



**CAYMAN ISLANDS
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
ELECTRONIC VERSION**

2016/17 SESSION

6 June 2016

*Fifth Sitting of the First Meeting
(Pages 139-180)*

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

Disclaimer: The electronic version of the *Official Hansard Report* is for informational purposes only. The printed version remains the official record.

PRESENT WERE:

SPEAKER

Hon Juliana Y O'Connor- Connolly, JP, MLA
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

Hon Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MLA	<i>The Premier</i> , Minister of Home Affairs, Health and Culture
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 Community Affairs, Youth and Sports
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 Portfolio of the Civil Service
Hon Jacqueline Wilson	Acting Attorney General, ex officio Member responsible for the Portfolio of Legal Affairs

ELECTED MEMBERS

GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS

Mr Roy M McTaggart, MLA	Second Elected Member for George Town
Mr Joseph X Hew, MLA	Sixth Elected Member for George Town

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

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

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

Mr Anthony S Eden, OBE, JP, MLA	<i>Deputy Speaker</i> , First Elected Member for Bodden Town
Mr Alva H Suckoo, MLA	Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town
Mr Winston C Connolly, Jr, MLA	Fifth Elected Member for George Town
Mr D Ezzard Miller, MLA	Elected Member for North Side
Mr V Arden McLean, JP, MLA	Elected Member for East End

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
THRONE SPEECH AND BUDGET ADDRESS
FIRST MEETING OF THE 2016/17 SESSION
MONDAY
6 JUNE 2016
10:16 AM
Fifth Sitting**

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

The Speaker: Good morning.

I will invite the Fourth Elected Member for the District of Bodden Town to grace us with prayers today.

PRAYERS

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr., Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town: Good morning, Members.

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 Premier, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Leader of the Opposition, Ministers of the Cabinet, ex-officio Members and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that we may be enabled faithfully to perform the responsible duties of our high office. All this we ask for Thy great Name's sake.

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

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

The Speaker: Please be seated.

Proceedings are resumed.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS OR AFFIRMATIONS

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

[Administered by the Clerk]

Hon. Jacqueline Wilson, Acting Attorney General:

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

OATH OF DUE EXECUTION

[Administered by the Clerk]

Hon. Jacqueline Wilson, Acting Attorney General:

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

The Speaker: On behalf of this honourable House I invite the Honourable Acting Attorney General to take her seat.

Please be seated.

READING BY THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER OF MESSAGES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

APOLOGIES

The Speaker: I have received apologies for late attendance from the Third and Fourth Elected Members for the district of West Bay.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

The Speaker: None.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND OF REPORTS

The Speaker: None.

QUESTIONS TO HONOURABLE MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

The Speaker: None.

STATEMENTS BY HONOURABLE MEMBERS AND MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

The Speaker: None.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

The Speaker: None.

OBITUARY AND OTHER CEREMONIAL SPEECHES

The Speaker: None.

RAISING OF MATTERS OF PRIVILEGES

The Speaker: None.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS

SECOND READING

APPROPRIATION (JULY 2016 TO DECEMBER 2017) BILL, 2016

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

[Continuation of debate thereon]

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

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

Madam Speaker, on Friday I had shown that there needed to be economic stimulus in 2009 and the two ways to get it in the world economic crisis existing from 2007 to 2011 was to attract business locally and overseas by giving concessions and to encouraging business with institutions like DART, Shetty, Economic City, the hotel in Beach Bay and the Ironwood golf project and the free zone and new cargo and cruise ship home porting.

The Speaker: Honourable Member, I should have indicated, I beg your indulgence, that you have five minutes remaining of your two hours.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, I am going to ask for a couple of minutes more than your usual discretion of five to ten minutes. I will ask for about 15 minutes, but I should be finished before that. But we will get to that point then, unless I do so now, but—

The Speaker: I only have a discretion at the end of the five minutes, and if it is a point that will soon be terminated.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Okay. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The projects that I named were to create that economic stimulus. I am sure that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) was prepared to agree and gave us a three-year budget, which I thought was too hard, but had to accept. But recognising that the projects would take time to materialise, local revenue had to play a role and manoeuvring against the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's push for the introduction of direct taxation of income tax, property tax, and VAT, and that we had to put on a range of fees, including fees on importation of fuel, and immigration fees, but also recognising their impact, we promise to reduce them as soon as the Government's budget was back in surplus.

Madam Speaker, what I do know is that after the law was broken and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office took control there was constant push by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to take control of matters here in projects and in the local budget. And there is evidence to show that that is where the battle of minds had to take place. But we took the hard decisions to get us out of their hands in that way. That episode, Madam Speaker, has much more to be recorded, but, of course, time does not allow that this morning.

Madam Speaker, I want to say a word about the disparity I see in the civil service in salaries. There is a disparity in the civil service when it comes to salaries. Those who were more recently employed, were able, it seems, to negotiate a better salary deal. So, even though they have less time employed than the older ones who have 20 years, let's say, the newer ones get more salary. I think that that really needs to be examined, and something done about it. People have reached 25, 30 years, and they are making less than people who have gone into 10.

Also, Madam Speaker, we have firemen who work 12-hour shifts for the same pay. Giving them 2.2 per cent to someone getting \$2,900 per month, that is doing nothing for them when that fireman has to work a 12-hour shift. I would hope that when the Deputy

Governor looks at that disparity that those kinds of areas will be examined.

Madam Speaker, the labour market is continuing in disarray. There seems to be no continuation of the strategic direction which I thought would be followed with a full rollout of a fully functioning National Workforce Development Agency. In fact, I think the successful Passport2Success programme that helped to bolster, undergirds much of what is the National Workforce Development Programme. Outside of that, I do not know what else would be happening except for this new programme rolled out recently.

I see the announced Ready-2-Work Programme; that their goal is to have 175 people back to work by February 2017. Madam Speaker, the way I look at it is, if the economy was doing as well as it is claimed, and they had done any work on labour, why would their own goal be so low? That's what I cannot figure out, given the fact that there are 2,000 Caymanians without jobs. So, it's a sad story for—

The Speaker: Honourable Member, sorry for the interruption, but your five minutes have expired.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, I am going to move that under Standing Order 86, for Standing Order 32(6) to be suspended to give me 15, 20 minutes to finish my speech.

The Speaker: Is there a seconder?

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.: Yes, Madam Speaker, I will second that.

The Speaker: The question is that by virtue of Standing Order 86, that Standing Order 32(6) be suspended to allow the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to go beyond two hours.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Can I just stop there and seek clarification from the Member, Honourable Leader of the Opposition, for your motion? Can you say it is your intention to say a specific amount of time, or are you asking for open-ended—

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: No, no. I am not asking for open-ended. I would not do that, Madam Speaker. Fifteen minutes, maximum.

The Speaker: By virtue of Standing Order 86, I put the question that Standing Order 32(6) be suspended to allow the Honourable Leader of the Opposition an extension of 15 minutes for his debate.

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

Ayes.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Standing Order 32(6) suspended.

The Speaker: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition has 15 minutes to continue, starting now.

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

I was getting a little bit worried, because I heard the Premier saying no. But, thank God, he changed.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Well, I made indication that—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Maybe 15, maybe 20, yeah?

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: And you see you've gone and took five minutes out of it already.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, it is sad for the other 1,825 people looking a job if 2,000 are unemployed. In fact, based on their number of 30-plus, 2,000 Caymanians are still unemployed then.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Well, go out and then you will see.

According to the Government, Cayman will experience positive GDP growth of 2.1 per cent and there will be more jobs in the economy. But we will not see a material impact on the unemployment rate. That baffles me.

Anyway, according to the Government, the economy will grow by 582 jobs between 2016 and 2017 in figure 4 contained in their own AP&E [Annual Plan & Estimate] document, that the economy will grow by 2.4 per cent. Yet, they can only get 175 jobs or people into jobs by a central government driven initiatives where they are spending and paying money for it. Government is spending its own cash to do that. So, where is the will to have development that can employ Caymanians and bring down unemployment? It cannot be much hope under that kind of scenario.

As to the minimum wage, I have one simple question for the people of this country: Are we better off since the Government introduced the minimum wage? Are we better off? I don't know.

Madam Speaker, I have a whole lot more to go. I wanted to speak on the finance industry which all of us on this side of the House have given support to and given the Government our full support on it. Madam Speaker, in any democratic society, freedom and the right to privacy are essential for the maintenance of the system. Privacy has been regarded for centuries as a fundamental right, essential to the autonomy and the protection of our human dignity and the foundation upon which human rights have been built and protected in a working democracy, even one democracy as fragile as ours. Privacy has been regarded to include the right of anonymity and the right to solitude, essentially the right to be left alone unless there is an overriding interest of the state, the exercise of which interest should be subject to due process and adjudicated upon by an independent and impartial tribunal. These rights have over the years been included in many of the Human Rights conventions recognised by the courts in leading democracies, such as the United States, included in their constitutions. And privacy is a right which is essential to the protection of our citizens and society as a whole to the arbitrary and unjustified use of power of government.

We have a long history of protecting the right of privacy of our people, the companies and others here who wish to conduct business in and from our jurisdiction, while at the same time leading the way for these rights to be encroached upon when the interest of the state is essential to detect and protect society from criminal activity. We know that we have had several conventions. In 1976 the Confidential Relationships Preservation Law was instituted, I believe. It protected the common law rights of privacy of individuals from abuse and in addition provided gateways for the state to obtain information through the court system when that overriding interest is necessary to detect criminal activity.

Shortly after that act, the Government passed the Evidence (Proceedings in Other Jurisdictions) (Cayman Islands) Order 1978, which came into force in 1980. That gave effect to the 1970 Hague Convention on the Taking of Evidence Abroad in Civil or Commercial Matters which convention was also ratified in 1975 by the UK and extended to us here in the Cayman Islands in 1978, and allowed [various evidence to be given in cases after the necessary due process had been completed through our court system.

Two years later in 1980 the NARCO Agreement was entered into and our law enforcement provided assistance pursuant to the UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs in 1961. In 1984, here the [Narcotic Drug (US Evidence) Law 1984], was passed and afforded the US prosecutorial authorities full ac-

cess to information and testimony for the purposes of narcotic offences and connected ancillary civil and administrative proceedings. In 1986 a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty was entered into with the United States and that was followed by the passing of the Mutual Legal Assistance (United States of America) Law, 1986.

Cayman has continued to enter into various international cooperation agreements through the years and we do have a number of tax exchange information agreements with numerous countries and have passed other internationally recognised legislation, the purpose of which is to provide cooperation and information in relation to criminal matters on an international basis.

In addition to its history of cooperation and its history of providing a balance pursuant to which privacy and freedom has been protected, we implemented a full KYC [know your customer] programme and its service providers have in their record information on all the beneficial owners of companies and other vehicles. Together with identification documents and other personal information there are few countries in the world, if any, whose service providers and financial institutions have this information and are required to collect it on each and every individual account, accounts of entities or investment vehicles.

Neither, the United Kingdom or the United States has any such comprehensive programme and have never sought to institute the same. Unfortunately, the Honourable Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and NGOs [Non-government organisations] in Europe have sought to introduce a system in the United Kingdom, the Cayman Islands and other dependent territories, which will eliminate the right of all citizens and people living and doing business in the United Kingdom and other dependent territories to any privacy whatsoever. The gathering and publication of the names, addresses, financial accounts and other information of all persons that are accessed by law enforcement on a basis known without any due process . . . unknown (I should say) without any due process. I think is designed to eliminate the very foundation upon which we as a democratic society have been founded.

It is unlikely to be instituted in other democratic societies with written constitutions. Let's wait and see. But I believe, for example, the United States of America will cut across the history of the United Kingdom and the development of important foundation which led to the development of these democratic societies, such as the Cayman Islands, and a series of important legal decisions and Human Rights conventions recognising that an individual's right to privacy is a fundamental human right and a reasonable expectation of every person.

Perhaps, they in the United Kingdom should refer to the 1361 Justice of the Peace Act in the United Kingdom which provided for, as simple as they

thought it was, the rest of peeping Toms and eves droppers, and the decision in 1765 (I think it is) of Lord Camden striking down a warrant to enter a house to seize papers. They wrote about that, Madam Speaker. We all know about that. We all know about the US Supreme Court justices who proclaim that privacy includes an individual's right to be left alone. And it is the most cherished of freedoms in a democracy. Unfortunately, we seem to have decided to allow ourselves to be pounded and beaten into submission by Cameron and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office who have clearly forgotten or chosen to ignore that the United Kingdom is recognised as one of the country's in the world whose system of law and the protection of fundamental freedoms include those of privacy which have led the way for many other countries.

Many Caymanians have not been told that their names, their children's names on the financial information and other private information relating to their identity will all be placed in this new database that no doubt can be hacked by those who seek to use the information for criminal purposes, such as to create false identification documents, access the accounts, kidnapping their children and creating other havoc. Now I see unna smiling over there. I don't have time to row with them this morning. Just listen! Just sit back and listen a little and then you can reply. You can get up after me and reply, because we got somebody to deal with you, Mr. Pantan.

If hackers can enter the Pentagon and other sophisticated companies in the United States and banking institutions and steal billions of dollars every year, on what basis does any government believe, here or in the United Kingdom, that it has the ability to protect this vital information from any such intrusion? Bring any excuse, the facts are the facts. The financial industry is a pillar of the economy and provides jobs to thousands of persons and also provides economic activity at least 60 per cent, maybe, in the Cayman Islands and a substantial part of government revenue.

Well, it seems that they don't pay much attention to what I am saying and are smirking. But it seems that in their haste to appease they have signed numerous letters and signed an agreement and made numerous promises, I hope they have the clear understanding of as now, it seems, of what it is they are signing to or have signed, and that the implication to the people of the Cayman Islands, our children and future generations, what those implications are. We can say we can't do anything. We can say that we have to follow the rest of the world. I don't know if that is so. But let's wait and see.

There is very little hope, I believe, if any, that other countries with constitutional protection of freedom and privacy will ever entertain the provision of its citizens' information to foreign entities and law enforcement without any due process and, thereby, exposing their citizens to the dangers in a very dangerous world of cyber-crime in which we all find our-

selves. I don't have the time to go into more, Madam Speaker, but there is a whole lot more. Certainly the Bill is before the House which they said was not going to be here, they were not going to do away with it. But it's being done away with.

Madam Speaker, I don't have a lot of time left. But in closing, the Government made a call in their statement about all of us doing the best for our country. I believe all of us want to do that and in our time in here, have tried. We don't use the same tactics. We beat up on one another, of course, in trying to get it done, just to try to make ourselves look better than the next one. But we live in a good country. There is nowhere better than yard! None!

This Legislature, Madam Speaker, is where we come to do a part of the people's business. My colleague from East End likes to say that piece of real estate belongs to his district. The legislative arm of government is key to the good governance and stability that everyone claims must exist in our democracy. Madam Speaker, I said a few days ago (and some years ago too) that respect begets respect. I have been here the longest, and I have learned that the personal attacks in this Assembly, because there is no other way to defeat a Member or their work, does not beget respect. I have sat here and listened to outright attacks on my personal being. Being humans, I would think that most people, if punched, would respond in kind. But, Madam Speaker, Members here and now, ought to want and to realise that we do one's self no good by attacking each other here personally. It only belittles one's own character, because when a finger is pointed in such a manner, there are at least three pointing back.

As Opposition Leader, Madam Speaker, I said in 2013 that I would give the Government the widest berth possible. I quoted Ernie Smith from his song, and I repeat it here this morning. And what did he say? He said:

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

***We the people want fi know
Just where we're going
Right now we hands are tied
Tied behind we back
While certain people if and buttin'
Where do we stand?
We have too far to go
Not to really know
Just how we're getting there
And if we getting anywhere***

***We have too much to change
Not to know the range
Of possibility and changeability***

Violence and crime is commonplace

*Within these said times
No man walk free
Prophecy comes closer to fulfilment
In these dread times, why should this be?*

*And as we fight one another
Fi the power and the glory
Jah kingdom goes to waste
And every drop of blood we taste*

*A fi we own disgrace, yeah
A fi we own disgrace
Can't build no foundation 'pon a if and a but
Are we building a nation?
Or are we building a hut?*

He goes on, but then he repeats—

The Speaker: Honourable Member, you're time is up. I will allow you to complete that thought.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Can I finish what I am saying? I'm nearly there; two minutes, three minutes. And this is such a good song; even you would like it, as a good Christian.

Do you have that discretion, Madam Speaker?

The Speaker: I have the discretion to allow you to complete that thought. If you are moving on to another topic, then I don't have the discretion, I need a motion—

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: No, no. Just this, I am closing. I said that, all right? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

*And as we fight one another
Fi the power and the glory
Jah kingdom goes to waste*

Madam Speaker, we are in too many problems with every Government still trying to do the right thing for this country over the years. There are people on the outside trying to get in here who scrutinise everything that is said or done just to belittle what we do as legislators, whether it is said or done in a moment of levity or not. All of us have families. We are most dear to them and they are most dear to our being. They are humans and no one here ought to believe that we exist without fault. To go on to those depths in today's Cayman when we have so much to talk about, so many needs to grapple with and we don't have time to deal with them in our speeches, much less as our time here is to attack ourselves with wanton disregard for the work we must do, the people's business.

So, no matter how one's supporters want to hear someone in this House that they don't like derid-

ed and castigated, I believe, have proven, that that is not the entire esteemed electorate in these Islands.

So, Madam Speaker, let us all want to tackle the real issues in this country—crime, education, health, social development and economic development, that improves and that lifts our people out of the quagmire that they find themselves in year in and year out in a vastly deteriorating world order. For which small island country can we say, which is as small as we are with no vast store of natural resources, has done so much to bring us from virtually being one of the poorest in the kind of Cayman Islands we have today. Problems do exist, but we have come a long way. And while we have our problems today, we must, we can, with God's help, get back there. We can recall the Biblical promise of God. And what did He say? *I know the plans I have for you.*

What did Mr. Smith say?

*And as we fight one another
Fi the power and the glory
Jah kingdom goes to waste*

No. That is not what we are fighting for in here. That is not what we were elected for in here. Let us not forget, we don't want to row over fire ants, Madam Speaker, while elephants are trampling us.

I thank you for your indulgence. I thank the House for the little bit of time they gave me. And, Madam Speaker, I do appreciate the extra time, though, and I thank my colleagues who supported it.

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

I recognise the Sixth Elected Member for George Town.

Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Sixth Elected Member for George Town: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

"I congratulate the Government on its careful stewardship and adherence to the principals of good governance." Madam Speaker, those are the words spoken by Her Excellency the Governor within the first two sentences during her delivery of the Throne Speech on Monday.

Madam Speaker, just a few paragraphs later, Her Excellency went on to say, **"This Government has worked hard to achieve the goals it set at the beginning of its term—to strengthen the economy, improve government finances, and enhance the lives of those who live on these Islands."**

Madam Speaker, I would like to record my appreciation to Her Excellency the Governor on her direct and objective Throne Speech. I would also like to commend the Premier on a well-presented and thorough Policy Statement, and the Minister of Finance and the entire Government on a well-prepared and pragmatic budget.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to take the time to recognise the hard-working civil servants and the different ministries, and in particular the Ministry of Finance, for their hard work with late nights and weekends away from their families in order to prepare this Budget.

Madam Speaker, over the last two years we have seen a 2.8 per cent decrease in the cost of living, continuous economic growth, year after year increase in the GDP, inflation declining by some 2.3 per cent, a decrease in unemployment for Caymanians, an increase in stay over tourism, increase in cruise tourism, increase in imports, including building materials, consumables, oil, and non-oil based products, and 90 days, three months of operating reserves.

It is from this position of sound finances that this Government can act in the long-term interest of these Islands and progress the much needed changes that will benefit our people in the future. Madam Speaker, these are the facts; these are the results of a hardworking and disciplined Government. And, Madam Speaker, these are achievements that every Caymanian can be proud of.

Madam Speaker, as Councillor for the Ministry of District Administration and Tourism, we continue to focus on our shoulder seasons, including sports tourism, festivals, and events that drive incremental visitation. This strategy has worked. In August 2015, we had a record-breaking month. The entire year of 2015 was a record breaker. We continue to work together as one industry, one Ministry, one Government in our approach to attracting visitors to our shores. Madam Speaker, annually we get together with all of the stakeholders, internationally and locally, including our attractions, our national airline and our industry partners to brainstorm and to break down silos and to work together towards one direct result.

Madam Speaker, evidence of that is through our collaboration between Cayman Airways and the Department of Tourism and targeting new gateways to develop stay over tourism. We look at the southwest, Madam Speaker. After Cayman Airways opened the gateway there in Dallas, we had an 8 per cent increase in arrivals from the southwest.

Madam Speaker, the actual arrivals for stay-over tourism for 2013, were 345,380; 2014, 382,816; and 2015, 385,378. So, Madam Speaker, I did not go back to the darker days prior to 2013, but this is to show, Madam Speaker . . . look at the growth in the last three years since gaining office, a growth of some 40,000 passengers annually.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: All you done was to go to Halogen, Cuba.

Mr. Joseph X. Hew: Madam Speaker, travellers from the northeast book their holidays about six to eight weeks before the travel date and in the southwest, a little longer, around 12 to 16 weeks before they travel.

So, Madam Speaker, not even the First Elected Member for West Bay, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition can try and take credit for those numbers. These bookings were made in the last two years as we continued to grow the numbers.

Madam Speaker, cruise tourism. When we took office we travelled to meet with the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association and I could tell that many that showed up to the meeting did so reluctantly. The first thing they said to us was, *You're here to tell us the same old story again. What happened to the old plans? Why didn't you use those? The three attempts to build a cruise pier.* Madam Speaker, they looked at us and said, *We have a list of 10 minor improvements at the Port Authority at the Royal Watler Terminal that we have been trying to get done for three years, four years, and you are telling us you're coming back to tell us you're going to build this huge pier again?*

Madam Speaker, we could do nothing else, but to look at them and say, *Can we have that list of 10 improvements that you need?* They weren't anything extravagant, Madam Speaker. They just wanted a re-direction of the lines, better signage, some shelter, better seating. So, Madam Speaker, we returned and worked along with the Port Authority and we went down there on a day-to-day basis to help improve the experience of our cruise visitors. And some six months later, less than six months later, Madam Speaker, the Minister attended the conference in Colombia where he received tremendous feedback and appreciation for the small, but important, improvements made to the terminal. And on that trip, Madam Speaker, he was informed of increased numbers and plans to continue to increase and support the Cayman Islands as a destination.

Madam Speaker, we also went on to have PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), the firm that did the outline business case, meet with the cruise association and all the stakeholders. We received feedback immediately, basically saying, *Wow, okay, you guys are serious; this looks like it's going to happen.* Madam Speaker, let us look at the figures. In 2013 we had 1,375,872 cruise visitors. In 2014 we had 1,609,555 cruise visitors. In 2015 we had 1,716,812 cruise visitors. So let's give the 2013 accomplishments to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition for his work in 2011/12. But, Madam Speaker, what about the growth of over 400,000 passengers between 2013 and 2015? I would have to assume that we could take credit for that. The good news is, Madam Speaker, it doesn't matter who takes the credit, but the industry is once again striving and our people are back to work and feeding their families.

Overall air and cruise arrivals increased by a combined total of 381,000 passengers last year. This injected approximately US\$90 million into the Cayman Islands economy. If you take the increase of 40,000 stay-over visitors and average stay of 6.7 days at US\$183 per day, per person, and the cruise passen-

gers 341,000 visitors at \$115 per day, the total combined contribution is approximately \$90 million.

Madam Speaker, much has been said about the fact that visitor arrivals are up. And it is worth taking a moment to reflect on why this is. In addition to the strategy as I spoke about earlier, this Government created policies to drive growth. Our Islands have also been blessed with outstanding natural beauty which visitors come to see. I am happy to inform this honourable House that the Cayman Islands continues to be recognised for having a superior tourism product and our tourism product continues to receive accolades from a variety of sources. To name just a few, given that our dive industry is world renown, I would like to mention the following: *Scuba Diving* magazine top readers' choice for the Caribbean and the Atlantic had the Cayman Islands as first place best overall destination; third place, best underwater photography; best shore diving, best marine environment, best wall diving; and fourth place, best big animals. Madam Speaker, fifth place, best value for diving, best snorkelling. We also received awards for best overall diving, best macro diving, best cave, cavern and grotto diving.

Madam Speaker, *Family vacation critic* rated the Caribbean Club the top family hotel in the Caribbean. *TripAdvisor* listed Caribbean Club amongst the top three luxury hotels in the Caribbean. And the list goes on.

Madam Speaker, with all of the successes, we recognise that we have got to prepare our people to take advantage of these successes. And one of the priorities of this Government has been the School of Hospitality Studies. We remain committed to developing the School of Hospitality Studies. In fact, we are now looking at ways to implement or include a water sports side to the programme where our young people can go and become trained in open water boat handling, CPR, dive instructors, et cetera.

In 2014/15 we had 26 students. Many of these have gone on to further their education at overseas institutions and 9 took employment immediately in the local industry. In 2015/16 we wanted to double our numbers. And as much as I agree with the Fifth Elected Member for George Town who said we should have 300 people in training, we were only able to attract 28 students, Madam Speaker. Twenty-three are current, and there are 18 students on rotation within the industry. The other students that are not on rotation are currently being groomed for the industry and will be in rotation soon. And we have been advertising over the last month for the 2016/17 year. And again we hope to try and attract at least 50 students, which is our goal.

Madam Speaker, in addition, the Ministry succeeded in securing a scholarship programme with the Johnson and Wales University. The school will offer up to [\$]15,000 for students that are able to maintain a 3.5 GPA. And this offer will include housing and meals

and taking partnerships with the Government's scholarship of \$20,000, students will be able to afford the full scholarship.

Madam Speaker, under our Ministry we also have the Tourism Attraction Board. And the board continues to grow and we have seen some increase in admissions and growth over the third quarter resulting in an increase of 17.5 per cent in admissions at Pedro St. James, compared to the full-year result for the 2014/15. So, with a couple or three months left we have managed already a 17.5 per cent increase in admissions. In 2015/16, full year admission is expected to exceed 25 per cent growth.

Madam Speaker, one of the main contributors to this growth was that after many years of talking about Go East, we were finally able through collaboration between the Public Transport Unit, the Cayman Islands Turtle Farm and the Tourism Attraction Board to get two tours added to the offerings from the cruise lines, at least from Royal [Caribbean], and that is the Turtle Swim, which is one tour that will take you to Pedro St. James and the Turtle Farm; and the other is the Tea Tour, which is Pedro St. James and the Botanic Park.

We have also presented these tours to Carnival and the results are looking good. So we anticipate the contract will be secured with Carnival to offer these "Go East" tours in the upcoming season.

Local tour company, Webster's, has also submitted a new tour to the cruise lines which will primarily be focusing on history and having tea at Pedro St. James. The goal is to further increase admissions to Pedro St. James and the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park, by developing synergies with other government entities, private attractions owners and independent tour operators. At Pedro St. James we have improved the visitor experience and we are just about ready to sign a lease on the on-site café which will significantly improve the visitors' experience by offering snacks and dining options. We are also marketing and targeting local families, offering discount rates to local families to attend the Pedro St. James and the Botanic Park. And at Pedro St. James we will be having local artisans displaying their arts and crafts, which will allow for greater interaction with guests and provide a truly unique CaymanKind experience.

At the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park we have embarked on the development of a children's garden which is anticipated to be completed in December 2017. And works have already started and programmes have already started with our local primary schools and the idea is that each school will have a little garden where they will come up on a monthly basis to see how their garden is doing and to work the garden and have educational talks in the garden. This will also be an attraction that will be recommended to the cruise lines to encourage a more family style or family type activity on our shores.

Madam Speaker, the goal is to further develop the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park and Pedro St. James as a destination wedding site and capitalise and secure a prospective market share which could potentially increase revenues by up to 32 per cent. We have been very successful as a destination in becoming established as a desired wedding destination and now we are putting all of the connection together to start to drive some of those weddings towards Pedro St. James and the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park.

Madam Speaker, we have also continued to see growth in the transportation sector. We have 56 permits approved between July 2015 and May 2016. There were 11 new Caymanian taxi drivers, 23 tour operators, 4 limo operators, 14 Omni buses, and 4 water sports operators.

We have also continued to try and improve the provision of transportation by offering services into areas previously not serviced. Three additional bus routes have been approved for the eastern districts via South Church Street and South Sound, and two new routes were approved for the Walkers Road, Fairbanks and Smith Road areas.

We have also embarked on a new initiative with the GPS programme working with Lands and Survey to enhance the monitoring of the routes. The Public Transport Board will install GPS in as many vehicles as possible as the budget allows. At the moment the system requires programming from Public Works Department prior to implementation and we have five units over at Lands and Survey now undergoing programming. So we hope to have those first five units in action very soon.

Madam Speaker, in an effort to provide better identification, the Cayman Islands Tour and Shuttle Association members now all have uniform shirts. We had the shirts sponsored by the Cayman Turtle Farm Wildlife Encounter, and it has really helped to boost the numbers, including the Go East Tour with the joint Turtle Farm and Pedro St. James visit. It obviously looks much more professional and in keeping with the brand and spirit of CaymanKind.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry also has responsibility for the Cayman Islands Airports Authority and, as we heard earlier, from last week the Owen Roberts International Airport Development phase 1 is 95 per cent complete. This is as we put in the last remaining item, being the baggage handling system. And then the building finishes will go on. We expect to start using that facility within the next six or seven months. And hopefully, as we move along with the other renovations this will help to improve our passenger experience during the high season.

Phase 2 of the construction is valued at \$42.5 million and was awarded to local construction firm, McAlpine. We are anticipating the start date at the end of this month, with scheduled completion by summer 2018.

Madam Speaker, this Government, with this project having an estimated cost of \$55 million, worked very hard to find ways to move the scheduled completion date or project date from five to three years. This was a very ambitious and aggressive timeline to minimise the discomfort of our travelling public and recognising that the overcrowding situation at the airport during peak seasons was having a tremendous negative effect on our tourism product. Madam Speaker, despite the redevelopment period being reduced from five years down to three years, the project is proceeding within budget and is on track to becoming a facility the entire country can be proud of.

Madam Speaker, if the five-year redevelopment plan proposed by the consultants was followed, the project would have been financed entirely by the Cayman Islands Airports Authority from their own resources, but due to the value placed on the tourism product it was decided that five years was too long for the travelling public to wait and Government agreed to inject \$15 million into the project to accelerate the completion.

The Charles Kirkconnell International Airport earned international airport status after the Progressive led redevelopment and expansion. And now, Madam Speaker, last year the Charles Kirkconnell International Airport was rated in the top 10 small airports in the Caribbean.

The Cayman Islands Airports Authority financial results indicate positive performance for revenue expenditure and cash reserves and net worth. The 2013 financial statements have been audited and have received a qualified opinion. The financial statements for June 2014/15 are currently being audited. In 2014, the Cayman Islands Airports Authority earned \$26.5 million in revenue. In 2015 it was \$29.8 million. And, Madam Speaker, the forecast for 2016 continues to be positive with a projected out turn of \$29.9 million in revenue, \$20.5 million in expenditure, resulting in a \$9.5 million surplus.

The 18-month projection, June 2016 to December 2017, the Cayman Islands Airports Authority is projecting an operating result of \$3.6 million in the transitional period, to December 2016, and a further \$9.5 million for the calendar year 2017, making this a total of \$13.1 million for the 18-months ending December 2017.

Madam Speaker, the Port Authority continues to show a complete turnaround in its performance, thanks to the increased numbers in cruise arrivals and the strong economic growth and development that we are currently experiencing. The Port Authority financial performance for the nine-months ended April 30, 2016, shows an improved result over 2015. The Port Authority of the Cayman Islands recorded a profit of \$3.8 million for the 10-month period in comparison with a \$2.8 million profit for the period July 2014 to April 2015, an actual of \$1 million, or 36 per cent increase.

Cargo income increased by \$1.6 million, or 14 per cent, for the 10-month period due to steady monthly increases in cargo import volume. Cruise passenger arrivals by 6 per cent from 1.471 million passengers for the first 10 months of the fiscal year 2015 to 1.5 million passengers for the first 10 months of fiscal year 2016. As the Minister spoke about last week, work continues with the cruise berthing facility. This is going to be at a minimum of \$150 million investment. It is expected to start next year and will bring in some \$425 million over 25 years and create over 1,000 jobs.

It will also enable cargo port expansions which will help resolve the congestion down at the port. And it has received tremendous support and interest from our cruise partners. In fact, just this week we received a letter, after meeting with one of the newest cruise lines coming on board, who had not intended on having the Cayman Islands as one of their stops, that they are excited to see the progress and to hear that we will be building cruise berths and that they are now considering strongly to add the Cayman Islands to their itinerary.

So, Madam Speaker, moving back to the economy, the Chamber of Commerce did a survey from the 24th of January to 5th of February 2013, with 254 respondents. In that survey, they asked what are the extremely important issues. And the results were: government spending, national debt, crime and public safety, cost of living, cost of doing business. Well, let's take a snapshot from 2009-2013 to set the scene, Madam Speaker. Chaotic leadership, no direction, best practice ignored, negative economic growth and high unemployment. And let's look at the landscape today, Madam Speaker. Under this Government, government surpluses have increased from approximately \$60 million at June 2013, the time of the survey, to \$122 million in 2014/15. Over the last three budgets we have generated net surpluses totalling almost \$400 million, and greater reduction in government debt from \$709 million in 2013 to \$593 million in 2016. As I said earlier, Madam Speaker, Government now has enough cash to pay its bills for three months without any revenue or without borrowing.

National debt has reduced by more than \$70.4 million since 2013. No more overdrafts as with the previous administration. The Progressive's-led Government cancelled the overdraft facility two years ago, Madam Speaker. And cost of living fell by 2.5 per cent in 2015 and continues to be reduced under this Progressive's-led Government. The economy grew by 2 per cent annually since 2013. This is twice as much as the .81 per cent under the previous Government. Cost of doing business, a \$1 million reduction in trade and business licensing fees for small businesses, free licenses for micro businesses. This resulted in twice as many business licenses than in 2014, the previous year.

Diesel fuel used by CUC reduced from .75 per gallon to .25 per gallon. This means \$17 million per year stays in the pockets of the people and in this economy, Madam Speaker. Import duties reduced from 22 per cent to 20 per cent for licensed retailers in this budget. No increase on the 15 per cent duty on construction materials. This encourages people to buy locally and to build homes and businesses.

Madam Speaker, this Government's first task was to restore the nation's finances and return stability and return investor confidence into this country. And it was no easy task, Madam Speaker. But we have done it!

Madam Speaker, much talk has been about new development started under the PPM Government, under this Coalition, Progressive's-led Government. Tourism works in synergy with Government acting as the catalyst for the infrastructural growth and development. This is why we are working hard to establish an environment where there is confidence in the economy and the Government. This is what spurs inward investment, creates jobs, reduces unemployment and encourages entrepreneurs and improves the quality of life for all Caymanians.

Since 2013, I will list a few things. New roads: Humber Lane, Bobby Thompson Way expansion, Owen Roberts International Airport Redevelopment, the Margaritaville Hotel (now replacing the old dilapidated Treasure Island Hotel), Charles Kirkconnell International Airport expansion, the reconstruction and beginning of works coming up on the John Gray campus, and we have seen the ground broken on FIN an ultra-luxury development by the Crighton Group. We saw the beginning and the completion of Elgin Court, which now house Baraud International on Elgin Avenue across from the police station. We see continued expansion at Cricket Square. We saw the beginning and completion of Technology Centre, which is the home to the Security Centre. Now phase 2 is just about completed. We see new retail complexes being built on Godfrey Nixon Way on the heels of improved road structure there. We see the renovation and successful sales of the Marriott, the Sunshine Suites and the Westin Hotel, all of which the Government has collected fees for.

Madam Speaker, three hotels not sold because they were in bankruptcy or receivership, but sold because they were attractive to buyers. That is a sign of a strong economy. And, Madam Speaker, we had renovations at the Ritz Carlton and the development of an 8,000 square foot penthouse suite which is the largest in the Caribbean. And now the owners of that hotel have realised that they are in a prime position to sell the property and capitalise as well. This is a sign of a strong economy, Madam Speaker.

In this budget we have another \$68.1 million to be injected into this economy through capital projects, all following best practice and without borrowing.

Madam Speaker, we continue with the George Town revitalisation taking a holistic approach recognising that without the roadworks, without proper access to the town centre, that planting trees and changing buildings, et cetera, none of it will make a difference. So those works have begun. We have long-term initiatives taken in phases, including the cruise berthing facility. We have overarching policies, documents being drafted and expected by the end of July that will clearly lay out the plan for the revitalisation which will include mixed-use occupancy, changes to traffic and pedestrian flows, beautification of key areas, preservation of historic sites. Madam Speaker, it goes on, but I don't want to take anything from the First Elected Member for George Town who has responsibility for the Ministry carrying out the works.

Madam Speaker, these are all signs of a healthy and growing economy. We saw 100 new companies registered at Cayman Enterprise City. There is no sense in having the building or the name or the concept if companies are not going to come, if companies don't have the confidence in our economy to come; one hundred new companies in Cayman Enterprise city. We see the Kimpton, Ironwood, St. James Point, Margaritaville, all of these . . . yes, they were concepts. Some of them were concepts for a while. But all of these investors and the financiers had the confidence in our economy to start these projects in the last few years.

Madam Speaker, since May 2015, we have had 1,269 planning applications, 934 of those have already been approved. These are people feeling confident enough to build their homes, to build condos, apartments, all signs of a very vibrant, strong confident economy, Madam Speaker. More investment means more jobs, more businesses, and more opportunities for our people.

The bottom line is that this Government, this Progressive's-led Coalition Government has proven to be trusted, honest, transparent, a Government of integrity, with no concerns around projects or international best practice not being followed. Government contracts are awarded and are transparent. Our procurement policies are openly tendered, and follow best practice, and, Madam Speaker, no turmoil, no scandals, no law suits. Yes, Madam Speaker, it may actually sound like cheerleading and it may be too good to be true. But these are the facts. These are the things that are happening.

Madam Speaker, I want to now turn my attention to the district of George Town and, again, would like to acknowledge the many improvements in the road works. The road from Prospect from the school up to Marina Drive and to the roundabout, Madam Speaker, you have driven that road. It felt like you were getting a massage it was so bad. And so, Madam Speaker, we have seen the resurfacing of that road, the realignment of the dangerous roundabouts in that area.

Madam Speaker, I spoke earlier about the Godfrey Nixon Way expansion, widening and resurfacing. We can see businesses reviving there. That was an area that we avoided previously, and all of a sudden we see economic stimulation there with new plazas opening, businesses reopening that had closed.

Madam Speaker, Smith Road and Cumber Avenue [*sic*], what a difference. I drive my son to school there every morning.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Joseph X Hew: Humber Lane, sorry. It is a difference of night and day.

We are all looking forward to the promised work on the Linford Pierson Highway, and I can tell you that the entire Island is eager for the four lanes on the Esterley Tibbetts Highway.

Madam Speaker, also, we are thankful for the crosswalks that were installed on Seven Mile Beach. Personally, I would like to see them raised and a bit more lighting around them to make them even safer. We are thankful for the speed limit reduction. That road was very dangerous with people travelling at 40 mph and 50 mph with our tourists, families and everyone on the side of the road enjoying Seven Mile Beach like we should.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to, and we have been working on identifying the darker areas on the strip to get some lighting there. One of my goals and hopes is that eventually we can put some nice centre islands with trees, et cetera, to cut down on the racetrack style manoeuvres we see down the middle lanes during the peak times.

As a Representative of George Town, I am also very confident . . . and, Madam Speaker, talking about the landfill, I live a mile away from the landfill. Not even as the crow flies if I'm jogging through the dyke road and onto the bypass, I'm a mile away. So, Madam Speaker, I just as much, or more than anyone else have an interest in the landfill. And I am happy to say that over the last year just the works that have been done so far with the new equipment and getting back to compressing the garbage sorting, Madam Speaker, the incidents of the smell have reduced tremendously. Of course, we have not seen any new fires.

Madam Speaker, I also feel confident that the approach taken by this Government will result in a long-term sustainable solution. We have had several quick-fix attempts. Or we are going to do this, or we are going to sell it to this one. Madam Speaker, I think whilst I would have liked to have seen work progressing on the site as far as the building going down and waste-to-energy facility, et cetera, I understand the process and I feel confident and appreciate the process that is happening. And I know now that we are at the point where we will have results. Madam Speaker.

It is not just a pie in the sky idea that we pulled out and when we get down to it we can't find the funding or we can't get approval from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, you know, all these things that keep happening. So, as a Representative for George Town, and, just as importantly, a neighbour of the landfill, I feel confident that we are on the right track to finding a long-term solution.

We still continue to have issues with crime in our community. Firearms are a real concern. We continue to work with the resident beat officers. Unfortunately, every time we get one that we become familiar with and we're working with, they leave and go to work in the private sector, go back home, or they have to move because they are short in another division. But, Madam Speaker, I can tell you that the communities are working hard. Ms. Dorline Welcome who is a community officer, and a member of the community, we work with her and I don't know where we would be without her. Even on her vacation last week she was working. Every day we get phone calls and she's working. She can't take vacation because the issues of the people do not go away while she is on vacation.

Madam Speaker, some of the issues that keep coming up and that we keep addressing are the trash and maintenance of vacant lots, the derelict cars which now we are starting to see some action as the Department of Environmental Health now has new equipment and trucks that they can actually remove some of these. And, Madam Speaker, illegal garages are popping up everywhere. These garages are posing environmental hazards with the oils being poured in the ground. And our senior citizens, in particular, who are home, are struggling on a day to day with the smell of the exhaust fumes or with the smell of paint fumes (from those that do bodywork). So, Madam Speaker, we also have the issue that some of these are being done by persons who are not licensed, nor do they have a work permit to do it, and they are working at night until 1:00, 2:00, 3:00 in the morning, keeping people in the neighbourhood awake, revving up the cars, et cetera. So I very much look forward to the revision of the Environmental Health Law that will put more teeth in, for the officers to use in cleaning up some of these areas and removing the derelict cars. And I continue to work with and look forward to working with the Trade and Business Licence to make sure that these garages are regulated or if they have Planning permission to be there. Madam Speaker, it has become not only an eyesore, but a health threat.

In the case of the cars, Madam Speaker, that have been abandoned on the side of the roads, the residents tell us that these cars are being used to hide drugs, to hide guns, not only are they infested with rodents, but people are actually using them when carrying out their illegal activity to hide things.

Madam Speaker, the shipping containers were a real concern. And I would like to publicly thank Minister Archer and the Ministry for implementing a

system of inspecting the outgoing cargo containers. This has reduced the activities where these containers were being put on the side of the roads with people loading them up at midnight, et cetera. I know this, Madam Speaker. Minister Archer and I went and witnessed these things for ourselves, seeing people loading and you can't and the police go and the stuff is all wrapped up in three or four layers of cardboard and you don't . . . by the time you go and get a warrant to open these packages they disappear again. But that has been reduced, Madam Speaker. Unfortunately, some of the containers are now left on the side of the road, some on government property. And we continue to ask the assistance of DEH and the NRA to remove these containers from our neighbourhoods. These containers are now also becoming havens for persons to carry out illegal activities, to camp out in. Madam Speaker, they are now becoming a place for undesirable characters to gather in.

Madam Speaker, also in the district we have the new Farmers Market over by the Cricket Grounds. That was long needed. You can just see the success of it that tells you how much it was needed. Madam Speaker, we are working and hopefully very soon will be able to develop the adjoining property to finally have a home for our District Heritage Committee, so they can have their Pirates Week event and their family events, et cetera, there. That has been long lacking. And sometimes we can't even get to use the Town Hall because it is being used by the courts. So, an area, a home for our Heritage Committee has been lacking for many years. And we are excited about the opportunities to be able to share that site and to develop a home for our Heritage Committee.

Madam Speaker, in closing, and while I am on the topic of constituents, last week in his debate, the Fifth Elected Member for George Town said that those attending the Progressive's dinner did not show up out of the goodness of their hearts. He said that those attending were attending in exchange for something. Madam Speaker, there were a couple of hundred honest, hardworking, Caymanian members of the party and supporters. There were iconic Caymanians there, Caymanians with MBEs, CBEs, from the young to the retired, there to support a dinner held by the fundraising arm of the People's Progressive Movement, with the keynote speaker being the Premier. I want to know if the Fifth Elected Member for George Town was saying that these people are expecting something underhanded from us, that they were not there to support the party they belong to, or the Government that they support, that they had some other reason. I hope not, Madam Speaker. I truly hope not.

Madam Speaker, in closing, this administration from a position of sound financing can act in the long-term interests of these Islands and progress in much-needed changes that benefit our people in the future. Madam Speaker, this year's budget is about seeing through the changes which began in 2013 and

doing so with the same determination that has characterised the spirit of getting things done, as we have done in the previous three years.

Madam Speaker, again, I would like to congratulate the Government, the Minister of Finance, and the Premier for his leadership on this very important Budget. And I look forward to working along with this Government to continue the good work that we have been doing. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? Does any other Member wish to speak? Last call, does any other Member wish to speak?

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

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

Madam Speaker, I recognise that I had no choice but to get up now to make my contribution to the Budget debate that is currently before us. I am a little perplexed, though, as to why all these Ministers, if they have such good things to say, are not making their reports to this country. I recall when I was a Minister, I couldn't wait for the now Minister of Works to sit down before I was on my feet, because I had something to report to the people that I serve. It seems like the only thing this Government and its Ministers have to report are the pompoms waving in the air and the need to poke holes in whatever this side says.

Madam Speaker, I understand politics (I've been here long enough), it is opinion versus opinion, debate versus debate and counter debate. I understand that. I also understand and have over the years tried to stick to that fundamental of politics which says that it is not the principles you attack, it's the methods you address.

Madam Speaker, I know I will have to put up with the Minister and his smirking during this debate that I am making, this contribution I am making. But, be that as it may, I will not let that deter me from what I have to say.

Madam Speaker, at the presentation of the Budget by the Minister of Finance, and the Budget Policy Statement by the Premier, on Monday, May 30th, there was a lot of cheering from the Government side. I assume that was to mark their approval of the sterile deliveries by these two esteemed gentlemen, or it was to congratulate themselves on a job well done. As I suspected, of the few that have spoken, I expect no less from the two backbenchers; that's their job. As I suspected, there was a lot of thumping of chests and self-praise. But, Madam Speaker, I am puzzled as to how this Government can slap themselves on their backs for a job well done when there are so many people in our community, our society that are barely surviving, and that is in one of the economic miracles of the 21st century. A country with a population of around 60,000 people with a workforce of just

over 34,000 and Caymanians only make up 56 per cent of that labour force, and over 2,000 seeking assistance from the state.

Something tells me that the time has come for a paradigm shift. Madam Speaker, we cannot be serious about providing opportunity for our people when almost 10 per cent have to depend on Government to put food on their table to be able to survive. This Government comes to this legislature and brags of getting the Government's financial position back on track as dictated by the UK Government, and not ensure Caymanians who are capable are working or in jobs to give them hope. Let me pause for a minute, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, yes, the Government has met the demands of England, the UK Government. I have always contended that we should have tried to push it out further. There are those who disagree with me and said it would not have made any difference, but that disagreement has not changed my position on that matter. But, Madam Speaker, someone once said, "As the grass grows the horse is starving to death." So, that can be applied here. The very beast of burden that we place the burden on to meet our obligation placed upon us by the UK, they cannot reach the grass, as green as it is.

Madam Speaker, I don't know if we are comfortable with the situation that we have. Are we comfortable with the fact that the more people on social services, on the state, to be able to be fed is the more that will be obligated to us as politicians, obligated to our generosity, and one day pay us back by voting for us. The Government can come with every statistic in this world. I know recently . . . or before I go there, let me say, Madam Speaker, the people, the Caymanians of whom I am one, and those I know, Madam Speaker, are not proud of holding their hands out. They want opportunity. And, Madam Speaker, we were elected and we were given the mandate to take care of our people. We were entrusted with their safekeeping. We were entrusted to provide opportunities for them. Whilst at the same time, I understand that they understood the sacrifices that we all have to make, but when we balance the Government finances on their backs, we need, in tandem, to provide opportunities for them.

Madam Speaker, people are not looking for a handout. They are looking for lifts. Madam Speaker, what happened to the concept of when the boat is rising, all rise? I said to this honourable House on a number of occasions that we, as Members, should not rejoice because the hole is in the other end of the boat and someone else is on that end. Madam Speaker, there are those of us who have plenty, who have much. I do not envy those of us who have much, who have plenty. But when we step into this political arena we need to understand why we are here. We need to understand that Parliament is where the job gets done. We need to understand that this is where the

decisions are made in the better interest of our people and not for a select few, and not to the point where the economy brings the few people out and bring them to the top at the expense of the others.

Madam Speaker, we know that the majority of our people are middle class and below. We know that. In any country that is a reality. You really think, Madam Speaker, of those people who are in those categories need a Governor who comes to deliver the Throne Speech and has 1,500 words compared with the Premier who has 48 pages? And those 1,500 words are a mere showering of kudos onto the Government about meeting the requirements of the UK Government, the Governor's Government? Anyone who thinks that any Governor is sent to any Overseas Territory because of their impartiality has made a mistake. You really think Cameron is sending anyone to this country or any Overseas Territory that can't carry out his mandate? Of course not! And that is not being derogatory, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, you think my people need a Governor who comes without any empathy? Madam Speaker, you think the country, my people, needs someone who talks about their strong affection for them, and does the complete opposite? Madam Speaker, we all know that affection means a feeling of liking and caring for someone or something; feeling of love, respect. Madam Speaker, I don't feel it. I really don't feel any when our Governor can be the guest of honour at a conference that is contrary to what I believe to be opposite to the majority of the people of this country.

Madam Speaker, oh for the day of steel men and wooden ships again. Oh for the day when people like my father, Farmer, my Uncle Goldwyn, my Uncle Woody and many others, Cheryl from George Town [PHONETIC] and many from West Bay, stopped the discrimination against Caymanians. Oh, for that day. Oh, for that day when some of us stand up. Oh, for that day when men stand up in their country. Oh for that day when the Christian community demand their rights too. Oh for the day when they all gathered on the waterfront and decided what the future of this country was going to be like. Because the day of today is such that we believe that as soon as we spend all of our money after getting rich in the private sector, and spending it on paraphernalia, gets elected, joins the happy band of merry men, gets elected and then forgets why we came here, and makes statements like if the Caymanians fall through the crack, some of them, so be it, and make statements that they have no dogs in the fight.

Madam Speaker, I have a lot of dogs in the fight. All the dogs are in the fight, whether that Caymanian came by birth or they came by paper. They are my dogs. But I will not make one or two take advantage of the majority either, without speaking up. That will be the day when like the Premier says, he reads my obituary over me. He has promised me that.

And the good thing about that is he doesn't know it won't be any, if I happen to pass before him, because there are specific instructions to keep him out of the funeral home.

[Laughter]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: No, Madam Speaker, that was in jest.

Madam Speaker,—

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: I am going to fool more than you.

Madam Speaker, we need to understand that we need to multi-task when it comes to doing what is absolutely necessary for this country in every way possible. Our people don't need . . . you think they are concerned coming down here and talking about good governance and who has responsibility for it? These are the buzz words that they don't need. What they need are opportunities wherein they can put bread on the table and keep their creditors away from their doors. That's what needs to happen.

Madam Speaker, I find it quite amazing, very amazing as a matter of fact, that we can talk about these things whilst our people suffer. And, Madam Speaker, I am going to get to the point a little later on in this debate about those who come here and do as they please and we put systems in place, especially this Government, since it's been here, put systems in place to control Caymanians from doing the same thing that the others don't have anything for. Madam Speaker, what my people want, most and foremost, is tangibility, measurability, and visibility.

Madam Speaker, the Premier got up on a point of order against the Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town, saying that . . . I think he said that CPI. Whether he said the cost of living continued to increase or not, Madam Speaker, I am saying now, that that which affects the people is increasing too. And, Madam Speaker, tell the Premier not to jump up yet, because he knows that when I am going to say something I am going to say it properly. He knows that.

Hear smirky again—Minister of smirks.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, the Government—

The Speaker: Honourable Member for East End, I am sure you are more than familiar with Standing Order 35(3) and I ask you to keep it within your cognisance as you debate.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, I am in concert with him. I am just saying that, you know, that is nothing derogatory. He smiles a lot.

The Speaker: Member, I will get into a literary or linguistic exchange with you but there is a great difference between smiling and smirking. The one commonality is that they begin with an “s”. Please continue.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Well, Madam Speaker, if such is the case then I think that word is “semantics.”

Madam Speaker, when the Premier intervened on a point of order, or elucidation, something, whichever it was, about what the Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town had said, I went and did my research. I done some on labour before, but the [Cayman Islands Consumer Price Index Report of March 2016](#), date of release was May the 13th 2016; a mere month ago—less than a month ago. It was quite interesting, Madam Speaker, to see what that revealed.

Madam Speaker, since the Premier said we can have as many opinions as you want, but there is only one set of facts, then, let’s see if he can answer to these facts which he considers to be correct, which I have suspect of, because that basket has not adequately reflected the people’s way of life in this country for a very long time. I understand there is an attempt afoot to change it. And I trust that the good Minister of Finance will see fit to put in there the things that really affect our people.

Madam Speaker, of course, whenever that’s done it is going to take some time for it to be reflected properly in actualities on the ground.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Obviously the Councillor doesn’t agree with me, but I believe that will be the case over a couple of years, I guess, we will see it. You won’t from the first time.

Madam Speaker, getting back to the release of May 13, 2016, and it says, **“Annual changes: March 2015 over March 2016**

“The 2.8 percent overall decline in March 2016 in comparison to March 2015 is mainly due to reductions in the price indices of the following divisions:

“Housing and utilities” . . . Madam Speaker, I don’t know if I should read all of this, but . . . and the narrative for that says, **“the price index registered a fall of 8.8 percent. Charges for water supply and miscellaneous services recorded a 14.8 percent negative adjustment, while the index for electricity, gas and other fuels fell by 12.4 percent following the trend in international oil prices. Actual rentals and imputed rentals for owner-occupied housing fell by 1.6 and 11.1 percent, respectively.**

“Transport: the division’s index fell by 6.7 percent as a result of the decrease in the price index for operations of personal transport equipment by 7.6 percent, transport services by 6.3 percent, and the purchase of vehicles by 1.6 percent.

“Recreation and culture: this price index moved down by 0.6 percent. Prices for audiovisual, photographic, and information process equipment generally fell, particularly television sets, radios, and computers, at an average of 15.6 percent. Newspapers, books, and stationery also recorded price reductions by 8.1 percent on average. These declines were offset by increases in recreational and cultural services by 4.6 percent and other major durables for recreation and culture by 1.9 percent.

“Household equipment: this division’s index decreased by 0.4 percent, largely as a result of lower price indices for household textiles by 7.8 percent; glassware, tableware by 5.0 percent; and household utensils and household appliances by 2.6 percent. Tools and equipment for house and garden also fell by 1.9 percent. The price movements were moderated by increased prices for furniture and furnishings, and goods and services for routine household maintenance.

“Meanwhile, the following divisions recorded increases in March 2016 compared to March 2015:

“Miscellaneous goods and services: there was a 3.8 percent rise in the index, mainly from a 27.8 percent increase in personal effects not elsewhere classified” (remember I said that we need to change it, Madam Speaker?) **“such as jewellery. Other services n.e.c. (for example, legal fees and passport handling fees) also rose by 8.4 percent on average while personal care and social protection increased by 4.4 and 1.5 percent, respectively.**

“Education: there was a 2.6 percent rise above the level in March 2015 due to increases in the average school fees for secondary education by 4.7 and pre-primary and primary by 3.7 percent. (These increases were first recorded in the third quarter of 2015). Tertiary education recorded no movement in its index for the period under review.

“Communication: there was a 2.3 percent rise in this price index as telephone and telefax services rose by 2.3 percent. Postal services also inched up by 0.4 percent.

“Clothing and footwear: . . . the index for this division moved upward by 0.6 percent due to increased prices for alcohol by 0.7 percent and tobacco by 0.5 percent on average.” (How can tobacco and alcohol get among clothing?)

Oh no, sorry, Madam Speaker, **“Clothing and footwear: this division’s index rose by 2.0 percent as the prices of footwear and clothing**

moved up by an average of 4.5 percent and 1.6 percent, respectively.” (Sorry about that, Madam Speaker.)

Alcohol and tobacco: “the index for this division moved upward by 0.6 percent due to increased prices for alcohol by 0.7 percent and tobacco by 0.5 percent on average.” (Sorry about that, I mixed those two up, Madam Speaker.)

“Food and non-alcoholic beverages: this index rose by 0.3 percent as there were increases in the average cost of the following groups: vegetables up by 7.5 percent; coffee, tea and cocoa by 5.6 percent; meat and meat products by 3.3 percent; and mineral water, soft drinks, fruit and vegetable juices by 0.6 percent. Price declines were recorded for milk, cheese and eggs; oils and fats; food products; and bread and cereals.” (Those are duty free.)

Madam Speaker, I don't have to ridicule my colleague. Every one of them shops the same place those people shop. Every one of them, my colleagues, including your good self, Madam Speaker—I'm not leaving you out—on a weekly, if not daily basis, find ourselves having to push our hands in our pockets to help our people. Every one of us! I don't know too much about the Official Members, because I never heard them say anything. But I know the 18 of us have to do it.

Now, Madam Speaker, there was a time in my lifetime, in all of our lifetimes, that we did not have to do that. Why? Well, I don't know about some, Madam Speaker, some of them have never had to do it. They grew up in that time when they weren't approached for that. But since they have been here, I know they are approached. I promise you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, our people run to us because they trust us. They trust that we can wade through all the baloney that some give us and identify those who are genuinely in need. They know. You think they don't trust us? Of course they do. But here we are, the Government with its statistics, an overall statistic of 2.3 per cent reduction and they are playing that to the audiences, about the cost of living gone down. I just recently said, Madam Speaker, within the last 20 minutes that the people who need us most happen to be the middle class and below. Those are the ones who need. Those are the ones who this Government is not helping. And if there is help coming from the Government it's marginal, and it's not doing anything for them! They still have to go to the same grocery stores and the same clothing stores, and the same soda stores and the same preschool to pay what those at the top are doing. But we brag of a reduction. It's gone up for them.

Madam Speaker, I applaud the young man for Bodden Town for bringing it up—

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Now, you know, Mr. Premier, how I operate. Just like you, I am going to say what I have to say. It's your prerogative to get up afterward. I notice you leave all your Ministers there to wait for me. But you know I'm not afraid to tell you what I have to tell you, because you are not afraid to tell me. We've been here long enough from the same day we were sworn in, almost 16 years ago. The rest of them can follow you; I'm not.

I told them already do not allow any one individual or entity to dictate their political career. You have to think for yourself. I did. And I am going to address these young men walking across that well too. Then I will address my walking away. I didn't have the opportunity like they had. That was historical to walk across, my good friend from Bodden Town, the well. Maybe one day.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean, Elected Member for East End: Oh, as you say, if I come back, I will address you too. Don't worry. Don't you rush me now, because everybody has to get their little piece.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: All right. You wait.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: No, you will not be left out. You will have something to respond to.

Madam Speaker, I know the people that I serve will recognise their mistake of 2013; it's not too long away. I know that.

Madam Speaker, I already applauded them on ensuring that the finances are back on track.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Mine, people hear, you know.

I applaud them for that. At what expense? At what cost? And the cost is to our people. As much as we reduce the cost, the duties on fuel, it still has not helped as much as we would like to. Madam Speaker, the Premier spoke of the reductions in duties for traders, I think they are called. Madam Speaker, the only one that the Premier can stand here today and guarantee to this country that they get the benefit of it is the one on fuel to CUC because it is a pass through. That is the only one.

Madam Speaker, let me applaud the right Honourable Linford Pierson, he did that during his tenure, you know. Okay? And at the renewal of that licence, I upheld that. That's the only one that any one of us (not only the Premier) can get up and truly say to our people that they are getting the benefit of anything that we do in the reduction of taxes.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: You want to know what I would do if I were over there?

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: To he who much is given, much is expected. You wait until I get there before you ask that question. You stay there. You stay there now.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: You know how bankrupt my ideas were then? Hang on now.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Members, please keep the comments through the Chair, otherwise democracy will be even more bankrupted.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, you know I can't leave that unresponsive. He's talking about me—

The Speaker: I am not saying that Member, I am saying both you and the Premier to please keep your comments through the Chair. I am not telling you about the content of your speech, unless it contravenes the Standing Orders.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, I am going through the Chair. It's the Premier who is not now.

Madam Speaker, he talked about me being bankrupt of ideas when I was Minister with him? Madam Speaker, were that so, he would not have been re-elected, because it is on my record why they got re-elected. But, more importantly, he almost made us bankrupt the country with those schools, which I told him to not build. So let's not start it now, because if he wants sabre rattling, that can happen.

My good friend for Bodden Town is right there.

Madam Speaker, let me go on to some of the things the Premier said. The Premier said that one of the highlights was that there was a determination by his Government to continue a programme of positive change. That may be their determination, but very few people are seeing it or experiencing it, unfortunately. I don't disagree that I believe that may be a determination and an ideal, whatever you want to call it, by this Government. I have never once questioned their intent. I have always questioned how they went about it, Madam Speaker. And I am concerned that they have not given this country value for their time spent there. I don't know what has caused it. It looks like they are paralysed from fear of doing things, making decisions, or they are making someone else make the decisions.

Madam Speaker, I want to turn to an issue, and that's to show that this Government has not fulfilled its promise to help its people, and, in particular, those people at the bottom. Madam Speaker, in 2013 this Government came in riding their high horse, promising reform, reform that would benefit its people. Madam Speaker, one of the things that this Premier promised the people, and I heard him, witnessed him saying it, right in the civic centre that was named after his grandfather; that they were going to make PR [Permanent Residency] more difficult for people to get. Madam Speaker, to this day they came here and changed the law in August 2013 to allow people to get PR. I objected to it then, and I object to it now. To this date, not one has been issued.

Madam Speaker, that in itself works against our people. They went and changed the point system. I am glad those who were spearheading all of that, the Government have seen fit to send them into Siberia. Madam Speaker, every time we touch our Immigration Law our people suffer more. I am grateful to the Premier because he has now said that he has recently received the report that he commissioned R&C (Ritch and Conolly) to do on that system. I am grateful to him for having done that, because if anyone knows about our Immigration Law, it has to be David Ritch. If the Premier will recall in 2007 this country came down on David Ritch like a ton of bricks when he said at the Westin that if you have your population it gets 10 per cent of another nationality you're looking trouble. He said that. And they came down on him with a ton of bricks. The Leader of the Opposition did too. Poor old David when he said that.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: You wasn't around, conveniently so.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, he has promised that he will review it and reveal the report to us mere mortals, soon, I hope.

Madam Speaker, I am today making my stand for all and sundry to hear and digest. Not my colleagues alone, Madam Speaker. They are the least in this because they are here. But I want my people to hear this. They must no longer be Cayman status issued, except by marriage and by descent.

[Thumping on the desk]

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller, Member for North Side: Been my position from 1972.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: We have enough now. Marriage and descent! We have enough now.

We need to develop a system of security of tenure that is different. Caymanian status must be reserved for spouses and those of our heritage who went and lived elsewhere and have now come back. We need to stop it.

Madam Speaker, every time we issue one, they come with something to take the rest of us out. Madam Speaker, I was amazed with a viewpoint in the *Reporter* recently. A gentleman whom the Premier revered and liked and who supported the Premier throughout four years of his tenure has a real deadly viewpoint in the *Reporter*. At the time he wasn't Caymanian; he has since become one. And one of those other ones who came here and cut his teeth on legal aid is the co-author. That's what we're getting.

We have enough now. And all those who shall come hence, subsequent, will understand. God will be kind to us, Madam Speaker. Anywhere else can do it, and we throw our hands in the air and pray we get manna from heaven. Do you know what manna is? — Coming up from here. That's where it is. Against the very Premier that engaged him!

[RECORDING INAUDIBLE FOR A FEW SECONDS]

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: No, it's against the Premier.

Madam Speaker, you know what? I'm laying the woes of the press is squarely on the shoulders of four people in this country—the Governor, the Deputy Governor, the Premier and the Attorney General. They should never have eased up on that one that we moved a motion here against.

In their infinite wisdom they thought that was the best thing to do. I trust that they have now seen the error of their ways in retrospect. Look at what the front page is today, Mr. Deputy Governor, Madam Speaker; a doctored picture of the dump. Every time they move, they wipe us out. And we sit down . . . *and so it's a good thing we can't do that, because Arden moved that motion in Finance Committee.* That's not a good thing. I understand this motion, Madam Speaker, that I moved was amended by the Premier for clarity, prior to me moving it. Do you think I would do such a thing without consulting with him?

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Of course. I'm a little different you know.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: You were helping him?

Mr. V. Arden McLean: He was helping me.

Madam Speaker, we need to understand . . . Madam Speaker, I don't have anything against any Caymanian, because I wasn't responsible for you be-

ing Caymanian, Madam Speaker. Therefore I can't be responsible for those who go it by jumping through the hoops. I just don't want them to take advantage of any other Caymanian. And despite what this country may think, I respect the Office of Premier. They have no respect for it. But it started when he backed up on what he did. He had the full force of this legislature behind him, and he allowed the Deputy Governor, the Governor and the Attorney General to make him change his mind.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Of course they pressured him. And of course, he wants to be amenable, and stop the fighting and the what-have-you.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Well, the damages would have to damage. We will fight it. We will do what my father told one man in East End—*Peel it until I peel every bottle and plantain.*

[Laughter]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, there needs to come a time when they need to stand up. Anyway, Madam Speaker, I don't want to go there anymore.

The Speaker: Is this a convenient time for the luncheon break?

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Absolutely, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: We will take the luncheon break and reconvene at 2:15 pm.

Proceedings suspended at 12:40 pm

Proceedings resumed at 2:51 pm

The Speaker: Please be seated. Proceedings are resumed.

I recognise the honourable Member for the district of East End to continue his debate. You have one hour and three minutes remaining.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS

SECOND READING

APPROPRIATION (JULY 2016 TO DECEMBER 2017) BILL, 2016

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

[Continuation of debate thereon]

Mr. V. Arden McLean, Elected Member for East End: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I shall talk fast.

Madam Speaker, when we took the luncheon break, I had touched briefly on the press. And it is true that, as some of my colleagues say, if you want positive PR here, you have to pay them. Because we do not—

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: You've got to pay Legge?

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Or the media, whichever one you want to . . . Not pay us, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I want to say to the Government that I have watched closely, and I do not see the priorities that are necessary to lift our people coming from anywhere from the Government. Madam Speaker, the Government claims they are very busy, and I would not try to take that from them. But I do not know—busy doing what? That is the question.

Madam Speaker, I want to touch briefly on education and labour at this stage. I shall be as kind as possible, but, you know, I shall leave no stone unturned. I have read quite extensively the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Employment [executive summary], which was laid in this Honourable House in June 2015. And it is quite interesting, Madam Speaker. I would implore everyone to read the executive summary of that, if they haven't, because it is quite interesting to look under the things like "Barriers to Employment", "Direct and Indirect Barriers". Remember when the papers had a lot to say about 82 per cent of those registered at NWDA [National Workforce Development Agency] were not work-ready? That is the same report I believe they got that from. But this is the same report that they got it from.

Madam Speaker, they talked in here . . . And this is the Inter-Ministerial Committee, where from the different arms of Government, the committee was formed to look at employment in the country. Madam Speaker, I read from 6.1 "Direct and Indirect Barriers", and I will read excerpts of this, Madam Speaker.

"The assessment of job seekers . . . by NWDA staff against 43 identified barriers to employment indicate that the challenges affecting the majority of the job seekers tend to be skills-related . . . Examples include: formal education up to high school or less (82.2%); moderate to low job market demand for the job seekers skills (80.7%); skills training insufficient (67.7%); little or partial trans-

ferability of skills to current employment goal (67.6%); limited number of demonstrable skills (64.4%); and poor job interview skills demonstrated by difficulty in expressing personal strengths or in presenting self appropriately (50.8%)."

Madam Speaker, it goes on to say, "This supports previous evidence that a number of new entrants into the labour force, including high school and college graduates, are perceived by employers to lack core employability skills . . . such as literacy, numeracy, communication skills, learning ability, problem solving, analytical skills and team working skills for entry level roles, or other requisite skills to effectively perform key or specialised roles within local industries."

It goes on to say, "Focus Group Sessions were held with staff of the NWDA, the Needs Assessment Unit ("NAU"), the Department of Children and Family Service ("DCFS"), Department of Community Rehabilitation ("DCR"), and the Prison Rehabilitation Team . . . The barriers these partner agencies identified included in no particular order: lack of basic skills, technical or job-related skills, interviewing/presentation skills and other soft skills; poor work ethics; sense of entitlement; criminal record; lack of transportation; need for dependent/child care; substance abuse, mental health challenges; inadequate protection of Caymanians, discrimination against Caymanians; and lack of full awareness of the activities of other government agencies."

Section 6.2, Lifelong Learning, says, "An additional factor contributing to structural unemployment is a deficiency within sectors of the Caymanian workforce, of a culture of continuous development or lifelong learning . . . The motivation to learn and develop has been generally lacking or, if present, has not been at the level required to meet existing demand for skills. The pervasive 'culture of entitlement' can therefore result in a desire for the top positions without the requisite skills and experience. This, coupled with anecdotal evidence of companies not providing proper on the job training, has further led to many Caymanians not acquiring relevant up-to-date skills to allow them to transition between jobs or access promotion opportunities at an acceptable level. An example of this has been in the Financial Services sector where some employees that were made redundant have found it difficult to become re-employed in similar level jobs because they lack the up-to-date skills or the educational and professional qualifications that recruiting companies require.

"This perspective was corroborated to some extent by employers-responses when asked whether government should have a role in addressing barriers to employment for Caymanian unemployed, in order to enable them to enter or

re-enter the labour market. Of the respondents, 85 percent stated that training in areas such as interview skills, specific trade or vocational skills, and ethics, whether via training programmes, or setting up a trade school, or through on-the-job-training, needs to be emphasised by government or put in place. However the other two major areas stated were:

- a) the need for government to educate Caymanians to take more responsibility for training, educating and developing their selves (which is linked to lifelong learning); and
- b) the need for government to address issues relating to Caymanian work ethic, attitudes and sense of entitlement.”

Section 7.2, Government Efforts: “**The National Workforce Development Agency . . . was set up to deliver a programme of active labour market policies such as the provision of Public Employment Services (career guidance, job counselling/brokering), Research & Statistics (labour market information), and Training and Development. Steps have been taken to integrate these aspects into the decision making on work permits. In addition to services provided by the NWDA, a variety of services are being delivered across the government intended to address specific social issues and which, directly or indirectly, are aimed at addressing barriers to employment. It should be noted that while these measures may provide short term relief the need for a holistic and long term strategy remains, given the permanent need for imported labour.**”

All good stuff, Madam Speaker, but it comes as a review of the problem we are experiencing. Madam Speaker, the Government has a Back-to-Work programme in place now. I heard the Premier expounding on it quite extensively this morning on the radio. We have 33 people. What is wrong with that picture? Is this a Band-Aid? Is this being used as a Band-Aid by this Government? Because, Madam Speaker, I must tell you—This Premier that I knew—and I emphasis on *knew*—when he and I were Ministers together, had this mission, which we all subscribed to, and it was “education, education, education”.

Madam Speaker, it may have been born out of the fact that he has a family legacy of teaching Caymanians. My question is, Where has it gone? He and his Government seem to have lost sight of that. I would encourage him to get it back, because, Madam Speaker, the priorities in education are not good enough. Madam Speaker, yes, we need to deal with those of a different generation that now cannot have a job. But their problem did not start now. It was people of yesteryear who were sticking their heads in the sand and talking about groups as opposed to gangs, and who deliberately would not put money into our

education. And I make no apologies for that, Madam Speaker. It was convenient for them to do it; therefore, they did it, because they feared the threat, the possibility of the ordinary Caymanian rising above them. And today our people are paying for it.

We identify entitlement, Madam Speaker. Well, every Caymanian is entitled to a job in their country—*every Caymanian*. But every government has paid lip service to it. I can say, Madam Speaker, when it came to the 2005–09 Government, the now-Premier may have gone too far. Because I saw him become animated many times about the challenges that he was having within the service in getting things through. Yes, and we may say whatever we wish about the schools, like I said earlier. But, Madam Speaker, our ideals under his leadership for education were good ones. I do not know where they have gone now, because there is no priority being placed on that. That is financial resources, personnel resources.

Madam Speaker, I am going to demonstrate. I am going to show. Madam Speaker, this Government will probably get up and say that our country, education has had many successes in the last three years, better results. Madam Speaker, I will not deny that. They will say that they did a baseline study inspection and they are better suited now to understand where to put the emphasis. That is true, Madam Speaker, under the current Minister of Education.

But, Madam Speaker, my question is, What about those whom we are not paying attention to? What about those with special education needs and those with behavioural problems? Madam Speaker, those who are getting the good records, good results, we do not have to worry about them. But if we leave one child behind, we have failed—one child, one Caymanian child, we have failed in our objectives and our ideals.

Madam Speaker, what we are going to wind up with is a situation in which the good teachers are going to leave because of frustrations. We need to put more priority on getting good teachers, paying them properly and holding them to account. If they do not give us results, they cannot cut the mustard, then, they must cut a trail for themselves, because the good ones will get frustrated because of the bad apples in the bunch as well. We need to hold people accountable. We cannot, we *cannot*, Madam Speaker, in today’s age, allow our children, all of our children—we are too small—to not reach their full potential, whatever that is in.

Madam Speaker, I have never supported vocational training in this country. I believe that it is too expensive for us because we are too small—50, 60 people going to it. I have always believed that we need to send them overseas and get the experience. Most vocations, 18 months, 2 years, and they qualify. We cannot afford it in our country. It is going to be another \$20 million per year to run a vocational school. It is going to take less to send all of our kids

over to the East Coast of America where they have these schools established already. But we constantly put the blame on, *Oh, we need vocational schools*. We cannot afford it. We can afford \$5 [million], \$7 million to send our kids overseas to vocational training, Madam Speaker; we can. Roy Bodden started it with mechanics, electrical in Boston, TVET. And they are all successful! Look at them! They have all come back and are working in those industries.

So, Madam Speaker, I am vindicated in saying that we do not need to build a vocational school. We do not need it! It takes enough to run the two high schools now and the college. Send them overseas. In particular, construction, Madam Speaker, we fall under the eastern side of America, and we follow their building code. Southern, Southeastern Building Code, I think it is.

Mechanics—somehow, we believe that it is grape tree mechanics nowadays, where our people can just go and hit two hammers together and hit one wrench, and we have fixed the problem on vehicles. There is still some of that, Madam Speaker. But you need to be very smart to be an auto mechanic. The kind of technology that is employed nowadays, you need to be smart to do that. So, you need to choose wisely. Anyone you see who can be a mechanic nowadays can be a lawyer or an accountant. It is a chosen field. But we are going to sit here and say we can do it. It is going to take us five years to develop it, and then we have lost—I don't know—1,500 kids who want to do it. Send them overseas! That is what needs to happen. And until we reach that point at which we are prepared to spend that money, we are going to lose our people!

Madam Speaker, the Premier knows that, you know. The Premier knows that. Poor me, nah?

The Premier, Hon. Aiden McLaughlin: Poor old Premier.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Poor old Premier, you know. You think I don't know you know? But everything else is priority. We have got to get it straight for England.

Madam Speaker, all that I read in this report of June 2015 is about the problem we are having. Let me show you, Madam Speaker, where we are creating that problem for future generations. Our schools are underfunded because something else has priority. Madam Speaker, we must have education, education, education as a priority. Places like Barbados did it years ago. Cuba did it years ago because they understood the value of it. Madam Speaker, what we like to talk about is special education needs and then we drop it and forget it.

I want to give some statistics, Madam Speaker. My school in East End, and I dare say North Side is no different . . . I do not know why 20 miles away is so far away. Madam Speaker, not all this falls on the Minister's shoulders nor the Premier's shoulders, you

know. Like the police force, it is about the operation eh? A Special Education Co-ordinator, two-and-a-half days a week—what are we doing with them the other two-and-a-half? The ordinary teachers must deal with that?

Madam Speaker, why do you think the parents of Savannah School have now come out? Maybe more parents need to do that. Mind you, Madam Speaker, more parents need to get involved.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Lock the gate in East End again; that's what they need to do.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: That's what is going to happen; they're going to lock these schools down, unfortunately.

For Inclusion Specialist, it is one-and-a-half days per week; that's the school inclusion specialist. The Psychologist is for one day per week. Councillor is for one day per week. The Speech Therapist is for one day per week. That is, when they come, when they come. There is no occupational therapist because East End School has not been identified as needing one. The Literacy Therapist is for one week every three weeks. And North Side gets the same thing. She has three schools to do. We have one for three schools? Are we kidding? And we are wondering why we have to go do this report and to review why Caymanians are not getting the job and sit down and take foreigners coming here and saying Caymanians can't do the job? Are we kidding? Are we joking?

Is that why we were put here, to leave our children behind because of priorities, to put \$61 million back into the economy during an election year?

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: That's what the Sixth Elected Member for George Town said.

Madam Speaker, is that fair to our children? Madam Speaker, during the last administration, I went to bat for that same speech therapist. The Leader of the Opposition will remember. They were taking the speech therapist after she was at East End and sending her to Cayman Brac. You remember that? This woman in one week, every three weeks, went out and begged money to start a library in East End. And the Government is not doing it? What kind of interest is that? We expect our teachers to do it. And we still under-pay them. Madam Speaker, money is not the only motivator, or it shouldn't be the only motivator, but neither do I think it is. But I can tell you what; it goes a long way.

Madam Speaker, we are going to lose our good teachers. Madam Speaker, this isn't today. You were here before I entered these halls, Madam Speaker, and you have heard me on more than one occasion saying, *Keep them, because whoever taught*

me should be teaching my children and, hopefully, my grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, math coaches—or math coach for East End and North Side . . . I don't know how often they do it in George Town. I am not really interested now, but I don't think it is much more. For the purposes of this, it's East and North Side, and to a less extent, Savannah and Bodden Town. Math coach, one day per week for six weeks which is for the juniors and for the infants, one day for six weeks. However, Madam Speaker, that is if we request it. If we request it?

Your school, too, Mr. Minister.

If we request it? Math coaching? Are we kidding? And everybody is saying our people are illiterate in numeracy? They've got to be kidding! But I'm not supposed to say anything. I'm supposed to swallow it hook, line and sinker. That will be the day, that they close my mouth. Music teacher—

The Speaker: You have 31 minutes remaining.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I don't think I'll get off this one.

Music teacher is for one-and-a-half day per week. PE [physical education]—Madam Speaker, we have taken a retrograde step. When I was going to school in the 1970s, every day you had a class of PE. A healthy kid is a healthy mind; that's what they used to tell us then. PE in East End School was two days per week. Are we kidding?

Today, 21st century, June 6th, 2016, everybody has got a computer or a tablet or iPhone or Smartphone, add-up and watt-up, and what-have-you. ICT is for one-and-a-half days every fortnight. Madam Speaker, do you know where this world is going? If you're not fully computer literate, you're lost. And we've given our primary school kids one-and-a-half days every two weeks?

Madam Speaker, honestly now, when do we expect them to catch up? When they're in college? Madam Speaker, there are kids in our communities who cannot afford computers! It is us to do it! With their parents' hard-earned tax dollars! Again, say what you want about the Premier. When he was there, he and his chief officer wanted a computer on every desk! Ambitious though it may have been, that's what we need to do. And this Government needs to provide the resources so that it can be done.

If we don't, we are going to lose our children! They are not going to be functional in this twenty-first century. Madam Speaker, there is not one of us in here with children who don't have computers, and a Smartphone and this iPad! The music—it's all right for us to do it but we mustn't provide for the others. We want to leave them functionally illiterate! That's what we want to do. This year, the East End School did not even have instrumental music!

Unna make unna notes.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, you know, I wish this debate was four hours or a whole day so I could stand here for three–four days.

This is where, Madam Speaker, we need to stop, take a step back and do what is necessary. We, and more so, specifically the Cabinet, are responsible for the distribution of the resources of this country; them only! They come here to get a rubber stamp. We can't even shift it around. They are responsible. And I must sit down, relax, don't worry about it and watch the kids of the parents who voted for me, and want me to do something about assisting them, must sit and keep my mouth closed. If we deprive the children of this country, one year is not too long when their parents will vote in the general election. That should be motivation enough for unna.

Madam Speaker, I don't know. We talk about *stimulus package*. Stimulus? That's what we're talking about? And then we talk about farming and the *this* and the *that*. And education occupied but very little of anybody's speech. Anybody's speech! Everybody wanted to talk about everything else—tourism, giving away land to Dart for \$14 million, at 11 million square feet, a little over \$1.00–1.25 per square foot, when we just leased Sunshine Suites [Resort] back, carried it up for 99 years for what, \$16 a square foot. This is what we're talking about? We continue to give away in concessions to bring investment, and Madam Speaker, I agree with the Minister of Finance. I have always said that—two things. I am not going to lease you any property. We are going to be partners, 20 per cent. I am 20 per cent partner in that. You can be 80. But in perpetuity, I'm going to be partner. And number two, every time a concession is asked for, they always tell you they need the cash flow now. Well, that means they're going to get plenty [INAUDIBLE] at the end of it. We want more money then, too.

I'm not saying we can't give some, Madam Speaker. That's what attracts people. But instead of throwing out the baby, the water, the pan and then tearing off the window, tear off the window and only throw half the water, and keep the baby so that we can address this thing called education in our country. And, Madam Speaker, if I say no more, I'm fine with that.

Madam Speaker, look at them. Every one of us went through the government system. Which one didn't? Which one didn't? Oh, we all did? And all of a sudden, now unna see where it carried you, but you don't want to help um? Unna joking man! Unna got to be joking. Every one of us, Madam Speaker, even the Premier, said that they wouldn't give them any scholarship after he got through it. But we went through the government system. Times have changed. We need to put more emphasis on the government system.

Everybody is starting a new private school because there's so much money in it. And we spend

so much and don't get results. Because we get a couple of CXC more, we think that's the result we need? It is more than that. It needs to be holistic, a holistic perspective that we must go after. Give the Minister the money. Like I always told the Commissioner of Police, if you've got the tools and you don't get the job done, we're firing you. That's it—done!

Madam Speaker, let me come off that so I can ease my blood pressure down a little bit. But that one aggravates me. Mr. Premier, whatever you need to bring here on education, feel free. I'm here to support you and go to my neck in blood with you about that. Or, do what we did with Miss Lassie's house. You remember when the realtors came to us and said the man next door wanted to buy it? He would pay the \$1 million if we gave him the public beach alongside his house? I say like Gabby—*Not a blade of grass, not one grain of sand*. No, it's not going to happen. Each one of us, the five of us went back to our Ministries and found \$200,000! That's where Miss Lassie's house came from. We still have a public beach, and we've also got Miss Lassie's house. Go to unna Ministries—that's \$1.4 million—and put it into the schools, into personnel, resources! Take it from the must. Criticise me if you may. Understand, unna ain't getting away.

Madam Speaker, you know, anyway. You're looking? You're not hearing anything.

Madam Speaker, I want to turn now to police, quickly, because we are deprived of proper policing on the eastern end of the Island still, you know, And I notice this Government, the same one that was so afraid to come down here to debate it, is now voting \$50 million for 18 months. I don't know what that's going to do. But that tells me, that's only \$600,000 or about what we currently have. And, Madam Speaker, you think I didn't know why we didn't debate that motion? They're afraid. They're afraid, afraid that they will say something that comes back to haunt them. But unna remember the Member for the North Side saying that I was coming? Here I am.

Madam Speaker, two days after . . . if we will recall the 25th, the motion was set to be heard on the 13th of April. The Government boycotted it, got their way. They came here on the 25th of April. Good. We lost. I didn't lose, Madam Speaker. On the 27th day of April, I received this letter to Mr. Miller and myself: "Good morning, gentlemen. I have read with interest of your concerns re: Lack of policing in the eastern districts." [UNVERIFIED QUOTE]

The Speaker: I beg your pardon? Are you intending to lay the document?

Mr. V. Arden McLean: No. I'm just going to read excerpts out of it, Madam Speaker.

"Whilst I may disagree with some of your commentary, the one thing that I will concur with you relates to the structure we have for appointing and

employing officers and assessing the budget funds to pay for those officers; regrettably, and often with an all-too-long a gap of losing staff before replacements are funded and arrived.

"Mr. Miller, you have at various meetings asked me if a further \$1 or \$2 million were provided, would I ensure better resource into the eastern district or North Side. My response then and now has been, 'permit me to spend and recruit to the budget allocated.' That still does not occur with the staff and budget freezes to meet a Government deficit, all too often preventing the recruitment to, agreed and approved numbers. All too often, that approach has seen a disproportionate impact on police above other government entities, as we have more expatriate officers and a greater churn of staff.

"I am grateful for your intervention at last year's finance committee, when you identified that the police were the least remunerated of uniformed staff and indeed we were losing staff to other agencies for economic reasons. You will recall that the Honourable House and every Honourable Member voted unanimously to progress the pay award and uplift for police officers and that such would be back-dated until July 2015.

"What has not occurred has been the injection of the additional \$2.4 million to pay that award and uplift the police budget accordingly. Unlike every other uniformed service whose pay award was implemented by an injection of additional monies, the RCIPS [Royal Cayman Islands Police Service] has had to, as no further funds have been made available. I am grateful to the Minister and Ministry for their assistance in providing some additional monies from their existing budget to help. However, in order to honour the House's promise of a pay award to officers, I have had to hold officers' vacancies in order to fund that. It equates to 58 officers' positions that remain unfilled.

"I found myself with Hobson's choice—fulfil your promise to officers and avoid further losses of staff to other agencies that pay better, or fail to implement your promise and preside over an organisation unfairly treated when compared to others, which would continue to haemorrhage staff.

"In conclusion" (this is the good part, nice part.) "In conclusion, I wish you both well in your constituencies. But in the meantime, could I ask that any focus you can bring to uplift the police budget to meet the award will be the best means of ensuring the presence in greater numbers of officers in the eastern district and the wider Cayman Islands, and specifically ensuring that officers' workload and capabilities are more manageable? Thank you. David Baines." [UNVERIFIED QUOTE]

Madam Speaker, was I wrong? I don't think so. Mind you now, Madam Speaker, this week, June 2nd, *Baines departs, citing political interference*. I thank God I did not disclose that one before this one came up. Political interference? Honestly? Madam

Speaker, the same *Cayman Compass* that is his mouthpiece and that he must be paid to his PR . . . I want to ask them something then, since it is *political interference*: 1) 18 of us were duly elected by the people to be politicians. The public expect the 18 of us to be politicians. We don't put on any collar here. The 18 of us are expected by those people to use our political influence to make their lives better. The only place the 18 of us can do that is here. And when our people come to us, it starts politics right there. Don't be afraid. This is another arm of the governance of our country and the enhancement of our people.

Madam Speaker, they sensitise these things for their friends so that their friends can say that *Arden made it political*. Yes, it is political! Put that across your headline this evening. This is politics! What he was doing was policing. Or that is what he was supposed to be doing. What the bus drivers do is transportation. What the construction people do is work to construct buildings. What the lawyers do is go to court. Eighteen of us are politicians. What do you expect? Really? We are expected to be anything but political interference? This is where it comes from. We must stand up for people.

I have never once, nor do I believe, Madam Speaker, either one of the Members in here in my 15 years I have never heard of anyone going to tell the Commissioner of Police whom to arrest or whom not to arrest. That is political interference! That is malicious political interference! When I get on this floor, it is political interference because my people want better. If you want to call it political interference, go ahead.

Madam Speaker, I have a vivid memory of that same Premier, myself, and Rolston Anglin standing on the Floor of this Honourable House in Finance Committee. I can hear the now-Premier saying he is operating the drug task force out of his back pocket. Madam Speaker, do you hear what I said? So, that was political interference, too?

Madam Speaker, the key is that no one, no one wants to say it. Madam Speaker, you recently ruled that anything coming into my possession that affects my representation of my people, I can bring here. You recently ruled that, Madam Speaker; those who don't remember the Airports Authority—because my memory is long. And you were right in your ruling. You cannot impede either one of us from doing what is in the best interest of our people. And I wouldn't advise anyone to try and impede me.

Madam Speaker, I guess I'm almost to the end. How much time do I have?

The Speaker: Five minutes.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Five minutes.

Madam Speaker, as the Leader of the Opposition said, there's much more to be said.

Madam Speaker, in conclusion, a couple of things that I don't see this Government doing. I got in some of it. But in conclusion, I want to briefly talk about some of the laws that are going to affect us as a people that are affecting us, the Legal Practitioners Law. It doesn't appear that we're going to see it. Now, Madam Speaker, you know this Government are cheerleaders and they like their pom-poms, twirling them. I don't see anybody bringing it. Why not? Because we know it's not in the best interest of my country. But I'm waiting to see who comes with it, who will sponsor it and what is in it.

As a matter of fact, Madam Speaker, I was mindful to bring a law to prosecute those in this country who encourage outsourcing our law currently, because it's against the current Legal Practitioners Law.

Madam Speaker, the Elections Law, I have not seen any consultation by this Government. In 2002/03, when we changed the Elections Law, there was consultation. I don't see it now.

Madam Speaker, two other things I want to talk about briefly. Madam Speaker, I saw in the papers today the goodwill behind Yolanni's Place, how a lady out of Bodden Town had been run from one place to the next, Ms. Manzanares, granddaughter of Mr. Rupert. And those who think he wasn't from here had better check their records—Moxam. Had been run . . . Every time she tried to make a little bit of money, she's the only one they caught without a business license. What's the name of the place, Madam Speaker? I'm trying to find it here. The DCI, Department of Commerce and Investment—every time this Caymanian tried to set up a little business, they caught her. How unlucky, eh, Madam Speaker?

You know why they caught her? Because all of the others would call and tell them. But, Madam Speaker, what we are not doing . . . we are talking about how Caymanians need to get their business in order. When is it that the Minister for Financial Services is going to send the DCI out for all those driving around in cars, selling clothes that are not from here? When is the Minister, or the Government, going to send people out with the Immigration task force to chase those down who are on permit and selling numbers all day? When? It's illegal, totally! But our omission or commission is causing problems in our country with it.

Madam Speaker, we need to stop it! And the little lady who is trying not to go to the social services, we're chasing her down in armoured vehicles with a bazooka on top of it to get her out. That's a stretch, Madam Speaker. I was only over-emphasising it.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: And the people down there . . . Madam Speaker, I understand we need to do something to try and regulate it. This Government says that small businesses are on the increase. Watch what will

happen. I predict the reason people do the little small business and it's on the increase since unna been thre, unna waive all those fees. Wait until they got to renew them this year; bang-bang. Not a one is going to be able to renew all the requirements that unna put on them.

The Speaker: Member, you can start winding down. You're in your last few seconds.

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

Madam Speaker, just let me say that, like the First Elected Member for Bodden Town, I too met with some of the Ministers' Association. And, Madam Speaker—

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, I found a little thing on my windscreen again, under the windshield wiper, dated May the 18th, 2016, from the Ministers' Association to the Governor.

"Your Excellency, We are writing on behalf of a group of Cayman Islands pastors"—

The Speaker: Member, are you intending to lay that down?

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Yes, I'll lay this one, because if I found it on my windscreen, Madam Speaker.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: Okay.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: "Your Excellency,

"We are writing on behalf of a group of Cayman Islands pastors, specifically pastors of the Cayman Ministers' Association and pastors of the Cayman Islands Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Churches, because we are deeply concerned that your office has publicly been associated with the planned June 11–12, 2016 "Queering Paradigms" conference sponsored by Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. While we concede that any event you attend, either in an official or unofficial capacity, you are a guest of honour, we would suggest that there is a significant difference in impact when promotional material highlights you as "the guest of honour."

"We are concerned that the planned conference, although framed as an academic exercise, which no doubt is useful for aspiring lawyers, appears clearly to have been promoted with the objective of undermining the traditional Judeo-Christian values of the vast majority of Caymanian residents. In particular, we take note that an Anglican Bishop has been engaged to represent a

view that is neither the view of Orthodox Anglicanism nor of local Christian churches.

"We are therefore respectfully requesting that you publicly disassociate your office from any real or implied support for this conference.

"We are mindful that acceding to this request may create inner and familial conflicts, since your roles as both the mother *[sic]* of Ms. Olivia Connelly and the Governor of the Cayman Islands cannot easily be separated. Our feeling, however, is that there is an inherent conflict of interest involved when the holder of the Office of Governor appears to be supportive of a socio-ethical position that will be as divisive as those that have already polarised our legislature.

"We respectfully reiterate that in our view it is inappropriate for a Governor of the Cayman Islands to give public support to an event which will serve to further polarise and divide the people whom she governs as Her Majesty's representative. We therefore request that a clear public statement be made from your office declaring your non-affiliation with the conference and associated events as a meaningful and helpful step towards reducing both the high level of concern and the political and social discord this issue has already created.

"Respectfully yours,

"Pastor Torrence Bobb, Chairman of the Cayman Ministers' Association, and Pastor Shian O'Connor, President, CI Conference of SDA Churches."

Madam Speaker, last but not least, I see where the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier got up here and did what Christ told Peter he would do him the night of the supper; that is, he would deny him thrice before the cock crowed. Well, I hope the Government gets up now and deny the civil servant that up there campaigning, which is illegal, and the Deputy Governor has not done anything about it. And I hope the Leader of the Opposition gets up, too, and does what is necessary before the cock crows here now, too.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, I should point out—

The Speaker: Can I say . . . Leader of the Opposition?

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

Shall I say to the [Member] that the Cayman Democratic Party has no candidate in East End? Well, it could be him.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? Does any other Member wish to speak? Final call—

I recognise the Minister responsible for Sports.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden, Minister of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I too rise to offer my contribution in this honourable House to the Throne Speech, the Budget Address and the Policy Statement that were delivered here last week.

Madam Speaker, they were delivered by Her Excellency, the Honourable Premier and the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, respectively. And I wish to also offer my congratulations to those individuals for a job well done. The Governor has certainly taken her share of flak for her Throne Address, but I have looked at it over and over, and with the exception of replicating what the Honourable Premier would have done, I am at a loss as to really what else she was supposed to do or didn't do. Her remarks are based on where she sits and what she sees as the high points and whether things are going in the right direction, whether the Government is fulfilling its task, what people perceive the Government as, how well they're doing. And if she sounded as a Cheerleader, then I dare say that the Government must be doing a decent job, because I don't think that in her capacity as someone who is well educated and with a serious job to do that she would stand here and lie to the Caymanian people. No one is perfect. The Government isn't. She isn't. I'm not. No man is. No woman is. But certainly, in large part, I think the work that's being done and the outlook is a positive one.

Madam Speaker, we are delivering an 18-month budget that will take us through to December 2017. And this is the first 18-month budget because of the change of year-end to the calendar year that will allow us to get away from the whole issue of having a general elections combined for year-end, which is pure chaos and a nightmare, especially for those who work in the Finance Department and for the new Government or the returning Government. It is not an easy job to complete when you have those two events coinciding. And it has been that way now, as we know, since Hurricane Ivan forced the change of the year-end from when it was originally in November.

So, Madam Speaker, as Minister of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports, my job is a huge one. As any Minister, we all have huge responsibility. Mine is the social aspect of government and the safety net, as it were, for providing support to our people and for looking after the welfare, in large part, of our young people and those less fortunate in our society, and also in the very busy area of sports and sports tour-

ism, which goes a long way towards empowerment and the development of our young people.

So this is by no means an easy job in this day and age, with all the challenges that are facing us. But the primary aim of any government is to improve the quality of life for all persons in their country and keeping human development at the forefront of the national agenda.

In the 2015/16 financial year, Madam Speaker, my Ministry contributed to this overarching goal by focusing on strengthening not only the quality of our services and programmes, but also the delivery of them. I would like to detail some of the achievements of my Ministry during the past financial year, momentarily. In the upcoming 2016/17 financial year, Madam Speaker, the Ministry will continue to develop policies and legislation and provide services that enable people to enjoy the highest possible standard of physical, emotional and social wellbeing. This is no small task, but with the support of everyone involved in this honourable House and in the civil service, the Ministry can and will carry out its responsibility.

A healthful community, Madam Speaker, is one that is inclusive, offering opportunities on an equal basis. It is productive and creative in its approach to challenges and obstacles. Such a community takes care of all of its members, including children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and those who are otherwise vulnerable. Madam Speaker, I take umbrage to anyone who feels that we offer preferential treatment. Day in and day out, Madam Speaker, I get requests, not just as the Minister in charge, but as a representative of the district of Bodden Town. I get requests from across these three islands—well, not so much Little Cayman, but certainly the Brac and Grand Cayman—for help in one form or the other.

Now, Madam Speaker, anyone who works with me knows that most of the time the people I help I don't even know. But I shouldn't say *most of the time*, but oftentimes, I don't even know. I don't care who you are; I don't care who you voted for; I don't care what your politics is; I don't care if you're black, white, pink, yellow, green; I don't care what part of the Island you hail from. If you need help, you need help. That's the way I run my show. And that's the way that I implore the people who work in my units and my departments to operate. We operate in a very fair, impartial way. And I think that that is the way it should be done.

Oftentimes, I don't want to know—the simple reason that I am looking at it in an objective fashion when I put forward a request for assistance. The department or unit that is concerned at that time, they have the guidelines which they follow. And they, in turn, do their job. And the person is either told *hey* or *no*. They're given a timeframe. They're told what else they need to do to make it happen. And the results are as quick to come as they can be under current limitations.

We understand, Madam Speaker, that the needs are great. We understand the needs out there, because each one of us here in this honourable House get these requests, and we see the people and we know people and we know situations; people who have been for all their life with a steady job, a good home, a good income, finding themselves redundant or with life's challenges. We know how it can get. Things can go awry in short order. And it is our job to catch those people and put them back as close as we can to being on their feet again.

It is our goal to give people a hand-up, not necessarily just a handout. We know that they are legitimate; oftentimes, most cases are legitimate. But we do have those who seek to abuse the system. And that is where the job gets difficult because you have to try and figure out who is doing that from who is not. Therefore, the people who work in the agencies, especially the Needs Assessment Unit (NAU) and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), they have their work cut out for them. And I want to praise those individuals. I will do so later in my speech as well when I am thanking. But I just want to single them out, because I cannot thank them enough for the work that they do for this country and its people.

Madam Speaker, this should not be looked at just as an act of generosity to our people. It is good governance, and it promotes and supports personal responsibility among residents. We implore and we have put things in place, and more to come, in terms of what you have to do to get the assistance that you get. We have active job-seeking, providing certain documents, showing that you are definitely on the road to recovery. The Government has . . . We saw in Friday's paper, I think the headline was something like *\$90 million bad debt at the hospital* at the HSA [Health Services Authority]. We know that we carry a large burden of social services between insurance and what we do in helping people through the Needs Assessment Unit and the various counselling and social services that we offer.

So, Madam Speaker, we cannot be just saying, *Bring it on, bring it on, bring it on. We will do, we will do, we will do.* There is a limited-sized pie. The demands on it are great. People are increasing in terms of the numbers who seek help, who have been seeking help in recent years. Therefore, we have to be very prudent and very smart in what we do in terms of helping people. It cannot be a free-for-all, and it cannot be a never-ending supply. The Government, without direct taxation in this country, depending on indirect taxation and the current revenue base that we have in this country, we cannot make this into a social service state. Because the demands, if you allow it to go on and you don't put the restrictions in place, people will naturally find ways and means to abuse the system and it will be an easy way out.

We cannot, where we see in other countries, where it's better to go on the dole than to work, in the

UK or in the US, where you go and you get onto the social service train and you just ride it along and basically live your life that way. That is not something we want for three small islands, Madam Speaker. We have our challenges. But our goal should be to reduce the dependence on social services.

As I said before, standing here with questions in this honourable House, Madam Speaker, I grew up in a Cayman Islands that didn't have social services. I was born in the 1960s, grew up as a young man in the 1970s and 1980s. And, you know, we went from a probation officer in the form of Ms. Hylton, to eventually having a social service department. But, there were a handful of people who were on social services. Now we have heard the numbers, we know what we're up against because Cayman developed at a rapid pace since that time.

We're now in 2016, and I dare say in a 40-year span, the growth in this country has been nothing short of phenomenal. And in many instances, the country developed and left the people behind. That's something I harped on many times, many times, in letters to the press and other utterances by myself. I could see it happening as a young man in college. I watched it happening. And the chickens have come home to roost, because many of those people who were not educated back then went on to, themselves, continue the cycle. And that lack of education has caused endless problems in this country, Madam Speaker, because many of them, when they could hold a job when Cayman was booming, when that bucket bottom fell out and things got tight, those folk, good folk, but simply not having that piece of paper, were left holding the bag, and in many instances, finding themselves very difficult to get back on the gravy train, very difficult to pay their bills, to raise their family, and a very sad state of affairs.

So, Madam Speaker, I understand this. I can relate to it. I have people near and dear to me, and people whom I know well who find themselves in situations like this. It is not an easy situation, Madam Speaker, for the Government, because we have many competing forces, as I said, for resources. We've just heard the Member from East End talk about education and the needs in the primary schools. We are fully aware of what's taking place in Bodden Town with our primary schools. The growth in that area in terms of people, the demands on the services that are being provided and certainly, myself, and Minister Panton, along with the other Bodden Town representatives, we'll be working as closely as we can during this upcoming sitting of Finance Committee to see what can be done to push more resources where they are needed in terms of education at the primary level, and not just necessarily in our district, but I'm sure there are competing demands in other districts that we have to look at.

We have to look at it holistically. The Minister of Education certainly has—you know, she has been

begging for resources. And we sit at a table. We are competing for resources for what each of our Ministries need. And we have to find a way to put what we can, the most we can into education, because I don't think that the PPM, which rode education as its priority in 2005 to 2009, has changed its stance. It's just that we have more demands on our services. We have the bad, bad need for mental health facilities. We have the urgent need for a landfill fix, which is on course, thankfully, not happening as fast as the media would like, but that's something I left. When I left there as Minister in charge, I left that on course with AMEC employed, with the resources employed to make it happen. And it's on target. Nothing is happening in that area that is not on target. And as we said, this country for the first time has a national waste management strategy.

As the Member for George Town spoke earlier, my colleague, the Second and Sixth Elected Members mentioned it in their contribution, the clamour about the disaster at the landfill, you don't hear that anymore. You don't see the fires blazing. Because why? We bought equipment. We found a crisis on our hands when we took office. Literally, the dump was a dump. Madam Speaker, when I went into that place as a new Minister, I was like, *Wow, people really work here?* You know, the guys who work there have to be lauded; they have to be praised, for the work they do in miserable conditions. And the equipment was all lying around in a state of disrepair. There were horror stories about engines being ordered for excavators that ended up in Brazil. There was what looked to be good equipment just sitting there unable to work because no one knew how to fix it or when the parts were coming or where they were coming from. People were demoralised. The dump was on fire. The firemen were worn out with it. We had a disaster on our hands.

That place was cleaned up. We hired a maintenance manager for the equipment in terms of Mr. Colford Scott, a very experienced person with knowledge when it comes to heavy equipment. The machinery was ordered, arrived on-Island, some of it before I left that particular Ministry. The machine rate, they are being maintained and the added trucks on the roads. We still, of course, have gaps in service here and there. But we had lost most of our commercial business because we simply weren't able to service them at the time. That clamour has died down. The dump, when you drive in there now and go to the landfill, you will see a well-sorted maintained area; separation—tires, one side; metals, one side; the dump being managed. No one gives any credit to that. It's just that we don't have a waste energy plant as yet. But, Madam Speaker, why rush into that and do what everyone else did and then end up with rubbish on our hands, literally? That is what is going to happen if it is not done properly. It called for a strategic outline case, it called for an outline business case,

and this is a serious investment on the part of the Government.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: If we did it the other way, you would hear about that, the kickbacks and the handouts and the favours. But because none of that can be beat-up upon, there's something else. *It's just not done yet. And nothing is being done, and it's a campaign promise that was kept, and \$60 million that Dart was going to give*—they don't say that Dart was going to give two holes in Bodden Town and nothing else. They don't talk about that. They simply talk about what was going to be done in the district of Bodden Town without the consent of the people. How in God's name could we stand by and let our people bear that, as representatives? We had to stand up. And stand up we did. And I'm proud that we did.

We will have a solution for landfill management and waste management in this country. It is about to be rolled out, Madam Speaker. It will take years to complete it. But we have seen the recycling already component is starting up. Composting will be a part of it. We'll have landfill being properly managed. We have a waste-to-energy plant to be built that will require a tiny amount of landfill space compared to what we've done in the past, where we dumped everything into one pile. And I'd like to see that day that that landfill is remediated, capped or whatever. And certainly, we forget about hearing about leaching into the North Sound and dangerous potential explosions and fires or whatever.

Madam Speaker, these things take time. And there are many civil servants who are working hard behind the scenes to make this happen, in conjunction with us. But the Government found itself, when we took office, in a difficult situation, Madam Speaker. And we had to stabilise the ship—no two ways about that. We were in problems with the UK. We were in problems with the budget. We were in problems with scandals and you-name-it going on. Every Monday morning there was another story, another disaster, as far as the Government was concerned. Our job was to bring back investor confidence in this country, Madam Speaker. And the group of us, with all our trials and tribulations, we have stuck together. And I dare say that that investor confidence is back. People are doing business in Cayman. They're anxious to do business in Cayman. Projects are taking off. Some are already in process, some to come.

Madam Speaker, anyone looking at the country can say the Cayman Islands, yes, they have their challenges. They have some crime that is not fully controlled. They have education that may be not where it should be. The health care, there's still work to be done in that area. But who's perfect, Madam Speaker? Who's perfect? The Cayman Islands is still paradise, and it is paradise because we have a stable

government. And anyone who wants to turn this upside-down, then I dare say something is wrong up top because we are on the right track. And given time, what I do know is that the country, any country, cannot move forward sensibly in four-year spurts. It simply doesn't work, Madam Speaker. Four years is too short a term, to start with, because anyone who's been in government knows you get in the first year. You're pretty much siphoning, trying to figure out what's going on. Second year, you're building your policies. Third year, things start to roll out. We're just in our third year, Madam Speaker.

So, I don't see how anyone can be that harsh upon us at this point. And for the fourth year, half of that is taken up with a campaign for an election. If I had my way, Madam Speaker, we'd have a five-year term. That is what I would certainly recommend constitutionally. And I think that even that, you know, as I said, if you operate just on those terms alone, the country ends up going backwards, because things get stopped and started, stopped and started, and nothing gets really done for the benefit of the people whom we are here to serve.

Madam Speaker, during the 2016/17 budget year, my Ministry will elevate its use of evidence-based research and best practices to support policy decisions and a development of legislation. The departments, units and companies will continue providing a wide range of human services. The Ministry recognises the need for a holistic approach in order to effectively address the needs of our people. Therefore, we will continue to cooperate with other agencies in addressing our social issues. It is only through this collaboration that we will be successful in all that we are trying to do and eliminate redundancy, while reaping the benefits of economies of scale.

I'd like to turn my attention now, Madam Speaker, briefly, to some of the 2015/16 achievements. And before I go into further detail about upcoming initiatives, it is important that we share with this honourable House some of what transpired and we actually achieved. My Ministry focused on strengthening the quality and delivery of its services and programmes for the community. As a result, some of the achievements across the Ministries, departments and units have been as follows:

- In the area of community affairs, the introduction of parent coaching at the Family Resource Centre to strengthen the parenting capacity in families is very important, Madam Speaker;
- The Counselling Centre restructured their hours of service delivery and positioned itself to be more responsive to persons presenting in crisis and to more effectively co-ordinate their care during this difficult time;
- The extension of the opening hours at the Needs Assessment Unit to better meet the

needs of clients—that was just announced last week, Madam Speaker;

- The opening of a new Needs Assessment Unit and Department of Children and Family Service Office in Cayman Brac. I was pleased to be able to go up and do that;
- Changes to the appointment system to decrease waiting time for clients at the Needs Assessment Unit;
- Introduction of an intake team at the Department of Children and Family Services to manage child abuse referrals;
- Renovations to Maple House, which is a caring home for children with disabilities.

Madam Speaker, the old home on Maple Road was badly in need of renovations. There were so many things wrong there and I don't know how we managed it without tearing it down, to be honest. I have to give kudos to the Public Works Department that did it. But, you know, these types of homes have to be purpose-built to offer the proper services. We had a case of poor air-conditioning and low ceilings. We had rooms that were not conducive to what they were cut out for. Therefore, we had a lot of things there to sort out which are now done, and the building is much more functional and everyone is quite happy to be back there.

When we moved the clients from there, we took them up to our property that we leased in Northward from a family. And that was a duplex which actually, once I looked at it, I realised that this was something worth further attention and could better serve our needs. Because of it being a duplex, we could have the split in female and male that is needed. And I thought, well, the original building, which I just spoke to about being renovated, could then be used for the younger population, because what has happened with the Maple House clients over the years, we have patients, or clients, who have grown up in the system and have now come of adult age. And under the Children Law, of course, it is not proper for adults and children to be housed in the same environment.

The plan, moving forward, once we were able to find the funds, acquired the property in Northward, and that is now being further renovated. That will become the main Maple House with the two sides to it, as I said, and a proper yard. It's really a much nicer, larger facility and not far in when you're going to Northward on the right-hand side. It used to be a pre-school. The Williams family owned it. So we purchased that. It's being dealt with. And the old Maple House, where the clients are at the moment, will be used then for a younger population. So we are very, very pleased to have been able to achieve those changes for our most disabled and some of our most vulnerable in our society. Some of these people, you know, they don't even have family that really worry about them anymore. They're left on the ward of the

state, as it were. And it's really, really sad when you get to understand some of those cases.

The approval of new criteria for recipients of the Seamen Ex-gratia Benefits was something that was badly needed, and we have clear criteria in that area. And that is still under the Ministry. And we're working through as many of the outstanding ones as funds become available to get them on board, and of course, maintenance of the register as seamen pass on. And the expansion of the Frances Bodden Children's Home was also another very proud achievement, which was not funded by the Government. It was made possible in collaboration with us. But the Chairman of CAYS, Mr. Garth Arch, worked along with his committee, or his board, and they were able to acquire the funding. Maples played a large part in that, and we were able to facilitate the building of this unit in short order. And I'm proud that we also are in the process of getting the funds to really bring that online. So, that again serves a very useful purpose. One of the things at the Frances Bodden Girls Home, as it's known, you go there sometime, and you see a boy or two being housed with the young females. And of course, that's a no-no. And I think we now have about maybe four young men who will take up residency once we bring this online. So, looking forward to that, and again that is another step in the right direction in terms of caring for our children under the Children Law.

Under Youth and Sports, Madam Speaker, we introduced swimming into the primary schools in the eastern districts at the Clifton Hunter High School pool. This is something that was always the plan when those schools were built or that school was built, and the same obtained for the other one that's not completed, but they were going to have 25-metre pools to be used by the community, as well as the school. [The Ministry] facilitated the attendance of both the track and swim team to CARIFTA 2016, where we had the strongest medal performance in both sports in many years. We also facilitated the Cayman Airways Under-15 International Youth Ball Cup recently completed with some of the highest calibre youth football teams in CONCACAF [Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football] and beyond, and headlined in Manchester City.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister, we have reached the hour of interruption.

I recognise the Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I beg to move the suspension of Standing Order 10(2) in order that the business of the House may continue beyond the hour of interruption.

The Speaker: The question is that Standing Order 10(2) be suspended to allow the order of business to continue beyond the hour of interruption. All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Standing Order 10(2) suspended.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I was saying when I stopped that we just had the tournament, Under-15 Developmental tournament and it included Manchester City. The Deputy Premier spoke in his contribution about the benefits that were derived from having a team of that magnitude here. And they were not the only big club, but we had the likes of LA Galaxy from the US, and Houston and everybody else, the teams that were here that really have large outreach. And I'm sure each of them went back to their respective countries and spoke well about the tournament, and gave the Cayman Islands that much-needed boost that we can't pay for.

We're also facilitating in the next couple of weeks a similar tournament. But this is Under-14 International Youth Football Cup again. And this will feature another very large UK team. I'm proud to say my team, taught them in Hotspur. They're coming here as the headliner this time. And it's some of the teams from the last tournament will come, such as the Jamaican club that was here, the Cavaliers, they're coming back. But there's another bunch of football teams from different clubs in the US and the region.

So, Madam Speaker, although we don't have CONCACAF, the big CONCACAF tournament that we were used to having in the summer, we certainly are continuing to support and work with the football grass roots programmes to ensure that our young people are exposed to top-quality football. We also facilitated the Cayman Invitational Track Meet, which saw the world's largest sports track star, Usain Bolt, who was here with us for his second time. And the coverage received from that event was monumental because this is an Olympic year, and Bolt was only running two races before he left to go to Rio. And one was here, the opening one, where he certainly enjoyed himself. And we took good care of him while here.

This year we also completed the reconstruction of the Bocce courts at the Truman Bodden Complex facilities for the Special Olympics team, Special Olympians. And just last week the Special Olympians had their national games. Sadly, I missed because of an injury that I have and was in too much pain to really go out there and see them. And I hope some of us went out. And as I have said in the past, it's very important that we support our Special Olympians, because they do go off and represent, and they have

been all over the world and have had great achievement. And it is important that they understand and have the privilege of being supported at home before they go overseas, where they oftentimes are faced with much larger crowds. So, I trust that that all went well. But sadly, I was unable to get out there, although I had very good intentions on doing so.

Madam Speaker, in the summer, we sent our largest contingent ever to the world's Special Olympic Games in Los Angeles, last summer, and they garnered significant press coverage for the Cayman Islands and returned with our biggest medal haul from an international sports event. Happy again to have supported that, and happier yet to have actually been there with them to witness what was a life-changing event for me.

The Cayman National Rugby Seven's team reached the world stage by qualifying and competing in Hong Kong Sevens. This Tournament included the top 28 rugby sevens teams in the world. And again, with support from us in the Ministry, we constructed a four-lane track at the Bodden Town Primary School to improve physical education and school sports and to facilitate community usage. Madam Speaker, this particular project was near and dear to me because I spent a lot of my growing-up years, my football years on that field. And even these days when I do go out to have a knock around, it's there. And that field has always been a place that people from the community have used as a walking area around the field. And I thought, what better place to put a track than someplace where people are already doing exactly that same extra-curricular activity, and oftentimes, at the risk of falling into holes or tripping on a tree root.

So, we got this project done, Madam Speaker, at the value deal, I think, of about \$70,000 with the Public Works and Island Paving. And, Madam Speaker, I have done many things, being a representative and as a Minister, but I don't think anything I've done has given me greater privilege than to drive past there, or actually go there, and see the number of people using that facility. It does the heart good, certainly doing the community a bunch of good. It is improving people's health on a daily basis, and it is improving camaraderie and the fellowship, because people are coming out. They're bringing their kids. And it's a family affair there in the evenings, which is really good to see. And I encourage those who are not out there using it to come on out and do so.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: At the Savannah playfield, yes, at the school there, we did a similar thing, where we . . . I may have mentioned this in my last year's contribution, but certainly there's no harm in repeating it. We opened the field at the Savannah Primary School for public usage in the evenings, and we installed lights. And again, a similar thing; you see

the community, which is a large community in Savannah, using that facility, Savannah, Newlands. And it's just good that people can come out rather than stay at home, and have a safe environment in which to exercise and improve their health and their lives. So, I'm very proud of those, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, we developed a master plan for the Haig Bodden playfield, and, as a precursor to enhancing this facility the works are slated to start there soon. They should have been started by now, but we got a setback on that. But we are doing a number of things there, and one of them will be putting in new stands because stands that were installed there from when the Premier was actually Minister of Sports, between 2005 and 2009, were actually the wrong ones and for some time were supposed to be changed. But they're at the point now where they must be changed because the wear and tear on them has reached the point at which the rust and everything else has taken over. But new stands are being installed, and other things are going to be installed there for the benefit of the people of Bodden Town. So, looking forward to that and will talk a little more about it as I go along. But looking forward to what that will bring, the enhanced services that that brings to the people of Bodden Town.

We installed lighting at four hard courts at the John Gray High School to facilitate the increased community usage. And again, we did a similar thing there, where we've worked with the school to open these courts up to public use. You know, we have these facilities, and they're already built, and oftentimes, Madam Speaker, when three or four o'clock comes in the evening, they're shut down and that's it. You go and looking for somewhere to play bounce-a-ball, to run, to walk, and it's locked away; makes no sense, Madam Speaker. If it's there and it can be properly used and taken care of, then that saves Government money from duplicating resources, and it makes the best use of them. So that's what we've done there, and that is now added to the list of services that the people in that area of John Gray who use that area, which is heavily used in the evenings, are now able to use the hard courts.

We aided young track star Jamal Walton in his development. And this year—well, last year, but in 2015/16, he won Gold in the 400 metres at the Pan Am Junior Championships. He's a bright light on the track scene, Madam Speaker, and we're looking forward to our continued working and supporting him.

We are also, Madam Speaker, in the process of renovating an existing government building, which is on the road next to the Chrissie Tomlinson Hospital. (What's the name of that road?)

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Middle Road.

There are two buildings that will come into service there. One is the Scouts Building, which should be open in the near future for the Scouts and Girls Brigade, a beautiful building that they've constructed. And next to that, just before you reach that, if you're entering from the Chrissie Tomlinson side, there's a building, an old building that was there—I forget what it was being used for before we . . . but it was shut down for some time. Anyway, we have taken possession of it for the Cadet Corps, and that's going to become their headquarters. They're currently housed in the Bodden Town Civic Centre for some time now, and certainly far from ideal—lack of space, improper resources there. And that will be a big, big plus to what they're trying to do to develop the Cadet Corps. And we're nearing a completion of an ongoing review of the Cadet Corps Law, and that will lay foundation for its future growth.

So, Madam Speaker, that's just a highlight of some of what we were busy with in the Ministry and supervising and contributing towards in the past year.

Madam Speaker, let me turn my attention now to be a bit of budget analysis before I go on to the other details of what I will be speaking to. In order to achieve our desired goals and objectives, the Ministry has presented a budget of \$74,054,636 for the 2016/17 financial period, which includes all outputs to be purchased from departments, units, government-owned companies, non-governmental organisations (NGO's, as we call them), transfer payments and the purchase of equity investments. By comparison, the 2015/16 12-month budget totalled \$45,659,383. So I guess that increase represents about \$28 million, Madam Speaker, and pretty much on target, not a huge increase in terms of budget. This is as a result of the movement of Government's financial year, as I said earlier, from June to December.

I'm pleased to report that the Ministry will continue to provide services through prudent management and stringent controls over the spending of public funds. All efforts have been made to ensure that the increase in the budget allocation has been wisely appropriated.

Madam Speaker, at this point I'd like to just address some of the issues raised by the Member from North Side in his debate when he spoke last week in his contribution. And he said he was at a loss as to how . . . the best thing for me to do, Madam Speaker, would be to read what the Member said, from the Hansard of this honourable House. But when he was speaking to what we were doing, he said that *we had budgeted more for cats and dogs than the needs of young people*. He said that was socially irresponsible. Well, I would have to agree with him if that were true, Madam Speaker. And I think he was being a bit cute with that, mischievous or disingenuous. But I will seek to show that that is far from the case, Madam Speaker. He also went on to speak to . . .

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Boddén: No. Madam Speaker, the Member went through various heads, and he talked about NGS 24, Spaying and Neutering Cats and Dogs of \$64,800. And then he went on to the ones that, in his mind, related to youth in GS-72, Therapeutic Services for Young Persons, \$37,500; NGS 47, Mentoring Cayman Programme, \$9,025; TP 34, Temporary Relief for Young Parents Programme, \$45,000; and GS-27, Supervision of Pre-School Children, \$54,000; and GS-76, Autism Diagnostics and Sexual Trauma Recovery Programme, \$43,238.

So what he said, Madam Speaker, is that all those services are substantially less than the \$64,800 we are going to spend to spay and neuter cats and dogs. Now, I agree those numbers don't lie. Each one of those figures, taken in isolation, of course, they are less than \$64,800. But, Madam Speaker, that's not the way that you can look at what we do for the youth of these Islands. And I will explain to the listening public and this honourable House just some of the things that are included in what we do for our youth.

Madam Speaker, the Member also spoke in his debate to senior citizens services. And he spoke to dealing with income replacement, health care, housing, and social support. He said that they remain dispersed across Ministries in all kinds of votes, making it very difficult to compare what those services cost and cover and what they are for. And there was another part that he spoke to, but that was the bit that I got up on a point of order, so I've dealt with that already. We'll not go back there.

So, Madam Speaker, I'd just like to run through for the assistance of the Member and anyone else who may be confused on some of what's in the budget in terms of our young people, youth programmes. TP-49 has the amount of \$131,100 attached to it. And next to it, it's labelled Youth Programmes, Churches and other NGO's. And these are funds that are used to aid churches and other NGO's that work directly for young people in a variety of ways, including Friday night youth groups and after-school programmes. They cater to hundreds of our young people. That was \$131,000, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, NGS-82, \$137,280, and that's Sports Programmes. These funds are used to directly support clubs with youth football development programming, camps and events. Here again, hundreds of our youth are offered structured sports programming during the high-risk time which is at the end of the school day and when parents are home from work.

NGS-60—Sports Programmes; all young people related, Madam Speaker, \$1,058,451. These funds are used to support the governing bodies of local sports, including five of our six focused sports—swimming, basketball, athletics, netball and cricket—everyone knows that, at the moment, CIFA [Cayman

Islands Football Association], which is the football executive, is not being funded—and many other smaller sports. The funds are used to provide youth sports development programming, leagues and competitions, which are a critical part of the structure of sports delivery in Cayman. There are many hundreds of youth involved in these various sports.

NGS-59 has \$290,150, which is Youth Development. These funds are allocated to a number of our uniformed youth groups, such as Scouts, Girls Guides, Girls Brigade, Duke of Edinburg, Pathfinders, Light Bearers, as well Youth ACT [Anti-Crime Trust] Anti-Crime Day, the Youth Development Consortium—Ms. Sylvia Wilks runs that—and the National Youth Commission, which is a youth advocacy and chaired by Reverend Myers. Again, hundreds of our young people are affected positively by these programmes.

The \$9,025, which was one that the Member alluded to, Mentoring Cayman, here a minimum of 30 young persons are paired each year with professional mentors in the private and public sector, to guide them in their development.

The Department of Sports, which again, it is all there for the benefit of our young people—\$5,824,799. The Department of Sport maintains some 24 facilities in support of the physical development of our young people. They also provide over 40 after-school programmes, 10 recreational leagues for the community, 10 sports camps in the summer where parents are screened to find affordable activities for their children and over 2,000 coaching sessions in our schools.

Youth Services Unit—\$627,860: In addition to its work to assist NGO's to develop strong programming in the districts, the YSU continues to provide leadership development programming through the Cayman Islands Youth Assembly and its *Youth Flex* show?

Cayman Islands Cadet Corps, \$494,943—the Cadet Corps is also a leadership development programme run through the Ministry. It caters to approximately 100 youths in various detachments. It uses military-style discipline to teach leadership and self-reliance and can assist in developing a foundation for our next generation of Caymanian policemen, firemen, prison officers, et cetera, et cetera.

So, Madam Speaker, that adds up to a grand total of what I just outlined, of some \$8,573,608. Madam Speaker, that's a far cry from \$64,800. And I don't have to belabour the point. I think that the Member would see that, even if he was Stevie Wonder. I think he understands.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: There's a holistic approach, Member.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Madam Speaker, in relation to his concerns . . . And I don't mind elucidating this, because it's important that the public understand as well, because I don't think it's only he who would be confused by this.

In relation to our elderly and what we do, Madam Speaker, we do a tremendous amount in this area. Our elderly persons financial assistance funding is providing under the Poor Persons (Relief) Law for the 2015/16 years as follows: Permanent long-term poor relief, spent to date was \$6,000,260. Madam Speaker, that's at a rate of \$550 a month.

That is significant, Madam Speaker. So anyone who would lead people to believe in this country that we are neglecting anyone where they are deserving of, again, Madam Speaker, is not being honest with the public. Because we, as a Government, (and not just this Government; this has been going on, Madam Speaker), we take this seriously, and people are well looked after, in large part.

NGS-64—Persons at the Pines, \$1.4 million covers 20 standard (what you call standard) care, which is a certain level of room and care, and 10 extended care. Extended care is when the person is basically bedridden, and you go there and you see them. They don't move around. The standard care are those who when you go to the Pines, you see them moving around and coming out and socialising and having their meals and what-not. So there's a big gap between the level of care and the amount that it costs for those individuals—significant. The Pines is actually constantly asking for more funding because they're under added pressures with the intake that they have.

Temporary Poor Relief, Madam Speaker, is the one that you hear the most about with the Needs Assessment Unit. In addition, we provide additional support in the form of rental, food and housing. Rental is capped at \$800 a month, Madam Speaker. To individuals receiving poor relief payments, but are still able to meet their expenses, \$7,666,000 of the 2015/16 budget was used for this purpose. And the total between the persons at the Pines and the permanent long term relief, the \$7.6 million is the total of those two that I mentioned earlier—\$6.2 million and \$1.4 million. And the total assistance given was \$12.371 million. So that's \$7.6 million, coming away from the \$12.3 million is the difference of what was spent on temporary poor relief. So some, not quite 0.5 million, but 4 million-something is that figure, which would have been spent on temporary poor relief. Madam Speaker, that is a lot of aid for a small island.

We also, Madam Speaker, at the moment have started our housing repairs for needy people. This is being conducted under the auspices of the Needs Assessment Unit. This is also one of the things that put added pressure on the Needs Assessment Unit, to try and get this programme going, because we

had budgeted funds for the last couple of years for this, and we have finally got the programme up and going. But of course, we can't just, everybody who comes and says, *I have a leaking roof, or, I have a house that needs fixing*, you can't just fly off and do it, because many times you have to assess the real need. So the only way to do that properly, we felt, was to run it through. Rather than create another committee to do that assessment, you run it through the Needs Assessment Unit. Usually, in most cases, these people already have existing files. And a committee was set up through the Ministry, along with various stakeholders, Public Works and the other people from the Needs Assessment Unit. So they meet regularly and assess. As the project manager goes out and brings back the information on these various needy cases, they are then looked at and assessed, and the process is underway.

A number of them have now been completed. We're starting with some of the smaller ones to move them along quickly. Some of the more needy ones, especially with the rainy season upon us, we're looking to get as many of the leaking roofs fixed that we can for our needy people.

Madam Speaker, you know, this is a very thankless job. Because when you do . . . If you don't do, you're not doing. And if you do, you're doing too much. So we recognise that. And all we can do each day is the best that we can do, and do it honestly and fairly and transparently. So, Madam Speaker, people will see homes being fixed as we move forward. We are just about at the end of this financial year, the few that have been done. But the programme will continue into the 18 months, and we will be working to get as many of those people out of . . . Some of them, sadly, go back to as far as Ivan. Others are simply because of economic times or whatever, and they cannot get themselves back on their feet. So we're working and sifting through them and getting this done as quickly as possible.

Madam Speaker—

The Speaker: Honourable Member, is this a convenient time for a 15-minute afternoon break?

Hon. Osbourne V. Boddén: Sure, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: We'll take a 15-minute break.

Proceedings suspended at 5:04 pm

Proceedings resumed at 5:40 pm

The Speaker: Please be seated. Proceedings are resumed.

I recognise the Honourable Minister of Community Affairs to continue his debate.

Hon. Osbourne V. Boddén: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I was just wrapping up the clarifications in relation to what the Member for North Side, in his contribution, had alluded to in relation to our elderly. And just to say quickly that the Budget for 2016/17 has some \$18.5 million, \$18,602,000 in it for the various support programmes that we offer. I think that is significant, and it is important that that money reaches the most needy people. And I think his main concern is that it does reach and it is made easier for those who need it the most. In the eastern districts, we have some people who find it difficult to access services, and we're looking at various ways to make that easier for them.

Madam Speaker, meeting the needs of the most vulnerable . . . Or what I'd like to say, too, the Member did mention too, the National Older Persons policy and our funding and resources for that, just to say that I commissioned for that policy to be completed. And it will be launched to coincide with Older Persons Month this October. And right now, one of the things that the Member had mentioned was the fact that stakeholders need to be consulted, older people. And before he even said that, in the works was a large stakeholder meeting that is being planned as I speak for a date that's trying to be worked out. And the committee working on this is quite extensive, under the able leadership of Ms. Debbie Webb-Sibblies. And she is trying to find a date that's suitable to some 160 people, which includes all of us Members, all of these members on the committee, plus people from within the community who know about, have knowledge of their communities, plus some older people.

So, I think that will certainly satisfy his concern in that area, that no stone is being left unturned in the development of this policy. From this policy will flow laws and regulations, and that is where there will be, once that is in the process of being implemented, then, will come the funding requirements later on in the 18-month period. But funds will be available to certainly implement whatever is needed going forward, as we develop the protection and resources that are needed for older people. We all know that abuses and the need in terms of our own districts. We see people being taken advantage of. We hear of property being swindled out of people's hands and people receiving money and not going to the right to benefit the older person.

I know of one particular case right now, which is terrible, where an account was somehow changed and the money is no longer being paid where it should be paid. There are horror cases, as we know, around the community. And this policy will speak to that and certainly put the teeth in the legislation as we go forward. It's very, very important that we protect the elderly and the young people of this country.

Madam Speaker, meeting the needs of these vulnerable groups, those particular two I just men-

tioned, will continue to be our priority. The budget of the Ministry of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports has been prepared with an emphasis on where human needs are the greatest. The provision of social programmes and services is a critical aspect for any nation, especially over the past several years when the world economy saw a downturn as a result of the global financial crisis, which has had a negative and severe impact upon many economies around the world, it is essential that Government ensures that social programmes are available and accessible.

Madam Speaker, Cayman residents, the youth, the elderly, women and children must have access to targeted interventions that will have a positive impact on their lives. Let us not be sceptical about the benefits this budget brings to our people, but let us recognise that what matters now and what will ultimately matter is our contributions to making our country a better place. Being here, Madam Speaker, as a Member is nothing short of being in a relay. We are not here to undo and turn the world upside-down, to stamp our name on anything. We are here to run the race and carry the baton for a period, whether it is long or short, and to pass on and try to win that race.

Madam Speaker, major initiatives for the 2016/17 budget year include, as I mentioned—

- the development of the NOPP, the National Older Persons Policy;
- development of a social assistance strategy to tidy everything up and bring it under one umbrella; completion of the Poor Persons (Relief) Regulations;
- amendments to the Cadet Corps Law, I mentioned before;
- further upgrades to the new Maple House facility, which will be the one that we've purchased. There are further things that need to be done there before we actually move the clients again;
- develop action plans for the implementation of the National Sports policy, and that is establishing and maintaining appropriate sports and recreational facilities in all districts through multi-sectorial collaboration;
- improving the quality and increasing the quantity of PE in schools through the implementation of the PE curriculum in line with long-term athlete development principles. This goes in tandem with what the Member for East End was speaking to earlier about the lack of PE. We recognise that, the Minister of Education and I, the need for that to be increased within, of course, the confines of our PACT academic agenda and curriculum. So we have to work with schools and find a way to make that. But I agree. We had a lot more physical education, and it's very important. A healthy child will do a lot better—healthy body, healthy mind, as was said; and continuously building

and expanding on capacity within national sporting associations.

Madam Speaker, I would now like to speak to the departments, units and companies under the Ministry, in brief. In 2016/17, the Ministry will be working on the following strategic assessment and outline business cases regarding future options of the CAYS Foundation:

- a social assistance strategy and exploring a comprehensive approach to early intervention for children at risk of criminality, in collaboration with other Ministries;
- completing amending criteria for all youth and sports grants to make them in line with the National Youth and Sports policies;
- completion of the NOPP;
- completion of the Poor Persons (Relief) Regulations; and
- review and improve all sporting facilities.

As outlined in Broad Outcome 6 in 2016/17, the Ministry will work along with the Sports and Public Works departments to review and improve the sporting facilities. This, Madam Speaker, is also in line with our promise to the people of these Islands. In addition, the Minister will also work along with the Minister of Education to upgrade school playing fields and hard courts that are agreed to be used as sports recreational facilities.

Capital Works, Madam Speaker. In relation to the Government's promise to the people of these Islands that we would utilise the sporting facilities during our last term in office to develop a nursery for world-class athletes, we only need to look at our neighbouring Caribbean Islands to see what is possible. Madam Speaker, I'm proud that we were able to host a series of international events this past year, but there's a need for further upgrades and renovations for current up-and-coming athletes to be able to train when they are at home. To this end, the following capital works will be carried out in 2016/17:

Truman Bodden Sports Complex—the Truman Bodden Sports Complex is a national stadium and is heavily used to host certain world-class sporting events. By being able to host world-class sporting events, we have been able to further develop our sports tourism product and expose more of our local athletes to international competition at home. If the Cayman Islands want to remain competitive in attracting and hosting world-class sporting events and to grow our sports tourism product, the national stadium facility must be improved to the best of our capacity by providing essential support services that such an international facility requires. Having installed a new public address system in 2015/16—I'm sure the public has taken note of that at the recent events; we no longer have that scrakling, crackling annoying sound that was parading as a PA system.

The next improvement will be the installation of a large digital scoreboard to provide playback and to create a revenue stream by offering advertising during major regional and international events. Other enhancements will also include the creation of a media and conference rooms to support regional and international events.

Madam Speaker, it is also my intention to begin works at the Truman Bodden Sports Complex to make this a Centre of Excellence for sports in general. This will form part of the work to advance the National Sports policy by establishing a framework to promote talent development in high-performance sport. The vision is to create a facility that will assist in the preparation of our more talented athletes in a number of sporting disciplines. The facility would need to offer dormitories so that national teams and individual athletes can go into focused and intense preparation ahead of international commitments on behalf of the country. This will also attract more international teams, who can stay at the facility and offer better and stronger competition for our local national teams. This will aid in their development and increase their chances of advancing to the highest levels within their chosen sport.

There's also need to be able to offer resources on site so that youth teams can still be provided academic development needs while preparing to represent the country. I will work closely with UCCI [University College of the Cayman Islands] in developing Centre of Excellence so that opportunities for developing careers in sports can be created—for example, sports psychology and physiotherapy, among others.

Madam Speaker, the G. Haig Bodden playing field in Bodden Town I mentioned earlier, and we've been unable to take advantage of this facility for some time. But we are looking at creating a multipurpose facility on this site. There is currently no facility in the eastern districts with the adequate supporting amenities to be able to take part in the sport tourism successes that Cayman have been able to attract over the years. It is my vision that we can continue to build on what we already have to bring regional and international sports to the eastern districts. Therefore, having completed the master plan for the Haig Bodden playing field in 2015/16, it is my plan that we'll be able to make this the Haig Bodden Sports Centre, with the improvements that are set to begin. Works will be completed on a phased basis and projects scheduled to begin imminently include the replacement expansion of the grandstands for increased viewing of the sport on the main playing field, as well as sports taking place on the hard courts.

Works also include the construction of concession areas and changing rooms, the covering of the netball and basketball hard courts with canopy-like structure to facilitate increased use during the hotter

daylight hours and in inclement weather and upgrading of the lighting on the hard courts.

Madam Speaker, the East End and North Side playing fields, as the Members for those two districts can attest to, have been without bathrooms and changing facilities . . . Well, North Side has bathrooms. (Am I correct, Member?)

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Yes.

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: Yes. North Side has bathrooms, but no changing facilities; East End has neither, except those that are in the Civic Centre, and it's not conducive to proper usage.

It is simply impossible to encourage individuals and teams to utilise facilities such as these without adequate bathrooms and changing facilities. The Ministry's reason is, for relatively small investments in these add-ons, we will be able to facilitate better usage at the facility and will assist in delivering one of the key strategic goals of the National Sports policy.

The Member for East End, I know he has made a lot of noise in here about this before. I told him that it would come in this budget, and true to my word, I'm delivering on that promise. The Donovan Rankin playing field will have the same amenities built, as well as North Side. And I'm pleased that we're keeping a promise that we made a long time ago to ensure that these facilities are used at an optimum.

Madam Speaker, the Red Bay Primary School area is adjacent to the densely populated community of Prospect and its surrounding areas. Its basketball court is being used by families in the surrounding areas. Many have the desire to take up walking, jogging and other exercising, but they're hindered by issues of safety when walking on the roads. Additionally, there are a significant number of young persons in this area without an accessible playing field or sports facility. We will therefore be seeking to improve the facilities for the students at the Red Bay Primary School, in tandem with the Ministry of Education, while at the same time improving access to both adults and youth in the community to allow sports and recreational activities in a safe environment.

This will involve a community-grade artificial turf, a walking track, bathrooms, lighting and adequate fencing to allow for amicable co-existing of both the school and the community population.

Madam Speaker, one of the things that will also be added to the Haig Bodden facility is the building of a boxing gym. Boxing is widely known as a contact physical sport. When we did a test case in Bodden Town at the Civic Centre, where we were offering boxing programmes there for a while, we saw the success and the great interest for that area. We felt, therefore, a need . . . and many of the young people said that they just simply can't get to the Dalmain Ebanks Gym. So, we feel that it would be very benefi-

cial to build a small building behind the Civic Centre, a small gym for this purpose. So we're looking forward to creating that facility on that site and continuing the enhancement of that site.

Certainly, it will take some of, you know, boxing appeals usually to young people who are at risk. And if we can pull them off the street and use up that energy in the evenings, they will go home tired rather than be looking to get into some other mischief or area that will pull them away from a wholesome lifestyle. This is therefore the motivation in this project.

Madam Speaker, another initiative will be creating a National Sports Hall of Fame and Annual Sports Awards. We will work diligently to ensure that recommendations of the National Sports Policy are achieved. One of the strategic directions of the National Sports Policy calls for increasing the value placed on sport, recreation and physical well-being. It is my belief that establishment of a National Sports Hall of Fame and institution of Annual Sports Awards will go a long way to lifting the value and importance of sports in this country. It will provide an opportunity to recognise and acknowledge our founding fathers and pioneers who have made significant contributions to sports development, while also adding prestige and honour to those who strive for excellence and higher achievements every day in their various sporting disciplines. It will also cause us to take stock of where we are and where we have come from, and provide a great motivator for the growth of sports. I have therefore tasked the Ministry with making this a key deliverable for the 2016/17 financial year.

Madam Speaker, getting back to the Department of Children and Family Services [DCFS] in a little more detail, it was recognised that the challenges facing the wider community begin in the privacy of our own homes. And as such, we need to continue to address the issues affecting families, ranging from violence and abuse, to parenting and healthy relationships in order to bring about any meaningful change in the wider community. Therefore, the main thrust of the DCFS will continue to be on the strengthening of families in an effort to stem the tide of social problems being experienced in our Islands.

Consequently, the DCFS will continue to provide case management and interventions to the people of the Cayman Islands through a cadre of qualified social work staff. With the separation of welfare services from the social work services, the department is now better able to ensure compliance with the Children Law, The Adoption of Children Law and the Youth Justice Law. One of the main functions of the department is child protection, which is legally guided by the Children Law. Madam Speaker, in the Cayman Islands today our society has become even more aware of the societal ills which have affected our children.

Our Government has therefore seen the need to support families as a preferred option instead of

placement in institutional care. The department will continue to support parents to prevent unnecessary separation of children, through collaborating with agencies such as the Family Resource Centre, who provide parenting programmes, conduct effective monitoring of children placed in residential care, foster community awareness and support for vulnerable children and their families and through inter-agency collaboration; advocate on behalf of those children whose rights have been violated to ensure that there is access to justice.

Madam Speaker, during this financial year, the department, in collaboration with partnering agencies, will also continue on the focusing of needs of older persons. We fully recognise the important role that our older persons have played and continue to play in the growth and well-being of our society. As such, I'm pleased to announce that the department has diligently been working on concluding the formulation of minimum standards of care for its residential and care facilities for older persons. These standards will ensure that government-operated caring facilities for older persons are a model of excellence within the region. Additionally, we will seek to build the capacity of those who care for our elderly, ensuring that we are adhering to best practices.

Madam Speaker, we commence the process of developing the National Plan for Older Persons. And as a result— sorry, I will not go over that, Madam Speaker, I spoke to that already; that was the National Policy for Older Persons. Sorry about that. I have already announced this bit. Forgive me there.

Just to elaborate a little more on the Needs Assessment Unit, Madam Speaker, as many are aware, the separation of Financial Assistance from the Department of Children and Family Services occurred in March 2013 during the efficiency recommendations from the public service review of 2010. The unit's primary function is to provide financial services to assist persons in meeting their basic human needs, as guided by the Poor Persons (Relief) Law. Since its establishment, the Ministry has been working with the unit to ensure sufficient resources, policies and procedures are in place to meet the needs of its clients.

Madam Speaker, the services requested of the unit are, as I said before, in extremely high demand. The unit has noted that a significant amount of persons seeking financial assistance are mothers with dependent children, elderly and/or disabled persons, persons who are chronically or terminally ill and unable to work to maintain themselves, or persons whose income is insufficient to meet the needs of their families. While the unit is providing some financial relief to vulnerable persons, as a government, we need to ensure that appropriate support mechanisms are in place to assist recipients in becoming self-sufficient. These types of mechanisms are being included in the Poor Persons (Relief) Regulations, which are currently being finalised by the Legislative Drafting Department.

The regulations will focus on assisting the most vulnerable persons of society in meeting their needs, while facilitating their independence in the community.

The Ministry, the Department of Children and Family Services and the Needs Assessment Unit will work along with the Ministry of Health Services Authority to transition all needs assessments for indigent medical services to the Health Services Authority. This will begin with all needs assessment for indigent medical being carried out at HSA effective 1st of July 2016.

So, Madam Speaker, it is a very important step and one that will smooth out some of the gripes that we heard. I know that the Member for North Side, in particular, picked up on that during Public Accounts Committee [Public Accounts Committee]. And we were doing that all over at the Needs Assessment Unit. If we can have that placed at the HSA, that will take away a large part of their responsibility, and also that way, they will work closely with the Needs Assessment Unit and make it a much more pleasant experience for the patient, who is first and foremost, the most important person within that whole process.

Department of Counselling Services, Madam Speaker, will be expanding or enhancing the options available to clients to more effectively address a broader range of emergency needs in our society and to enhance success and treatment and improve the lives of our clients. Skill-building programmes currently offered to parents by the Family Resource Centre have been modified to more effectively target the needs of certain populations, while an expansion of family skills sessions offered will provide greater access to ongoing support and intervention for families.

New services such as parent coaching have also been made available to strengthen the parenting capacity in families. In response to a growing concern for the number of persons in our community who are experiencing emotional crisis in their lives, the Counselling Centre has restructured their hours of service delivery and positioned itself to be more responsive to persons presenting in crisis and to more effectively co-ordinate their care during this difficult time.

At Caribbean Haven Residential Centre, the staff took a look at the clients served to determine how enhancements to the programme can allow us to better meet their needs. Persons who have substance abuse issues also struggle with mood disorders and other mental health problems. Now, specific treatment options will be available within the context of the programme offered there to meet the needs of at least a portion of that population, primarily those with mood disorders. In addition, many clients who come to the centre for help are not literate, or struggle to express their thoughts and feelings verbally.

Modifying the programme schedule to afford more time to work at the clients' pace, a music therapy programme recently introduced provides an effective evidence-based intervention to address physical,

emotional, cognitive and social needs within the therapeutic relationship.

CAYS Foundation—the CAYS Foundation provides a key component in the Ministry's continuum of care for children. Madam Speaker, CAYS continues to assist the Government in meeting its legal obligations under the Children Law revision and the Youth Justice Law revision. Due to the complex issues that at-risk youth experience, CAYS continues to re-evaluate its therapeutic programmes and expanded services to ensure that appropriate residential treatment is available for those boys and girls who are not able to remain with their families. As such, Madam Speaker, in 2014, CAYS developed a proposal which was approved by me and my colleagues in Cabinet to further enhance their facilities and services by expanding the Frances Bodden Girls Home or Children's Home, as I mentioned earlier. With the additional building at that site, children will be able to flourish and grow and explore and understand their personal and family and behavioural issues within an appropriate peer group setting.

Again, I would like to publicly thank Chairperson, Mr. Arch, the other board of director members and the many private companies who made this a reality. The Ministry will continue to work with CAYS in exploring options to support children who have been committed into its care and expanding residential care for children who are no longer able to reside with their families.

The Youth Services Unit, Madam Speaker, will continue to play a key role with the non-governmental [NGO] youth service providers to ensure that they deliver effective programming throughout the districts. To this end, it will review as part of the grant process, those youth service providers receiving funding from the Government. Through this process technical advice is administered and guidance and best practice provided. This will ensure that our NGO stakeholders are working towards a common goal of achieving the National Youth policy. The unit will also work on its youth and permit [SOUNDS LIKE] work through the private and public schools, high schools, and provide avenues for the voice of young people to be heard. These programmes assist in cultivating the leadership skills of our young people and prepare them to be more able to take part in our political process and life in general.

The Department of Sports, Madam Speaker—in our manifesto, we referred to [the fact that] sports and recreation of all sorts are essential to the physical, mental and social well-being of a nation. In this day and age, when obesity is creating challenges in segments of our population, sports is increasingly more important. Although we are seeing a change in culture in some segments of our community towards sports and recreation, we still have some ways to go to achieve a culture of physical well-being. The Department of Sports coaches will continue to support

our partners in education by administering an excess of 2,000 coaching sessions within the school system in the coming year to lay a foundation which will result in a lifetime of physical activity.

In tandem with this, I along with Minister Rivers, who is responsible for Education, have tasked a multi-sectorial group to develop and implementation plan to increase both the quality and quantity of PE in schools, as I mentioned, and to develop a structure and programmes for enhancing to school sports. The goal is to expose increased numbers of the very young to the fundamentals of movement and play within the schools and/or after-school programmes, thereby sparking an interest and developing their capacity to take part in sports and other physical activity throughout their lives.

Madam Speaker, as people living on an island, we are keenly aware of the benefit of being able to swim. This essential life skill creates so much opportunity for safe recreation and physical activity in our Islands. We are pleased that this past year, we were able to offer swimming to the primary schools in the eastern districts through a combining of the Department of Sports coaches and the Ministry of Education swimming facilities at the Clifton Hunter High School. We have also enhanced and will continue to enhance opportunities for residents to be able to keep active in safe facilities. To this end, we have installed a . . . (I have already done that. Sorry, Madam Speaker. Forgive me there.)

We intend to construct wheelchair-accessible restrooms at the Bodden Town Primary field, where we have just installed a track, and at West Bay Primary to support public usage.

Madam Speaker, on the Cadet Corps, the Cayman Islands Cadet Corps remains one of the stronger Government-administered youth development programmes. It utilises military-style discipline to teach high school students the value of citizenship, leadership, service to the community, personal responsibility and accomplishment, while instilling in them self-esteem, teamwork and self-discipline. It prepares them for responsible leadership roles while making them aware of their rights, responsibilities and privileges as Caymanians. We have been fortunate to have a retired Justice of the Court volunteer as Chairman of the newly established Cadet Corps' committee. A review of the Cadet Corps Law is nearing completion, and this is expected to establish a firm foundation to launch the Cadet Corps into a period of growth. Its programming will be enhanced by strengthening its music and marine offering, and these are expected to yield more rounded cadet graduates.

A training facility is badly needed for the Cadet Corps, and land will be identified and purchased, if necessary, to facilitate this. My goal is to have a Cadet Corps that can be used as a feeder programme to our uniformed branches, such as police, prison, customs, immigration and fire. And we will also provide

discipline, hard-working recruits as we move ahead. I was pleased to see in the news recently, Madam Speaker, that we have a new superintendent for the RCIP coming, or is here already, Mr. Lansdown. And apparently, he did a lot of work with cadets, and he's interested in volunteering while he's here. So we look forward to welcoming him on board with our many existing volunteers.

I must thank the many dedicated volunteers who are the backbone of the Cadet Corps. The cadets are run by only three full-time staff, and it is on the strength of its many volunteers that it provides those services to our young people.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to turn my attention quickly now to the District of Bodden Town and some other projects and plans that we have carried out there. We have paved the Anton Bodden Drive, which used to be in really, really bad shape. With the help of the NRA, that was paved. And that is really useful and appreciated for the folk who take and use that road. Madam Speaker, along that road, we built a parking lot this past year for access to the Harry McCoy Dart Park, which is adjacent to Cumber Avenue. So, people no longer have the inconvenience of not being able to find somewhere to park when they come to events in the park. And there is actually something coming up there on Monday, which will be the reopening of the renovated homes that we have there. I implore all of our Members and people in Bodden Town and elsewhere to come and witness what a beautiful sight that is. The parking lot certainly is a welcome addition, and it's not yet completed, but it's certainly usable.

I mentioned already the fact that the Frances Bodden has the male wing in the lower valley area. That was done. We have now lighted school crossings, which were installed with the assistance of NRA. We have been begging for those for some time. Sadly, one of those was taken out in the Savannah area by the Savannah Primary School. We're hoping to have that replaced soon. But that is very useful because we've already seen two young people knocked down in Savannah with people traveling quickly through that area. Where we have our schools, it's very important that the crossings are not only there, but I look forward to the day when we have those manned properly at schools' opening and closing times.

Madam Speaker, I mentioned just now that we had renovated the home there in the Harry McCoy Park. We have two buildings there, the Nurse Josie's Senior Centre. And these buildings serve as a museum for the district. And it's important that people come out and enjoy and see what the great facility is there, that they can look back at their past and see some of the wonderful stuff that we're known for. I want to thank once again the committee that worked so hard to make this happen. Right now, I know they're busy planning for next week's opening. And we look for-

ward to seeing them at four o'clock next Monday on the public holiday.

Madam Speaker, we are about to open, as soon as the building is open, we're hoping to have vehicle licensing in the eastern districts up at Breakers in the building that is owned by Mr. Tony Powell. And that will be a welcome addition to services in the Bodden Town district.

We have repaired a number of roads at the Pease Bay. I see where one lane has been done. I'm hoping that they haven't left it at that. We're also going to be repairing the roadworks that were done by Water Authority through the Central Historical District. That's about to be done, I think, starting this weekend. We're getting that finally fixed and making that a nicer drive through Bodden Town. And many street lights—of course, as we go along we keep getting requests for those that have been put in in the district.

The Bodden Town Coe/Wood Public Beach, we're looking at taking down the huts that are there now that were built by the last administration, which sadly were not conducive to purpose, not fit for purpose. And they have been there, and we have been pushing to get those sorted one way or the other. So the Ministry of PLAHI [Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure] have agreed now that these will come down, and proper facilities will be built there. I think eight kiosks will be installed, and these will be open-faced kiosks. And we'll be looking for management of that to ensure that it's done in a proper way to offer the proper services.

There are people in the district who, mischievous as they are, would like people to believe that we somehow sabotage—and myself, in particular, because I have a business in Bodden Town—sabotage anyone putting businesses in these cabanas. But nothing could be further from the truth. The record shows that I have been pushing for this, and I know the First Elected Member knows how hard we've been pushing for this from the time that Minister Clifford was the Minister of Tourism. And what we said when it came up and there was a letter written by myself and the other gas station, was that we hope that the services were not a duplicate of ours, that we wanted to see a lot of craft and a lot of culture being on display there. And, you know, we had existing businesses, so we didn't expect people to be selling sodas and chips and that type of stuff at those kiosks, but they would be used for the right purpose.

That was the objection that we made. And it wasn't an objection; it was just merely a point that we were making. Planning heard it, and everybody agreed that it was sensible. But there are people in the district who would like others to believe that we didn't want anyone to have anything there because of our selfish—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Boddén: I wasn't in an office at the time. So, you know, that's just something that, unfortunately, no matter what you do, Madam Speaker, you're going to have your critics, you're going to have your detractors. But, you know, I know in my heart of hearts what we are trying to do for the district of Bodden Town and how hard we are working at it.

At the Coe/Wood also, we'd like to put in a . . . I have spoken to my colleague, and I know colleagues on the other side who were previously here, feel the need for a fish cleaning station probably on the eastern end of that where the launch ramp is. And we are looking at getting that done as soon as we can as well.

I also met recently with the Public Works Department up by the Meagre Bay Pond area in Pease Bay. What we are trying to get done there is that I have asked them to look at that to see how best we can thin out some of the vegetation with a view to the pond and create a nature walk and some outposts so that families can go in and enjoy viewing, because there is a lot of bird life in that pond when it has water, and most of the year it has water, to go there and be able to . . . there was a small one there before and I think it had probably been done by the owners of the property. But that property is all privately owned so we have to work in conjunction with the property owners, either to get permission or to purchase those slivers of land so that we can have a place where anybody driving past can stop and enjoy what is a beautiful sight. We see it in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, and there is no reason why something like that couldn't be shown off and enjoyed here. So I am looking forward to Public Works coming back with a conceptual drawing for me on that. So we are looking forward to getting that done.

The Speaker: Minister, you have half an hour remaining.

Hon. Osbourne V. Boddén: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think I will be within that.

Madam Speaker, I think something that I left out when I was mentioning sports facilities in districts and when I mentioned the improvements in North Side and East End and Bodden town playing fields, we will be looking at all of the district community fields ensuring that they all have restroom facilities. Not necessarily changing rooms, because that is for the bigger fields, but like the community field in West Bay, which is by the old Town Hall, and others, they do not necessarily have anywhere for people to utilise restroom facilities. So, we are looking at the best location for those facilities and ensuring that all of our sporting facilities give people an opportunity to relieve themselves properly, rather than around the compound, and we all know that is not desirable for proper community living. I know that the Minister for West Bay has been on me about that. Somewhere in my

speech I must have glossed over it earlier. But certainly I did have a special point on that facility in West Bay by the Town Hall and any other field of that nature that is used heavily by the public which requires public amenities, those will also be looked at and those are not large ticket items, Madam Speaker, so we will seek to get as many of them done in the coming year, in these 18 months for sure, as we can.

Madam Speaker, I have been through a lot of stuff. It is obviously a very busy Ministry. We have a huge workload on our hands and I think that the budget that is before this House reflects our commitment to putting the Cayman Islands on a socially stable and sustainable path. It is intended to provide government assistance for those who are truly in need, and also intended to support our residents in their ability to care for each other which is, and was, the Caymanian way.

Madam Speaker, our ultimate aim is the wellbeing of our citizens. We cannot compromise on these principles because the public is dependent on us for the country's productivity, stability, and in very fundamental ways for its survival. We must, therefore, all be active and committed partners in this process and ensure that we continue to enhance existing resources, services and programmes which focus on human development priorities. It is important that we recognise the range of services being provided and accept that no single agency working in isolation from others can address these demands successfully without inter-agency collaboration between Government and its partners. The pooling of resources, skills and coordination of human services is necessary when working to improve services to children and their families.

Madam Speaker, I wholeheartedly stand behind this 18 month budget as it seeks to reaffirm our commitment to work together with all in pursuing a better future for our children, our youth, our families, our communities.

Madam Speaker, I remember there is something that I meant to mention that is outside my remit, but certainly not as a Member for the district of Bodden Town. It is to do with the whole aspect of policing needs in our districts. The Members for North Side, East End and I, along with (at the time I wasn't in office) many business owners formed the Eastern Business Owners Association. We met with the police, Commissioner Baines and others, on more than one occasion. We were looking strategically at what we could do to enhance policing in our eastern districts, because as a businessman in the district, I can tell you we have seen the decline in terms of policing, as well as the support that's needed overall in the community to deter crime.

What happened, Madam Speaker, when the police resources were pulled largely in part to West Bay and George Town, we found that on that end the criminals certainly said, *Hold on, things are a little too hot in the west; we're coming east.* So we have seen

people that we don't even recognise around those three eastern districts. Not that we don't have our own, but we have seen . . . you can pass Coe/Wood Beach sometimes and you don't recognise anyone. And East End, North Side suffer the same plight.

So we got together and we implored that they look at the shifts, the amount of resources, and to re-allocate some of that. And, Madam Speaker, I must say, our pleas, although heard at the meeting, fell largely on deaf ears, because you still too often call the police station, can't get through; go there, no one there. The Bodden Town station is the headquarters for the eastern districts. The commander there is in charge of those other two eastern districts. We have heard the Members from those two districts talk about their police stations not being used, locked up, broken into, and the story goes on.

Madam Speaker, I hope, I plead, I pray that in . . . we are about to get a new commissioner, whoever that is, and the police service that's there . . . I pay kudos to all the hardworking police. We do have police, however, are not necessarily of that same vein. Police need to be receptive, learn their communities, to work with the community, to drive around, to walk around, to ride around, put down their windows, listen to their public, get to know their public. Too often the police come and they are strangers. And when they come they have little or no respect to be gained from the community.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden: That's not good. Okay thank you. I thought so. I wondered.

So we are pleading as Representatives, certainly as a member of Cabinet I will do all I can to provide resources in Cabinet. I also sit on the National Security Council, Madam Speaker, and, you know, that has not functioned properly. I would be lying to stand here and say it has; it is far from ideal the way that that has been functioning. We need to get that functioning properly for us to really look and offer the type of input that we can offer to the police. We are not telling them how to do their job; but certainly we bring something to the table that they need to listen to and hear from us.

So, Madam Speaker, I am looking forward to a new dawn, and thank those who have worked hard in the past. We are here to support the police, not to cry them down. We need the police. And, therefore, Madam Speaker, I am looking forward to us having new things going on in terms of the RCIPS and the style of policing. I really do.

Madam Speaker, to wrap up, I'd like to thank (if you will bear with me for a few minutes) the hardworking members of the Ministry, the departments and units under my purview. Without their support I could not stand here and deliver the address I did to stand by our promises as a Government and continue

to deliver for the wellbeing of our people. It has been particularly tough in the past year as budget cuts continue to strangle us in some areas, and the small pie was divided into even more pieces. More and more is expected of Government, as I said earlier, and it is not easy to juggle the priorities and please everyone. However, the hardworking staff members strive every day to do their best under difficult constraints, especially at the NAU [Needs Assessment Unit]; kudos to the new Director, Ms. Tamara [Hurlston], and her able Deputy, Mr. Matthew [Hylton].

I wish also to thank the broader civil service for their support and contributions, without which we could not accomplish our goals. The Ministry of PLAHI, in particular, and the Public Works Department, and NRA under its remit, have been particularly helpful and much has been accomplished with their support.

Madam Speaker, we have a good, solid, honest, hardworking team that makes up the elected Government of this country at this time. This talented, well-rounded team has stuck together through thick and thin and we have delivered on our promises. Granted, all are not yet fulfilled and some take longer than others to come to fruition, but they are coming, Madam Speaker.

We have turned this country around from the brink of financial ruin, everyday crisis and scandals and strained ties with the UK, to one we can be proud of. We have represented well locally and overseas and we have regained the respect lost and restored investor confidence in these Islands. We have given our people hope again that with hard work and perseverance they can make it to be a success in their own country. We will continue to do this with the help of Almighty God and Protector and fight for our people and these Islands. We thank God for all that He has done and continues to do through us, His humble servants, for the people of the Cayman Islands.

My people, we hold this office at your pleasure, and we do not for a minute take it for granted. May the good Lord continue to bless these fair Cayman Islands.

I thank you. Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Premier.

ADJOURNMENT

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I have been spoken to by a number of Members who wish to attend the graduation of the Triple C High School this evening, which is at 7:00. Therefore, I think we have done fairly well today in terms of speeches and so rather than inconveniencing them and preventing them from doing some of their constituency and ministerial duties, I am proposing that we adjourn now and resume tomorrow at 10:00 am.

Madam Speaker, with your permission may I say . . . sorry, not tomorrow—tomorrow is Tuesday. Forgive me. Tomorrow is Cabinet day—Wednesday.

Madam Speaker, if you would permit me to say to Members that Monday coming is a public holiday, so we will lose another day of the debate. Therefore, I would like us to strive to complete the debate by Thursday evening and that we start Finance Committee on Friday morning this week. We will see how it goes. There are two Ministers left on this side, plus the two Official Members, and . . . no, three, sorry. Three Ministers, two Official Members (that's five), plus two Members on the Opposition, so that's seven, in addition to the Minister of Finance and myself who will have to wind up. So there is still a fair amount of work to be done. So, I believe we may wind up having to push on a bit later on Wednesday and Thursday evenings to achieve the stated goal. So I wish to indicate that to Members at this point.

Madam Speaker, I move the adjournment of this honourable House until 10:00 am on Wednesday.

The Speaker: The question is that this honourable House be adjourned until 10:00 am on Wednesday.

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

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

At 6:33 pm, the House stood adjourned until 10:00 am, Wednesday, 8 June 2016.