



**CAYMAN ISLANDS  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT  
ELECTRONIC VERSION**

**2014/15 SESSION**

**29 May 2014**

*Second Sitting of the First Meeting*

Throne Speech and Budget Meeting

*(pages 37–90)*

**Hon Anthony S Eden, OBE, JP, MLA  
Deputy Speaker**

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PRESENT WERE:

### **PRESIDING**

**Hon. Anthony S. Eden, OBE, JP, MLA**  
Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

### **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	Deputy Premier, 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 Financial Services, Commerce and Environment
Hon G Wayne Panton, MLA	Minister of Education, Employment and Gender Affairs
Hon Tara A Rivers, MLA	

### **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 Roy McTaggart, MLA	Second Elected Member for George Town
Mr Winston C Connolly, Jr, MLA Mr	Fifth Elected Member for George Town
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. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP, Mr Bernie A Bush, MLA	<i>Leader of the Opposition</i> , First Elected Member for West Bay Third Elected Member for West Bay
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#### **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**

Hon. J. Y. O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MLA	<i>Speaker</i> , Second Elected Member for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman
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Hon Samuel W Bulgin, QC, JP	Attorney General, ex officio Member responsible for Legal Affairs
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#### **ABSENT**

Capt A Eugene Ebanks, JP, MLA	Fourth Elected Member for West Bay
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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT  
THRONE SPEECH AND BUDGET  
2014/15 SESSION  
THURSDAY  
29 MAY 2014  
10:23 AM  
Second Sitting**

*[Hon. Anthony S. Eden, Deputy Speaker, presiding]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Good morning.

I now call on the Premier, the Honourable Minister of Home and Community Affairs, to lead us in prayers.

### PRAYERS

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** 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 Deputy Speaker:** Proceedings are resumed.

I now call on the Acting Attorney General, Ms. Jacqueline Wilson to come to the dais to be sworn in. Please stand.

### ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS OR AFFIRMATIONS

#### OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

*[Administered by the Clerk]*

**Hon. Jacqueline Wilson, Acting Attorney General:**

I, Jacqueline Wilson, do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, her heirs and successors, according to law, so help me God.

#### OATH OF DUE EXECUTION

*[Administered by the Clerk]*

**Hon. Jacqueline Wilson, Acting Attorney General:**

I, Jacqueline Wilson, do swear that I will well and truly serve Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, her heirs and successors, and the people of the Cayman Islands in the Office of Ex-Officio Member of the Legislative Assembly, so help me God.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Ms. Wilson, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to this honourable House. Please take your seat.

Please be seated.

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

#### APOLOGIES

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would like to give apologies for the Honourable Speaker and for the absence of the Honourable Attorney General.

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

#### REPORT - CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT 2014/2015 FIRST YEAR STATEMENT

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Speaker, as I alluded to in my Policy Statement earlier this week, it now gives me pleasure to bring to this hallowed House a report of the successes of the Pro-

gressives-led Administration in our first year on the job.

I knew that we had accomplished much since our swearing-in exactly one year ago to this day, but I must say I was a little overwhelmed when the report was placed before me. I thought to myself, *Wow, we have done a lot in our first year.*

The report is being tabled and will go out to Government workers and media houses today, so I won't spend the time to read through it in the House, but I would like to point out some highlights.

I have to reiterate our continued success with budgets and the United Kingdom, which approved our four-year fiscal plan allowing Government to prepare its annual budgets with more certainty because of the parameters set out in the plan. We continue to meet those, so the UK continues to approve our budgets and, I might add, on the first submission. They did it again last week when Minister of Overseas Territories Mark Simmonds sent me a letter commending Government for the significant progress it had made in public financial management. I must tell you, Mr. Speaker, that it made me even more proud, if that's possible, of the Progressives-led Administration.

As you heard from the Minister of Finance on Monday, the surplus in the 2013/14 budget is \$7.9 million more than the \$100.2 million originally budgeted and we are ending this fiscal year with core government's operating revenues estimated to be \$652.1 million, which is \$7.4 million more than originally forecast. Our expenses will be \$1.5 million less than budgeted, at \$547.7 million.

Prudent financial management has meant that we are able to give civil servants a one-off gratuity payment of 2.5 per cent of their 2013/14 income. I want to again thank them for their hard work and dedication and I appreciate the kind words of thanks that I, on behalf of the Administration, have received from the Deputy Governor, the President of the Civil Service Association and other civil servants throughout the course of this week.

Mr. Speaker, much of this was covered in my Policy Statement and the Budget Speech from the Minister of Finance and the Throne Speech from Her Excellency the Governor, and, as I said, is included in the Report we are giving today. But please let me take a few minutes and run through some of the highlights of the past year: Government continues to support local and international investors, in developing Cayman's economy. Recent examples include:

- Health City Cayman is a \$70 million development in East End that opened its doors earlier this year and is providing jobs and other economic opportunities for Caymanians. Some 28 per cent of the current staff are Caymanians, with the numbers expected to grow, and the economy of the eastern districts has been boosted with hospital staff renting accommodations and living in proximity to the hospital.

- Cayman Enterprise City (CEC), which is another area of economic diversification, has seen renewed activity under new management and has reached a milestone of 100 new clients. CEC shows continued promise for further expansion and offers the potential for more jobs for Caymanians.

- The Ironwood Community is a \$360 million mixed use development proposed off Frank Sound Road. Part of that community will be a golf course designed by golf great Arnold Palmer who was in Cayman earlier this year to break ground. An important part of the Ironwood development will be the public private partnership that will oversee the construction of a 10-mile extension to the East West Arterial, from Newlands to Frank Sound. This extension is much needed and will bring added economic growth in the Eastern districts

- Gran Palazzo will be a major Caymanian waterfront residential build out development on North Sound off the West Bay Road. This 126 high-end unit development is anticipated to create 250 jobs during the five-year project build out.

- Hotel room stock is growing or improving. The Londoner, a luxury 20 unit property at Morritt's Tortuga Club Resort, opened recently. The new Kimp-ton Hotel on West Bay Road is under construction and is slated to open in 2016. Work will soon begin on the expansion of Beach Suites on Seven Mile Beach increasing the number of floors from five to seven. Then there is the proposed construction of a new hotel on the old Hyatt site that will also bring much needed economic activity and employment. It is scheduled to open in 2015. The recent refurbishment of properties such as the Marriott, the Westin, and Comfort Suites also helps maintain our high standards. Over the next two years room stock will have seen significant improvements and will facilitate increased tourist arrivals.

- From the management of government financed end, we've implemented a new stricter travel policy that sets out parameters around business travel, including classes of service to be used, as well as requirements for reporting in a timely manner on the achievements, outcomes and costs of overseas travel of ministers and civil servants.

- The Legislative Assembly unanimously passed the long awaited Standards in Public Life Law to regulate the conduct of public officials, and preserve the integrity of public institutions. It also gives authority to the Standards in Public Life Commission.

- Stay over and cruise ship arrivals for 2013 numbers registered a 7.4 per cent increase over arrivals for 2012. The actual number of air arrival visitors to Cayman was 345,387 and represents our best figures since 2000. Cruise passenger arrivals are expected to reach 1.65 million by the end of this year and are expected to hit 1.95 million passengers next year.

- Over the year we saw successful events such as the NORCECA Beach Volleyball tournaments, the Cayman Invitational Track Meet, the CARIFTA track championships, the CONCACAF Under-15 boys' football tournament, and the CONCACAF Under-20 Women's tournament. These brought large numbers of officials and fans from participating countries and from CONCACAF, which helped to boost our tourism numbers.

- We appointed a new Customs management team with the remit to increase enforcement on the borders of the Cayman Islands. The Department has already seen results with increased contraband interdiction at our borders.

- The RCIPS has new purpose built, Human Rights compliant Custody Suites. These will replace the condemned holding cells at George Town and West Bay Police stations.

- The Draft Outline Business Case for Airport Developments in the Cayman Islands has been finalised and includes a Master Plan for the airports on all three Islands that addresses priority needs and phases of implementation.

- The Environmental Impact Assessment for George Town cruise berthing began in May this year. Government is in the final stages of the Central Tenders Committee review of the Environmental Engineering bids and anticipates that a successful bid will be announced shortly. Indeed, since this was written, that appointment has actually taken place.

- A memorandum of understanding has been signed between Government and Ironwood Development and an agreement has been reached with the National Trust on the route of the East West Arterial leading from Hirst Road in Savannah to the development site off Frank Sound Road.

- The Cayman Islands Hospital dialysis unit found a permanent home next to the foyer at Government Hospital. The new unit boasts added space while also addressing the privacy concerns of patients.

- The Counselling Centre's move to its new location on Cardinal Avenue has allowed for the expansion of community-based programming to include play and art therapy and has enhanced the delivery of family therapy and group experiences.

The move of the Family Resource Centre to its new location at Compass Centre allows for greater access by, and expanded programming being made available to, the community.

- Close to 100 people gathered at Aston Rutty Civic Centre in April to watch Members of this Assembly hold their meeting on Cayman Brac. It was the first time that the Legislative Assembly had gathered in the Sister Islands since 2003 and served to make the Sister Islands inclusive in Government and promoted transparency.

- The Progressives-led Government sent the proposed National Conservation Law, 2013, to the Legislative Assembly where it was passed unanimously.

- Operations at the George Town Landfill have been enhanced with the acquisition of much-needed equipment. Management practices have been streamlined, deep water wells have been relocated and funds have been increased for operational requirements to ensure that best practice can be followed to the greatest extent possible.

- The Market at the Grounds has been a primary driver in increasing public and consumer awareness of the quality of locally grown produce and livestock. This increased awareness has led to additional demand by restaurants and residents for local produce and meat products.

- "Ensuring Persons with Disabilities live with dignity, are respected and participate fully in society" is the vision of stakeholders in the final stages of developing a National Policy for Persons with Disabilities.

- Government has appointed a Minimum Wage Advisory Committee to examine the economic, financial and social implications of introducing a minimum wage aimed at determining an appropriate National Minimum Wage(s) for the Cayman Islands.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a sampling of our accomplishments in our first year in office.

We said at the beginning that we were going to put Government and the Cayman Islands back on the right course and I think that we have done much in our first year to restore confidence and right the good ship Cayman.

We know—and can take satisfaction in the fact—that we have done much, but we also realise even more so now than we did a year ago that there is so much, much more to be done.

I assure you Mr. Speaker the Progressives-led Administration is ready for the challenge. As four-time Olympic Gold medallist Jesse Owens said, "**We all have dreams. But in order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline, and effort.**"

I believe Mr. Speaker that we have proven that we have the determination, dedication and self-discipline and we're more than willing to make the effort. And so it is with great pride that I am able this morning to table in this honourable House our first year report entitled "On Course—Achievements of Progressive-led Administration 2013/14 fiscal year."

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Please table the statement.

## **PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS**

**CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT ON COURSE –  
ACHIEVEMENTS, 2013-2014**

*[Laid on the Table by the Premier, Hon Minister of  
HC&A]*

**GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**BILL**

**SECOND READING**

**APPROPRIATION (JULY 2014 TO JUNE 2015)  
BILL, 2014**

**DEBATE ON THE BUDGET ADDRESS  
AND THE THRONE SPEECH**

*~together with~*

**GOVERNMENT'S POLICY STATEMENT**

*[Continuation thereof]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before calling on the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, I would like to indicate that we are working until 7:00 pm tonight, and to encourage my colleagues to try to get here a bit earlier. I know some Members have been here from before 9:00, but there are always reasons why. But, where possible, because we have so much to do, try to get here.

I now call on the Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As the Leader of the Opposition I rise to address the Speech from the Throne and the Budget [Address] presented by the Honourable Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, at times we wonder about life in our Islands. We listen around our districts, the back yards and front porches and people bemoan where we are headed, how we are progressing and if we are going backward. It's always easy, Mr. Speaker, for people to criticise and make judgments and not be satisfied with positions in life, particularly so when everybody is having a difficult time. And, Mr. Speaker, times couldn't be more difficult—not only here, but in this world with the crisis started in 2007, which is still ongoing. I don't know that we are out of the woods. I don't think so. And world conditions still deteriorate in key areas that affect us.

Mr. Speaker, at times here in our Island we hear the criticism of our churches, and people complaining about the deterioration of life in these Islands. I have never given up hope and trust in what our

churches contribute to our daily lives. While I have pondered many times in my life why we haven't produced more pastors from our own shores, I have been heartened in recent times when I listen to Pastor Alson who gives an excellent sermon and quality advice on his time on television.

I must say that I was really, really pleased to see the ordination of another Caymanian young man in the past week, Father Kirkconnell, in the Catholic Church. I have been acquainted with the Catholic Church for some time. I used to be its organist back in the 1970s, something I don't do in public anymore. I was glad and assisted them when they came to build their church in West Bay and have many, many contacts of good Catholic families who have been here for many years.

But here, Mr. Speaker, are two Caymanians that could easily have taken up any vocation. They could have been lawyers, accountants, doctors, but they choose to serve the people through the holy Word and God's guidance for the church. So it gives me continued hope that the Word and the influence of good parents, good grandparents and other good people who really care, is not lost. I want to offer congratulations to the parents and grandparents of both young men and the particular churches for the encouragement and support given to both of them and to say to the young men and women of these Islands that service and effort to help others doesn't really need to be from the commercial and other social sectors or from the political standpoint. But true service can be given through the work of the church.

Again, I want to encourage the two young men and encourage more young people to look in that direction. It can be more satisfying (I would think) to pastor someone, to give pastoral care. As humans we all know how much in our daily lives we fall down and need that advice. I certainly do in mine. It will always be good to have young people that can talk and help to move you forward, pick you up and turn you around.

In assessing the past year, I can say that in spite of the bashes and criticism I have taken from the PPM, as recently as Monday by the Premier, I have stuck to what I said I would do—be a responsible Opposition. That too, however, brought its own blame in my own camp and from the general public—*You are not being harsh enough. Are you scared or what?* But I will say again so one and all can hear, we don't need fussing and fighting and the building of roadblocks for the country. We need solutions, progress, understanding, patience, even when nettled and aggravated to the point you want to move the world. But that's what we need, national life demands it. Good leadership is what it is all about.

This year, Mr. Speaker, I will have marked 30 years plus in this Chamber. It hasn't been an easy time, these 30 years. More about that some other

time. But I am proud. I can look back on many accomplishments, even to those just read by the Premier taking credit for them. I can say, ha-ha, work has been done.

Firstly, let me thank the Premier for continuing the policies of our Administration almost verbatim. Word for word every policy listed here is for the previous Government and endorses the hard work of the previous Government. Can't be denied, no matter how much you paint it red, change its name, turn it upside down, send out the counsellors to say one thing when they ought to know different, and even the Ministers who get up to swallow their tongue sometimes. But nevertheless work is done. Work is done.

I also want to thank the Honourable Finance Minister for his kind words in entitling his Address "Maintaining the Path of Fiscal Prudence." This is, I think, an overwhelming endorsement of Government's work. And I want to congratulate, particularly, the Finance Minister for his demeanour, the way he delivers and has chosen to work. I am not saying that politics will not play, but I certainly appreciate that, no matter what side we're on, because here I am on this side and they are on that side. But at the end of the day this House encompassed "we."

Mr. Speaker, we need solutions. And regardless of who thinks otherwise, of what use is it to sit down and come up with all kinds of reasons why something is not right and do nothing to make it right? We had four years of criticism that wore us into the ground. Nobody needs to think it's not difficult and distracting. And there has to be at some point in national life atonement for that at some point.

I want to say too that I am not scared of anyone.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Don't involve me in it.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Not going to do that.

I am not scared of anyone. I am scared of liars. All my life I have been petrified of them because my mother flogged me so many times for people going and telling her things that I didn't do. But because someone perceived it and I was in the vicinity and I was with a group, I got a licking, lies told on me and floggings. So all my life I have been petrified of liars. That always makes me worry. A liar is a dangerous individual. I take no part in that.

Mr. Speaker, in this small place we call home, people who are dirty and vindictive and lie will do anything to damage and get what it is they want. They are wicked, immoral, evil and rotten, and bad will be their end. But, Mr. Speaker, all those things are fleeting and that, too, will pass.

Me? Me, Mr. Speaker? I was elected to serve, to work for the people and to be true to them. I'm human, not that I haven't made mistakes. If I'm here long

enough I will probably make more. But nobody is going to say that I didn't try to help them in my lifetime in this House. So, I am not going to lie on anyone, no matter who it is, or how that situation may look, because the truth will always come out. I am not taking my route as Leader of the Opposition to destroy. I am here to help build up, if I am given an opportunity, not tear down.

The world crisis should not have impacted us as a Government so severely if mistakes along the road were not made. For many years, not this Government or my Government, but many Governments who did not see or care about the problem no matter how we said it, or I said it, or motions we moved to prove it, or any other person warned us. And so we faced many a complicated problem. And we must move forward, though, as a country by building our people and working with those who came here to help; building those particularly who cannot help themselves, and we have many of those, as much as people don't want to admit it.

Oh, we can show the nice homes. We can show all that we want in this country. But there are people, and have always been people, who are there that will not be able to help themselves. Not just handicapped or mentally disturbed, but other people because of how the country has grown, and grown out of the way of some of our people.

We already have many complicated problems. But some people over the years failed to see or deal with them. The crisis, which I say started in 2007, if you look at Bloomberg, and you look at and watch and read the *Economist* and the *Times* and leading financial magazines, you knew that what was happening, particularly in the housing market in the United States and Florida (who we are most closely aligned with), could not continue. Could not! Houses that we saw in Florida back in 2005 and 2006 for \$400,000 sold for \$60,000 plus in 2009 and 2010.

That crisis, however, has made our problems more evident. I always believed in building reserves for the period of global instability that is always around the corner. That's why I warned the Government in 2007 (or whatever it was) to pull back. I will never forget it. I was told, *Not on the kindest of mornings am I going to listen to you*. Yeah? I bet you listened when it was proven and all those things were just make believe facades over there in the United States and everything fell and crashed, and Lehman Brothers went to pieces and one after the next. We have and we must prepare for that time of instability that is always around the corner.

I can't help but reflect on the many initiatives that I tried to put in place, not only as the Premier, where I had to preside over a new Cabinet and under new reasoning where I was told, *Listen, you may be the Premier, but we have the votes. We can do and*

*spend what we think.* Mm-hmm. That's the way it went.

But some of those that I had put in place as Minister of Development or Planning and Minister of Finance and Financial Services . . . those alone would have built and hedged around us a buttress against some of the effects we are going through today. I am convinced that if we created attractive conditions for global investment, a strong and a better Immigration system, for instance, and strengthened our resources, or the sources of our assets, or strategically meaningful resources, we will handle better whatever any economic crisis throws our way. Nobody can say it can't be done. It can be.

So that journey, as my good friend said, of a mile begins with a single step. I do believe there is a foothold for these Islands, Mr. Speaker. So, we can rely on the moral values that have ensured the progress of where we came from, of our own little Island civilisation—integrity and hard work, responsibility and self-confidence. So if, as a country, we pool our intellectual, moral and material resources, we can overcome those complicated problems that we face.

Lee Kuan Yew built Singapore to the envy of many after having to fight Communists and invaders who occupied Singapore and a Colonial administration that would not agree with him, still doesn't agree with him. And after having to pull out overnight, if you read what he says, from Malaysia, a small bit of land, I believe smaller or just about our size, that was nearly all swamp, but look at it today. They can pay their premier \$3 million per annum and their ministers nearly \$2 million per annum. Their civil servants earn some of the highest salaries of any country in the world.

That's what Lee Kuan Yew built of an island as small as we are. But he allowed people to come; blue- and white-collar workers, big, small, big and large companies. He allowed them to migrate to Singapore. He built a nation.

Cayman too can do so. But a lot of mindset has to change, Mr. Speaker. And since some people think so small, some people are so willing to criticise, some so willing to accuse and be suspicious about everyone's actions and modus operandi, a lot of explaining, a lot of education has to take place to get that mindset changed. We are not going to do it, not by listening to people around wherever you go, whether it's a tea shop, barroom, dance floor or a backyard or a front porch, when you listen to some of them, as somebody said, *Boy, it's no good me asking anybody about help because some of them I'm asking for help are worse off than me.* True. You have to be careful who is guiding you or telling you what they want, what they think. Mm-hmm.

No, Mr. Speaker, this little Island here has come too far in a short 35, 40, 50 years, if you may, not to be able to move forward more progressively. I

am talking about a party name. I am talking about people's ability to educate their children properly to be safe in their homes to be safe in their business and to have the job that they can do; whether that is sweeping the street or whether that is managing the biggest law firm and the most progressive accounting firm or hedge fund in this country. If people can move and have their being, this country can be the envy of the world.

Mind you, they are jealous now. Don't think they are not. They are jealous. But we haven't gotten there yet. So, a lot of mindset has to change, Mr. Speaker. Immigration, migration, or whatever you want to call it, has to be changed. The population has to grow. Mr. Speaker, either we embrace wealth or reap poverty.

Mr. Speaker, the report was just given about how much they have done. As I said, if I was closer to him I would have shaken his hand because most of it are things that we put on the table that we started—our policies. I can look back because we are enjoying some . . . the present Government is enjoying early rewards of bold actions we took—removal of Cayman from the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] “grey list”; establishing the Shetty Hospital; the Special Economic Zone and the ForCayman Alliance to attract knowledge-based business, helping us diversify from our reliance on only financial services and tourism; sports tourism; established legislation to support the medical tourism; improved tourism arrivals to the point where we have the best stay over rates for 12 years. They are not going to get up and say McKeeva did that. Uh-uh!

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** I nearly put one on this morning. But it's not Christmas!

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** And that's the only time that I won't care to wear red.

The best stay over rates in 12 years!

The Minister talked about his hotels.

Morritt's? I know what I was told when Mr. Morrirt came and told me he needed to get some help. He was going to build this because he wanted a more upscale product. Morrirt's is the only place in the tourism industry that has full Caymanian management in the top layer of its operation—the general manager, the operational manager (Mr. Miller is one of them), the financial operation controller. The only one! And we must congratulate David Morrirt for his commitment and his family's commitment to us in going up there in East End and putting down what he has put down.

We must say thanks too to the past representative and a lot of thanks to the present elected representative for his drive and commitment to his constituents in supporting that operation there. But we must! And so when he came to me to get help and concession, of course I agreed. Look at what we have.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** He *nah* get 'em yet, though.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** *Heh, heh.* Well I left the letter for him to have it. But look at what he has built there. We have the best stay over rates for tourism. That didn't take sitting down and beating up on anybody; that took us going . . . and I went with [Shomari] at times. That took us going and opening the roots.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** We maintained the Aa3 rating with Moody's Rating Agency when the United States, the UK and France had all been downgraded, Mr. Speaker.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Leave him alone in George Town. He'd get lost in this big constituency. Give me a chance.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order!

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Speaker, as much as you hear about how much we had lost investor confidence and how much they brought it back, what in the world was Moody's doing maintaining our rating if we were as bad off as what they politically get up and push out their chests about?

No, Mr. Speaker.

We provided \$11 million in duty waiver concessions to small and medium size local businesses—\$11 million. That is me writing it off with my prerogative as Minister of Finance of giving them assistance. And this was not any foreign national business; this was small people who had boats bringing engines, bringing a dump truck or whatever. Wherever they were from, in Cayman. I don't care which side they were on, if they showed up at my office they didn't go away without me trying to help them.

We provided stamp duty waivers to first-time Caymanian home owners. That was a programme I started in the '90s. When the PPM came in they changed the name, but not much else. Gave a few more increases on that by motions here and they agreed at the time. But we helped people. And we reduced duty on construction materials by 50 per cent.

We reduced duty construction materials for the whole time by 50 per cent. So don't think that that didn't help small-, medium-size businesses and Caymanian home owners. It did.

Mind you, I am concerned about reduction of duties, you know. I have always been.

We brought Cayman to the attention of Asian and South American markets promoting our financial and tourism sectors, and it is working. And we ensured that our government accounts were audited for the first time in four years. We held an annual pride clean-up that employed over 800 people each year. We enhanced our annual Pirates' Week festival to where it is now really attracting people.

The Third Elected Member for West Bay in charge of that did some travelling in the region to get (more specifically in the US region) those people closest to us to come back. And they did that.

We produced a real surplus budget of \$67 million at the end after trying to bounce back and forth in the other three years. We saved over 200 homes with our Save the Mortgage programme.

Mr. Speaker, work is yet to be done. Nobody can come and tell me that we didn't do work and it wasn't successful. It wouldn't be in this little book this morning if it weren't successful.

We believe that we have miles to go before we sleep. We believe in a transparent and globally competitive Cayman economy driven by enhanced investment in training, research and development, education, and sustained by public policies which encourage and inspire all the sectors of our business community. Even more important are the skills and entrepreneurship that can drive our economic growth and raise our living standard.

Our economy has become more diversified and globalised. We have an increasing vibrant international services sector and we are one of the leading business and financial hubs in the Americas. We have moved up the value chain in financial services and we are rapidly moving into new areas of growth, such as tourism, the capital markets, IT, medical tourism and biomedical sciences. We made good progress in developing entrepreneurs with many more start-up enterprises and larger numbers seeking to expand. And we strengthened trade and investment links within the region and with our global partners, and we are an emerging hub for some talent as well.

We did show some resilience, because we could have been a whole lot worse off in these last four years. Certainly, we have set out over time our strategies to develop new capabilities and give every Caymanian an opportunity to grow. There is a new landscape, and there are opportunities in that new landscape.

Cayman is well placed to succeed in the emerging post-crisis world. I believe that the global crisis has reinforced the shift of markets to dynamic

off-shore markets and sophisticated financial centres. That's why it's important for us to have a strong and fair balanced immigration policy. Growing organisation infrastructural development and increasing demand for services in Latin America can play to the strength of many Cayman-based businesses and Caymanians generally.

Our companies have an important window of opportunity to create a strong presence in the Americas over the next five to ten years. Whilst skill sets are in high demand, we can do that. Over time, other players in this region will catch up and deploy the best human capital to compete with us. We must establish leading positions in key markets in the next four years that we can build upon to establish new ways of adding value over the long term.

The G-8 economies, while growing more slowly because of reduction in household wealth and continued deleveraging, will remain large and sophisticated markets. Cayman has to stay engaged in these markets and grow its financial services role over the next four years as a key global centre for high value services. We also can benefit from the increased premium that global countries are placing on jurisdictions that provide safety and stability post-crisis. The crisis, as I talked about earlier, has altered materially global finance. And there has been a reduction in the capacity to finance cross-border and emerging market risks that could persist for some years. But we must further develop our financial markets and plug current gaps in funding for Cayman enterprises to encourage entrepreneurs and the venturing abroad of Caymanian businesses.

I believe, and understand, that there is no lack of opportunities for Cayman. We must build deeper capabilities and expertise to make the most of this window of growth. But to sustain growth we must make better and more efficient use of our limited resources, especially by growing the skills and talents of our people. The size of our indigenous workforce will always be a major constraint. Yes, it will. A large part of our GDP growth was achieved over those years through the expansion of our workforce, both among Caymanians and the foreign workforce. And I believe that we must be committed to increasing the opportunities of our resident labour force with direct inducements to private enterprise to train, develop and hire Caymanians whilst still encouraging foreign direct investment. And the two have to be gelled together. We can't do that in an atmosphere where everybody is fighting. No.

At the same time, we have to moderate the future growth of the foreign workforce, because I believe that the rapid increase in foreign workers in recent years does enable us to seize opportunities to grow our economy and, in so doing, create jobs and raise the income of Caymanians—one manager, three Caymanian secretaries. That's the way it was. I don't

know if that is what is happening now, but that's the way it should be.

However, I believe in growth that benefits Caymanians in all instances and, where possible, we must try to reduce the dependence on foreign workers in certain categories over a period of years. And while not as pressing as our workforce constraints, we must begin taking active steps to use land and energy more efficiently. Likewise we have to play our part in reducing carbon emissions as a responsible member of the global community and continue to look at alternative energy providers and sources that in ways will bring real savings to our people and not more money in the supplier's pocket. Now that's what we have to be careful of, that our electrical board doesn't do. We must also develop a strategy to diversify our sources of energy so as to insure ourselves against future spikes in fuel prices and pollution.

Mr. Speaker, we are hearing something now about Islamic finance, Sharia funds and so on. Sharia funds, or Islamic finance, is no different than regular finance, with one exception. Interest should not be paid. That's what they said. The remuneration to the investor should be paid in the form of dividends, capital appreciation and so on. As such, the question to ask [is] what, if anything, does Cayman not have to service that market? The simple answer is, Cayman is not lacking anything to provide the services we normally provide to international finance. In other words, registration, legal structuring, accounting and so on. In fact, Cayman . . . and we have to take note of this. This thing called Islamic finance is not new. Cayman has been servicing the Islamic market for many years. Maples and Calder, I believe Solomon Harris, such firms.

What I think is happening is that the United Kingdom may be so interested in becoming a fiscal hub for that market providing not just the services Cayman regularly provides, but having fund managers, product developers and customers facing people based in the UK servicing that market. Time zones and other reasons, the UK may be a viable alternative for this, but Cayman, under the direction of this Government, is not going to grow it. And it's made more difficult than it would seem for a number of reasons for which the time zone is probably the last of them. We mightn't do as well.

The Premier's participation in this initiative . . . I hope that they don't have all these people around pushing and shoving and prodding and taking little bits and pieces from us. Because every time they set up a committee they hardly do it with politicians any more. They have this professor and the next professor from this Cambridge and from Oxford chairing and prodding and pulling and trying to understand so that they can get the upper hand. Times haven't changed. Uh-uh.

The reality is, we need to want more fund managers. We need to want more product developers and we need the customers facing people to service any market. And the reality is that with the present immigration policy and amendments that this Government has still not understood, unless we welcome the best of the best the business will not come. And for each of these people that does not come we lose an average of three positions that could be filled by our own Caymanians.

I'm not talking about the trouble we face in getting the jobs, because we have to deal with that ourselves. But, at the same time, we have to put the balance in place that we bring the people so that our secretaries and our middle managers, our children who came up and didn't get any more than the regular college degree, or perhaps a high school education but were able to rise up because of experience in their work and their initiative and hard drive to get to middle management positions. The secretaries, and so on, are the people who benefit. That's where we lost out in the last couple of years, when so many companies moved out.

When companies like the big hedge fund companies and wealth management companies moved out, they didn't move out. It was because there was an immigration policy that didn't link with them. We have to want population growth. And if we don't want population growth . . . without population growth, our economy will not grow. We are going to continue paying \$800, \$900, \$1,500 for our light bill because it's not spread over many people. That's a fact. So, as the price of other goods . . . if we don't have the population there we all pay for it.

While we can talk about these things, why is it that the private sector is not so interested in that initiative that the UK got going? Why is it? And the FCO is prancing around with it. Because our private sector knows very well that there is much lower-hanging fruit than this fund administration, re-insurance, trust, banking and so on. Those are the low hanging fruits. And unless we make the right commitments, the fruit will continue to be taken by some of our best competitors before we even make a move for it and the possibility that our own will be helping them exist.

As the current Minister of Finance quite rightly indicated in the *Caymanian Compass* dated 28 May, the economy of the Cayman Islands and job creation has been affected by the decline in the middle-income earners. This decline is continuing, and will continue until our immigration policy recognises that it is imperative that some type of permanence be offered to the skilled person who supports our financial industry and other sectors of our industry that are going to bring the middle management jobs.

Taking 2 per cent off the fee for somebody, taking 25 per cent is not going to create it! It's not going to do so. As I have repeatedly said over the last

many years, Cayman's economy cannot be built on an immigration policy which is aimed at removing persons from our economy instead of encouraging them to stay and invest. Not across the board. Now you have to clean up, you have to weed out the bad. Oh yes, you have to do that. That's the normal job of Immigration and normal Government policy. Clean out the bad, send them . . . and boy there are a few of them that I would like to see go. Oh yes. I can tell the world that.

I have one neighbour. Don't know where the man came from. He's nothing but a peeping Tom! And they set him up to be Mr. King now; nothing but a peeping Tom. Can't move him! But we have to live with everybody.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Keevie, he peeping at ya?

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Oh, I had a good dog then.

Cannot be built that way.

Our immigration policy, though, must take care of the nuances that we find as a developing country. Unfortunately, the Government over the years now seems to have opposed this policy as they are under the mistaken belief that changing the current immigration, or should I say, immigration policies may affect their ability to be elected and earn their Government salaries.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Well, some ought to know that because I had some on my side that believed that. And where are they? And they didn't change. So where are they?

The sooner the policies are changed and we move forward, the better and the faster our economy will grow. Government revenues will expand and job opportunities for our people will also expand. I am not saying that high fees are not playing a part in stopping some of the growth. Maybe it did, but it shouldn't.

You know, I hear them talking about high fees. But in comparison, if they had to pay a 50 per cent tax overseas, what would be the case? They would have to pay the company tax, capital gains tax, debt tax, this tax, that tax, property tax, payroll tax, even when you have income tax—every tax in the world! And still they would have to. If they made \$100,000 per year, they will still pay 50 per cent, maybe 30 per cent, 40 per cent of that.

So the fees . . . I didn't agree with the Foreign Office when they pushed me into it. I didn't! I didn't agree with them. But you know they wanted us to do what we could. And they said put that on. And even when we got the \$30 million that they wanted, they said, *Uh-uh; we want more still. Go back and find more.* And we went back and found more and they

said . . . that's what kept putting off the budget, my good friends. Because when we got to the point where they said they wanted us to be one day, the next day they threw something else in and said, *We want that too.*

Finally, I said, *You know what? Keep talking up there because I am bringing the budget down here. And anybody who doesn't want it can stay home, run outside or cuss McKeeva, but I am going to bring the budget down because I have reached the limit of what this country can afford to put on and what we can afford to take off and I ain't got the books ready but I'm going with it.*

And I went down. I didn't have the books printed. Had enough, I think, for one or two people—the same thing we had yesterday. Although, you know, yesterday everybody was an angel. *Oh, we are so better than you, Mr. McKeeva. We are not like you. You didn't come with the books and we didn't come with ours either, but you ain't no good. So that's all right.*

*[Inaudible interjection]*

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

He complains about everything. Don't listen to him.

Mr. Speaker, I come now to what we talk about entrepreneurship. The role the Department of Commerce and Investment (DCI) should be to assist in the creation of a business environment conducive to the seamless interchange of goods and services to the local and international market for the purpose of creating macro-economic stimulus in the Cayman Islands economy through profitable returns.

That said, Mr. Speaker, one of the functions associated with this should be to identify new opportunities within our two mature industries, but equally important, and more urgent, to identify and research new industry opportunities. The DCI's mission was, and I would hope still is, to attract, retain, facilitate and monitor appropriate investment opportunities through the creation of local and international ventures which generate income, employment, linkages, and domestic competitiveness in key areas.

As an economic development agency (what it was) with a strong focus on investment promotion, the department in our time was there to assist foreign direct investors gain entry into the local market with a focal point for them to get understanding of what they could do, try to do. And while critics and detractors will try every which way to suggest that the Cayman Islands does not need an investment promotion agency, and if one is needed it should be done by the private sector—because we were told that too—the fact is that that agency in every progressive jurisdiction around the Caribbean and, indeed, the world, is part of government. Aside from the Cayman Islands there are those agencies in Antigua and Barbuda, Baha-

mas, Barbados, Belize, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Lucia, you take it, all over the Caribbean.

These agencies are government owned and government subsidised. These countries, including the Cayman Islands, are all members of the Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies, I think it's called CAIPA, or something like that. But that is strictly business facilitation which includes information sharing to present the Caribbean offerings with the site selection and so on that they do need to do.

When I was the Premier and Minister of Finance there were 14 staff [members]. Four were responsible for investment promotion and overall investment services and the remainder of the staff were responsible for marketing and communication and trade and business licence. Mr. Piercy, who was the Director of the DCI, along with another three staff [members], not only met with various stakeholders locally and internationally to try and get the economy kick-started, but was very instrumental in providing counselling and workshops for small business owners.

They became the secretariat for the special economic zone, held advanced talks with different companies to recover defunct mutual funds assets on behalf of the Cayman Islands Government, which, I should add, is well within our legal right as stated in the Companies Law. And they facilitated advanced talks with various companies locally and overseas. And they completed a draft Trade and Business Licensing Bill and launched the first ever real small business expo which was essential, or is essential, in building brand awareness in the community and also provided networking and educational opportunities for small businesses. All of that was done with less than a handful of staff and a very limited budget.

Our competitors have staff members in those agencies of 20 all over the world. And we were only doing it with four members of the DCI here. The director, working with his chief officer, Dr. Dax Basdeo, made very good moves. They asked for money, but, of course, funding was limited all around. But if you now look at the current picture over at the DCI, 9 of the 14 staff have left the DCI, I understand. I don't know where they are, including the entire four that were responsible for investor services.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:**  
Say that again?

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:**  
Did I? They must have wanted to then, eh?

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Well, at least one. That's the four staff . . . that was the director that went to run. But he did a good job.

The marketing and communications unit in the Ministry (but was responsible for providing marketing and communication support) dropped from a staff complement of six to one. And the now head of DCI is responsible for both investor services and trade and business and tobacco and liquor licensing. This department is, I think, with all that I don't know how they are going to get their work done. It should be beefed up.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Let's wait.

The Government is talking about helping small business and getting development and the economy kick-started. Well, let's see. Small businesses are struggling as a result.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

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

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Speaker, we are going to have to work hard to continue to retain the foreign direct investment. And we are going to have to work hard to reduce costs where it's meaningful to small businesses.

Now, as usual, the Premier couldn't keep quiet, he had to poke his way in there just now and you can imagine when he has the whole floor for himself what he's going to do. And they are going to ask what the UDP Government under my leadership did. Well, we brought Health City to Cayman. That's medical tourism. We brought sports tourism to Cayman. The various regional track meets and football events came about on our watch.

We tried to diversify the economy and create jobs for Caymanians by embracing the special economic zone, the Dart projects, that I was crucified for. I am proud to say that Grand Cayman has one of the best pieces of road ever created. And, yes, that project created work and employment.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Yes. Well, let's see what price *unna* going to pay. You think that price . . . I'm glad that you raised that.

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** I'm glad he raised that.

They believe that the Dart deal is any worse than what I saw printed in the paper with those people up there which started also discussing from February 2012, or 2011. I think it was more 2012 when they informed me. They think that that deal is going to be any better with all that I saw in the papers? Check it! You're the master accountants, lawyers, soothsayers, everything you have over there.

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Check it if you think it's going to be any better than the Dart deal.

I have something! Ha! What, so far, have you all gotten?

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** I hear ya, Keevie.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Paved one piece of Linford Pierson Highway. I don't know what was wrong with that.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** I'm talking about major roadways now. Anyway, I know they are going to say something. That means I must be saying something of value when you hear them dipping in over there.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** You don't worry, I got your back.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** If we are not moving forward, not doing something, Mr. Speaker, then we are standing still and actually falling behind. Instead of asking me what I did, they need to take the time, focus their time and attention rather than watching me at every turn, where I go, what I do, who I am with, what I did. Instead of them doing that—go do your work!

Mr. Speaker, as much as can be said about these aspects I've talked about, I think I have made my point. I only hope they agree with them even though they choose to chat at me, but that they see some value in what I am saying.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Keevie, you finished so that we can start?

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Oh no!

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:**  
I might need some of your time.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:**  
Mr. Speaker, there is much talk about the Civil Service, about efficiency and synergies within the Civil Service. Certainly, the UK says a lot about cutting the numbers.

As long as I can remember, before I entered this House and even at those meagre times when I entered, there has always been talk about the cost of the Service. That is what the public ought to realise. Those people provide a service. I am not going to say that there can't be improvements, because most aspects of life, as we all know, can be improved as we move through our years on this earth. But the public and the various commentators need to take note that this country has come to be a shining example in many areas of our existence.

We didn't get this far, Mr. Speaker, without a good Civil Service, one that had to put up with far too many situations over the years that were not good. And it's true about every section of government that could have been done better over the years, but for the selfishness of some who wanted to get to the top, or who were at the top and didn't want others to move upward.

I saw that when the famous reorganisation of salaries took place many years ago. Those at the top who were in charge took time and great effort to work out the position then for the very larger amounts to be paid or increased at the top. But that left those in the lower brackets with much less. And when the salary increases came, those at the top always, of course, increased significantly because of the already significant salary they had. The lower ones barely moved.

So, it is evident now in the pounding of the legislative desks on Monday with the announcement of 2.5 per cent . . . look at what that means to a person making \$3,000 or \$2,500 per month, and what it means to those making \$8,000, \$10,000 or \$13,000 per month. And, Mr. Speaker, while the press can keep calling for less expenditure from government, the private sector always wants more and more. And who is going to do it? Who is going to police it? Who is going to look at it? Them? You can't let them police themselves.

Our Islands built what we have all enjoyed in this land. The Civil Service had to cope with it. I knew this, and I often refer to it. The day that the first \$500,000 came they said, *We are going to computerised government*. Oh, what a big thing that was. If you computerise, someone has to input; someone has to monitor; someone has to manage everything and everyone on their watch. You're not getting rid of people.

Mr. Speaker, recently the Customs Department has come into the limelight. If you listen it's like they never accomplished anything over the years. And they throw the same bunch of things at the Fire Service. However, the opposite is true. Both have been under me at some point and, like I said, most things can be improved in life. But let us stop to realise that some officers in the Customs Department are not making \$4,000 per month after 10 years. The Customs Department collects and is responsible for collecting the greatest amount of the government's revenue of any one department—40 per cent of government's revenue is collected by them. And we must stop and realise that the revenue affords our children free schooling, largely free medical and help to pay for more services for us.

Customs is responsible, together with the Immigration and the Police, for our border control. Our marine section . . . you hear about the detection rate. Our marine section is a total of the three departments—Customs, Immigration and Police. And yet, we don't know how well the Customs officers have done. You know why? They don't have PR. They just go and do their work.

I can tell you, the records will bear it out, that over the years the role that the Customs Department has played in our border control has been exemplary. Every year has been one where large drug catches by Customs have taken place. Every year! Some years they have done better than others. I know when my sister was in charge of detecting the swallows, those who have ingested the packets bringing the cocaine here, the mules. They were at serious risk, you know, and stress. So stressful that she got sick and had to leave. They have been exemplary over the years. So, we need to stop and realise just how much those officers do and have done.

We hear too often that the firemen don't do enough, and we don't need so many firemen. Of course, they too have no PR. So the commentators can complain. But when there is a fire or an accident, we know then just how much the firemen are needed. And the day when something really awful takes place and we don't have enough firemen, what will they say then? Most countries have separate fire departments for their airports and the community. Do they believe (the commentators) that the Cayman Islands can have six planes come into our airports in the space of one and a half hours and tell the world we don't have a fire department with staff at the airport on the ready? We would have no air travel. That's a fact!

They don't understand the role they are playing, it seems like. But that's usual with some commentators and radio people. I call them radio people because every day they must live there, got their lodging in those radio stations. They don't understand that the fire department is not only the community fire depart-

ment and has to travel all over and be everywhere, but they have to be at the airport as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is my opinion that we need to stop and realise, and stop being so willing to put everybody down, complaining about who is not doing their job, being so selfish about everything, making mountains out of molehills, putting people down and being quick to pounce in statements to show up themselves when one incident takes place. Stop it!

Say what you like about me. Say that I took the 3.2 per cent if they want to say that. I am going to come to that. But they can't get up and say that I downgraded or degraded any of my Customs Department or Police Department. I am not going to do so. If I have a right I will do what I think is best at the appropriate time. But I am not going out there saying things that are not going to be more than helpful.

All that that kind of complaining does is lose moral. By and large we have good civil servants, the huge majority of which pull their weight and some of whom are out in the trenches in rain, sun and in hurricane too, so that we can sleep safely at night in our comfortable homes. Yes, there can always be improvement; but we have to be grateful too for the service we get and stop talking about it's only now that there are big catches. There were always big catches. Marine section caught but that was Immigration, that was Police and that was Customs. That wasn't just the Police; that was the three!

Mr. Speaker, there has been much talk about divesting of government entities. I wish the Government well. I wait to see what is recommended, what benefit the country will gain from its divestment and what or how many civil servants will be impacted negatively, if any.

What I can say is that between 2009 and 2010 we set up a committee consisting of the leaders of the four big accounting firms—Deloitte, Ernst & Young, KPMG, and PWC. Chairing that committee was, I think, Mr. Nick Freeland, former managing director for PriceWaterhouseCoopers, to look at what government could divest and make recommendations. Lo and behold, they met. They worked hard; they got nowhere. They got no cooperation from those in areas of authority at the top in the Civil Service, not even the letters that they wrote were answered because those at the top wanted nothing done. So, they did nothing. They didn't help the committee and the committee disbanded themselves.

Their work—and they did work—was all for free. They never charged government one cent. Government paid nothing. So, I wish the Government well. But in divesting, you know, I must say we have to make sure that people are not put out of work. That's one of the things that we have to pay attention to.

Mr. Speaker, I listened to the proceedings on Monday, in particular to the utterances of the Premier. And I had a quiet chuckle when, in his usual pompos-

ity, he continued to lash out at me, to blame me for the cost of fuel, to blame me for the debt of the country, and to blame me for the Civil Service 3.2 [per cent] salary reduction. I found it even more amusing when he stuck out his chest, swallowed his tongue and said that the Leader of the Opposition was stung by what he had produced. I was even more amused when he lauded Dr. Shetty's project and the special economic zone. But I was neither stung nor surprised at anything he said, or anything that he does, because he can't help himself, really—even when he so contradicts what he's saying.

But I had to think, my dear friends, does the Premier really believe that people are blind and deaf, or have lost all of their memory? And I thought further. Wouldn't it have been better use of time and energy for the Premier that he had really taken on the challenge? No, he didn't. No. Uh-uh, he didn't. What I just said here is the truth; I was amused. Had he really taken on the challenge of addressing the country on problems the people really face . . . why is there no work? Why have people lost their businesses? Why can't they pay their bills? Why are they losing their homes? Why are they losing their vehicles? Why can't they buy water? Why can't they buy groceries to feed their children? Why can't some pay electric bills and don't have electricity? Why can't they pay their water bills? Why can't they pay their rent? [Why is] the everyday robbery of every business place in this country being at risk? And the Premier, having understood that situation, would have produced a real plan of action to build an economy to address these needs in the short term and a plan that would offer security against the country having to face them again. And here he is still saying, *Because you, McKeever, were in for four years.*

He either pays attention to only what he wants to pay attention to, but he doesn't pay any attention to when he was there, what he did, and how he left what he did! As I said, people are neither blind nor deaf. And you can't believe that people don't have a memory. I have to write down a lot of what I say at age 59. But boy, some nights 12:00 I am wide awake writing down things that I remember.

The absence of work, Mr. Speaker, and the related problems come about because there was a change in world business from 2007, and no plan for an industry to face it off in the future. When I put it before them then, they said, *Not on the kindest of mornings am I going to listen to you.*

Maybe, Mr. Speaker, they didn't like my idea for a transshipment port for cargo and oil, and the special oil refinery that I thought would go with it to get in tune, get ready, for world expansion, get ready for the opening of the new Panama Canal, and get ready for when the world falls again. And they might not have agreed with the special containerised cargo port. Maybe they didn't like my idea that we can develop a

mega yacht facility in the North Sound and the Sandbar, and that such would not be adversely affected and yet create a sustainable industry. Maybe they didn't like those things. No, they didn't support that. They chose rather to make the world believe that it was all bad. So they opposed and he opposed.

But just as he and others criticised Dr. Shetty's project—but now laud it; just as he and others criticised the economic city—but now travel to say a few words about it—it was all my work, and all things that they opposed. Just as they all criticised the Dart hotel (and some are still talking about it this morning), but bragged in the budget about its being built and count it good sense to do so, even to put it in their so-called list of accomplishments, they then too would praise the new special oil and cargo transshipment port and oil refinery. And if it were done they would go an open it too—pomp and circumstance as big as you want. They would do that too.

If I had gotten the mega yacht facility they would have carried a boat through it and been satisfied with it too! And they would have put it in this booklet here as well saying it happened with them, just as he said in his speech that they brought in the electric cars. Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker? He said that in his speech—they brought it in. Yeah? Brought them in, but they couldn't travel on the road. They could only travel around the yard on private property. I had to change all that to make it happen. But I didn't make a big thing of it. It was done. The company could bring it. It does what it's supposed to do, and I think it's good for the country. But you *ga* try to say that you did it?

Ha! Mr. Speaker, they would take credit for the refinery as well.

New industries are needed. Not just jobs; but careers. Know this, Mr. Speaker, know this: This is a new world order we face. And no matter how much they pour into Cayman Brac we would have to continue pouring more and more and more into it. We would even have to hug up the former member and say, *Boy, you're Hilton Hotel really looks good. Now I'm going to make it something else, you hear?*

Mr. Speaker, we need to be making money. We need new industries. If we fall again, we have little or nothing to depend on. That's what I was trying to say, that you didn't get it done. Say that, if that makes you happy, if that gives you some joy, some glee. It is not going to make you win any election again. Uh-uh. You won it last time based on that; can't do it again. But do something, for God's sake.

Traditional ways for us to get work and keeping our people employed are not around much anymore. Competition is huge and a problem for us, particularly so when our people are still hyped up about not wanting more people here and that we must have a restrictive Immigration policy. I know the problem the Premier will face. I know. I went through it; took

my licks for it. But I do believe that he somehow must believe that that situation cannot build the country that we want and that people expect from him as their new leader.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

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

Oh, I think he is taking a good flogging on it. Mm-hmm. It's not going away yet.

They should pound you good though, you know, because you are being a bad boy.

*[Laughter]*

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

New industries, Mr. Speaker, must be found. And we must start that process now. And we must start that process now, even if it is a coconut industry. And don't scoff at it. Look at those countries that have it. Thousands of trees that remain green its whole life. They are making plenty money from it. Even if it's a coconut industry we should think we can prepare to bolster the country from any future world shock of instability when that arises.

I am thirty years in this. I am going in time, Mr. Speaker, God willing. There are others younger here who have the possibility of being as long, or maybe longer, because they are younger than . . . I believe some of them might be. No, I don't think so. But anyway they still have a long time to go if the people so chose. Think about those coming in. Somebody will face the music. But, there will be another world shock of instability. And when that arrives we need to be prepared. We need to push things in Cayman Brac, yes. Push more to go to Cayman Brac. Not us to just give Cayman Brac from here, make things happen up there. And Cayman Brac has to recognise that that has to happen, so a few changes have to be made.

I know what the Member will face there too because the people there want plenty, but they don't want to change their slow pace of life. That's the problem he faces. So, they have a tough job. But instead of pointing fingers and accusing, think on what careers a special oil and cargo transshipment dock and a small oil refinery could bring for the hundreds of children graduating out of school, the mega yacht facility, and the next . . . getting out of school this year, hundreds of them, that we all have to face. Because I'm sure these representatives here are being called already and parents and children are looking for jobs. I'm sure they are.

Think of what that number is going to be in the next five to ten years down the road, and all we have is a finance industry which little by little and bit by bit is being whittled away for whatever reasons. That's all we have now, plus our tourism industry. And people don't want anything else. Where is the money going to

come from? People have to recognise that. They have to understand. Where will the Government get money to do all the things—give them free education and largely free medical, take care of old people, and we haven't started to do that properly yet. We've gone about halfway. All of us in administration over the years have done that. And then keep up with a burgeoning infrastructure that we need to keep up with, because one thing leads to the next. So where is the money going to come from if we don't launch out into new areas—bold new areas?

And some people mightn't like it, but who is going to listen to them? As I said, some of them need advice themselves. And they want to give me advice? Some of them from other countries messed up their countries! Some of them—let's say the truth—messed up their countries. And don't say, *Yeah, but we messed ours up and so now we have the experience.* You don't have experience; you have experience in mashing yours up! That's what you have experience in. And you put in rigmaroles and you put in bureaucracy in yours and you can't handle the flooding there. And now you want to come and tell me what I must do and what I can't do—only to keep me down!

Think of what's around the corner for the next five to ten years. Do they understand, really, how much money the country would save by those three industries in gas for vehicles and the electric bills we must face each month for homes and businesses? How else are we going to build up our reserves?

Where are the funds coming from to pay for more and more free education?

So, the Premier can get up with his policy statements and poke his darts at me. Oh, he has; he was quick and constant in his severe and disruptive criticism when he was on this side with mock Assembly meetings outside these Chambers, and just about every other Opposition disruptive tactic he could employ in a four-year period. I said, Mr. Speaker, they haven't considered what damage the constant battering of untrue stories, marches, constant inflated conversations on radio shows, how demoralising and damaging that kind of constant scenario was. Yes. And he is still coming now to blame me.

But now, when he has the rod of correction in his hand, he is supposed to be the Moses (not Moses, he is supposed to be the Moses). He comes now bereft of ideas only to depend on the funds we left in the coffers and funds through legislation to be voted on to come into the Treasury. The very things he ran all over the place criticising. Now only to produce a budget (and I must say this) after the UK turned down their request to borrow!

We heard no pronouncements about that last year, but I know it was. They had a borrowing plan, a budget which, they claim, takes us back on the road to recovery. Firstly, Mr. Speaker, they ought to understand that it's not going to be the panacea they say. I

am not going to debate at length on how the oil levy and the paucity of a four and a half per cent reduction will be. Of course, I will be more in depth on the motion I have before the House, or I will try to be. But understand how hypocritical and wicked, a slap in the face to people who don't have electricity now, and those still struggling to pay.

And I tell you what I understand: There are hundreds of people who had electricity that don't have it now. What is the plan to do with them? They don't have electricity now, and those still struggling to pay theirs, to tell them, *We are for you, you know, Bobo. We know you are struggling. And we are the PPM; we are the party that will help you. But this four and a half per cent we are giving you now can't come off in July, can't come off in August, can't come off in September, can't come off in October, can't come off in November, and in December, when it's really the hot summer months (getting into fall, but the summer months), when it's really, really hot, Bobo, and your bills are really, really at their highest. No, no, dear people, you have to wait. You have to wait until the weather cools down in January, February, March, April and May, and your bill naturally goes down because it's so cool. You have to wait until then.*

*[Inaudible interjection]*

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

You never mind about what I had to add. You had better mind when you went building that new high school for 106 that you could have gotten for less, and I had to pay for it. You better . . . we built it. We had to go borrow it because you left it. And we paid down plenty on it as well. You can get back up when you get back over here . . . or which one are you talking about . . . when you come back over here some time, because when you're over here, you're better.

So, Mr. Speaker, what then? Why is that happening? Why wait all the way until January? Why?

That's how much they care.

A person who has a bill of \$280 will see a reduction of \$12.80. Real recovery! But wait! January, Bobo, January.

A person who has a bill of \$320 will see a reduction of \$14.40. Real recovery! But wait, Bobo, January, you'll get that off.

A person who has a bill of \$900 will see a reduction of \$40.00—all in the grand old time of seven months down the road. January next year, Bobo, Just wait—January next year. Soon come.

So, the government loses \$8 million for this paucity that they say they are helping people with, while the people who don't have electricity . . . nothing is happening with them. Wouldn't it be better, if you were going to do that, to take the \$8 million and try to put them back on the electric line and try to help them pay their bills? I know I would pay my \$40.00. I'm

speaking \$900 because that sometimes is in the region of where mine is, fluctuating up and down now.

This is not meaningful at all, Mr. Premier. Talk about the 25 cents if you want, but it was you who caused that to happen! And how are they proposing, Mr. Speaker? Even your partners over there said so in the campaign. Even the C4C said so in the campaign, that you were to blame for it, although they cussed me. And they are still doing that too. But that's all right. They cussed him in the campaign, though. So, you now can try to lay the blame on me. You're not that good a lawyer. You can't make anybody believe that.

And now, as I said, how are they proposing to monitor the passing on of the reduction? That's what I want to know. Pray, tell. Tell me.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, people are being removed off the social services monthly stipend—people who are mentally disturbed. Absolutely ridiculous! Hit the ground running all right. Running us into the ground is more like it. Where is the social conscience that they were supposed to have? Is that the best that can be done with a \$108 million surplus and with government losing \$8 million? Is that the best? I don't think so.

What about all the little children in these Islands who are going to bed hungry and who don't have electricity and the elderly who still have to do what they have to do? I am certain that the offering in this budget after a year in office of Cayman's most brilliant minds is not going to address the needs we all recognise must start to be addressed now for the long term. No.

I really don't think that we are offering much, one year or not. We are still in crisis and have been for years, but certainly more evident since 2007. I don't think that the budget offers much for small businesses. I don't think it has anything in it for entrepreneurs nor is it doing anything about employment or the current unemployment we are experiencing. If they are sure that the exercise of reducing fees for traders of 25 per cent less and the duty reduction of 2 per cent will be effective, if they are sure of that, and that it means something in substance, and that it will save them money, then why hasn't the Government said to those businesses, *We are reducing these fees, but we want proof from you that you will employ more Caymanians and less work permits*. That is a sure way to ensure that Cayman workers are employed. You get 25 per cent less, but you must employ more Caymanians. Drop some of your work permits. How are you going to ensure it?

From my standpoint the real way to help small business is to eliminate the fuel surcharge on businesses' electrical bills, if you want to try to do something. Government can say, *We will eliminate the surcharge, but you have to employ those Caymanians who are on social services assistance but they can*

*work, those that can work, and Government will ensure you get a rebate of your fuel surcharge.*

That will in turn give Government a \$400 to \$600 savings on the social services budget, and also the businesses then have to get insurance as normally a business would do, and there too is a savings for government since they would not be responsible for free medical. In my opinion, getting those people employed will increase demand for product and service. People will have money to spend, Mr. Speaker. There is nothing in the budget to encourage entrepreneurship. And we want to give people an opportunity to do business.

No matter how much you take off, if there is no work, there is no money. So, there is still going to be a problem to pay. There are glaring opportunities now, since there seems to be an appetite today for divestment, because you know that that was something I was barked at and hollered at across from here by the Premier about divesting and selling government. You know that was part of his mantra, his long suit. You know that. But since there is an appetite now for divestment today, if we take, for instance, government's mechanic section, plumbing section, electrical section and general maintenance section out of government and we allow the persons in those departments to get it as a business and guarantee the contract for the service to them and then let them have the equipment at a low price and a very low payback per month with no interest, then guarantee those employees that work for five or six years, it would be encouraging and promote real entrepreneurship and help our Caymanian people.

No? You say no? Across the way you say no? Okay, Bobo.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** You never mind about how long I was in charge, long as it took you to mess it up it took for me to clean it up. That's what you ought to remember.

If I could have gotten some of these things done . . . as I said, don't forget the committees I put together, or were you not listening?

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** You were listening?

Well, you should ask Mr. McTaggart, he was part of that committee. Not one letter that that committee wrote did the hierarchy in the Civil Service even answer. So, I couldn't get it done. But maybe you can. Maybe they grin and laugh with you and talk with you and buddy-buddy with you and ride with you and go all the places with you. Maybe you can get it done! So, that's why I'm saying to go ahead and do it; you

have my support. That's all I'm saying. But it would encourage and promote real entrepreneurship and help our Caymanian people.

Government would save money on the expenditure. They would have no salary, no pension, no health insurance, as the company would then be owned by the former employees of the government and they would be responsible for its operation. All Government has to do to help those people is to make sure that what they pay out for the service in the new arrangement is less than what they pay out in the present arrangement. Government would save a huge amount of money and those Caymanians would not lose a job.

But Government would have to put the caveat that those same Caymanians that they are going to give this business to would have to hire Caymanians. And Government would remove a good portion of their liability, both short and long term. That exercise could create real entrepreneurs. Again, to repeat, the stipulation would be that only Caymanians or legal residents be employed by the company. That would generate employment which puts real money in the economy.

Now, Government can go out and get any accounting firm and pay them to tell them the same thing. We tried that. Some of those ideas came across back then, were written to—

*[Inaudible interjection]*

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

Don't say no, because it was. Nobody even answered the four accounting firms on that committee. That's a simple illustration. Much more—and I suppose the work that Ernst & Young is doing will prove that.

It is the guts of what the Government can do to cut costs, create work, create real entrepreneurs and help our Caymanian people. And I don't think that we need to wait until the next four years to get it done with, again, the stipulation that only Caymanians or real legal residents must be employed. It would be taking care of the civil servants by giving them a business to own and no one would be disadvantaged.

One year or not, we are in a crisis, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, talking about a reduction of costs in something as critical and important to national sustenance as the cost of electricity taking a scant 4.5 per cent off and taking it off seven months away in the cool winter months is not meeting the needs of the people and still not addressing the most crucial need of the people, that is to be able to work and pay their bills.

Fiscal prudence, they say. Intelligence, they say. You mean to tell me that big hard-back men have to spend \$4 million on a plan for the dump, on which they did a plan? The then Minister, who is now the Elected Member for East End, did a plan during 2005-

2009 which cost us \$150,000 then, and that plan told us that we would have to spend \$111 million on the dump. That plan is still in existence. And you're going to spend \$4 million to get a plan that will tell you it cost 100? For what? How does that translate into fiscal prudence?

Mr. Minister of Finance, I know it's difficult. I've been there. But I tell you what, I would put myself up in that room, lock it up and let them pound on the door for a week because that \$4 million could be well spent somewhere else. They don't need to spend that! Don't tell me that.

Now they call it building back confidence. Well, with what they are doing, an immigration programme that is stifling businesses both local and foreign, one that is keeping Cayman from getting work, build back confidence with the many projects that were already on the table, and those projects are the only ones they can talk about. Many of those investors, Mr. Speaker, were trying to move forward, but for the roadblock. There was no lack of confidence in those efforts or else there would not have been so many people trying to get the projects off the ground. Not a lack of confidence. Uh-uh. Bureaucracy and political dirty tricks kept us from getting anything done. And of course, you had good old Duncan Taylor running around with short pants.

Oh yes.

Mr. Speaker, roadblocks. They ask why I didn't get it done. Oh, I tried. I put every professional in place in the private sector I could.

Let me address for a few minutes this talk of the Premier about relationships and confidence. And when he replies, Mr. Speaker, if he chooses to bring out personal matters, I will address a few in a personal statement that befits his present-term stature as a Premier.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I sat and listened to the Premier chastise me on what he called "mangling the relationship." He always has some doing word in there. He should be ashamed, and those who wrote it for him should be ashamed too. I am still waiting to hear from him what it was that I did to mangle this relationship they claim we had with the FCO. How could there have been any such good relationship of theirs with the FCO when the Governor, Stuart Jack, was doing so many things they were against and they were constantly fighting?

Mr. Speaker, you were in Cabinet. They even refused to give him a car. They told him to drive a horse or a donkey and cart or something. And you are going to talk about you had a good relationship? And that I made it bad? That's good for politics, but it's not good for this House. It's not good for the truth. In my opinion, what I did was stand up to a Government, or a department of the Government, the Foreign Office, when they wanted to push us into taxation because they thought they had us conquered. They thought

they had us conquered when this present Premier broke the Public Management and Finance Law—when he broke it!—and they, the FCO, took control of the budget process. They thought they had conquered us.

Mr. Speaker, after the Financial Secretary had produced his report and showed me the deficit, showed me the projects, showed me the cost of the Civil Service, and showed me the need for the money in June 2009. Not even a month after I took office, I was summoned to London and there I was told in no uncertain terms, *Cut the Civil Service by 400 or 500 people. Put in income and property tax or put in VAT and payroll tax.* And I said, *Bobo, you are talking to McKeeva Bush; this is not Robert the Bruce.* But the truth is, the Foreign Office recognised that the projects and all the excessive expenditure had taken place on their watch. So, they granted permission to complete the loan arrangements. That is when my group decided that they were not going to knock down the projects and do anything else, but to continue with a similar plan. They granted permission to complete the loan arrangement which was started by the PPM. They started the loan arrangement, but they were going to do one for 7 per cent. We said no.

In the final analysis all the things that were needed to be paid, the bills that were needed to be paid, the projects and all this, amounted to \$309 million. They also told me there and then in no uncertain terms that in no way were there going to be any more projects approved by the Foreign Office without their explicit permission beyond and above \$10 million (or there about). It came down to that in the final analysis because we could not afford what we already contracted. Thereby, the discussion started about the FFR, not in detail. That didn't come in until later.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I was taken up with the rush and the short timeframe to get the \$309 million. And in the great rush I even got robbed. People don't know that. I got robbed going to the ATM in Boston trying to get some money out of the ATM. I was robbed. Had \$29 in my pocket. But I was afraid of that big old knife.

**The Speaker:** Mr. Leader of the Opposition, is this a convenient time for the—

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I will soon be finished, but I won't be finished in two minutes or five minutes.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I move the suspension of this honourable House until quarter to two.

**Proceedings suspended at 12:30 pm**

**Proceedings resumed at 1:59 pm**

**The Deputy Speaker:** This honourable House is now resumed. Please be seated.

I call on the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to continue his debate. I understand you have around 15 minutes . . . less than 15 minutes . . . 13 minutes, I'm officially told.

## **DEBATE ON THE BUDGET ADDRESS AND THE THRONE SPEECH**

*~together with~*

### **GOVERNMENT'S POLICY STATEMENT**

*[Continuation thereof]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Speaker, I refer now to book . . . I will ask the House to allow me to get a couple of minutes from my colleague.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Madam Clerk, do we need a motion to that effect?

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** No, that was the Speaker's ruling, Mr. Speaker, if I remember the last time.

*[Short Pause]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will give you until 2:30, sir.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
Captain Eugene, yes.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Captain Eugene . . . he's not here.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Speaker, when we took the lunch break I was dealing with this claim that the Premier and others too, were all over the place talking about mending fences and going to the UK to mend fence and repairing relationships and mangling relationships.

I was showing how, if any bad feelings were built up, it happened. I am not really concerned about what they say, but I was taken up at a particular point in 2009 with the rush and short timeframe to get the \$309 million and the great rush for the other things took place some months later. But from June 2009 and the months following, the FCO intensified their push on the OECD matters and we had to get us off the grey list—the grey list that occurred during the present Premier's handling of that situation. There again, I think they thought that I wasn't going to move quickly on it, but we went and we signed the agree-

ments. In four months we got us off that grey list that the Premier left us with.

When he talks about confidence, I should say to him that if I hadn't moved to convince them, the OECD, that Cayman was willing, Cayman was competent and Cayman was able and had taken the time and effort with the private sector to do all the necessary work, we would still have been on that disastrous black list, where, Mr. Speaker, investor confidence had already waned. No, they can't say there wasn't a grey list. Whether they call it black or grey, it wasn't a good list and it was one of the OECD's bad lists and investor confidence had waned, coupled with a disastrous immigration policy during the period of the grey list we were left with. And we would have really, really suffered that much more. But we did it.

Now, the Premier has the audacity of accusing me of losing investor confidence. Mr. Speaker, ringing a bell doesn't build that. That doesn't build investor confidence. But taking us off the OECD's grey list, OECD's negative list, brings us confidence. I didn't care to go out and ring the bell. And I was the Minister of Finance and Financial Services. And I had eight invitations to go. I didn't go. I didn't have time. I didn't have time to go ringing any bell. I was already ringing the UDP bell, that's my emblem.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** I didn't have time to go do all that. You think you can go put that in the Throne Speech, bring the Governor down here to make her say that . . . and that's about all she said. But I took us off that black list, or that grey list. That's what matters.

The push from the Foreign Office came when I outsmarted their effort in pushing us into taxation. And they had all their men lined up, who they were going to bring here and everybody else. I said, "Oh yeah? Not today. Not on my watch." And we went and put Miller out of Washington, and Shaw, who was a Conservative, on the job with agreement of the private sector. And that move stalled the FCO's effort for a time. That was something they growled and barked at me about, but I outsmarted them and they were road-blocked.

And the truth is the Premier didn't give me any support there either. He kicked me to pieces about Miller/Shaw. He didn't support the hiring of Miller/Shaw. So I know that if the bunch of them could have eaten me they would have. But that didn't help, Mr. Speaker, although I got past that stage with them. That didn't help all the other things because the truth is that I was not getting sufficient cooperation from those in the Civil Service who had to put in place the various action plans and put the ingredients of the Miller/Shaw Report into action. And that's not something that the Elected Members could do.

The FCO made their next move, and that was to zero in on the very heated matter of the size of the Civil Service. Their dictum was to cut it and bring down the cost of the Civil Service, bring down the cost of Government's general expenditure. They didn't ease us up on that. And they had the authority over the budget then, so they knew, and we knew that we had to be moving here and there. The Deputy Governor at the time, the Financial Secretary the Cabinet, myself and others, sought help from outside. We were under severe pressure because they wanted us to do what they wanted. And either we were going to cut the Civil Service their way or we were going to cut something else. And I wasn't going to cut what they told me I should cut . . . I must cut the expense to the old people and the social services. I said, "No!" They said that's what they were doing. I said, "You are doing it central government from the common side, but your council in the United Kingdom are not cutting their social benefits. No, no, no, no."

They are talking about credit cards. Go get the newspapers. Then you want to see use. So I said, "No. I am not doing that. I am going to try bit by bit to bring down the cost, but I am not firing any civil servants. In fact, I can't do it." And you know, they told me I could do it, and I said, "No. The two that can do it are the Governor and the Deputy Governor. Not me. I have no authority. They gave me no constitutional ability." I had to tell Mr. Bellingham that. And he said, "What?" I said, "I don't. The only time that I have some responsibility is when it comes to the budget, and then I can say I support or do not support this figure. But cutting actual figures is the Governor's responsibility and the Deputy Governor's."

So, Mr. Speaker, at that time it was either to cut the Civil Service by the 400 or 500 they demanded or something else. And we had discussions, Mr. Speaker, although the Premier constantly gets up there and says, "You did it!" Yeah, it happened on our watch, because (again, right back to where it was) of what he did. We had to cut something. He should have been flogged. But nevertheless, we had to cut something.

We had discussions, Mr. Speaker. I faced 600 to 800 civil servants at the Mary Miller Hall to talk about it—600 to 800. And not one senior civil servant, the Deputy Governor or anybody else, came and stood up there with me. Those civil servants barked at me and told me all sorts of things and told me that I didn't even have a mortgage so I didn't have to worry. At that time my mortgage was well over \$700,000.

Not one of them got up to help! We went back. I listened to them, I listened to the grips. And the vast majority of them were the people at the bottom. And so you understand that they had some right, some feelings because those are people making \$2,600. So, we sat down with the management council and I said to them, "We are not . . . if you take off

300 or 400 people it means worse for the economy and worse for those people and worse for the Government. All around it's worse. So we are not doing it." And they agreed.

When they gave the different packages the management council said they would cut the 3.2 per cent. I promised—we all agreed—I would put it back when we could. And in one budget, Mr. Speaker, if we remember, we did put it back. But that was not to the liking of the FCO. The FCO said, "No. We are cutting civil servants. We are doing this, we are doing that." And I said, "Well, this is what we're doing." And we didn't only take off the 3 per cent for them, but we took off the same amount for Members of this House except for myself and the Leader of the Opposition at the time. I cut my friend's salary out there . . . I know he didn't like it, but he and I agreed. We took . . . what? . . . 5 per cent or something like that.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

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

I cut 10 per cent off my salary and cut his I think by 10 per cent as well. The rest of the Members had 3.2 per cent, the same as everybody else in the Civil Service.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** But you had to agree!

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** But, Mr. Speaker, the crisis continued. They demanded more cuts and more revenue. Every step we made that we could have said we were caught back in line, they came back with something else. So it was either to cut the numbers of the 300, 400, or 500 and lose jobs, or keep the jobs and lose the 3.2 per cent. So which was better? Everybody still had something going for them. A half of bread is better than none.

So, yes, Mr. Speaker, I had reasons, many reasons, to buck heads with them at the FCO. But my duty was to always do what was in the best interests of these Islands. I tell the Premier he can say what he likes. My aims and objectives, and the aims and objectives of this country will always be different than theirs. So, what the Premier talks about as a bad relationship, he can continue if that's what makes him jolly. I'm just never going to let them have their way with us.

I am nobody's puppet! I am not seeking a knighthood. I am not giving away the country. I am not Robert the Bruce! Let me tell him that. If he doesn't know what that is, go check the history of Scotland.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Premier needs to . . . he can continue, and he will. But what caused any hard feeling I don't know. The director paid his usual visit courtesy call, and he came down to West Bay and he was happy . . . I don't know whether it was because I was out of office or whether there was still a good relationship, but he was a happy man. And I didn't care.

The breaking of the Public Management and Finance Law, the tremendous amount of building projects, the OECD grey list and the huge loan bill the PPM put on us was enough pressure to cause any disgruntlement of the FCO, and now he comes here all chest pounding about he restored the broken relationship. Mr. Speaker, any coward who starts or causes such a fight ought to find ways to stop the fight without giving away the yard. But are we giving away the yard? My administration bore the brunt of the licks. I did. I know I did, and I probably will continue. I will be a focus point for them. That's okay. As long as the people of West Bay say I am here, I am here!

And this is what I want to say about that, Mr. Speaker: *Take it or Leave it*, by Roy Bodden.

**Natives, it has come to this:**

**And we wish to ring you in,**

**For it is not as you may think...**

**You cannot be allowed to embarrass**

**Our supremacy**

**As if you own yourselves...**

**And what's this talk about talk your leader gave...  
about equality?**

**No such thing exists, you know,**

**And now you have been told,**

**It's only us who have parliament.**

**And when you meet, you may**

**Debate, but only us can give assent.**

**And, by the way, bad talk must cease,**

**And so too must dissent.**

**Your leaders should be circumspect**

**As we reserve the right to step in, if and when  
We choose.**

**If you have read the melian debate**

**You will be informed that the weak will never  
In a position be to dictate terms to the strong.**

**And as for the business you are in: you do what  
we shall say.**

**So do not be surprised to learn that this partner-  
ship Today is predicated once and for all, upon  
Our imperial design.**

**For it is now as it has always been,**

**That the administering power is**

**Supreme and sacrosanct.**

**So it behoves you**

**One and all, to realize that it's our call,**

**To state what passports you shall use,**

**And eavesdrop on you, as we shall chose.**

**And, by the way, that's nothing new,**

**Since it's just a part of our routine**

**To always know what's going on,  
 For we *must control* the realm.  
 Divide and rule has been out style and you will  
 always sibling be,  
 Clinging to mother for sustenance as  
 Those who lead you feel to take,  
 From our old offering plate.  
 And because of this, we say  
 That you must tell us now, how and when  
 You wish to handle the position you are in.  
 And, by the way, we have changed the  
 Way you do your spending. No more deficit  
 Financing, loans or overdrafts, and everything  
 You do from henceforth must be approved by  
 Our second level bureaucrats whom we shall  
 Send to you. So scrap your plans about  
 Development and read the austerity text, as, from  
 Now on, we wish to know every time you need to  
 go. And if it's number one or two,  
 We shall have our say in that as well,  
 For we no longer trust you  
 To tell us what we need to do.  
 And furthermore:  
 Just you be sure that we are far  
 From finished,  
 And, if you do not like what we do,  
 The choice is clear; but our control  
 Will not diminish until you get the cojones  
 To do what you should have done.  
 So now, stand back,  
 And suck it up until some leader comes.**

Mm-hmm. End of that poem by J. A. Roy Bodden.

Mr. Speaker, I am no puppet. I am not seeking a knighthood, and I am not ever going to give away the country. I am not ever going to sign anything against that is not good for this financial sector. I am not going to put any doubt on where our money comes from to satisfy them. I am not Robert the Bruce!

Now, after all that is said, what the FCO and I agreed was that there would be no borrowing. That is why I was so intrigued when I learned that the Government had gone to London with a borrowing plan. And I was glad to hear that the UK had not granted them the courtesy of borrowing.

Mr. Speaker, there are a few areas—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Fifteen minutes.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** I am just concerned, Mr. Speaker, we can all do what we can do. But there are several areas that, as I said, I will speak to the Minister about in Finance Committee on the 517 through 508 incorporating expenses down. The \$9 million or \$11 million is explained, but I want to find out, Mr. Speaker, what happens with, like,

CIMA [Cayman Islands Monetary Authority], that they say the revenue forecasted is \$6 million and CIMA is forecasting to increase staff numbers by 7 per cent and expenses by \$3 million, and new staff is needed at CIMA. So, those sorts of things I can talk to the Honourable Minister about in Finance Committee.

Also, the \$4 million by changing the way the Road Authority is funded. Instead of a cost, they will now receive a portion of import duties on gasoline imports. And this is . . . I don't know what budget process was used, but I don't see the real savings there either.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, the budget also forecasts our economy growing at half the pace of the world on a whole by 2015 and far below the US. And accepting and promoting as a bar performance through the continued size of the public service and imposing the fees in our core industry, that is putting on pressure. When we imposed the current fees it was out of need and under the premise that this would be some temporary measure because we would have to cut back on it. We figured we would have to, and we said to give some strength to the private sector we would do so.

The current Government is clearly demonstrating the intention to make this not only permanent, but to continue the taxes as was proven with the other fees, the new fees, the Director's Registration. So, although they battered me about those things, severely criticising me about the increase of the fees, and promising to reduce it, they got elected with no plan, no plan put in place after one year, and the fees are still there. So there are some things that we can talk about in Finance Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I recognise that there are areas doing better than others and we will see what time gives as far as measures that are put in place. We continue, though, to try and cut costs and we talk about synergies. One complaint that I have is that we continue yet to see one government department go in a different direction from another that they should be discussing their policies and intentions with.

We have a situation in West Bay now where a house was rebuilt in an upscale neighbourhood. I saw it when it was being rebuilt. It was due to open as a halfway house this morning—all done without Planning permission. So, Community Services didn't work with Planning. How does that still happen at a time like this with something as big and important as that?

I was contacted by constituents and my colleagues, in particular, the Fourth Elected Member for West Bay was on the job, and we spoke about it. I know that the Minister of Education was spoken to as well. I contacted Planning [Department] to complain and find out for ourselves what was going on, and is going on. But that place was due to open this morning but Planning did step in and stopped it. Putting a halfway house in the midst of an upscale neighbourhood

and people who have apartments close by, people's investments. We are destroying people's investments.

Now we can say the Island is small and there can be all sorts of things said why we need to put the halfway house somewhere, but the truth is that West Bay already has three halfway houses—one in Birch Tree Hill, and two off of Hell Road. These are funded by the private sector. We already have three that are funded. I don't know that we need any more down there. I think Government needs to ensure that those three are being worked at and managed properly, and so far they have been doing good. I can't complain about the people there. But find out whether they can take more, if they have more space.

I know the one house on Birch Tree Hill, the one with boys or men should be able to hold more because it is a big property, rather than trying to go in another area. How, though, as I said, if you were talking about joined up Government, are you going to have the opening of one that doesn't even have Planning permission?

So, these are things that I know. I mean, this happens. We can stand all day long. I am not going to be unreasonable and jump up and down and carry on, as I know the Premier would do. No. You have to be reasonable. Things can happen and you don't know that they've happened. But he takes joy out of punching below his weight, you know. I am not going to do that, but I do want to make sure that the House is aware, the relevant Minister is aware, that the joined up Government is still not being joined up.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, as per usual, the Premier and his guys over there will get up and say that I was there for four years and didn't get these things done. Some will parrot the same clack. I was there. I tried. I tried to put in place divestment but didn't get the support from the Civil Service to divest. There were too many influencing, some there who were already closely aligned. Too many bags of peppers and mangos given out!

*[Laughter]*

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

But what they can't say is that I didn't try to get all the things done, or I didn't care, or I don't care. There is no one that is going to be able to say that successfully.

From what I see presented in the Policy Statement there is no crucial plan for the short, medium or long term to deal with the economy to really put our people back to work so that they can live and move and have their being. There is no plan to safeguard these Islands if there are any disastrous shocks in the international markets. We need to prepare, we ought to prepare for the world is still like a rickety podium.

Alas, where are those ideas and the fortitude and know-how to get it done? Not in the Premier's chest-pounding, tongue-swallowing policy speech.

Mr. Speaker, I do thank you and the House for its indulgence. And at the same time I want to thank all those hardworking civil servants along with the Minister of Finance and others who have worked to produce a budget to get us where we are and there is a whole lot of work yet to be done.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you.

And just for the record, the Honourable Fourth Elected Member for West Bay agreed to give you his time since the Third Elected Member was not here.

Does any other Member wish to speak? Does any other Member wish to speak? Does any other Member wish to speak?

The Fifth Elected Member for George Town.

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr., Fifth Elected Member for George Town:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to add my contribution to the Throne Speech and Policy Statement and the Budget Address.

I would like to publicly thank the people of George Town and the Cayman Islands for affording me the privilege to stand here on their behalf. One year in, I am constantly reminded that I work for them and for the betterment of these Islands. I am also still happy to be a part of this Coalition Government, as I think that, from the statements given in this honourable House, we are proving that coalition governments can work, as they do in many other parts of the world.

I am particularly proud of being a contributor to the National Conservation Law, the Standards in Public Life Law, the Exempted Limited Partnership Law, and other notable legislation that we have passed in this short period of time, legislation that was needed, legislation that the previous Government did not bring.

I think it shows political will, Mr. Speaker. I think that it is also a sign that this Government will do the hard things even in spite of some of the criticism that it might get. I look forward to doing more, Mr. Speaker.

When I was sworn in I promised to vote my conscience at all times using my judgment and experience to guide all of my deliberations. I listen to that little voice in the back of my head, which is usually right, if you don't fight it.

We have shored up the country's finances. We have repaired the relationship with the UK, and we have implemented policies that will ultimately help the people of these Islands. But that's what we were supposed to do, Mr. Speaker. There is no time to rest on any laurels, or feel we have accomplished any great feat. We haven't. We simply have laid the groundwork for the work that's yet to come. But I dare

say that we have done more, much more, than the previous administration did.

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

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** I believe that's why the good people of the Cayman Islands have elected us.

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

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** Mr. Speaker, as an Independent Member of the Government, I do not always agree with everything the Progressives bring to the table.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** Oh you do. Hush! You vote every time.

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** I know that they don't agree with everything I bring either. But I am still very happy that we can sit at a table, debate and compromise, and most times come to an agreement. I challenge this entire House to work together because the sooner we can get on the same page the more we can do for this country.

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

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** Mr. Speaker, I truly believe that we are stronger together. I have told the Premier that I intend to start bringing my own Private Members' motions. And whilst not asking for anyone's permission, I will ask for support, like I have supported the Government in the last year. We all have similar broad goals. He has told me that I have his full support in what I have proposed so far, and I am going to hold him as a man to his word and the true statesman that he is.

I am particularly proud of the recent rationalization review taking place right now, of which I am a member of the steering committee. It was something we, as Independents, stressed from day one and brought to the table several times. I am happy to say that some of the persons who were hesitant at first are the biggest proponents of this exercise now and have brought some of the best examples and suggestions forward. To me, that is progress, Mr. Speaker, and it is something which shows that this Government can co-exist, it can advance, and it can take, sometimes, the harder step.

To all those detractors who say this Government has done nothing, I would hope that this week they have been a bit silenced. I suspect not, because if you beat a drum over and over, at some point in time you are going to annoy the people in the room. I

think sometimes that's all the detractors do. My wish for those people is that we all get along, Mr. Speaker; that as long as the motion is honest and transparent that it should gain support. We are here, after all, about the business of the *people* of the Cayman Islands, and not our own.

Mr. Speaker, I want to echo some of the sentiments put earlier as well about the Civil Service. We have a great Civil Service. They are hardworking, bright, and in the large majority, willing to carry out the policies of the Government of the day which, by their own Code, they should so do with neutrality. As long as there is nothing illegal, unethical or immoral, they work along with the Government of the day. To those [whom] much is given, much is expected. You cannot have the pats on the back without some of admonition and also pointing out when things are not going the way they [should]. For those who would not give up fiefdoms created sometimes by necessity with corrupt governments, or sometimes because it is the only way they have known, I would remind them of that Code.

In many instances their interests are aligned with that of the elected Government. And even when it is, they must always be cognisant that it is not their right or their role, it is the Government's. Civil servants are here to support and carry out the mandate of the Government of the day. When this is not done, Mr. Speaker, and when persons are allowed to impose their will in the process and slow down, or stop, progress, this should not be allowed. I would ask the Deputy Governor to remain vigilant and ensure that he is ever mindful of this. He and I have had conversations, and I know he is absolutely on board with that.

No person is infallible. So where any Government Minister or Member suggests something illegal, unethical or immoral, I will be the first to back any civil servant who stands up to that type of behaviour. But, Mr. Speaker, the one thing that is very evident to me is that with only three years left it is time to either get on board or get out of the way!

*[Desk thumping]*

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** There is so much to be done and a short time to do it in. And if you are not part of the solution, then you are a part of the problem.

That being said, having seen the civil servants very close up in this rationalisation exercise, we have to be extremely proud of the talent, of the energy, of the drive of these civil servants. And I commend this Government in trying to give them some token of that appreciation in this next month coming up. They absolutely deserve it.

The Government has identified five projects that will be pursued as a matter of priority, Mr. Speaker. My colleague from George Town, the Minister of Finance, has set out:

- George Town cruise berthing;
- Owen Roberts International Airport terminal upgrade;
- George Town revitalisation;
- extension of East/West Arterial Road; and
- new solid waste management facility.

Looking at these in context is important, Mr. Speaker, as each will bring much-needed economic and sustainable growth to these Islands and benefit our people. That is the only hope and should be the only driver in anything that we do in this House.

I look at these items being proposed as a good, solid start. But facilities without proper regulation will not give the intended benefits or results for our people. I am very interested in the progress of each of these projects, both to ensure that they are carried out in a proper and transparent manner, and also to add my two cents to any findings as they come out. I truly believe that they are the catalyst to the change that we need. And the sooner we can get them underway, the better off the country will be.

The economic measures produced in the Budget [Address] are designed to lower the cost of doing business and living in the Cayman Islands. Again, unlike the Second Elected Member for West Bay, and the Leader of the Opposition, it should be seen as . . . or, sorry, the First Elected Member for West Bay (sorry, Mr. Bush).

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

[Laughter]

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** They shouldn't be seen as inconsequential, because we have to start somewhere, Mr. Speaker.

It is one thing to try to say that you should do something. The other thing is to actually do it. We are actually reducing what the previous Government increased two times over.

[Inaudible interjection]

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** In my opinion, though, Mr. Speaker, the next step is to take a serious look at reducing our reliance on diesel fuel. In my mind, and until proven wrong, I would like to call a national debate on this with CUC, the ERA and several solar energy proponents to discuss why solar is not being seen as a way forward. And it is a dire [SOUNDS LIKE] which seems ludicrous, Mr. Speaker, given the amount of sunshine we get in these Islands. Why? Because I do not believe that the limits placed on commercial buildings and the limits of how any megawatts can be installed island-wide on an annual basis is helpful to the Caymanian people. I challenge

this honourable House to look honestly at whether this and other things can reduce our reliance on diesel fuel.

This Government has looked at some of those solar options, and dialogue has taken place. But I think it has to be more than dialogue, because in some of the reports that we got we could reduce prices by as much as 40 per cent. That will make a difference in the lives of people, Mr. Speaker. I think that a target of 10 per cent renewables of the approximately 150 to 200 megawatts of electricity generated in Cayman would be a good start. I would suggest that we try to have that goal by 2020. The UK has just committed to 20 per cent by 2020. It is also a source of energy for low-income houses. I think that Government should absolutely look to add those to any of those projects. Not only will it bring down the cost for the owners thereof, it will take a burden off of Government from a Social Service standpoint.

Mr. Speaker, we also need to look at where we source diesel from and how we buy and store fuel. Some of this is underway, as you have seen in the Progress Report, so I won't dilate further on those. But I think that we are moving in the right direction. We still have a ways to go.

The reduced import duty for licensed traders, again, is a first good step, but we need to become more sophisticated. Recently, Customs was able to increase revenue by over 300 per cent by checking returning passengers at the airport. It just begs the question of how much revenue we were losing before that. We also need to look at the cargo declarations and update those and put stiffer penalties on the people that would try to circumvent a system where the government gets a large quantity of its revenue.

The laws have to be updated and enforced to keep up with changing times and technology. Licenses issued under the Trade and Business [Licensing] Law, and Customs Law for importers must come with penalties for false declarations, re-invoicing and things of that nature, because we know it's happening. You just have to read the headlines, Mr. Speaker. We have contraband, we have counterfeit; all of these products coming in. We need to really bear down on those people that would thwart the system, because they are cheating each and every other citizen of the Cayman Islands when they do so. I don't think the current system deters anyone from doing what they do, because if they get caught and they pay three times the price of the goods, and they get to keep the goods, and no one knows who did the crime, then what are we really doing?

I would humbly suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Government introduce two types of licence—a retail, and a distributor; and three categories of import duties—consumer, retailer, and distributor—and in that order, have a declining import duty rate to try to pass on some of those savings from the distributors and the

retailers to the consumers. And on those custom import forms, Mr. Speaker, introduce an invoice verification, contact and telephone number. And if those people are found guilty of trying to evade the import duties, name and shame them, and take away their licence for an extended period of time and stop them from being able to do so for a significant time. That will also set the tone for others who might want to follow in those footsteps.

I also think, along the lines of the rationalisation exercise that Government is now carrying out, that we [should] look at doing some of the employee mutual type arrangements. I must say that the Leader of the Opposition touched on some of that, and I would like to acknowledge him for doing so. I think in his own special way he is agreeing with the exercise that is being carried out by the Government. I am happy to see that he is supportive—even though he can't admit it in public.

We should move to create jobs by offering a licenced import officer where people from the Civil Service in Customs can go off and do their own businesses where these persons can be employed by brokers and distributors and must be trained by Customs, or come from Customs. And the penalty for those people if they are caught doing anything illegal should be to lose their licence for life. This could be a job that former Customs officers could do to supplement their earnings. I think that should be looked at across the board, not just in Customs. There are a number of highly skilled (and sometimes lowly skilled) workers in the Civil Service that could benefit from this sort of employee mutual because it will make them entrepreneurs and it will make them self-sufficient.

Mr. Speaker, when I was listening to the Premier's Policy Statement and the Budget Address it reminded me that Governments do not create jobs. Wealth creates jobs. It is the Government's role to produce an environment where jobs can be created and its citizens can enjoy wealth. And that word "wealth" means a lot of different things to a lot of different people. My definition here would be to make a liveable wage and that you can put away a few dollars for retirement. If we accomplish anything near that, Mr. Speaker, we will have done an incredible job and left a huge legacy for our fellow Caymanians. If companies can produce a good return on their investment, they will expand and diversify and create employment. Simple modification to present laws with strict enforcement can do this, Mr. Speaker. And it can increase the revenue for the country. More jobs equal less crime; less crime equals more revenue. It's as simple as that, Mr. Speaker.

This Government has also reduced the Trade and Business Licence fee for small businesses, and will be allowing them to pay it over time. We have to look at what the Government is trying to do and expand on this. It goes back to what the goal of any

government is, to facilitate ways by which its people gain access to employment opportunities and then flourish because they are properly prepared to take them.

The people have to do their part by preparing themselves to grasp those opportunities and fully maximise them when they present themselves through education, through training, through dedication, through hard work. And we always have to remember that being Caymanian is not a qualification in itself.

Mr. Speaker, what the presentations and reports which were tabled also say is that Cayman needs to be seen as taking care of business. It is by attracting business here and fostering home-grown businesses that it will be seen to be doing so. We have to offer people advantages to come to Cayman. For those wishing to start their own businesses, we have to give them a kick start. They say that entrepreneurship is the lifeblood of any economy. I say to this honourable House let's prove them right. Let us, through initiatives passed here, transform each district in these Cayman Islands for new and expanding businesses. Trade and Business licence rebates are a great start. But let's finish the race.

I plan to add my own contribution to the Government's reduction of the Trade and Business Licence fee to provide even more incentives for small businesses, those with at least 60/40 Caymanian shareholding, which is tracked very carefully on an annual basis by bank statements and annual returns and declarations and penalties. If we wish to keep the wealth in Cayman by empowering, truly empowering Caymanians and businesses, it has to start with them owning a real part of that business.

Mr. Speaker, we do have to look at long-term or catalyst breaks in fees thereby removing some of the barriers to entry for entrepreneurs. In my mind, these include waiving incorporation fees or annual return fees for a limited period of time. Just as we have spoken about reducing the Trade and Business Licence fee, I think that we need to seriously look at all the start-up costs and try to see what Government can afford to do. On the one hand it will reduce the amount of money coming into government. But, on the other hand, if we have citizens that can support themselves, then we don't have to pay it out in social services. So, Mr. Speaker, that exercise should be done and looked at across the board and not just the fees coming in the door.

Mr. Speaker we also have to offer small businesses some handholding initially. We all know that a vast majority of businesses that start-up also fail very quickly. We have the perfect department with the Department of Commerce and Investment (DCI) to give that assistance. And I think that anyone who would seek government breaks should at least prove that they have gotten up to 10 hours-worth of training at

the DCI with just simple procedural and accounting assistance. I also think that the DCI could be utilised better. I know that it has in the past had angel investors that worked alongside of it looking for opportunities to invest in Caymanian businesses. I think that is something we should really focus on because someone could have a great idea, but no capital. And if you marry the two it's a win/win situation.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to step on the toes of the Minister of Finance, and this is just a suggestion (I am sure he can do the calculations, he probably has his calculator handy). But I would like to see Government actually come up with a guaranteed loan for \$10,000 to get people started up to a maximum of \$1 million. So it's first come, first served. You could call it an entrepreneurial fund, where the money can be held either at the Credit Union or Cayman Islands Development Bank (CIDB) and the shares would later equate to dividends as long as that company repaid the loan without any gaps, relief, and in the agreed timeframe. I think that's the situation which exists now at the Credit Union. It's something we should look at. How do we best get people off the starting block?

Government services have to step up to the plate as well, Mr. Speaker. We will, and we should, guarantee small businesses a quick turnaround on licenses, incorporation certificates, sort of a one-stop shop, because they don't have the resources or the personnel to go from government agency to government agency. And sometimes it's a matter of economic success or failure, given some of the turnaround times. I am proud to think that if we do the e-government as we are planning to do, that that will solve a lot of these issues. But imagine going to one spot and dealing with pensions, health, Trade and Business, all of those things, how beneficial that would be for a small entrepreneur. And it would also mean that they could be 100 per cent compliant from day one before they got their incorporation fee. So they won't fall afoul of the law.

Mr. Speaker, I also think that we should reward those companies that employ and promote Caymanians. Discussions have gone on in Government about ways to have a "carrot approach" and not a "stick approach" to facilitate businesses in Cayman. I truly believe that that is the way to go. I have told my colleagues, and will carry through with that in short order to bring the accreditation plan that the former Chief Immigration Officer, now Deputy Governor, brought to the forefront a few years ago, because we have to simplify this process. We have to reward good behaviour, and we have to give those people that would do the right thing competitive advantage to show them that we appreciate what they are doing even though it is the right thing.

We also have to come up with a master plan, Mr. Speaker, of how and where we want Cayman to be in 10, 15, 20 years, and then direct breaks in those

areas to people who would step up to the plate. That is going to be something that's beneficial for all of us and not ad hoc, over-saturating markets. That would lead to failure to a number of businesses if they are all in the same sector. Areas such as tourism are ripe for this type of steer where we can give breaks for Caymanians to become dive masters, boat captains, waiters, waitresses, you name it, because that is also a step for them in the right direction.

I am glad that we will be pushing the apprenticeship programme in the upcoming year, as reported earlier. I think that is the first regular step in getting where we need to get, but it has to be followed up by businesses registering with the National Workforce Development Agency (NWDA) at the time of incorporation with them exhibiting what they are doing for the Caymanian workforce and then being rewarded for doing so.

Mr. Speaker, like I said before, as part of a Coalition Government there are times when we don't always see eye to eye. That happens even within the party. But it is time, like the Premier said, to at least have the national debate on Sunday trading and daylight savings time. It is something that, because of the religious makeup of the Cayman Islands now, where people worship on different days, we have to include everybody in the dialogue and see where we come out. I find it very hypocritical that we can go to a barroom on a Sunday and buy alcohol, but we can't go to a supermarket. We need to look at some of the repercussions; we need to do a full analysis. And where the people in the Cayman Islands end up deciding the path to go, I will support that 100 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

As part of this Coalition Government I have actively sought to push my colleagues in the areas that reduce both the cost of living and produce liveable wages for Caymanians allowing them to become self-sufficient. Mr. Speaker, you know as well as I that our people are hurting. They come to each of us on a daily basis, and it's almost impossible to do any repair one by one. So we have to come up with real policies that affect the maximum number of our people. We have to get them back in the workforce.

Mr. Speaker, one area that I have been a little hesitant to push is waste management, only because I have an interest in the business that is related to it. But I truly believe that we need to go down the route that we are going and have a comprehensive waste management plan for the Cayman Islands in short order. I am encouraged to see what the Member for Bodden Town, the Minister of Health, is doing. But I do think that whatever we come up with in the end it has to work for the greater good and all the people of the Cayman Islands. It is not only a catalyst for jobs for our people, but when we increase recycling and reduce waste there are health benefits and aesthetic

benefits. I think that it is high time because, again, successive Governments have let it slide.

We heard about the \$150,000 plan. My question to that is: Why wasn't the plan implemented? I am encouraged that this Government is taking this on and that the Minister has said that within two years the solution will be operative. We have to come together in this House and stop the bickering over \$150,000 here, whatever there. We haven't gotten the job done. We need to get it done. It affects our economy, it affects the environment, and it is part of the step that we started with the National Conservation Law. It's the next evolution along the line. Whatever the approach is, it has to be holistic and economical in order to solve the problem now and also to prepare for many years in the future.

I often question why we don't use that \$50 million Environmental Protection Fund to assist in this, Mr. Speaker. I haven't gotten a proper answer, but it is something that I put out there and I ask openly. As a Member for George Town, I am very interested in this process and what happens next, because I have been canvassed by my constituents. Like I said, I am encouraged by what I have seen so far, but I do want to keep an eye on the process. In the Capital, with the largest population, it affects more people if we get it wrong. This was my promise during the campaign, and it is a promise that I intend to keep.

Again, going back to the employee mutual, and I have raised this with the Minister and he supports it, that we should look at empowering some of those employees already there to take up some of the services that they already do at a high level, but let them own their own businesses to provide those services. So, in that rationalisation plan and the process that the Minister of Health is going through, I truly hope that that is one of the focuses in either or both of those plans. Like I said, I have spoken to him about it, and he supports that type of activity. So I am pretty sure that it will have come up in his exercise. Not only will it reduce head count for the Civil Service, but it will empower people.

Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding those reports, and notwithstanding what may come, my own personal belief is that polluters should pay. By that, I mean both fees for dumping into landfills by the ton, and also by the fact that we have three major contributors because of their size for waste in Cayman. That's George Town, West Bay and Bodden Town. And part of this exercise should look at whether or not transfer stations in each of those three places could be undertaken. I say that because it could create a number of jobs right in those districts and allow efficient recycling and removal of waste. It is something that I would ask at least be looked at in the process.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** The Minister says he has already said that. So, I thank him for that.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing I might add to that which could be a bit controversial (but I'm known not to shy away from a little controversy now and then) is that when we are looking at Private Public Partnerships (PPPs), we should look at those people that are most affected in the area to come up with some of the solutions. Although sometimes we have to look closely at those relationships, we should try to involve stakeholders as much as possible and sometimes let them bear the financial brunt of some of the things that are going to help them immeasurably.

I don't think that anyone can argue that if the Government takes this on there will be one or two close-by neighbours that will benefit if it's a huge success. I do think that sometimes they should be looked at to put some skin in the game, because for far too long we have had developers and other people that do not bear the proper infrastructure fees. And then we, the people, end up either paying for it in total or it just never gets done. I really look at trying to involve people in the vicinity for a vested interest in the solution.

Mr. Speaker, I am not picking on the Minister of Health. I assure him, and you. Again, I have had some discussions with him and the wider Government about the hospital. I am encouraged by what the Minister of Health is doing. My own view is that we should find a true way to partner with some of these world-class institutions that are courting the hospital and the Health Services Authority (HSA). Not only will it raise the profile, it will raise standards. And it will give employees of the HSA a boost to their CVs if they can say that they work for some of these world-class, well-known institutions.

We have to look at those PPPs, I think, to get us down the road. It will reduce cost, it will increase the level of healthcare, and we can better our people. And again, Mr. Speaker, this is what it should all be about—how we better our people, and how we better our country.

Mr. Speaker, I won't press on the Minister any more. I will move on to education. I am ultimately involved in whatever we achieve or fail to do because I am the Counsellor in that Ministry. The Minister has tasked me with holding the reins of education sometimes when she is absent. And I would like to publicly thank her for giving me that opportunity. But, again, it comes with an awesome responsibility. I, for one, didn't get into this job because I wanted to shy away from responsibility or because I wanted to be a wallflower. So, I welcome the task and have committed to her that I will carry out her vision, as well as the vision of the entire Government, including the Independents and what we campaigned on as well.

I am not going to go into a number of the accomplishments, the journey thus far. I will leave that to

the Minister of Education (the Second Elected Member for West Bay). But I would like to say that we haven't been standing idly by or twiddling our thumbs, as one of our great fans likes to say on every radio broadcast on the Island, it seems. We have just moved into phase 2 of our approach with strict behavioural changes coming into play for September 2014, which the Minister has said will be carried out without fear or favour.

Changes to the Education Modernisation Law will be coming into effect before the school year starting September 2015 with a view to changing the governance model for schools based on stakeholder participation and Public Private Partnerships, setting national standards for achievement, performing baseline audits of our schools, and, I think most importantly, Mr. Speaker, the Minister's vision is to re-establish the independent inspectorate of our schools. We were very surprised and disheartened when we realised that the last full set of inspections was done sometime in 2007. How can we accurately determine where we are if we haven't done the exercise in an objective and transparent manner and then acted on the reports?

That independent inspectorate will be taken out of the hands of the Ministry of Education—

**An Hon. Member:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** —and those results will be tabled in this honourable House and inspections of schools done on a routine basis so that everyone can see exactly where we are and where improvements need to come.

I think when we accomplish that (because it's not "if") people will see what the Minister's vision is in creating education as a centre of excellence in the Cayman Islands. It is not going to happen overnight. But I dare say that we are setting the groundwork and we are going to be vigilant while we are here to ensure that education is left in a better way than when we found it.

We are also looking at the scholarship criteria. Having regularised the Young Nation Building Scholarship, which had to involve a rebalancing of the amounts of several people because some of them were getting three times the amount of any other scholarship recipients, and those were in high school. We have carried out our audits. If you have seen recent headlines it has resulted in at least one person being arrested in relation to activities carried out under this programme.

Our view, Mr. Speaker, is that right is right and wrong is wrong—period! And we cannot just do things because people did them before. And just because they were allowed in the past does not mean that we should allow the abuses in the present. We stand behind our actions, and I am happy that we have been able to shed some light on some of the

practices therein because it's important for the people of the Cayman Islands to know that their interests and the fairness of the system is being safeguarded for their benefit and for the benefit of their children.

With proper systems in place, more Caymanians will have opportunities to reach their educational dreams knowing that it is not who they know that will get them there, but what they know and what they do throughout their school existence. Mr. Speaker, I only hope that all our efforts do not go for naught, because part of this process and what a number of people fail to realise is that it starts in the home. And it is in the home where respect for education and teachers and seeing education for what it is, a key to success that parents need to push from an early age. There should not be any question in a child's mind about coming out of school at 16 to go into the workforce. That should be just another step along the way, either to getting some tertiary academic qualifications, and possibly more, or betting themselves in a technical or vocational field. Because that is the other step as well, Mr. Speaker, that successive Governments have failed to do.

Not all of our children are academically inclined. No one can tell me any different, no technocrat, no novel, no book, no report, nothing can tell me that we should put someone through a system knowing that they are probably going to fail, when they have other talents we could harness, polish and get them ready for functional life in society. And I think that's where we have to have those two forks in the road, one for the academic and one for the technical and vocational. If we put someone through the wrong one, and we don't give them options to choose which one would be better for them, then we are going to only serve half of their best interests.

The other thing I would ask the people viewing and listening to these proceedings to take into consideration, Mr. Speaker, is the obligation and responsibility to pay for your child's education if you can. It shouldn't always be, *What can government do?* Government should not be the only source for education. We need to encourage parents [to consider] the long-term costs [before] having children, and one of those costs is the cost of tertiary education. So, I would challenge those parents listening that when they have their children think it through. Anybody can make a baby. To support, foster and encourage you need to do your part as well. It is not just the responsibility of the Government. Eighteen years comes very quickly.

Mr. Speaker, we have begun that fight for trade and vocational programmes. And I will leave it to the Minister to speak a bit more on that. But, suffice it to say that we don't want to just give it lip service. By the end of our term it should be going in the right direction because, given our budget and financial constraints, it is not all going to be bricks and mortar. But

there will be a push for apprenticeships and other things that will try to encourage businesses to take on those children that are so inclined and to polish them with a view, I think in the long term, to actually doing some more practical work. And that is not to say that we are not doing some of it in the schools. But it has to be a clear and defined path, I think.

It would be remiss of me not to talk about the Caymanian teachers that are in the system and how we have to support them. We all know that teachers can have a disproportionate positive or negative effect on our children. We also know that we can't produce enough teachers to fill our schools from these shores. The goal has to be to try to track the best teachers we possibly can from around the world. But, at the same time, we have to look at our own Caymanian teachers and facilitate their journey in education to try to get them proper resources, proper salaries, proper support, because this will encourage those coming behind them. And we need to encourage the ones we have in the system to go further and be the best that they can be because they are the overseers of our children for up to eight hours a day.

Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing that I would like to accomplish in education, is how to best support and encourage our Caymanian teachers before this is all said and done. The Minister has started that by mandating succession plans. But we need to do a bit more in some of the things that she will no doubt talk about, and the things that I know she's advocating, which is to get them in a better stead. That also starts with communication by those teachers, as to what some of the issues are, and that is sharing that information without any fear of people coming back and using that against them.

Mr. Speaker, we have started teachers' forums. The Minister has stressed on every single occasion that if any repercussions come because they are being honest about their situation, she will take it wherever she has to take it to ensure that that doesn't happen. I find her to be a woman of her word, thus far, and an advocate for things she believes in, so I don't question that she will go to every extent to ensure that there are no repercussions to people actually telling us how the situation that they find themselves in has come about and what they are enduring daily. It is that kind of support that will empower people to feel that they are appreciated, and to give 110 per cent. And we have to find a way to promote those great teachers, Caymanian and otherwise, who would go the extra mile to take care of our most precious natural resource, the youth of the Cayman Islands.

Mr. Speaker, the promises I made during the election campaign are very important to me. One of those was, and remains, the one man one vote. And a second one is the whistleblower legislation. Some people might question why we didn't support motions coming from the Opposition. I just want to assure the

good people of the Cayman Islands that those are things that we have discussed at length in the Government and we have had the promise that they will be reviewed and brought before the end of this term. And that is one of the promises I am going to keep my colleagues in Government conscious of. When they do come, I will fully support both of those endeavours that we all campaigned on because it is, to my mind, a step in the right direction and it is a promise that I made. And it is a promise that I intend to keep.

We have said in this past year some of the concerns we have. Those are shared by some and not others. But when we get to that position it will be a debated and compromised position, but it will be in the best interests of the people of these Islands, and not for any political grouping.

Mr. Speaker, we spoke about the finances of the country and we have heard what we have done, what we are going to do, and what we intend to do. One of the things that we need to look at is how to keep wealth in the Cayman Islands. There is a tremendous amount of money being made in these Islands, sometimes not by Caymanians. And, yes, I understand trickledown economics. But we have to try to ensure that our people participate when they can, where they have all the skills to participate, in some of those golden apples. I, for one (before the end of this term), intend to bring a motion to ensure that some of the loopholes that exist where people can come to these shores and set up very lucrative businesses without any Caymanian participation whatsoever, even when that Caymanian participation exists both from a financial and a skill set level, because if we are allowing people to come here and make their money and take it abroad to buy everything from vineyards to golf courses to mansions, who are we building it for? And what will be left when they have taken it, gone, and left us with what they didn't want? Mr. Speaker, I will always make my decisions based on empowering our Caymanians, especially when they have done their part, the part we have asked them to do.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that the accreditation plan is something that we as a Government are looking at. I am happy that we are looking at Immigration. We have to simplify our Immigration process and policies. We have to also take work permits and the labour-related side of things outside of the Immigration Department. Immigration should be border control. Let the workforce agency (or whatever we end up calling it) handle and facilitate business in Cayman. They are best suited for it if given the proper resources.

I am proud that this Government has sought to look at ways to facilitate large conferences, large businesses coming to these Islands. The Sixth Elected Member for George Town and I have been tasked with the work to look at some of those ways to accommodate that and to impress on the front line

what it means to be courteous, what it means to go the extra mile. Because that, in itself, could be a determining factor on whether or businesses come to the Island or they leave before they even got here.

Mr. Speaker, one year in I have learned the results of bad governance. I have seen where bad policy decisions result in huge costs for the Government and this country. I don't need to go into a number of them. We have seen the headlines of rash decisions, people sitting and doing nothing for years and collecting huge paycheques at the end. That's what bad governance results in. It is also a sign and a constant reminder that we need to be as transparent as possible. We need to play by the rules and realise that each and every one of us in this honourable House still follows the rules of the Cayman Islands. Nobody here is above the law.

Bad and irrational decisions cost taxpayers money. And when we take those funds away we see the things like waterlines, people being evicted from homes, and a number of other ills that possibly could have been avoided if we had the funds that were put to cover up some of those bad decisions in the proper places. Imagine [how much] more could have been spent on education, mental health, the police, roads. I don't even want to start to begin to add up the tab, and for reasons of confidentiality some of those figures won't be known. But I just know that bad governance costs the country money. I hope that these good people of the Cayman Islands never become nostalgic for that sort of governance again. To the supporters of such activity that say we have done nothing, I am proud that we have done none of that. If not repeating that kind of activity is doing nothing, then I wear that high on my sleeve.

Cayman, we need to wake up. We have lots of work to do. These issues weren't created overnight and they can't be solved overnight. But I do think that we are going in the right direction, Mr. Speaker.

I have to commend the Premier and the Minister of Finance. They are kept busy; they are kept under the gun. But when I looked at the Budget, and there are areas that I may have pushed in another way, but overall, with them, the Civil Service, the input of other Ministers and the backbench, I am truly proud of what we have produced in this House for the next financial year because it shows that with the proper people in place good things can happen.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** If you hadn't taken so much time I could have had a half hour of yours.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** Mr. Speaker, I am proud that politics is not politics as usual. I think that if—

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.:** He was conveniently out of the room when I said that.

I got into politics, Mr. Speaker, not for any fortune, but to do a job, because I saw that the people who came before had not done their job. I think at the end of the day we should be proud of whatever we accomplish. And I am certainly proud to be part of this Coalition Government. And, like I said before, I am not asking permission for anything I do; I am asking for support. And the exchange is also support for those things that we all know will aid the people of these Islands and our children after us.

Mr. Speaker, with those not-so-few words, I thank you for your indulgence and I thank you for allowing me to express some of my views.

*[Desk pounding]*

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

I now call on the honourable Elected Member for North Side.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller, Elected Member for North Side:** Mr. Speaker, let me start my contribution to this debate on the 2014 Throne Speech, and the 2014/15 Budget Address by expressing my profound disappointment in the Throne Speech. It was hopelessly short on substance and policy proposals by the Government to address many of the issues, concerns and problems faced by Caymanians in this society.

Mr. Speaker, the statement entitled "Stability—the Road for Prosperity" delivered by the Premier after the Throne Speech is, as you would be aware, not debatable under Standing Order 30(2), which reads: "**No debate may arise on such a statement but the Presiding Officer may, in his discretion, allow short questions to be put to the Member making the statement for the purpose of clarification.**"

Your confirmation, Mr. Speaker, of my interpretation of Standing Orders was demonstrated by the fact that you allowed the Leader of the Opposition to exercise the provision of that Standing Order, suborder (2), by facilitating him to ask questions of the Premier immediately after he had completed the statement. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in my contribution to the debate I will not reference or make any comment on anything contained in that statement.

Mr. Speaker, in my view it is unfortunate if an elected Government cannot trust the Governor to deliver a speech which they approve and, for all intents

and purposes, prepare, that should have included all of the policy positions taken and intended by the Government for the 2014/15 financial year. For the elected Government to reduce the Throne Speech to 12 pages of soothing philosophy void of any substance, is truly regrettable and regressive, simply to afford the Premier to make a statement declaring policy plans and decisions that should have been in the Throne Speech.

The statement, in my view, and the position it occupied on the Order Paper programme for today, also eroded and usurped the constitutional authority and responsibility of the Minister of Finance, who is charged with the constitutional authority for finance and legally under the Public Management and Finance Law (PMFL) to produce and deliver the Budget Address. The announcement of adjustments to government fees, awards of salaries to civil servants and such financial matters belong in and should remain in the Budget Address and not in a non-debatable statement by the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, far too often during the last year I have sat in this House and smiled inwardly as I recalled the PPM's opposition and my opposition to the 2009-13 Government, to the UDP's bending of the rules, including the Constitution, to achieve their goals, and now they find great comfort and solace and justification in continuing to bend the rules and the Constitution on the fact that the UDP did it.

Mr. Speaker, let me congratulate the Minister of Finance on his comprehensive Budget Address delivered with the quiet confidence that only great preparation can engender, even though most of his thunder had been stolen by the Premier in his statement. The public that I interact and communicate with and listen to, are fully aware of who did the hard work, and there is great confidence and expectation that with the hand of the Minister of Finance on the tiller the good ship *Cayman* is on the right course.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me turn to the Throne Speech to see if I can find anything therein on which to praise the Government. Well, Mr. Speaker, I can agree with the Governor in congratulating the Government on completing their first year in office. I can also agree and congratulate them on their notable achievement with the passage of the National Conservation Law and the Standards in Public Life Law. But I anxiously await the Cabinet order bringing these two pieces of legislation into effect. The effect of what we did here four, five, six months ago is nil, void; nothing has happened until the Cabinet issues the order bringing the legislation into effect.

I am perplexed, concerned that that order has not yet been issued by Cabinet on either of those two important pieces of legislation because it should not be sufficient on our part to congratulate ourselves for having passed it into law here and to sit idly by while

time passes on and the laws are not into effect. So they are really of no consequence.

In the Governor's [Throne Speech], and I quote from page 2, "**In the international arena, a number of developments enhanced the Cayman Islands' reputation as a player of note. The opening of Cayman Health City was heralded across our wider region as an initiative that embodied both innovation and foresight in the fields of medical tourism and affordable tertiary health-care.**" I find that statement hard to accept, Mr. Speaker, because one of the first and most damaging things, I believe, this country has ever done, was to lower the standard of registration for healthcare professionals to allow that institution to be set up in the first place. This country is going to pay dearly for that in the near and foreseeable future.

In the last several days the EIU brought to my attention some of the fee structures that these people intend to put in place, or have put in place in that institution. And I don't believe that it is correct to describe that fee schedule as affordable tertiary care. Mr. Speaker, I intend to drill deeper into that in Finance Committee through the allocations to the Ministry of Health and CINCO, et cetera. But 20 per cent to 30 per cent above fees currently being charged in the state of Florida are not likely to engender the kind of business to this country that these people assured Government they were going to bring to its shores because they were going to do heart surgery for \$10,000.

And, Mr. Speaker, I trust that the Government, and in particular CINICO, is not going to be nudged or cajoled into signing any contracts at those rates simply to buy local, because [from] my recollection of the numbers that were tabled in this House four months after opening, there should be hundreds, if not thousands, of patients that have already gone through that institution and spent money in the Cayman Islands.

Mr. Speaker, I also agree that sports tourism is moving in the right direction. Again, I wait to see what returns government will get from the \$800,000 it has invested in a football field in Cayman Brac for sports tourism. I also support the Premier and other Ministers travelling to promote, defend and enhance the international image of Cayman. However, it is not so comforting with the one day whirlwind visits by the FCO and the Overseas Minister and they gave me and my elected colleague from East End a whole 20 minutes to talk to them. That's a waste of time. It's not possible to have a conversation that either party might benefit [from] in that period of time. So, what they are coming for, I don't know.

Mr. Speaker, I am also glad that the Governor recognises and thinks that Caymanians are becoming more cautious. I believe Caymanians have good reason to become more cautious with what's transpired in this country over the last decade and looks to be con-

tinued into the next decade. And, Mr. Speaker, for the Governor to come here and remind us as elected representatives of the need for good governance and transparency to keep the trust and to develop the trust of the people we represent, while employing every legal and administrative tool and, I might add, at great expense to the very people we represent, to maintain the absolute opaqueness, ultimate secrecy and titanium quality lid on Operation Tempura—

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** This, Mr. Speaker, in my view, is a bit disingenuous and not appreciated by the people I who I represent. I cannot inform how much of their money was paid to Kernohan. They regard that as part of my responsibility as their representative to find out and let them know because their position is it's their money that the Cabinet and the Governor are spending and they should know.

Those are some of the reasons, Mr. Speaker, why Caymanians are beginning to be cautious and doubt if we are worthy of their trust.

I have a message for Mr. Bridger: Put the documents on the windshield of my truck, a black Chevrolet four-wheel drive Colorado, licence plate Q005. I'll get them out. Put them on my truck!

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:** What are you going to do with them?

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** I am going to release them to be published.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Now, Mr. Speaker, the philosophical . . . and I say philosophical because there are no facts or statistics to support the statements in the Throne Speech—none. **“The present year has seen the establishment of a strong foundation for our economy, upon which Government will build. It has already initiated a number of key projects, and will move forward with plans for the new airport and cruise berths, as well as with needed road improvements.”**

Mr. Speaker, I believe we built that foundation a long time ago, you know. And it is kind of troubling to me . . . “plans for the new airport”? I hope that's a serious typographical error because I am not supporting any new airport in the eastern districts, as was proposed was needed for Health City. Now renovation of the current terminal I support. That is not what this says! And these are the experts in English, not us little North Side country boys. And this, I assume . . . when I was in ExCo we certainly vetted and approved any Throne Speech by any Governor that came down here from our Government.

I want to be given the assurance by the Minister responsible that this is a serious typographical mistake and there are no plans to build a new airport. I have been given recent brochures produced by investors, supported by Government that put pictures of their investments of an airport in the eastern district.

What do those old people in North Side say? Where there is smoke there is fire. Now, somebody is telling somebody something.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to plans for the renovation of the airport, this country is with renovation plans like that good gentleman in West Bay told the Planning Board, Department, when they told him he needed some plans for his house. He said “Plans? Plans? I have plans all my life; what I need is a house. I'm building a house, get off my property!” We have had plenty plans to renovate this airport, but for some strange reason . . . I was a member of the board 2003, 2004, with a big transition of the separation of civil aviation from the airport. And we had completed plans estimated to cost . . . I think it was around \$40 million to completely renovate the airport terminal, keeping all of the departures upstairs and all the arrivals downstairs on the existing footprint.

I am not one of those who believe that extending the runway is going to guarantee any long haul flights in any great numbers or any great number of additional tourists. Ask Turks Island. I think they just had somebody help them spend a couple of hundred million dollars down there to extend their runway for 747s and it's been about two years and they haven't had the first flight yet. This country cannot afford this kind of expenditure and it is unnecessary.

Of course, if you talk to the pilots . . . there is no pilot in the world who wouldn't like a longer runway. But does he really need one with the improvements in aircraft technology, take-off and landing distances being reduced? Do we really need to extend the runway? One of the things we need to do is to move general aviation to the eastern end of the property so that we can expand the facility for general aviation because it's a good source of money. But, again, what confuses me, Mr. Speaker, is (and the Governor mentions it in the back of her speech) this rationalisation (nice, new buzz word—they've been through about six of them so far, just in the term I have been here in the last four years) of the privatisation of the airport. And if they are going to privatise it, why is the Government getting ready to spend a couple million dollars on it?

Same with the cruise berth, Mr. Speaker. I remain to be convinced that putting \$300-plus million in docks in George Town is going to give us any great increase in number of cruise ship tourists or any great increase in the individual spend. Those rednecks have so much to spend and that's it. Or, is it going to increase the time that they spend in Cayman?

I come from a maritime family, Mr. Speaker, as you know. All of my maritime people tell me that the departure time from Cayman for cruise ships has very little to do with what's happening in Cayman. It is related to the ETA (estimated time of arrival) in Cancun, or estimated time of arrival in Ocho Rios or Falmouth, Jamaica. They can't leave here after 3:00 in the evening and be in Cancun 8:00 the next morning. If they stay here until 6:00 they will not get to Cancun until noon, and they are not going to do that to their clientele, because they have lost a half day in Mexico. The Good Lord put us in the right place; overnight sail from Jamaica, overnight sail from Mexico. They have to stop here. We are the most popular on their route.

I picked up two friends of mine originally from Jamaica and Australia last week. They came in on a cruise ship. This is the only place that they felt welcomed. They went to the fancy new port in Falmouth. The gentleman is a Jamaican. He went into a fenced-in compound and they were very reluctant to let him out of it, although he was Jamaican. He went into Cancun and he went up one stairs, down one stairs, down through one building up through another building, all past the shops owned by the cruise industry. He came to Cayman, he got on a rickety boat, he came ashore and he was free to do what he wanted to do. To him that was the ultimate experience.

Somehow, somebody has convinced us that we must have piers in George Town, yet we are told here that cruise ship passengers are increasing under this Government. They don't have piers out there now.

Mr. Speaker, do we need to enhance the cruise visitors' experience and arrival facilities in George [Town]? Absolutely! But there is not only one solution to that to build piers. All the person wants is that when they get to the exit door on the cruise ship there is something to step into or onto. We haven't looked. The business case that was made for which the Government paid a little bit of money, didn't evaluate alternatives such as changing the kind of boats that we are using from those single hull wooden boats that one of my grand uncles built in the '80s. And, as we North Siders would say, just as crank as a dory. Standing on the shore watching it will make you seasick, because it is single hull and single screw.

Force the people who provide the tender service to buy decent boats, multi-hull, 150 people can be taken in it, air-conditioned, glass tops, aircraft style seats, security belts. Make the journey from the cruise ship to the port a positive experience, not having to worry about getting splinters in their legs. And have plenty of them. Don't just allow them to have three so you have to wait for . . . one doesn't leave shore until one leaves the boat's side. So you have to wait that period for them to come back and forth. Have 10, 15, or 20 of them, bow to stern, almost like a conveyor belt. They making good money out of it you know. With the numbers we have been shown here, it's

about . . . what . . . \$4.50, \$5.00 per passenger, whether they get in the boat or not.

Cruise berthing does one thing. It gives the cruise industry greater control and a greater portion of the money that is spent in the country. They are not going to stay overnight. That adds a whole day to the itinerary. And most of the people they are bringing in now can hardly afford to pay what they are paying. But the interesting thing, if you look at the announcements from the industry, when we want to build a cruise port they are spending \$100-odd. When we want to do something else, they spend only \$60. And most of those passengers . . . and you know, all of us Members . . . I invite you to take a little walk if there is a cruise ship in tomorrow, particularly if there are more than two. Go down there, climb up the stairs in the Royal Watler, go sit on the back and listen to what's going on down there, the cajoling, the cursing, encouraging people. Regulate the place properly.

Put some trees down there and put them in big concrete buckets; some mahogany trees, some ironwood trees (*unna* like the word "ironwood"), some birch trees, some palm trees, some coconut trees. Lively the place up! If a nor'wester comes in, a forklift can come and carry them further ashore. When the nor'wester is gone the forklift can pick them up and put them back out there. Improve the experience of the cruise industry.

Remove those security guards. If I try to go down and buy a cigar from Robert, it's a nightmare to get up the stairs. Two or three of them, you have to tell you who you are, where you come from, what you're doing and where you're going. That should only matter when you're getting on the launch or getting on the boat. It shouldn't matter on the roadside, going up the stairs. Most of those people rented those places with a clear understanding that Caymanians could go there and transact business with them. But no, you go there and you have these people that harass you. Every shop you go in town has a security officer. *What are you doing? What's his function?*

Mr. McLean and I went to pay our telephone bills a while ago because they cut us off, so we had to go pay.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** On the way back there is a security officer sitting down in the shade on the Post Office porch, rocking away.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Right by the parking lot of the Post Office.

I said, "Sir, what's your job?"

He said, "Tecurity."

I said, "Pardon?"

He said, "Security, security."

Oh? Nice job sitting down in the shade.

We are going to come to this security business in the Government later on, you know, because I went to Immigration yesterday. They had two opening and closing the door. It has to be cheaper, Mr. Minister of Finance, to buy automatic door closers from Thompson. Has to be cheaper!

Do you know what my friend said? *Ezzard what happened? In Cayman your crime has gone so much that every shop has a security guard in it?* But you see, we create these images and we don't look at the consequences.

We have always sold Cayman as being crime free, stability. But when you get off the cruise ship there are all these security people around. Every door you go into there is a security officer opening and closing the door for you. You know why they are at the door? Anything happens, they are the first out.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** And I will tell you something else, I think you've seen both would be under threat to try to catch them, because the wages they are being paid is not what the security company is being paid. That's a different thing, but we are going to find out about that in Finance Committee this year because we know what a security officer is being paid on the job.

Mr. Speaker, yes, we need to improve the cruise visitors' experience so they will go away with a tongue of good report on Cayman. And they will tell their friends and their friends will want to come.

The last time this was brought up here, that unconstitutional counsellor responsible at that time, Mr. Cline Glidden, told us that we were getting 85 per cent to 90 per cent of all of the cruise passengers on the western itinerary. So, if that statistic is right, we are spending \$300-plus million to try to get a portion of 15 per cent. That doesn't make good economic sense to me, Mr. Speaker. We could spend a couple of million, improve the whole ambiance of that place down there, make it a pleasant experience for the cruise visitor and we could probably get away with keeping the 85 per cent that we have. We might not need anymore. But if we spend \$300 million . . . did the (what was it?) \$18 million that we spent on the Royal Watler addition to the cruise terminal dramatically increase the tourism? No. It provided a better experience for the people.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is this a convenient time to take a break? You're not finishing shortly?

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** No, I'm sorry to inform you, Mr. Speaker—

### **Moment of interruption—4:30 pm**

**The Deputy Speaker:** We have now reached the hour of 4:30 pm I understand that we will be going until 7:00 pm. I now call on the Deputy Premier for a motion to suspend Standing Order 10(2).

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

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** I move [the suspension of] Standing Order 10(2) to continue the business of this honourable House beyond the hour of 4:30 pm.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The question is that Standing Order 10(2) be suspended to enable the business of the House to continue beyond the hour of 4:[30] pm.

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

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

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

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** This House is suspended until 10 minutes to 5:00.

### **Proceedings suspended at 4:30 pm**

### **Proceedings resumed at 5:00 pm**

**The Deputy Speaker:** This honourable House now resumes. Please be seated.

I call on the Member for North Side to continue his debate.

## **DEBATE ON THE BUDGET ADDRESS AND THE THRONE SPEECH**

*~together with~*

### **GOVERNMENT'S POLICY STATEMENT**

*[Continuation thereof]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Mr. Speaker, when we took the break I was speaking on the fact that I am not one of those who is convinced that we need to spend a couple of hundred million dollars to build cruise berths because even if it's a hundred million, it's way too much.

Mr. Speaker, if the cruise industry and the business people of George Town are so convinced that building these two docks is going to so tremendously increase the amount that each tourist spends

and the length of time they stay, then they should build the dock themselves and not bother the Government at all because they are going to be the ones that get the benefit.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Well then . . . somebody on your side got up and announced a couple of days ago that cruise passengers are increasing.

And then we see this situation where it appears that by the time this budget is over we will have spent close to \$5 million on this port and we don't even have plans for what we are going to do. I don't understand how we can do a \$2.5 million EIA [Environmental Impact Assessment] if we don't know what we are going to build. Certainly, whatever we build is going to directly affect the environment. So how we can do an EIA before we know what and how we intend to build is beside me. Maybe we will spend another million dollars to revise it after we get the plan.

But, Mr. Speaker, I contend that there are things we can do that will have minimal cost to the Government, very little cost that will greatly enhance the experience of every cruise passenger that comes here. And that's what we should be doing—improving the quality and the quantity of the tenders we use. Make the passage from the ship-in-the-stream where they are anchored to the dock an educational experience for the tourists. Put some greenery on the dock. We can do that in huge concrete containers that can be moved. They have forklifts that can pick up 45 foot containers, tons of them. Not a difficult thing to do. Have some retired Caymanians dressed in old Cayman [traditional] clothing walking around informing the tourists about Cayman while directing them.

A couple of months ago I was in Kingston, in new Kingston, walking up to the bank. There was a policeman dressed not in the usual black pants and red striped uniform but . . . I don't know the term, but his role in that area was to simply assist and look out for the tourists and help them find what they wanted to do. It was a comforting experience for me to be approached by somebody like that, particularly in Kingston, and feel that they were spreading some comfort. But what we do is have all these security officers down there dressed up in white shirts and all this stuff intimidating and frightening everybody and they can't do anything about anything.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the greatest leap of faith in the whole Throne Speech is this statement that Cayman Health City is already the vanguard of international healthcare industry in the region. Well, Mr. Speaker, there are some well-recognised healthcare institutions in this region that have been around a long time. And, as I pointed out earlier, I haven't observed the number of international patients that were going to

be flying in lined up in America waiting to come down once they got this facility built.

I have some concerns, and I want to alert the Minister of Finance who is responsible for CINICO to be very careful that CINICO and the Government are not cajoled or pushed into signing any agreements with that institution on their published rates today simply to buy local. When I looked at all the jobs that were advertised I thought it was supposed to be cancer, cardiac and orthopaedics. But I see them advertising for dentists too. It kind of indicates to me that they are going to more of a general practice clinic.

I had a strange experience this last week. My mother went by ambulance to the hospital with pain in her chest. Of course, those brilliant folks just gave her some Oxycodone to kill the pain and sent her home. But my father approached me yesterday, because I told him I was going to make arrangements to take her to the heart place on Seven Mile Beach just to make absolutely sure it wasn't anything wrong. He said "I think we can go straight up to Health City now. We can go up there and walk right in." The point I am making, Mr. Speaker, is that my father didn't make that up. Somebody told him so. But that's not what is supposed to be happening.

I have always said that my concern about Health City, Cayman, was that my experience in the business told me that their business formula couldn't work. My concern is that if it doesn't work they are only going to have one choice, and that is to capture the \$40 million to \$50 million that the Government is currently spending overseas for cardiac, cancer and orthopaedic care. And even if they were giving you cut rates . . . well, I can tell you without fear of successful contradiction . . . and when it comes to Finance Committee, with the permission of the Minister of Finance, who will chair that, I intend to summon the CEO of CINICO here and drill down and ask some questions and then we will see whether it is affordable healthcare or not.

The current information the EIU brings to me is that right now the published fee is between 20 per cent and 30 per cent of cardiac procedures available in Florida and that other institution they are use in mid-America and Kansas.

And the one thing we don't want to do, Mr. Minister of Health, is to wind up with a fiasco with them like we got with Three T's [PHONETIC] in the MRI at the hospital. You hear about a catastrophe—it was that. And I have the evidence, and I am going to bring it out in Finance Committee, that even for the same CPT [Current Procedural Terminology] code they are charging the HSA and CINICO different rates, and more expensive than competitors in town.

My information is that CINICO could fly somebody to Kingston, get the MRI done, if they had to stay overnight they could stay overnight and they could still do it cheaper than what they are doing up there for.

Then, of course, the other side of it is there was supposed to be a particular piece of equipment, it was supposed to be installed and in operation last September, not operational today, but they are charging these expensive rates that were agreed about.

And then there is this curious thing that the HSA gets back 20 per cent of whatever fees they send to them. Now, there is something wrong with that formula because that is a perfect incentive for abuse. The incentive for the HSA is to overuse the facility because they get more than 20 per cent. If they can give them a 20 per cent discount, take it off the fee, end of story, and compete at that level.

When we see statements in the Throne Speech, of which the Governor was justly proud, under health, **“Health, too, has a role in determining quality of life,”** (I agree with that) **“in particular the readiness to succeed. Accordingly, the Government will seek an overseas partner for the Health Services Authority to facilitate training, improve access to services, and maximize efficiencies.**

Now that could be difficult to accomplish. I will advise the Minister of Health that any foreign entity that offers to come and be a partner in that mess you have up there is coming for the wrong reasons and it is not going to be for the benefit of the people of Cayman.

Here are some of the things you don't have that you are going to have to put in place which, by the way, I left there in 1992. That famous National Team Government went in there and threw out the baby with the bathwater and everybody, right? Full set of medical staff bye-laws.

You are only going to be able to privilege the doctors according to their credentials. What does that mean? The obstetrician is going to be privileged to practice obstetrics. He is not going to be allowed to practice cardiology. Medical audit and peer review in order to ensure quality assurance. Medical director that is elected by his peers is not appointed by the government and paid by the government; total waste of government money. But we are talking here in the Governor's speech about helping to train, but we are spending money in the budget to help with internships.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk a little bit about that. Any Caymanian who is forced or made to believe that coming back here to do his internship at this hospital rather than a proper teaching hospital is being given a disservice, not only to himself, but to the Caymanians that he might go in to treat because there is very little opportunity and very little example, and very little demonstration of quality assurance that could train a Caymanian in internships for medicine. So, we need to make up our minds which way we want to go.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Governor also made a very . . . again, I hope this is like the business about

the new airport . . . let me see if I can find it. It's hard to find anything good in this to say. And I'm trying really hard sir. Ah, here we go. **“Establishing what I hope will be a model for future development, the developers, Government, and the National Trust recently came together to agree the best route for the proposed extension of the East West Arterial road.”**

Now, Mr. Speaker, we need to talk about this National Trust a little bit. I was shocked . . . I am working with the Minister responsible for roads to try to get some farmland opened up in North Side. And so that nobody can say it, and I don't want to get in the same position of the Premier was with roads, my mother and father own a piece of land where we are trying to get the farm roads to go. If my father doesn't decide to disinherit me I hope to inherit a piece of it down the road. So I am declaring my interest up front.

All the landowners are giving the land to the Government for free. But this idea that the National Trust can convince Government not to use National Trust land, but to put the road on private land that is going to cost Government money to buy . . . and it's not a situation where there is a huge difference in the kind of land, you know. One parcel of land that they are putting the road on is almost exactly the same as the parcel of land that the road would have went on for the National Trust.

But here is the problem that we have with the National Trust and what successive Governments have allowed the National Trust to morph itself into. Mr. Speaker, those people who administer the National Trust don't think that that's our land, you know; they don't regard that as land for the people of the Cayman Islands held in trust by a corporate entity called the National Trust. They regard that as *their* land. And you know something? The way the law is now it is their land because when they make it . . . I don't want to run astray here, so let me quote a section of the law. Section 21: **“Any property acquired by the Trust by any means which is eligible for placement on the Heritage Register under the bye-laws of the Trust may be declared inalienable by the Council.”** (Not Cabinet, but the National Trust Council.)

We all know what “inalienable” means.

That's not the troubling part—**“(2) Property which has been declared inalienable by the Council may be alienated only after a two-thirds vote of the full membership of the Trust at a general meeting, and only for the reason that so doing will further the purposes of the Trust.”**

They can decide amongst their members, because Caymanians no longer subscribe to it. I'm a life member; I haven't been to a meeting in 20 years because when they were trying to rezone all of the farmland in North Side into useless environmental zones, I brought 25 landowners to a National Trust meeting.

Every one of them paid the \$25 and they wouldn't allow them to vote. So, there is no North Side District Trust. And I don't believe there is any in any of the other districts of which I am aware of. But the point is that they themselves can decide to take the land and sell it. And the Government has no input, can't stop it, and no return from it.

And here's what they do now, Mr. Speaker. They don't interfere with that man down the road that begins with D and ends with T with what he wants to do. He simply writes them a cheque, donation. They go North Side. Most of the land they are buying up is estate land. So, when the family tries to divide it amongst its members, the government tells them and the surveyor tells them, *You can't sub-divide this land unless you have a 30 foot road.*

So, none of them have a 30 foot road. Most of them have a six-foot path. So, they can't sub-divide the land amongst their children. And this is not something that I dreamt, I just went through the process in government. I went to a surveyor and told him, "We wish to divide a 40 acre parcel of land into four 10 acres lot. No intention to develop the land. He said, "Sorry Ezzard, boy Lands & Survey is not going to approve that unless you have a 30 foot right of way from wherever the road is now all the way to the land. You have to get an easement from all these people of 30 feet."

So, that's not going to happen.

Anyway, as usual, I don't give up so [easy]. So I went to Planning. I said, "Why can't I apply to you to sub-divide this parcel into four pieces [with the] clear understanding there is no application to develop the property? We just want to subdivide it into four parcels. Why do I need a 30-foot road when all I am going to do is continue to go up in there and get a couple mangoes off it during mango season? A 6-foot road is fine with me."

Planning said that if I write a letter explaining that, they will consider approving it without a 30-foot road. I told him that if he isn't doing it I need to know because I am going to bring a motion down here to change whatever we need to change in Lands & Survey Law to allow people and families who have large parcels of land to subdivide the land amongst the children without having to have a 30 foot right of way. So we will see how it goes.

So, the National Trust goes to these people and tells them, *Well, you know, you have this piece of land here, it's 30 acres. Can't get it subdivided because it doesn't have a 30 foot road. But you can divide the money.* Of course, it is an easy out for the administrators of the estate. So, they say, *okay we'll sell it.* Yeah, but now you have to understand you don't have any right of way so the price has to come down.

And what it means to my district with 20 per cent or 30 per cent of the undevelopable arable land

owned by the National Trust, [is that] there's no place for the next generation of North Siders to live. And don't talk about they are going to go on the land now and pull the top of the thatch tree to plait a basket because that's a \$5,000 fine under the National Trust Law and a year in jail, or cut a piece of mahogany limb to make some candle holders for your wife for Christmas, or even pick a mango, because it says removing anything on National Trust property.

And the National Trust was never established to go out and solicit land. The National Trust was established to try and protect certain things that the people who wanted them, who owned them, protected them.

The late National Hero, Jim Boddan—I was here . . . the Leader of the Opposition was in this Parliament when the Bill was passed—specifically asked the late Sir Vassel Johnson: *Does this give the National Trust power to go and buy people's land?* And we were given the assurance in committee that that would not happen. We tried very hard to remove the ability for the National Trust to purchase land because my argument was simple. If land needs to purchase, let Government purchase it. But we have allowed these people, now, to set up this whole regime where they can take donations from any developer, he can do anything to land in George Town that he wants, and you don't hear (like my grandmother would say) *te-heh* from the National Trust.

When last have you seen the National Trust over here demonstrating about any environmental matter? They had, I think, only patches of rushes removed a couple of years ago and there was talk to stop them from removing the rushes. No. They bought piece of land up East End that had rushes on it. So they are quite happy . . . in some instances their very family, you know, enjoy the economic benefit from the utilisation of their land because they bought a piece from those country people up in North Side and that's all they need.

Mr. Speaker, I give the Government due warning: I am going to bring the Private Member's Motion to amend the National Trust Law. Now, it's up to the Government whether they want to support it or not. But I am going to make it my business in every forum I get to tell the people of North Side to please not sell the National Trust any more of North Side land because you are depriving future generations of that district the opportunity to have a place to live. There is only so much land we have up there.

They are so powerful they can get the Government to move a main arterial highway off of their land on to private land that, by law, Government will have to offer compensation depending on value gained or value lost to private owners when the Government can't use the Government's land.

When last have any of us seen any advocacy by the National Trust out in public against any devel-

opment going on? But it's the usual story. Do anything you want on the western peninsula, we can take it back from those country people. And they are the ones who have preserved and protected it all these years. So, it will be very interesting, because I am bringing a petition to the Minister of roads to remove the planned connector road to the East/West Arterial from going through the wonderful quaint little Hutland Village to move it to come in at Driftwood Village and link up with the roundabout for the East/West Arterial Way at Lookout. Now, I know they are going to be jumping up and down and hollering about all of them nutrient-laden fresh waters that run out of the central mangrove and feed fish. Well, I don't know where they come from, but the fish in North Side can't live in fresh water.

And, you know, Mr. Speaker, we went through this exercise a couple of years ago. I won't call his name (it doesn't deserve to be called) . . . but he went down to White Bud [PHONETIC] and hung up one of those yellow construction buckets in one tree and came back a couple of days later and measured the water in it, and how many leaves had dropped and what colour the water was. On the basis of that he calculated the water flow from the wetlands into the North Sound and how much nutrients it was bringing with it.

Well, because he went to Rotary—

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** No, this is a fact. You can ask the Rotarians. He went to Rotary and presented these statistics, and Mr. Harry Chisholm was there.

Mr. Harry Chisholm got up and challenged him and said, "Okay, I'm listening to him now, and I'm going to listen to Ezzard come back here next week to counter argue this. So, I went to the weather bureau and got the rainfall records—all that exist in Cayman back to 1954. The lowest rainfall for any years was 1958. Boy, we had plenty mangroves around here then. Even if you assume that the whole wetlands were flooded, no water evaporated, given the annual rainfall the wetlands would have to be bigger than the state of California to produce the off-flow that he wanted."

But he's a scientist. So he comes down here and tells us this, and we say, *Oh, that's a great idea*. And we give him an award from the Queen and we give him this, and he writes a couple of books and he's the most intelligent person in the world. My grandfather tells me, and I sure you fellows from West Bay had similar stories. They remember sitting at Rum Point on the beach and you could watch the lobsters crawling out from the Little Sound at certain times of the year, particularly in the rainy season. You know why? They were running from the fresh water coming from the mangroves.

You can carry a lobster home tonight, catch it live, put it in your kitchen and tomorrow morning he's still alive. Put three drops of fresh water on him and he's dead in half an hour. But these people come down—and you're going to hear all this now, because this road that we North Siders want . . . because the East/West Arterial Way doesn't help us. It's not going to help Mr. Arden in East End. It doesn't shorten our travel to George Town.

Come in by Driftwood Village, come through the wetlands, link up to the roundabout at Lookout, behind the police station in Bodden Town. That will do two wonderful things for North Side. It will shorten our distance, we'll save gasoline, because we don't get the breaks they get on Cayman Brac—although we drive three times as far as them every year—and, it will take all of that drunk driving traffic out of the village of North Side and Old Man Bay every Saturday and Sunday evening. And when they go down through that swamp, if they want to run off in that swamp, that's fine, because we don't have any police up there to monitor it. Right?

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Mr. Speaker, a big part of my responsibility in these Chambers while I'm here is to look out for the next generation of North Siders. Part of that looking out is stopping the National Trust from doing what they are doing. I am not the only one in North Side who believes that when it suits them they will find a reason to sell it. And unless we change the law we can't stop them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Governor also mentioned this wonderful elusive event of E-government initiatives. Every Government for the last 20 years has had all these wonderful plans about E-government. I can distinctly remember a lady (I think her name was Cheryl Gorce [PHONETIC]) who was head of computer services coming to Executive Council in 1990 for \$2 million to buy computers for government because by 1992 government was going to be paperless. Hasn't happened! We use more paper, employ more people by computerising.

But here is one thing that I believe the Government could do right now for no additional expense. I will give you one example. Somebody needs to apply for a gun licence. They have to get a police record. They have to go to the police station, carry their passport, fill out the application form, pay \$25 and come back the next day to get it. Why can't the police electronically look at a police record, charge the same \$25 and add that onto the gun licensing by just simply look at the record? If that police record is clear, charge the \$25 and give the licence.

You go to Land Registry to transfer something for love and affection. You need a birth certificate, you need a marriage certificate. You have to get up out of

your chair, walk across the hall and pay \$25 for each one. If you know the people there they will give you the service right away, otherwise you might have to come back the next day because they are pressed for time. Why can't Lands and Survey look at registry records [and see that], yes, Ezzard is the son of Ned Miller; yes, he is married; the name corresponds with here. But, in addition to the marriage licence, because they look at the wife's name before you got married (which is on the licence), you have to go get a JP to sign it to say it's the same person. This is the kind of thing that causes inefficiencies with government that we can change tomorrow. It won't cost a dime more. In fact, you will save money because you won't have to print all those forms.

It's the same thing to carry a truck to the Licensing Department to licence it. Because it's owned by a company it must have a certificate of good standing. Go on the computer, see it as in good standing and issue the driver's licence. Why should the customer have to get up and come to George Town and pay for that? Charge them for it. You will save the printing paper and all that kind of stuff. But, no, we have to look for greater things.

Oftentimes it is the little things that we can do that will make a big impact on people's lives. I just think those are some of the things we can do.

Mr. Speaker, mental health needs a lot of attention. First of all, we have to agree it's a disease, and it's not somebody full of the devil. We have to insist that insurance companies cover treatment—outpatient, inpatient. Then they can involve the private sector to provide the relevant services. It's a simple amendment to the Health Insurance Law.

For some reason every Government since 1992 caters to the health insurance industry. The argument of the health insurance industry is, *Well, we can't do this; we're not making any money. We are doing this as a favour for the people of the Cayman Islands. We're not making any money. We can't carry these high-risk people. Government has to pay for them.* But if you look at the CIMA Annual Report 2013 [there is an] interesting fact. Premiums collected for health insurers were \$171,865,000; total underwriting expenses were only \$133,433,000. Profit, \$10 million.

But we as politicians, who have the power to change the law, listen to them—they ain't making money. So what do we allow them to do? First of all, no insurance company in the Cayman Islands offers group health. Everybody offers individual plans discounted on volume, because when you offer group health you come into a company, you take the total staff and you put the risk over the demographics and decide what the premium is. That's not what we do here. We allow the insurance companies to come into the company and say, *Well, we'll take everybody except Ezzard Miller. He's 50 pounds overweight. He's high risk; we're not taking him.*

And then Mr. Arden goes to the doctor a week later and he's diagnosed with hypertension. *Well, they're not covering him anymore either.* So, we allow the private insurance companies to take the crème-de-la-crème, cover only the healthy people, and allow this utter, utter madness where the Government accepts from a private insurance company a \$10 contribution to cover a person that they won't cover for \$700! And we do nothing about it.

They used to get it by saying, *Well, we're an American based company and we don't cover high risk people and we don't . . .* Obamacare took care of all that. They're covering them now. But that's what we do. We create a local government-owned insurance company that all of these people are dumped into and we collect this measly little \$10 and \$20 (whatever it is now) and we cover all the high risk people, we cover all the indigents, we cover all the civil servants and we don't even require that that company operates like a proper insurance company!

If you look in the budget figures you will see that for pensioners Government is paying a premium of almost \$1,000 per person per month. But for indigents, the premium is only six-hundred and something. And the premium for the healthy civil servants—which is, by far, the most—is about \$400 or \$500. That's not how health insurance or any insurance is supposed to work. You are supposed to take everybody, spread the risk and actuarially compute a premium to cover everybody.

We seem to be quite willing to simply dump \$19 million for pensioners, another \$10 million for seamen and veterans, or \$9 million (whatever it is); a couple million for this and a couple million for that, and don't require anything. Then we have the other preposterous situation where CINICO is paying the bill, CINICO has negotiated with certain providers for certain benefits, but the doctor decides which provider you go to visit. Again, there is something wrong with that equation. The doctor should make a clinical decision that the person needs to go. CINICO, based on its contractual relationships, and their satisfaction that you will get quality, should decide where you go.

We have situations where we require the Minister of Health to sign off on certain things. The only thing worse than that (while I remember it) is this JP training that we all had to go through. And we have had people, particularly one person to train, who had absolutely no idea what he was training you about. But we brought him here in 1990 to do a six-month study.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** He hasn't . . . I don't know that he ever completed that study because I don't remember seeing the results of it, and he's still here! And every time you look, he's gone one level higher.

I tell you right now I am going to resign my appointment as a JP because it is being converted into something it was never intended to be. It used to be a position of honour that you earned by being a respectable member of this society and up in age. Now, it is almost the [same] way to be a notary public without having to pay the fee. They tell me that if I am in George Town and one of my constituents has to leave in a hurry and comes and gives me a passport picture signed, unless I have that numbered stamp that he gave me, which can't fit on a passport picture, to put on it, I can't sign it. And I have to record on a couple pieces of paper every transaction I did.

We know how papers can disappear in government. So, you take all your papers, turn them into the court house, someone decides these two sheets don't mean anything and throws them away, then, you've broken a law. At least provide the JP with a proper bound book with pages that can't be removed out where it's not obvious.

I am not going to support the Government changing the Judicature Law to allow Cabinet to make regulations about the judiciary. I believe there is a real reason why the current Judicature Law does not allow Cabinet to make regulations. In my view that's an opportunity for Cabinet to interfere in the judicial system. And we might say it will never happen. You guys mightn't do it, you know. But it can happen. I am not going to support it.

They are training me under regulations that do not exist, but the regulations are dated 2013. And they are telling me I have to comply with these regulations but they are not law, and there is no possibility of making them law unless you change the law. Then, of course . . . I just can't keep out of trouble.

Propose a stamp that you stamp, "I certify this to be a true copy of the original." I had to go and ask the question: What is the stamp going to say?

[The answer was] "I don't know."

[I said] "I beg your pardon? You're training me, you are making the stamp to give me, but you don't know what the stamp is going to say?"

He said, "No, I don't know what the stamp is going to say."

I said, "Well, here's my problem. When I was trained by the magistrate in 2004 when I got the appointment, I was told that I could not certify a document that it is a copy of the original, even if the document was marked original, because only the person who prepared that original document can certify it. I can certify it as a copy of the document presented to me. But even if it says original, with these computer abilities these days we can put original on anything. I was told by the magistrate trainers that you can say it is a true copy of the document presented to me; but you can't say it's a copy of the original because you have no . . . you didn't make the original, so you cannot prove that's the original."

I raised that with him. He got very disgusted. He came back the next day and gave everybody else in the room one of the stamps except me. So I don't have any stamp that says "certified original". And these are the kinds of things . . . it's a total waste of government money.

We passed a law here for notaries public that lawyers are exempt. Yet on the course with me were imminent legal minds in this country, like David Ritch, who has to have . . . what? . . . 35, 36, 40 years in the legal fraternity here and he has to be trained as a JP by somebody who doesn't know what he's talking about? Unless you make it an offence that anybody who uses that stamp with my number, then I am not taking responsibility for that number. I handed in my appointment.

Mr. Speaker, waste management—

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** We taking it away.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Taking it right away.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Mr. Speaker, waste management is a topic. I see all over the press that the country has never had a waste management policy. I can promise you, Mr. Speaker, I left a 10-year waste management implementation plan and policy in place when I was kicked out of Government in 1992. And we can go to Timbuktu and back, there are only two things we can do . . . there's only one thing we can do: reduce the volume. And there are only two ways to reduce the volume: recycling, reuse, re-whatever they want to put on it now, and education, and burn the balance of the waste that comes into the landfill. Those are the only two things we can do.

I left a study in place by Post, Buckley, Schuh [and Jernigan] done in 1992, a 10-year plan. I put the plastic liner in Little Cayman in 1992. And it would have been put in Cayman Brac in 1993, but we spent too much time building roads to try to find a piece of land. And if my memory serves me right, it was supposed to go in George Town landfill in 1995 or 1996, and I bought the 45 acres for the expansion of the thing. And that is what the plan was for. We started recycling in 1992! And we're still doing recycling.

All of a sudden, now, all of these studies, all of these surveys . . . and we are putting this process through this huge elaborate expensive process that is going to cost us \$4 million. And we can only come back to those two decisions, you know. And what are we blaming? The FFR! Everything is to the responsibility of the FFR these days. The FFR is no more than common sense. All of that was done in 1992!

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** And in 2006 too . . . 2007, 2008.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** But all of a sudden, now, we don't have any local expertise that knows anything about it. So, I see this piece of paper published by the Ministry of Health . . . I don't have it here . . . what is it called again? Oh, OSO.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** But the objective there is the most oxymoronic statement any government could ever make in history; that we are going to deliver a proper waste management system in this country with neutral cost.

It's impossible to do that! So don't fool the people by telling them Strategic Outline Case, SOC, by telling them that the main objective is to have a modern waste management facility that isn't going to cost us more.

The Fifth Elected Member for George Town mentioned privatisation of garbage collection. We tried that in 1992. I was the stupid politician who put the \$25 per house on garbage, you know. Right? Also, the hospital fee when it was quadrupled. I tried to privatise garbage in 1992. Households were paying \$25 a year. If my memory serves me correct, the lowest bid was \$50 per household per month—\$600 versus \$25. Is the \$600 unreasonable? Of course not!

So don't tell the public that we are going to spend \$4 million to design a system but it's going to cost them no more. Tell them the truth! We have to address the solid waste problem. And, as the Fifth Elected Member for George Town said, the people are going to have to pay for it! If you want your house garbage picked up three times a week (which, by the way, North Side now is only once, and it may not happen) you have to pay for it.

In my view the UDP made the mistake of adding 2 per cent on to duty and replaced the household garbage fee. But it doesn't seem like the garbage people . . . I guess I should call them the "solid waste management people." That's more politically correct. Can't use the word "garbage" anymore. They don't seem to be getting that money because up there is a mess. But if we are collecting that kind of money now, what's that? Is it somewhere in the region of \$18 million per year, Arden? Two per cent of your total income from duty?)

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** We have to charge the people like the hotels who sometimes . . . when I was there we had to pick up compressible containers from them twice a day.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** But they are paying the same thing as a little condo. It has to be prorated up per ton of garbage. And if I drive up in my truck I must go on the weight scale and pay the fee. Do not make the people believe that we have any magic to do this thing with. And the Government can no longer bear the cost. Members of the public will have to pay it. Tell them the truth and stop all this studying. Just get on with it. Put out an RFP [Request for Proposal].

What has changed since the last election? The only person that's changed is the Minister of Health, you know. It's the same civil servants who advised the previous Minister to tender an RFP for waste to energy.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Based on my study.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Exactly! And other studies, right?

That was the right thing to advise that Minister, but all of a sudden, now, to keep themselves employed they are going to go through another two years, another \$4 million in study.

And you know something? Most of them who are presenting those studies do not mean anything to them! They don't have the academic or experience background to determine whether it's a good study or not.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** At least I went out to get somebody to do it.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** So, Mr. Minister of Health, I beg you, let's get on with fixing . . . as the guy who calls up *Rooster* all of the time says, *fix the dump, nah. Fix the dump.* Just put out an RFP. Stop floating this thing around about the Government is going to have to invest \$100 million and we are going to invest \$10 million in this, that and the other. Take the suggestion of the Fifth Elected Member for George Town and privatise the collection. Don't buy any more garbage trucks, and let's go out on a campaign and tell the constituency that they are going to have to pay for it.

Most of them are willing to pay for it. Not exorbitant amounts, of course, but they are willing to pay. But, no, it's going to be neutral, not going to cost any more—which means you don't have to pay, because you're not paying now. It's under some undetermined amount under import duty.

Mr. Speaker, I support most of the things that the Minister of Finance said in his speech. I'm sorry, I can't find anything else in the Throne Speech to compliment you all on. But before I move on, let me alert you to what's missing from the Throne Speech. There is no mention of one man, one vote. If we don't do it in this financial year it's going to take us until July 2015. Do you know what you're going to hear then? *Oh, I can't do this now before election, you know; too many*

*changes. Don't have time to educate these fool Caymanians. You really can't convince them how to cast one vote instead of eight. It's easy for them to figure out to cast six in George Town, four in West Bay, four in Bodden Town, and two in Cayman Brac, one in North Side, and one in East End. Oh, they could never understand how to cast one vote. That's just too high a mountain for them to climb.*

Not a word about it.

No commitment to minimum wage in the Throne Speech. Not mentioned. So, we need to know what's happening about those two very important topics.

I understand the Government's attempt—

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Let me tell you something: The only thing more abused around here than “transparency” and “good governance” is “I love you.” You throw in those two words “good governance” and “transparency”, they are just fillers. You remember that one that used to be here for the last four years that had those 48 words and just kept mixing them up? That's where good governance and transparency come in.

The attempt to help small business by reducing the fees, I support that. But I have one concern. Because the amount is so small, the average small business is going to have to utilise it in the business of this economy and not be able to pass it on. I think if it were a greater amount the Government could demand adjustment to prices, if 10 per cent was being given.

For people who have Trade and Business Licence in the Cayman Islands, I don't like the way the Government is doing the duty concessions. My preference would be that it is left at the 15 per cent or 20 per cent that it is now for a business. But if I want to go to Miami and buy all of the material to build my house, I pay 35 per cent. Any developer who is coming in here and wants to bring in material, et cetera, to build, should pay 35 per cent.

I don't think there should be allowed any duty concession whatsoever for anybody who purchases stuff overseas. The only way you should be able to get duty concession in the Cayman Islands is to purchase the product locally and claim it back from the government. That way you grow the economy. The Caymanian businessman can then produce volume and he doesn't lose.

But when we give those people duty free and they can go anywhere and buy it and bring it in, the Caymanian businessman—who's hiring Caymanians, paying pension, paying health insurance, paying fees to government—gets absolutely no benefit from it. But at the very least if he brought it in for the person, and the person applied to government to get the [INAUDI-

BLE] stamp duty, it increases his volume so he might get better prices.

I would invite the Members of Government who are involved in the small business . . . the manager of the Cayman Islands Development Bank, Ms. Tracy Ebanks, just did her master's thesis on the culture of small business in the Cayman Islands. It's very well done and it's very interesting reading. The Government would do well to have conversations with her because, again, of her banking expertise and experience in commercial credit, particularly, to get some input from her about what we can do to help small businesses. So any committee you are setting up, my recommendation is . . . she's a government employee, so it shouldn't be difficult to get her to come to a meeting.

The other thing that I like and I congratulate the Minister of Finance on, is the idea of shifting the calculation of these ratios from government revenue to GDP [Gross Domestic Product]. I have always believed that it's a more appropriate comparison, because when it's linked to government revenue any downfall in government revenue could throw the whack out. And all that government does is stimulate the economy and it does not get the benefit of the ratios because no revenue comes in from Dart and all these other enterprises that got everything duty free, and all other fees waived. But it grows the GDP so you would be able to get more for the same thing. And it certainly reads better to say that the public debt is going to be 18.5 per cent of the GDP rather than 70-odd per cent of government revenue. So, I congratulate him on that. I think that's a—

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Well, that 10 per cent was . . . the Leader of the Opposition and Truman [Bodden] did that to stop me and Mr. Benson [Ebanks] in 1990—

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** The other thing I would invite the Government to consider in talking about adjusting fuel . . . one of the things that the fuel companies get away with, in my view, is that they do not have to declare the cost of the product at source. We tax them on volume. So they have no incentive to buy fuel at a cheaper source because what they are paying to government is not based on their cost. I think if they were treated like the rest of us they would make more efforts to get better prices at source because we can still monitor the quality. But right now all we know . . . and we calculate the duty based on volume. I just don't think we are getting the maximum benefit of Government policy being used to influence fuel prices.

One thing I beg the Government to do is to please stop calculating the unemployed percentage on the total workforce, because we know that at least 45 per cent to 50 per cent of those are not Caymanians. It lowers the figure, but it's not fair to the people because we really shouldn't have any unemployed non-Caymanians in this country. If they are not working, their work permit should be cancelled and they should be gone. And least of all should we be paying them any benefits out of government Treasury.

The other thing I would invite the Minister of Finance to consider is the allowance for Caymanians on return at the airport. Consider increasing it to \$500, but you only get it if you produce the receipts. In other words, if you come in and you have receipts for \$100, although your allowance is \$500, that's all you get. And that's just encouraging honesty. And I think it should only be for Caymanians. I don't think residents should get it at all. I believe it is time the country started doing things for Caymanians. We do enough for the other people.

Mr. Speaker, let me once again congratulate the Government for naming the North Side Primary School the "Edna M. Moyle Primary School." But, Mr. Speaker, having done that, we now have a responsibility to that worthy lady to bring the school's standard up. The school needs, before September, two additional classrooms and a staff room. I think it's the only government school in the Islands that doesn't have a staff room. We still have temporary classrooms which are in a deplorable state.

We are not talking about a lot of money. I have talked to some architectural friends in construction. We should be able to build that for about \$120 or \$130 per square foot. And we're only talking about probably, a maximum of 1,500 square feet. We can join it onto the hall so we can save one wall. So we are not talking about a whole pile of money. The other thing the school desperately needs is a bus pick-up area that allows the children to get on and off the bus without getting wet.

But just to get back to how things get thrown out of whack and we politicians get the blame, via the technocrats, about three months ago . . . and you see, Mr. Speaker, I have an advantage now. The last Government locked me out of the primary school and wouldn't make the principal talk to me. But I am secretary to the PTA now. I know what's going on now. It came up at the PTA that we had been trying for three or four years to get this bus pick-up area. So I suggested to the PTA that it's not a problem. Let's take it on as a project for the PTA because I think we can build it for less than \$5,000. So we agreed.

The principal said she had been told there was a set of plans. I said, "Well, you call the Education Department and ask to see the plan." Oh boy, the bells started to ring. I got all kinds of phone calls. *Well,*

*you know we got \$25,000 in the budget this year for that.*

Really? Okay. What about the plans?

*Well, we really don't have any plans, you know. We are just putting in \$25,000.*

Oh? Okay.

Anyway, I went back to the EIU and said, "Listen, I understand that there are some plans for this bus shelter. Can you get me a copy of them?" Lo and behold . . . of course, I'd been told now by the technocrats and the Ministry staff that they would have them by Friday evening. I got a call Friday, *We can't find any plans, so . . . that's when the discussion came up of how you know it's going to cost \$25,000?*

*Well you see, we're building it out of aluminium and glass. Really? In North Side with that salt spray? It should last a long time.*

Anyway, the EIU delivered the plans to me at my house on Saturday evening. Lo and behold, beautiful facility, nice curved glass, aluminium frame, but 50 feet away from the school. [It had] beautiful potted plants and planters around it, nice seats for the children, but 50 feet away from the school. The bus goes 10 feet away from the school door.

I said "Well, this is what . . ."

*"Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, that's [INAUDIBLE]."*

But it doesn't solve the problem. The children are going to have to get wet twice. They will have to get wet from the school to the bus shelter, from the bus shelter to the bus. We don't want that. *Unna* can tear that up and throw it away. We don't want that.

I asked the technocrats to come out and let me show them how I believe . . . and I have this unfortunate thing that my grandfather was a carpenter and all that, and he was always trying to work himself out of me, so I just like to cut up wood. I said, "Listen, all we need here is to go to the Water Authority ask them to give you eight lengths of that 12 inch PVC pipe that they dig up from along the road. We need a couple of lengths of 2x10, some plywood to put between it, we need eight lengths of 2x6 for rafters eight foot long, we need a couple sheets of plywood, we need 15 bundles of shingles and we can screw it onto the building so that the children don't get wet, and the bus drives in, picks up the children, backs up and drives away."

*Oh, well now, you know if you can do that, you understand that Public Works and Planning, you're going to have to get engineering drawings on that. No, no, you can't just put these PVC pipes up here and Planning is going to accept that. You have to put . . . you're going to have to put rebar in them and fill them up with concrete and you have to do this and . . . stick a pin!*

You're building a roof for the bus to drive under. If we get a hurricane the wind will blow through. There are no walls in it. It doesn't need any engineering. That's all we need.

This is how politicians have to wear the blame for this kind of incompetence and stupidity, because they are going to spend \$25,000 on that bus pickup area. Mark my words. They have already decided that the FFR does not allow us now to give the PTA \$3,000 and you get some free labour and come here and build that.

*No, Mr. Miller, you don't understand you can't do those kinds of things in government any more. The FFR doesn't allow that.*

I don't see that in the FFR.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable Member, you have about 14 minutes left.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Okay.

We showed them how we could build the two classrooms and we have 85 feet between the wall and the hall. You can build it right here. All we need is six-inch blocks, same seamless roof, 125 . . .

*Oh, Mr. Miller, you don't understand. We have to build this to hurricane category five.*

Really? That piece I built in 1985—category none—stood up in Ivan!

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** This is how we waste government funds.

And the elected Government in Cabinet, Ministers get the blame, because I am going to hold you all responsible. If you name this school the Edna M. Moyle School, we have to work together to raise it up to where it is worthy to carry that name.

The paper today carries some of the praise that was duly dispensed at the opening, properly said, all deserved, all earned by Ms. Edna. If we don't get those two classrooms and that bus shelter for September, I am going to accuse you all of dishonouring her name, because we are not talking about a whole pile of money out of a 550-plus budget.

So, Mr. Speaker, I like the trends that the Minister of Finance has projected. I will do my best to help him continue on those trends. But I want North Side to get our share of it. The embargo on North Side, because I am not a member of the PPM, has to stop.

The only piece of arterial road in the Cayman Islands that is not hot-mix is Rum Point Drive, which is used daily by hundreds of tourists and residents alike. We are doing some of it in this budget. I will be fighting in Finance Committee to get it completed in the next financial year. I am asking you all for your support.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you.

I acknowledge the Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to offer my congratulations to Her Excellency the Governor, Mrs. Helen Kilpatrick, CB, on her Throne Speech 2014. I would also like to congratulate the Premier, Honourable Alden McLaughlin, on his Policy Statement: "Roadmap to Prosperity," and the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Marco Archer, on his Budget Address. Mr. Speaker, I believe they were well done and I believe the country received them well. From all the feedback I have gotten it's starting to vibrate what they have said. And as the debate goes on more of it will be articulated.

I would also like to acknowledge Father Joseph Kirkconnell, who the Leader of the Opposition so rightly did in his contribution, the pride of the community and the family and the country. And also the soon-to-be Father Abbott, another young Caymanian for ordination. It took place last week for Joseph and for Father Abbott it will take place this Saturday.

Mr. Speaker, in October last year during my [debate on the] Budget Address I spoke at length about the specific initiatives, policies and programmes that would be implemented during the 2013/14 fiscal year in the areas I hold constitutional responsibility for, namely, District Administration, Tourism and Transport. I stated at that time that I believed my primary responsibility is to improve the quality of life for all Caymanians, and expressed my commitment to improving efficiency, deriving greater value for money and facilitating sustainable development of Cayman Brac, Little Cayman and the tourism industry.

I still hold firm to those beliefs and am keenly aware that my role as a policymaker is to create a stable, robust, and well-regulated environment that attracts investment and development and serves as a solid foundation to encourage entrepreneurship and the creation of job opportunities. In my contribution today, I will speak to the outcomes of these initiatives and provide a comprehensive appraisal of how my Ministry is moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, despite experiencing setbacks and turbulence resulting from the knock-on effects of the recession, the global travel and tourism industry is still one of the world's fastest growing economic sectors. According to the World Travel Organization, in 2012 global travel reached a historic milestone whereby one billion people travelled in a single year. In 2013 global travel grew a further 5 per cent, representing an additional 52 million international tourists.

Here in the Cayman Islands, the tourism industry also recorded strong growth in 2013, ending the year at 7.4 per cent ahead of 2012. Air arrivals in 2013 were the highest since 2001. And I am pleased to report that the upward momentum has continued throughout the first quarter of 2014. January, March and April of this year recorded the highest air arrivals since 2000, and a year to date increase of 9.5 per

cent was registered for the first four months of 2014. Additionally, each of our source market countries registered positive gains for the first four months in 2014, compared to the same period in 2013. This translates to a 6.2 [per cent] increase from the United States, 10 per cent increase from Canada, year over year, and the other markets have grown as well in similar proportion.

Cruise results? The tourism industry comprises of more than one sector. And while any kind of positive growth is welcomed, we've become accustomed in recent years to stay over arrivals going up, while cruise visitation goes down. Just over 1.3 million cruise passengers visited the Cayman Islands in 2013, representing a decrease of 8.7 per cent from 2012. But, Mr. Speaker, in 2014, cruise passenger arrivals are expected to increase by over 300,000 passengers to around 1.65 million, and further growth is forecast for 2015 to yield 1,900,000 arriving on our shores by cruise vessel. The last time we saw anything close to this number of cruise passengers was in 2006.

For a country like ours which uses tourism statistics as a barometer of our economic wellbeing, the prognosis is encouraging and the future looks bright with increases in both stay over and cruise passenger arrivals on the horizon. This is the first time in several years that both sectors will register positive increases within the same year.

I should stress that these increases are the result of the slower economic recovery in Europe and unstable areas in other parts of the world, along with the government working with the cruise lines to encourage more visitors. It should not be construed by Members of this honourable House or by the public that the berthing facility is not required, nor should it be assumed that passenger arrivals can be sustained at this level without it, Mr. Speaker.

In the interim, while the necessary processes are being followed for construction of the berthing facility, various amenities have been put in place in George Town Cruise Terminal [and] the surrounding areas to improve the port experience for all arriving passengers by cruise. These include the installation of shading to provide protection from the sun and rain; provision of benches and signage in strategic locations; bathroom facilities are now being constructed to be completed in the next few weeks in George Town, which are desperately needed in the capital where the passengers arrive. The embarkation and disembarkation processes are being improved to give visitors the best experience possible with the tools we have to work with.

Mr. Speaker, cruise lines take a keen interest in the port experience to ensure that their passengers have a safe and enjoyable visit, and the customer satisfaction ratings remain high for our Island as a destination. It is therefore in our interest as a cruise desti-

nation to make sure that we provide a convenient, pleasurable and entertaining passenger experience. Judging by the positive results and the forecasted growth in visitation over the next two years, it is easy to get a little carried away on a wave of optimism, thinking that the road ahead is all successes. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

While it is true that increased revenue derived from the tourism sector has been vital in helping our Islands wrestle our way out of the economic stranglehold brought on by the recession, we are not out of the woods yet. Although there are good reasons to be optimistic about the future, we must continue to ensure that every dollar spent delivers maximum benefit and value for the people of the Cayman Islands. With that said, I am confident that the course this Progressive Government has set and the partnerships being achieved with the private sector will ensure that the tourism industry continues to be a major source of growth in our economy and a significant contributor to our GDP.

Mr. Speaker, servicing the current rate of arrivals is a good problem to have. While planning for the future growth requires the redevelopment of all of our ports of entry, in the case of Owen Roberts International Airport the congestion and overcrowding during peak travel times provides an embarrassing first and last impression and is not the kind of welcome our visitors deserve or expect from a cosmopolitan and sophisticated vacation destination that thrives on Caymankind.

The Owen Roberts Airport commenced its commercial operations back in 1952, which is well before Tourism was an industry to speak of. On that basis, it is not surprising that the existing infrastructure is ill-equipped to handle today's volume of passengers, which currently stands at a million passenger movements per year and comprises tourists and business visitors as well as residential travellers.

Mr. Speaker, with two record-breaking years on the horizon and the reasonable expectation of future growth, improving customer experience is both critical and time sensitive. To address immediate needs over the medium term vital upgrades have been completed to provide more comfort and convenience to travellers while permanent solutions can be identified and managed [for] the increasing passenger quotas.

The substandard travel experience due to inefficient or inadequate facilities is regrettably not confined just to the Owen Roberts Airport. Therefore, by necessity, all of our airports require redevelopment. In Little Cayman the airport sits on privately owned property and has a roadway, electrical utility lines and mature vegetation all in close proximity to the runway. While this may be viewed by some as being quaint, attractive and in keeping with a smaller island experi-

ence, it is not compliant with aviation regulations and must be addressed from the perspective of safety.

Mr. Speaker, with this as a backdrop, my ministry is duty bound to rectify these anomalies so that our airports can operate in appropriate and acceptable standards. Time is of the essence, and we are moving ahead as swiftly as possible. On Thursday last week the business case and master plan for phase one outlining PWC's analysis and recommendations was presented to caucus for consideration.

Mr. Speaker, my good friend from North Side gets a lot of information from a thing called the EIU. I would say to him that a lot of the information he gets is wrong.

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** And I would also tell him, because he's my good friend, I'd fire them, because they are not giving you the right information!

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** The business case calls for ORIA (Owen Roberts International Airport) to be expanded in a way that can be afforded by this country. It doesn't call for privatisation; it calls for debt service that can be paid out of the profits that the Cayman Islands Airports Authority makes.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** So that's a sacred cow then? That's not part of the rationalisation process. That's a sacred cow.

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Mr. Speaker, the business case for Owen Roberts was started before the E&Y study and it is our intention to move as quickly as we can possibly move to improve the situation at the airport. I believe that each one of us have been through there and have seen the improvements that have been made over the last six months and will continue to see the improvements as we prepare ourselves to receive the most visitors we have ever received in our peak season.

You will see improvement in the departure processes, you will see improvement in the arrival processes, you will see improvement with Immigration, and you will see improvement with customs. So we clearly understand, Mr. Speaker, that it is a flow. When you arrive on an Island, you come by plane or boat. You arrive on a plan, you get off the plane, you have to be managed, you have to provide access, you get bottles of water, you get good musicians to play the song you want, and we have increased the number of Immigration officers that process you through. Customs is now improving the flow through and transport on the other side.

The same thing is beginning to happen as you see the walkways being closed in by the departure area. We have great confidence in the short-term plan to move as quickly as possible. And, as the business case, the next step in the process is to seek Cabinet's approval which will clear the way for public consultation, a series of public and private sector stakeholder meetings will be planned, and at the completion of the consultation process, the final document will be returned to Cabinet for approval. So, I am hopeful that this request for proposal for the architectural and engineering design can be released in August and the tender awarded in September.

The goal will be to commence construction of the new expansion in early 2015. The short-term improvements have begun with the new covered arrival area and extra Immigration, the covered walkways are under construction and work will start in the next month on the short-term expanded departure areas.

Mr. Speaker, the George Town Port is another area of . . . what's that called? The EI?

**An Hon. Member:** The EIU.

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Another EIU report.

The George Town Port is another business case that is progressing. I want to refocus the attention that my friend gave the George Town Port because it's a bigger picture to look at than just the piers themselves. This is looking at how we support the long-term sustainable growth in the tourism cruise industry in the Cayman Islands. This is not about building piers; this is about providing the environment and the infrastructure for success for generations to come and increasing the amount of cruise visitors that we manage, cruise arrivals and air arrivals in a very manageable way.

It is also a fact that the business case had looked at this, and when they did they narrowed it down to three options. One option was status quo with improvements, very similar to what the EIU information and your opinions are—nothing wrong with it at all. The second one was two piers, one pier now and a second pier when demand came. And the third option was two piers now built at the same time and a consideration to move cargo.

The numbers and research done in the business case selected option is therefore to build two piers and, if needed, relocate cargo. They estimated that if we remained at status quo, where we have to go is from 1.6 million cruise visitors this year to eventually decreasing the cruise visitation to around 1 million because of the regional competition of a new pier that takes Oasis class vessels in Falmouth, a rebuild in Ocho Rios, an improvement in Montego Bay, new piers in Roatan, and with Cuba opening at some point in time with large facilities there, how are we, as a

prime destination in the western Caribbean, going to be the only one that you tender ashore to?

Mr. Speaker, this third option, which was the recommendation and the pursued course, analyses that we would balance out at 2.3 million visitors in a systematic way over the next eight to ten years which would give our industry time to prepare and work in a managed way with the people that arrive.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Right.

And I will say this, Mr. Speaker. This is much like the plan that the last two Governments have had. So, I would say that this Government looks at projects, looks at improvements, and it doesn't matter to this Government that somebody else has been involved with it or started it. If it is something that is good for this country we work hard, we follow the process and we move it as quickly as we possibly can.

Mr. Speaker, construction of the berthing facility will, by necessity, influence the revitalisation of George Town, as will the rebuild of ORIA. By moving the flow of pedestrians to provide safer and unrestricted access to shops and amenities, the traffic analysis is currently underway as part of the cruise berthing environmental impact assessment to provide pertinent information on existing and proposed road usage. The study will also outline the optimum means for pedestrianising the harbour front area while keeping the character and heritage of our capital city intact.

Mr. Speaker, for tourism to bolster and transform our economy it must be geographically disbursed and ensure that the benefits are distributed throughout all the Cayman Islands, including Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. In keeping with our standing as a leading tourism destination the accommodation sector is benefitting from substantial investments which are translated into the refurbishment of existing facilities, the expansion of capacity and the addition of new properties to augment our mature product base.

Mr. Speaker, by way of a brief update, the old Hyatt premises on West Bay Road is finally being redeveloped, to start in November of this year. On completion the property will be rebranded as a part of a major hotel chain. The Grand Cayman Beach suites are adding two additional stories to their existing property creating additional rooms, deluxe suites. This will boost their room count on completion. That property will also be rebranded. I am not at liberty to reveal the identities of the new hotel partners as it would be inappropriate to make those announcements in the absence of the entities concerned. But what I can say is that we have two powerful brands coming to our Islands that we do not have here now, and discussions have begun with an extremely well known and influential third.

Along with these developments, Kempton is still on track to welcome its first guests in 2016 and on the eastern side of Grand Cayman two new hotel properties are planned to come on stream over the next two to three years. One will service the Shetty Hospital and the other is a completely separate entity. This, along with the opening of the Londoner wing expansion at Morritt's Club, and the continued building at the Morritt's Club . . . and I must brag a little bit on my good friend from East End, on the opening of the Morritt's the other night. It's true the Caymanianised management team did a fantastic job. The manager, Mr. Miller, and his deputy, Mr. Connolly, welcomed everybody. The facilities is absolutely gorgeous, it's a tribute to East End and to this country. And it's full, which is very important to the Member for East End that it creates a lot of employment out there and creates a lot of good will for the eastern end of the Island; so, kudos to them.

Also, we know the Reef Resort is doing quite well and is being rebranded as a Wyndham. That should take effect next year. They also are involved in some upgrades in the things they have to do to comply with the brand. And still on the eastern end of Grand Cayman, Government has signed a non-binding memorandum agreeing to principal construction of a \$360 million development covering 600 acres. This proposed Ironwood community will feature a mix of commercial, tourism and residential development and includes the first Arnold Palmer 18-hole golf course in the Caribbean, reinforcing our reputation in the Cayman Islands as a trend-setting and unique destination.

The slew of activity is welcomed and encouraging and represents a firm and decisive step forward in the development of our accommodation sector. The variety of projects and sizeable investments speak to the confidence investors have in our jurisdiction and should be construed as yet another indication that our tourism industry is successfully rebounding. From an industry standpoint the new hotel properties will strengthen our marketing muscle which will, in turn, expand our ability to attract visitors looking for a memorable vacation experience. I cannot understate the importance of keeping heads in beds, as every unoccupied room has a cost. It's perishable. Not just to the hotelier, but also to the taxi drivers, the restaurants, and the scores of small businesses and vendors who depend on this industry for their livelihoods.

Additional room stock accentuates the need for additional air lift. And, as the Premier has alluded, we are fortunate to have our own national carrier supporting the tourism and economic development strategies of the country. The Department of Tourism and Cayman Airways are already working together and targeting the most advantageous markets that will deliver the greatest returns to the sector. For Cayman Airways, this means that the national interest is al-

ways given priority over the company's own profit, which makes the airline a valuable tool for achieving economic growth. In addition to servicing major markets, planning more strategically allows us to service the lucrative gateways that other airlines are not, and bolsters our ability to traverse the routes that are more closely aligned to our tourism development.

Mr. Speaker, for example, New York is the single largest source of tourists to the Cayman Islands. It has grown by 16.3 per cent. Chicago has grown by 37 per cent, and Dallas, bolstered by the introduction of twice weekly service has grown by 147 per cent! Giving credit where it is due, there is no doubt that using Cayman Airways as a strategic tool has significantly contributed to outstanding increases that have been registered in stay over visitation.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** It is good business when you build a route and you invest in the route and it gives the best return on investment for your country, an example being New York. Visitors spend on average \$6,000 a week.

The last Government understood the principle, Mr. Speaker, of using Cayman Airways, as did the Government before the last Government. So, we are building on successes of the Governments before us in a prudent way for this country!

Cayman Airways employs more than 300 Caymanians and strives to attract and develop the best and the brightest talent by offering several unique employment opportunities in specialised fields that if they weren't Caymanian and they weren't here, the jobs would not be available. It will continue to create an environment of opportunity for Caymanians under this Government.

This has a tremendous socio-economic impact on our Islands and makes a significant contribution to national development and growth. The airline will, therefore, as it continues to target operational efficiencies, do so in a manner that places emphasis on the retention and provision of services and employment locally versus overseas. While Cayman Airways has succeeded in growing its revenue by over \$3.1 million in the first 10 months of the 2013/14 year (through April), there have also been challenges which the board and management are working diligently to address.

Despite increases in fuel and other operating costs, some of which were unanticipated, total costs have risen by only \$500,000 to date. I am pleased to note that over and above all the other positives I have mentioned, the airline is on track to finish this year or near its best financial performance in the last 15 years.

In line with the objective of working together, my Ministry is also looking at ways to work closely

with the Tourism Attractions Board which manages some of our Islands most notable attractions. These include Pedro St. James, Queen Elizabeth Botanic Park, Craft Market and Pirates Week Festival and Hell.

While each of these attractions has its own unique appeal, the focus of this collaboration effort is to develop a range of co-branded tours to increase their collective visibility. Repackaging the product offering in this manner will enhance the visitor experience by adding an attractive new twist to the range of available excursions and will increase each attraction's ability to benefit from higher visitor volumes and spend.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other subjects I have in my Ministry is the Turtle Farm. Looking more specifically, I am pleased to report that despite the negative attention in some international circles, the Turtle Farm still ranks as our number one land-based attraction. On an annual basis more than 200,000 visitors are welcomed to its wildlife encounter and more than 2,000 students visit its research and educational facility.

For the upcoming fiscal year, the Turtle Farm will receive an equity injection funding of \$9.5 million which, Mr. Speaker, it is \$790,000 less than the subsidy paid by Government in 2013/14. It should be noted that more than 50 per cent of the subsidy or approximately \$6 million is required to service the Turtle Farm's debt and interest payments. The remainder is used to fund the shortfall between revenue and expenses. As a result of various initiatives undertaken by management, significant increases in revenue are forecast from the sale of food and beverage and gift shop sales. The repayment of the debt is a critical component of the Government's fiscal strategy. And I am pleased to see that the Turtle Farm's debt is steadily decreasing and is forecast to reduce \$4.3 million in this fiscal year.

Additionally, an economic impact study conducted by a leading international firm determined that the Turtle Farm contributes more positive macro economic impact than the amount of the operating subsidy it receives from the public purse. Moreover, it sustains hundreds of jobs in the local economy—direct and indirect. A hundred plus work at the farm and they support tour operators, visitors, taxi drivers . . . so it spreads out and multiplies into hundreds of jobs that depend on the Turtle Farm for a living.

The Turtle Farm is an important and valued element of the Cayman Islands tourism product and its conservation and commercial farming operation continues to play an essential role in the facilitation and preservation of our Islands' culture. For 500 years the consumption of turtle meat has been an integral and established part of the local diet and having a legal source of production via the Turtle Farm greatly reduces the poaching in the wild.

Mr. Speaker, from a ministerial perspective our focus is to ensure that the Cayman Turtle Farm maintains a safe and humane animal environment, provides its guests with a high quality, enjoyable, responsible tourism experience. And I believe there is value in its green sea turtle research and conservation programme. And it remains supportive of the role it plays in preserving our Islands' unique cultural heritage and traditions. But understand that we must work to increase revenue and manage costs. I am pleased to say again that the subsidy has been reduced by almost CI\$800,000 or US\$1 million, which is due to the hard work of management and the new board and pushing it in the right direction.

Speaking of traditions, I am reminded of the rich maritime heritage for which our Islands have been known across the globe. Plying the seas, whether for trade or recreation, has featured heavily on our Islands' past and still today scores of local boat operators depend on the ocean for their living. Therefore, I am pleased to say that over \$3.5 million worth of renovations have been done to the SafeHaven Marina. It is fully operational with 20 local boat operators who have now moved in. The new facility is a tremendous improvement over that which existed previously and includes purpose-built slips, ample parking, changing rooms and a waiting area for visitors. The new facility was officially opened on Tuesday, 27 May, and is expected to bring additional income and employment opportunities to the boat operators, the North Sound operators and others in the industry.

Mr. Speaker, there are no magic formulas to drive visitation to the Cayman Islands. Rather, our success is due to the combined efforts of the Department of Tourism, Cayman Airways, private sector entities and the Ministry working together marketing to tourists and making it easy for them to get here. The Department of Tourism is constantly thinking of new and innovative ways to promote our Island, to entice tourists and their families to visit this beautiful place that we call home. Consistent marketing, advertising and PR within our source markets builds awareness and demand for the destination and key contributors to sustaining increased arrivals.

Over the last six years the DoT's budget has consistently been reduced and is now \$10 million less than it was in 2008. The reduction in funding has reached the level where it is critically impacting the effectiveness of in-market advertising, as well as collaborations with trade and industry partners such as travel agents, dive shops, wholesalers and airlines. And, Mr. Speaker, these are the kinds of marketing dollars that don't show up this year. They are the marketing dollars that build repeat visits, they are the marketing dollars that bring people next year, and they are the marketing dollars that we depend on to continue freshening our product with. And in spite of the cuts year after year, the Department of Tourism

identified key partners that continue to provide the best return for the reduced investments and have developed ways of working more closely with them. This has made our partners more accountable than ever for every dollar that we invest with them.

The DoT is working harder to develop affinity partnerships which secure more reciprocal co-opt dollars from wholesale partners, increases the awareness among consumers and agents, and translates into room nights at our hotels, customers for our attractions, and diners at our restaurants. To truly benefit from the promise of tourism the attributes of our country must be accessible and affordable to a wide cross-section of the global travelling population. The DoT has strengthened its relationships with airline partners including their vacation arms that offer packages which fill airline seats bundled with room nights in the Cayman Islands.

The Department has also gone deeper into organisations to forge better relationships with route planners and revenue managers. As a result they are able to be more strategic and proactive in developing tactics and promotions that deliver satisfactory load factors for airline carriers which are the lifeblood of the tourism industry and our economy.

Mr. Speaker, with constantly reducing budgets, the Department of Tourism is trying its best to be tactical and protecting the advertising funds which it uses to build destination awareness and demand in our key source markets. In doing so this flexibility to sponsor events that showcase the destination is becoming limited. As a result the department has adapted to reviewing all its sponsorship programmes against new benchmarks for success and ROI [rate of return], and is concentrating its efforts on improving ones that have proven to work best for our destination.

While the number of event sponsorships will be reduced next year, those that remain will support key niche markets, such as culinary, romance, dive, fishing and sports tourism. For example, the annual Cayman Cookout not only attracts incremental visitors to our Islands, but over the years has helped to solidify our position as the culinary capital of the Caribbean. In the area of romance, I am pleased to announce that the luxury Engage! 14 Wedding Summit will be returning to Grand Cayman. This event typically attracts over 350 attendees.

The dive industry, which represents an important and growing segment within the tourism industry, continues to receive support for events such as DEMA [Diving Equipment and Marketing Association], which increases awareness of our Island as one of the foremost diving destinations in the world. With moorings in place all over the Islands of 365 sites, the Cayman Islands is now able to offer a different dive experience for every day. This catapults our dive product well ahead of the region and, along with the *Kittywake* and

the *KP Tibbetts*, will continue to drive interest and demand.

Over to the Sister Islands: Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. Mr. Speaker, the emphasis on increasing job opportunities remains a priority, along with the development of infrastructure to sustainably support tourism and sporting opportunities. I am pleased to report that over the course of the last fiscal year progress has been made in both those crucial areas—job creation and infrastructure—and will continue throughout the new budget year.

Dealing first with jobs, Mr. Speaker, the Cayman Airways reservation centre on Cayman Brac is now fully operational and in conjunction with the new cargo facility offers services that will add long-term sustainability to Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. Four permanent positions have been created and more will be required in due course.

Mr. Speaker, a very exciting announcement for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman is that a business case was directed by the board to be done by the management of Cayman Airways. Therefore, it is the opinion of Cayman Airways management that a large turbo airplane would be of benefit to travellers between Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac. Further, the Saab 340 appears to be the preferred choice for the service and is expected to improve the operational results of the domestic service.

Mr. Speaker, the board has instructed management to review the availability of a plane like this and to see if it can be available to be put in service in late August or September for when the express planes go up for their checks and are usually out for about three months. So, that would certainly improve the service over there with a revamped schedule. And it is our belief that an improved air service into Cayman Brac will greatly benefit the tourism product and the friends and family market with a way to get there that can be depended upon. So, I am very happy to be able to share that with you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable Minister, is this a convenient time for you to take a break, or will you finish in due course?

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** I will finish in probably another five, ten minutes.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Please continue.

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Upgrades to the Charles Kirkconnell Airport are in progress and installation of new baggage screening equipment is expected to be completed by the end of summer. Once this is in place, Cayman Brac will meet international standards and flights will be able to fly directly to the United States. This will also give opportunity to service eastern Cuba which is a lucrative market that is currently

un-serviced. These new flights will create more jobs in retail, airport security, and ground handling around the airport.

In January the General Registry established a presence in Cayman Brac to make it easier for companies operating in the Sister Islands to make payments, file annual returns and request certificates of good standing in a corporation, in addition to eliminating the inconvenience for business owners having to travel to Grand Cayman for such purposes. Government has also reduced the Trade and Business Licence fee for small business based in Cayman Brac by 75 per cent, Mr. Speaker, a welcomed initiative that is designed to support the creation of new jobs.

Provision has been made for a new marine police unit to be established in Cayman Brac to protect borders of the Sister Islands, patrol the shorelines, and should create three new jobs.

Earlier this year, two magnificent sailing ships carrying roughly 150 passengers each called on Cayman Brac as part of their scheduled itineraries. The visits brought together artisans and merchants to provide a warm welcome to the tourists, along with a craft market type experience, and was followed by island tours and cave excursions organised by District Administration for their enjoyment.

As well as being a welcomed addition to the tourism landscape, the visits provided a healthy injection of cash into the local economy and proved that the Sister Islands are the perfect venue to handle visits of this scale. Both ships have indicated that, based on the overwhelming success of their initiative, they are keen to return in the future in the star vessels that put Cayman Brac on the itinerary for next year.

The Government has also negotiated for ships from the United States Coast Guard to visit the Cayman Islands, and we hope to attract a few of those ships to Cayman Brac for an R&R visit which will also help to boost the local economy.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this year Government delivered on its commitment to improve the facilities of Cayman Brac playing field to facilitate the creation of sports tourism related opportunities. Again, my friend from North Side doesn't understand—

**An Hon. Member:** The EIU!

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** No, the EIU didn't report this.

**An Hon. Member:** Oh!

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** This was him.

**An Hon. Member:** Oh, okay.

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** He doesn't understand how sports tourism generates money in the economy

and how we would hope to recoup spending \$800,000.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Here is a simple example for you. In August four teams will be there for eight days in a CONCACAF tournament. That's 150 people that would not have come there.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** They are going to spend an average of \$2,000, each one of them. So, \$300,000 is what it is going to generate. And when you look at the multiplier there, that's—

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order!

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** The other part that escapes you is that you have to take a bridge to Cayman Brac, which there is not one. You can't drive there, like you can North Side. So you enjoy all of the progress and all of the things from CONCACAF here. So that's why we have to do separate facilities.

And I know—

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** But I know that you are happy that Cayman Brac is getting this, you just want more for North Side. I know what this is; I know you're happy for Cayman Brac.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** All I said is that when you return the \$300,000 I can get it for North Side.

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** In addition to the FIFA certified artificial turf that my friend is so happy that we have, which was installed during the last Progressive Administration, upgrades at the site include fencing, bleachers, tents, flagpoles, changing rooms, and rest-rooms. The provision for these amenities means Cayman Brac is now well equipped to host sporting events that will drive incremental visitation which is so important for sustaining a vibrant tourism industry.

In recent years our country has focused on the development of sports tourism opportunities resulting in the successful hosting of a wide cross-section of regional and international sporting events. Having proven that our Islands possess the required infrastructure, talent and expertise to skilfully manage such events, it follows that sports tourism opportunities should be channelled where possible to increase arrivals during the traditionally slower months between August and October. An example of this is the under

15 tournament for the Cayman Islands' four teams will be in Cayman Brac and 12 teams will be here in Grand Cayman. Sale of airline seats, increasing hotel occupancy and the multiplier effect passes down all the way through the economy.

From a visitation perspective it is commonplace for attendees at sporting events to pass on glowing personal endorsements to family and friends that often translates into repeat visitation which is another added benefit.

Mr. Speaker, I want to finish this but I can't . . . *[addressing a Member]* . . . just give me five minutes and I will finish, okay?

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** I can't hear, you're talking so loud.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order!

**Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Outside of football, the Department of Tourism is currently in discussions with marathon organisers, wedding planners, and the Angling Club to expand fishing tournaments in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. The Ministry and Department of Tourism continue to support the main tourist attractions of diving and nature as it encourages a variety of events in the Sister Islands, including Braccanal, Brac Bash and Cook-off, Little Cayman Cook-off and Pirates Week.

The aim of promoting these activities is two-fold. For visitors the goal is to encourage Sister Island day trips either to participate in an event or to simply get more from a Cayman Islands vacation by visiting another island. On the residential side the population of 55,000 provides a captive travel market that can easily be stimulated to encourage travel to the Sister Islands. The increasing popular annual Cayman Brac Agriculture Show is just one example of a Sister Island event attended by Grand Cayman residents.

Mr. Speaker, there is also talk of a marina and another boat dock, and another improvement, three projects for Cayman Brac, one that has received a Government Motion resolve. I am happy to report that the Cayman Brac Environmental Oversight Committee has been established. Committee members are, Mr. Burnard Tibbetts, Mr. Cornel Burke, Mr. Kenny Ryan, the Deputy District Commissioner, Mr. Mark Tibbetts, Director of Planning, Director of Environment, and the Department of Environment Designate. And also, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to say that two additional members have been appointed for a short period of time to the Development Control Board, enabling these applications about the Dilbert Marina to be heard. They are now appointed and I assume in the next few days the applications will be heard. So, we are very happy to

see the progress of this and hope that this will start as a project shortly.

The Sister Islands Affordable Homes has proposed to start the building of four homes in the next 30 days and it will be built on the West End site where the homes are built now.

The Government is also in the process of installing 12,300 feet of water main pipelines in the north coast up to the West End Primary School with smaller diameter pipelines being installed from the mains. This will provide piped water to about 110 developments, such as houses, apartment complexes, restaurants and businesses. The Water Authority also plans to clear and fill their new location on the Bluff to prepare for the eventual development of another Cayman Brac waterworks facility.

The Government also continues to work with developers of the marinas, as I have already mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, Little Cayman traditionally enjoys the more vibrant and stable tourism market and continues to lead the two-island market. While there has been a slight dip in occupancy, visitation is still high with the world famous Bloody Bay Wall diving and strong stakeholders. Ever popular for diving and romantic getaways, the DoT is actively marketing the Sister Islands as the perfect destination for encore weddings and honeymoons.

Prior to the start of Engage! 14 Wedding Summit which takes place in Grand Cayman, the Sister Islands properties that are interested in hosting weddings and honeymoons will be invited to participate in a seminar with some of the world's top influencers to learn how they can engage in this profitable market.

Mr. Speaker, increasing emphasis on sound fiscal management has led to a greater scrutiny of expenditure and tighter controls on the public purse. An examination of the Annual Plan and Estimates (AP&E) will show that significant reductions have been made to the Ministry's overall budget fiscal year. Effects to achieve savings have been carefully considered so that vital services and programmes are not compromised to the extent they become dysfunctional. Rather, efforts have been underway to implement cost savings in every possible area and resources have been redirected for maximum benefit.

In Cayman Brac, for example, where the need to stimulate the economy is greater than ever before funding to support Government in administrative services is actually increased by \$300,000. This is offset by reductions in travel related expenses resulting from Government's new policy governing business related travel.

The Hospitality School: Having discussed result strategies and infrastructural development, I believe it has been demonstrated that steady progress is being achieved and there are solid reasons to be op-

timistic about the future. As a travel destination we have made great strides, Mr. Speaker. And in many respects we are trending ahead of our major competitors.

As the second pillar of our economy, tourism is a catalyst that channels revenue into government's coffers and drives a steady flow of imports which are necessary for the service industry. Outside of its contribution to the economy, I firmly believe that tourism must also be used far more decisively as a tool which also drives entrepreneurs and keeps revenue multiplying at all levels throughout our communities.

At face value our arrival statistics paint an outstanding picture. But if we take an honest look beneath the surface, we must acknowledge that there is a real divide in our country between the picture presented by our growth rates and the reality represented by living conditions of some of our citizens.

In other words, in order for our outstanding arrivals to truly be meaningful as a barometer of our country's well being, they must translate into real and sustainable jobs for our people. If the benefits from record-breaking arrivals are not trickling down to small business owners, and craft vendors, and taxi operators and the like, then we are merely skirting around the edges of opportunity, and our efforts are seriously missing the mark where it counts the most.

Our people are our most valuable asset. And yet it is evident that Caymanians, particularly our young people, are not sharing in the industry's success to the extent that they should be. The Cayman Islands Hospitality School Programme will address deficiencies by providing the training necessary to shift the balance and qualify Caymanians to perform in the roles which are predominately undertaken by expatriate workers.

Mr. Speaker, plans are in place to enrol over 25 students in to the first semester in September. And we have high hopes for their successful integration into the industry at the completion of their studies. Equipping these bright and ambitious young people to benefit personally and economically from the industry's success is its own reward. But our aim is to have the students placed where they can tangibly interact with visitors and infuse more authenticity and a distinct local quality to the tourism sector that our visitors want and deserve.

To arrive at this juncture, the Ministry of Tourism has worked in close partnership with the Ministry of Education, Hospitality School Advisory Council, which comprises representatives from UCCI and the private sector. And the Cayman Islands Tourism Association is invaluable in the partnership. Our budget for next year is over \$400,000 that we have pledged to this for these students, with the idea that in a partnership (as I have named) we can get them not only into the classroom, but also into the businesses themselves and let them enjoy the tourism product and see

that it is a tremendous opportunity for employment and success.

Since taking office, this Progressive Government has restored confidence and credibility in our country. And, as the Premier has stated, the world is finally willing to listen to the good story we have to tell. The solid foundation we have laid and which will undoubtedly be fortified throughout our term in office is already providing impetus for growth, confidence and investment.

With respect to tourism, the world is a much more accessible place. Travellers are more discerning. Markets are more diverse, and the competitive arena is more competitive than ever. Going forward the interest of both cruise and stay over tourism will be developed in tandem as they each play separate, yet distinct, roles in the long-term growth and sustainability of our tourism industry. Our goal, therefore, in building both is to reduce our dependency on one versus the other and create more opportunities, more jobs, and more prosperity for our Islands.

Greek philosophy teaches that the only thing constant is change. As the world changes around us, if we are to stay ahead of the game we must become more pioneering, more proactive and more tactical when planning for the future while remaining agile, flexible, to adapt to change.

Mr. Speaker, change sometimes comes with challenge. But within every challenge is an opportunity to strike out boldly in a new direction. Over the last 12 months few, if any, stones have been left unturned in the quest to deliver innovative, cost-effective and creative solutions to some of the most pressing tourism related needs. The tourism industry is synergetic. And with Government laying a solid foundation for manageable and sustainable growth, I encourage the private sector and entrepreneurs to explore new business opportunities, particularly those that are consistent with the economic diversification and opportunities that we are bringing with the growth in the tourism sector.

Mr. Speaker, Counsellor Joey Hew, who I want to say is a tremendous Counsellor, a big part of this Government, and is an extremely important tool to the tourism product of this country. We have gone to great lengths to break down the silos between internal departments, statutory authorities, practitioners and end users. Furthermore, we have welcomed and encouraged open and forthright dialogue between the public and stakeholders. This is to ensure that the best ideas and opportunities can be deliberated in an unobstructed environment and adequately supported while they take hold and mature. I believe that this level of interconnectivity and communication provides a far more effective structure for working together and will deliver more clarity, more partnerships, more collaboration, and better results.

Mr. Speaker, my vision for a better Cayman Islands starts with the recognition that we each have the right to enjoy a decent life sharing justly in the resources of our country. In keeping with the aspiration we each also have a role to play in creating an enabling environment for the industry of our country. Under the policies of the Progressive Government, and that's each Member here . . . and I want to say, Mr. Speaker, to you as well, it's a pleasure to work with this Government in the confidence that I am so fortunate to have to see how they work and how hard they work for this country and know where their hearts are every day. It makes you want to do more.

I believe our tourism industry is in the most capable hands we could entrust it to. And I am confident we will continue to steer the industry towards growth, prosperity, and a sustainable future.

Mr. Speaker, it has been an honour today to outline the Ministry of District Administration, Tourism, Transport plans. I am also happy to say that Counsellor Hew will not only deal with some of the specific areas but talk a lot about transport and the opportunities and the new jobs that are being created there, again, by the growth.

In closing, I'd like to thank all the members of my Ministry and the statutory authorities that are under my Ministry for all their hard work and all their help with the success that we've had. Thank you.

*[Applause]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** I now call on the Honourable Premier for the adjournment.

## ADJOURNMENT

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased that we have made such good progress today. Four Members have spoken. I would ask my colleagues present and the Opposition who are absent to please turn up on time tomorrow morning. If we can get started on time we can progress. We may even get five speakers in tomorrow and we can get through this part of the process as swiftly as possible, get to Finance Committee, and get through the budget approval process.

With those few words, I move the adjournment of this honourable House until 10:00 am tomorrow, Friday, 30 May.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The question is that this honourable House now adjourn until tomorrow, Friday, 10:00 am, May 30<sup>th</sup>.

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

**Ayes.**

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

**At 7:23 pm the House adjourned until 10:00 am,  
Friday 30 May 2014.**