



BIU and BPSU Presidents Happy With Results of Negotiations

by LaVerne Furbert

Although it has been reported that not all members of the unions forming the Bermuda Trade Union Congress (BTUC) are happy with the result of the recent negotiations with the Bermuda Government, we know that the executive officers of the BTUC are pleased with the outcome of the negotiations. This is clearly evidenced by the fact that on Monday, July 22, 2013, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Government of Bermuda and the Bermuda Trade Union Congress was signed by the presidents of all member unions and associations.

Bermuda Industrial Union (BIU) President, Brother Chris Furbert, and Bermuda Public Services Union (BPSU) President, Brother Kevin Grant said that they were satisfied with the agreement that was reached. These two men are presidents of the two largest Unions and associations which comprise the BPSU.

"These are tough times for all trade unions around the world, so unions have had to make decisions to protect its members," said Brother Chris. "I am satisfied with the agreement reached between the Bermuda Government and the BTUC because it keeps our members employed".



Bermuda Trade Union Congress and Bermuda Government Negotiation Teams

Brother Kevin echoed similar sentiments saying that the economic state of the country is expected to experience negative to moderate GDP growth over the next two to three years and the unemployment rate is predicted to increase.

"The Government is operating with a deficit of \$330 million and it is predicted that next year this figure will rise to \$400 million," continued Brother Kevin. "Government's ultimate goal was to achieve \$60 million in cost savings which equates to a 15% reduction in wages and salaries. So when you consider the issues that this country is facing and the mandate that government came with, I am satisfied with the agreement that has been reached".

Regarding the dissatisfaction expressed by some members of both the BIU and the BPSU, both presidents agreed that this was to be expected as it is almost impossible to get total buy-in in any situation.

"Most times when unions get agreements there are always certain members who feel that something better could have been achieved," said Brother Chris. "I can say that the BIU has about 1,200 members that work for the Bermuda Government. Hence, because of the importance of the meetings where the unions were asking members to agree to a 5% reduction in salary, we invited all of our members to attend. Those invited included bus operators and

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We've had the Cup Match now we have Cook-Off Match!

by G. Maxine Esdaille

Five Chefs – 3 Judges – 1 Crown –

The match to see which of the chefs can produce the best Louisiana Gumbo. This event will take place at Landfall Restaurant on Saturday 10th August 2013 when 5 local chefs will match their skills to see who can produce the best Gumbo.

The event is a fundraiser for the African Diaspora Heritage Trail Bermuda Foundation's Youth Development Fund. This year proceeds from this event will be used to support students from CedarBridge Academy who have competed within the school to attend this year's ADHT 9th International Conference which will be held in Lafayette, Louisiana, USA. It is hoped that the Cook-Off will become an annual event featuring the food of the country/region that is hosting the Conference and allowing the ADHT to support local students' attendance at future ADHT international conferences.

Hence on 10th August at Landfall Restaurant, the focus will be on all things Louisiana. There is the gumbo competition of course; but in addition the restaurant will be decorated Louisiana style, bringing to mind a stroll through the French Quarter in New Orleans; guests will receive Mardi Grass mementos and the music will highlight the jazz and blues of the many famous Louisiana musicians, such as Louis Armstrong, the Marsalis brothers, Fats Domino,



Mahalia Jackson. Even Beyoncé is connected to Louisiana as her family is from the New Iberia area in Louisiana.

In addition to the Cook-Off competition, there will be raffle prizes, door prizes; live music and a DJ for your listening and dancing pleasure.

We know who has won Cup Match and now you are invited to come out to see who wins the Cook-Off Match! Although there is a professional judging category, all attendees will have the opportunity to a sample food from each of the 5 competitors and then they will use their Mardi Gras chips to vote for their favourite gumbo for the People's Choice Award Category.

We would like to thank Hunts Food and Supplies who has supplied the main ingredients for the chefs to use in their gumbo. This ensured that all money raised from this event can go directly to the Youth Development Fund. Special thanks to Mr. Nelson Hunt and the manager of Hunts Food and Supply, Mrs. Joy Hunt for their assistance, advice and support. ■

THE WORKERS VOICE

PUBLISHED BY THE
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Hamilton HM 12
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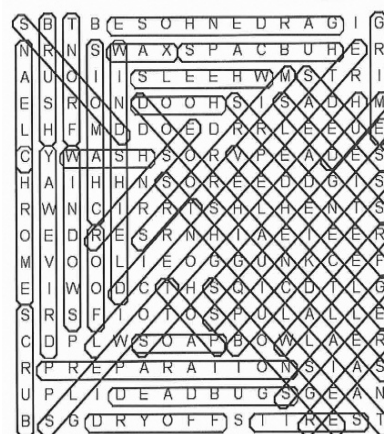
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The Bermuda Industrial Union

PUZZLE • SOLUTION

WASHING A CAR

This is the solution to the puzzle located here.



BRUSH	FENDERS	PREPARATION	TIRES
BUCKETS	FRONT	REAR	TOP
CHAMOIS	GARDEN HOSE	RINSE	TOWELS
CHROME	GLASS	ROOF	VEHICLE
CLEAN	GRIME	SCRUB	WASH
DEAD BUGS	HEADLIGHTS	SIDES	WATER
DIRT	HOOD	SOAP	WAX
DOOR HANDLES	HUBCAPS	SPONGE	WHEELS
DOORS	LICENSE PLATE	SQUEEGEE	WINDOWS
DRIVEWAY	MIRRORS	SUDS	WINDSHIELD
DRY OFF	MUD	TAIL LIGHTS	

The hidden message is: BIRD DROPPINGS

Negotiation Process Amicable – Not Adversarial

In my opinion, it is most unfortunate that some people have misinterpreted remarks made by the head of Government's negotiating team, Judith Hall-Bean, during the press conference to announce the settlement reached between the Bermuda Trade Union Congress (BTUC) and the Bermuda Government on July 26, 2013. During the press conference, Mrs. Hall-Bean stated "By nature, the negotiation process is adversarial. We entered, not in an adversarial way at all. We entered as colleagues trying to find a way to assist the Government out of its current deficit position."

Some who heard Mrs. Hall-Bean's remarks have taken her statement to mean that normally when negotiating with the unions, the process is always adversarial. It appears to me that even the Premier, the Hon. Craig Cannonier tried to insinuate, or intimate that previously the negotiation process between the Government and the unions was adversarial.

However, Mrs. Hall-Bean, who also serves as the Assistant Cabinet Secretary, Deputy Head of Civil Servants has put paid to the notion that some may have had regarding the negotiating process, in particular with the Bermuda Industrial Union. Responding to a question from me, Mrs. Hall-Bean confirmed that "it was not my intention to imply that my negotiation experience with the BIU or any other Union on the Island was contentious." She further stated "I was talking about the negotiation process whereby the interests of the parties are different, it can sometimes become adversarial. I can truly say that none of my negotiations with any of the affiliates

of the BTUC has been adversarial in nature, and I certain did not mean to imply that they were."

In my opinion, Premier Cannonier should have taken a page out of Mrs. Hall-Bean's book rather than stating at that same press conference "We have tended to believe that it is difficult to work with the union." We must keep in mind that no premier, Cannonier or otherwise has been involved in the negotiation process with the government and the member unions of the Bermuda Trade Union Congress. Granted, the Premier and the Finance Minister did meet with representatives of the Trade Union Congress on Monday, May 20, 2013, however, neither of them was involved in the negotiating process. So for Premier Cannonier to state "we have tended to believe that it is difficult to work with the union" shows that once again he does not have his facts correct.

Bermudians should know that the BIU negotiates with several businesses/organizations including the Bermuda Government and the Bermuda Hotel Association, and more often than not the process is cordial, rather than adversarial. It is unfortunate that situations like the matter with KFC have been made public and gives the appearance that the negotiations between the BIU and their social partners are always adversarial. The BIU has over twenty-five collective agreements with their social partners and rarely do the negotiations reach a stage where the public is aware of the process. In some instances, because an agreement cannot be reached between the two parties, the



matter will be referred to arbitration, but more often than not, in the interest of good industrial relations, the BIU and the other organizations/businesses involved in the process reach a happy medium and the agreement is signed.

But back to the process between the Trade Union Congress and the Bermuda Congress, as has been stated by all involved, this was an historic occasion where all six trade unions or associations which include the Bermuda Industrial Union, the Bermuda Police Association, the Bermuda Public services Union, the Bermuda Union of Teachers, the Fire Services Association and the Prison Officers Association, came together to negotiate a settlement on behalf of their members. In this instance, I believe that this is proof of the adage "in unity there is strength".

In my opinion, Bermuda must thank Mrs. Judith Hall-Bean because it was she who came up with the idea of bringing all of the unions/organizations together in the interest of moving Bermuda forward at this crucial time in our history. Of course, we must also thank the members of both negotiating teams for their work while sitting at the negotiating table.

Dr. Barbara Ball Public Health Scholarship Winner Announced

The Ministry of Health and Seniors today announced the names of the 2013 Dr. Barbara Ball Public Health Scholarship recipients.

The new recipients this year are: Dashante Burgess who will study nursing at Middlesex College (\$5,000); Amne Osseyran who will study medicine at the University of West Indies (\$15,000); Karen Raynor who will study nursing at Duquesne University (\$5,000); and Jasmin Caines who will study Medicine at Ross University School of Medicine (\$10,000).

The Ministry will also continue to provide funds for the following individuals who have already received previous funding under the awards scheme: Ciara Talbot who studies medicine at Loma Linda University (\$10,000); Veronica Baptista who is pursuing her MSc Advanced Practice in Health and Social Care at the University of Cumbria (\$5,000); LeRhonda Mills who studies nursing at Delaware State University (\$10,000); Angelita Trott who studies nursing at Barry University (\$10,000) and Erica Ingemann who studies Speech Language Pathology at Kean University (\$15,000).

Recipients were chosen because they stood out to the selection committee as individuals who had the potential to return to Bermuda upon completion of their studies and offer a great service to

the island's healthcare system.

The Minister of Health and Seniors the Hon. Patricia Gordon-Pamplin said: "As most of us know, there is an international shortage of healthcare workers. In fact, the World Health Organization estimates that there is a shortfall of more than 4.3 million health workers worldwide.

"It is for this reason, coupled with the desire to Bermudianize our island's healthcare system and to strengthen Public Health in Bermuda, that the Dr.

Barbara Ball Public Health Scholarship was created."

Since the scholarship was founded the Ministry of Health and Seniors has financially assisted dozens

of Bermudians who are beginning careers or pursuing professional development in public health.

Scholarships may be offered for study in the following areas: nursing, occupational therapy, speech therapy, maternal care, dental hygiene, dentistry, psychiatry, drug counseling, social work, occupational safety and health, environmental health and medical studies.

As well as offering scholarships, the Ministry of Health and Seniors also assists successful applicants with summer employment for the duration of the scholarship. ■

SAGE Commission Extends Deadline for Awards Programme

HAMILTON, Bermuda, July 30, 2013 – The SAGE Commission today announced that the deadline for submissions to its Awards Programme has been extended by one week.

The deadline, which was 5:00pm on Wednesday, July 31, is now 5:00pm on Wednesday, August 7.

"We're impressed with the number and quality of the submissions we've received, and appreciate the time and effort they represent," said Commission Chairman Brian Duperreault. "With the release of the SAGE Commission's interim report, we'd like to offer the public a chance to have a good look at its findings and recommendations, and possibly use them as a catalyst for additional ideas for streamlining Government, contributing to greater efficiency, enhancing accountability, and providing better service to the public through privatisation."

To date, 284 submissions have been received through the SAGE Commission's web site at www.sagecommission.bm.

"We're particularly interested in hearing from the younger members of our community," said Mr. Duperreault. "A young person's fresh

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Goals of the New PLP Leader

On Monday night, July 22nd, PLP leader – Mr. Marc Bean – gave the people of Bermuda a clear and unflinching statement setting out what he believed needed to be done to restore the island of Bermuda to its previous preeminence in the world of Tourism and International Business. Mr. Bean made it clear that he believed the business model for International Business had changed. He declared:

“We cannot continue to pretend that our current economic model isn’t broken”... “We cannot continue to pretend that Bermuda isn’t an expensive place to do business, or that any influx of new companies to Bermuda will not bring the huge numbers of consumers, tenants and taxpayers, that we saw in the past. The business model has changed”.

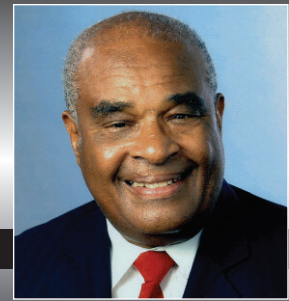
As a result of this changing business environment, he suggested that Bermudians must prepare themselves for the very real possibility that government will most likely “cut civil service jobs” and that we must prepare ourselves to face that possibility. He noted many potential investors “Have privately confessed to being unsure of our government’s stability and direction” He insisted that this developing attitude must be of increasing concern to all Bermudians and that we must get behind our government, support them where possible ... encourage them to produce a plan, and perhaps most importantly, push them to think more carefully about the social and economic consequences of their actions”

It is noteworthy that Mr. Bean is proposing that the PLP must help the OBA get Bermuda back on track even though the likelihood of this occurring has about the same chance as a “Snow ball surviving in Hell”. I believe that such

cooperation is unrealistic given the nature of the Westminster Parliamentary System. This system confers the entire power of government upon the winning party. This means that the party in power is only likely to try cooperation with the losing party if the margin of victory is very close. However, such associations are fragile since even if there is a slight majority held by either party, the political experience is that the party out of power will be seeking every opportunity to bring the government down in an effort to acquire the reins of power. This is the way the Westminster system was designed to work.

However, there are circumstances under the two party system during which the parties usually agree to cooperate. One circumstance is obvious – in the face of a real or impending war. The second circumstance is in the face of an impending economic depression. In the case of war, the need for cooperation is obvious. Although in the case of a colony like Bermuda, political cooperation will be dictated by the imperial country as was the case during World War II when England and the United States were allies and Bermuda as a British Colony automatically became an Ally.

In the case of an economic depression whereby England and America may have different goals and objectives, Bermuda might find herself having to implement English policy which clearly was not in Bermuda’s best interests given our extremely close economic ties to America. For instance, those of us who have reached or surpassed middle age will remember when England introduced controls on dollars earned in her colonies. Bermudians, generally could earn the dollars they required but then had to turn



BY CALVIN SMITH

them into the local banks and pay a premium to get them back in order to purchase goods and services from the United States or any other nation which conducted its external trade in American Dollars.

This policy impacted heavily on Bermuda and Bahamas both of whom were heavy earners of US dollars due to the preponderance of American military men in both countries. However, the dollars that were earned were required to be turned in to the local banks immediately. However, when Bermudians required dollars to purchase goods from abroad, they had to purchase them from the local banks even though in many cases Bermudians had earned these dollars in the first instance.

Although I was very young at the time, I remember the many subterfuges local residents and citizens participated in so that they could get those precious dollars to make purchases of goods from America and Canada. In many cases the purchases of goods and services were made by friends & relatives who were travelling abroad. These travelers were certain to repay friends and relatives upon their return to Bermuda. This was because they certainly did not want to find themselves unable to travel and purchase abroad because they annoyed the local illegal currency dealers. ■

You are cordially Invited to Attend the...

Bermuda Industrial Union *32nd Annual Labour Day Banquet*



Guest Speaker, Rev. Nicholas Genevieve Tweed
Pastor of St. Paul's A.M.E. Church

Date: Friday, August 30, 2013

Cocktails: 6:45 – 7:45 p.m.

Dinner: 8:00 p.m.

At the Fairmont Southampton Resort & Spa

[Dress semi-formal]

Tickets available for purchase at the B.I.U Headquarters @ \$100

Contact: Sister LaVerne Furbert at lfurbert@biu.bm



Our Chickens are Coming Home to Roost

“Cutting off your nose to spite your face” is an old saying meaning that we often embark on a different path instead of taking the one that is in our best interests. When Premier Cox made the offer to government workers to consider accepting a one year pension freeze to ease up government finances, I did not get the impression that it was fully understood what was at stake that led to the government making such a proposal.

This proposal was presented under the former PLP Government and was not accepted by the Police and Prison Officers associations. Although blue colour workers organized by the Bermuda Industrial Union and the Bermuda Public Services Union had accepted the proposal in principle, as I stated above, which was part of a column I had written earlier in the aftermath of the failure of this proposal to go through. In discussions with some of my work colleagues, there seems to be great confusion as to what it would have meant if we had accepted the government’s offer at that time.

To me it was clear that we would have been exempt from paying our share of pension payments as we would have to the government, which would have meant that we would have had that money back in our pay packets.

Fast forward to today, a new political reality is in place with the election of

the anti-Bermudian, one-term OBA government and they have put on the table a 15% pay cut in government workers’ pay. The unions have countered with a proposal of a 5% cut. One thing is for sure, had we accepted Premier Cox’s proposal, we would not be facing the attempt by this government to cut government workers pay by 15% or any percentage because we would have already taken a cut in that we would have sacrificed a year of pension payments that the government was no longer bound to pay.

What has been made clear by this government is that if Bermuda is to undergo an economic recovery, it is going to be borne on the backs of working Bermudians and that this so-called shared sacrifice is meant only for certain people. Look at what they are cutting – educational benefits for young Bermudians. They are now taking steps to make it harder to apply for social assistance now needed more than ever, given our growing unemployment situation.

Giving massive tax breaks to economic interests which only promises employment opportunities for Bermudians, while we still maintain the level of migrant worker employment in this country. Recently it has been mooted that Government House land may be the site for a new container dock. But I ask the question – “Who will really

THE OTHER ALTERNATIVE



BY ALVIN WILLIAMS

benefit if this comes into being?” Should this large stretch of land be developed where all Bermudians benefit? I would like to see the building of a university up there because I am sure that with the continued down-sizing of Bermuda’s standard of living, many Bermudians will find themselves in no position to send our children overseas for further education and that will have a devastating impact on the future economic development in Bermuda and especially the Bermudian component in it.

There is a mindset developing here that sees a future Bermuda without the Bermudian being any part of the control of this future Bermuda. Perhaps they are hoping that all our young people will leave Bermuda to go to live in England. But we must be prepared to defend our existence in this country and thwart the plans of those who would create a future Bermuda without Bermudians having a role, let alone an existence in their own country, the development of which generations have toiled and sacrificed to bring about. ■

BIU and BPSU Presidents Happy

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ferry personnel which meant that public transportation was shut down while the meeting was in progress”.

Brother Kevin said that he could understand why some BPSU members may not be happy with the outcome and explained that all members of the BTUC realized that the negotiations were going to be different from any other negotiations.

“There needed to be somewhat of a reality check into what we as unions were facing and more importantly, what the country was facing”, Brother Kevin told the Workers Voice. “These are some very hard and difficult times that we are facing and we realized that hard and difficult times would require hard and difficult dialogue which eventually will require some hard and difficult decisions to be made. So we came up with a proposal that we believed was equitable for all unions and that we felt would be palatable for the membership. Although some members may be disgruntled far more have come to me and said thank you”.

Not only union members, but other workers in the community have expressed concern regarding Government’s proposal of “shared sacrifice” and have questioned how effective this will be when it comes to food prices, the cost of electricity and other necessities. Some in the community have suggested that the BTUC should have approached the Chamber of Commerce and the Bermuda Employers Council to get a commitment that they too would buy into the “shared sacrifice” proposal

before signing off on the agreement with the Government.

The BIU President said that once the Government has sent letters to the private sector asking them to participate, the BTUC will contact them to have a dialogue.

“In addition to the above, the BTUC has also agreed with the Bermuda Government on the formulation of a Tripartite Economic Committee which will consist of all social partners (Government, businesses (employers) and unions so that we can have some meaningful dialogue going forward,” concluded

Brother Chris.

The BPSU President concurred saying that Government has promised to have the letters sent before September 1, 2013.

“The unions have been encouraged by the fact that we were able to come together for the benefit of the country and make a collaborative effort and shared sacrifice amongst ourselves,” added Brother Kevin. “We are hoping that we have set a precedent for other stakeholders to realize the need to come together and get this country back on its feet economically”. with poisonous loopholes. ■

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The Business Vote versus The Property Vote

by E. McNeil Stovell

I could not believe the statement that was made by Senator the Hon. Michael Fahy about the new voting qualifications for the cities of Hamilton and St. George's which he supported in the flat and undefined manner in which he had presented it over the airwaves.

The supporters of the OBA seem to be in a do or die desperate rush to grab back City Hall with a type of vengeance that one would not find on the landscape of true democracy.

In his reference to the changes to the Municipalities Act that the OBA now want to make to the system of voting at City Hall, Senator Fahy said that that it's the business vote and not the property vote that the OBA was seeking to introduce into the electoral system of the Municipalities Act.

I would be the first to admit that I was unable to attend any of the public meetings put on by Senator Fahy's ministry, but none-the-less, the manner in which the Senator had introduced his concept of the new act seemed heavily flawed at best. The first question to enter my mind was, "What was the difference between a business vote and that of a property vote?" The way in which he expressed the difference in his public statements to the public attempting to explain this new voting system seemed deceptive at worst. The problem with the above statement was that it was void of any clear definition and sounded misleading.

With the events above going through my mind, I began to give a lot of thought to Senator Fahy's presentation to the public about the Municipalities Act and tried to put some real meaning to the definitions of this so-called new act. One thing about me is that I am very suspicious of lawyers turned politicians and I try to keep a keen and wide-open ear to whatever way they try to present their case in terms of the wording of statements to the public.

My first thought when I read the statement by Fahy was how does one define "property" when it comes down to owning property. Could it be that a business,

even though one may not own the building that it is contained in, be considered property in its own right?

Even if one owned a building in the City in which the owner rented out about ten sections within that building at a rate of \$5,000 per month, could that not be seen as a business? After all that's a very large sum of money for one to be receiving and not be conceded to be a business owner.

It has always been a dream of mine to see the city of Hamilton and the town of St. George's being brought under the banner of universal adult suffrage, in the same way that the national elections are held. Most of the people who own those large buildings and businesses in the city of Hamilton do not live in the city. Hence, if Senator Fahy seems hell-bent on giving the vote to people who own businesses and who do not live in the city, why not then also give the vote to all those that work in the city as well. After all, they are taxpayers as well and most of them don't live in the city either. If it wasn't for those who work for those businesses, the businesses would not make the profits that they do and, in that case, pay their taxes to City Hall.

It would seem that in his haste to bow down at the altar of those big business plutocrats, the concept of universal adult suffrage no doubt did not even cross his limited legal mind. Let's be clear here, what Senator Fahy wants to introduce is a bill contaminated with loopholes. It is my belief that once this act has passed, it will allow hundreds or even thousands of business owners to be created who would be able to vote in the City elections.

The Act creates the possibility of property owners signing up people who in fact don't even own a part in any businesses in the city. In other words Senator Fahy would be deliberately opening up the system to corruption, ballot box stuffing and voter manipulation.

Oh, by the way, Senator Fahy, we would like for you to know that not all of us are stupid. It is quite clear to some of us that this bill is truly flawed and contaminated with poisonous loopholes. ■

EAP CLIPS: AUGUST 2013

THE VALUE OF FRIENDS

From the philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome to the comic strip buddies Calvin and Hobbes, the subject of friendship has inspired countless poets, musicians, artists and film directors. More recently, the scientific community has focused on friendship, producing clinical evidence of its powerful and healing effects. Strong social connections to family, friends, community organizations – even pets – increase our chances of leading longer, happier lives.

Here are some ways you can increase your social connections:

- Join a special interest group, a book club or a community organization that interests you. Check newspapers for ideas or start your own.
- Travel. Whether you choose a group tour or plan your own adventure, chances are you will meet someone you enjoy.
- Learn a new sport, take an exercise class or head to the bleachers and cheer on your local team.
- Adopt a pet. You will reap the rewards of their unconditional love and the chance to link up with other pet lovers.
- Take a class in something you have always been curious about. Most towns offer adult education classes that range from cooking to computers. Museums, community colleges, churches and recreation programs are also good resources for continuing learning.
- Volunteer or teach. Sharing your skills and passions can lead to wonderful connections. Schools, food banks, senior centers and hospitals are always looking for volunteers.
- Become a better neighbor. You can organize a block party or simply start saying “hello” when you meet a neighbor on the street. Invite a neighbor over for coffee.
- Find a faith community and attend worship services. Churches and synagogues offer many opportunities for social interactions, as well as spiritual growth.



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If you need to talk...
we are here to listen.

Statement of Rev. Terry Melvin

President, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists — July 14, 2013

CBTU officers, chapters and members are stunned, repulsed and heartbroken by the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's killer. How does this unarmed 17-year-old child end up dead and nobody gets punished? In fact, the gunman, George Zimmerman, got his weapon back after a six-woman jury found him not guilty of second-degree murder and manslaughter in a Florida courtroom over the weekend.

The verdict, whether intentional or not, sends an ominous message to the black community – that is, white fear still trumps the value of black life in America today – whether you wear a suit or a hoodie; whether you live in a struggling neighborhood or a gated-community; whether you are minding your own business or being stalked by a stranger armed with a gun and hostility toward folks who fit a negative racial profile. This is reality, not a reality show.

CBTU holds firmly to the belief that George Zimmerman deserves punishment for his actions that culminated in Trayvon Martin's death. And we will stay on the battlefield until justice is done, not only for Trayvon and his family but also for all families of color who refuse to succumb to the destructive force of racial profiling.

The truth is, America, we still have plenty of work to do. The truth is that racial profiling, this despicable, dangerous instinct, still thrives among us, in the George Zimmermans of the world, in people obsessed by fear and the use of lethal force.

Our hearts and prayers go out to Trayvon Martin's family. Their poise, their strong, silent dignity, and their strength

over the past 17 months have been inspirational and extraordinary. But the criminal justice system failed them, terribly.

They had to listen to their son being stripped of his innocence and blamed for his murder. They had to wipe away tears as horrific photos of their dead son were shown to the jury, while Zimmerman's lawyers made the preposterous argument that Trayvon used the sidewalk as a weapon to attack their client, raising the question, "Who was on trial – Zimmerman or Trayvon?"

Last year Trayvon's parents – Tracy Martin and Sybrina Fulton – spoke in St. Louis at CBTU's annual convention, where they received an emotional hero's welcome. As an active union member, Ms Fulton thanked CBTU and other labor groups for supporting their efforts to get justice for her son. We said then and we reaffirm today that the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists will stand with the Martin family in their pursuit of justice as long as it takes and wherever it goes.

Call to Action

We call upon all CBTU chapters and regional representatives to participate in community actions showing solidarity for justice for Trayvon Martin.

We also call on the U.S. Department of Justice to investigate possible violations of Trayvon Martin's federal civil rights and to file criminal charges if necessary.

Furthermore, CBTU calls on state and federal legislators to establish and enforce measures that prohibit racial profiling in the workplace and the court system.

Finally, CBTU calls for a mass mobilization to restore the civil rights of

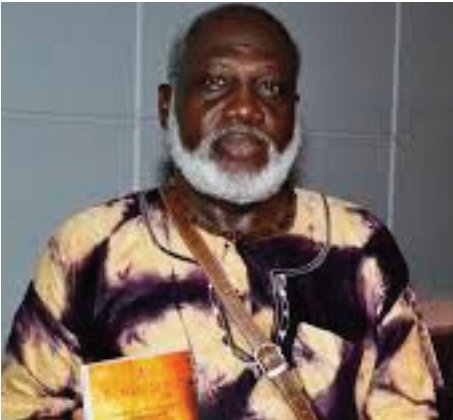
ex-felons, because African Americans, especially young males, are disproportionately represented in felony convictions and, thus, more likely to be excluded from jury service. For example, a study in 2011 by Darren Wheelock found that exclusion of ex-felons from jury selection in Georgia "dramatically reduces the pool of eligible African Americans by nearly one-third (33%)."

We agree with Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, who noted that whenever a large segment of a community is excluded from jury service, the effect is to exclude their life experiences from jury deliberations and trial verdicts.

Can anyone reasonably doubt the absence of African Americans on the jury in the Zimmerman case impacted the consideration of evidence, arguments, witnesses and the application of law itself?

CBTU believes the fight to protect and restore civil rights must be fought on all fronts, because injustice never takes a day off.

Editor's Note: The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) was founded in 1972 is the largest, independent voice of more than 2.2 million African-American workers in labor unions today. With more than 50 chapters in major U.S. cities and one in Ontario, Canada, CBTU is dedicated to addressing the unique concerns of black workers and their communities. CBTU President, Rev. Terry Melvin is also the secretary-treasurer of the power New York state AFL-CIO. ■



A salute to heroines of labour

by Bukka Rennie

I could do it mainly because, in my view, these two women were local heroines. Annette passed on shortly thereafter and Bernadette is here today with her book. For that, I am grateful and I am honoured to be asked to express a few words at this launch.

The point to be noted about Bernadette is that she was not the first person asked by the union to assign her name to the class action suit on behalf of all public servants. Those whom the union first approached had all refused to oblige.

It is important to note that there is an inherent tendency of civil servants to view themselves as a cut above workers in the productive industries.

In their early history, public servants sought to distance themselves from the militant working-class activity. That tendency began to change in the 1970s and 1980s, as the gap between civil servants and production workers narrowed significantly. Leaders like James Manswell and, later, the Forwards and others took the union in another direction and began to forge alliances for joint struggle with workers across the board.

So the fact that Bernadette agreed to take a militant stand and saw it through to the very end is a hallmark of a true heroine. But to me what reflects an even more sterling characteristic of Bernadette is the way she stood up to the mamaguy and the picong coming from some of her fellow workers and supporters of the Government of the day.

The “what she playing?” syndrome is one of the cultural negatives of this society. Anyone who dares to stand on principle, anyone who dares to establish a system of core values without compromise, anyone who dares to be different, can expect to be ridiculed. Bernadette took it all and pressed on.

CLR James, our foremost internationally recognised man of letters, always maintained that despite all the negatives, the Caribbean people are unique and emanate from sterling stock. As I indicated in the foreword, when Bernadette decided to make that stand I doubt whether she understood fully that the fire that burned deep down in her belly was part of that historic river of consciousness and spirit of combativeness that have been identified with the people of the Caribbean for centuries.

We are the people who launched the struggles that sought to break the back of plantation economy and began to envisage a freedom that would inform the imperatives and demands of the 21st century. Our people grew up to participate and to provide leadership for movements all over the world.

To be specific about heroines, we can cite women leaders of Trinidad and Tobago such as Elma Francois who described herself as a washer-woman of Port of Spain but became a dynamic leader in the 1930s working-class struggles and was the first woman to be charged by the colonial state for sedition.

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I first became familiar with the name Bernadette Hood-Caesar while working on a history of the Public Services Association (PSA), that I was commissioned to write and began in 2005. The name signified a major footnote in the PSA's history.

In 1987, Bernadette Hood-Caesar was asked by her union to make a stand in a class action against the state on behalf of some 35,000-plus public servants. She and her colleagues were, by an Act of Parliament, being deprived of their cost of living allowance and increments already established by way of the democratic process of collective bargaining.

The next occasion the name Bernadette Hood-Caesar became foremost in my consciousness was when I was asked to write the foreword to the book that she, now domiciled in Canada, was about to publish. That was in 2011.

I remember this vividly because, at that time my wife, Annette Charles-Rennie, also a public servant and a PSA member, was waging her final battle with cancer. I had to gird my resolve to accomplish the task of writing that foreword for Bernadette, and being there for Annette at the same time.

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Her speech in court in her own defence is required reading for all today.

Also we can cite Etherline Roberts of Fyzabad who stood in the front line in defence of Uriah Butler against the tyranny of the colonial governor. Claudia Jones, born in Belmont in 1915, grew up in Harlem in the US to provide leadership for the working-class struggles there and was eventually deported to England because then Governor Sir Hubert Rance refused to allow her to enter Trinidad and Tobago because she was deemed “too troublesome.”

She intensified her activities in England, editing a number of journals and newspapers and even initiating the Notting Hill Carnival that is today the largest Trinidad-style carnival in the world. When Claudia Jones died she was afforded the honour of being buried next to Karl Marx at Highgate Cemetery in London.

That is the kind of stock from which Bernadette Hood-Caesar has emanated. And today she has gone on to extend her activities, providing leadership to public sector workers in Canada about which I am sure we shall hear a lot more in the future.

—Excerpts from the address by labour historian Bukka Rennie at the recent launch of *Courage* by Bernadette Hood-Caesar.

Editor's Note: This article was forwarded to the Workers Voice by Public Services International (PSI). ■

PSI independent affiliate union leader named as Egypt's interim labour minister

Almost two weeks after tens of millions of Egyptians took to the streets in a ‘second wave of revolution’ against the Morsi government, and the military took control of Egypt, a new cabinet has been sworn in. Kamal Abu Eita, who was leader of the independent Real Estate and Tax Authority Employees’ Union (RETA) in Egypt and president of the Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions (EFITU), has been named as Minister of Manpower in the new Egyptian government. Abu Eita also served as an MP in the previous democratically-elected parliament.

The 2011 revolution brought greater awareness of basic labour rights in Egypt, but Morsi’s government targeted union organisers and activists through repressive laws and violent actions. Workers will be looking to Abu Eita to initiate new trade union laws that uphold trade union rights, especially freedom of association and the right to strike.

For 50 years, all trade unions in Egypt were controlled by the state. However, RETA refused to submit to regime control. It led ground-breaking strikes and submitted its registration as an independent union in April 2009, and sought affiliation to the global union federation Public Services International in 2010. PSI supported RETA’s struggle for independence and survival when it was attacked and suppressed. During 2011, RETA and another new PSI

affiliate in Egypt, the General Union of Health Technicians, (GUHT), began participating in the activities of the PSI/IMPACT Arab Countries Workers’ Rights project, aligned with their fight for their members’ rights, terms and conditions and their struggle for a democratic Egypt. PSI has also provided ongoing communications and leadership training for RETA members.

Speaking to a PSI trade union rights forum in Tunisia earlier this year, Eita emphasized that the independent unions are the main venue for achieving the just goals of the revolution. “We consider that workers’ fundamental right to freedom of association is also linked to freedom of women and all other members of society. We must all struggle together for a new type of globalisation built on a foundation of human rights.”

Commenting on the latest wave of popular uprising, PSI General Secretary Rosa Pavanelli said, “Good governance, rule of law and respect for human rights are crucial for equitable social and economic development. Workers’ rights must be upheld so the delivery of vital public services can be assured for the benefit of all. Building a healthy and more open society also requires the rising violence against women to be stopped, and that strong measures to

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G20 must deal with the jobs crisis

Public Services International General Secretary Rosa Pavanelli joined trade union leaders at the Labour 20 Summit in Moscow from 16-19 July, 2013, in advance of consultation with the G20 Labour Ministers.

This L20 meeting is part of preparations for the G20 meetings that will be held in Russia in September. Pavanelli chaired a special L20 session on “Growth and Recovery Strategies” with speakers including Guy Ryder, Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO); Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); Ignacio Fernández Tojo, General Secretary of Comisiones Obreras (CCOO); Rudy De Leeuw, President of Fédération Générale du Travail de Belgique (FGTB); and Barbara Susec, Head of International Department of the Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB).

Throughout L20 discussions, PSI's leader stressed that, “Quality public services produce as big an effect on the distribution of wealth as simple tax and transfer payments. Implementing the Social Protection Floor is also critical to achieving Sustainable Development Goals; governments need to step up action to ensure this occurs.

“Social protections, particularly by way of essential service provisions such as health, education, and public housing and transport, boost consumer confidence as they provide certainty for workers that their essential needs will be met in times of difficulty.

“Public investment, such as in health and education, provides direct economic stimulus and increases productivity. For example, the public sector contributes to economic growth in important sectors such as the care sector.

“These need to be public investments as only the public sector can ensure they meet the common economic and social goals and are not just gifts to the corporate sector.”

PSI also contributed to the official L20 Trade Union statement which includes specific demands to address the role of public services in redistribution of wealth and social protection, such as:

- Put an immediate halt to austerity measures and corresponding cuts in public spending in areas that provide social support, facilitate productive economic activity and provide the basis for functioning stable government services;
- Invest in infrastructure, education

and quality public services including in the care economy to improve long-term productive potential, and support the transition to a low-carbon economy by, amongst others, engaging with workers' pension funds to achieve this goal;

- Take determined action to counter the erosion of tax bases and achieve reform of tax systems, so as to move towards broader-based and more progressive taxation; Support this by shifting taxation from employment to environmentally damaging and non-productive activities;
- Fund measures by ensuring revenue is not lost through tax havens by requiring automatic exchange of information and country by country reporting and supporting action to stop Base Erosion and Profit Shifting by multinational enterprises;
- Expand cooperation with the social partners to scale up apprenticeships and training programmes and put in place a “Jobs Guarantee” for young people;
- And, the G20 should embrace these measures and push for the inclusion of decent work, social

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equity, quality public services, trade union and workers' rights, and equality as principles in the new post-2015 Millennium Development Goals.

Pavanelli also noted that the recent G8 meeting in Ireland had a large focus on the crackdowns on tax havens as promoted by UK leader David Cameron – but did little to act on it. “We encourage union and civil society members to be more active in campaigning for tax justice at their national level – as it was domestic political pressure that made the

difference in pushing Cameron to highlight this issue.”

She added, “We believe that the time is right for applying political pressure on corporate tax avoidance as the global environment (such as the recent tax haven leaks and media attention) makes domestic political actors vulnerable.”

PSI is working with the Council of Global Unions to strongly link the Quality Public Services-Action Now! campaign and the need to raise public funding through tax justice.

Pavanelli said, “The G20 will receive a report soon from the OECD on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting. We will be watching the outcomes and if the OECD does not live up to its rhetoric then we must take coordinated global actions to embarrass national governments into dealing seriously with tax avoidance.”

The IMF has recently produced a paper that shows that taxing is a better way for governments to pay down debt than cuts, in regards to the effects on unemployment and inequality. (www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2013/wp13151.pdf). ■

PSI independent affiliate

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ensure women's participation in all levels of politics and the community are put into effect.”

The new cabinet of more than 30 ministers includes three Christians

and does not include any members of Islamist parties. Women lead three ministries — including the powerful information and health ministries. The justice portfolio is renamed as the transitional justice and national reconciliation ministry.

The Muslim Brotherhood has denounced the new cabinet as “illegitimate” and says it won't recognise it. The military says the interim cabinet will serve for just six months until parliamentary and presidential elections are held. ■

SAGE Commission Extends Deadline for Awards Programme

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perspective can offer startling and innovative ways of looking at things. The result can be truly creative solutions.”

Four awards, each with a value of \$2500 and funded by the private sector, will be awarded for the best idea for reducing the cost of running the Bermuda Government coming

from an employee of Government; a member of the public; a young person between the ages of 18-25 years; and a youth under the age of 18 years. An award of \$10,000 will be given to the best submission overall.

The link to the submissions page of the SAGE Commission web site is <https://sagecommission.bm/contact-us/>. Submissions may also be hand delivered to the SAGE Commission, c/o Suite Solutions, 3rd Floor, New Venture House, 3 Mills Creek Road, Pembroke. ■



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S	B	T	B	E	S	O	H	N	E	D	R	A	G	I	G
N	R	N	S	W	A	X	S	P	A	C	B	U	H	E	R
A	U	O	I	I	S	L	E	E	H	W	M	S	T	R	I
E	S	R	O	N	D	O	O	H	S	I	S	A	D	H	M
L	H	F	M	D	D	O	E	D	R	R	L	E	E	U	E
C	Y	W	A	S	H	S	O	R	V	P	E	A	D	E	S
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BRUSH
BUCKETS
CHAMOIS
CHROME
CLEAN
DEAD BUGS
DIRT
DOOR HANDLES
DOORS
DRIVEWAY
DRY OFF

FENDERS
FRONT
GARDEN HOSE
GLASS
GRIME
HEADLIGHTS
HOOD
HUBCAPS
LICENSE PLATE
MIRRORS
MUD

PREPARATION
REAR
RINSE
ROOF
SCRUB
SIDES
SOAP
SPONGE
SQUEEGEE
SUDS
TAIL LIGHTS

TIRES
TOP
TOWELS
VEHICLE
WASH
WATER
WAX
WHEELS
WINDOWS
WINDSHIELD