a successful way as it is working now. So, the public consultations will involve looking at the environmental assessment issues that will come from this and what the business plan has shown as far as the economic model of the benefit to the country of these new piers. And this should start in the very near future, which I mean is in the next 15 days.

Madam Speaker, as an interim measure, while Government is continuing to work on this business case and framework to facilitate the construction of a cruise berthing facility, I am happy to confirm that some progress has been made. Upon assuming office I took the opportunity, along with Councillor Hew and Chief Officer, to meet with the cruise line representatives to explain the improvements plan for the short term in order to encourage more visitors to Cayman. These improvements, along with current world events, have given the cruise lines the confidence to continue booking more visitors to Cayman, which is projecting numbers of approximately 500,000 more visitors next year; and the year after, approximately 700,000 more cruise visitors.

This means, Madam Speaker, that in 2015 (the projected numbers being correct) we will receive more cruise passengers than we have ever received in the history of the Cayman Islands. This is a testament to the confidence and partnership that Government has with the cruise industry.

Madam Speaker, with two record breaking years on the horizon, the need to improve the customer experience has become even more critical and time sensitive. It is therefore timely that upgrades have recently been completed to enhance customer comfort of the Royal Watler Cruise Terminal.

New amenities include installation of benches, shading to provide cover and protection from the sun and rain, designated areas for tour operator, vendors and taxi dispatchers to operate within, and signage. Changes to the way passengers are organised from embarkation to disembarkation perspective have also been initiated in order to give visitors the best experience possible with the tools that we have. The budget for next year also calls for a new restroom block and rest areas in George Town close to the bus dispatch area.

Having outlined the upgrades at the cruise port, Madam Speaker, I would like to provide a brief overview of the changes which are planned to take place at our other important port of entry; our airports.

We are at a point with stay over arrivals where we face another significant guest comfort problem. Simply put, we are bringing in more people than the current facility can cope with during peak travel times. And I am sure that anyone who has recently travelled on the weekend would have witnessed that the high concentration of passengers at the airport is more than the infrastructure can properly manage. As in the case of the proposed cruise berthing facility, attention needs to be placed on improving the customer experience.

Madam Speaker, the medium-term goal is to redevelop the airport and increase its footprint so that it can comfortably accommodate much higher passenger quotas in the departure and arrival areas in the peak periods. But until this can be in effect, the decision has been taken to implement a series of cost-effective improvements over the short and medium term. These include the covering of inbound walkways to protect passenger from the elements on arrival and departure, as well as entertainment refreshments during the peak winter season. Additionally, the need for improved outbound immigration checks will also be examined.

Madam Speaker, these measures are being introduced to ensure that passengers receive the best entry and exit experience possible. We know that the last impression is a lasting one. And if it is less than ideal it can ruin what would otherwise have been considered a fabulous vacation experience in the Cayman Islands. However, when a visitor's experience ends on a positive note, they are more likely to return and



more likely to recommend a Cayman Islands vacation to their families and friends. To ensure that the experience is great on the way in and the way out, attention is also being paid to Customs and Immigration interactions in working with them again—everybody working together.

As I have outlined, Government is clearly committed to taking care of every component of the visitor experience and is reaching visitors more effectively through the Department of Tourism's activity. Supplementing this effort, Cayman Airways is also being used more strategically enabling markets to be served that are not only lucrative, but that other airlines are not currently serving. We are fortunate to have a national airline, Madam Speaker. The Cayman Islands Government has historically never provided revenue guarantees or paid airlines to fly into our destinations, as most of the eastern Caribbean islands are now being forced to do to get lift into their islands.

Going forward, Madam Speaker, Cayman Airways will be used more efficiently to ensure that we continue to stimulate the right markets and build the right air bridges that our destination needs to ultimately increase tourism arrivals. A good example of how Cayman Airways can be used as a strategic marketing tool is in our quest to be considered as divers' airline of choice. By working with the private sector and ensuring that booking process is easy and such that dive bags can be carried for free. There is no reason why this aspiration cannot be fully realised in a not too distant future.

Madam Speaker, our tourism product as a matured destination, we must face the uncomfortable fact that aspects of our tourism product has become stagnant and aged. As an Island blessed with natural beauty, magnificent water, it is easy for complacency to set in, and we forget that other destinations are constantly refreshing and adding to their tourism products in the hopes of enticing visitors to their shores. As a Government we are committed to playing our part in taking care of some of the big projects, such as the redevelopment of the airport and the building of the cruise berth facility. The private sector, too, is playing their part by developing new accommodation products which will help us to secure our positioning and competitive edge in the tourism sphere.

In recent months, news has been released confirming the Kimpton Boutique Hotel in the redevelopment of the former Hyatt Hotel. In addition, to these two exciting projects, I am pleased to tell you that two additional hotel properties are being planned—one in East End and one in Bodden Town, expected to come on stream over the next two to five years. These new developments will expand our existing room stock, add more diversity to our accommodation sector and will underscore our reputation for offering a high-end cosmopolitan sophisticated tourism product.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** One of them was in the works.

**An Hon. Member:** Exactly!

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** One of them was in the works.

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** In fact, three!

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** One!

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Three.

**Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts:** Don't list to him [inaudible].

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** As a matter of fact I just informed my good friend from East End this morning about the hotel out there.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** You *nah* said anything to me.

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** I said it to you this morning.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** No, no, no, no.

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** What I said?

*[Inaudible interjections and laughter]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** For their continued commitment—

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** For their continued commitment to the Cayman Islands and their willingness to work is through partners with this Government toward the common goal of sustaining our tourism industry.

Madam Speaker, with that said we must be mindful that we have a fine line to play between regulating and protecting the supply of tourism providers and allowing new opportunities for Caymanian small business entrepreneurs. I am of the view that healthy competition is the catalyst that spurs innovation and new ideas which, in turn, keeps the destination functioning at the cutting edge. We cannot afford to take continuing success and the growth of the tourism sector for granted. Rather, we must strive to continue and improve our product, develop through careful planning and implement refine marketing strategies to ensure

our country remains at the cusp of innovation, quality and customer value.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Tourism is involved with the revitalisation of George Town. It is involved with improvements to the transport and we are involved with the Craft Market policy change. And I am not going to touch too much on this because Councillor Hew has been hugely involved with those and I know that he is going to deal with it at length in his contribution. So, I just make mention of that.

We are also involved with the Turtle Farm and some initiatives that will be announced shortly which will be taking place there in partnership with the cruise lines.

The Cayman Islands tourism industry continues to do well from an arrival standpoint. However, there remains a gap from a Caymanian participation perspective, which means Caymanians are not directly benefitting from the industry as much as we should. This will be resolved over time through the provision of education and training and by working closely with the private sector to close the loop on employment opportunities in order to ensure Caymanians are rightfully given every opportunity to be successful.

The Government is taking steps to ensure that through the collective efforts of the Ministry of Tourism and the Department of Commerce and investment a robust and effective framework is put in place to assist Caymanian entrepreneurs and small businesses, and increase their chances of success and sustainability. The development of both ports of entry is integral to the future growth and sustainability of our tourism industry. And this Government will ensure, Madam Speaker, that the major elements are completed within the next few years. This will give the second pillar of our economy—one of the major contributors of our GDP [Growth Domestic Product]—the best possible chance to maintain the positive momentum that has been achieved over recent years.

Madam Speaker, simply put, we know that we have over a billion dollars of inward investment coming in the next three-to-four years, and we are committed, the bricks and mortar we have done that before, but the commitment to provide the training and the mentoring and the opportunity to make sure that the skill sets that are needed for this new investment are available to those investors, is the commitment that we are working on extremely hard as a new government.

I believe, Madam Speaker, I've described the initiatives that clearly illustrate a bright future for the tourism sector in a viable way forward for the sustainable development of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Government and my colleagues here in this House, the talented and experienced staff in my Ministry and other private sector partners to grow job opportunities and improve the quality of life for all who call these Islands home.

I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

At this time the House will suspend for 15 minutes.

#### PROCEEDINGS SUSPENDED AT 5.20 PM

#### PROCEEDINGS RESUMED AT 5.49 PM

**The Speaker:** Please be seated.

Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause] Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause]. Last call: Does any other Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town.

**Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr., Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I just want to give a brief address; I won't take up too much time.

Just over a year ago, the Government was forced to move a motion to incur executive transactions in order to continue operations from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012. This came in the third year of the UDP Government's administration and it was a direct result of failure to comply with the FCO's guidelines and requirements. This failure highlighted one of the main concerns of the PPM—an issue that we campaigned on—and resulted in a further erosion and confidence in the Government to be prudent and carry on the affairs of the country with confidence.

If the Government cannot demonstrate that it can manage the country's finances from the outset, then that sets a tone for the next three and a half years. Loss of confidence by the FCO resulted in a loss of confidence both locally and overseas, and contributed further to our economic slowdown.

The PPM campaigned on a promise to restore confidence in the Government and the economy. This Budget represents an important milestone in our commitment to restore that loss confidence. We have now sent the right message to the people and the businesses of these Islands and to the global community. The Premier (former Leader of the Opposition) voiced his concern about this over a year ago and I think he can now safely say that the Cayman Islands, is back in business.

I have to congratulate Minister Archer, Minister of Finance, and his team for their diligent commitment, and the many civil servants who have again gone above and beyond the call of duty to prepare this Budget and gain approval from the FCO. The Minister of Finance has introduced a disciplined cash management approach in the management of government's finances. Gone are the days of spending everything in the budget in case it is cut next year. We are now seeing an era of conservative fiscal man-

agement. This unique management style goes a long way to restoring confidence in our ability to manage this country's finances.

To date, Madam Speaker, we have not made use of the approved overdraft granted to us by the FCO saving this country in excess of, I think it is close to, \$100,000 in banking fees.

Throughout the course of this debate Ministers of the Government will lay out their plans for the country, so I will not go into extreme detail. But will stick to the areas of which I am primarily involved in. The primary area for me as Councillor to the Ministry of Home and Community Affairs is e-Government. The Cayman Islands, Madam Speaker, is behind most of our competing jurisdictions from a technology standpoint. We must race to embrace technology if we want to boost our global competitiveness, if we want to reach new markets, both in tourism and finance, and further our reach globally, and if we want to diversify and control the cost of operations and create new industries locally.

Businesses expect government to operate as efficiently and lean as possible in order to keep the cost of doing business as low as possible. Government's operations can be more efficient. And just using an example: applying for a passport, and having to visit the General Registry and the Police Record's Department to obtain on paper, information which is already owned by government.

As Councillor with responsibility for e-Government, I have communicated the Government's vision for e-Government to those responsible for implementing it in the Civil Service. And, Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Deputy Governor and his staff for wholeheartedly pledging to support our plans for e-Government. We are putting in place an action plan for getting these projects moving. And this Budget is principally where we intend to begin the work.

We have to set priority targets where we can capitalise on the already existing pockets of excellence that Government has already established for itself. We have to analyse existing manual services and look to improve and automate them, and grasp new concepts, such as those like big data where we will create information store houses of data gathered from both the private and public sectors (for example, hotels, airlines, restaurants, banks and trust companies), and create decisions support system using this information, allowing us to make decisions in realtime and boost our global competitiveness.

No other jurisdiction in this region is using this concept in data processing and we must be the first. This initiative will be launched as a private and public partnership and will be developed in a way that it completely funds itself. Our tourism marketing strategy can be adjusted on the fly within hours of identifying new trends and consumer behavior by using technology such as this.

We are able to respond to changing global conditions, Madam Speaker, in just a matter of hours, rather than months waiting on reports which normally contains information that is completely outdated and useless. This partnership, of course, will also involve working with private sector companies that are involved in those same industries that we as a Government have to support.

In partnership with those companies we can actually move this country forward and boost our competitiveness to a level that it would be hard for any other competing jurisdiction to keep up with, but we have to make the move now.

The recent crime wave is a result of a generation that we have forgotten. We have built two pillar industries and left out Caymanians from that equation. I talked about this when I was campaigning, Madam Speaker, on a number of occasions. I've seen where we have built some very successful businesses but we have not factored in Caymanians to the extent that we should have. We forgot to teach our own people how to fish, Madam Speaker. This Administration is already busy creating jobs and educational and training opportunities for our people. We must put our people first and ensure that they receive the opportunities that are out there.

The recent NWDA [National Workforce Development Agency] taskforce announced by the Minister of Labour addresses one of these issues. I am proud to chair that initiative. And the taskforce will be given the responsibility of looking at the operations of the NWDA and making recommendations to improve the operation of the NWDA. The NWDA has existed for quite some time as I have heard Members discuss throughout the course of today. And they have questioned its effectiveness. We have recognised that there are definitely areas where the NWDA can improve, and this step is important in actually correcting some of the issues that we already know exist, and also identifying others.

Just this morning I was at the Bodden Town Civic Centre, Madam Speaker, to visit an important initiative that is taking place there between the [Cayman Islands] Tourism Association (CITA) and the NWDA. They are going through an exercise of identifying Caymanians who exist into the NWDA database who qualify for tourism jobs, or should qualify. Those individuals are being screened. They are being interviewed (so to speak) by members of CITA and the NWDA, and they are being lined up with jobs that exist that the NWDA is aware of, but also the CITA members are playing an active role in coming forward and letting the NWDA know which jobs exist, what opportunities are out there.

The individuals are given the opportunity to apply for those positions. If for any reason they are not able to qualify, or if they feel that they may be lacking in one area or the other, they do not just send them home but they actually give them the counseling

and the assistance they need so that they can, in the near future, qualify for those positions. This is just one example of what has been going on behind the scenes.

I think that this Government has maybe suffered a bit from working a bit too hard and not talking about some of the things that we are doing often enough. It is something that I think we suffer from, from time to time. We do not pay much attention to the PR aspect of things, Madam Speaker; we just get down to work.

I heard the Honourable Leader of the Opposition refer to some of the immigration abuses that exist in our work place. And these abuses do exist, Madam Speaker. We are aware of that. We are not trying to ignore them or pretend that they do not exist, but we believe that we can resolve those issues. We do have a handle of what is going on in the workplace, and I want to assure this honourable House that these issues are not escaping our attention. But we believe there is a certain delicacy in the way of how these matters are handled and that is the way we have been going about handling them.

One example of the way I think things have blown out of proportion is the recent outcry against the coming Immigration Bill and the way we have chosen to deal with the TLEP [Term Limit Exemption Permit] issue. I think this issue has been blown out of proportion, by some out of mischief, and by others out of a lack of understanding for what it is that we were trying to accomplish, Madam Speaker.

Every TLEP on that list is going to be asked to apply for PR or a work permit. The rollover policy is being amended. It is moving to nine years. The rollover policy was never intended to deal with employment. That was not the purpose of that policy. And I think that that has escaped a lot of peoples' attention, and what has happened is that it has just been used now against what we are trying to do to discredit us to a certain extent. The rollover simply states how long you can remain in this country, assuming you can qualify for a work permit, and that identifies the real source of the problem, Madam Speaker—work permits and PR.

Those two systems are where we are focusing our attention on fixing the problem so that we do not have to continue down the road that we are going where we are approving 90-plus per cent of work permit applications. We inherited that issue, Madam Speaker, we did not create it. But we have Caymanians out there who are capable and willing and able to work. And this Government is going to do everything we can to assist those Caymanians. We recognise the need for foreign labour. We are not anti-foreigner. We are not anti-foreign labour, but we are pro-Caymanian as well. We have, Madam Speaker, to address those issues if we are to move forward and become more accommodating to requests for labour from outside of this country.

I know that there has been some discussion, Madam Speaker, in the press and in private conversations and on the talk shows about my commitment to the immigration changes. I just wanted to spend a few minutes to explain how I see my role as a Government Backbencher. My role is not to come to this House to argue with the Opposition, Madam Speaker. As a Government Backbencher following the parliamentary tradition, my role is to keep my Government in check and make sure that it follows the mandate that it was elected to carry out.

So, there are times, Madam Speaker, when we will have our arguments and disagreements. Unfortunately, I think my initial disagreement with what was being done was blown out of proportion to some extent. But I am completely on board now with what this Government is attempting to do as far as to Immigration reform. And I think that when most Caymanians look at the presentations that we are planning to give, which we have already started to give, and we explain exactly how the changes will affect them, and the benefits from those changes come to light, I don't think that there will be so much opposition against them Immigration reform.

As a matter of fact, Madam Speaker, while I was sitting here I got a text message from someone who initially threatened to completely resign from the PPM and have nothing more to do with us in the initial stages. He is now just texted me to say that he has read through the Bill and seen the presentation and is completely happy and actually he sees a lot of benefit in there for Caymanians.

Madam Speaker, it is important that we do not get caught up in some of the rhetoric and some of the politics sometimes with issues as important as this. I am committed to working with this Government and I have seen where this Government is committed to working for the Caymanian people they represent. No one needs to remind me of my obligation to protect Caymanians, Madam Speaker, [after] having spent three years unemployed in this country with an MBA from a top university of the United States, having sent out 40-plus applications for jobs with only three interviews resulting from that, and despite having assurances from those in power that I would be taken care of and looked after.

Madam Speaker, Government is already addressing the crime issue. Last night I attended a meeting at the Savannah School Hall with the Bodden Town members of the Police Force and the community. I had one initial meeting with the Chief Inspector and he explained to me what his difficulties were and where he saw problems. And I am pleased to hear that after having come back and discussed that with the Premier that they have already been allocated four additional armed officers to deal with the escalating crime in the eastern districts. Those officers will be in place within a month.

I, along with my colleagues in Bodden Town, Madam Speaker, have decided to take responsibility for dealing with the crime situation in the eastern districts. And this is where we will work hand-in-hand with the Member for East End and the Member for North Side, as I have heard their concerns and we have agreed with the majority of their concerns and know that action needs to be taken. But, Madam Speaker, we need to get to a point where we do not have to constantly be beefing up the police force and arming the police. We need to get back to a situation where our citizens feel safe without having to arm themselves.

What I think we are suffering from, Madam Speaker, as I referred to earlier, is a situation where we have left a generation behind. Many people heard me on the campaign trail talking about youth, unemployment and opportunities for our young people. I think this is where we need to focus our attention. And again, this Budget represents an opportunity for us to push those initiatives forward, and I am happy to be a part of that.

Our Government is encouraging development in the eastern districts. And we have already seen some of these developments starting to get off the ground, Madam Speaker. Members earlier referred to possible hotel developments in East End and Bodden Town and there is a lot more being discussed in the initial stages now. But our focus is definitely on bringing some more business opportunities to Bodden Town and the other two eastern districts. Our responsibility is to provide entrepreneurial and educational opportunities for our people and to make sure the Bodden Towners, East Enders and North Siders are not left out of that equation.

Madam Speaker, as I stand here today I think that this Government has made a good start to what we have set out to accomplish. We are following the Manifesto promises that we made. We are taking our obligations to the country extremely seriously. And while it is nice to sit here and sometimes joke about this or that, we are taking our responsibilities very seriously. We have actually created a timeline by which to accomplish many of the things that we were elected on in our Manifesto and we are following that.

I heard one Member question whether or not we would implement single member constituencies. Madam Speaker, I am going to be one of the proudest Members of this House when I vote to approve the implementation of single member constituencies in the near future—and that time is coming right around the bend.

We can't do everything all at once, Madam Speaker. We have to pace ourselves. Our key priority was restoring confidence in the county, in the economy, and in the Government. And one of the primary ways of doing that, Madam Speaker, was to bring a budget that had the approval of the FCO and that also contained elements of some of the important initia-

tives that we intend to move throughout the course of the next four years.

So, the ship has now left the harbour and we are sailing. I think we have a good crew on board and a good captain. And I ask all Members of this House to relay look at what it is that we are trying to accomplish here in this Budget and to support it. This may not be perfect but it represents an opportunity for us to turn Cayman around and address many of the issues that have been plaguing this country for the past several years. We all need to work together. We need to have a partnership regardless of what side of the aisle we sit on. The country is depending on us to do that.

Madam Speaker, I said I would keep it brief and I have. But those are just some of the highlights of what I have been involved in and exposed to in my short time here as a Representative.

I would just like to thank you, Madam Speaker, for the time. And again, thank all Members of this House. I hope that my words may have impacted you in some small way to support this Budget and this Government in what it is that we are trying to do here today.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, honourable Member.

Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause] Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause] Final Call—does any other Member wish to speak? [pause]

I recognise the Third Elected Member for the district of West Bay.

**Mr. Bernie A. Bush, Deputy Opposition Leader, Third Elected Member for West Bay:** Madam Speaker, as everyone knows, this is my first Budget speech.

Like many Caymanians, I was anxious to hear what the Government had planned and how they intended to make the lives of the ordinary Caymanian better.

Madam Speaker, I am also happy to have been a part of history to hear and see the first female Governor deliver the Throne Speech. I am also happy to see you and the Honourable Minister Rivers sitting in this House as you both serve to remind us of the important role that women have played and continue to play in the leadership and development of these Islands. On behalf of the people of West Bay I congratulate you, Madam Speaker, Minister Rivers and Governor Kilpatrick and the many women who have served this country and will continue to serve this country.

Madam Speaker, I am also very happy to be a part of this freshman class, which includes some friends. While we may not be from the same political party, I am pleased when I look across the aisle and see them.

I am also very happy to see my friend, the Honourable Deputy Premier, Moses Kirkconnell. I thank the people of Cayman Brac for returning him to this honourable House. Madam Speaker, I have worked with him outside of politics before he was in politics and he is a good man and a man of his word.

Madam Speaker, I am also happy to sit on this side of the aisle where I have come to find two gentlemen who are happy to impart knowledge and their experiences to me. With the elected Member for North Side, I have come to realise reading everything is very important and going by the book is very important.

I have come to learn from the Member for East End respect for people like [Minister] Tibbetts, the First Elected Member for George Town; for Mr. Eden, First Elected Member for Bodden Town; for the Leader of the Opposition and for Mr. Miller, the Elected Member for North Side. When we were discussing going electronic here, the elected Member for East End kept stressing to remember that these men have paid their dues and respect is due. I will keep this in mind as I move through time in this place. Madam Speaker, these gentlemen have served our Islands well and I look forward to working with them over the next three years.

Last but not the least, I am happy to have two of my fellow colleagues for West Bay here with me: Captain Eugene and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. I have watched Captain Eugene work tirelessly in the community for over a decade and his passion for my district is well documented.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Bernie A. Bush:** Madam Speaker, I would like to use this opportunity to thank the Leader of the Opposition for what a lot of people within the financial industry have told me [as to] when he restored the finances of this country between the years of 2002 to 2005 after it was left in a sad state.

I would also like to commend the Leader of the Opposition some of his past Government [members] for leaving an operating surplus of over \$60 million after inheriting the deficit of over \$80 million. And, Madam Speaker, while more time was spent criticising him for not delivering the \$80 million projected, people forgot that while he found the cupboard bare and the coffers empty, nonetheless, he left the cupboard stocked, and I and the entire district of West Bay are happy. Madam Speaker, I am happy to be sitting here with him in this honourable House.

Madam Speaker, he is saying that he is going to leave me to learn on my own and does not want me to pick up any of his rough ways. And, Madam Speaker, I am happy to say that quite a few Members on that side of the House and over on this side have taken me under their wings trying to guide me through these first rough waters. And I do I know, Madam

Speaker, that yourself and the Clerk of the [Legislative Assembly] will remind me (like she just did) when I do the slip ups.

Madam Speaker, although I am very happy to be here, I am very disappointed with what I thought was more political posturing. I was shocked when I heard the Honourable Premier stand and say that he wants to get back on course. I was very concerned of the course he was on with no compass and no direction. Was that not the course that broke us before? I hope that is not the course he wants to embark on again. But, Madam Speaker, I am very happy to say that I look across the [floor] and I see the Honourable Marco Archer, the Elected Member for George Town. And I also see the First Elected Member for George Town and the First Elected Member for Bodden Town, these two veterans will not [allow] him to make the same mistakes again, I'm sure. So, that makes me feel better.

Madam Speaker, the polls were closed at 6 pm on Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May and the election is over. The people have spoken. They must stop and the electoral pondering must get on and we have to work and work together to make the lives of our people better.

When I hear the Honourable Premier bragging about how the UK likes his Budget, it actually gives me [cause] to pause as it was the same UK Government that sat idly by and watch them destroy this country. . . well, not destroy but get our economy the way it was, and our financial independence was questioned. Now we have handed everything to the UK on a silver platter. Madam, Speaker, this is nothing to brag about. The Government cannot even buy toilet paper without getting them to say it is okay. Any programme to help our young Caymanians, they have to approve it the same.

Madam Speaker, I have looked at the Budget presented and I think there is hope. And I hope there is hope. I just hope that those people keep things in track. I take comfort knowing that the people in this country are now becoming more and more politically aware and they are now holding us to task.

Madam Speaker, as much as I am happy to see that new Government Building and a surplus left behind for them by the previous Government to work with, I cannot in good conscience read the headlines and hear that the Government has \$100 million surplus, not when it comes at the hands of employers who create labour and hardworking Caymanian employees in this country. Madam Speaker, the Government is taking too much money out of the economy and this is unsustainable based on the economic model of these Islands.

The Government needs to look at ways to put some of that money back into the economy and stimulate it and get our people back to work before it is too late. No government around the world has yet to prove that by taking a dollar out of the economy and

putting it back in has been more efficient than leaving it in the hands of hardworking people where it belongs in the first place. Government needs to look at some of the fees being charged, especially those which are passed on to the average man on the street and determine what can be done to reduce the cost of living in these Islands to improve the quality and standard of the Caymanian people.

Madam Speaker, it is well known that the UDP campaigned on regulating fuel in this country and improving the standard of living for Caymanians. And while we did not receive a mandate to implement such an initiative, I implore and beg the Government to look at decreasing or removing the duty on fuel. Regulate it and reduce the utility and gas bills. If we could achieve this feat, not only will we be able to reduce the cost of living, cost of food and other goods, we will also be able to put money back into the pockets of the people where it belongs. We will also be able to reduce government's own utility bill as well as Government subsidy to other governmental agencies such as the Turtle Farm, the HSA, as well as Social Services itself.

It is imperative that we explore this option as soon as possible so that some of our retirees (not only in my district but all over these beautiful Islands) who are on fixed incomes will be able to live in dignity without depending on government for a handout. These are the kinds of initiatives that will give our people a hand up instead of handouts.

Madam Speaker, I believe that in order to be a good Opposition Member as well as a good person is to be able to give credit where credit is due. The solution to the many challenges facing our country will not be found by any one party or person, but all of us who are working collectively as a group.

That said, I would also say that the Government should also look at implementing the revenue fund that the elected Member for East End publicly spoke about Tuesday on the radio. This is not the first time I have heard it. I also remember a former Member of this House, Mr. George McCarthy, speaking of something similar in the past (during my time as a civil servant). Madam Speaker, while it may not reap much, if it is based on 1 per cent or 2 per cent of revenue as he suggested, but as the old people would say, "one, one egg, full basket."

Madam Speaker, speaking of civil servants, I would also like to thank the civil servants of this country for the tireless and sometimes thankless service that they provide. There are some good people who put their life on the line daily who are underpaid. There are people patrolling the streets at night offering medical care and some who even run into buildings when they are on fire when everyone else is running out and without these men the airplanes would not land. Madam Speaker, these people work in shifts and many times they are unable to have the quality time

that many of us have with our families, yet we refuse to recognise them properly—the firemen.

How can you have men working for 28 years and making less than clerical [officers] in the Glasshouse and driving a million-dollar-piece of equipment and making less than clerical officers in the Glasshouse? Something is not right with this equation. And while many of them may receive medals for long service, we know that none of these medals are made of silver and gold and, as such, cannot be used as collateral or any kind of money to purchase goods or services.

Madam Speaker, we need to pay these people properly, and, more importantly, we need to pay them now. If we are going to have a surplus I would say to the Government, please look at the firemen. This is one section. Not those at the top, they are doing pretty good; it is those foot soldiers at the bottom. Madam Speaker, if these people cannot live on their salaries today, how do we expect them to live on their pensions tomorrow?

I remember after [Hurricane] Ivan, at times we could not even find the police but we could find the fire service [personnel] rescuing people. How quickly we have forgotten. There seems that the only thing we have left over from Ivan is that we seem to want to cater to a set of people who came here to work and knew their time was up and do not want to go back.

Madam Speaker, everyone in this House knows that I have a soft spot for the children of our country. It has been my life and it will not change. I implore all of us to take them seriously and not just pay lip service but look for the sound bite that will get us a spot in the media. The young people in our country are hurting. We need to be reminded that the young people today will be managing this country tomorrow and it is imperative that we equip them with the skills and tools necessary today to meet and beat the challenges of tomorrow. Without investing wisely in our youth today, we will ensure that our country will fall tomorrow.

The Honourable Minister of Sports and Youth, unlike the two previous ministers, has reached out and I must say, Madam Speaker, he is accessible. I do continue to pray and hope that for the next four years I will continue to work with him once I am called upon.

Madam Speaker, without investing wisely in our youth today we will ensure that our country will fall tomorrow. And no, Mr. Premier, we do not need another \$100 million building. Some of the best lessons were taught under a tree. My party campaigned on a national apprenticeship programme and I would be more than happy to sit with this Government and explain how it works and how best we can implement such a programme if they are interested. Sending a child out into this world today at the age of 16 or 17 will not be in their best interests. My party proposed that we pay a weekly or monthly stipend to each stu-

dent enrolled in the programme so that they will gain the necessary skills for the workforce that is out there.

I have heard many people in this society speak about Caymanians receiving on-the-job training from the companies in which they are employed. Madam Speaker, at times this is a joke. When I speak to some of the young people who go into these places, the most they have been doing is filing, whereas the children of friends of the top people of other countries come in and get the experience in the real sections that count.

Madam Speaker, considering that many of the jobs in our society are created by small business people, I am curious to know how many small businesses can afford to hire two full-time workers where one of them is a trainee. That was an idea doomed for failure when it was conceived. And today's unemployment problem is a testament to that failure.

It is one of Government's primary responsibilities in ensuring that we have a workforce to meet the demands of society. After all, is it not the Government that sets the syllabus in the schools? This programme will not only provide real world training for children, but will better prepare them for the world when they graduate from the programme. A monthly stipend from \$500 to \$600 to 300 kids will cost less than \$2 million or 2 per cent of the projected surplus. I caution the Government to be wary that they know the cost of everything and the price of nothing. This is a small investment and not a cost to the public purse but if we do not find this \$2 million now, I guarantee you that we will have to find a lot more to tackle the criminal problems in this country.

Madam Speaker, on speaking about training for Caymanians, I would like to use this opportunity to segue slightly into the proposed Immigration Bill. I am still reviewing the proposed Bill. But, so far, having sat on the Immigration Board for over five years, I know that what is on paper will not work in real life. One of the things on this is about if someone writes in they would take away points. Madam Speaker, they will not write in. Because when you write in about the First Elected Member for George Town, the Member then has to see that letter. So, if I write in about my boss, what happens is that I lose my job the next day. There are no repercussions for these companies that have to pay a little \$25,000 fine or pay out someone and make them leave. They are making hundreds of millions a year. They got rid of what they wanted.

I just had a young lady come to me and say to me, *please, I am a lawyer* . . . and she is at one of the big firms. Well I went to her, actually, because one of her workmates had said to me, *Go and speak with her and find out her story*.

Madam Speaker, when I spoke to the young lady and heard her story of how someone was brought in here to train her, that person has systematically held her back. But, Madam Speaker, they can't do it forever. She is a Caymanian woman and we

know what Caymanian women are made of. When the men went to sea it was those Caymanian women who kept this country going. She hasn't given up. She has gotten there but now this same gentleman (who was brought in to train her) is now applying for PR. And he is not someone who mixes or socialises with them.

I asked her: *Why don't you put it in writing?* She said: *I have a son; I will not have a job next week.* So, all of this that they have put in there will not happen on paper. They can write on paper all they want, Madam Speaker.

Seven years ago the companies in this country knew that they had seven years for their employees to move out. The employees knew that in seven years they had to go. Why is it only in the Cayman Islands that the bar keeps constantly moving, moving, and in other countries it never moves? Only here!

Madam Speaker, for too long this Immigration issue has been used as a political football and it is high time we stop it. We may use the word "Immigration" but, in fact, it is really the movement of people. Madam Speaker, we are talking about people and, so far, we have not taken this responsibility serious. And the UDP is not without blame. For too long politicians in this country have been derelict in their duties and I implore the Government to reach across the aisle and find consensus on this important subject before it is passed.

We have to screen these people who we intend to extend this thing to because what we have in this country . . . we have imported racism—something that people have told me not to speak about on this platform. But when I have my people telling me over and giving me instances, there is nowhere else to say it. That is what is here, and these types of people.

There is nothing worse than when you back an injured animal into a corner. And when I talk to my people . . . and I talk to them throughout the Island. I do not just move in one circle or [with] one clique of friends. Madam Speaker, we have been left out, we have been left behind, and a lot of us now feel that there is nothing for us. In the words of a young man who I sat with, he said: "If I can't get a piece of the pie, no one will get a piece of the pie." That is very disturbing, Madam Speaker.

Bearing in mind, Madam Speaker, that approximately 55 per cent of the workforce in our Islands are expatriates, as a Representative of the people who have to work in that environment, it is important that we do not create an atmosphere that will create disharmony in the workforce with the "us-and-them" mentality. But it is coming—and coming fast, if it is not already here.

Earlier, I heard the Elected Member for North Side talk about someone who went in applying for a job with a Jamaican accent and the minute they found out she was a Caymanian, their tune changed. This touched close to home. When Banco Do Brasil [S A] (where my wife worked for 18 years) closed and



moved out, my wife applied for a job. Madam Speaker, everything was fine until the lady told her to bring in her passport so that she could apply for the work permit papers and my wife said: *I am a Caymanian*. Their *tune* changed and she never did get a call back.

So, the elected Member for North Side hit the nail on the head. These are the things that are going on in our country. Is it that Immigration has no teeth? Is it that we, as lawmakers, have not given them the ammunition? Or is it the boards that approve these things that are to blame? Madam Speaker, regardless of where the blame sits, the problem is here.

Sometimes, Madam Speaker, you hear the cries of your people. But when you see the children suffer it gets hard. If we do not cut this “us-and-them” mentality or cut it out and make these people realise that when they come here this is our country. We will have an unproductive economy that is service based and one which relies heavily on people to provide services. Madam Speaker, it is no use if the Government using the majority to push such an important Bill through the House only to have it overturned in the next four years when they are in the Opposition. Madam Speaker, this method does not provide stability for our Islands and will discourage others from investing if they know that there is a possibility that the law may change when the Government changes.

I believe that we should look at a committee of the entire House as this is a subject that every single one of us campaigned on. I stand ready to work with the Government in this regard. I've already done this with the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Sports.

Madam Speaker, I am aware that the words from my lips will become part of the permanent records of this honourable House. And I wanted my first speech not to be filled with criticism, but, rather, solutions that the Government may embrace.

Madam Speaker, the mighty United States Government is partially shut down and serves as an example of when politicians play politics 24/7. The campaigning is over, the election is over, and it is time that we put the politics behind us and do the work that we were elected and are being paid to do. Every Caymanian looks to us to start the ball rolling, to improve the lives for their children and for themselves. I am aware that these problems were not created overnight and they will not be fixed overnight, but, Madam Speaker, I am sure that with hard work, team work, commitment and dedication they can be fixed.

There has to be some regulating done by the Government, Madam Speaker. For too long we have allowed the banks, insurance companies, various people to come here and do as they say and please at the expense of us. I always wondered why no one ever . . . I have stood here many years and listened to this House and never heard anyone speak about regulating these banks. Today I heard it again. When I say I have heard it before, I am talking about Governments that were in power. No one seems to want

to do it. But, Madam Speaker, they are—and I repeat, they are—raping the people.

When you see grown men who have paid a mortgage for 15, 16 years and all of a sudden now because of the economic downturn go in and ask them to just please work with them, having not missed a payment, Madam Speaker, and the banks tell them no.

Madam Speaker, I have a young constituent of mine with a five-year-old son with diabetes. She had a job where she was making \$2,800 a month and somehow she was able to wrangle a mortgage for a little place for herself and her son where she was paying \$1,000 a month and she was okay. Madam Speaker, the job was made redundant but she persevered and got another job paying her \$1,900 a month. She went into the bank and asked them, *Could you please take me down to six or seven hundred dollars a month?* And the bank said no.

Madam Speaker, a single woman with a 6-year-old child making \$1,900 a month paying \$1,000 a month to the bank, tell me where they are trying to help us.

But I was told something one time by an older West Bay man who is quite comfortable in his finances when I asked him: *Why do you help people?* He said: *It is a very simple thing. When you live on top of the hill and you have five or six families around you who are hungry, they will come and steal from you, whereas if you keep them full, they will be your friends and everybody will work together.* And for too long, Madam Speaker, in this country there has been a set of people in this country who have lived in the ivory tower and they do not even want to make crumbs drop to those. And I am not talking about the lazy ones, Madam Speaker, I am talking about the ones who are willing, able and are trying, but nothing is ever done to help them.

Madam Speaker, I promised myself that I would not get up here and start to criticise. I am happy to say I did not. Madam Speaker, Bernie Bush stands ready to work with anyone and with all to fix the problems facing our country today to ensure a happy and prosperous Cayman tomorrow.

I want to say to those Members who have given me words of encouragement, who have set me straight, and let me say a special thank you to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly who has made sure that every time when I needed direction on where to go, what to do, has been very patient with me. I want to say thanks very much to Madam Speaker, and Members of this House. God bless you all. God bless this honourable House and I look forward to working with you all.

**The Speaker:** Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause] Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause] Does any other Member wish to

speak? [pause] Final call: Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause]

I recognise the Honourable Premier.

**The Premier, Hon. Aiden McLaughlin:** Madam Speaker, given that it is approaching 7.00 [pm], which was the hour of adjournment, I would seek your indulgence for us adjourn a bit early and then we can resume tomorrow. There are other Members who wish to speak but I think they are reluctant to begin at this point in the day.

*[Pause]*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**The Premier, Hon. Aiden McLaughlin:** Madam Speaker, with your permission, therefore, I move the adjournment of this honourable House until 10.00 am tomorrow.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Premier.

The question is that this honourable House be adjourned until 10.00 am tomorrow. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Speaker:** The Ayes have it.

**At 6.48 PM THE HOUSE STOOD ADJOURNED UNTIL 10.00 AM, FRIDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2013.**