



**CAYMAN ISLANDS  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT  
ELECTRONIC VERSION**

**2014/15 SESSION**

**30 May 2014**

*Third Sitting of the First Meeting*  
Throne Speech and Budget Meeting  
*(pages 91–124)*

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

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET**

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

**ELECTED MEMBERS**

**GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS**

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

**OPPOSITION MEMBERS**

Mr Bernie A Bush, MLA	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 Juliana Y O'Connor- Connolly	<i>Speaker</i> , Second Elected Member for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman
Hon. W. McKeever Bush, OBE, JP, MLA	<i>Leader of the Opposition</i> , First Elected Member for West Bay
Hon Samuel W. Bulgin, JP, QC	Attorney General, ex official Member responsible for Legal Affairs

**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  
FRIDAY  
30 MAY 2014  
10:10 AM  
Third sitting**

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** I call on the [Third] Elected Member for West Bay to lead us in prayers.

**PRAYERS**

**Mr. Bernie A. Bush, Third Elected Member for West Bay:** 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. Please be seated.

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

**APOLOGIES**

**The Deputy Speaker:** I have apologies from the Honourable Speaker, the Honourable Attorney General and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** I have no notice of statements.

**GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**BILLS**

**SECOND READING**

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

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

*[Continuing thereof]*

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

I call on the Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town.

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

I rise to give my contribution to this debate. And before I zone in on the actual topic at hand, I would just like to reflect a little bit on this past year in office for me, which has been extremely eventful. I am still extremely pleased and humbled to have been chosen to represent the people of Bodden Town and these three Islands. As I said, it has been a very humbling experience, but I am always grateful for the opportunity to represent the people of Bodden Town. I think there can be no greater reward than what I have experienced this past year.

I know they say that our job is, at times, thankless. But I certainly didn't choose this job for thanks; I did it because I thought I could make a difference and contribute to the development of this

country. I think all of my colleagues share that sentiment and that ambition. I think I chose well when I decided to join the Progressives and work with the Progressives-led Government to better the country.

Mr. Speaker, I think we should all be congratulated for deciding to serve our country. I know that we have all sacrificed in some way, shape or form. I have heard comments in the public about some of us who were not worthy of being in this honourable House because of our backgrounds or, what was referred to, some of the high salaries that some of us used to make before we became representatives. I just wanted to say a few words about that because, to me, it is reminiscent of an attitude that actually held this country back for many years. And what surprises me is, that I am hearing these comments being made in the public by individuals who are not from these Islands and who are representing certain individuals, or claim to represent some of us, and that really disturbs me. I call it the "plantation syndrome."

I hope that we can work together to eradicate that sort of behaviour because it is despicable. And I think that individuals who decide to pick on individuals in here because they may have made a good living and may have been successful at some time or another and decided to sacrifice—and I say sacrifice—and put aside their personal goals to serve the people of this country, I think it is an embarrassment for anyone, any Caymanian or any foreigner, to point at any Member of this House and accuse them of being not worthy of being in here.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Stop tip-toeing 'round and say who he is.

**Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.:** No.

My colleague from Bodden Town made a comment the other day that I have chosen to respect. I am not going to get into too much of the name calling and the backbiting and the last lick. I am here to represent the people of Bodden Town. I have a manifesto that I have signed my name to, and I have promises that I have made, and I am committed to doing that.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.:** So, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to make a few comments about that. I hope that no one in here subscribes to that sort of behaviour because we all come from diverse backgrounds and we all have something to contribute. We are all respectable Caymanians who have chosen to serve our people. And we need to get away from that sort of mentality. But I will move on. I don't want to dwell on that and give it too much importance, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** All right, you go on and do what you like. I'll deal with it.

**Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.:** I know my colleague from East End will deal with him.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Oh yeah!

**Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.:** Mr. Speaker, being a representative in Bodden Town I have had the privilege, along with yourself, of spending a lot of time in the district because our other two colleagues have been busy, obviously, as new Ministers. As Councillor for the Minister of Health, I understand the workload that they have taken on. And I do not envy them, to say the least.

In Bodden Town we have actually made a fair bit of progress. It has only been a year (and I am not making excuses, Mr. Speaker), but we have done some work in the district and there's a lot more to come. But just to highlight some of the important things that we have done . . . for me, as Councillor of Sport, I thought one of my first undertakings would be to promote the sport of boxing in Bodden Town. We have actually started the boxing programme at the civic centre with a lot of success. I think at the last count there were about 15 young men who would otherwise be loitering on the streets, or looking for something to do, who have now taken their place in that boxing programme.

They are not only learning the art of boxing, but they are also learning a discipline. They are being taught quite a bit by coach Doney there. I have gone by on a few occasions to visit and observe and that programme has taken off and taken root. I am extremely proud to have been a part of that.

The Minister has also made sure that the Savannah playing field is now open to the public. It is fenced and lit. And I am proud to say again that the Ministry of Sports went the extra mile to get that done, and also the other agencies, including the Ministry of Minister Tibbetts who assisted quite a bit.

The cemetery expansion in Bodden Town is also completed. I know that during the campaign there was a lot of concern about that because we didn't have enough cemetery space in Bodden Town. That has been addressed. People will criticise and say that we spent too much on that project, but it was a plan that was started. We found it in place and we finished it.

Cox Lumber will be opening their doors in September. That's another project that has started and been completed in the district. And just to touch back on the cemetery, that has a lot of room for expansion. So, our needs in that area will be covered for quite some time, not that we anticipate or would hope that we would need it.

Just as a matter of interest, and to show how much the district of Bodden Town has picked up in the past year, since January alone there have been 62 total building permits approved in the district. Of those, 2 are apartment buildings, 3 are commercial,

43 are residential, and there is a category called "other," which I assume are just other types of buildings, and there are 14 of those. But 62 permits have been approved since January. This doesn't include what was already approved and being worked on prior to January. So, this is a sign that things are picking up in the district.

I am pleased to acknowledge that a lot of this is due to this Government's efforts to encourage entrepreneurship and to encourage job creation. This is clear evidence that this is working and the Government's policies are working.

The Affordable Housing applications are currently being assessed in Bodden Town. Those houses will start to be assigned, hopefully by the end of June. I know there have been some delays, but these are now being sorted out by the new chairman of the board. I am confident now, and have had a lot of calls from people inquiring whether or not we are moving ahead. We are determined to move ahead and I think we pretty much conquered all the issues that have come up.

I am extremely proud to announce that we have opened the PPM office officially. The office was functioning for quite some time prior to the official opening, but we had the official opening a few weeks ago. We are now operating from 9:00 to 5:00 on weekdays. Our four representatives are available by appointment. This is the Bodden Town MLA office I am speaking of.

Overall, I think Caymanian unemployment has reduced. We have seen the results. The economic activity in the eastern district has picked up and things are definitely taking a positive turn in a short year. But we are not out of the woods yet, Mr. Speaker. There is still a lot left to be done. And I am by no means announcing that we are finished and that we have accomplished what we came here to do.

One issue that has plagued my mind is unemployment. I don't think that's any secret. I know amongst my colleagues it's no secret. I think we discussed this issue at every caucus meeting. But I did go out on my own, along with the PPM MLA office in Bodden Town, to create a job drive because I was aware of the growing frustrations of many Caymanians who are saying to me that they are not able to get work. In launching this job drive, one thing that became abundantly clear to me, Mr. Speaker, is that we still have a lot of work to do in the area of Caymanians competing with cheap labour, Caymanians not being equipped to join the workforce, and Caymanians not being workforce ready. And I will speak to this a little bit later on in my address when I cover the NWDA and my role there.

But there is an abundance of cheap labour that has created an imbalance in the workforce. And I am careful how I say this because we are not trying to come across as anti-business, or wanting to discourage businesses from improving their bottom line. But

there has been an impact on the Caymanian workforce and many companies, because of the economic conditions now, are unable to dedicate as many resources as they can to training Caymanians and preparing Caymanians, as these things cost money, and many businesses are suffering. Hence, you see the Government bringing some concessions and incentives for small businesses, because we are aware of the hurt and how this affects not just the business, but the employees.

This problem didn't begin yesterday either, Mr. Speaker. This goes way back to when we created financial and tourism industries during what I consider the boom years when we were in a pioneer spirit and people were coming here to invest. The global economy was good and growing. It was easy then to overlook the future needs of the Caymanian workforce.

I think one of my concerns is that we need now to step back for a second and re-look at how we are dealing with Caymanians in the workforce and ensure that the policies and the steps we put in place now guarantee Caymanians a place in existing and future industries. We have matured considerably, and it is now up to us to ensure that we continue to push for Caymanians to take their rightful place. Not just push them out there and leave them on their own, but support them, develop them, educate them. The last thing we want is for Caymanians to go out and fail.

I was looking at a news story on Cayman 27 about a young Caymanian lady who was working for the Ritz and is now taking a management position overseas in Canada. She started off washing dishes. She is just one example of what can happen, of what a motivated Caymanian can do with support.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.:** Oh yes, she is now moving to Canada to take up a management position with the Ritz. Councillor Hew will discuss that later on as well.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the neglect of Caymanians in the workforce and not giving them the opportunity is now showing up in our court system and on the streets and in some of our homes. We have to collectively take steps to curb this behaviour or we will face greater consequences. I have come across two recent examples of employment agencies that, in my opinion, misrepresented certain facts to Immigration in order to obtain work permits. This Government has put in place a severe penalty, a stiff fine for that offence. And I am pleading, imploring, and begging the Immigration authorities to be vigilant. Look into these things when they are reported. Assess the fine if necessary, but make sure that we get the result that the Immigration changes were intended to derive—which is to get people to straighten up and fly right.

We cannot have these sorts of incidents occurring because it continues to allow people to buy into this thing that the Government doesn't look out for

its people, that it looks out for the foreigners—which is completely absurd. But when examples like this come up, we have to put our feet down and stamp them out immediately.

Another example is that I have heard a lot of complaints about people telling Caymanians that jobs are being advertised simply to renew a work permit. I think the businesses need to be informed that this is illegal. You cannot tell a Caymanian that you are not going to hire them because you are renewing a work permit. Again, there are a few examples. Not all employers are doing this. There are a few bad apples and we need to deal with those.

Mr. Speaker, I worked with the NWDA during my job drive to assist individuals in getting placed in jobs. I did this because at the time I was working with the NWDA as chairman of the task force created by the Minister, and I wanted to prove that the NWDA could actually work, and that I believed in it. I have had quite a bit of success in getting Caymanians out for interviews, getting them involved in further training in cases where they were not quite prepared to join the workforce. And I will continue to do that. I am not getting the success that I hoped initially, but changes were occurring in the NWDA as the year went on, and I am happy to say that the situation there now is vastly improved compared to when we started a year ago.

I still believe that in Bodden Town we need to create (reminiscent to the Go East Initiative) an economic stimulus package strictly for the eastern districts. I think the eastern districts do have some unique needs that you can't really compare to George Town and West Bay, and so on. But we do need to focus a bit more on economic stimulus in the eastern district. And that's my job. I will be making some recommendations to caucus going forward.

We have also had some improvement in the level of policing in the district. But I do feel that we could do a bit more. And I am extremely concerned . . . and I am not throwing this at the feet of the Government, obviously, because we've only had a year to deal with these issues, but I am highlighting them now so that the public is aware that we are looking at them, and I will be looking at them. But emergency services in Bodden Town need to be improved as well. I am particularly concerned with the schools. Bodden Town Primary School currently does not have a nurse, and I will be discussing that with the Minister to see what we can do to remedy that. But in cases where kids become injured there are no emergency services in the vicinity that can assist and that, to me, is a bit concerning. It's a problem we inherited, but we will deal with it.

Looking ahead for the district, I would like to push for the creation of a district committee. We do have a committee that works closely with us, but I want to expand that into the entire district. What I would like to see is representation from every single area of Bodden Town so that we can start to encour-

age a greater level of participatory democracy among Bodden Towners. I think the way to accomplish this is through working with a central committee that has been empowered to do certain things on our behalf and work with us as a team.

I would like to have very soon after this budget session a series of public meetings. We're not sure in what format yet, but we will decide that in the upcoming weeks and make announcements on when we will be actually meeting with the public to discuss our first year in office and also to continue to solicit feedback and encourage the Bodden Towners to meet with us and tell us what their concerns are. Bodden Town has four representatives in the Government and there is no excuse, as the Premier said, for us to not be available to our constituents. And I applaud him for saying that because he reminded me of how important my job is. I know some people criticised him for putting us on the spot at the office opening, Mr. Speaker, but I didn't take it as criticism; I took it as strong encouragement from my Premier. And his words didn't just go in one ear and come out the next.

Along with my colleagues I also want to continue to work on improving the Heritage Park. We know there is an issue there with parking during occasions when we have a lot of people at the park. We recently had Mayfest there, which was hugely successful despite the rain. But parking is an ongoing concern. We are looking at ways to alleviate that. I know Minister Bodden has taken that one on wholeheartedly and is determined to get it resolved. And I know it will be resolved.

I do have a concern with the flooding and hurricane threat on Cumber Avenue. We have seen issues in there with flooding. I think during Hurricane Ivan Cumber Avenue was actually cut off from the main road. There is a possibility of creating a back access from Anton Bodden [Drive]. I am discussing that with the Minister of Roads and we will put forward solutions for that as well. That issue was raised to me by a number of Cumber Avenue residents, and I haven't forgotten it.

Mr. Speaker, I have also worked closely with the community team in Belford to create the beginnings of a public park. We have taken their concerns on board and relayed those to the Minister as well in terms of road flooding and flood control and so forth. We are working on solutions for those. But I wanted to highlight what has been done in Belford because I think it is something that we can use as an example for other communities in Bodden Town.

We have created a working committee that deals with their local community issues. I must applaud them for doing that. Some of them have even gone as far as becoming first aid certified so that during times of hurricane impact, or any other natural disasters, or any disaster, they are able to respond and assist the people within their community. I want to use that as a model for other Bodden Town communi-

ties and build on it because what they have done is commendable and it's all done on a voluntary basis, even down to the organising of a Christmas party for kids, which I attended. I think we all attended it [last] December. But I didn't want to miss the opportunity to highlight what they have done.

They have created a connected safe community. Minister Bodden and I were down there a few weeks ago. It was a sad occasion because it was a death, but we spent several hours in the community. You can see the level of closeness, the level of harmony, everyone working and living together. And these community groups do more than just come out and respond to hurricane threats. The community is close knit; everyone is looking after each other. And I must commend them for that.

We are also working with a similar group in North Sound Gardens. They presented a number of initiatives. Again, they are a fine, shining example of a community group that works well together and takes care of their community. These two groups will, I think, be the template for other groups that we hope to inspire moving forward.

On a down note, the kiosks on CoeWood Beach are still not operational. While I will refrain from beating up too much on the individuals involved at the Civil Service level, I am pleading with the Minister now to make sure that he puts his foot down. I know he will. It's been a year now and we need to get those things sorted out. It was a mess handed to us by the previous administration, but I don't want to use that as an excuse. Three years from now I don't want to be standing here telling people that we couldn't get it done. It just needs to be done.

Mr. Speaker, I have also made a commitment to have a regular attendance at primary school PTA meetings in the Bodden Town district. I kicked this off by attending one at the Bodden Town Primary School and I have gathered an ongoing list of the issues that need to be addressed by the Government and I will be asking the Minister for her ear for a short time just to go through these. And I can assure the parents of Bodden Town Primary students that we are on top of these issues and are working on them. Obviously, the budgetary constraints that we are dealing with make it difficult to do everything at once. But we will prioritise and I will work with the Minister and Councillor to make sure that we address those.

I am also aware that the library in Bodden Town needs some work as well. It is an area that I am familiar with, on computers and IT equipment. So I will also discuss those with the Minister.

I am pleased to see that the Minister has launched his road upgrade programme. I think once this budget is approved, we will see more roadwork happening in the district. I just wanted to publicly thank the Minister for giving us that attention because some of the roads in Bodden Town were in urgent need of repair.

We continue to hold discussions with various developers in the district encouraging their projects to take root, encouraging them to continue to invest in the district. One in particular, in Beach Bay, has my full support. We actually saw something which you don't see every day, but the developer decided that he would create some jobs to help us with the unemployment situation just on a temporary basis. But he was very gracious in creating some jobs that could have been done with heavy equipment. He decided he would turn them over to the unemployed people in Bodden Town. And for a few weeks there was some work going on there, and people were benefitting from getting a little cash in their pockets.

We will continue to work with people like that to make sure that when there are opportunities for our people they receive them. There may have been one or two hiccups with that, but it was just phase one. And, on an ongoing basis the developer will work a lot closer with us to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

I have also committed to launching a district newsletter that I will share with my colleagues and ensure they participate in adding to the content. But I think this is another way of keeping in touch with our constituents and letting them know what the Government is doing because there are times when we are extremely busy and we may not have the opportunity to communicate with everyone. And everyone jokes that I am Mr. Facebook, but coming from an IT background I can't help it! I like to communicate with people electronically. So I will try to push that initiative. We have managed to get the Minister of Finance using BBM [BlackBerry Messenger], I think.

Is he on that now?

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Alva H. Suckoo Jr.:** So, I think we can accomplish a lot more electronically.

Also, the Shetty Hospital and the upcoming golfing community project will enhance the economic condition of the eastern districts. And I am pleased to have supported both of those initiatives.

During the campaign we talked about the PIECE initiative. That is something that I want to put on the agenda now for this year. I think it was actually Minister Panton that came up with that acronym, and it was quite fitting. It is the Programme of Incentives for Eastern Community Entrepreneurs. We will see how we can tie that in to some of the things he is doing in his Ministry, especially with the focus on small businesses and creating new opportunities for entrepreneurs.

Mr. Speaker, this budget contains a number of incentives that are designed to bring a high level of economic relief to the country. But obviously we can't do it all at once. We have to take baby steps because we are constrained in what we can do, not just be-

cause of the economy, but because of the FFR [Framework for Fiscal Responsibility] requirements and so forth. If we could do more we would do it, Mr. Speaker, I know that.

These incentives were geared towards increasing the amount of disposable income in the hands of consumers. And when you look at things like reducing duty for businesses, reducing business licensing fees and spreading out the payments of those fees over time, and ultimately reducing the cost of electricity, it is clear what the Government's intention is. We are not going to continue the regime of taxing just to meet our fiscal demands. And we are prepared to take the risks, take the licks sometimes, take the extra stress of trying to balance a budget with reduced revenues—which is not easy to do—in the hopes that what we do will be reflected in the short term and the medium term in the economy, by creating enhanced positive cash flow throughout the country.

This is not a new economic theory. This is nothing new. But we have decided to take on that burden because it then falls back on the Government to find ways to work with a reduced revenue stream. But we feel that the dividends will be paid off in the near future, and so, we are willing to do this for the people of this country.

It bothers me when I hear people start to criticise us to say we are not doing enough, because they know what the financial situation is, and they know better. But you live and you learn.

Everyone knows that government revenue is based on consumption, not direct taxes. And the more that we can encourage to spend, the more we can encourage people to do in the economy on their own as private individuals or businesses, the more the government will benefit. And that is the strategy that we are employing here.

Government is limited in what measures we use to stimulate the economy and what we can do to encourage economic growth. We can't spend, which is something that a government with lots of resources can do to stimulate the economy. And increasing the population over night, to me, Mr. Speaker, is not really a feasible solution at this time. I said I wouldn't get into pointing fingers and blaming, but I think this story has to be told.

I was a member of the United Democratic Party at the time, so I think I am qualified and know what I am talking about. But when the status grants were done, I think it was done in a way that both existing Caymanians and the new Caymanians suffered. I say that because the new Caymanians were not here long enough to integrate properly into our society. There were some who deservedly got status. I agree with that. But there were those who were newly arrived, hadn't really learned the Caymanian culture, the Caymanian way of life, and we did them the disservice of throwing them into our communities and expecting

them to just continue life as if they had always been a Caymanian.

By doing this, Mr. Speaker, we created two societies that were not fully meshed together and working together. And it's created some conflict and some strife, some social issues. It has increased certain burdens on both cultures. And I have seen for myself, being the product of a Jamaican/Caymanian marriage, that there is some animosity between our young people and we cannot continue with those sorts of actions. I have even seen where it has encouraged the development of gangs, where you have two cultures clashing, all because we didn't take the time to figure out how to properly integrate people before we just threw them into becoming Caymanian.

I am not, in any way shape or form, speaking ill of those who received status. If I was one of them I would have accepted it too. And I would have been extremely grateful. But existing Caymanians suddenly found that overnight, as a benefit of the status grants, we received competition for jobs that our people were hoping to receive or were competing for amongst each other. And now with that added strata of the population we actually had more competition for entry level jobs. When you increase the population of a country, Mr. Speaker, you don't bring in people who will compete with your people. You bring in people who have skills that are not found within the country.

So, if it had been managed properly . . . but it wasn't . . . I call it a social experiment gone bad. Society was not prepared to deal with that sudden population increase and the strain on the resources of this country. And we have done both groups of people a disservice. And when I hear the Leader of the Opposition talk about increasing the population, I hope that that is not what he has in mind, because we have seen the ill effects of it. So much so, that I believe the individuals who were involved have seen the ill effects of it and voted for this Government, despite people saying that we were anti-expat and anti-Jamaican, and anti-foreigner. They saw through that; they realised what was going on.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that population growth comes naturally with proper economic and social planning and strategic thinking. The strain on our schools, social services, health services and the police service was not given any consideration when the UDP did the status grants. And it was the primary reason why I decided that I could not continue with that group, because I saw the shortsightedness. And I will stop short of saying anything further on that, because I don't want to start accusing individuals of being selfish or buying votes, or using it to secure votes. But I find it ironic that the people who were being manipulated during that time of our history have decided to support this Government, and I am humbled to have seen that.

This Government has a plan, Mr. Speaker, for everyone, not just one group. When I think back on

individuals who came here and helped us develop this country, the people I call the true nation-builders, those are the types of individuals we want to encourage to work and become Caymanian to live and work amongst us. And that is where I think we have to focus our strategies. Suddenly, giving hundreds of people the right to citizenship without planning for them is not the answer. And it will only create more burdens on this economy and on this Government. I think this Government recognises that. We don't want to bring people here and give them more drastic consequences of living than they were experiencing in their own countries.

Things like putting a gender equality policy in place, things like that have to be done before you go and suddenly increase your population, putting a conservation law in place, dealing with the immigration issues, the weaknesses in the Immigration Law, looking a minimum wage. All of those things have to be done prior to a sudden increase in population or we will multiply the problems to a point where we cannot deal with them. So let's focus on fixing the issues that are impacting the existing population and Caymanians before looking to inflate and compound the problem. The population increase will come in time if we get things right.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned a minimum wage a short time ago. I wholeheartedly support the implementation of a minimum wage. I saw recently where a US state (can't remember which one) moved their minimum wage to \$14.00 per hour. We have a long way to go. But, again, I am comfortable to note that with the Minister's policy and what she is doing in terms of trying to determine where we go with the minimum wage, I do believe that its implementation will stem the development of the cheap labour market I referred to earlier and stop the competition with our young people and our semi-skilled people for entry level jobs. I think it will open up a lot of entry level jobs for Caymanians who, at the present time, are unemployed and unable to survive on the wages being offered.

I think it will also do quite a bit for our reputation as a gem of the Caribbean, that we do not encourage the exploitation of labour, whether foreign or domestic, and ensures that we have been looking after the needs of all employees, Caymanian and otherwise.

I mentioned one man, one vote. I take note that a lot was said about the recent vote in the House. Just to set the record straight, I am still working with the Progressive-led Government to determine the best way forward, and I still support one person, one vote. I still believe it is the purest form of democracy. But, I recognise there are those among us who have joined us who may have had slightly different views and opinions. And I respect the fact that as a Government we need to take the time to get this right. So I am willing to wait for the debate to finish internally before we

come forward with our position. But I will be, as my colleagues know, pushing every step of the way for the reform.

Mr. Speaker, our Government has chosen to stimulate our economy via a programme of incentives. The Government believes that the more cash we have circulating in the economy, the more economic growth we will experience. And I believe this as well. As a student of economics, during the time I was working on my MBA . . . it's commonsense to me. We have to understand that the Government alone cannot create economic opportunities. But we have a mandate to try to do that as much as possible and we want to encourage entrepreneurship. We want to encourage the development of new industries and new businesses. And that's why our policies are geared toward lightening the load on businesses so that they are able to employ Caymanians and survive from an economic point of view. As I said earlier, as economic growth progresses, so too will the opportunities for Caymanians and opportunities to increase the population gradually.

As the Minister of Finance quite rightly pointed out, we do not have the natural resources to attract a high level of skilled experienced individuals who can perform the role of the nation builders of yesteryear. So we need to find creative ways to get the right individuals to come here to work alongside us.

We have evolved beyond that phase of our history and we have to change our strategies. We cannot keep doing the same old thing and expect different results. So when I hear the Leader of the Opposition talking about increasing the population, I find it funny and ironic, because the attempts that he made several years ago actually resulted in some of conditions we are experiencing here today. Given the nature of the economy and the limitations on Government now, the most effective way to move forward is the way that this Government has chosen.

Mr. Speaker, I find it a bit concerning that there are those who still question what this budget does to assist the poor people of this country, as it should be abundantly clear what benefits these incentives will bring. But I guess that's part of the politics. And I won't even get into arguing that point, but it is clear to me what we have done and what we have set out to achieve here.

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't let this opportunity pass without talking about the Civil Service and the recent one-off payment that is going to be made to civil servants. During the past year I have worked closely with many civil servants at all levels of the Civil Service. I have found that despite what people say, the majority of civil servants are hard-working, dedicated people who sometimes do very thankless jobs. They have suffered through the economic times along with the Government and they have experienced a diminishing purchase power due to the rise in the cost of living without being able to get a salary increase.

I know civil servants who take vacation days to concentrate on work that they have not been able to finish in the office. I don't think you find that too often in the private sector. And I am extremely pleased and proud to have been a part of the initiative to show our appreciation for the hard work and effort of the civil servants. Next year, if there is an opportunity, I will support it again. But I just wanted to take a moment to highlight their contribution to this country.

Mr. Speaker, moving on to more national issues, I have actually been given responsibility for E-Government. I work as the Councillor for E-Government. Under my direction the Government is going to be moving ahead with our E-Government plans. This is yet another campaign promise that I am trying to fulfill. The first step we are going to take is to actually move the E-Government initiative from under the Ministry of Home Affairs to the Cabinet Office, hopefully, once that receives Cabinet approval. The only reason for doing that is that I fear it will become just an IT project. And this E-Government encompasses the entire government and I thought the Cabinet Office would be the ideal place to steer it from.

We are also moving ahead with the recruitment of a director of E-Government. I have moved to create an operational framework from which to manage the implementation of E-Government across the government. The Premier will continue to have responsibility for the initiative, and I will work under his direction as Councillor and take on more of the day to day direction of the initiative.

We will create a high-level steering committee that will take on the strategic and decision-making role of the project. And that high-level committee will actually be made up of individuals from the private sector, from government and different agencies. There will be a lower level task force charged with implementing the initiatives. The composition of that task force may change depending on the particular initiative we are dealing with at the time. But I think that is also a good way of involving individuals from across the Civil Service who actually may not have the opportunity to work on projects of this nature.

For example, if there is a programme or a business analyst working at the HSA there may be opportunities to second them for short periods of time as we deal with different initiatives. Give them a break from the monotony of their existing positions; give them something a little exciting to get their hands involved in from time to time. But I think it's a good opportunity for everyone across government to play a role in the development of E-Government.

As I said, the steering committee will have oversight and responsibility for all E-Government initiatives. Ministries and department, and so on, will have the autonomy to bring forward their initiatives based on their business plans. But we are putting together a framework they will have to work within.

In order to save us some time and resources, I have asked the Government to take on board my professional opinion as an IT expert to agree on certain assumptions that would otherwise have taken a lot of time and money to research. These things from my point of view are commonsense and part of any successful IT implementation, but for the layman it might not be quite so clear.

Just to give you a quick overview of these, I am asking Cabinet to agree that the initiative will have a shared platform; that all work will be directed via the steering committee; that it makes use of open data and API technologies; that it is cloud based; that we will expand on the use of already established solutions and platforms and not try to re-invent the wheel; that all data will remain within the jurisdiction; where possible, that we will continue to use already established models where providers engage in revenue sharing in order to pay for the development of the system and minimise the cost to Government; that all initiatives need to be vetted by the steering committee; and that, from a more global perspective, external licensed vendors and service providers for ICT will now be expected to develop and create solutions and products that support the creation of a digital society giving particular priority to e-students and e-citizens. This is something that has to be done in partnership with other entities operating privately, but I think it is something that they will embrace.

We obviously have a clear focus on consultation with the public and private sectors in order to get this initiative off the ground and all consultation will be guided by the key players involved. There will also be (in response to the concern by the Member for North Side) a focus on business process improvement. We will not simply replicate what we have now; we will actually look at the existing processes, look at where we can improve them, and then seek to automate them.

I think the example he gave was obtaining a gun licence or doing a land transfer. In both of those scenarios we will actually look to better the process before we automate it. There is no sense automating a process that doesn't work. Again, he is obviously looking at this from a layman's point of view. I am looking at it based on the training and experience I have. And his concerns are not going unheard, but we have already considered all of that.

Cabinet will decide on legislation and budget and other key components involved in the creation of the E-Government initiative, based on the guidance of the steering committee. And the task force will have the responsibility for implementing the project. And the projects will be broken down into discreet projects so that we don't try to tackle it all at one time. We will attack the initiative through a process of division of labour and effort. This is a huge initiative, and it has to be managed properly.

Looking ahead for E-Government, I mentioned a year ago that I would like to steer the country towards the implementation of its first, what I call, big data initiative, which would involve collaborative effort between private sector and government. And that we look to create an information system which can be used to forecast financial trends, trends involved in tourism, anything that basically impacts government revenue and the revenue of the companies that work with government or rely on government services. This can only be done by sharing information. Again, it's another partnership effort that I think can be done with minimal cost to government and reliance on the private sector and the technology firms that exist within the Cayman Islands.

There will be more on that as E-Government takes off, but I think it will give us competitive advantage over other jurisdictions. For example, if we knew at a glance what our occupancy levels were at all the hotels, where the majority of our visitors come from, without having to wait months for information to come back in reports and so on, we could respond to changes in the market almost immediately. We could craft marketing efforts based on real time data, real time information shared between everyone who participates in a particular industry, rather than waiting on information that is six months old. It gives us a huge competitive edge over other jurisdictions, and I think this is the direction we have to go in. It will take some effort and some planning, but this is one of the marks I hope to leave.

Sports tourism was already mentioned, Mr. Speaker, a number of times. But sports tourism continues to improve. And there have been a number of notable events that have provided us with access to high level international competition for locals and visitors alike. And it's mentioned on page 6 of the Government's achievements. Some of the most notable events that have taken place are obviously the NORCECA Beach Volleyball tournaments, the Cayman Invitational Track Meet, the CARIFTA track championships, the CONCACAF Under-15 boys football, the CONCACAF Under 20, women's tournament and there is another CONCACAF tournament coming up very shortly as well. All of these events have received the full support of the Government and we hope to continue supporting them, and we will continue to support sports tourism and the development of sports tourism going forward.

We have seen the importance to our economy. And not just that, but the development of local athletes and giving the local athletes the exposure they deserve. I have already mentioned the expansion of the boxing programme in Bodden Town, and I have to mention one of our rising stars, Tafari Ebanks who is preparing himself for a much higher level of competition now, with hopes of moving on to the Olympics. He is to be applauded for his efforts. I have seen the hard work and dedication he has put into his

sport. And boxing is obviously one of my favourite sports, so I just wanted to mention Tafari and his efforts. He and I talk on a regular basis and I am extremely proud of him.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard some criticisms about our efforts with the NWDA task force. I keep hearing mention of all these committees and task forces that are not doing anything. But nothing could be further from the truth. The Minister created the task force to look at issues with Caymanian unemployment and getting Caymanians secured positions in our workforce and making them workforce ready. I have actually come across a few examples where there have been breakdowns in the system and where we have had work permits refused because a Caymanian was identified and then later on that decision was overturned and the permit granted. On the surface it may seem like another blatant case of discrimination against Caymanians. But we have to look a little bit deeper sometimes.

I think it signifies a failure and a breakdown in the system. There is a conclusion you could make that the system favours the expat and foreign labour. But knowing some of the individuals involved in the system I find it hard to believe that that could be the case. One thing that happened was that the business was disadvantaged in waiting for a decision on the permit, on whether you agree or disagree that they should have gotten a permit. But then you have to wonder was the rejection of the Caymanian legitimate. I think we have a much larger issue to deal with in that we have a mixed bag. We do have cases where Caymanians are discriminated against, but we also have cases where Caymanians are not workplace ready.

I am not going to stand here and say that there is just blatant discrimination and no one gets an opportunity, because I have seen examples where Caymanians do get the opportunities. But I feel that the efforts made by the NWDA taskforce and the NWDA itself will actually go towards addressing both issues.

Cabinet created the taskforce. And in order to ensure that the NWDA was positioned to meet the needs of the stakeholders, the Minister of Labour asked me to chair the taskforce, and I gladly accepted. We met numerous times between September and January and we worked alongside an internal review committee whose responsibility was actually to put forward recommendations aimed at improving the ability of the agency to carry out its duties.

The review allowed the NWDA to re-engineer itself and while we were actually meeting and discussing the areas of improvement under the direction of Dr. Tasha Garcia, the NWDA was in the background working on implementing the recommendations. So, we didn't wait until the production of a final report to do anything. The work was ongoing as we were meeting and discussing. And there have been a number of notable improvements in changes made.

I think one of the main ones is the creation of an Immigration interface which gives the Immigration Department visibility of Caymanians who are available for positions when work permit applications are made. In the past this was not possible, and some permits were granted based on the Immigration Department not knowing or the Board not knowing who, or if any Caymanians were available.

A community outreach has been launched and the NWDA now visits districts regularly to meet with individuals, get them registered and available in their database so that when discussions come up at Immigration Board meetings and Immigration meetings that they are now aware which Caymanians are out there and available.

The taskforce also recommended the creation of national programmes, such as the National Job-link Programme and the National Training Programme. These two initiatives actually go some way towards addressing the issue of making Caymanians work-place ready. Caymanians who are identified as lacking in one area or another, but just about ready to join the workforce, or take up a position in the workforce, now actually have a means to getting those skills that they lack, and getting the support from the Government that they need to actually become productive employees. This initiative aligns Caymanians with the needs of the employers, and that is key.

Also the creation of the training and development programme initiative actually was based on research and data provided by the local employers. So, the NWDA has responded and actually created opportunities for our people to gain employment and it is based not on just what we think, but what the industries think. I have been using the NWDA to assist my constituents with some success. I know that as this initiative continues and grows it will actually improve tremendously.

Again, I also think that this is an opportunity to use the NWDA to stamp out cases of discrimination, to identify those who do discriminate, and deal with them appropriately. We can't have the entire country suffer for a few bad apples. And I think this is one way of dealing with it.

Mr. Speaker, I can't sit down without saying a few words about the FFR [Framework for Fiscal Responsibility]. I think it is overall a positive thing for the country in that it does force Government to embrace medium-term planning, value for money, management of risks, and proper accountability. I do find it a bit ironic that there are members . . . I wouldn't say members, I would say individuals in the public domain, who do not necessarily support this Government, who are saying that we should put that issue to a referendum, and we should resist it. But it was something that this Government did not sign us into, and I think it would be a bit foolhardy to go and try to change it now.

We have to work towards achieving the goals set by the FFR and get it off our back as soon as possible. I do agree that it does stifle our ability to grow and expand the economy, but I think we need to take it for the positive it brings, the discipline that it brings, and commit to meeting the requirements and getting it off our backs so we can move forward as a Government and a country. We actually did need some of that discipline based on recent events.

I don't think any of us here enjoys being handcuffed, so to speak. It is a necessary pain and we will continue to soldier through it. But I just didn't want this Government to be expected to carry that load on our shoulders as well. I have heard comments about it being the result of actions taken by this Administration. You simply have to look at the signatures on the document to understand why that became necessary. I won't go about beating up on anyone, or blaming anyone. We are here now, Mr. Speaker. We are a year in. And I think everyone, at least on this side, will agree that we have worked extremely hard through some very difficult circumstances, and we have worked well together.

It wasn't always easy. We come from a range of diverse backgrounds. We are different individuals with different upbringing; some of us slightly culturally different, depending on our parentage. But we have pulled together. We have held it together; we have worked together. I am proud of this Government. And the individuals, we have so many first-time representatives here and I have seen an extreme commitment from everyone to get it right. I have seen everyone take personal sacrifices, put aside personal ambitions to do what is right to support this country and its development. I continue to believe in this Government. I continue to support this Government. And I know that we will get it right.

As I said, it's only 12 months. We have a lot of work to do. This is by no means a declaration that we are finished. This just means we are only just getting started. But I look forward to the next year ahead with my colleagues and working through the issues that this country faces. I am sure that next year the report will be just as positive, if not better. I have every confidence in the world that this Government is the right Government for this country at this time.

Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence, I would just like to close my contribution by reading a short poem. At the end I think you will understand why I read it. It's called "Still I rise."

***You may write me down in history  
With your bitter, twisted lies,  
You may tread me in the very dirt  
But still, like dust, I'll rise.***

***Does my sassiness upset you?  
Why are you beset with gloom?  
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells***

***Pumping in my living room.***

***Just like moons and like suns,  
With the certainty of tides,  
Just like hopes springing high,  
Still I'll rise.***

***Did you want to see me broken?  
Bowed head and lowered eyes?  
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.  
Weakened by my soulful cries.***

***Does my haughtiness offend you?  
Don't you take it awful hard  
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines  
Diggin' in my own back yard.***

***You may shoot me with your words,  
You may cut me with your eyes,  
You may kill me with your hatefulness,  
But still, like air, I'll rise.***

***Does my sexiness upset you?  
Does it come as a surprise  
That I dance like I've got diamonds  
At the meeting of my thighs?***

***Out of the huts of history's shame  
I rise  
Up from a past that's rooted in pain  
I rise  
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,  
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.  
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear  
I rise  
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear  
I rise  
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,  
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.  
I rise  
I rise  
I rise.***

I think that was fitting because it's a poem by Maya Angelou. May she rest in peace.

[Applause]

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

If not, I call on the Minister of Environment.

**Hon. G. Wayne Panton, Minister of Financial Services, Commerce and Environment:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to add my contribution to the debate on the Throne Speech, Policy Statement and Budget Address for the 2014/15 period.

I would say first that I congratulate Her Excellency on what I thought was a clear and concise Throne Speech. I agree with her view that policy issues are, by and large, the remit of the elected Government as set out in the Constitution. And I think it is appropriate for these matters to be dealt with as detailed by the Premier.

I congratulate both the Premier and my colleague, Minister Archer, on a job well done earlier, in relation to the budget and their contributions. In fact, I congratulate all colleague Ministers and the backbench of the Government on a job well done. I think we are collectively judged by the performance, or lack thereof, as the case may be on each such occasion. I think on this occasion we can collectively share the credit for the outcomes that we have had over the past financial year for the financial performance of the Government. I think we have all contributed very meaningfully. Of course, these have all been detailed in the progress report that the Honourable Premier tabled in this honourable House yesterday.

Some will say that self-praise is no praise. But, certainly facts and figures don't lie. As an aside, the Leader of the Opposition said yesterday in his contribution that essentially our achievements are off the back of his work. Certainly, in terms of continuity of Government, there will always be some grain of truth there. But the harsh reality is that when he had his opportunity he made a complete mess of it. And such was the view of the people of this country just over a year ago.

In his contribution yesterday, he was singing that familiar song of his, that everything he did was good and for the benefit of the country and he restored confidence in the country when he became Premier. Mr. Speaker, one could close one's eyes and . . . or one would have to close one's eyes, let me say, and speak from the most generous parts of one's heart to say that.

He referred to the OECD black list as being indicative of some loss of trust for Cayman internationally. I think everyone knows there wasn't a "black" list; there was something called a grey list, and it was based on an arbitrary number which the OECD mandated at the time of 12 Tax Information Exchange Agreements in order to be regarded as being in compliance. And Cayman had only signed at the time, I think, about eight such agreements. A number were being negotiated at the time of the election.

The interesting thing is that most of our competitors were on this grey list as well. So, essentially, there wasn't any loss of trust. But, of course, I am not going to belittle the efforts, either, of the Leader of the Opposition (Premier at the time) in getting the necessary agreements signed up to get us off this grey list.

Mr. Speaker, this budget is collectively our budget. It is what we will be judged on in a year's time. I think we can all be justly proud of what we have achieved. And we can be proud of the budget

that we have submitted as our proposal. Hopefully it will be adopted by this honourable House. And this is more so the case against the backdrop of the expenditure cuts which we were mandated to achieve—some \$25 million since coming to office.

I am confident that there is an excellent chance that we will be able to say the same thing this time next year. And I say that not because I want my colleagues and I to bask in any way. Rather, because I know that each of us is motivated by a deep-seated desire to see the best for our country and for our fellow Caymanians. So, Mr. Speaker, when I congratulate my colleagues on what I think is a job well done, it is really a statement of congratulations to our beloved Cayman Islands and its people.

We are moving in a good direction, and I think we are picking up some speed. If we succeed in the job they, the people of this country, the voters of this country, our fellow Caymanians, have entrusted us to do, then our country succeeds and we have done our job.

Mr. Speaker, in relation to the financial circumstances of the country, we promised upon taking office to stabilise the financial position. We have done that. We promised that after we had done that we would begin rolling back some of the enormous tax increases that had been put in place which had driven up the cost of living and the cost of doing business very significantly. We are beginning to do that in this budget. We also promised that we would examine ways to support small businesses. We are also doing that in this budget. And we will continue to examine ways to do that.

Mr. Speaker, we have a projected surplus which is some \$8 million more than originally forecast for this year. I have no doubt that the policy decisions we have taken to curtail unnecessary expenditure and the efforts we have made to restore trust and confidence in this country as a whole, has significantly been responsible for that.

One question that has demonstrated itself amongst much of what I would regard as politically motivated criticism, is if we have \$108 million surplus, why are we not giving more of it back to the people through, for example, duty cuts or some other form of rebate? The question is straightforward. And the answer is equally straightforward. That surplus pays for some capital work, pays down the principal and interest on government debt, and provides reserves to enable us to make progress in relation to meeting the Public Management and Finance Law requirements.

Mr. Speaker, we agreed a plan with the UK to have this country in compliance with the financial yardsticks which had been set out in the Public Management and Finance Law that incorporates the Framework for Fiscal Responsibility, which the previous Government was required to sign up to. This surplus helps us to stay on track to meet the targets of the plan. The fact is, if we have some vigour room to

both achieve those targets and begin the process of lowering the cost of living for all individuals in this country and the cost of doing business in this country, then we should do that. And we have done that.

So we are seeking to strike the right balance. Lowering the cost of living provides relief to people who are struggling and increases the possibility that consumption will improve and, therefore, the multiplier effect across the economy will be even more positive. Lowering the cost of doing business is critical in a number of ways as well. This is particularly so for small businesses. The statistics show that small businesses account for in excess of 60 per cent of the economy. So it is imperative to support those. And that is what we are doing.

These measures to relieve the cost of doing business, allow businesses to lower the cost of their goods and services, to be more competitive, and, therefore, grow. Of course, lowering the cost to the public has the added benefit of lowering the cost of living generally. If they grow, they will at some point maximise the productivity of their existing employees and they have to create additional jobs and hire additional people. That is a very positive benefit which lowers unemployment in the country.

For some, these cost reductions may be a lifeline to keep them going, to keep people hired, to provide a living for families. So, Mr. Speaker, people should be happy that we have a significant projected surplus. It helps this country to regain its fiscal health very quickly and it enables us to take positive steps of rolling back a lot of the choking fee increases of the last few years. It would be absolutely imprudent for us to squander those benefits the surplus budget provides at this point. Now, in years to come that may well change. We might be in a much stronger position and, therefore, a much better position to lower costs overall, reduce revenues and give more back.

The Rationalisation Review that is being undertaken will also likely result in structural reforms in government which should significantly lower, over time, the cost of government. I say “over time” deliberately. While I think there are very likely quick wins, I think it is certainly the case that any such initiative has to be managed carefully over a period of time to ensure that decisions made, will leave relevant entities created in a viable state and effective in continuing to provide the services that are needed at a reasonable cost.

I say all of that, Mr. Speaker, to indicate that we should not expect very substantial or significant declines in the cost of living at any one point in time. But rather, I think it will likely be a process of incremental reductions over time. The combination of a growing economy, more jobs, higher levels of pay, plus reductions in the cost of living is a recipe for a strong economy, a strong country, and a stronger society. I think our current trajectory and plans are point-

ing us towards that reality. And this budget is, I think, an integral link in that process.

Mr. Speaker, at this point I would also add that there are certain initiatives that this Government is contemplating. In the progress report there is a reference to an MOU [Memorandum of Understanding] with a company called Navasoto. There are other potential sources for alternative fuels which have significant potential to drive down the cost of electricity in this country. If we can implement something like that, if we can convert from burning the diesel fuel that we burn today to natural gas or propane, for example, those are cleaner, cheaper fuels. And based on the experiences of utility companies in other parts of the region, those could account for up to 10 cents per kilowatt hour in cost reduction.

So, those are things that we, as a Government, are seeking ways to engage in solutions to have that done through the local power company and anyone who is responding through the recent RFPs for power production.

Getting on to Ministry specifics, Mr. Speaker, in his Budget Address I am pleased that the Honourable Premier highlighted the importance of Financial Services as a pillar of our economy. I would like to take it a step further by telling the people of this country how important Financial Services are, as well as discussing the connection between Financial Services, Commerce and the Environment. There is a clear symbiosis there, Mr. Speaker.

This Progressive-led Government has made great strides in developing this 2014/15 Budget with the incentives and measures that should make it easier for everyone to pay their bills and have an improved quality of life. Yet, Mr. Speaker, I am unsure that enough of the public understands how Financial Services has made a lot of these measures possible.

There was a survey done in 2011 in which the then Financial Services Secretariat (which has undergone a name change) asked three questions to determine if people knew how much the Financial Services industry alone contributed to their quality of life. It was a fairly small survey, Mr. Speaker, but the results were clear and indicative. Our people are generally less likely to know that Financial Services contributes around 50 per cent to public revenues. The direct contribution from the Ministry alone is roughly about 40 per cent. But, of course, this increases once you account for all of the indirect contributions, including work permits and things like customs duties, et cetera. This revenue is obviously a very major contribution to Government's ability to fund public services and social programmes, scholarships, those very important aspects of services that Government provides. Take away the contribution from Financial Services and every household in Cayman, including Government, has far greater difficulty.

In light of this, I would like to gently suggest that we need to reassess the level of Government

funding for Financial Services and increase it. I think it is shy of where it should be when we compare the efforts and the contributions of the Governments of our competitors who are investing significantly more. We have been very successful and I think we can achieve this and we must continue to be vigilant to maintain, grow our market share and to protect our market leading position. But I think, certainly in future budgets, we will need to pay more attention to that which is invested in relation to the Financial Services. We are always going to have the cost associated with the cost of regulation. But our competitors have those costs as well.

I think, given the circumstances, the current budget allocation reflects the best position we could put ourselves in while trying to stay within the plan that we have agreed with the UK. We are prioritising, as the Premier has said. On saying that, I want to be clear that my interest is purely in protecting the value of the industry. I think we have to continue to refine our budgeting process so that it allows for greater prioritisation and in this case some rebalancing, as I said.

Mr. Speaker, allow me at this time to say clearly what improving the spending in relation to Financial Services can do for us. It will provide a stronger, broader, deeper financial base which, with careful guidance, will continue to provide steady and sustainable revenue and substantial contribution to this economy.

I have already outlined how Financial Services is a primary driver of the economy. But it is also a significant component of my other area of responsibility, which is Commerce. This includes the systems and framework for Financial Services and other areas, including Tourism, for example. The key distinction to be made regarding Tourism is that my Ministry focuses on businesses that support our Tourism product, while the Ministry of Tourism focuses more on attracting visitors and providing exemplary tourism experience.

As I mentioned earlier, there is a connection between Financial Services, Commerce and the Environment. I think everyone will recall the discussions we had with the National Conservation Law. There is the clear link between the conservation and preservation of our environment and the value that that has to our Tourism product. There is also the very clear link that that has in relation to our quality of life as citizens and residents of this country.

I think that in today's world there is another connection globally where there is such a significant focus on the environment that the way we treat our environment is actually a reflection of how we are respected internationally as well. That may well have an influence in relation to our reputation as an international financial centre. Where we are at, I think, reflects the fact that we have the right balance. Much like we want our children to develop into well-rounded

individuals who perhaps excel in one area but do well across the board, international civic societies like to do business either through Tourism, Financial Services or what-have-you, with countries that appreciate and respect their own environments.

While I mention respecting ourselves, Mr. Speaker, permit me to digress for a moment on an issue of real concern, and that is the amount of littering we see every day in this country. It is a huge issue and one which impacts not only our quality of life, but the quality of our Tourism product as well. It is nothing short of disgusting, Mr. Speaker, to see the number of beer bottles discarded along our roadsides, aluminum cans, other trash, such as fast-food bags. This is indicative to me of another problem in terms of the beer bottles—too much drinking and driving. I want to appeal to our citizens and residents to be more responsible, to have pride in themselves and the country and to show respect for both respecting the environment. I want to appeal to them to cease the unsightly littering and dumping that goes on.

Moving back to my original tract, Mr. Speaker, there is a growing recognition that a country's gross domestic product (GDP) which is commonly used as an indicator of the economic health of a country, and to gauge the country's standard of living, is an incomplete measure of the actual wellbeing of its citizens. Increasingly organisations like the World Bank (WB) are linking the state of a country's natural resource base, or natural capital, with long-term economic sustainability.

As a small nation with a fragile natural resource base, it is imperative that Cayman understands the very tight links between the health of our natural environment and our economy. And I am delighted that the Department of Environment is beginning to produce data and information that will assist Government in this regard. I will speak more about that subsequently.

In relation to each area of my Ministry, to provide some background on the Budget that is before the House, first in relation to Financial Services, persons who are keeping abreast of developments in Financial Services will have noted an important shift in Cayman's global reputation. This has been decades in coming, and as a jurisdiction we are just now welcoming the evidence of the fruits of our labours. That is not to say that we can relax or let down our guard. We still have a long way to go. There are many non-governmental organisations and misguided national and supranational agendas out there that will continue to attack our credibility.

Cayman has long engaged in a global forum on transparency and exchange of information for tax purposes. For the past few years we have retained our seats on the OECD Global Forum Steering Group and its Peer Review Group. Last year we were named for the first time as one of the peer review group's vice chairs. For those who are unfamiliar with the Global

Forum, it is more than 120-member jurisdictions which form the brain centre for international tax and transparency issues. In addition to being the preeminent tax body the forum ensures maximum engagement in the rapidly developing and expanding world of international tax cooperation. And it is responsible for monitoring and assessing all countries against acceptable international standards.

The direction and tone of how international tax cooperation is implemented and evaluated is a hallmark of this forum's work. And it ensures that initiatives that are globally developed are globally practiced. The positions we hold on the global forum groups are unmistakable honours. They indicate that we have proven ourselves to be knowledgeable enough, trustworthy enough, unbiased enough to contribute to the forum's work and the governance thereof.

Cayman is among more than 50 countries that have committed to becoming early adopters of the new standards for automatic exchange of information for tax and transparency purposes. People in Cayman are no doubt familiar with the US Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act intergovernmental agreement which was signed with the United States and what is referred to as the FATCA type agreement which is being entered into with the United Kingdom.

This jurisdiction is no stranger to automatic exchange of information, Mr. Speaker, having successfully operated under those requirements of the European Union Savings Directive with 28 EU countries over the last nine years. All of this places us in a good position to handle the extensive new obligations which result from the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act and the new international requirements of the Common Reporting Standards published by the OECD and endorsed by the G20 leaders.

This is a new norm for tax cooperation and transparency, Mr. Speaker. And I am pleased to note that Cayman is a member of the Global Forum Automatic Exchange of Information group that is handling the implementation of the new standard, as well as an observer to the OECD's working party that is responsible for setting the standard. Mr. Speaker, we are certainly pleased to be recognised with that space at the table.

Today I am pleased to announce that as a result of the diligence of the Ministry's Department of Financial Services Policy and Legislation, formerly, the Financial Services Secretariat, we have recently confirmed an exchange of information relationship with Columbia. The result of that, Mr. Speaker, is that Columbia is removing the Cayman Islands from its black list of tax havens. Now, there are other South American countries that have similar lists, and we are very hopeful that this will assist in achieving that end result in relation to those lists as well.

This comes about through the extension to Cayman of the Convention on Mutual Assistance in

Tax Matters, the OECD Convention, which this Government committed to last year and, as I said earlier, came into force the first of January. There are now 70 countries being recognised to effectively exchange information on an automatic basis for tax purposes as well as on request with the Cayman Islands.

Now, Mr. Speaker, for the public this is a compelling reason why we are so involved in the global tax and transparency initiatives. If we want to maintain the quality of life that benefits all Caymanians then we must remain involved, we must remain engaged, we must continue to influence perspectives and correct untruths. These issues are of huge importance. We must continue to be well represented. And it is not a role that industry can take. These meetings are amongst government leaders and officials. So, if we don't do it, who will speak for us?

Mr. Speaker, I note that our work in Financial Services is global. As such, it's worth talking about what our competitor jurisdictions are doing. In this quickly-changing landscape, they are researching and developing strategies in order to maintain and grow their Financial Services profile. They are well funded as well. We are being outspent. But, despite that, we are continuing to be very successful. The concern is that we make sure that we don't lose our competitive edge and we don't lose our dominant position.

For the coming year we are requesting a total of \$1.3 million for the Department of Financial Services Policy and Legislation, and for the Department for International Tax Cooperation. For the record, that is the new name for what was formerly called the Tax Information Authority.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. G. Wayne Panton:** Department for International Tax Cooperation.

That department encompasses all the competent authority functions for tax matters performed by the Authority and also handles other tax related issues including our Global Forum involvement.

Mr. Speaker, the renaming of those departments mentioned, Financial Services Secretariat to the Department of Financial Services Policy and Legislation, and the Tax Information Authority to the Department for International Tax Cooperation, is part of the restructuring of the Ministry in order to allow us to more effectively focus on their respective areas of responsibility. These two areas or entities are directly responsible for local and international Financial Services developments. And this \$1.3 million budget allocation will fund our continuing engagement with our local Financial Services industry and with the global bodies, such as the Global Forum. These functions are now more important than ever for the Ministry to maintain and enhance Financial Services as a pillar of our economy.

I consider it to be a privilege to also have responsibility for Commerce. It has a similarly broad reach and importance for Cayman. In particular, I am interested and dedicated to this because of the focus on small businesses as I mentioned earlier in my initial contribution. This is primarily a local activity. For academics and practitioners, Mr. Speaker, it is a given that countries without strong small business environments weaken their economies. Now, researchers also agree that when inward investment is brought into a country it provides overall stability as well. It does so in three ways: it protects against shocks caused by global economic disruptions; it creates short and long-term employment; and puts more money into circulation.

In Cayman, the Department of Commerce and Investment (DCI) oversees small businesses and investment services. The small business support aspect in this budget is very important, obviously, to the country and very important to the DCI. We are starting with ways to minimise the revenue impact on Government, yet provide tangible benefits to small businesses. The discounts of Trade and Business fees designed to increase as you move away from the traditional centres of business in George Town and West Bay to encourage the businesses relocating in other districts and, obviously, of course, to support those existing businesses in the districts further away from the current centres of commerce. There are other proposals which we are working on which will require the cooperation of other ministries and perhaps a change in laws to facilitate them.

But similar principles will be utilised in terms of trying to provide tangible benefits, but at the same time minimise the impacts on revenue. Of course, I am speaking specifically of the move to have fees paid rather than in one lump sum, on a quarterly basis, for example. It helps the cash flow of businesses, yet it has little specific impact on government's cash position and its revenue overall.

There is one element in relation to an Authority under my Ministry, and that is the Cayman Islands Monetary Authority, through which we will seek to encourage them to adopt the same approach to support businesses that are licensed by the Monetary Authority, that are small businesses, but are not specifically part of the Financial Services industry. I think we want to focus our efforts, certainly at this point, in trying to help those small businesses that don't have access to the larger international markets, but are trying to survive, trying to grow, and trying to maintain themselves in the domestic economy.

Mr. Speaker, to better serve the public the DCI staff revamped the Trade and Business filing system which has cut down on the time it takes to save and retrieve files. This is very significant for commerce because no one, especially small business owners, has enough time in the day to work at making their business a success; they always need more time. And

the less time they spend in a line, the more efficient we can make the process, the better off they will be, and the more successful they have an opportunity to be.

Staff also improved the workflow with Cayman Enterprise City to expedite application processes and create a new due diligence process for the special economic zone and the Local Companies (Control) Law licence applicants. The public will be glad to know that this improvement gives the relevant boards more information in approving fit and proper persons to operate businesses in the Cayman Islands. They are also continuing to review the Liquor Licensing Law and are working on a new Trade and Business Licensing Law that will be merged with the Local Companies (Control) Law. At the same time, we will be looking to address some of the loopholes that my colleague, the Fifth Elected Member for George Town, mentioned in his contribution yesterday.

In relation to the Liquor Licensing Law, Mr. Speaker, we have a committee that was established and is reviewing that law and proposing amendments to the law. In addition, they were charged with assessing the position in relation to the existing moratorium which was set out in the existing law and making recommendations as to the approach that Government should take in relation to that. The recommendation that has been made is that the existing moratorium should be lifted. One of the very significant reasons for that is the black market that essentially exists at this point in relation to these licenses (and I refer to it as the "black market" simply because that is how it is typically described in the business community), where licenses are being offered for sale at very substantial values and, in some cases, many cases, they are being essentially rented for significant sums of money as well.

I think one of the issues there is that the Government gets absolutely no benefit from this. It doesn't limit the number of restaurants and bars that are serving the public because there are quite a number of these licenses out there. So, the recommendation is that this moratorium be lifted. That is a recommendation which Cabinet will be considering in the coming month.

Another initiative, which was mentioned by the Premier, is the consideration of the Sunday Trading Law and whether we should engage in a process of consultation. I think our determination has been that we will engage in a public consultation on this issue to essentially get the feedback of the public of the country. It is clearly a sensitive issue and that has to be respected. I think our traditional Christian values have to be respected. But equally, there are a number of competing factors which suggest that it is something that we should consider and that we should engage the public in discussing. Of course, the Government will, having gone through the consultation process,

make a decision based on the preponderance of views.

There is also an initiative in relation to the conversion of the country to Daylight Savings. This is something that has been discussed for many years and the Chamber of Commerce, in particular, has advocated quite strongly for many years for the introduction of Daylight Savings to bring this county in line with its major trading partner, which is the United States. So, that is another initiative that we will be having discussions on and Cabinet will be considering as a proposal for discussion by my Ministry from the DCI in particular.

Mr. Speaker, the DCI has done a lot of work with a reduced level of staffing. I have to congratulate them for the efforts they have made and the work they have done. They have two posts for liquor licensing for 357 establishments. One person for enforcement for 4,500 businesses, and three staff members on trade and business licensing, which sees 400 applications per month, around 70 of which are new grants. If this budget is approved they will be able to hire three new staff [members] to better serve the country and to reduce the levels of stress and work that the existing staff have to cope with.

The DCI also has responsibility for guiding investors through the business establishment process by providing information on incentives, legislation, or current regulatory requirements and the steps required to accomplish these. I have not said anything in relation to posts for that area because, unfortunately, we have none at the moment. It has been an area, unfortunately, that has been a victim of the budget cuts which we have been mandated to provide. But we are making that up by being more engaged at the ministry level and available to discuss the needs and interests with potential investors. I know there are other ministries, including, for example, the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Tourism which can, and do, assist in this area. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, it is probably fair to say that it is not ideal, but I will be seeking in the next budget to deepen our capability and performance in this area.

In addition to DCI, a core department is also the General Registry which performs the critical functions of registering business and generating significant revenue collection. The Registry continues to pursue initiatives that will enhance services available to the Financial Services sector and the wider community. One such initiative will be introduced later this year with the implementation of modernised Intellectual Property legislation. This legislation will provide for direct registration of trademarks in the Cayman Islands. Currently, the process involves registration in the United Kingdom and application for extension to the Cayman Islands. The benefit, obviously, is that we do not need to pre-register the UK and will not have to deal with the Madrid protocol. It would also enhance the attractiveness of the jurisdiction to global players

in the field of research and development who may be interested in relocating to the Cayman Islands.

I think this represents an excellent investment for us and should generate significant revenues. I think we are looking at somewhere around anticipated \$5 million to \$7 million in the next three to four years.

In the coming budget year, General Registry plans to expand its online services, which now includes the Companies Register, to include a register for partnerships. It's also budgeted for the conversion of existing manual records for partnerships to an electronic format in an ongoing effort to increase efficiencies and manage storage and other associated costs. I am pleased to say that the Registry's introduction of online transactions now boasts more than 900 active users.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable Minister, is this a convenient time to take the luncheon break? Or are you close to finishing?

**Hon. G. Wayne Panton:** No sir. I probably have a little bit longer. So, this would be a convenient time.

**The Deputy Speaker:** This honourable House now suspends until 1:45 pm.

**Proceedings suspended at 12:30 pm**

**Proceedings resumed at 1:49 pm**

**The Deputy Speaker:** This Honourable House now resumes.

Please be seated.

I now call on the Honourable Minister of Finance Services to continue his debate.

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

*[Continuation thereof]*

**Hon. G. Wayne Panton:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if I can confirm the time remaining.

**The Deputy Speaker:** We're working on that right now.

**Hon. G. Wayne Panton:** All right.

Mr. Speaker, when I sat down earlier for the lunch break, I had begun talking about the General Registry's introduction of online transactions, and I indicated there were 900 active users, and that this technology—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Minister, sorry to interrupt. One hour and three minutes remaining.

**Hon. G. Wayne Panton:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The introduction of this technology had significantly reduced the turnaround time on services. So, instead of waiting for three to four working days for regular service, clients can receive some certificates in eight hours. The time for express certificates has been lowered from 24 hours to 4 minutes. All of this provides significant enhancement of service for those service providers within the Financial Services industry.

There is another aspect of it, another feature, which allows clients, users of this online service, to redirect the delivery of their documents to their business partners, even if those business partners are not subscribers to the Registry's online service. All of these features, the enhanced delivery times are all very positive improvements on the delivery of service which will continue to make our Financial Services industry efficient and a model of service delivery.

The Registry is also in the process of developing a client portal which will very substantially improve the series that are available. I have no doubt that this service will be readily embraced by the Financial Services sector and, in particular, some of the smaller operators within Financial Services in Cayman. It will significantly contribute to a leveling of the playing field, so to speak, because for those operators who do not have the resources or the staff to develop their own portals, can easily use this portal provided by the General Registry. It certainly will enhance and improve the level of service provided by those businesses in the Financial Services sector across the board. It significantly elevates the platform of service for everyone.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, the operational costs for General Registry will be lower in respect of providing this service. And we haven't provided any specific funding for this portal in the 2014/15 budget because it is effectively being done as a joint venture with a private sector entity which has been involved with the Government for some time. This is indicative of the significant amount of enhancements to Government's services and the delivery of service that can be accomplished by this sort of approach without having significant cost elements to deal with by Government.

The next level of enhancement of the General Registry system, including this portal to be rolled out in a few months . . . I don't want to say too much about it at this point other than those high level indications that I have made. But it will be quite significant. And I am not aware of any other competitor jurisdiction which has this facility available. In fact, I think there are others who have contacted General Registry to see if there is a way they can assist them in elevating the delivery of their services in a similar fashion. Of course, that's not likely to happen. Nobody gives up a competitive advantage that easily.

Mr. Speaker, the amount I am requesting for DCI and the General Registry this year is \$3.64 mil-

lion. This will fund the continuation of provisions to a raft of laws, many which I have mentioned earlier, including Trade and Business, Liquor Licensing, Tobacco Laws, Special Economic Zones Law, the Local Companies (Control) Law. It will allow DCI to again organise a small business conference which was held last month. That has become very useful and very popular amongst business owners.

The funding will also provide staff who can provide technical assistance to new entrepreneurs who may have nothing but a solid idea for a business plan on the proverbial napkin. It will also help some of our more seasoned business owners, and it will help Cayman, as a country, to create a regulatory and legal environment that economists would recommend is necessary for a successful thriving economy.

On the issue of the Trade and Business Licenses, and the provision of services to small businesses, Mr. Speaker, one of the . . . well, I think statistically there is a high rate of failure in businesses. One of the proven reasons for that is the failure to do effective business plans, to plan properly. If we can, through the provision of advisory services with DCI, help small businesses to plan better, create better business plans and understand exactly where their challenges are going to be and how to meet those challenges, we allow them a greater opportunity to succeed. We allow them a greater opportunity to be an active participant in the economy to create jobs and be successful. So, we need to improve the ratios for a greater chance of success.

Mr. Speaker, Financial Services and Commerce take place in a 24-hour, 7-day a week world. It's global. And in this Ministry, nowhere is that more clearly felt than in General Registry. We cannot tell a partner in a law firm in Hong Kong or in the UK that Cayman can't process a transaction for a couple of days because we're in a different time zone, or folks are sleeping just now. But the improvements in General Registry also benefit local commerce. So if the online system improves its transaction speed for the Hong Kong based client, they also speed it up for those in Cayman, the small businessman or woman here. And the use of this technology improves the convenience and efficiency, and that's what we are seeking to achieve with the acceleration of Government's E-Government plans that my colleague, the Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town spoke of earlier in greater detail. This is a platform that I think will accelerate. I am looking forward with great anticipation for the significant benefits that I think will be in place over the next year.

Mr. Speaker, I now turn to the Environment. It is no surprise that this is a particular passion of mine. The Department of Environment has ably protected the environment of Cayman, particularly the marine environment, over the decades. I believe the people of this country are very pleased that . . . I know the people of this country are very pleased that the National

Conservation Law was passed last December. I am particularly pleased to say that this law will begin its implementation in the next few weeks because we have been waiting on two amending [Bills] to be dealt with in this honourable House which are now tabled to be dealt with in this Meeting. So, I am very hopeful that we can get those dealt with and get the law implemented and begin the process of fully protecting the environment of the Cayman Islands, both from a marine and terrestrial perspective.

I know the Member for North Side raised this yesterday. I can assure him I will share his joy in seeing that commencement order published in the Gazette in the not-too-distant future. Of course, the Member was aware that the Bills were being presented for passage and those were the two things that were outstanding in relation to implementation of the Law.

The DoE's spending plan includes finalising and agreeing on a proposal to enhance the marine park system, to continue the projects that were funded through the Darwin Initiative. Staff have also been requested to begin the implementation process and funds have been allocated to implement the Endangered Species (Trade and Transport) Law, otherwise known as the CITES legislation. That legislation was passed in this honourable House in 2004 and it has never been implemented. However, we do have a deadline to implement that by June 2015.

CITES is an acronym for Convention on International Trade in Endangers Species of Flora and Fauna. The UK is a committed supporter of CITES, and it believes it is one of the most important international agreements for global species conservation. So, under the convention each party is obliged to put in place implementing legislation to deliver the requirements of the convention or risk facing trade sanctions.

Mr. Speaker, some may mistakenly think that CITES is just another environmental issue. It is not. It has the potential for very serious local commerce issues if we don't implement it properly. If we don't implement the law, as passed in 2004, artisans will not be able to make and sell products derived in whole or in part from internationally listed endangered species, including conch shell and black coral. There are many local artisans who manufacture jewelry out of these items. There are many who participate in the local craft market that serves the cruise tourism market in particular. And all of those will be negatively affected.

There are other significant knock-on effects if we don't enact the law, or bring the law into effect. Importers will not be able to supply restaurants and supermarkets with imported conch and lobster meat. The demand will still be there from locals and visitors, but restaurants will not be able to obtain them through importation and that will drive the poaching of our local assets to provide and serve this market.

Of course, it will affect employment if our artisans can't sell their works. So, there are impacts

across the board—artisans out of work; artisans unable to earn a living; restaurants losing money; impacts on our local marine assets. These are things we cannot allow to happen. So, we will be dealing with this issue in time for the implementation deadline.

In addition to CITES, in the coming year the DoE also plans to reactivate the discussions and drafting of a climate change policy for Cayman for Cabinet's consideration. They will be implementing the newly awarded Darwin project on the socioeconomics of marine turtle protection in the Cayman Islands, continue working on the Sister Islands Iguana conservation, and conduct parrot population surveys with assistance from experts from the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The last point in relation to DoE is an important one. And that is that the department plans to conduct an economic valuation of marine resources of the Cayman Islands. I am pleased with this because it underscores the connection between the economy and the environment. We say frequently that our Islands are jewels. This tells us what the jewels are worth.

Mr. Speaker, before leaving the Department of Environment, I would also just quickly mention in the context of conversations that occur in the public arena fairly often—or criticism, I should say, which is directed towards the Department of Environment quite often—that these criticisms come about because the department will always be seeking to give advice on how best to protect and conserve our natural marine environment, terrestrial environment. I think there are times when the reputation, credibility, perhaps even the qualifications of the DoE are brought into question by people who do not appreciate and do not wish to acknowledge the advice given. It is quite interesting that the DoE is very much recognised around the region for its level of professionalism, scientific knowledge and skill, and the amazing amount of work they have done over the past decades. This extends as far as the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanographic Atmospheric Administration, of which I have had the pleasure of discussing some of these issues with some of their senior scientists. They have, in no uncertain terms, given very glowing assessments of our Department of Environment, the staff and the work they do.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to say that I think it will be interesting to this honourable House and the public that the chief officers and department heads of the Ministry have been planning their activities and preparing budgets differently over the last short time. Instead of staying trapped in a mindset of doing for the sake of doing, which leads to a very inefficient process of simply updating numbers from previous years, they have taken a hard look at what the core functions of the Ministry are, what they should be, and how best to allocate the resources to those functions. And this work is paying off. Some activities

have been discontinued and it has certainly brought about beneficial changes in the way the Ministry operates. Core functions have become more distinct and that allows departments to focus more clearly on what's important, and to collaborate more efficiently and effectively.

Restructuring is not easy. The staff had to work quite hard, even in circumstances where attending global discussions that have been going on, for example, in the Financial Services area and colleagues back in Cayman have had to work doubly hard to cover the services, provide the services to strict deadlines, for example, in relation to regulatory assessments and exchange agreements. Nevertheless, the staff in the Ministry and its departments understand very deeply that what they do benefits the people of the Cayman Islands, benefits this country, the business owner, the investor, all of us. And I thank them for their commitment.

Mr. Speaker, just turning to the Statutory Authorities and Government Companies (SAGCs) under the control of my Ministry: Beginning with the Cayman Islands Development Bank, the bank has been conservative in estimating its loan loss provisions because of the nature of lending and the economic conditions. This has led to the bank reporting a net profit for the 10 months ended 30 April 2014 of \$134,898 compared to a net loss for the previous year of \$112,000. The bank has, as Mr. Archer mentioned in his Budget [Address], an amount of \$4.8 million on fixed deposit. And that is expected to be \$6.1 million by 30 June 2015. And that amount is earmarked to assist in repaying significant loans which come due fairly shortly.

For the year to date, the bank has approved \$800,000 in student loans. And these are remarkable results considering the lack of capital that the bank has had and the shrinking assets and a very high delinquency rate, particularly in relation to those funds which had been borrowed under the past administration. But they continue their cost cutting expenses and their financial position has certainly marginally improved.

Mr. Speaker, in relation to the Cayman Islands Monetary Authority [CIMA], in this most recent fiscal year, it has collected more than \$100 million in regulated entity fees for Government. That was a significant increase over the \$79.56 million for the prior year. Net income for the Monetary Authority was \$587,000 for the 2012/13 year, which was allocated to the Authority's capital expenditure reserves. Just for clarity, Mr. Speaker, the Cayman Islands Monetary Authority collects a lot of revenue for the government. It is government revenue and not specifically entity revenue. So, in saying that they have had a \$587,000 net income, is not an accurate reflection of the value of the services provided and the net benefit to the Authority or the country.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note that as of May last year, CIMA signed 27 MoUs [Memorandum of Understanding] with European countries. That enables the continued marketing of Cayman Islands Hedge Funds throughout the European Union. In December of last year the Financial Stability Board confirmed its designation of the Cayman Islands as a jurisdiction that demonstrates sufficiently strong adherence to international standards of cooperation on exchange of information.

In its efforts to protect investors, Mr. Speaker, while retaining the Cayman Islands' position as a leading jurisdiction for mutual funds, the Authority conducted a survey of hedge funds corporate governance practices (which has been detailed previously in this House). That led to the enactment of the Directors Registration and Licensing Law in the last Meeting of this House. I am pleased to report that we are well underway to having the regulations in respect of that law brought into effect very shortly so that the Monetary Authority can implement that. It certainly will be a revenue-raising measure for the Authority itself. As entity revenue, that will allow the Authority to cover a fair bit of its cost and reduce the amount of contribution which government has to make to the Authority in terms of the purchase of outputs.

In relation to the stock exchange, in the current fiscal year it has introduced specialist companies Listing Rules and admission of companies to the official list under this regime. It has had expanded equity listings, launched XETRA, which is the Deutsche Börse trading platform for trading equities, bonds, warrants, exchange trader funds and other instruments. They have also developed new Listing Rules for start-ups, retail funds, exchange trader funds, shipping companies, forestry funds, and clean technology companies. For the coming year plans are to market new products introduced last year, continue diversification of a range of products and services currently offered and develop new trading markets. It also intends to attract new broker members and listing agents and will examine the feasibility of establishing a central securities depository system for clearing of trades locally.

Moving on to the Maritime Authority [MACI], I know the Member for North Side was particularly interested in our last meeting in the performance of the Authority. I am happy to tell this honourable House that amongst its successes, the Authority can count on a turnaround of a loss of \$377,000 for the 2012/13 year to an expected projected surplus as at the end of this year of around \$500,000. Mr. Speaker, that is certainly better than an \$800,000 improvement.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. G. Wayne Panton:** They've also implemented new crew compliance documentation services in Singapore, broadened its survey network to include Chi-

na, Brazil, the Philippines and Australia. It has also implemented the Maritime Labour Convention of 2006.

They have now certified the majority of vessels on the register affected by this convention to ensure that Cayman complies with global standards.

Mr. Speaker, some additional initiatives for MACI for the 2014/15 year will include Government's consideration of various initiatives to enhance MACI's business prospects, including allowing for the registration of cruise ships and for the implementation of a one-stop-shop type of arrangement which allows clients to obtain company documentation, radio station licensing, and a certificate of registry, all through one of MACI's offices to complete vessel registration.

Mr. Speaker, these accomplishments and plans of the SAGCs under the Ministry are intended to support Commerce, support Financial Services and continue to contribute significantly to government's coffers. We are working very hard to ensure that that is the case. I am pleased to say that government contributions to these four SAGCs which I have mentioned have been reduced to CI\$2.9 million. And they are contributing more than \$101 million to government's revenue.

Mr. Speaker, for the record, I am proud of the work that the staff of the Ministry and its departments continue to do as they implement processes that improve efficiency and effectiveness in support of Cayman's critically important economic sectors that provide major sources of revenue for public services. I thank them for their dedication and service and I am pleased that we were in a position to be able to reward them in some way for their hard work with a 2.5 per cent gratuitous payment which has been announced.

I would also like to thank my colleague, Councillor McTaggart, for the important work he has done in a number of areas, including chairing the FACTA Implementation Committee. The deadline in respect of having the necessary regulatory framework in place is imminent. But because he has ably led this implementation committee I am completely confident that we have been put in a position where we will be able to meet that deadline.

I would also like to thank my colleagues for their cooperation and assistance over this year. I would like to thank, in particular, the Premier and the staff of the Cabinet Office and, of course, our own office. It's a privilege and an honour to have completed one year of service to this country and the district of Bodden Town, in particular, and I look forward to continuing our best efforts to make a real difference in the lives of our people.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I end up where I began, by congratulating our country, that place which is our home and our land, on a successful year, one that we can be happy about and one which will motivate us to continue to do better always so that our

children inherit the best that the Cayman Islands can be. This 2014/15 Budget is a strong balanced step in that direction. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister.

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

I acknowledge the honourable Member for the district of East End.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean, Member for East End:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I shall take them out of their misery.

[Laughter]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** They wait here with bated breath for me to get on my feet when the convention is that Ministers speak first and tell us what their agenda is for the year and then we debate it. But they are waiting to hear what Mr. Miller and I have to say. So, I shall not punish them any longer, because whether I say it now or after they have all spoken, it is going to be the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, let me commence by looking briefly at the second Budget that the Government has presented here. And whilst I can congratulate my good friend—and I trust that the Government will not take that out of context now—the Minister for Finance, because I know he works hard, I understand that his objective is to stabilise the Government's finances and to try and bring it as quickly as possible in line with the requirements of the FFR [Framework for Fiscal Responsibility]. And whilst I believe he is doing a good job with that, I believe we should all recognise that we are not the only ones who are trying to do that since this recession is global, the meltdown that caused the recession some seven to eight years ago. And it is prudent for all of us to get back on track and ensure we are frugal in the running of a country; not only the Cayman Islands but everywhere. But in this case it is our country and we need to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I should hasten to warn my good friend that a country's success is not only measured by its balance sheet. Whilst it is an extremely good position to be in, there is a socio-economic measure that we have to intermingle into that success story. And, Mr. Speaker, I must warn my good friend that I did not hear any clamour since Monday to embrace the budget, because it is expected by the people whom we serve, that we ensure the country is on a good financial footing. But what I have been hearing is that Janet Jackson song—"What have you done for me lately?" That is what people ask. And this is no disrespect to the Minister of Finance or to the Government. It is necessary that we multitask and understand what our people are going through.

Mr. Speaker, the Governor, in her very bland Throne Speech, spoke of her experiences here with our people, and it ties straight into what the masses, people in our country—not only our country, all countries—expect of a duly elected government. She says on page 3: **"On a personal note, since my arrival in the Cayman Islands, I have grown to appreciate and admire the character of the people. It is these people whom the members of this House are privileged to serve. Caymanians are welcoming, warm-hearted, intelligent, and proud of their culture. But, increasingly, they are cautious.**

**"The onus is on Government, and on the members of this honourable House, to be worthy of their trust. To do this we must demonstrate by our words and actions that we have their best interests at heart."**

Now, Mr. Speaker, those are good Soundbytes that we must try to live by. We must endeavor to fulfill.

Mr. Speaker, despite the Government's best efforts to placate the people with their offerings in the budget, duty on fuel reduction, reduction in import fees for traders, the Civil Service getting a one-off 2.5 per cent bonus, and giving concessions to small businesses, in spite of all of that, Mr. Speaker, people are crying, people are hurting. And in the words of the Governor, Mrs. Kilpatrick, we have to demonstrate that we have their best interest at heart.

Mr. Speaker, I have always contended that politics to the individual can be defined by three words: tangibility, measurability, and visibility. We are not getting those across to our people.

Mr. Speaker, I know my good friend, the Member for North Side, said he was not going to debate the Premier's statement. Well, at the time I believed you could not debate it, but that was last Monday, today is Friday. And on page 1, Mr. Speaker, the Premier said: **"Last year we told the Country that this Government's goal was to put the Cayman Islands back on course, basing our plans on economic growth through fiscal prudence. Our mission has been to stabilise, prioritise and energise."** I think the charge has run out of the battery, because I do not see any energy in the people to believe anything is in it for them.

Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility to make our people feel a sense of ownership, a sense of belonging, a sense of sharing in this economic miracle, albeit hitting a few bumps in the road right now. Mr. Speaker, the Government, in its efforts to placate those same people, walk around George Town with a placard saying in one year they got 162 jobs for Caymanians. Mr. Speaker, I am going to answer that question and that statement for the people of this country. It is not enough!

When this Government took office it was a question as to how many people were unemployed. It was somewhere between 10 and 11 per cent unem-

ployment which equated into some 2,000 Caymanians. Mr. Speaker, 162 is not enough out of 2,000. It cannot be. It never will be.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** That's only those who are with the NWDA, that's not [INAUDIBLE] from government.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Mr. Speaker, increasingly, I am hearing Caymanians complain about the lack of opportunity in their country. Mr. Speaker, all of us in here, each have a responsibility to ensure that we do this right. Some 40 years ago this miracle started.

Mr. Speaker, my good friend, the Minister for Finance, said in his delivery . . . and I am trying to find it, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to misquote him because I am sure he will not be too kind about that. But he said, in essence (I really need to find this), that . . . Oh, page 1: Mr. Speaker, he said: "**We must recognize and acknowledge the mistakes of the past and then set about correcting them in a manner that minimizes the risk of reoccurrence.**" Agreed!

Now, some 40 years ago, I believe he was talking about, when this economic miracle started, there may have been mistakes. Maybe he was strong in his words about mistakes. I would like to call them omissions or oversights. We have experienced double-digit growth ever since in many years.

At the time, Mr. Speaker, I don't think anyone in leadership in this country anticipated the kind of success that we were going to achieve. But they knew they had to prepare for the future. So, they tried at least putting something in place. I want to say they omitted, there were oversights on their parts. And when we look at it now in retrospect we can say it should have been done this way, it should have been done that way, to protect Caymanians, to ensure they enjoy opportunities in their own country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say we missed it then for whatever reason. No disrespect to Sir Vassel [Johnson], Mr. Warren [Conolly], Mr. Jim Bodden, bless their souls, and the likes, and it goes on and on.

The downturn in our economy since 2007 and the necessity now to rebuild gives us a perfect opportunity to get it right. And this Government is responsible for that. This Government has a responsibility to the people because they hold the reins of this country. They are the Executive. Let not the opinion I saw in the [Cayman] Reporter today by one Dr. Livingston about a runaway executive, be our legacy. And about the importation of the Westminster system and how we in the Caribbean did not do—

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** [INAUDIBLE] running away.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier wants to know where we are running away to. I just want to know where he is running from.

[Inaudible interjection]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** I don't expect that you are going to run any place. Just don't be a runaway executive that does not deal with what has to be dealt with now. There needs to be multitasking on the part of the Executive now to ensure Caymanians get it right. Ensure, now that we are rebuilding, that we rebuild properly, that opportunities be provided for our people, that they are not feeling marginalised like they have felt for the last 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, I tried that in the last Finance Committee in camera. I asked the other 17 Members of this Parliament to join with me and all of us sit down and look at the laws and the issues and the policies and the rules and everything that governs us and drives us. Right in the committee room I begged. We agreed on it. We agreed to set up a working committee led by the Deputy Premier.

To this day we have not had one meeting. So, do not tell me I have not tried to play my part. Don't tell me I have not extended myself to help run my country. I don't want to hear the Government repeat saying that again, because I have heard it too many times that the Government has extended its hand, its olive branch and I swatted away.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** You have, many times.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Hear the Premier again about 'I have'.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** I can't take any more kicks in my face.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Mr. Speaker, it is this same Premier that is saying we are not going to meet, I guess, because he holds the control.

[Inaudible interjection]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** The Deputy Premier was supposed to call a meeting. The Deputy Premier came over here and asked us when we would be available, including the Leader of the Opposition too. And we told him it was up to those who are on the Executive to decide when they could meet. This was August . . . October . . . October last year. [counting] November, December, January, February, March, April, May. That's seven? (Doing pretty good with my counting, though). Seven months I have heard nothing. I don't want to hear again that I did not extend myself and take my responsibility seriously.

Mr. Speaker, I requested of the Finance Minister who was Chair to do that. The Speaker was there too, and we all agreed with it. And we all said that the Premier would do a press conference when we

reached that point and we would all stand behind him in solidarity, that that is what we were going to do for our people.

That gives Arden too much credit. The people know today, though.

Mr. Speaker, our people are hurting. Our people . . . and before I go there, let me say that it was interesting, and I enjoyed listening to the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Financial Services, the Member for George Town, the Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town, I enjoyed listening to them between yesterday and today about the many things they have done for their constituencies. I really enjoyed that because, Mr. Speaker, that is what this is all about; being able to fulfill your political goals during your tenure. But it appears to me that East End has been put on an embargo. I can't get up here and say anything that has happened, other than that which I have done—or very little. That is not a good thing. That is not the way to win the seat in East End. Do what I have asked and take credit for that and then you can win the seat.

Mr. Premier, are you listening?

That's how you do it. Do not punish me because you want the seat and, by extension, you are punishing the people. Our people are hurting.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I hear the Member there asking if they have taken the decision . . . that is the Minister for . . . what is that? Health?

**An Hon. Member:** Yeah man.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Yeah.

**An Hon. Member:** Same said guy.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Same said *guy*.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if he remembers. I don't know. And, Mr. Speaker, to my good friend the Minister of Health, I only say that because I can only make some assumptions. He was part of Cabinet the three times that I have been there. And each time I went, Mr. Speaker, I did not sit there and rely upon that between my ears to make the presentation. I left nice little presentation folders with each Minister and the Governor and the Deputy Governor and the Attorney General and the Clerk of Cabinet and the Secretary of Cabinet. My most recent one . . . since he is trying to find out from his colleagues when they decided to put a political moratorium on the district of East End, I would read the first page of my presentation to them.

Mr. Speaker, I wrote: "Madam President, Mr. Premier and Members of Cabinet, please allow me to once again thank you for this opportunity to make this presentation to Cabinet on behalf of the people of

East End, in accordance with section 47(3) of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009.

"While I am appreciative of the opportunity and your efforts to ensure I am given the chance to inform Cabinet on a regular basis of the needs of the people of my constituency, as per the Constitution, respectfully, I must record my disappointment that there has been little progress on several issues that I represented to Cabinet on my two previous visits in August and December of 2013. Accordingly, this presentation will primarily be a resubmission." [UNVERIFIED QUOTE]

You remember that? You read that?

"The most vexing issue that has apparently not been addressed is that of proper policing in the constituency. Residents are becoming agitated about the lack of police and the increased criminal activity in the district. Many continue to express disappointment in the lack of response from police. Drug dealers are openly selling and using drugs and police are not responding when called. Residents are now refusing to call and threatening to take matters into their own hands. Certainly, a situation that must not continue to exist." [UNVERIFIED QUOTE].

What am I to expect? What am I to assume if, after a very long period . . . it is not like I do not keep papers and Cabinet has not been presented with them. They know what the issues are. They are many, many issues that I brought to the fore. I also offered to deal with each Minister individually.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know the reason why the many issues have not been addressed. I make the representation on behalf of the people of my constituency. I am their voice. I am but one person.

Remember . . . I must give credit where it is due. This Government has invited me three times in less than a year. The previous Government did it once in four.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** But at least they were doing stuff trying to get rid of me. Even though they were giving it to Johnnie—

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** We are going to do that too.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** My opponent.

Hear the Premier saying he is going to do that. Don't worry he is going to do that. Mind, this man is threatening me every day with my seat.

*[Laughter]*

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** You better be worried. Got a good candidate too!

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I want him to know that this is a two-way street. The same street that he is coming to East End on, I'm coming to George Town on too.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** That's all right.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** And if you think, because I am not worthy of being a part of those organisations which he is a part of, that I can't hold something until then, watch me. You watch me. And he, most of all, knows that I am in my glory when that mic is turned on during campaign. He knows that. He knows that I have some currency in this country. He knows that.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** That's why I'm on the Opposition Bench. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I hope you don't start crying when you are out *ya*.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** I'll be home then.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** You'll be home then. Thank God I will be able to send you home; good.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Mr. Speaker, that is good for a little now and again. I hope people don't think now that there is any animosity between the Premier and me.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** No, I would not want the country to think that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** That's good.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Between me and him, he has the icepick poised over my back, not me. I have nothing in my hand.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Because he is threatening me. He has been threatening me now for one year.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** You and Ezzard, all two.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Boy, if you were to spend . . . Mr. Speaker, if the Premier was to spend as much time on assisting Caymanians as he has spent on threatening me, what a country we would have!

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** But, Mr. Speaker, he knows that these little treads that I have on here are not shaking. He has not frightened me yet.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I'm going back because the Premier is trying to distract me so that I can waste my time.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** He thinks he is smart, you see.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, let me get back to the subject that is vexing and of concern to me. And I am going to get back to the police, because . . . where is his little report card? I need to get one marker for that.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Yeah I have 'F' written on it in red. So . . . I had to grade it. *Unna* brought it out, I had to grade it. I graded it, of course.

Mr. Speaker, I will get back to the bold one-line statement in this little blue book which says: "Royal Cayman Islands Police Service: The reopening of the East End and North Side Police Stations and increase staffing to support the police in these districts." I will get back to that one too. Okay? Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, more and more Caymanians, particularly those who are coming back as young Caymanians, are finding it difficult to integrate into this society, to get opportunities to fulfill their dreams in their own country. I know the Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town is aggravated by this particular subject, like I am.

We like to say that they need experience. We like to say that their irresponsible and we cannot put them on the job so they need to go someplace else to get experience. Mr. Speaker, no matter where they go they are going to have to get the opportunity to get the experience. But here we are, young Caymanians, we are killing their spirits. We are killing them, Mr. Speaker. And I want to make this one straight. Mr. Speaker, I want to clear my interest here. I have a vested interest, a big one, in this.

Mr. Speaker, this is personal, and I make no excuse for using my privileges to bring it up on this floor. No excuse. If the people of this country want me, that is fine. If they don't, that is fine too. But I am going to survive in this country. And my family is going to survive. I have avoided saying anything about this, for the specific reason that I expect that my family are given opportunities in their country. I expect them to work to get their ideals, their dreams. I expect them to do that, like I have done.

I expect my two children and all of my nephews and nieces to live in their country. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that for whatever reason, my family is not

targeted politically, and I ain't talking about the big 'P', I'm talking about politically. Okay. I trust, Mr. Speaker, that that is not the case, because we all have children or we have grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I am speaking specifically about my nephew, Darren McLean. I have avoided this for the specific reason to make him do this on his own. I wanted him to understand what it is to succeed without his uncle's political influence, or any other influence I may have. But since we are on this subject I am going to talk about it, Mr. Speaker.

My nephew had a dream to be a helicopter pilot from the time he was born, from the time he could talk. That's all he ever wanted. The advent of the police helicopter compounded that in my nephew. My brother (his dad) went to the Government of the day, and, yes, he was given a scholarship under the Nation Building fund. I did not even know he had applied. Mr. Speaker, my nephew was successful. He notified all and sundry before he got back, before he was finished, of his impending completion of that course. Upon completion, the way my nephew was treated, I hope that never happens to anyone in this country again.

Mr. Speaker, it is an abomination for the Government, whether it is the elected arm or the civil arm, it matters not to me. Today, if it was anyone else's child I would have to defend them. It's time for me to defend my family—a family that has never held their hand out to any government for anything! And the one time a 21-year-old comes home, first Caymanian to ever qualify, and you are going to tell me that we don't embrace that.

We don't embrace that? And we have three captains up there flying the helicopter.

Mr. Speaker, there is no way my 21-year-old nephew can fly a helicopter and be in command of any helicopter. Nowhere in the world unless he is in the army so that the can send him to go and kill people. That's what they do. They fast track their training so that they can go into war to kill people. That is not in this case. There is no way my nephew could have been in command of any helicopter. But that is the excuse the Government is making!

Wrong! Wrong! He is no different from any other Caymanian in this country.

So, those who want to get up and speak afterwards, I won't be here to listen to them.

Mr. Speaker, what they did for my nephew was to give him a list of companies on the Internet that he should apply to.

All we wanted was for that child to join the police force as a constable so that he could go up there to wash the [helicopter] and help them with maintenance and every now and again he might get a little hitch ride on it.

Every Minister was written to and one responded, the Minister of Finance. You think that is

fair? Is that what we are doing the rest of our children? And I hear it every day.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Arden let me tell you, Buster came and sat and talked with me for one hour— about I didn't respond? [INAUDIBLE]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** You say what you want, Mr. Premier, when you get up.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Just tell the truth; that's all I ask.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** He came and saw you, of course. You turned it over to one of your chief officers and he gave him a list of places to apply to!

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Who said I didn't respond? [INAUDIBLE]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** *Unna* all have children you know. *Unna* don't know where they are going to be. *Unna* do not know what is going to happen to your children. I have never begged the Government for anything, nor has either one of my children or nephews or nieces.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Don't worry, I will tell the whole story when I get up.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Mr. Premier, you can tell the whole story. It does not bother me one minute. We have one side.

[Inaudible interjection]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I am going to tell you how simple this is, that nobody even looked into. I am going to tell this country that if everyone in my family has to die a pauper, that child is going to succeed. Watch how we do it.

*Unna* need to be careful man. *Unna* need to be careful how *unna* do this thing. Okay? It's wrong. By any stretch of the imagination, Mr. Speaker, it is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, we have not stopped our efforts to get this child in his chosen field. We have applied to the navy in England and he is awaiting a response for his acceptance there. We'll do what we have to do. Don't worry about that. And Government didn't help him!

"On Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, the JDF in collaboration with the Canadian Armed Forces have been operating a flight school in Jamaica at the Norman Manley International Airport since about 2007. This venture replaces the training that was once done by the Canadian Government CAF for Jamaica. The school has been very successful and offers training to the highest international standard. It is regularly evaluated

by the Canadian Armed Forces. I recommend it highly. They have trained international students and I am sure, given the close ties between Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, they would be happy to undertake training of military/paramilitary pilots for the Cayman Islands. It is not inconceivable that an attachment to the JDF air wing could be organised in order to facilitate the building of experience for the young man. I shall be happy to facilitate and contact between the two countries and the JDF in particular.” [UNVERIFIED QUOTE]

Understand how easy it is? A Jamaican in JDF is helping my nephew. You need to stop talking about finances and start looking at our people too.

Mr. Speaker, it is wrong. And I can't accuse the Premier or the Ministers of exercising their political might against my family. I can't do that. What I am accusing them of is passing it on to someone and then they do nothing and the political arm does not do anything with that. And the political thing may very well be coming from somewhere else.

Mr. Speaker, my good friend, the Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town, spoke quite passionately here today (I believe it was this morning) about what people think of us, and those who are not from here, in particular, criticising us as legislators.

Mr. Speaker, the first time I know that Lester McLean raised a thief was when I came in here. I hope that my contribution to this country will be viewed by my people as being worthy. Could never be this is going to be the dividend that I am going to reap out of giving up so much, like all of us, that my family in the future is going to be pushed out of the country that we have built, just like the rest of those young ones.

Mr. Speaker, can you imagine what they are doing to them? Just for a minute imagine: Darren McLean has an uncle who stands on the Floor of the Legislative Assembly with some little clout of an opportunity to speak about it. Can you imagine what they are doing to those who have no avenue to speak? And then they call those who look down upon us from foreign countries, like the Jordanian, who wants to advise us on how to run our country and we sit down here and allow ourselves dog eat dog. Is that what we are going to get? Is that what all of you young ones are going to get for giving up so much of a bright future to make a contribution to your country? Will that be our ultimate end? You all need to think about it.

This is my fourth term here. I hope to God I did something. This is your first. You only got one year yesterday. I hope that you will be here for a long time—not under that Party, but for a long time—to make your contribution. Are you going to get the same thing with your children if you just happen to come on this side? We have to think about it.

When I sit with my 21-year-old . . . and, Mr. Speaker, he said that he is not coming back to his country. Why? There is nothing here for him. I am a

legislator of 13 years and I can't do anything about it. That means I have done nothing to energise my child.

We need to get together and defend our people. A budget means nothing if our people are not a part of this country. It is for naught, Mr. Minister! It is for nothing, absolutely nothing if our people are not a part of it. We cannot survive like this, Mr. Speaker. We cannot.

A country lives on in perpetuity. Why? Because of the next generation, and the next, and the next, and the next. We are doing a poor job in preparing them for the opportunities. They have become disillusioned, not only because of us. Like the Minister of Finance said, this financial thing that we are in, the mistakes did not start today. It started a long time ago. Let us be the ones to correct it! Let us be the ones to leave a lasting legacy on the future of this country. Let us leave our footprints on the sand on West Bay Beach. We don't need any statues. Let us be the ones to lift this country. Let us be the ones to ensure that provisions are in place to give Caymanians an opportunity in their own country. There is no other Caribbean country that a young man comes home as a qualified pilot and the civil servants kick him out and refuse to make him be a part of it.

Listen, DG [Deputy Governor] you can do. You can speak when your turn comes too. I trust you will. Maybe he is not qualified. Maybe he does not have the experience. It is the responsibility of this country to get it for him, to assist him in getting it. I have a responsibility. His father does, as well, to support that. And that we will do. But when he sees no future in his Government, what do you want him to do?

What is going to happen to him and the many others who feel that way? Let us put our backs to the wheel and deal with this. It is going down a slippery slope. And, Mr. Speaker, the only persons who are going to suffer just happens to be the generation after us. That is what is going to happen.

We are feeling it now. Many of your children are below 10, I don't know, 10, 12, whatever. In 10 to 15 years, they are going to feel it. It just so happens that the last one of my children is 19, 21, or something like that. And one day some of you will go back after I am long gone from here, according to the Premier, and research the Hansard for today, one year, one day after you were sworn in. You will find it. And if nothing is done you will wonder why I could say that. It is personal experience. I have felt it. My children can't see the mountain top. They cannot reach it if we continue like this. And yours are not even going to get out of the valley.

I see the quizzical look on your face Mr. DG, I've been waiting to do this. I've been waiting to make my last stand in here and today it is. The people, we who rise to the top, forget those who are at the bottom. And somewhere along the way each and every

one of you have had some experience of being at the bottom.

Yes, like many of you, I grew up in a one-bedroom house, the seven of us. I know what it is for my parents to teach me how, through hard work ethics, principles, integrity, to crawl out of those holes. And all of you know it too. Why? Why aren't we doing something to ensure the others get the opportunity to crawl out of the hole? When parents in this country make the necessary sacrifice for their children and they come back here, somebody steps on them. Not everyone is going to be as loud as I am. Not everyone is going to go out there and defend their children like me. I hope their defense does not go further than them standing and speaking. I hope that never happens in this country, because we are going to be the ones who feel responsible for it.

We are going to carry some of that responsibility. Us! All 18 of us! Let's do it now. Let us do it now. Now is the time. We cannot waste one minute more. We must respond to their every need, Mr. Speaker. They are ours. The budget means nothing. I congratulate the Minister of Finance. I don't even have time to go through it. It means nothing if we don't have opportunities for our children.

We think because we are in here that that is an opportunity? That is a privilege and we won't be here forever. The people saw something in us. Why can't we see something in those who are coming? Bring 'em! This is the only country in the world where they tell us we feel we are entitled to something.

YES! It is our country. We are entitled to it! Tell all of those who said that, that I say I am entitled to it, my children are entitled to it, and their children are entitled to it. And so are yours, and their children, and their children. It is an entitlement! I'll step out of here today.

Don't think I'm getting any heart attack, Mr. Speaker. I will deal with it. Okay? But if that happens today, 20 years from now, so be it.

We have to defend our people. We have to stop isolating ourselves from the realities of the future. The writing is on the wall and no matter . . . yes, you all are going to do what you can. Nobody just came in here to have it to say. We all came in here with one objective; contribute and make our country better. We just need to remove the stumbling blocks that are preventing us from getting there. If that is the civil servants, then let's get rid of them.

You heard the Premier say that this is my last term. *Unna* got three years to put up with me.

We must start a human revolution—not out in the middle of the street. You must put it in writing [*clapping*] and leave it for our children. There is too much of it going on Minister. Too much! We are losing a generation. We are going to have a brain drain.

My little boy, I don't know if he is going to be successful in his studies. He is trying hard and doing pretty good. The kid says he is not coming back to a

country that I try changing, that I try to make provisions for him and he is seeing that he can't come back to it. I've been in parliament more than this child has been alive and he is telling me that? Longer than he has been alive . . . than half of . . . no . . . than . . . and that is what my child is telling me. I wonder what all of yours are going to tell you because they are younger than mine, and they are plenty smarter too. Smarter than *unna*. Because you can see mine is smarter than me. He is seeing the opportunities elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, let me get off of that because my nephew is going to be embarrassed and my sons are going to be embarrassed, my wife is going to . . . my brother is going to beat me up. I don't know. Of course, they did not know I was going into this tirade, but it is not only on Darren's behalf, it is on all of our children's behalf. Say what you all may, it does not bother me anymore.

Mr. Speaker, I just need to let my good friends on that side know that there is nothing in me that wants to destabilise my country—last man. And I know the same goes for them as well. This is just us finding the right balance, but it must be tipped in our direction. That's all. We are too envious of those who are successful as Caymanians. That is half of the problem. I keep telling people that I am not rich. Riches are, to me, like caffeine is to 7-Up. I never had it, I never will. But I know what I have. I have a deep burning desire for this country. I have a desire to live, contribute and die in this country!

I noted there are so many other things. The Attorney General came down here the other day with this Notaries Public Bill saying that lawyers don't have to do any training. The Deputy Governor sends us a letter as JPs saying that if you do not go to do the training that your designation would be taken away. Mr. Speaker, any jurist of this country . . . What is the name of that woman? Adriana Webb, David Ritch, I guess the Premier, and I guess the Minister of Finance.

You're not a JP yet? You are a JP too?

The Minister of Education, the Minister of Health.

[*Inaudible interjection*]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Any jurist in this country . . . just because it is us, you know. No, no, this is a serious matter. Because the notaries public impressed upon those, and in particular the Attorney General, that they did not need it for notaries public. But the Caymanians need it.

And then . . . Mr. Speaker, it was pretty good for me you know because I ain't an officer of the court. *Unna* got called to all of those things. *Unna* knows what it is to do that, I don't. So, it was good for me, but I was embarrassed to know that Caymanians—CAYMANIANS—had to be subjected to that kind of abuse. It is wrong. You hear what I tell you? It is

wrong. Everything Caymanians do is wrong! We are nobody in we country. I've had enough. Mr. Speaker, I had enough.

Mr. Speaker, I see you have a motion on the floor for changing immigration thing. That is going to be another subject. You hear? Everything is that we can't trust the Caymanian. All others who come here know it best.

Mr. Speaker, I am open to advice and I may seek it out of those who come to our country to integrate that to make our country better, but I ain't going to look for people whose country is worse off than mine to seek advice. I hear that Jordanian on the radio all the time. Do you really think I need his advice and he has destroyed one country done?

[Laughter]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** I am not looking for him!

There are many people in this country—100 and odd nationalities—that come from good countries, and have practiced good democracy. Jordan ain't one of them. But here I am . . . we can't do it ourselves.

I see the Member for George Town . . . what are you, the Third elected? Second?

**An Hon. Member:** Second.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** *Wha?* You gone way up there.

The Second Elected Member for George Town, big time accountant. I don't have an envious bone in my body for you all. Not one. I hope you make all of the money.

Mr. Deputy, this is our country. My son—

**The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson:** [INAUDIBLE] against training. I never heard that one before.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** *Wha—*

**The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson:** You beating me up because I offered some training? Is that what you are doing?

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I don't want the Deputy Governor, to get too bent out of shape about me beating him up because he *offered* some training. I embrace the offer; I didn't like the way you went about it. You can't tell me that you don't do it. I *ga* take away your designation. Why you don't tell them notaries public who are lawyers that, eh?

**The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson:** Okay.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** That come from Timbuktu, wherever in the Commonwealth. I never heard 'em

tell them that. They went and exempt 'em! That is my concern.

My concern is that all of these lawyers that we have in here are Caymanians and get one little old stamp for JP because of their standing in society and *unna* are threatening to take it away because they have to come and train to see how to sign a warrant.

Don't kill the messenger; kill the message that your people sent out. Okay? I'm afraid of that. And it sends the wrong message to us. *We are not worthy*, that is what it says. Someone else has to train us to make us worthy. Every one of those lawyers there . . . I would have to call their names but I'm not going to do that; too much 'em. Every one of them went through four or five years of school to do this. I don't know how long it takes *unna* to go. I am an engineer, I ain't a lawyer. You are going to tell me they don't know what to look for when it is a warrant. Eh?

That's all I am saying. These people know what to look for when they are stamping every page on those documents and charging \$25 for it and they have 4,000 pages. That's what those notaries public know how to look for.

That's all I am asking; treat us for who we are. It might not have been me who created this miracle but somewhere some of us did. Right Mr. FS?

I see thumbs up.

Mr. Speaker, Immigration—now that is a subject that we really need to address. I got a young man, a couple of young people in East End got married, seven years, applied for . . . well they really ran over a little bit, their time. They are not looking for it, Mr. Speaker. They don't have any time to try to think about that. They are trying to get a little living and keep their family together. They ran over their seven years and they are kicking the wife off of the Island. Now come on, man. What are people doing? What? That's what we need to talk about. Forget about that budget for a minute. We will get to that in Finance Committee.

I was married to my wife seven years and when she applied . . . and I am going to read all of the letters out [in] here.

[Inaudible interjection]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Not today. But there were bad letters. But I am going to read them out so that the people can hear. [They] wanted me to send financial bank reference that she was not bankrupt or insolvent. I thought that provision was to make sure I could have two incomes.

[Laughter]

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Especially when it is bigger than yours.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Especially when hers is bigger than mine.

*Unna* got to understand Cayman status is something we bequeath upon someone else. It is not the other way around. Immigration has no say, nor the boards, as to whether or not my wife receives it. It's me. Me. I am telling you to stamp her passport. That's what I tell ya. But you want me to show you bank reference. Bank? Not today Bobo. It *nah* happening. So you can talk about what I got around the board table and then come outside and talk about it? No, Bobo. You *nah* getting it!

Can you imagine what they are doing to the Caymanians with it? I tell you the one in East End, they want to run his wife off the Island, stopped her from working. She went over a little bit. We have to have some flexibility for our own. Somebody come ya . . . my wife had to wait seven years.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Seven years. No. Yes, seven years but we were married a little more than that. No, the thing wasn't . . . anyway, I will get that straight.

She had to wait seven. Someone came here and got a residency and married the same day, he or she got it, to another foreigner and they wait one year and they got naturalised. *Unna* really think that is right? Eh? This is about us.

All I am doing today is to impress upon you all the problems we are having as a people.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Only Caymanians.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** I don't have anything against one foreigner who comes here. It is not my job to make provisions for him or her. It is my job to look out for the Caymanians. Whether he got it through birth or through McKeeva in 2003, or through applying for it, once you get it, then you are mine. Prior to that, I ain't business with ya. What you want me to do? Make provisions with somebody in Timbuktu and don't know whether or not he is coming here. No sir, you have to come first.

Oh Lord.

Mr. Speaker, I got so much down here I don't know which one to start. Look at the Legal Practitioners Bill. Could never be *unna* bringing that the way it is so that Caymanians are disenfranchised again. No, *unna* don't bring that one ya. That one is going to cause some problems.

Everybody wants to outsource our law that has been painstakingly put in place to help our people. And then we put a law school down and brag about the success rate of the law school and as soon as you get out of law school we outsource the law and you will be a librarian ya. Oh no! Oh no Bobo, that ain't going to happen. Why are we pandering to everybody but our own, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, I mean it may sound dramatic, but it is a fact. It is a fact! We are losing our country. Our people are slipping through our fingers. We need to close the gap, Mr. Deputy Premier. You know it too. You think I don't know you know it. Yeah. I know you know it. It hurts me. I cringe. I go home every night and worry about it. Before I go to bed at night I worry about it. What is going to happen to us?

Mr. Speaker, the people come. And, yes, we embrace them and let them come because when we don't have sufficient then we need to bring someone. But don't tell me it is at the expense of all others here. They changed the rules on you. We are allowing it to happen. Because they have offices elsewhere they want to change our law now to send it over there so they can practice and want me to legitimise it. Tell them to come here.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** [INAUDIBLE]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that all of those others who got up and spoke talked about their successes in the communities.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** [INAUDIBLE]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Let me spend the rest of my time on East End because I represent them too, and I need to multitask.

**The Deputy Speaker:** You have 35 minutes.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Thirty-five, that is plenty. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Mr. Speaker, I read what I said to Cabinet and then I read what the Premier delivered here in his blue book about East End.

I told the Governor she must stop listening to those sound bytes. Now I am going to warn the Premier to do the same. Stop listening to sound bytes, man.

Mr. Speaker, in the interest of that buzzword 'transparency': After I went to Cabinet, the Commissioner of Police called me and told me that he had some good news. And I must tell you that he said to me that the news was good for the constituency of East End, in that he was reinstating Mr. David Scott who was a good police officer and was putting three or four other people with him to be the intervention members of the force in that community. That's besides who is supposed to be the normal police complement.

Mr. Speaker, I know I had begged the Premier on bended knees on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November to get more police. I went to Cabinet a couple times to talk about it. So, Mr. Speaker, we believe . . . and those officers would take care of East End and North Side. We believe that we too have a responsibility to promote and support the police. But I can tell the Premier . . . I don't

know when he said the reopening (if he was talking about next year or further down the year or whatever)

...

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** He didn't put a time.

But I can tell him, Mr. Speaker, and would invite all of you . . . let me read the letter that Mr. Miller and I have been using in support of our officers since we are getting officers there.

"East End and North Side Police Resources: Over the last few years the residents of East End and North Side have called on their representatives for more policing in their communities in order to curb the increase in deviant behavior, protect their property and families and preserve the marine environment. Representatives have implored successive governments to provide additional police officers and the requisite asset to facilitate this.

"Historically, governments have been slow to respond. However, we have now made some headway. The current Government and the Commissioner of Police have committed to provide additional officers to be stationed in East End and serve both districts. In order for this to be effective the communities have to lend their support in tangible ways. We believe that this must include: a Toyota 4-wheel drive truck, estimated cost \$27,000 less duties; Waverunner, estimated cost, \$12,000; patrol boat, estimated cost, \$12,000" (that has changed now, it has gone up); "upgrade of both police stations (that is, power washing, painting, landscaping), estimated combined cost \$10,000. We anticipate that these funds will be raised through monetary donations from residents, businesses in the communities and the broader Cayman Islands; community fundraising, for example, food sales and sweat equity." (That is what I am going to come to in a little bit.)

"The Minister of Finance has committed to wave the duties on the required assets." (Since then, the Minister has sent me an email confirming that). "The assets will be vested in the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service and the Commissioner of Police has committed to provide operational and maintenance cost.

"The waterbourne assets will be used to protect a once fertile marine life that is in jeopardy of being decimated by poachers. The truck will be utilised to haul and launch these assets for patrol and intervention between East End and North Side. The proposed repairs to the police station will be community projects undertaken by the residents. This community outreach is being spearheaded by the district representatives.

"The purpose of this communication is to solicit your support for this endeavor which will confirm the community support for our police officers and the rule of law. Any financial assistance that can be of-

ferred would be greatly appreciated. If you wish, acknowledgement of your donation may come in the form of corporate logos displayed on the assets. For further discussion, or to make your donation, please contact either Arden McLean or Ezzard Miller whose respective contact details are set out above." [UNVERIFIED QUOTES]

Now I can report that the wave runner is bought, the boat is bought. We have a truck pulled off the lot behind . . . what is the name?

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** Behind the dealership—

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Behind the dealership. Just waiting for a couple of more checks to go over there to deal with that.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** [INAUDIBLE]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I now extend a hearty invitation to all of my Ministers, all of the Government, to come tomorrow morning between six and seven. We are going to landscape, we are going to power-wash, we are going to paint, we going eat food, and I know the Minister of Health like that. And we are going to set up a tent in the parking lot, and the NRA [National Roads Authority] has given us the top soil, so we are going to spread it out. We are going to put in sprinkler system and we are going to put in landscaping.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** This is East End. North Side is coming on the weekend of the 16<sup>th</sup> of June holiday. And that is our contribution.

I can't expect to pay lip service to it when the Government has made their contribution. It is our job now to cook up little chicken and rabbit and rice and have a jolly good time while we are doing it. And rebuild the relationship with our police officers in the district and the likes. And I think that is fair.

So, in the PPM achievements they need to sort of acknowledge that we are part and parcel of it as well.

Mr. Speaker, much of what I have asked for in the district of East End is not forthcoming. I heard the Deputy Premier, Minister of Tourism, who spoke quite passionately about the success of Tortuga Club and Mr. Morrith and Mr. Miller who manages the establishment. And I understand that, you know, the Government has to take credit. However, I can only say, Mr. Speaker, that based on my information, since 2013 that establishment contributed \$1.2 million in duties to the Government. So, it is *extremely* valuable to this budget. It is *extremely* valuable to the tourism product in this country.

East End just happens to be host to the largest timeshare in the Cayman Islands, in the Caribbe-

an, most countries, and it is the best one. They just go the award for that.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** I am imploring my good friend, the Minister of Tourism, to assist. I believe there are certain duty exemptions that were promised, and my only hope is that this Government will assist in that regard.

The Minister is right. It has provided an avenue for employment for the last 50 years in that community. And, Mr. Morrith has to be applauded for carrying on that legacy over the last 25 years.

Mr. Speaker, the least we can do is to make a contribution to assist them. I'm not saying to give all concessions now, oh no. You know I was never one for that. But you know we have this situation where Mr. Dart loaned us money to build road and the repayment is that he is going to get 50 per cent cut. He never gave us any money, you know. I told *unna* that this was not a 'ForCayman Alliance'. This was also for him. And he is getting 50 per cent of his duties cut. So, to the Minister, I . . .

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** On his accommodation tax.

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** All duties he is getting.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** So to the Minister, I would make a suggestion. He is responsible for duties, fees, what have you. Bring a Bill to increase the accommodation tax by a 100 per cent, and then give everybody 50 per cent off.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** And you would have fulfilled your contractual agreement with him. That's all. I'll support you.

Mr. Speaker, I see where the Government spoke about the Shetty Hospital. I know my good friend, the Deputy Premier, keeps telling me that East End . . . *Man, East End is booming, Arden. What are you complaining about?* Can't boom as much as Cayman Brac, though. Cayman Brac is really booming, at least with concessions.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know, I heard my good friend from North Side say yesterday something about the Shetty targeting CINICO overseas referrals. Well, not all the time my friend and I agree, you know. Not all the time. We are not conjoined at the hips. What I can say is that if they can get that and give us a 20 per cent cut of what we are doing now, that is an improvement of government's finances. So, I would welcome that I believe. The Minister of Finance can use that to shore up his budget.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there are many things that we can be proud of in this country, there are many opportunities presenting themselves. We have to be careful how we do it. I heard the Member for George Town (I believe he is the Fifth) speak about solar. I caution us all because I believe in this honourable House I have as much experience, if not more, than anyone else. I caution to hasten slowly. That's without defending any producer, whether they are now or in the future.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we need to pride ourselves on is electrification of this country, albeit it expensive. It was extremely expensive, a little cheaper now. We need to be very careful. The financial industry and success of that industry has been hinged on Cable and Wireless and the electrification company CUC. If we did not have a good electrification system or a telephone system in this country, we be onto us in the financial industry. We would never have succeeded! Go to these Caribbean [countries] and why do you think people were not attracted to many of those countries? Because of their lack of proper electrification! That's what it was.

We hear the Government talking about changing time to Daylight Savings Time. That is miniscule. If we cannot, in our offices as lawyers, accountants and management of peoples' businesses from overseas . . . if they did not feel confident that they could pick up the phone and call or that you could fax or email out something to them at the click of a finger, they were not going to come here. Time is money for those people and that is how we were so attractive. It was because of the time, our efficiency, our effectiveness. And that came as a result of the electrification and the telephone in this country. That is how it was developed.

Be careful with this alternative energy. Mr. Speaker, there is somewhere between where we are now totally dependent upon fossil fuel and where the proposals are on the table to 60 odd megawatts that we need to be—somewhere in between there, 10, 12 megawatts so that we can rely on it during the day and try to knock off some of the cost of electricity.

When we start thinking of it as firm power, what are we going to do at night? At night we either have to have fossil fuel to burn, or we are going to share power. And when we have power sharing, and when the days are cloudy and gloomy, what are we going to do? Which office building we are going to cut off in town? Eh? That's what we are going to do. Be careful, those who bear these gifts that come to you.

Mr. Fifth Elected Member for George Town, you be careful. I'm not saying I have the authority on it but I have been involved in it about 30 years now too. We have to be very careful.

You remember when Obama came into office one of his things was that he wanted to reduce America's dependency upon fossil fuel. And his goal was to go to alternative methods of electrification. And he

committed a billion dollars or something like that for the development of batteries.

We already have the solar panels and that technology. We do not have the batteries. We cannot store the power from it. It is too costly. You cannot make this country dependent upon alternative energy. Everything has a price, and if you are going to do it, it is going to cost this country an arm and a leg, Mr. Speaker. Are we prepared for that? Fine, then, let's go.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say that I notice the Minister of Agriculture is not here. I spoke to him on a number of occasions about the division of that land in East End for farmers. And it has been one year now and he said he had set up a committee. So, what I did recently was I made a register and went to the people of East End. So, there are persons putting their names down on it and I am going to send that to the Minister to see what they are going to really do. At least he will have that in his hand and see how many persons want to do farming on that government property.

However, on page 13 of that blue book the government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in April with Navasota regarding the possible establishment of a modern bulk fuel facility.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I look around this House and there is not one person in here who sailed on fuel bulk carriers, other than myself. Quickly, let me give you a classic example of how risky it is.

I arrived out of the Persian Gulf . . . and I'll tell you why I will never forget the dates. I arrived out of the Persian Gulf to Bantry Bay, Ireland, with two and a half million barrels laden *Universe Iran*, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of December with the intent of paying off that day to spend Christmas with my Mom.

When we arrived there they changed the orders. Bantry Bay was a transshipment port, nothing but oil, bulk storage tanks on the shore, and we had a manifold docking facility there. Mr. Speaker, when we arrived there they changed orders on us and said we could only lighten up. So, we would lighten up to 50 feet draft as opposed to 83 feet draft and go into Holland and finish unloading. You cannot pay off on a stop before your final destination. So, I had to pay off in Holland. And I paid off on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of December; Boxing Day. So I missed Christmas with my Mom. I made many friends in Bantry Bay during my time there as a young man sailing bringing in bulk fuel.

Mr. Speaker, I did not arrive in Cayman until the 31<sup>st</sup> day of December 1978. When I got home I called my friends and told them I was home. The installation opened back for business on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of January and at six o'clock that evening it went sky high and we lost 40-odd members on the smaller ship that was taking on what we had pumped ashore, and the people on the dock. I'll never forget that.

We're walking on thin ice; talking about bulk fuel. And what we were carrying was Bunker C. What

we're talking about here is even more volatile. Gasoline and diesel . . . do we know how volatile this is? And the handling thereof? And the risk that we have to mitigate? I understand we got to bring it in out there but we are not putting it back on ships. Therein lies the risk.

But I say all of that, Mr. Speaker, to say that I understand they are going to use that piece of land up there.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** In East End—the 200 and odd acres to put the bulk storage on. This is rumour. That's why I said the Minister should get up and say. But I also understand that the proposers of this were told not to talk to me.

Hello!

**Mr. D. Ezzard Miller:** [INAUDIBLE] Ironwood. They told Ironwood the same thing.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** And they told the Ironwood project [developers] the same thing. I was talking to the Ironwood project developers a year before the election. As soon as the election came along they disappeared. I have not seen them since. It's wrong! Anyway, we shall see what happens.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable Member, you have nine minutes.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** All right, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, may I implore the Government . . . I see the Premier is not here and he is responsible for Social Services. But I am sure he is listening. I implore him to assist the people who are on social services.

Too many people are complaining to me that they are not being attended to. Too many people are complaining that Social Service have gone out there where they can't find them. And they believe that is a deliberate act. One side of it has gone out on the waterfront amongst the tourists, and, of course, people put their own interpretation to it and they believe it is a deliberate act to get away from the people. And I believe, whilst I try to diffuse that by telling them it is a matter of dollars and cents, that's not being received very well.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Government to look into several things that I have asked them to do in the constituency. Now one of the things that I have to do is to play a part too. I am doing that starting tomorrow with the police station.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** About 7:00, 7:30 [*addressing inaudible interjection*].

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we all have a responsibility if government provides these facilities, to try and help support it. But there are many of those that . . . the maintenance thereof. When asked about the maintenance of these buildings, nothing is being done. Or, at least not that I see. It does not make sense to have all of these facilities, these structures, this infrastructure, and leave it and let it die. It just doesn't make sense, Mr. Speaker.

I know one of the most concerning aspects of it that calls for something to be done, is that of Social Services. I don't know whether it is the lack of money or resources that's scarce and the like, but it needs to be looked into. I believe at one stage one Government had a satellite office in Bodden Town. That has now been closed down, I believe, and they've merged everything into George Town. It's difficult. If we are going to provide a service to our people, let's do as much as we can. What we are doing is, in the interest of the financial aspect of the country, we are cutting those services. Or we are making them less accessible.

Mr. Premier, I implore you go back to England, and stop worrying about 2016 to become compliant. Let's make this a longer period so we can do two more years. What's wrong with going from one Government to the next? You will have done your part and maybe go over a little bit. You never know. But why are we trying to crunch all of these things down?

We are doing this on the shoulders of the private sector. We are cutting the fuel for CUC but we are not cutting it for the little small trucker out there on the street. And we want him to go up there on that road to do trucking. And the big job that was done recently . . . all of this you all don't know. They have cut down the value of aggregate to the point where the little small truckers are getting about 50 per cent of what they were getting 10 years ago. And the fuel cost is up. You need to check it out.

Mr. Deputy Premier, you know what I'm talking about. That road down there; the cost of aggregate has been driven down and as a result, the cartage has been driven down too. And that's where our little small businesses are. And their largest cost is diesel. That's where their cost lies. So, we need to look at it. Somehow we need to bring that back down to where it was. What was it? Sixty cents? It used to be sixty cents. It's now 80, right?

[*Inaudible interjection*]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Something like that. And it used to be 60.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** It is 30 cents.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** No, no, no, that's for CUC. I'm talking about for the gas stations. That used to be 60.

The previous Government took it up to 80. Let's just bring that back down . . . yeah It'll be—

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Next budget.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** It might help.

[*Inaudible interjection*]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** And I applaud you all for trying to cut that off CUC. Unfortunately, we could not go to 45 cents that that previous deviant government put on there. After I had cut it by 20 cents, you know. We don't understand the value of these things to people. But unfortunately, you all are not doing it until the cool season, we don't need it then. That's when you lease need it. We need it summer, 1<sup>st</sup> July. But, of course, I understand how that is going to throw the budget out of whack, and you do it in small bites.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Eight million dollars (\$8 million).

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** I understand it is [\$]8 million. When we took off 20 cents it was about 6 million or 7 million, something like that for us. But, Mr. Speaker, it is nevertheless commendable. And I am not saying this to avoid any licks from the Premier. I hope he does not get that impression.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** You're going to get them anyhow.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** I am prepared to take anything he can throw, including a Bazooka.

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** [INAUDIBLE]

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** Yeah I *ga* tighten up, but I did what I had to do with you too.

So, Mr. Speaker, Finance Committee will be another day. There are many things that need to be ironed out in that Finance Committee, so I would advise you, Mr. Premier, to tell A-L-L the other six Ministers, TIGHTEN UP!

Thank you.

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

We have now reached the hour of 4.30 pm. I now call on the Premier for a motion.

## ADJOURNMENT

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Speaker, it has been a long hard week, and a particularly long day. I don't believe that Members of the House can bear much more after that last contribution.

**Mr. V. Arden McLean:** I'm glad I could contribute to us going home.

*[Laughter]*

**The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** So, I will move the adjournment of this honourable House until 10:00 am Monday.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you.

The question is that this House now adjourn until 10:00 am Monday, 2 June.

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

**Ayes.**

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

**At 4:30 pm the House stood adjourned until 10:00 am, Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2014.**