



**2018/19 SESSION
of the
BERMUDA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

7 June 2019

*Sitting number 22 of the 2018/19 Session
(pages 1741–1840)*

**Hon. Dennis P. Lister, Jr., JP, MP
Speaker**

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BERMUDA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT****7 JUNE 2019****10:02 AM***Sitting Number 22 of the 2018/19 Session**[Hon. Dennis P. Lister, Jr., Speaker, in the Chair]***PRAYERS***[Prayers read by Mrs. Shernette Wolffe, Clerk]***The Speaker:** Good morning, Members.**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES***[Minutes of 31 May 2019]***The Speaker:** Members, the Minutes of May 31st have been circulated.

Are there any omissions or amendments?

There are none.

The Minutes are confirmed as printed.

*[Minutes of 31 May 2019 confirmed]***ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER
OR MEMBER PRESIDING****APOLOGIES****The Speaker:** Announcements this morning: There are Members who have indicated that they will be absent today. We have, on the Order Paper, MP Jeanne Atherden. We also have MP Gordon-Pamplin, MP Dunkley and MP Commissiong.**MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE****The Speaker:** There are none from the Senate.**MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR****The Clerk:** Also, there are no messages from the Governor. (I omitted that.)**PAPERS AND OTHER
COMMUNICATIONS TO THE HOUSE****The Speaker:** You may note that there is a paper or communication on the Order Paper. But that is being carried over for another occasion.**PETITIONS****The Speaker:** There are none.**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS
AND JUNIOR MINISTERS****The Speaker:** There are seven Statements this morning. And the first is in the name of the Premier.

Premier, would you like to put your Statement now?

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to you.**The Speaker:** Good morning.**ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
INTO HISTORIC LOSSES OF CITIZENS'
PROPERTY IN BERMUDA****Hon. E. David Burt:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members will recall that, on the 4th of July 2014, this Honourable House approved a motion in these terms: "THAT this Honourable House take note of historic losses in Bermuda of citizens' property through theft of property, dispossession of property and adverse possession claims;"AND BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House calls on His Excellency the Governor to [establish a Commission of Inquiry](#) into all such known claims and to determine, where possible, the viability of any such claims and make recommendations for any victims of wrongful action to receive compensation and justice."

Mr. Speaker, the then-Governor refused to establish the Commission of Inquiry and, moreover, indicated that Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom was not disposed to funding such an exercise in any event.

Mr. Speaker, the community then marched on Government House, and some 2,000 people assembled to protest the then-Governor's decision, demonstrating a consistently expressed public depth of feeling on these historic issues. Earlier this year, the Civil Justice Advocacy Group renewed its call for such a commission to be established.

Mr. Speaker, in 2015, this Honourable House approved the Opposition Bill entitled the Commissions

of Inquiry Amendment Act, which gave the Premier the authority to issue commissions of inquiry. Honourable Members will also recall the first and, so far, only use of that authority by the former Premier, the Honourable Member for constituency number 10. It is not forgotten that this authority was not used to appoint a commission, which was passed by resolution of this Honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, truth can be uncomfortable. Unearthing historic wrongs may be inconvenient for some. It may well be that some of those who were victims and those who committed wrongdoing have since passed on. But, Mr. Speaker, it is never too late for justice. That justice can take many forms. For some it may simply be the opportunity to be heard and have their claims acknowledged, while for others it may confirm the legal standing they have long asserted.

The process of providing justice starts with a step towards truth. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise this Honourable House and the public that I shall establish a five-member Commission of Inquiry to fulfil the mandate of this Honourable House as expressed by the motion passed in 2014.

[Desk thumping]

Hon. E. David Burt: The Commission will likely comprise a judge, counsel experienced in conveyancing, a land title officer (ex officio), two lay members, and a secretary to the commission to provide administrative support.

Mr. Speaker, whilst the terms of reference continue to be the subject of further consideration, I can advise Honourable Members that, at a minimum, they will include inviting the commission to do the following:

1. inquire into the historic losses of citizens' property in Bermuda through theft of property, dispossession of property, adverse possession claims and/or other such unlawful or irregular means by which land was lost in Bermuda;
2. collect and collate any and all evidence and information available relating to the nature and extent of such historic losses of citizens' property;
3. prepare a list of all land to which such historic losses relate;
4. identify any persons, whether individuals or bodies corporate, responsible for such historic losses of citizens' property; and
5. refer, as appropriate, matters to the Director of Public Prosecutions for such further action as may be determined necessary by that office.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, it would be remiss of me not to recognise the significant efforts of the Honourable Member from constituency number 17, the

Hon. Walton Brown, who championed this cause whilst in Opposition and has quietly kept attention to it since we assumed the mantle of Government.

[Desk thumping]

Hon. E. David Burt: Mr. Speaker, the process of identifying those who will sit on the commission has now commenced, and I will ensure that we assemble the best group to address these issues. Additionally, the administrative planning will now start, and my hope is to revert to this Honourable House during this session with further updates on our progress.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Premier, I believe the second Statement this morning is also in your name. Would you like to deliver that now?

Hon. E. David Burt: Sure, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Continue on.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

FINTECH BUSINESS UNIT EDUCATION INITIATIVE UPDATE

Hon. E. David Burt: Mr. Speaker, today I will provide this Honourable House with an update on the Government's [FinTech Education and Training Initiative](#).

Mr. Speaker, technology companies are domiciling in jurisdictions that have a high incidence of talent with technical skills. As we continue to execute our strategy to ensure that Bermuda is a domicile for the future of financial services, it is imperative that we ensure that Bermudians have the skills to take advantage of new opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, phase 1 of the FinTech Business Unit's Education and Training Initiative was launched in January 2019 under the direction of Dr. Gina Tucker. I am pleased to inform Honourable Members that the response of the community was excellent, and the training proved to be a success.

Mr. Speaker, a few highlights from phase 1 are as follows:

- over 300 persons registered their interest in taking the training;
- the cost of providing the six-week training opportunities for Bermudians was \$80,000;
- 130 persons completed the local courses including Intro to FinTech, Intro to Blockchain, Basics of Blockchain and Beyond the Basics of Blockchain;
- the instructors were Bermudians, and the entities running the training were the Bermuda Blockchain and Crypto Association and a local company called Gibraltar;

- 80 people participated in the Comparing Blockchain Platforms & Creating Fun Tokens courses hosted by the Bermuda Blockchain and Crypto Association;
- 75 persons participated in the two-day Business Boot Camps, and 25 participated in the one-day Technical Boot Camp hosted by Connectech;
- 15 teachers participated in the Google in the Classroom for P1 through P6 courses; and
- 45 persons participated in the four Compliance Lunch and Learn Sessions, and many are now enrolling in the KixKo compliance courses currently being offered by the PACE Department at the Bermuda College.

Mr. Speaker, phase 2 represents additional opportunities for Bermudians to enhance their skills with the launch of the FinTech school's online programme, which will allow any interested Bermudian to access all of their courses for free until November 17, 2019. Currently, Mr. Speaker, we have 167 Bermudians who have already enrolled to acquire additional skills. During phase 2, local courses will continue, including Introduction to Blockchain and FinTech, and Beyond the Basics of Blockchain.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, a compliance course will be offered by Omega One, the first company to obtain a digital asset business licence in Bermuda. Omega One is keen to contribute to the community and in doing so will offer a six-session course over six weeks for interested persons, commencing next Tuesday, the 11th of June.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is doing everything possible to produce a talent pool of Bermudians who are trained and ready to assume opportunities in technology-related jobs. We will continue this education initiative, as the overwhelming response validates the decision to invest in educating our people. I am happy to report that the participants cover the entirety of Bermuda's cultural diversity, and Bermudians are, obviously, hungry for this training.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Bermudians to visit the FinTech.bm website to learn more about the education and training opportunities that are being offered free of charge. I would also implore Honourable Members to share this information with their constituents so that the people we represent in this Honourable House can take advantage of the investment that this Government is making to develop a workforce in Bermuda which is ready for the technology jobs of the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Premier.

The third Statement this morning is in the name of the Deputy Premier.

Deputy, would you like to present yours?

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Yes. Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Good morning.

BILL ENTITLED: THE ELECTRICITY AMENDMENT ACT 2019

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Mr. Speaker, as the Order Paper indicates, I will today table a Bill in this Honourable House entitled the [Electricity Amendment Act 2019](#).

Mr. Speaker, you will remember that, on the 15th of March 2019, I informed this Honourable House that, on learning that the Ascendant Group Limited announced that it was considering the sale of the company, I issued ministerial directions to the Regulatory Authority [RA], which are imbedded in the purposes of the Electricity Act 2016, namely, to seek the following:

- a) to ensure the adequacy, safety, sustainability and reliability of electricity supply in Bermuda so that Bermuda continues to be well positioned to compete in the international business and global tourism markets;
- b) to encourage electricity conservation and the efficient use of electricity;
- c) to promote the use of clean energy sources and technologies, including alternative energy sources and renewable energy sources;
- d) to provide sectoral participants and end users with non-discriminatory interconnection to transmission and distribution systems. (This prevents any monopoly on the generating subsector and ensures that other market participants are allowed to interconnect to the grid, and it ensures that end users are not denied service without just cause.);
- e) to protect the interests of end users with respect to prices and affordability, and with respect to the adequacy, reliability and quality of electricity services; and
- f) to promote economic efficiency and sustainability in the generation, transmission, distribution and sale of electricity. Economic efficiency in these areas translates to lower costs for customers.

Mr. Speaker, I also assured the general public that we would require any prospective new owners—and, indeed, the current owners—to adhere to the soon-to-be-published Integrated Resource Plan [IRP].

Mr. Speaker, quite coincidentally, we were working on this amendment to the Electricity Act 2016 to assure the proper regulation of the electricity sector when the announcement was made that the Ascendant Group Limited had identified a proposed buyer. I would like to assure Honourable Members and the general public that the sale cannot be finalised until the RA gives consent to a licence transfer. This re-

quirement is outlined in section 30(1) of the Electricity Act, which states, “A licence shall not be transferred or assigned without the prior consent of the Authority.”

Mr. Speaker, I must state up front that I have every confidence that the RA will perform the due diligence required prior to making a decision on whether to approve the transfer of any licence. However, it is also important to note that if the RA approves a licence transfer without adhering to the ministerial directions, currently the only remedy available to the Government is to appeal to the Supreme Court to grant an injunction to require the RA to comply with the directions. However, it would be too late to do so if a transfer had already been approved by the RA.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you would agree that the better remedy is to provide the Minister with an opportunity to review the RA’s intended consent to the transfer of the licence to ensure that the application is in accordance with the ministerial directions. The proper regulation of the electricity sector would be further strengthened by requiring that the RA’s consent shall not be given unless an IRP has been approved and published and that, when making its decision whether or not to consent to the transfer, the RA shall have due regard to the IRP.

Mr. Speaker, the BELCO plant is a strategic asset which is used by all residents in Bermuda. It is critical to our social and economic wellbeing. Therefore, it is a duty of this Government to ensure that any proposed sale will promote “economic efficiency and sustainability” in order to reduce our reliance on fossil fuel, increase the use of renewables and make electricity more affordable for all residents.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Deputy.

The next Statement on the Order Paper this morning is that in the name of Minister Burch.

Minister, would you like to put your Statement?

Lt. Col. Hon. David A. Burch: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

The Speaker: Good morning.

THE WEST END DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Lt. Col. Hon. David A. Burch: I rise this morning to highlight change—sustainable-growth, change, ongoing cruise ship port enhancements, change, developing an artisan industry, change, growing retail businesses, change and repurposing historical assets to accommodate modern expectations, change.

Mr. Speaker, in an era where it is so easy to publicise negative messages, even if they are untrue, I am compelled to highlight some positive and factual information in the hope that it will become contagious and we can learn to accept change more easily. I

know some will declare that as *Mission Impossible*, but try I must.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that the former Royal Naval Dockyard has been transformed and continues to be. The North Basin has become one of Bermuda’s primary destinations for shopping, entertainment, dining and showcasing Bermudian artisans, as well as displaying history and historical buildings. Dockyard is Bermuda’s largest tourism point of entry, which fuels and supports commerce to every point around the Island. Servicing visitor expectations includes facilitating their transportation so that they are able to see our entire Island and support local businesses Island wide. Dockyard has been transformed from that military base of yesteryear into a vibrant destination with distinct characteristics. It is a tourist destination, it is a cruise ship port, and it is home to many Bermudians who wish to live, work and play there.

Mr. Speaker, for those who have been to the West End recently, they will know that there are very few remaining derelict historical buildings which have not been upgraded. In fact, the only remaining area within the North Basin is the Victualling Yard. Over the past 15 years, growth has been steady. Total occupancy then was around 60 per cent, and today it is over 90 per cent. The fact is that, currently, there is 100 per cent occupancy of all wind-tight and water-tight buildings.

Mr. Speaker, for more than a decade the data show revenue increases every year in every business sector, from as little as 3 per cent to increases in excess of 10 per cent annually. On an individual basis, there are numerous successes in the hundreds of percent year over year. April this year alone saw a record month-over-month collective sales increase of an incredible 20 per cent. I also have to make the point that this growth trend started before the addition of a second cruise pier, before the advent of larger cruise ships and certainly before the America’s Cup.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend the management and staff of [WEDCO](#), and all business owners and entrepreneurs who have worked together to write such an ongoing success story.

I am confident that this will continue as long as we all are willing to be receptive to change, continue to listen, continue to offer suggestions and, where necessary, make modifications. Sometimes, the required changes are not seen by everyone, nor are they supported by everyone. Typically, those who are in opposition do so because of a propensity for negativity, being afraid of change or because they are already happy with the status quo. I wish to encourage those in a position to make a difference to continue and not to be afraid of change. Continue to push forward, knowing that growth will require change and success is managing the challenges while executing the changes and adjusting them when necessary for an even better outcome.

Mr. Speaker, we have all seen the changes:

- single-lane roads becoming dual lane roads;
- adding an extra lane to bridges;
- widening the main gates to accept two-lane traffic;
- creation of parking lots;
- addition of a playground;
- road modifications for larger vehicles to travel safely;
- a new deep-water cruise port;
- North Lawn stage to host public events;
- free shuttle train;
- no unauthorised vehicular traffic on the north arm;
- staging area for port transportation requirements;
- new parking areas created;
- designated tenant and staff parking areas; and
- pedestrianisation.

Mr. Speaker, the growth of Dockyard is facilitated by ongoing strategic planning and the consistent implementation of major infrastructure projects. These projects have enabled additional growth, but equally important, it strengthens the infrastructure systems.

What pleases me most, in addition to growing infrastructure, is that the corporation continues to develop projects and programmes that look at ways to reduce costs and lead the way in green initiatives. The latest such project of this nature is the implementation of solar-power generation. The project will see solar production of over 500 kilowatts, which reduces BELCO consumption by more than \$25,000 per month.

An Hon. Member: How much?

Lt. Col. Hon. David A. Burch: Just \$25,000.

An Hon. Member: Wow.

Lt. Col. Hon. David A. Burch: The system is already partially online. Next week, we intend commissioning another large section of production, and the final connection to power the wastewater treatment plant will be online within the next 30 days. Included within the project, WEDCO intends to set up live displays showcasing the system and real-time data of the energy that is being produced.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the changes which have enabled continued growth, and we will continue to see more ongoing changes that will enhance the experience and enable further growth. Some of these are: creation of a fun space within the pedestrianisation area; additional parking areas, some free and some paid; creating new retail and entertainment spaces by relocating existing tenants; and daytime boat berthing, some free and some paid.

Mr. Speaker, the most recent concern expressed by some has been the minor adjustment to the public bus termination point in the Royal Naval Dockyard. This decision was not taken lightly nor without significant forethought. Several factors were considered, including [accommodation for] those who would have difficulty walking that distance. The public, like our visitors, have the option to use the free shuttle service to move around the site. However, I would encourage folks to walk. Dockyard is not an enormous site, exercise is good, and one might even see something previously unnoticed. Additionally, Mr. Speaker, I can report that, not unexpectedly, the merchants in both the Clocktower Mall and elsewhere have enjoyed increased sales since this change.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to provide this report on activities at the Royal Naval Dockyard and will continue to do so as the need arises. I am going to take the liberty of tabling aerial photographs of the solar panel installations and the new King's Wharf Terminal Building, currently under construction.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

The next Statement on the Order Paper this morning is in the name of the Minister of National Security.

Minister Caines.

Hon. Wayne Caines: If it pleases you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Do so.

EXERCISE TRADE WINDS

Hon. Wayne Caines: Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to inform this House of the Royal Bermuda Regiment's involvement with [Exercise Trade Winds](#). This exercise is organised by the United States Military, specifically the US Southern Command [SOUTHCOM], which is based in Florida. Trade Winds is a Caribbean-focused training exercise designed to help participants better respond to natural disasters [and] to land and maritime threats.

The Trade Winds event takes place in two phases. Phase 1 is a security-based exercise, and phase 2 is Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Recovery, which is also referred to as HADR. I accompanied the Royal Bermuda Regiment's Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel David Curley, and Regimental Sergeant Major Jason Harrell. Together we visited the opening ceremonies at Las Calderas Naval Base in the Dominican Republic. We also visited the opening ceremonies, which included high-level briefs by SOUTHCOM planners, organisers and lead staff.

Mr. Speaker, during the opening ceremony, the Royal Bermuda Regiment stood proudly amongst Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Colombia, Dominica, the Dominican

Republic, France, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, the Netherlands, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom and the United States. We were addressed by senior commanders from the Dominican Republic and US SOUTHCOM in an opening address.

After the opening remarks, all troops were on their way to conduct their rehearsals and equipment checks in order to prepare for the final test exercises in the Las Calderas area. Our Bermuda team were guests of SOUTHCOM, and we were given dedicated briefs by SOUTHCOM commanders, planners and exercise lead team members.

Once the briefs were wrapped up, we went out to visit our Royal Bermuda Regiment staff in different locations. Captain Gordon Emmerson and Col-our Sergeant Curtis Grant were using explosive ordnance disposal charges and working with 24 Commando with tactics and operational plans. Major Beasley and Sergeant Matvey received joint task force training in Circuit Military Cooperatives in order to support the test exercise at the end of the training phase. Sergeant Husayn Muhammad worked with other national medics in receiving and teaching training.

Mr. Speaker, we were given a two-day tour of Las Caladras, where we were invited onto a US Coast Guard cutter and a Canadian patrol ship, where we were given full briefings from both ships' captains. We were given a full tour of SOUTHCOM logistics and saw special field kitchens established, capable of feeding 600 troops in under an hour, and saw re-supply of kit and equipment being used in this phase of the exercise.

Follow-up briefings commenced with Trade Winds phase 2, which will be held in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, where the Royal Bermuda Regiment will be the largest force participating in Humanitarian Aid Disaster Relief, and security operations being tasked from a Caribbean task force. At the same time, the entire camp was buzzing with troops loading into Black Hawk helicopters for a small flight out into the ocean where they hovered a few metres above and then deployed naval marines and Special Forces units into the water. It was a very impressive sight to see.

I will attend phase 2, which will be held in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, along with the National Security Ministry's Permanent Secretary, Mr. Collinwood Anderson. Phase 2 will test the Royal Bermuda Regiment in all aspects of training and operations and will strengthen our portfolio in all respects of HADR, which is crisis management at all levels. There will be a closing ceremony that will end Trade Winds 19, and then Bermuda Regiment troops will fly back to Bermuda to enjoy a few days off before attending the Warwick Camp for training again.

Mr. Speaker, Exercise Trade Winds, phases 1 and 2, is a vital training and testing process for the

Royal Bermuda Regiment, which has SOUTHCOM credentials. The Bermuda Regiment will continue building in order to reinforce and maintain top-level and new-and-improved HADR crisis response to Bermuda, and to the rest of the Caribbean if needed. The work of the Royal Bermuda Regiment is important, and I believe they are receiving adequate training to defend our shores. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

Minister, the next Statement is also in your name. Would you like to proceed on that?

Hon. Wayne Caines: If it pleases you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Continue on.

HURRICANE SEASON

Hon. Wayne Caines: Mr. Speaker, the second Statement this morning is to remind this Honourable House that we have just entered hurricane season, which runs from the 1st of June this year until the 30th of November. We have already seen the first tropical storm of the season, subtropical storm Andrea, which was a potential threat to Bermuda during the week of the 21st and the 22nd of May.

Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, June 5th, I chaired a meeting of the Emergency Measures Organisation [EMO] Executive, which met to discuss the Island's preparedness as we enter [hurricane season](#). I am pleased to report that all agencies are prepared; and apart from some fine-tuning, Bermuda EMO agencies stand ready should any hurricane threaten our shores. At this time, I will remind this Honourable House that preparedness activities being undertaken by the 60-plus agencies that form the wider EMO are being coordinated and documented by the Disaster Risk Reduction and Mitigation [DRRM] Team, which works out of Ministry of National Security Headquarters.

Mr. Speaker, the Bermuda Weather Service reports that the latest hurricane forecast by international agencies has predicted an average season, with 13 named storms, six hurricanes and two major hurricanes.

Mr. Speaker, we are reminded that Hurricanes Fay and Gonzalo hit Bermuda in 2014. Hurricane Joaquin hit Bermuda in 2015, and Hurricane Nicole hit Bermuda in 2016. In 2017 [and 2018], Bermuda was spared any hurricane activity.

Mr. Speaker, it takes only one hurricane to make 2019 an active season for Bermuda, and I urge all residents to be prepared. Now is the time to prepare and repair your house for hurricane season. Now is the time to look at your family plans and update them with any changes to phone numbers, et cetera. Now is the time to take stock of all medical prescriptions that your family and pets require in order to en-

sure that you have at least a two-weeks supply on hand. Now is the time to check your hurricane kit to make sure that you have working flashlights, a portable radio with spare batteries and a stock of non-perishable food to last your family for seven days. Now is the time to look at your neighbours and ask them if they need any help with their preparations.

Mr. Speaker, in April, the Department of Communications released their smartphone application called Tree Frog. This application will alert all users to news and alerts posted by the Bermuda Government and includes any alerts posted by the EMO. We want [the public] to be aware of any information that they urgently need to be aware of, and they can do that through the Tree Frog app. I urge this Honourable House and all of Bermuda's residents to sign up for the Tree Frog app. It is free, and you can receive all of the alerts. And this is available, Mr. Speaker, on both iTunes and on the Google Play Store.

Mr. Speaker, the Disaster Risk Reduction and Mitigation Team will hold a further Emergency Measures Organisation meeting for all EMO agencies in late August to update the country on the last hurricane season forecast for 2019, which will be published at the beginning of August.

Mr. Speaker, the work of the DRRM Team is important in ensuring that Bermuda is prepared for any large-scale disaster. I will continue to update this Honourable House on the important work of all of the departments and units within the Ministry of National Security. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

The next Minister who has a Statement is the Minister of Transport.

Minister De Silva, would you like to put your Statement?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. Good morning to colleagues, Bermudian listeners, and our overseas listeners.

The Speaker: Good morning.

THE NEW BERMUDA CHAMPIONSHIP—A PGA TOUR EVENT

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Mr. Speaker, this week's announcement that Bermuda will host its first-ever mainstream [PGA Tour event](#), the Bermuda Championship, is a very exciting development for sports tourism in Bermuda.

PGA Tour events are broadcast to international audiences, and this is an excellent opportunity for Port Royal Golf Course to host a top-level sporting event in October this year. The TV coverage, to be aired primetime in North America, will showcase Bermuda's stunning natural beauty and the legendary

hospitality and friendliness of its people to a wide audience of discerning travellers.

The Bermuda Tourism Authority [BTA] has signed a five-year agreement with the PGA Tour as title sponsor of the Bermuda Championship. And please note: This will be a fully sanctioned Tour event, a fully sanctioned Tour event, Mr. Speaker, which distinguishes it from the PGA Grand Slam of Golf. Players entering this championship are playing for points that count towards the \$35 million FedEx Cup purse, which will be held later in the season.

In the Tour calendar, the Bermuda Championship will sit opposite the HSBC World Golf Championship in Shanghai, replacing the Sanderson Farms Championship, which has been upgraded to a stand-alone PGA Tour event. While the very top players, including Tiger Woods, will be in China, Bermuda can expect to host up to 120 of the world's top players, including a diverse group of rising stars in the golf world. Compared with other "alternate" events on the PGA Tour, the Bermuda Championship is a cost-effective and valuable media property because, for the North American audience, the Shanghai event is taking place overnight, while our event will take place in prime viewing time.

Mr. Speaker, the Government is confident that the primary objectives in securing this event for Bermuda will be met. They are to achieve the following:

- a) generate significant increased spending on Island during the fall shoulder season when the event is held;
- b) generate significant media exposure to increase awareness of Bermuda and showcase the Island as a destination for golfing, tourism and business to the lucrative US and wider global audience; and
- c) increase visitor numbers from key feeder markets as a result of hosting the event.

In fact, the PGA Tour television audience is one that aligns very well with Bermuda's target visitor profile.

- 1) PGA Tour audiences travel more times per year outside the US than average, making it more likely that they will consider Bermuda as an international destination.
- 2) PGA Tour audiences are [82] per cent more likely than average to spend over \$6,000 per year on foreign travel, making it more likely that they can afford to travel and spend in Bermuda.
- 3) PGA Tour audiences are 72 per cent more likely than average to influence others regarding where to vacation, making it more likely that they will recommend Bermuda; and
- 4) PGA Tour television audiences grew 27 per cent in 2018. The event is reaching

a diverse, younger audience beyond its traditional base.

The Bermuda Championship schedule will span almost a full week, once practice days and the Pro-Am rounds are taken into account. Also, the PGA Tour will make available positions for leading Bermudian golfers to play in the tournament.

Mr. Speaker, the PGA Tour requires that all sanctioned events have a purpose in the community in which they play. Youth and school engagement activations are examples of programmes that can be planned around the core event. For those who are interested in volunteering for Bermuda Championship, you can go to the website bermudachamp.com. And I will repeat that, Mr. Speaker: Anyone interested in volunteering for this magnificent event, this milestone event for Bermuda, can go to the website bermudachamp.com.

Mr. Speaker, the Government is very excited to share this news, and the Ministry is looking forward to working with the PGA Tour and the team at the Bermuda Tourism Authority to make this event an international success, with the intention that Bermuda becomes an "annual fixture" on the PGA Tour calendar.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I close, I would like to acknowledge Mr. Pat Horgan III, who is in the Gallery today. And he has been coming to Bermuda since 1986, Mr. Speaker. And this has been a dream of his for over 30 years. And I thank Patrick for his steadfastness. And I welcome you to Bermuda, and your team, and look forward to our having a long-lasting relationship that one day, one day may, just like the tournament that we are replacing, include all of the players, Mr. Speaker, include all of the players. And we might even see Tiger Woods get here before I pass by this House, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

That brings us to the close of the Statements for this morning.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The Speaker: There are none.

QUESTION PERIOD

The Speaker: We are now on questions. And the questions this morning relate to the Statements in that there are no written questions. All questions are to be answered this morning.

Ministers, of your Statements this morning, there are five Members who have indicated that they have questions.

The first is to the Premier on your Statement regarding the commission of inquiry. And that question is from the Opposition Leader.

Honourable Member, would you like to put your question now?

QUESTION 1: ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO HISTORIC LOSSES OF CITIZENS' PROPERTY IN BERMUDA

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Thank you, thank you, Mr. Speaker. And good morning to everyone. Yes.

At the top of the third page, the Premier says that the commission will likely comprise a judge, counsel experienced in conveyance, a land title officer, two lay members and a secretary, in naming out the makeup of this commission. We know that other commissions have been remunerated and paid for their services. Just curious as to whether or not this particular commission also will be a commission that is paid for and has a fund?

The Speaker: Thank you, Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Honourable Opposition Leader that the cost of this commission will not be free. What I can say is that the cost will be managed prudently. And as part of the administrative planning, a budget is being prepared. Technology and the sensible use of existing government resources will play a large part in keeping costs down.

The Speaker: Thank you, Premier.
Supplementary or a new question?

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: I am good.

The Speaker: You are fine?

Thank you, Premier. That is the only question for you on that Statement.

We will now move on to the Statement from the Minister of Works regarding WEDCO. And the Opposition Whip would like to put a question to you.

Honourable Member.

QUESTION 1: THE WEST END DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Ms. Susan E. Jackson: Thank you and good morning, Minister.

I was just wondering if the Minister might be able to give us any insight into the development, or otherwise, of the eastern-facing shoreline where the dry dock is?

So, right now, ferries are brought up on dry dock in private boats. And I know that at times there had been some concern about the safety of tourists

and residents walking across that dry dock area. And then, also just for beautification purposes, opportunities for maybe some sort of small boardwalk with restaurants and such. And I was just wondering whether that was still on the plate, or otherwise?

The Speaker: Thank you.
Minister.

Lt. Col. Hon. David A. Burch: Mr. Speaker, thank you. There are no immediate plans to move that area at this time.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Supplementary? No further questions?
We will move on. The next Statement . . .
Minister Caines?
If someone can get Minister Caines, we are going to move on and come back.
Minister De Silva, there is a question for you. The Opposition Leader would like to put a question to you in reference to your Statement on the PGA Tour.
Honourable Member.

QUESTION 1: THE NEW BERMUDA CHAMPIONSHIP—A PGA TOUR EVENT

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On the second page, the Honourable Minister says that the Bermuda Tourism Authority has signed a five-year agreement. I guess what I was curious about is, do we know what that cost is now for the PGA for this tour, since we will be the title sponsors here in Bermuda? And in addition to that . . . well, I can ask a supplementary. I will let him answer that.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Minister.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Yes, of course. It is \$3 million a year.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: I am sorry? Could you repeat that?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: The cost is \$3 million per year.

The Speaker: Supplementary or further question?

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Yes, supplementary.

The Speaker: Yes, continue.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Yes. Considering that, is the Minister aware . . . or, have any additional funds

been asked of Government to add and to contribute to this tour?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: No, there have not.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Further question or supplementary? Supplementary?

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Supplementary, supplementary.

The Speaker: Continue.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Yes. Once all is finalised, would the Honourable Minister be willing to at least table the agreement so that we are aware of all of the details?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Unless there is any sensitive information, I will be happy to do that. And I will be happy to share with the Opposition Leader.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Yes. Yes.

The Speaker: Thank you.
No further questions? No further questions.
The last question this morning would be to Minister Caines.
Minister, it is in reference to your Statement on Trade Winds. And that is from the Honourable Member from constituency 7.
Honourable Member Richards, you have the floor.

QUESTION 1: EXERCISE TRADE WINDS

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, would the Honourable Member inform the Honourable House, What was the size in terms of numbers of the contingent that attended ETW in the Dominican Republic?

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Yes, yes, the Bermudian contingent (sorry).

Hon. Wayne Caines: Mr. Speaker, it was 10 including myself.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Supplementary or further question?
Supplementary?

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Supplementary.

The Speaker: Yes.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Would the Honourable Minister advise whether there will be a similar-sized contingent that will attend phase 2 in St. Vincent and the Grenadines?

Hon. Wayne Caines: Mr. Speaker, as per the Statement, the second part will be the significant part, where we are taking an entire company down. We expect, Mr. Speaker . . . we are actually chartering a plane, as the Bermuda Regiment does every year to take the soldiers on overseas camps. We believe an entire company . . . I am not sure of the numbers, but we believe it to be about 120 soldiers on the annual camp, as we do every year. We will be going to the second phase of Trade Winds in St. Vincent, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Supplementary? None?

Well, Members, that brings us to a close of the Question Period this morning.

CONGRATULATORY AND/OR OBITUARY SPEECHES

The Speaker: Does any Member wish to—

Ah, Minister. You were quick that time.
I recognise Minister Burch.

Lt. Col. Hon. David A. Burch: Yes, yes. I want to go first, Mr. Speaker, since I only have *three minutes*. I mean, my goodness.

Anyway, let me start, not wasting them, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes. That's a good way.

Lt. Col. Hon. David A. Burch: I would like to extend congratulations to Esther Merle Brock Swan Williams, who celebrated her 90th birthday on the 29th of May, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes. Yes. Associate the whole House with that. Yes.

Lt. Col. Hon. David A. Burch: I associate the whole House with those congratulations. She is the founder of the Adult Education School 60 years ago, and still teaching and still giving licks on a regular basis, Mr. Speaker.

[Laughter]

Lt. Col. Hon. David A. Burch: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to extend congratulations to the Ombudsman for Bermuda, who last week hosted the 10th Biennial CAROA [Caribbean Ombudsman Association] Conference here in Bermuda which was attended by 17 countries from the Caribbean and Central America. Mr. Speaker, I had the distinct pleasure of chairing one of the panels, on Climate Change, Natural Disasters and Ombudsmanship. And I was pleased that there were representatives from seven jurisdictions, led by our own very distinguished Dr. Mark Guishard, who spoke about, in particular, hurricanes in Bermuda, where you will know, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of experience. And oftentimes, when we suffer, our fellow countries to the south suffer hurricane damage, we are some of the first people to call on that experience.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend congratulations to the five young men who participated in the Alpha Beautillion last Sunday at CedarBridge Academy:

- Mr. Antonio Carvelho, Impact Mentoring Academy;
- Jehkio Bean-Lightbourne, Mount Saint Agnes Academy;
- Dimitrius Richardson, the Berkeley Institute;
- Sediq Simons, the Bermuda Institute; and
- Myles Smith, of CedarBridge Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I can say without fear of contradiction that these five outstanding young men really acquitted themselves with distinction last week. I am glad I was not on the panel having to judge them, because it would have been a very difficult task. I am pleased to say, though, Mr. Speaker, that young Dimitrius Richardson, who is the son of my administrative assistant and was a summer student at the Ministry last summer, really gave an outstanding, outstanding performance on every single front.

This young man came to the Ministry last year, and he was an introvert and quiet, and you know, you would not even know that he was in the room. And I just sat in awe. Needless to say, his mama screamed down the entire building. But he really, really gave an outstanding representation of what young men in this country can do, along with the other four.

And I am just encouraged, Mr. Speaker, just as somebody who lives in this village, not in any formal capacity, at the outstanding performance of young men in this country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

Now, I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 22.

Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Mr. Scott Pearman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would just like to join with the Honourable and gallant Member in my congratulations, as well, to

the Ombudsman. I too attended the event last week. And it was delightful to see such a gathering of independent members of integrity from the various ombudsmen around the Caribbean. My understanding is that Bermuda was lucky enough to secure that event because our very own Ombudsman, Victoria Pearman, has become the president of that local association. I did have an opportunity to meet and discuss with her the work that she is doing as Ombudsman, and it is an incredibly important post that a democratic society such as ours should be proud of. So, I too add my congratulations to those of the Minister.

The Speaker: Thank you.

I recognise the Premier.
Premier.

Hon. E. David Burt: Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Good morning.

Hon. E. David Burt: Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning on a sad note, and I wish to ask this Honourable House to send condolences to the family of the late Beunice Crockwell, long-time—

The Speaker: You should associate the whole House with that one.

Hon. E. David Burt: I will certainly, Mr. Speaker, associate the entire House with these remarks.

Many persons will know that Ms. Crockwell was a long-time receptionist at the Cabinet Office. Her spirit would brighten even that place and any other place where she was. She was someone who was known for loving life, incredibly fun. And we always used to share a joke between each other regarding our ages. She was kind to myself. She was kind to every person who came into the Cabinet Office. She was kind regardless of party or regardless of who you were. It was always her spirit.

She loved life, Mr. Speaker. And I remember the one time she was even so famous as to be around the world in a Soul Train Cruise advertisement, because that is how much she enjoyed having an excellent time. And so, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that condolences be sent from this House to her family and her mother, her children and her grandchildren, all of her friends including her work colleagues, during this very difficult time. She has passed from labour to reward, Mr. Speaker, but rest assured—her time on this earth was spent enjoying life to the fullest.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to be associated with the remarks from the Honourable Minister for Public Works for the participants of the Alpha Beautillion, and particularly the winner, Mr. Dimitrius Richardson, of the Berkeley Institute. Yes, I will associate the whole House with those remarks, as well, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, with that, I will take my seat.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Does any other Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 2.

Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise very happily today to offer congratulations and thanks to both the Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Zane De Silva, and Mr. P. H. Horgan and his team, Mr. Bruno, for realising a dream of mine from the days when I did play the professional tour in Europe. To have an event of that magnitude in Bermuda bodes well for tourism and for the sport which is my trade. So, I want to congratulate them. I do not want to lose sight of the fact that, in this country, we still do not have a National Championship, which was the vehicle for this little country boy to get access to the world. And I am sure, as the time has passed when this country has seen its players play for peanuts, that we can now have the next tier down below have a greater purse in which to compete.

On a sad note, Mr. Speaker, I have some constituents who have passed on to reward. Edward Joseph “Jo Jo” Gibbons of Slip Road. And I associate the Honourable Member from constituency 1, MP Ming, and I am sure MP Foggo, as well.

And also, Ms. Joan Wade, from Wellington Lane, whom my mom went to school with at Alaska Hall not just yesterday. And Ms. Wade was a very dear spirit. And at Christmastime, when I paid her a visit, she was so happy and actually gave some knitted goods to take home to my dear wife. And we always appreciated to find that connection with her and my mom. It was extremely special.

And, Mr. Irvin Hayward, a long-time proprietor of St. George's Esso, former Member of the Corporation of St. George's, and an avid sportsman—golf was very much a part of his life. Snooker and the fitted dinghy racing on May 24th, and the life of St. George's Dinghy and Sports Club down there on Cut Road was very much a part of his life and family.

So, we extend condolences to those three St. Georgians and bereaved families right now, Mr. Speaker. Thank you ever so much.

The Speaker: Thank you.

We recognise the Honourable Deputy Premier.

Honourable Deputy, you have the floor.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like, of course, to be associated with the congratulatory remarks given to the Ombudsman of Bermuda for the holding of the conference. I did have the honour to give the opening remarks at that

conference. And certainly, holding that regional conference here is a credit to the Island and to the work of the Ombudsman and her office.

I would also like to ask the House to certainly acknowledge and congratulate all of those residents and Bermudians who took time to note that it was World Environment Day this week, and also to those who see it important that the Island does take greater concern for the environment that we live in. Although it is only 22 square miles, plus another 200 square miles of ocean, we have impact around the world that is not of small significance. And we should take time as a community to acknowledge such important days.

And, in keeping with that, I would just like to announce to the House that I have been informed by persons in the Ministry of the Environment that a Cahow chick was fledged last night.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Walter H. Roban: So, that is something that is quite wonderful for us, as we know we were seeking for many years to rebuild the petrel, the constituency of a very unique bird that is indigenous to Bermuda. So, there will be more official comments on that coming forth from my Ministry. But I thought I would let the House know, as I have just been told, that which I know is great news to all of us.

I would also like to be associated with the condolences that were given for Ms. Crockwell. But I would also like to add to that message that she did have a life prior to her time with us in the Government. And that was as a member of a law firm named Richards Francis and Francis, and she spent many years there working. And I am sure that the Honourable Member, Minister Wayne Furbert, would like to be associated with that, as well, as he would have been a colleague of hers during that time that she would have worked there, prior to her being a part of the government family.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Deputy.

We now recognise the Deputy Opposition Leader.

Honourable Member, you have the floor. Good morning.

Ms. Leah K. Scott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer congratulations first to Inspector Na'imah Astwood, who was the first runner-up at the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police. And I associate the Deputy Premier. And I will associate the whole House, if that is okay. Thank you.

Also, Constable Cerepha Bridgeman, who actually is my parish constable in Southampton, who

was awarded the second runner-up Top Caribbean Community Policing Officer.

I would also like to give congratulations to Tracey Armstrong, who organised a tribute to all of the pioneering police females who have broken through the glass ceiling. And in particular, I would like to give congratulations to Jean Vickers, who was Bermuda's first policewoman, who also celebrated her 85th birthday on Wednesday, I believe it is. I associate Cole Simons with that.

And I was not here last Friday, Mr. Speaker, and I do not know if anybody gave congratulations to those young children who ran the Heritage Day Invitation Junior Classic?

The Speaker: I do not think so. But you can go ahead.

Ms. Leah K. Scott: But I would like to give congratulations to all of our runners. I would like to thank Lister Insurance Agency, who has put on this race for the past 21 years now.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Ms. Leah K. Scott: I would like to associate Mr. Swan.

And it is always a pleasure to see our young people come out and run. We had a nice awards ceremony at the Bermuda College. So, I would like to thank you for sponsoring this, for allowing our young children to have an opportunity to showcase their talents. And I look forward to working with you on it for another 21 years.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Ms. Leah K. Scott: Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to be associated with the remarks for Beunice Crockwell. Beunice was a ray of sunshine, and I remember walking into the Cabinet Office every time, and she was just always welcoming and warm and kind.

The Speaker: Yes.

Ms. Leah K. Scott: And she will be a big miss. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

I now recognise the Honourable Member Smith. Honourable Member Smith, you have the floor.

Mr. Ben Smith: Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

Firstly, I would like to give congratulations to Bermuda's Football Team for the 1–nil victory in the Friendly last night. I know I saw quite a few of the MPs there.

The Speaker: Do the whole House, do the whole House. Yes.

Mr. Ben Smith: So, I associate the whole House with that.

I would also like to give congratulations. Last weekend was the Bermuda National Swimming Championship. And we had the high point winners in the 12 and under, and 13 and over. So, the female 12 and under winner was Imogen Judd, and the 12 and under male was Giulo Ligorì. And in the 13 and over, it was Logan Watson Brown, and for the male, it was Jack Harvey.

I would also like to—
[Inaudible interjections and laughter]

Mr. Ben Smith: I would also like to send good luck to all of our track athletes who will be participating in the Bermuda National Championships for Track & Field over tonight and tomorrow, and hopefully, everybody will go out and support our youngsters as they continue to strive for success.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Now I recognise the Honourable Member from St. George's, constituency 1.

Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Mrs. Renee Ming: Good morning, Mr. Speaker and listening audience.

Although I have been associated with the comments for Beunice Crockwell, I just wanted to add my own story to this. Although I have known Ms. Crockwell through her children most of my life, I have had the pleasure of really interacting with her when she worked down in the Cabinet and I was in the Senate. And I have to say that, week in and week out, she always offered words of encouragement. And she would always let me know about any topics or anything that was relevant that she thought we should look into, and things like that. So, her engagement was definitely there with us on a regular basis.

And so, it is extremely difficult to grasp what it is that will become our norm. But we know that, I believe that she lived a fruitful life. She enjoyed life to the best of her ability. And she will be remembered for many, many years to come.

One thing that I must mention, and no one seems to have mentioned it, Mr. Speaker, is that she was an avid St. George's supporter.

The Speaker: Well . . .

Mrs. Renee Ming: And she could be found on Facebook always defending and letting everybody know that she was—she wore—she was blue.

The Speaker: Well . . .

Mrs. Renee Ming: So, I do not know. Maybe the Premier forgot and left that part out.

But I would also like to just say that Jo Jo, who Kim already has given acknowledgement to, will definitely be missed around St. George's, as well. His favourite line to me was, *Are you going canvassing?* So, if he saw me at seven o'clock in the morning on my walk, and he would say, *You're going canvassing?* So, I think that that became a common joke amongst us.

But these are people who help you on a day-to-day to get through and give you things to look forward to.

And I just also want to acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, a young lady by the name of Sara Schroter Ross. And she is the youngest member, at the age of 37, to achieve the Chartered Director status. I would like to associate Nelson Cole [Simons] and Leah Scott with that. And I went in and had a read of it and her achievement, and I encourage you to have a read of it.

Also, I looked at it because when I hear and see women doing things, it always makes me have a second look at it. And she is a young woman who is doing things in her field. And one of the things that she said is that she hopes that her attaining this at such a young age, that she is able to encourage—she said men and women. But in this case, I am thinking of women, and letting them know that with hard work and just keeping determination and keeping at it, we as women will rise and will take what is our rightful place. So, thank you, Mr. Speaker, on that note.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 11.

Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Mr. Christopher Famous: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, Bermuda.

I associate myself with [the condolences for] Ms. Crockwell. What has been left out is that, before everything else, she was a Pond dog, right on Friswells Road. Also, she was what we call a BELCO mom. Her son Garrett is my co-worker at BELCO. So, every day she would say, *Make sure you byes are doing what you are supposed to do, you know. Don't put the Island in darkness.* So, I just want to add that to the equation, and that she was from St. George's. So, we have someone just in case we need a rain dance this year.

Mr. Speaker, let me also speak about Ms. Marion Gumbs Hayward of Dundonald Street, from the St. Paul's family. She, unfortunately, passed during a cruise with her St. Paul's family. And she will be funeralised tomorrow. She was the proud mom of five children. I associate Brother Weeks and anybody at AME with that.

What the Colonel left out, Mr. Speaker, was Dimitrius. He did not say that he was a Berkeleyite. And he did not say he was Gold House. So, we are proud of him, as well, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: I wonder why, Colonel?

Mr. Christopher Famous: I wonder why. Because he said, *Berkeleyites can't count*. Well, he won that, didn't he?

Mr. Speaker, moving on, a Bermuda College culinary student, Mr. Tremayne Bailey, is doing an apprenticeship over in Africa for eight weeks in conjunction with the Ace It Foundation, headed by Mr. Quinton Sherlock. It is important, Mr. Speaker, that our students get to see the wide world, because everybody eats. Not everybody just eats just in France or these fancy European places. We eat all around the world. And it is very important that our students . . . because remember, Mr. Speaker, there are 800 chefs in Bermuda. Eighty per cent of them are non-Bermudian. So, I am glad to see a young black male learning culinary arts.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to give a shout-out to Wolves Sports Club of eastern Devonshire on their prize-giving ceremony tomorrow.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

We now recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 7.

Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to be associated with the remarks that my fellow colleague, MP Ben Smith, gave about the game last night. The Premier was in attendance. Minister Foggo was in attendance. MP Smith, obviously, was in attendance. MP Weeks was in attendance. And if I am missing anyone, I give my apologies.

But it was a fantastic atmosphere at the game. It was good to see so many supporters out with their pink jerseys on, which is the colour that the National Team wears. It was an excellent game, as I said. It is interesting, both Bermuda and Guyana, Gold Cup debutants. So, it was an interesting match-up from that perspective.

And I have to give a big, big congratulations to Coach Kyle Lightbourne. Since Kyle has taken over the helm, that team has really grown in leaps and bounds. I could see the professionalism last night in how they played. The style and the quality of Bermudian football has really, really improved. So, that was great to see. Bermudian Nahki Wells was part of the line-up. But the goal was actually scored by Donte Brangman. He scored a fabulous goal in the 37th minute that brought everybody to their feet. So, I just

want to congratulate the team. They have matches coming up. And, yes, we have got to support them. They are going to do great things. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 16. Honourable Member Weeks, you have the floor.

Mr. Michael A. Weeks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to you.

The Speaker: Good morning.

Mr. Michael A. Weeks: Mr. Speaker, I would like to be associated with the comments by the Member who just sat down, congratulating the National Team. I just want to remind him and others that that pink and blue that you see now have become our national colours. So, not only will you see the football team in it, but hopefully every team or any team that represents our lovely Island. Yes.

I would also like to be associated, Mr. Speaker, with the condolences for, first of all, Ms. Crockwell down at Cabinet Office. In the 10 years, Mr. Speaker, that I have been an MP, I really got to know Ms. Crockwell. I did not know her before then. But she was very encouraging with her smiles and her advice and encouragement. You know, sometimes, we as Ministers used to go in there, and you are not feeling the best, and she would always remind us we are doing the people's business. And she would say something encouraging for us to carry on.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to be associated with the remarks by the Member from constituency 11 for Ms. Hayward. Ms. Hayward was a close family friend of my family. Last week when she was on the cruise and she succumbed, Mr. Speaker, she was actually with my mom. So, Ms. Hayward was always in and around my family. And it was a shock. It was a shock what happened to her. And on behalf of my family, Mr. Speaker, I want to send out condolences to Ms. Hayward's family and hope that they will find solace in knowing that she is in a better place.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 32. Honourable Member.

Mr. Scott Simmons: Good morning, Mr. Speaker, and thank you.

I rise in this Honourable House this morning on two very sad notes, Mr. Speaker, and ask that I join colleagues in extending condolences to the family of my family, Mr. James Prescott Robinson. Though Uncle James was not my paternal uncle, he is the uncle of my siblings, Senator Marcus Jones, Rev. Ste-

phen Jones and our sister, Deborah King. He was a humble man, spoke softly to me and will be greatly missed by all who knew him. I am sure the family has appreciated all of the extensions of sympathy, and I rise today to honour and mark his remarkable contribution.

Mr. Speaker, on the second sad note, I join honourable colleagues in extending absolute condolences to the family of Beunice Crockwell, whose passing has deeply affected us all. As you know, Mr. Speaker, Beunice was an absolutely fantastic person. From the moment I stepped into the Cabinet Office for the first time as Press Secretary, I was met by Beunice at the front desk. From the outset, she set me straight, developed a friendship and, with her mischievous wit, big smile and deep laugh, she made life absolutely bearable as the business of government overtook all of our lives.

Mr. Speaker, she was considerate and intolerant of arrogance, and she began every greeting with, *I just got back from a cruise*. She will not appreciate it, but I will give a short story, Mr. Speaker, really quickly. My phone rang one morning in the Cabinet Office, and it was Beunice. She demanded that I come immediately to the front desk. On reaching the back door of the Cabinet Office, one of the most celebrated Corporation of Hamilton city dwellers, "Scientist," standing at the door, the back door, wearing only his smile, facing Beunice, who was standing in the doorway.

[Laughter]

Mr. Scott Simmons: Scientist, having been running around the Cabinet Office stark naked, on facing Beunice in the doorway and looking to her, he said, *My eyes are up here*.

[Laughter]

Mr. Scott Simmons: Beunice blushed and yelled, *Scientist! Get out of here!* Scientist ran off towards Front Street.

Mr. Speaker, Beunice and I laughed without ceasing. She will be greatly remembered, as she is much loved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

I recognise the Honourable Member Furbert.
You have the floor.

Mrs. Tinee Furbert: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I also would like to be associated with the remarks giving obits to Ms. Beunice Crockwell. More recently, [as I was] her Member of Parliament in constituency 4, she will be a big miss in the Duck's Puddle community. Ms. Crockwell is actually my aunt. She is the stepsister to my mom. And so, greatest condolences to the family, to Nicole, to Garrett, to her mom,

Shirley, and to Kal-Lyn. She will be a huge miss. She constantly used to tell me how proud she was of me and how proud she was of the Progressive Labour Party, as well. So, she will be a big miss, and I just could not not stand to my feet and acknowledge Ms. Beunice Crockwell. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

I now recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 26.

Honourable Member Tyrrell, you have the floor.

Mr. Neville S. Tyrrell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning, all.

Mr. Speaker, last week, I was under heavy threat not to bring attention to this young lady. But this week, I am going to weather the storm and hope that I can send congratulations out to Ms. Virginia Butterfield, better known as "Ducky" Butterfield, my mother-in-law, who celebrated 90 years of life, so far. She has had a great life so far. And I hope that she has many more.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Does any other . . .

We recognise the Honourable Opposition Leader.

Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Yes. thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to add my comments and support and condolences to certainly the loss of Ms. Beunice Crockwell. I have many stories as well that I could tell, having been there at Cabinet. And of course, we know that she was a very lively and spirited person. When I got the news, no one said her name. They just said, *Someone down at Cabinet had passed away*. And I said, *Who?* And they said, *You know, the lady with the big smile*. And so characteristic and so well, they were trying to describe because they did not know the name. But what they did know was the character.

The Speaker: Yes.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: And it was signified with a smile, a massive smile. I used to tease her all the time about her slightly bow legs. And her travels, of course, were everything to her. We talked about the ethnic cruises that we had been on. And so, again, I would like to say to the Crockwell family, our deepest condolences.

Now understanding that we have a Member whom she was an aunt of, our deepest condolences go out to you for such a big name, certainly a loss.

And I know that I also want to speak to the Cabinet employees there. This is a second loss for

them. Almost within a year, they have lost another member there. And so, I know that they are really reeling and suffering right now because that team down there is very, very, very close. And so, I want them to know, the family and her fellow employees, that we are all thinking of them at this time.

Also, I would like to speak to, as the Honourable Member from constituency 2 spoke about, Jo Jo. And I must admit, Gibo there, I used him as a clock. Because if I was late, I missed him. But if I was on time, I would see him first thing in the morning on the road, Wellington Slip Road. He lived literally four houses down from myself with us all there, a very close group there. And my condolences go out to the family. I know the family extremely well, and I know that they are trusting in their Lord and Saviour during this time.

Also, one other item for condolences, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Irvin Hayward down in St. George's passed away. And I speak of him because we were part of the same group of owning service stations. And I have been around 15 years doing this, but he certainly probably triples that in the amount of time that he has been around, serving the East End with fuel. And so, another character, another person who was part of the St. George's fabric who has been lost.

On a higher note, I would like to congratulate the National Team. I did not get a chance to see the game last night, Mr. Speaker. So, I want to congratulate them.

[Timer beeps]

The Speaker: Thank you.

I now recognise the Honourable Member, Minister Simmons.

You have the floor.

Hon. Jamahl S. Simmons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning, all.

I rise today to add my voice to the list of people paying tribute to Ms Beunice Crockwell, who was a dear family friend, a good friend to my parents. They were cruising buddies. And one thing I can say about Beunice is that she had a passion and a love of life. And to the extent that most of us who knew her, whether as family or friends, we never believed that she was ill, never believed that there was anything wrong up until the day . . . I mean, she was still posting on Facebook. She was still laughing. She was still doing her thing up until the time when she took her last breath.

And I think that, during my time at the Cabinet Office versus the Premier's Chief of Staff, and then just throughout the years, she was always a calm and reassuring voice. She was always a supportive shoulder to lean on. She was always there for us. And I hope at this time that we are all there for her family

and all who loved her. And we wish them best wishes as they try and deal with this very sad time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

No further speakers on condolences and congratulations?

I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 36.

Hon. Michael J. Scott: Mr. Speaker, thanks.

Mr. Speaker, I was jotting a few notes of observances in respect of Ms. Beunice Crockwell. So, sir, in adding my observances of condolences, I of course adopt and associate myself with my colleagues, particularly my colleague, the Member for constituency 32, Mr. Scott Simmons, for his eloquent observance for Ms. Crockwell.

Beunice served in the first PLP Government, Mr. Speaker, led by Dame Jennifer. You were there. Dame Lois was there. Mr. C. Eugene Cox, Honourable Alex Scott, any number. We all know the team. And I am sure that, for those of the Members of that Government who are still with us, I express on their behalf the condolences to the family of Ms. Crockwell. Beunice Crockwell loved, I know, Dame Lois. Dame Lois is dead. Dame Lois Browne-Evans loved Beunice Crockwell. Now Beunice is dead. Love conquers death.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Does any other Honourable Member?

No further Members wish to speak?

We will move on.

MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE

The Speaker: There are none.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

The Speaker: There are none.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS FOR THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE ON MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

The Speaker: There are none.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

GOVERNMENT BILLS

The Speaker: Deputy Premier.

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Good morning, Mr. Speaker, again.

The Speaker: Good morning.

FIRST READING

ELECTRICITY AMENDMENT ACT 2019

Hon. Walter H. Roban: I am introducing the following Bill for its first reading so that it may be placed on the Order Paper for the next day of meeting: the Electricity Amendment Act 2019.

OPPOSITION BILLS

The Speaker: There are none.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS

The Speaker: There are none.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

The Speaker: There are none.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Speaker: Members, it is now 11:20, and we are on the Orders of the Day. And the first and only Order for today is Order No. 5, which is a motion in the name of the Minister of Transport in reference to the Green Paper on the future of transport.

Minister, would you like to move your motion?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes.

MOTION

2019 GREEN PAPER ON TRANSPORT

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now take under consideration the following motion, notice of which was given on the 17th of May 2019:

WHEREAS the Government undertook in the 2017 Speech from the Throne to conduct a thorough review of transportation and to produce a Green Paper on the future of transport in Bermuda that will provide various options for modernisation, which also takes into account the needs of the differently abled;

AND WHEREAS the Government recognises that technology is modernising transportation globally and that Bermuda must examine those trends when taking into account the future of public and private transportation;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Honourable House supports the recommendations and priorities set out in the Green Paper on Transport 2019.

The Speaker: Continue on.

No objections to that?

I am glad it was such a long intro on that one.

No objections to it, Minister. Continue.

[Laughter]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, today we look forward to debating the findings of the 2019 Transport Green Paper, a Ministry of Tourism and Transport initiative on behalf of the Government of Bermuda from the 2017 Speech from the Throne that was published on the 17th of May.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Tourism and Transport conducted a thorough review of transportation in Bermuda and collected the combined thoughts and comments of 21,567 residents, students and public authorities, as well as business groups and visitors, who took the time to be interviewed or surveyed during the stakeholder consultation period between November 2017 and December 2018.

Generally speaking, Mr. Speaker, the 2019 Transport Green Paper highlights the demand for more (1) reliable public bus transportation; (2) reliable taxi service; (3) affordable and reliable motorised wheelchair transport options; (4) safe spaces to walk and cycle, including smoother road surfaces; (5) regulations to provide for training standards for public service vehicle drivers, taxi and minibus; and (6) transportation infrastructure and services provided in an energy efficient and intelligent way.

Mr. Speaker, to get the transportation conversation started, I will focus my comments only on the following areas:

1. the public bus service;
2. student public transportation;
3. accessibility transportation;
4. dark visors on helmets;
5. road traffic;
6. active transport; and
7. balancing air and cruise passenger traffic flows.

Mr. Speaker, the 2018 Public Transport Survey and 2017 Visitor Survey results indicate that the public bus service is used mostly by visitors and school students. However, commuters have a strong ridership as well, and we all agree that these three groups require reliable and punctual bus service. These factors can contribute to a more reliable bus service and a decrease in, if not elimination of, bus cancellations. The first is a change in the public bus schedule to reduce the number of buses needed at peak times and throughout the day. The second is restoration of budget allocation to allow for new bus-

es, new bus purchases. And third, a proper annual maintenance budget.

The Government continues to act on all of these three factors, even though we are still faced with the challenges after introducing the new bus schedule in March and reverting back to the old one six weeks later. With or without a new bus schedule, tracking buses and obtaining real-time information on punctuality is one customer service feature of public transport that Bermuda can and should embrace. It requires the installation of GPS tracking software and equipment on all buses.

At present, only a small percentage of buses have this capability. Part of modernising Bermuda's bus fleet involves bringing this capability to residents' and visitors' smartphones, which Government is committed to doing. Work has already begun with Global Transit for GPS bus tracking in real time. This is taking place alongside the steps to identify available and affordable technology to implement the cashless, digital fare media solution with real-time trip-planning features. Rounding out the customer experience will be the availability of Wi-Fi on all public transport.

Mr. Speaker, future planning of public bus routes and schedules must be based on more than anecdotal evidence. The Department of Public Transportation requires actual ridership information. At present, there are no passenger counts being carried out on public buses either manually or with automatic counters. The Government will seek to outfit the bus fleet with the necessary equipment to enable automatic passenger counts.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the purchase of new buses, the majority of buses manufactured in the world are still diesel driven. Given that fossil fuels are non-renewable, fuel costs are high and diesel emissions contribute to greenhouse gases, public transit authorities are increasingly turning to hybrid diesel-electric, biofuel powered, or battery electric alternatives. For Bermuda, a transition to a full fleet of battery electric buses, which may or may not use solar energy as a power source, requires assessment of the cost not only of the buses, but also the charging infrastructure, equipment and training.

The Government is currently reviewing its options and signed an MOU last year with Rocky Mountain Institute, USA, to investigate the feasibility of and develop a strategy for a transition from current fossil fuel infrastructure to electric bus fleet.

The Ministry will use ridership counts and undertake a route analysis to determine the feasibility and viability of using small vehicles to overcome the first-mile/last-mile challenge, as well as consider the role small vehicles might play in delivery of bus service.

Mr. Speaker, 72 per cent of the middle and senior students surveyed felt that a dedicated school bus would make them feel safer going to and from school. Should capital funds be found to implement a

dedicated school bus service, this would allow commuter bus runs to be used primarily by commuters rather than students. Importantly, bus operators will be able to deliver students closer to their schools rather than to the nearest bus stop.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to public transport by ferry, the Government is committed to rebuilding and/or replenishing the fleet in a phased manner by using fast, size-appropriate and fuel-efficient vessels. This will enable Marine and Ports to gain flexibility in the deployment of the fleet such that it can potentially consider additional stops and/or an extended schedule. The current fleet of high-speed ferries is too expensive to operate with any greater flexibility. As with the buses, ferry timings, current locations, et cetera, can be incorporated into a Passenger Information Act.

Mr. Speaker, on the subject of accessibility, the 11 public service vehicles on the road today are insufficient for the number of disabled persons living in Bermuda. And that number [of 11 vehicles] cannot service visitors to the Island, either. In the first instance, the Government supports the establishment of a national register so that there is certainty about the level and type of disability and the number of persons affected. The Ministry of Tourism and Transport can work with the Ministry of Health to complete this task, recognising that issues of privacy apply. With a more complete understanding of need and the gap in service, the Ministry of Transport will work with the Ministry of Finance regarding more favourable importation conditions for vehicles providing transport to disabled persons.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, the Government will review options for disabled transportation service for residents that is based in the private sector, but which may require initial funding assistance in the form of a grant. There are existing organisations providing such services that, in the first instance, may require financial assistance to stabilise their organisation and expand their offerings. It is the Government's view that a subsidy could be a practical alternative to correcting the infrastructure, which is 720 bus stops, needed for the public bus service to provide disabled transportation.

Mr. Speaker, the Transport Control Department [TCD] will issue permits to minibus operators seeking to import motorised wheelchair accessible vehicles to the Island. TCD had 20 applications for minibus permits with motorised wheelchair accessibility, and once these vehicles are on the road, this will increase the available lift for wheelchairs from 11 public service vehicles to 31 public service vehicles, as an interim solution.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Transport is committed to working with the Ministry of Health to determine training standards needed for drivers of public service vehicles who provide transport for differently abled persons. In addition, the Ministry of Transport will undertake a review of its terminals,

docks, bus stops, buses and ferries to identify improvements for signage and hailing for the physically, visually and hearing impaired.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to road traffic, the Government takes seriously its responsibility to ensure our roads are safe, well-lit and comfortable for all those to use. And they include walkers, pedal cyclists, motorcyclists, and car and truck drivers. There is no doubt, however, that the motoring public must take responsibility for its own actions, too.

Mr. Speaker, banning dark visors on helmets is something that the Ministry of Tourism and Transport will seriously consider in light of the robberies that have taken place in broad daylight by persons wearing full dark visor helmets. We understand it would take some time to ensure that the right regulations are in place, because there are many models and types of visors that are affixed to helmets. The dealers will need some time to determine an exit strategy for the offending product and ensure that new helmets meet new guidelines.

Also, the Ministry will work with the Ministry of National Security regarding the possible installation of speed cameras as part of an enhanced road safety scheme, and will work with the City of Hamilton and the Ministry of Public Works regarding the installation of traffic light CCTV cameras to better manage and enforce vehicular flows through the traffic lights.

Mr. Speaker, the Government, working in conjunction with the Bermuda Road Safety Council, CADA, Bermuda Police Service and TCD will continue to work to change Bermuda's reckless driving culture through education, enforcement and technology. TCD is reviewing the current traffic handbook and licensing requirements to determine what modernisation is necessary and to take steps to implement changes. And, Mr. Speaker, TCD is reviewing the penalties laid out in the Road Traffic Act 1947 with a view to updating and strengthening them as per the stakeholder recommendations in the Transport Green Paper. In addition, the Bermuda Road Safety Council is currently working with the Ministry of Education to implement the next phase of Operation Caution, which will include road safety education as part of the school curriculum from an early age.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Tourism and Transport will initiate discussions with the Ministry of Home Affairs and Stevedoring Services regarding the possible installation of truck scales at the Hamilton docks, as it will be good to know the weight of cargo traveling on Bermuda's roads to better manage and protect them.

[Noise from electronic device]

The Speaker: Members. Can you sort that out?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Mr. Speaker, the Government is also keen to encourage active transport as we

tackle the impact of obesity and diabetes on our population. However, the Public Transportation Survey revealed justifiable concerns regarding our road safety. Respondents indicated overwhelmingly that more sidewalks and better lighting would make walkers feel safer. Indeed, an active transport culture thrives where footpaths and sidewalks provide pedestrian protection, and pedal bikes are separated from motorised vehicular traffic.

The Government recognises that the ability to provide new sidewalks and bicycle lanes is very limited by the existing road widths and the extent of private land ownership. Nonetheless, residents can be urged to walk to the nearest bus or ferry dock. The Bermuda Railway Trail presents an immediate opportunity for residents to become more active by walking and cycling. Government will investigate where sidewalks can be added to enable pedestrian safety. In addition, Mr. Speaker, Government will continue to assist the work of the Friends of the Railway Trail by taking on maintenance and repair of each new connection and the landscaping of the trail as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, you will be aware that there has been a significant increase in the number of cruise ship passenger arrivals between 1999 when 195,000 visited Bermuda, and 2018 when the Island received 484,000 cruise passengers. This represents an increase of 289,339 passengers, or 148 per cent, in the last 20 years. This is significant because the 2012 National Tourism Plan anticipated an increase in cruise passenger arrivals to 428,000 by year 2022. This means that in 2018, a full five years before the goal date, Bermuda hosted approximately 56,000 more passengers than originally targeted in the 2012 plan.

Mr. Speaker, accommodating this growth in cruise passengers, the 2018 cruise ship strategy evolved to include a strong focus on the increasing cruise ship passenger spending and attracting a mixture of small premium cruise ships for Hamilton and the Town of St. George's. It also sought to extend the cruise ship season either side of the April to October period. The Ministry of Tourism and Transport recognises that 2018 was something of a tipping point for the cruise ship activity, especially with six cruise ships in port on the 31st of October 2018. In 2019, the cruise arrivals are estimated to rise to 545,000 passengers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, today compared to 1999, there are 30 fewer public buses in inventory. There are 24 fewer community service vehicles. There are 44 fewer taxis on the road, for an assortment of reasons. There are 73,000 fewer air visitors than in 2018. But 350,000 more cruise ship passengers are expected in 2019. This creates an overwhelming need for additional modern transportation infrastructure.

Bermuda requires more public buses and ferries, reliable taxis and minibuses, tugboats, a pilot boat, and pier enlargements and upgrades to service the needs of the cruise ships and cruise ship passen-

gers, as well as the International Maritime obligations that accompany our shipping industry. Mr. Speaker, there is a need to better balance air and cruise passenger traffic flows throughout Bermuda. As a result, the Ministry of Tourism and Transport, and the BTA [Bermuda Tourism Authority] are developing some recommendations for a new cruise ship strategy through to 2028. These recommendations take into consideration the critical need to upgrade Bermuda's transport infrastructure, and ultimately will be beneficial for everyone—residents, air visitors and cruise ship passengers.

In short, Mr. Speaker, we recognise that the successful and economically beneficial execution of a new cruise ship strategy depends on an equally successful transportation infrastructure strategy that is as identified in the Transport Green Paper.

Mr. Speaker, the Government does not intend on producing a White Paper, as mentioned a couple of times since the publishing of the transport paper itself. The Ministry of Tourism and Transport, on behalf of the Government, has started preparing memorandums for Cabinet's consideration and approval. For example, amendments to the Motor Car Act 1951, the Motor Taxi Regulations 1952, Auxiliary Bicycles Act 1954 and the Road Traffic Act 1947, to address shared rides with taxis, regulations for minibuses, enhanced regulations for electric bicycles, dark visors on helmets, and increased fines for road traffic offences.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, may I remind the listening public that they still have until June 17th to submit to the Ministry any inquiries or comments regarding the findings of the 2019 Transport Green Paper, by writing to the following email address:

transportgreenpaper@gov.bm

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

Does any other Member wish to speak?

We recognise the Deputy Opposition Leader.

Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Ms. Leah K. Scott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank the Minister for bringing forward this Transportation Green Paper. I think we all would agree that transportation does need to be addressed in Bermuda.

Public transportation provides a basic mobility service to people who either do not have transportation, do not have access to transportation or simply choose to ride the buses there because they do not want to be caught up on the congestion of traffic getting to and from work. So, it is important also . . . sorry, the other thing is that it is important for our children to be able to get back and forth to school, and for them to be able to get back and forth to school on time.

So, I would support having a dedicated bus service. I remember, because I grew up in the States,

that we would have a yellow school bus. And it would come through our neighbourhood, and it would pick us up for school. And that was the only transportation that was utilised for us to get to school. So, I think that having a dedicated bus [service] would be very good for the reasons that the Minister has laid out in the Green Paper.

We know that the bus dispute has been an ongoing saga. And while the purported new schedule did not work out and they have had to revert back to the old schedule, we really need to figure out how we can get a viable schedule in place. And while the Government blames the bus issues on lack of hiring by the OBA, [these issues are] not really [due to a lack of] workers.

I mean, in the Government's own paper here, it says that (if you will allow me to quote from it), "Three factors can contribute to a more reliable bus service and a decrease in, if not an elimination of, bus cancellations: first, a change in the public bus schedule to reduce the number of buses needed at peak times and throughout the day; two, restoration of a budget allocation to allow for new bus purchases and, three, a proper annual maintenance budget. The Government continues to act on all three of these factors."

Nowhere does it say that they did not have enough workers to service the buses and, because the OBA did not fill positions, that is why we have issues with the buses.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: I thought it was being nice to you.

Ms. Leah K. Scott: Ooh. Thank you.

[Laughter]

Ms. Leah K. Scott: While public transportation does not provide a great revenue stream, it provides a service. I think that it is notable that there are currently 23,376 students and seniors who ride the buses. And I am happy to see in the paper that they are looking to reverting back to having schoolchildren being charged to ride the bus during the weekend (I think I have it right), riding free during the week and then paying for buses on the weekends. And so, I think that will increase the amount of revenue. I do not think that seniors should be charged anything, because I am a senior now, so I do not want to pay to ride the bus.

[Laughter]

Ms. Leah K. Scott: I am a senior.

So, we have to also look, Mr. Speaker, at what is a sustainable bus schedule? We have been talking about this bus schedule now for 17 years. What does it take to get a proper bus schedule in place? And what will it take to also address the needs

of the bus drivers in terms of health and safety, and all of their concerns that they have been discussing for the past week?

There is talk in the paper about introducing a driver recertification. And I guess that would be analogous to lawyers or accountants getting continuing legal education units. And, you know, I would support a driver recertification. And I think that there is also mentioned in the paper the “Train the Trainer” programme. And I would like to have an update from the Minister on that programme. How long is the programme? How many people have been through that programme? What exactly does the programme consist of? And is there ongoing training once they have completed the “Train the Trainer” programme? And how are they assessed? And then how is it determined who takes the programme? Is it all bus drivers? Is it the entire Department of Public Transportation? How is the determination made?

We have got the Bermuda Tourism Authority working diligently and very successfully in getting people to come to our Island, Mr. Speaker. And so, we need to have a public transportation system that can support our visitors, as well as our existing residents. And we want a modern-day public transportation system. And I do not think that that is too much to ask for.

There are . . . the . . . let me see. Our bus schedule should actually . . . we need to have a ridership survey. And I think that the Minister stated that we would have that. Because we actually need to know which areas are most popular, which buses need to be in areas more frequently, what times they need to be there. I know in my constituency, up at Lighthouse Lane, when they used to have the sight-seeing buses, they used to go through there. But there is not a bus that goes through there. And there are a lot of seniors who live in that area. And they can only catch the bus either on Middle Road or on the South Shore. And that is quite a walk from Lighthouse Lane. So, looking at adding in routes that will assist seniors and other challenged people is a good thing. And I am looking forward to seeing how they are going to do that.

In the transportation paper, the Minister talks about a grey bus schedule. And I would like to know, exactly what the grey bus schedule is. What time are those routes serviced? Which drivers are driving on that schedule? And are they paid extra compensation for driving that schedule? How is that incorporated into the existing schedule? And why do we have a need for a grey schedule? What does it accomplish?

There have been complaints; the paper addresses complaints about bus drivers. I would like to know how those complaints are addressed. Are disciplinary actions taken? Are courses required to be taken by bus drivers, depending on the infractions that they have committed? And how do we train our bus drivers to understand that they are providing a public

service not only in driving the bus, but also interacting with our students, with our residents, and with our tourists?

Mr. Speaker, now I would like to move on to the ferries, which are not under as much stress as the buses are. However, I would like to see more ferry locations, and I think that a ferry (what do you call it?) a terminal, a ferry terminal at the airport would actually be ideal, particularly when we can have tourists who are coming in and have their first experience with Bermuda on a ferry taking them to the hotel or wherever it is that they might be going.

I note that there are . . . some of the ferries can take bikes, and those ferries, I think, are the front-loading ferries?

An Hon. Member: Yes.

Ms. Leah K. Scott: And so, they said that they are not looking at procuring another front-loading ferry because there is not enough volume of people. However, I think it is kind of a catch-22. More people would ride the ferry if they could bring their bikes. And so, do you buy the ferry, and then more people use it? Because I think that, you know, I used to be able to catch the ferry. And I liked being able to catch the ferry into town. It actually gives you a wonderful start to the day, and it is calm and peaceful and beautiful. So, you know, if we could get another ferry that would allow people who have bikes, motorised bikes and bicycles, to take them on the ferry, I think that would be a good thing.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to also address differently abled people. And I understand from the Transportation Green Paper that there are multiple definitions in different pieces of legislation as to what “differently abled” people means. And I would suggest that we have a comprehensive definition for “differently abled” people. I agree that there are degrees of disability. However, you know, challenges—we can find an encompassing definition that addresses all challenges.

I was looking on the Internet, and looking at, in the US, what are the states that are ranked number one in terms of having wheelchair accessibility? And Seattle, Washington, is ranked number one of the top five most wheelchair accessible cities in the United States. And so, they have made accessibility to disabled persons their priority. And so, they have got wheelchair friendly ferries, wheelchair friendly taxis. They have got wide ramps. And they have made themselves available for people who want to enjoy their state to be able to enjoy it, whether they are walking on two legs, whether they are rolling in a wheelchair or . . . not the motorised ones.—

[Inaudible interjection]

Ms. Leah K. Scott: What is the one with the three wheels? The tri-chair, or whatever it is.

In New York City, Mr. Speaker, there is a programme that is called ADAPT. And ADAPT is a community network that is working to empower disabled people. And it is also about teaching the community about the needs of disabled people. And they offer programmes which include education, health, technology and residential. And it is one of those things that they actually provide support to other jurisdictions that maybe the Minister would like to look into in terms of how we can provide greater support services for our disabled people. And ADAPT is the leading human service not-for-profit organisation. And they have been providing cutting-edge programmes and services for people with disabilities for a very long time.

And so, we need to be, as a country, more inclusive of disabled people, not just in terms of transportation, but just generally. You know, I note that the Minister said that we were going to put up more signage at the buses and ferries. Will that signage include Braille? Because signage is good for people who can see, but for those who cannot see, you know, how are they going to be accommodated? I think we need to address that.

I was also very shocked to read in the paper, Mr. Speaker, that a taxi can cost a disabled person up to \$200 for a return trip. And if you have got somebody who is on a limited income having to pay \$200 to get to a doctor's visit or wherever they need to be, that is ridiculous. And so, we need to find a way that is more accommodating. We need to find a way that is more user-friendly and more cost-friendly for our people who are differently abled. You know, it is almost like they are being penalised for being differently abled. And that is not what we want to be displayed as. We should be an embracing community and accommodating the needs of all of our people, Mr. Speaker.

Now, the paper identifies that there were 20 applications for minibus permits for people who wanted to import wheelchair accessible vans to the Island. I would like to know what the status is of those permits. How long ago were the applications submitted? How close are any of those applications to being approved? And although it will not fill the gap completely, I am glad that steps are being taken to accommodate those who are differently abled.

And I notice that there is a proposal to have, I guess, a sort of disability register to look at, to kind of identify who is disabled in the country. And I am not sure that that is the correct way to do things, because the register does not mean that everybody is going to sign up. So, I am sure that there must be some other ways to identify whom we are not reaching in terms of support, whether it is with transportation or other needs. But I am glad that differently abled people is a category that is being considered in this paper.

Mr. Speaker, I fully support any legislation that would disable the use of the dark visor helmets. As you are aware, a lot of the robberies and things that have been taking place in the community have occurred by people who are wearing these helmets and these dark visors. And in order to address this, I think we need to put in place the appropriate legislation. So, I fully support that.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak now about the taxis. And from my understanding, because I have been in contact, in communication with several taxi drivers, my understanding is that since 2016, or even before, they have been looking at trying to implement a central dispatching system. So, up until 2017, I believe, or 2018, there were three dispatching companies in Bermuda. And they were BTA Dispatching, CO OP and Bermuda Island Taxi. And then, my information is that there was a moratorium on dispatching licences granted and that there was actually someone who was associated with one of the three companies that I have just identified, who wanted to get a dispatching licence and was refused because he was told there was a moratorium in place.

However, in May of 2018, HITCH was issued a provisional licence with a full licence being issued in October 2018. So, the question posed to me is, When was that moratorium lifted, and why were not other taxi drivers informed of the lifting of the moratorium so that other people could have had an opportunity to get a dispatching licence?

Now, there was an article in the *Royal Gazette* a couple of weeks back, written by a former, one of the former presidents of one of the taxi dispatching companies. Their concern is that the Motor Car Act, which governs taxis, is not being utilised effectively. And in the Motor Car Act, if you will allow me, Mr. Speaker, section 35B is in relation to "Motors taxis to register with a taxi dispatching service." So, anybody who operates a taxi should be registered with a dispatching service.

But that is not what is happening, Mr. Speaker. A lot of taxis are being utilised by destination management services. They are not going through the dispatching service. And so, what the taxi drivers are thinking is that if there is a central dispatch system, then we can triage where taxis should be so we will not have a glut of taxis in the West End, and St. George's and the central parishes are neglected.

The other thing is that HITCH has a meter on their app that is—you know, you go through it on your phone. And they have been issued a licence. And this is my understanding, and I stand to be corrected by the Premier, whom I know has an interest in HITCH. But under the legislation, anybody who has a dispatching licence has to have a two-way radio set, a mobile data terminal, a global positioning device and an alarm device. And if you do not have those things, then you are in contravention of the Act and you should not be able to have a dispatching licence.

There are people who are operating without a dispatching licence, and the legislation provides for a \$1,400 fine for the day on which the offence is committed and for each day during which the offence continues. And if the offence continues, then the permit can be suspended by the board as for such time as the board deems proper.

Mr. Speaker, all drivers should have a radio, pursuant to the legislation. My understanding is that HITCH does not have a radio, that the drivers were given a phone and that the directors are directed to take their work from the app on the phone. And I do not believe that we have seen legislation come forward in this House to amend the Motor Car Act to allow for apps to be used and to eliminate the use or the requirement for radios.

One of the companies, I think it is BTA, actually employs 12 to 13 people. If we are going to resort to taxis being dispatched by application, what is going to happen to Bermudian jobs? Because if you are using a computer app, then there is really no need for people. So, we need to look at the things that we are doing.

And while we want to be advanced in our technology . . . and I get it. And I did go on the news and say that we should consider using either an Uber- or a Lyft-type service. However, having spoken with taxi drivers and gained a better understanding of the damage that such a service in Bermuda would cause, I am going to backpedal on that and say, well, we need to actually look at the fundamental issues of the taxi industry that we have now. We need to look at the legislation and, where the legislation is being violated, [enforce] the enforcement procedures.

I believe that the Transport Control Department does have a transport enforcement officer who should be out there patrolling and policing people. And where people are violating the Motor Car Act, then whatever consequences are provided by the legislation should be instituted.

Oh I think that we have had a two-edged sword with the road sobriety legislation in that people are no longer going out. And while I believe that the road sobriety legislation is a good thing—people should not be drinking and driving—the challenge is that people are not going out because they are not able to get reliable transportation to get to and from their destination. And so, it would be interesting to see whether any data have been compiled since the time that road sobriety legislation has been implemented and what the revenue impact has been on bars and restaurants in terms of people not going out anymore.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister announced a couple of weeks ago that they were looking at possibly issuing 20 special licences. And I think he does have the ability to issue, I think it is 87 or 88. But he thought that he would start with a sample of 20 for a temporary period and see where that would go. And the concern with that, Mr. Speaker, is that taxi drivers who

have paid \$125,000 to \$150,000 for a taxi licence are afraid that their investment is going to be devalued. And I think I would not be happy if I were a taxi driver and somebody could get a licence for \$2,000, and I paid \$150,000 for mine. You know?

And the truth is, Mr. Speaker, the taxi licences for some people are like deeds. They are used as collateral at the bank to send their children to college. And you cannot send your child to college for a \$2,000 licence. So, I think that we need to assess that.

And I think the other thing is that, currently, I believe that there are . . . and my numbers may be wrong, again. I have been working with some members in the industry. But currently, we have 600 taxi permits which have been issued. And out of those [600], about 50 to 100 vehicles are not on the road. So, what are we doing about those people who have taxi licences who are not on the road? Before we say we are going to issue 20 special permits, let us look at why those 50 or 100 are not on the road. And I think that the Public Service Vehicle Licensing Board should address those taxi drivers. Why are they not on the road? And if they are not going to be on the road and utilising their taxis, then they either need to forfeit their licence or sell their licence.

But before we add anything to what already exists, we need to address the challenges that we are already facing and see if we can find solutions within the existing industry.

My understanding with the announcement was that there were going to be 20 special licences and the cost of those licences was going to be between \$2,000 and \$4,000, the banks are looking at re-evaluating what value the permits really have. And so, we have got to be able to allow people to retain the value of their investment. And we need to look at ways of getting taxis on the road, getting and providing superior service to our people without detriment to the industry, to those who have worked hard to secure their taxis and to those who are working hard to provide service to Bermuda.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it was brought to my attention by a taxi driver (as I drop all of my papers on the floor) that, in the Motor [Taxi] Regulations, under Schedule 1, there is a Rate 3—Surcharge. And that surcharge comes into play during public holidays. And the rate surcharge is that for anybody who is getting a taxi between the hours of midnight and 6:00 [am], there is a surcharge of 25 per cent of the total charge otherwise payable under Rate 1. And this has to occur at a public holiday, and the taxi has to carry up to four passengers.

And Schedule 1, Rate 3—Surcharge, section B says, “Where any part of the hiring—1 occurs between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. and the taxi carries 5 to 7 passengers; or 2 occurs on a public holiday and the taxi carries 5 to 7 passengers,” that is

50 per cent of the total charge otherwise payable under Rate 1.

Now, one of the taxi drivers sent me a notice from HITCH that was notifying members that the steps to our holiday rates would be in effect for Good Friday and Easter Sunday, which again, as I stated, represents a 25 per cent increase on fares for up to four passengers, and 50 per cent for five to seven passengers. But my understanding and information is that on top of those 25 [per cent] and 50 per cent surcharges, that HITCH also charges an additional 12 per cent charge, which is higher than what the other taxi drivers are charging. So, Mr. Speaker, that cannot be right or fair for people who are trying to drive a taxi and make a decent living and are unable to do so.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I have been provided with some correspondence from the licence dispatch companies with their concerns about the industry. And they have actually laid out all of their concerns. I think that this was provided to the Minister, and I was provided with a copy, as well. And the licence dispatch companies are very concerned about the industry. They are very concerned that a central dispatching system is not going to occur. And they want to know what can be done to address this and many other issues.

And they have got some good solutions here. And so, I do know that the Minister, my understanding is that the Minister was provided with this correspondence about a month ago, and the taxi drivers have not yet had a reply. But they have set out their concerns. They are very legitimate concerns. And they have also provided suggested actions and solutions.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that the people who are actually working in the industry and providing this service, performing the day-to-day job of being taxi drivers, are actually the best people to discuss the areas of concern, and to provide the solutions, because it is what they actually do. So, I am hoping that the Minister will take into account the suggestions and find a way to provide a taxi service that is going to be beneficial for both the taxi drivers and the people of Bermuda, our visitors and our residents.

Mr. Speaker, in addition, under the taxi regulations, taxi drivers have to have a code of dress. Yes, a "Dress and conduct section" [section 12]. And so, one of the things that was raised and brought to my attention was that the regulations may be a bit discriminatory for men. And under section 12(a)(v), it says, "dress shoes, boots or moccasin shoes shall be worn, but not leisure shoes, sneakers or foot coverings likely to cause the driver to lose control of the taxi, such as flip flops, clogs or sandals." And so, there are women taxi drivers who wear sandals, and the men cannot wear sandals. And so, they are disturbed that they are being discriminated against.

In general, as I look at the dress and conduct, there are quite a few rules that actually are not followed. There are not any consequences for not follow-

ing them, but, you know, there is a dress and conduct [regulation] that should adhere to all taxi drivers. And again, it is just something that should be looked at and enforced because it is in keeping with the regulations and the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing is that the taxi drivers would also like to have the ability to accept credit cards. I know that some of them do not. And with the modern traveller these days, Mr. Speaker, I know when I travel, if you are going to New York or Miami or any of those places, they have that little taxicab machine [sitting] in the back. And you can pick whether or not you want to pay a tip. And it will print a receipt for you.

And so, I know that there is also a charge associated with having a credit card service. You have got to pay the bank a fee for having those, the machine and the processing. And so, yes, it will cut into sort of the revenue of the taxi drivers. But, you know, in essence, it is the cost of doing business. And it is a cost that if we want to be a competitive jurisdiction or remain a competitive jurisdiction, we may have to incur. But it may be something that, you know, the Government could consider buying the machines and selling them to the taxi drivers at a discounted rate so that they could have them in their taxis.

I think that covers all of the things that I was going to talk about, Mr. Speaker. I think that some other Members of my team are going to address the paper. Generally, I am very glad to see that we have a Green Paper. I am a bit disappointed that it is not going to be a White Paper, because I think a White Paper kind of enshrines what the Green Paper sets out and it also provides a form of accountability. Because you put it in a White Paper, you said you are going to do these things, and, you know, the thing with having a Green Paper is, *Well, we can pick, choose and refuse the things that we are or are not going to do.*

But again, as I said, overall, I think that it is a good step forward. I hope that we can get the transportation issues that we currently have resolved. We have got the PGA coming up, and I am sure that the Minister would like to ensure that there is sufficient and viable transportation for the people who are visiting our Island. We also want to make sure that the bus drivers are working in a safe environment and that when they have to go to [different] places to [use] the restroom, that the restrooms are safe, and that they are clean, that they are hygienic, and that we are all working to better Bermuda and our public transportation and our tourism industry, because they go hand in hand. So, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Does any other Honourable Member wish to speak?

We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 2.

Honourable Member Swan, you have the floor.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this Green Paper on Transportation. I thank the Minister for bringing it here. I want to thank Ms. Stacey Evans, who I know has done a great deal of work in the preparation, and the team from the Ministry of Transport who have been involved in this process. I single her out because, on one of the boards that I serve, she actually took some time out to meet specifically with us to share with us what was taking place and to get feedback, and that was greatly appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, I will declare my interests. I am a frequent user of the public transportation system, and I carry my card not because I have reached the age, although I am fast approaching; I carry my card as one who would go down to (or my wife, more frequently than I) and buy that three-month package, which makes it far more economical. And dare I say that we have long boasted on having a very good public transportation system in Bermuda? The Island runs east to west, a mile and a half at its widest portion, runs from the east, where the sun rises and decides that it is going to park. That is the way the Island travels. We go with the flow of nature. And the Cup will go that way this year as it is supposed to.

[Inaudible interjections and laughter]

The Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: But I digress there, Mr. Speaker, because I only have 30 minutes on an important topic.

Transportation reflects very much the social makeup of any society. And in university, in addition to playing a lot of golf, I majored in social science, as well, and spent a great deal of time in different communities where transportation is handled in different manners. And for many years, we prided ourselves on our transportation system. Recently, transportation has been something that has come under the proverbial microscope.

And let me point, because it is easy to point fingers. And I just want to single out Mr. Herman Basden, who was in his role for many years as Director of PTB [Public Transportation Board], my next-door neighbour for many years before he took ill. And I just want to say that he often emphasised to me the importance of transportation economics, which he studied at the London University. He was very proud of that and very proud of his time there and the relationship that he had fostered with those who operated under him at PTB. And my association through running a government quango for some eight years before working as a private contractor allowed me to

come in close contact with some others who have been at TCD [Transport Control Department], like Mr. Tyrrell and Mr. Oliver, Stan Oliver, who later went on to be Permanent Secretary and then headed the civil service.

And so, many experiences have allowed me, and interactions with some key people who helped to develop our transportation industry along the way have allowed me to garner a little bit of a perspective as a dear country boy.

But when I look at this report, the numbers that allowed me to appreciate the dynamics that have shifted in Bermuda are that in 1999 Bermuda had 355,000 visitors by air. Now, I dare say that this report does not go into air transportation to the depth that it deals with other aspects of it. And I am sure that the Honourable Whip, my colleague, will speak more succinctly to that. I will say just one point as it delves into the air transportation, is that one of the things that always stood out to me is the compaction, if I can use that word, of air arrivals and departures in Bermuda.

Now, we know we have got a nice, big airport coming. But we do not have greater flights coming to accommodate it, but compaction in that. So, you have compaction in arrivals, and then you are expected to have people there to cater to that in a transportation way. I will leave it there—355,000 arrivals in 1999, and 282[,000] air visitors in 2018, so a decrease. That was a time when Bermuda was more hotel heads-in-beds centred. There was a shift away from that for a number of reasons, no fault being pointed.

I remember seeing the exodus away from hotel properties and our little niche boutique places that now form condominiums. You can go start in the west and work your way down to the east if that suits your fancy. I will start from the east and work my way back up. Thankfully, the St. George's Club is still around. But even that has shifted a little bit to more residential to be able to survive.

But what happened on the other side of the hotel dynamic? In 1999, we had 195,000 visitors coming to Bermuda by sea. And those visitors, I know because in 1999 I could sit on the first tee at St. George's and look down and see the *Bermuda Star*, right there at Ordinance Island. And *Royal Caribbean* line was just below Harbour Radio, two cruise ships at the same time, dual-ship policy one of them may have had, Hamilton and St. George's intertwined. But what was the common denominator? A cruise ship from going back to the *Ocean Monarch* and the days of . . . well, the *Ocean Monarch* and the *Queen of Bermuda* (thank you, Honourable and Learned Member), the *Queen of Bermuda*. A boat would leave on a Saturday from New York and be in Bermuda on a Monday, and leave on a Thursday and be back in New York on a Saturday, and be in Bermuda on a Monday. Another boat would leave Boston on a Sunday, be in Bermuda on a Tuesday, leave Bermuda on a Friday and be

back. And that was their rotation—four days in Bermuda.

I remember my dear friend, whom I used to have lunch with often, my dear friend, Jimmy Williams, who had the Pub on the Square during the glory days of tourism. He said to me when I first came to St. George's to open up that golf course in 1985, he said to me, *My clientele, Kim, is the cruise. I am their home for four days.* And anybody who travels on a cruise ship regularly will say to me that the crew are their source of where the locals would eat. So, the Pub on the Square would be a local haunt, and it would also be the local spot for the cruise ship crew, who are coming to and from Bermuda on a regular basis. And it would be the place where the regulars on the cruise ship were gravitating because they know, those folks know where the best deals are.

Those were the days when the cruise ship people would come out of the cruise ship, and venture around and the like. I remember that because I saw the ship when cruise ships then became, Mr. Speaker, concessioned-out entities. And my own rental golf clubs, I had to come in competition with them because they were then figuring out who was making money on land.

I fast forward in the little bit of time that I have to 2018, where Bermuda now has 484 [*sic*] cruise ship visitors.

An Hon. Member: Thousand.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: [Yes,] 484,000. That is 484 with *three* zeroes. Not even HOTT 107.5 with two T's. That is three zeroes in the back of that 484. That is a lot of zeroes. That is a lot of people to have to manage.

Now, let us cross reference that. Let us cross reference that to the number of taxis that we have in Bermuda. There were 600 taxis in 1999; there were 556 taxis in 2018. Minibuses, there were seven, I believe. (I am looking for it here, but I know I read it already.) Seven in 1999. I remember that. I remember that seven was in St. George's, servicing St. George's Club and the beach, which is now called Blackbeard's and back. Now we have 147 minibuses. Thankfully, we do.

But let us look at that dynamic. If Bermuda has transitioned from having total visitors from 550,000 visitors in 1999 to 771,000 visitors in 2018, and the number of taxis has decreased and the minibuses have increased only [slightly], the question is, Have we kept pace with that shifting social dynamic? It is a social dynamic. And I know social dynamics do not get the attention of a government like financial ones do. That is a fact. I have lived long enough to know that this is a fact of life that I will have to live with. But as a person who wears social issues on their sleeve, I am duty-bound to speak to this social dynamic that is in front of us here right there.

I read in here, and I cannot find the page right now, but I will find it as I shift through, when I come to it, that said that taxis are expensive. Let me tell you something. Taxi drivers, just like any other business person, has all the responsibilities of costs of health insurance, payroll taxes, and all the like. Okay? And except for some reductions that I see posted, 5 per cent, [taxi drivers] pay the same fuel cost that we pay and have an increased burden on them. And that is an important dynamic that we have to take into consideration.

Mr. Speaker, how come that clock keeps ticking away? I mean, time and tide wait for no man, as my grandfather used to say.

The Speaker: Do not waste your time. Keep talking. Keep talking.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: I am going. I am going.

Mr. Speaker, the senior population in Bermuda and the group of persons approaching the senior population in Bermuda are the fastest-growing segment of our society. And that presents a different dynamic for Bermuda to consider. In the Green Paper, on page 19, it tells us just that. Age 45 to 64 has grown from 12,000 people (rounding it down) to 20,000. That is a significant increase. Sixty-five and over has grown from 6,700 to almost 11,000. I will round it up a little bit. That is a significant growth that is going to impact a number of things, transportation notwithstanding.

I want to say this, that when you look at the income versus expenditure of public transportation, rightfully so, it is a subsidised area. I do not have any issues with that, historically. But what we do have to grapple with is the here and now. If you tell me that we have in the here and now some 700,000 visitors—771,000, almost 800,000 visitors—to cater to versus 550,000 visitors to cater to in 1999, and you have fewer taxies than you did then, more people, fewer providers, *Houston, we have a problem here.* A serious one!

And in the here and now, we have a nice problem in the fact that we got more visitors to have to address. So, that is a poor country! Every week, you hear people trying to tickle up the Government and find all the faults. The Government has created a nice problem to have to solve!

And let me digress to say that the creation of that problem came with great criticism even from the person who stands here speaking today, because many of us have had a field day on the cruise ship, the big port over in Dockyard. But thankfully, I see it every day when I am out at Port Royal, that wonderful place that is hosting the Bermuda challenge (Thank you very much for that). But I see it in minibuses going by. Last week I spoke about the opportunities with our ports. It did not get any coverage in the paper. That is understandable. I understand that! I do not expect

what I say to be covered by the daily, even if it makes sense!

That is the problem we have in this country when it comes to people who really passionately understand issues, and there is a partisan approach to how they are covered! It is a problem. Because some of us, some of us actually live tourism. The Honourable Member sells gas, so he understands the tourism dynamic and the transportation dynamic.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: If he does not see the receipts coming in, he is going to be looking at numbers.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: No, I am just saying. It is important to look at the social dynamics at play. And we have cultural problems as it comes to transportation. I remember back when in 1979 when I was at Davis, California, for the NCAA Championship, and I remember the University of California, Davis. You talk about progressive thinking. They had pedestrian . . . not pedestrian, they had pedal-bike-only campus for the whole university. But you know out West they are way ahead when it comes to things like being laid back. The world catches up later as a consequence.

In a small society like Bermuda, we have got to look at that. Because the flip side of that that the Minister of Health speaks about is that those of us who are not walking the way we used to or should be now, we need to create a culture by virtue of our challenges that encourages greater use of pedal bikes and the like, a walking community and the like.

Now, let me say this when it comes to the bus problem that we are faced with for an immediate consideration, as we consider this Green Paper. I was most pleased to see some thought being given to the challenges that communities such as St. David's face. Let me say that it is not just St. David's. Ferry Reach and Cut Road experience those same problems. Ord Road and Spanish Point experience those same problems. Pond Hill and, dare I say, Sound View Road experience those same problems.

The day has come when Barnes Corner, the new Barnes Corner needs to be Rockaway Port Royal! Think about it! You have got a bus running up the south, you have got a bus running up there. And you have got a major facility that the Government is going to invest millions to promote to the world. And a cruise terminal that can be a major link, and the public system has not linked up to it yet. We need to do that! And guess where a large percentage of seniors live. Right there in the Honourable Member from constituency . . . who sits in front of this constituency, so I am sure he is in agreement with me, he might even elaborate far more than my time permits.

The Speaker: Looks like you are seeking support.

[Laughter]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: It is a Green Paper, and I have some latitude. The only problem is, Mr. Speaker, with these new rules that I helped introduce, I do not have the time!

[Laughter]

The Speaker: Well, it is now 12:30. I am going to ask the question. Do you intend to finish in the next minute? Or do you want to use the rest of the remaining 10 minutes that you have?

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: I have got 10 minutes? I will take the whole 10 after lunch.

The Speaker: Well, after lunch is good.

Does one of the Ministers want to rise and break us to lunch?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Yes. Mr. Speaker, I ask that we break for lunch.

The Speaker: And return at two o'clock?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: And return at . . . yes, sure. Let us do two o'clock.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: Okay. Members, we now stand adjourned for lunch until 2:00 pm.

[Gavel]

Proceedings suspended at 12:30 pm

Proceedings resumed at 2:00 pm

[Hon. Dennis P. Lister, Jr., Speaker, in the Chair]

The Speaker: Good afternoon, Members. I trust everyone had a refreshing break during their lunch. We are about to resume.

[Gavel]

MOTION

2019 TRANSPORT GREEN PAPER

[Debate thereon continuing]

The Speaker: When we broke for lunch the Honourable Member Swan, from constituency 2, was on his feet with 10 minutes remaining in his speech.

Would you like to use up your 10 minutes or are you considered done?

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: [Microphone off]

The Speaker: Trying to get 10 on the clock. Well, mine is started, how is that?

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: I will continue on the [Transport] Green Paper.

Let me start off, Mr. Speaker, the Green Paper states that taxis are expensive. But it is my contention that the operating costs of a taxi have increased exponentially and outpaced any fare increases that have occurred over the years. And I would ask [for] an undertaking [to] consider the cost of operating a taxi in 2019—all the costs that go along with it—against the fare increases that have come over time so that we can have a fact-based discussion about the situation. The number of taxis has decreased from 1999 to 2019 while the total visitors have increased significantly.

The shift has been, Mr. Speaker, from hotel and guest house visitors, who, I might add, spend considerably more than a cruise visitor . . . not negating the importance and significance of cruise visitors who are here in great numbers these days, but as that dynamic shifted before our very eyes over 20 years, so have the circumstances that service providers for the public. Their dynamics have changed. And so certainly we must undertake to track the passage of visitors and locals.

When we look at transportation, you know, the times and days, the bottlenecks . . . I can give you an example, Mr. Speaker. Since 1999, Dockyard is a major transportation hub, located at the very western extreme of Bermuda. Therein lies hundreds of thousands of visitors who need to be traversed throughout Bermuda. And dare I say that we need, scientifically . . . because in my discussion with transportation engineers . . . I told you, Mr. Speaker, I spoke to a great deal of them in my life for the last 20 years, scientific and matter-of-fact evidence is very much a part of the persons who held those particular posts.

In my emergence . . . in fact, the ones that I named . . . I named Mr. Raul Tyrrell, Mr. Stan Oliver and Mr. Herman Basden, three people I spent hours around a great deal through my holding of the government post as a general manager of a quango for some eight years. They always spoke of things from an engineering point of view. They looked at life more scientifically because they . . . I think some of them may have been even tech boys, for the benefit of the Colonel, the Member for Works and Engineering, Mr. Oliver was a Berkeleyite—

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: And golfers, indeed.

But I want to say that science has a lot to do with it. So if hundreds of thousands of people are in Dockyard, the composition of the Island, the layout of the Island, being configured [like] a fishhook, we need to make sure . . . we need to say, *Well, is it humanly possible to expect all of our people to be there to cater to that 400,000 or so people, or should we be finding ways to transport people to other important significant hubs?*

St. George's would be a natural hub because it is a very important part of Bermuda's tourism equation. From my point of view it is the most important part, it is where it all started, and so we need to make sure those people in Dockyard are in St. George's—soon and often and long!

Hamilton is an important part of that. The water will play a significant portion of making sure that we do not rely on all of the vehicles that can be hampered by an accident on the road to move masses of people.

My uncle . . . I go back to the old-timers that taught me who are over 100 years old. [My uncle] talked about herding cattle, why? We grew up in an agrarian society. We can see how you moved the cattle from up on the top of Cedar Hill, Southampton (for those of you who do not know there is a Cedar Hill, Southampton) and got them down through the local corral to be able to put them in the areas. That is what it is like. If you do not look . . . that is what we need to do.

And so I feel, Mr. Speaker, it is important and I will be prevailing upon the Minister, my colleague, as best I can, knowing that the challenge is on us as we speak and knowing that the cruise ships [operate] differently than they did 20 years ago. Because, as I mentioned, cruise ships try to spend as much time at sea—they are bigger, they [are like] cities—and they are trying to get that dollar out of those persons pockets for their services on board their ship to the detriment of . . . and our goal is to get them on land and get persons spending money. And that is a major challenge.

The Green Paper suggests using private services in light of the transportation challenges. And I would like to know if the Ministry is looking at the possibility of developing community transportation services. I mentioned St. George's, St. David's, Ferry Reach . . . and I would say that we could very much be a pilot service. There are greater numbers of people in those areas than there were in 1999 and the like, and if we can find ways to utilise our community-based areas to provide a fee-to-service during the peak travel periods of those persons . . . the most important times would be going to work and coming home from work.

And let me say this, Mr. Speaker, because I know my time is nearly running out, times have changed. As a commuter, you cannot tell me I can get a 6:15 bus, because I have got to make time out of St.

George's on a Friday, but I cannot have that same option on a Saturday and Sunday, not when you tell me that the hotel is going to be open and they need me, not when you tell me I have got to be at the grocery store where I work . . . and the [number] of people in this country paying \$25 to go to work to make \$15 an hour is . . . you know, that bit of economics, to me, does not make sense. That is something we have to look at for our working-class community.

Mr. Speaker, technology must become commonplace in Bermuda when it comes to transportation. So I hear people talking about, you know, Bermuda is more computer literate than most places around the world. My mother is probably listening to us right now, at her age, with her iPad, to get us online. So persons can certainly have the opportunity to learn how to use their phone to be able to buy their bus passes. And our busses need to be like they are in Japan and other communities, where they . . . where the electronics are directing the traffic to take away from some of the experiences that our bus drivers have to put up with within the community.

Mr. Speaker, transportation speaks to the social conditions of our country, and I am one that is supportive of the fact that transportation of public service is subsidised, but it must be—

The Speaker: You are almost at that point.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: —efficient.

The Speaker: You almost at . . . well, there you go.

[Timer beeps]

[Laughter]

The Speaker: There you go.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: And I will . . . I have no choice but to stop right there, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you for your contribution.

I now recognise the next Member, and I believe it is the Member from constituency 12.

Opposition Leader, you have your 30 minutes.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to everyone after lunch.

I would like to say from the onset that this Green Paper provided us with, actually, some very good reading. It is rather lengthy. I believe it is 190-plus pages.

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: However, it is not difficult reading, but it is very informative in the scope that it has taken to get to this House and to the larger Ber-

muda what this Government believes is the direction that we need to go in.

What I will say is this, Mr. Speaker, from the onset, however, that I believe that this Government should show the people of Bermuda a commitment, through a White Paper, that it will do specific things. A Green Paper is perfectly fine. I believe that as they go further with their reviews of things, I believe that there are other institutions still, to this day, that have not been talked to in specific, that are in the industry, that will, of course, reveal many opportunities that I think need to be included.

And so I say this to let the Minister know . . . I know he has said no to a White Paper, but a White Paper, essentially, would give a commitment to Bermuda of specifics that we will go after. And, certainly, we know with transportation it is something that is fluid as we upgrade things. It will continue to be fluid with technology changing all of the time and with many of the variables that are involved with transportation in Bermuda—from the coordinating of the buses to the coordinating of our cruise ships, to the coordinating of WEDCO and the activity that goes on just within that area, the coordination of what happens in the City of Hamilton, when, in fact, a ferry drops off people and how easy it is for them to be able to get onto a bus and to have alternatives, whether it be tourists or Bermudians, to have options to be able to get about on the Island.

And so there is much to be praised about this Green Paper, in fact. Certainly this is not an intent to try and put any shadow on this here, but I do believe that we already are aware, as we have gone through this Green Paper, of many of the things that could already have been done, things that can be done right now. And so I think the public will be looking for a commitment of the things that we can do right now to ensure that we can bring about better service.

Now, at the bottom of page 9 our Honourable Minister mentions . . . the last thing that he says is "Bermuda's modern transport future begins now." It is a very catchy phrase. And I like that, certainly with the inclusion of talking about where we are going to be bringing in technology and the likes. But the future of transportation has been in place for some time now. We have seen the advent of the Twizy, which is in this paper, and the small electric cars. So we have been reinventing ourselves, maybe not at a pace that we would like to, but now that we have a Green Paper in front of us it would behove us to hasten the pace because now we have got solid information in front of us which can lead us to some real conclusions.

And if you walk along the street right now, if you were to ask a taxi driver (just talking about the taxi part of this Transport [Green Paper]), if you were to ask any one of the drivers, which I have done on a regular basis since this Green Paper, the first thing that comes out of their mouths is, *Listen, we've got things that we should be enforcing right now.* And we

know that we have challenges with that there, and maybe manpower. I do not know what all of those challenges are, but certainly with this Green Paper and with more discussions that I hope will happen, it will highlight what those issues are of enforcement and let us get down to enforcing these things.

I do not know about you, Mr. Speaker, but I am tired of coming into town and seeing guys popping wheelies all through town, which is a real safety and health hazard to all of us, whether it be motorists or whether it be pedestrians who are crossing the street or just moving about . . . our tourists who are coming here who are flooding the streets. This is a serious problem.

I do not know about you, Mr. Speaker, but I am tired of seeing people driving through red lights—purposely ignoring the red lights!

The Speaker: Yes.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: We put them in place for safety reasons and we, as a people—not the tourists, we as a people—are ignoring the fundamental laws of the land. So we have got to go a long way in enforcing that safety for everyone in Bermuda as we start looking at this very, very, very comprehensive report that we have in front of us.

I do believe that there is more to come. And I am hoping that as they sit down and start talking to some of the dispatchers and the likes . . . I heard a former Member say that those discussions still had not been had entirely, so I am sure that there is more to come to light. And I am hoping that as we learn some of these new things and some of these new revelations about transportation, that the Minister will have the opportunity to bring statements to this House to update us as they move along with some of these recommendations that are here.

I would like to highlight, Mr. Speaker, I take note that as I was going through this comprehensive report many of the things that they talk about are already completed, which is great. It was great to be able to see that this was added in here and to be able to also see that there were ongoing things that they are working on. And so I believe that this truly is a work in progress.

And so what we would like to hear as we are moving through this process of progress in transportation is that we will hear more and more about some of the things that are forthcoming. I mean, certainly, when we were Government we understood the challenges that people had with the Twizys. But you can see in the graphs . . . and I am going to go through this particular paper to show where Bermudians are now saying, *Well, hold on a second here. We want to be fossil fuel conscious as well. We would like to buy these things and travel in these things.* And I have heard many times before in the past . . . many people

have said that Bermuda is a perfect test tube for going—

The Speaker: Going green.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: —mostly electrical.

The Speaker: Yes.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: I mean, certainly, Mr. Speaker, you—

The Speaker: Yes.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: —have been in the field and you know it all too well that this is a great opportunity in Bermuda.

I was just looking last night, actually, at these new glass batteries that will go a thousand hours—

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: —without being regenerated.

So technology is certainly catching . . . well, not catching up. Technology is certainly pushing us forward and we do need to advantage of many of these new and innovative things that are happening out there in the world. And we have a great opportunity because it is not . . . you know, with 60,000 people on the Island it is small enough that we can make some drastic changes very quickly. And so I would encourage the Minister . . . you know, we sometimes tease him, he has got a lot of energy, to push forward with some of these things, to get going.

But I believe that a commitment must be made to the people of Bermuda. It would have been nice if he would have committed to a White Paper—that is not the case. So we will hold this Ministry to the task of ensuring that many of the things that we see in here are going to be implemented and that they do come up with something that is more targeted to getting things done.

We have seen way too many times that we get all of these papers in front of us and recommendations and we go through them—great recommendations, you know. I must say the civil servants get going and get all of this stuff and get all hyped-up and then it takes two years before we even get to one or two of them . . . bureaucracy sets in place.

And so, if we are going to talk about moving forward I believe that we can. The Government has our participation in this and our support. We believe that we do have major, major issues in Bermuda, going through this report, with transportation. Which leads me to say, I was just listening to the Honourable Member that just sat down from constituency 2 and how he was talking about the cruise ships and the likes. And I just want to say this here that, you know,

cruise ships . . . you know, they . . . the place to make money from cruise ships is not retail for trinkets and things like that. The place to make money from cruise ships is transportation. They want to see stuff. The last thing they want to do is buy something—everything is on the boat! They want to be able to get to see things and so this is a huge economic opportunity.

And what you saw with the increase of cruise ships up in Dockyard was the proliferation of minibuses. And the challenges that the bus service was having, you know, being able to do tours and maintenance and the likes, we recognise that these guys stepped up to the plate and I can tell you, I set off the other day across from Horseshoe Bay . . . I cannot remember the name of that restaurant, what is that restaurant across from Horseshoe Bay?

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Yes, yes, I am from St. David's, I cannot remember the name of that place. Right, Gulfstream?

An Hon. Member: Gulfstream.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Gulfstream, and I had a nice meal there. My goodness, the number of minibuses that rolled out of that thing . . . it was incredible! I did not realise we had that many. I mean, to be frank, I felt like it was dozens of them. Huh?

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Yes, yes, yes. My brother-in-law works at Rangers, yes. I was sitting there too, making sure it stayed safe. And I mean just these minibuses that were coming out and they were loaded down.

And now, as we go through this paper here, this Green Paper, I realise that we have got even more scope to expand on that. I was talking yesterday to a gentleman who does tours and he does these tours on his own, he just takes two or three people, he is licensed to do it, and he uses his vehicle to go about doing these tours, and this guy cannot keep up. I said, *Well, why don't you go ahead . . . why don't you get like a minivan?* You know what I mean? You get licensed and get all that other stuff done. And he did not want to go that far. He was very comfortable. He was making his money off of just these couple of tours.

And so, you know, Bermudians are true ambassadors of a place that they love and what a great opportunity—economic opportunity—we have. We have to take advantage of that. I mean a whole part of when we were Government and getting cruise ships down into St. George's, it was not all about the trinkets to buy, it was about getting tours. And maybe we

should have been clearer about that there, but it was about getting tours going down in St. George's through our National Heritage Site.

And so, again, I go back to the fact that when the Honourable Minister closes off by saying "Bermuda's modern transport future begins now" I recognise a bit of politicking there, he is trying to take credit for the modernisation of transport . . . future begins with transport now. But it has been going on. Like I said, the Twizys are a hit—the little minicars. Those things are a hit. And half the time, it is tourists. If you see 10 go by, 5 of them have got tourists and the other 5 of them have got Bermudians who rented them out just to jam up and down and to enjoy this new technology. So we need to take advantage of that.

And one of the things that, as I went through this, you know, I learned it from the America's Cup while I was Minister of Public Works, that the coordination of moving people is a real . . . how should I say it? . . . science.

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: I mean it is a real science. And we are seeing far too often that we are not applying the science to this, and we are hearing all of the issues that are happening up at Dockyard that we know we need relief for and that we hear down at the airport . . . we have got challenges with people just being able to get a taxi out of the airport. And then we have got challenges leaving town. You know, you have had a few drinks, we have got sobriety testing going on, and you cannot get a taxi.

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: And so we have got to find a way, as we have gone through this paper, of ensuring that we have somehow, not necessarily a central place where all this information is going from, but ensuring that all of the separate entities that are out there, that are involved with transportation, can communicate through the Ministry to allow for us to have somewhat—maybe it is not completely, but somewhat—of a seamless transition that information is being passed back and forth so that we can get to the destination of having a system that moves our Bermudians and moves our tourists throughout the Island without, or with as little, complication as possible.

As I read through the Green Paper I recognised that we had issues and some of the issues about the buses was, you know, they are going too fast and you know we have got trees overgrowing and the likes, that is something that we can do . . . we can do something about that now. We can go to the homeowners now. And I know that some of these things may be in place because, certainly, we were addressing it when we were Government.

But I guess I wanted to hear a little more, and I had not quite heard it yet and hopefully it will come at some point in time, about exactly what we are recommending when it comes to streamlining this whole process to ensure that we are moving people back and forth. I mean, my brother from constituency 2, he has every right to be concerned. I am concerned about St. David's islanders who have, always, throughout our history, been the last ones to get this and the last ones to get that.

I believe in this Honourable House a couple of years ago I got up and spoke to the issue of us [being] the last ones to get paved roads, the last ones to get electricity out there. You know it would be nice if some priority were given—and I know it is a sacrifice—to ensure that people can get back and forth. Pequots like to travel too!

[Laughter and inaudible interjection]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: You know, after having that landfill done in 1940, which was the greatest landfill ever done in Bermuda, so that we could have a causeway so that we could connect St. David's to the so-called "mainland" we need to do something. And we know that we have challenges with our bridges there—far too long it has been—and we need to sort out some of these challenges, but I believe, with this, we are on our way.

And the encouragement from me is to say let us move with some swiftness. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I am going to move through some of the pages here because I did want to highlight some things that I . . . some I took exception with, and most of it I most certainly . . . as I said, I really enjoyed this read. I learned a lot actually about our transportation. So it is a bit lengthy, but it was very good.

On page 10 I take note where it talks about . . . and I was a bit confused about this here, it says "the Government is investigating the efficacy of moving to electric buses." I get that. I understand that this makes sense. And "During this time, the intention is to gather ridership information . . ." I am a bit confused about the ridership information. I mean, we have been gathering that information for years, and we haven't? I mean, I need to know from the . . . I am looking at the technical officers over there. We have been gathering this information for a long time. I mean, is that not how we came up with the new schedule . . . because of this ridership information?

So I am still wondering how much information we need in order for us to do something. We have got the information already. That is why we have some buses not going to certain areas, like St. David's, at certain times because we got the ridership information. So, as I listen to this guy on Instagram . . . he says, *I was behoved*. What behoved me was that . . . we have already got the information, so why are we going to collect it now? I hope that is not a significant

stalling tactic, but I do not believe that that is the case, but I would like for the technical officers to certainly take a look at that.

What I will say is, over on page 11, I was quite excited about the fact that, in terms of student transportation, it mentions that . . . and I will read it here, the very first paragraph, that "A significant percentage of Bermuda's middle school and senior school students use the bus regularly and would benefit from having a dedicated school bus service."

I would venture to say even in primary schools as well, but middle school and senior school. You know, we have seen this around the world. If you travel you know there are dedicated buses for students. This, of course, is a completely different approach to how we pick up and drop off our young people, but certainly with the revelations of the past and the bullying and the likes that go on, it would be nice to see that we do have some form of service that is dedicated. So I like that suggestion. I really do think it makes sense.

I will declare my interest that many years ago I realised that our young kids, those who were just starting to go to school from preschool, I started a service called *Little Tykes Service*, and it is still out there today, owned by a friend of mine who I sold it to after a few years. And my goodness, what a brilliant opportunity . . . as in the paper here, it suggests that, you know, a lot of times it is not safe for kids getting off the bus to cross the street. There are no sidewalks and the likes. And it is a real safety hazard . . . a risk for our young people just trying to get to school. And one of the beauties of the transportation that I was providing many years ago called *Little Tykes Service* [was] we picked up the kids where the parents wanted us to pick them up—whether it was from their home or from another centralised area, which was safe—and then dropped them off right to their school . . . [we drove] right into the gate and it was very safe. So it would be nice to see that we encourage that kind of entrepreneurship to this whole approach to . . . our young people and getting them to school.

So I was very, very, very much encouraged by some of these recommendations, as I was looking at the Executive Summary, that were coming out.

Now, also on the very bottom of page 11, it says, "Unfortunately, poor road traffic conditions undermine the efforts of the health sector to encourage" (over on page 12) "active transport." And one of the challenges, certainly with our roads, Mr. Speaker, is that we may be a little late to getting to this now, but there probably was, at one point in time, an opportunity for us to change our main roads so that they were a bit safer. Now that we have much of the private ownership of homes and the likes that are right on the borders of the public roads, it is going to be difficult to be able to put more sidewalks out.

It has proved to be a challenge, especially for Public Works, in making sure that people are trimming

back their hedges, are taking care of even their walls and ensuring that they do not fall over. We have had tragic instances where that has happened, as well on our roads, where private ownership has not taken care of their walls and they have fallen over and we have seen the hardship of loss of human life in instances like this here.

And so Bermuda's roads do provide a real challenge. And I know that while I was in Public Works when they were looking even at crosswalks and lights for crosswalks, there is a science to being able to . . . where do you put the actual bus stop or where do you put the crosswalk so that it is not on a blind corner? And that can get difficult in Bermuda. It certainly can get extremely difficult. And all you are trying to do is put in these crosswalks to slow the traffic up, but at the same time you do not want to affect the traffic flow so much so that it becomes vexatious and people start exercising road rage, which we all see already way too prolific at this time in our history.

And so it will be interesting as they coordinate this Green Paper, and the interested parties coordinate with Public Works on the road works that are needed to be done. I must say that the road works were always . . . [they are] great teams there as they go about the Island ensuring that our roads are as safe as possible.

I also want to give tribute to, on page 12 where it mentions in the Summary about the Railway Trail. And we heard good news last week from the Minister about the Railway Trail down in Flatts there. And certainly, while we were Government, we saw the Friends of the Railway Trail doing great work and investing millions of dollars in the Railway Trail of Bermuda. And so, we want to give them a hearty thank you for the work that they are doing as they work with Public Works and the Government on the whole. It does make a difference. I have been through the trails and I have seen many people on cycles who use the trails to cycle in relative safety, as opposed to having been on the road travelling back and forth.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Sorry?

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: It was that light? I did not see you . . . ah! I did see you on the Railway Trail last week Saturday. The Minister was out getting some exercise.

So what I wanted to do, Mr. Speaker, I am going to continue through here on some of the things that I highlighted. I also noticed on page 26, as it was talking about bus passenger safety, where it says, "There is also a concern, particularly for children, that DPT buses do not have seatbelts." And that is where I segued earlier, talking about if we had dedicated bus-

es for [school] service, that would go a long way . . . I am still not quite sure about the seatbelts and how they are on buses, but we will leave that up to the Minister. Maybe he can enlighten us on some of the new buses and whether or not that is in actual fact a potential reality that we might see.

I also took note on page 30 that there is an MOU that was commenced on the 14th of November last year with Rocky Mountain Institute "to investigate and develop a strategy to transition from the current fossil fuel infrastructure to electric bus fleet." In addition to that, I guess I wanted to ask the Minister . . . so, we know that we have transportation experts, and I know that we have one up at WEDCO (and I am not sure how much he is being used there), but we do know that in other populous cities and the likes they have these engineers and the likes who look at how we coordinate things. And I was just curious as to who we are liaising with, who we are seeking to create some partnerships with, in helping us look at the complete infrastructure of transportation from the very beginning of the sunrise down at St. David's and St. George's to the beautiful sunsets that happen up in Somerset and Dockyard. Who are we dealing with that is assisting us in putting together what we believe is, as I said already, the Minister said, *the future begins now with transportation?*

It almost made me feel like the *Jetsons*, when I was young watching the *Jetsons*. I saw a recommendation in here where they said we need to spend more time investing and looking at . . . a personal aircraft, personal flight machines that would fly two or three of us. You know, I must admit that, Mr. Speaker, at the time when I was talking to you that I would be out of the House, I was over in Dubai. And they had instituted drones that carried . . . I saw them with my own eyes. They were testing these drones that held six people in them. And they were flying these drones from one building to the next transporting people. I mean, it is pretty phenomenal at where our transportation is going.

And, again, as I have already said, Bermuda has a unique opportunity of being small enough to test many of these things and to be the test pilot, if you will, of many of these innovative ideas. I am not sure about the airspace right now over Bermuda with the airport not too far away, but I marvel at the technology that does exist out there that makes it available for individual flight and does not require a pilot's licence.

Interestingly enough, as I went through this paper, and started looking at things, I was on YouTube. There were many of these vehicles out there . . . they do not even require a pilot's licence. So you can just go on, get instructions for two hours, and you can fly this thing as far as you can go as long as you can get back because, you know, you are going over a lot of water out there right now and you want to make sure you can get back.

So I do take note of that and, also on that page, it says here . . . I talked about the ridership already, and so on the Public Ferry side, on page 31 the overview there says, “95 per cent of the general public who participated in the 2018 ‘public transport survey’ said” (and this is very significant and I want to make sure that those who did not have the opportunity to read all of this [hear this], it says) “95 per cent of the general public who participated in the 2018 ‘public transport survey’ said that the ferry system was reliable.”

I mean we need to commend those guys for the work that they do. That is quite staggering, with those kinds of numbers, that we have got that support for those guys and the work that they are doing. To only have 5 per cent say that it was unreliable is quite phenomenal, actually.

And I do believe that we do have scope and more opportunity, which is why I am asking, Who are we talking to so that we can coordinate the ferry services with the bus services, ensuring that the times match so that we are moving people back and forth? To hear that we are already at a good start with the ferry service, it is quite commendable, actually, and we probably need to incorporate more if we are looking at having fewer buses. Because as we certainly go on down further we find that with the ferry system, that more people would actually use the ferries if there were . . . and I will get to it at some point because there is some kind of trade thing it mentioned. I have got it highlighted; I guess I will find it as I go through. But this trade partnership . . . I will find it as I go through here.

Now, I guess one of the—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: What is that?

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Is that all I have got, Mr. Speaker? My goodness, so let me go to some of these other highlights here then . . . if I have only got that short period of time.

But I was a bit confused at first as to what was a high speed ferry and a fast ferry. So as I was reading through it—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Yes, I think I got it now.

But what I questioned was, had we not already done the analysis on the high speed ferries? Because we recognised that they were not cost-effective. In purchasing these ferries certainly—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: That is all right. I am just saying.

So looking at the information, nothing has changed. And that is the challenge, nothing has changed. So we are hoping that with this Green Paper, since . . . since . . . everything is coming, Mr. Speaker, that is why I asked for a White Paper to make sure that we have a commitment, something [written] in stone that says this is exactly what we are going to do. So we will see what happens as we move along.

We will hold the Minister to this here. Again, he has done some great work here with the technical staff. We certainly are supporting all of the recommendations that are here, but I do believe [that with] some of the information that is already available out there we can already start implementing some of these things.

And so I will, with interest, I recognise that I do not have much time left . . . sorry?

The Speaker: You are winding down now—

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: I am winding down now.

The Speaker: You have less than half a minute.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: And certainly I did not even get to the last three-quarters of this report, but this report gives a lot of great information. And I was excited about the fact of being able to read through this here, Mr. Speaker. Much can be done and, again, if we can get some of that *Jetson* feeling back into transportation, it will be an exciting thing for Bermuda.

So I am looking forward to what the technical officers do with this, Minister.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

We recognise the Government Whip.
Government Whip.

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One thing that we . . . it is a term that we tend to use very often, which is talking about vision and, they usually say, *Hindsight is 20/20*. And you know me, I like to research why we use the phrases we use and whatnot, and I like to try to educate people.

[Laughter]

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: And, as I said before, the nurse that I am dating is helping to educate me on anatomy. But the thing is when we talk about vision and we talk about it being 20/20, that means that . . .

20/20 is not necessarily the . . . you having perfect vision. It is more so about the clarity and sharpness of your vision, which is just one aspect—20/20. The number 20/20 means that at 20 feet you can read something or see things with the clarity that a normal person could see from 20 feet, meaning that if you have 20/100 vision that means you can . . . you have to be 20 feet away to be able to see something that the average person could see from 100 feet.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: I do not know. My eyesight is actually correctible to 20/20 with my glasses.

But the thing is that the 20/20 part is just . . . and the clarity and sharpness of vision is just one aspect. There are other things that go into really being able to tell or monitor or gauge your eyesight health or your visual health, such as your peripheral vision, your hand-eye coordination, depth perception, your ability to focus, and your colour vision—stuff like that.

And this is where the Green Paper tends to come in with Transportation, because what I want to touch on is something else that you will be able to see in 20/20 which . . . and I mean when I say 20/20 more specifically, hopefully, it should be July 2020, which is the new L. F. Wade Air Terminal, all right? That is the proposed date that we should be able to open it or it should [be substantially completed], to be technically correct.

Now, one thing that I noticed in this 189-page Green Paper was that it did not spend too much time talking about the air terminal and air arrivals. Now the thing is that air arrivals play a very big role in our transportation infrastructure. Now, one might be asking why it was not covered in more detail. And one reason could be that the civil service is responsible for producing the Green Paper, and under the project agreement with the [L. F. Wade] Air Terminal, air arrivals are no longer necessarily the responsibility of government, but more so the responsibility of Skyport, a private entity.

So what has happened is that over the last two years Skyport has not been able to (how can I say it?) adequately attract significant new air service. Now, with that being the case . . . I am not here to point fingers, I am not here to call names. What is happening now is what I dub the trinity, the BTA (Bermuda Tourism Authority), the BAA (Bermuda Airport Authority), and Skyport are now all working together to ensure that we attract significant new air arrivals to the country.

Now, with that being the case, to give you an understanding or to put things in proper context, if you look at some numbers out there now you would see that last year we had roughly 450,000 arrivals or passengers that flowed through the airport. The Tourism Authority would say that approximately 350,000 of them were visitors. And the new airport or the new

[L. F. Wade] Air Terminal should be able to flow up to 750,000 passengers per year. So now that gives us the ability to roughly, approximately, double the number of passengers that we flow through the airport, which means that we are going to theoretically double the [number] of people coming and going to and from the airport itself.

If you look at the numbers provided in the Green Paper and through the exit reports, they show that taxis are used by 80 per cent of air visitors. So if we have 350,000 air visitors a year and 80 per cent of them use taxis, and with this new air terminal and with the trinity's work on being able to—the BTA, the BAA and Skyport—attract more air arrivals, that means you are going to need more taxis or more ways and means to be able to transport people to and from the airport. But this is something that was not . . . it could have been covered a bit more in more detail, because what happened is, as I go back to the 20/20 vision, a lot of Members focused on the 20/20 vision, meaning the top three—the ferries, the buses, the taxis—but not necessarily things coming out of the airport.

But [an] aspect about the airport that was discussed, and that I believe is worth looking into a bit more, was to provide better communication between the airlines and the taxis (or the ground transportation providers) so that we do not end up, as Members have said before me and the Honourable Member that just took his seat, the Honourable Craig Cannonier, about how we have persons or visitors coming into the airport or arriving at the airport and there not being any taxis to their final destination.

Now, also, another aspect of being able to become a little more efficient, in doing so, is to provide help for some of those taxis by, as mentioned in the Green Paper, allowing hotels to provide their own shuttle service to and from the airport, which then allows and frees up taxis from having to be dedicated or stationed at the airport and can be sort of flowing throughout the country, throughout our transportation infrastructure, and being able to be utilised by persons who are, as the Honourable Member said before me, enjoying themselves, enjoying the nightlife here in Bermuda, having a drink or two at Place's [Place] or Spinning Wheel until about three o'clock in the morning.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: Well, yes, Place's closes at 1:00 and then we go, I mean, some Members in here do go to Spinning Wheel.

So therefore . . . but also another thing is allowing the buses to be able to pick up some additional bandwidth by providing luggage racks on the buses so, therefore, we can now motivate persons to start being able to catch the bus that goes right through the airport.

Also, another thing that I found interesting, which was further back in the Green Paper, around pages 135 or 136, was the reinstating of the airport docks. And for those members of the public that are not quite aware, leading up to and during the America's Cup there was a dock that was out there on the Grotto Bay side of the airport which was removed. But in looking at the Green Paper it is suggesting that a possible thing that could be done would be to have the dock reinstated, put back in place, but also to have another dock put down there at Castle Harbour so that, once again, the short run from the airport to Rosewood Tucker's Point could be done using the water as a medium.

But also, another reason to have the docks reinstated could be as a fail-safe, as a backup, as a contingency plan in case we end up having something happen to the causeway due to a natural disaster or an act of God.

So those are things that I really do like that were mentioned in the Green Paper, but also, one thing that we need to sort of look at when I go back into the air arrivals, is to be able to—and this might be an indirect consideration that the Government might want to have—look at really utilising our partnership and our alliance with the United States Customs and Border Protection. Because, as I mentioned in the beginning, talking about air arrivals and increased air arrivals, remember we enjoy the luxury of pre-clearance. So if we are bringing more air arrivals to the country, we want to make sure that they can enjoy that same pre-clearance regardless of the time.

So we do not want all . . . and I am throwing out hypothetical numbers. If we are attracting 10 airlines to Bermuda over the next two or three years we do not want all of them landing at two o'clock in the afternoon. We would like to be able to spread it out and have some come in at 10:00 at night and some could go out at 11:00 at night and start really stretching the operational hours and utilising the most out of that new air terminal that we are developing right now.

But ultimately, Mr. Speaker, I understand and appreciate that you like brief and concise speeches—and that is what I plan on giving right now, because for me I am about to wrap up. But the thing is that—

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: Huh?

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: Well, no, I am going through my main points, mainly about the airport, just making sure that people understand the importance and its contribution to the transportation infrastructure because that is a . . . just like the cruise ships bring in large numbers of people, so does the airport over time. And we need to make sure that we are able to

have our transportation infrastructure grow and adapt and be able to accommodate what is proposed to be coming down the pipeline with new air service, new air arrivals, increased air arrivals, increased visitor arrivals that are coming down the pipeline.

And, Mr. Speaker, just so that I do not go out of the Standing Orders, I do declare my interest as the Chairman of the Airport Authority, which is part of, what I call, the trinity—the Bermuda Airport Authority, the Bermuda Tourism Authority, and Skyport. So I am working with the Government, working with the other entities, to ensure that this does come in and does come to fruition.

So, I have declared my interest there, but outside of my sole interest as Chairman of the Airport Authority, the thing is that I believe that we all have an interest in this Green Paper and we . . . and I think the best way to explain it, to illustrate it, is as in one of my previous speeches I spoke on blood pressure. And I would like to sort of say that transportation—not just here in Bermuda, but transportation in any community, transportation in any country—is essentially the life-blood, the circulatory system, of said country.

Looking at the roads and the highways and byways like veins and arteries and having vehicles being the blood itself, but the people are sort of the blood cells or the little red blood cells that are carrying the oxygen and all the nutrients around the body and making sure that this country or community is happy and healthy.

So the thing is that we need to make sure that we are able to maintain the health of our transportation infrastructure. And in order to be able to properly maintain the health of our transportation infrastructure we have to look at what is going into it, what is coming out of it, what it is being asked to do, and what it needs to be able to do. And I think that we [should not do this] too quickly because we have a lot of good data in this Green Paper, we have a lot of good options, we have a lot of good observations. But I just want to make sure that the input and the contribution of air travel, air transportation, and increased air lift are at the forefront of these considerations of the Green Paper as we decide to move forward so that we can, not just achieve, but maintain and sustain a clean bill of transportation health.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you very much, Mr. Whip.

I now recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 9. Honourable Member Moniz, you have the floor.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First, just a matter of housekeeping, Mr. Speaker. The Member who spoke immediately before me declared his interest. I do not recall the Minister himself declaring his interest.

An Hon. Member: Well, you were not here.

The Speaker: Now—

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: The Minister is chirping over.

The Speaker: Go on.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Did the Minister declare his interest, Mr. Speaker? He is implying that he did.

The Speaker: Yes, we will continue.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: No, no, I want to raise the point. It is an important point, Mr. Speaker. I just want an answer because we need to know that.

The Speaker: To be honest with you, I am going to have to check the note on that one.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: I do not believe he did.

And so just . . . it is important, because there are commercial vehicles involved. I believe he has a beneficial interest in Island Construction, which runs a variety of commercial vehicles, including tractor trailers, tipper trucks, et cetera. And also I believe he was selling tyres. One of his companies has an interest in and was selling tyres, including to the government at one point.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Don't forget the other 12 businesses. If you are going to plug me, plug me good.

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: I am plugging you good. You are plugged.

[Laughter]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: You are plugged. Just as you wish to be, you are plugged. Consider yourself plugged.

And going from there, Mr. Speaker, he will get his turn to speak again so he can have a chance to clear the record.

Now, again, I would like to repeat the point that was made by my Leader on this side, that while this is . . . a discussion paper is good to have, we really need a White Paper in terms of what the Government intends to do out of all of this. So I mean, obviously, what you want to see, from my point of view, is you want to see meaningful analysis. And in many cases, of course, the Government does not have the numbers it needs, so what numbers it has are here. But there are numbers and numbers of situations where they say that they are going to get more real time analysis of, for example, ridership on the buses, et cetera. And so once you have your analysis, you

need to come to a conclusion and make a commitment.

Now, there are a number of commitments made through this paper, and I will run through them as we go. But then once you have those commitments to say we are going to do A, B, or C, for policy you need timelines and you need an approximation of what the dollar figure that will need to be allocated by the Minister of Finance in order to make this happen. And those are the things that are missing. So, that is why you need a White Paper, and I think it is mentioned in this Green Paper that it is normal to have a White Paper come out afterwards.

In fact, in the UK I think Green Papers are often discussion papers, so they are not necessarily published and they go directly to a White Paper. But to just have a Green Paper and then not go to a White Paper is something that is not normal and I do not believe that it is desirable, because we do not know where we are or where we are going.

Now, with respect, I will look at the Government commitments that are made in here. And the first one that comes up is the buses. Now, you know, we have this whole thing with the bus schedule. The Minister at one point in time said that he was reviewing the winter bus schedule and then, as we came into spring, he had a number of press conferences—three, four, five press conferences—saying that this new winter bus schedule was coming into effect. At that time we were coming into the spring, and the difference is that that is when the cruise ships come in so you get all of those tourists starting to come, which the Honourable Member from constituency 2 spoke to. So the whole ball game changes at that point in time. So you are not really looking at the winter bus schedule.

In the [Green] Paper it speaks at page 25, Context, at F, it says “Currently, DPT is working on a new winter bus schedule.” So I get very confused about whether they have a new winter bus schedule or just a new schedule. In any case, we know the schedule did not work, it has now been withdrawn, and I am not quite sure where we are, whether we are just going to sit with the old schedule or whether we are doing more analysis. And if we are doing more analysis, how long is that going to take?

So, at page 29 of the Green Paper it talks about “Government’s Perspective on Public Buses” and item [1.1.7.]2 there they talk about three factors. First the “change in the public bus schedule to reduce the number of buses needed at peak times and throughout the day; two, restoration of a budget allocation to allow for new bus purchases and, three, a proper annual maintenance budget. The Government continues to act on all three of these factors.”

Now, you know, the questions immediately arise: How long are we talking about to get this budget? And how much money are you asking for each of those items? We are already past the budget cycle. We do not have another budget until March or April of

next year. So what are we doing about that? There is no detail in there and, hopefully, the Minister can put some meat on that bone.

I mean one of the things I was concerned about, something that was mentioned by the Opposition spokesman are the so-called grey routes which have been introduced. And the Green Paper talks about grey routes being the school routes. But I believe there are also other grey routes. Originally, grey routes were routes that were not included in the original union agreement negotiated with the union. As routes were added then special concessions were made and, in some cases, the drivers, I believe, were getting overtime rates for driving these grey routes in normal working hours. And I want to know whether that is still going on, or whether that has stopped. And that was one of the big impediments to getting a new schedule because, of course, the bus drivers operate on a seniority basis. The senior guys were picking the routes where they got paid more money and they were not likely to say, *Oh, well, now they are not special bus routes anymore, they are normal bus routes after 20 years.*

So we need to know what is going on with that. And it is not a problem which has arisen quickly, it is a problem that has arisen over the last 20 years.

Again, we are talking about, in item [1.1.7.]3, under "Government's Perspective on Public Buses," the Green Paper says that the "DPT has taken delivery of four new buses, with an additional eight buses on order and due for delivery in 2019." Now, again, I would like to see a dollar figure put on that. We did discuss that during the budget. I think these buses, I think their first cost is close to half a million dollars each and it something or was something like approaching \$400,000, and I do not know if that was a landed cost in Bermuda.

The way we get our buses is a very strange way. We were dealing with people in Belgium. The buses were being made in Germany. They had to be shipped to Portugal to get customised. And when they arrived in Bermuda they were always too wide or there was always a problem with them. And you will recall there was a court case in Belgium and the middleman over there in Belgium disappeared. He went on the lamb, nobody could find him. And the police have an arrest warrant for him. So there was a lot of trouble concerning that.

And I do not know whether that has all changed, whether there are new contracts and new players in this game, but I agree with the statements in the paper that the buses we are getting are too expensive. They are the price of a small house in Bermuda. If you are paying \$400,000 for each bus, you can at least get a nice condo for \$400,000.

So—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Call me afterwards and I will sort you out. I will take a commission, too. I am being questioned about my knowledge of the real estate market, but . . . yes.

They are talking about these buses, so we need a dollar figure and we need to know if we have sorted out the wrinkles of buses arriving here and they are too big and then they have to be fixed at great expense or we just have buses that are too big on the road. And the buses are dangerous. And I have had a lot of complaints from members of the public saying the buses travel too fast, they speed. And, in addition to that, there have been people killed by buses in Bermuda—both tourists and locals. They are dangerous vehicles on our small roads, so we should be examining [the use of] smaller buses, which is looked into in this report. So I am glad to see that.

The suggestion here that we go to electronic tracking with GPS on the buses . . . and I think that was started with a small number of buses under the OBA Government, I believe. So that we have . . . they were talking about having a smartphone app with a schedule and tracking. All of that is a good idea. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating and, again, how long? So, what is the timeline on that? How long is that going to take? How much is it going to cost?

And obviously you want to do it on an incremental basis. It talks here about eliminating printed schedules. Well, you do not want to do that until you are sure you have got a robust app which everyone is happy with. You still do have people who do not have cell phones and you have visitors who may not have their phones on roaming if it is expensive.

But the ideas here are good ideas—cashless, digital fares, and real-time trip planning features, Wi-Fi on public buses. Again, you know, these are wish-list sort of things, which all make sense. But you have got to put a dollar figure on them to know where you are going with it.

So it speaks to the need for more investigation. And, you know, I am a bit disappointed because I thought that was taking place—ridership information. And I guess the buses that presently have GPS are getting ridership information, perhaps, at least times or something. They are talking about automatic passenger counts. Maybe the Minister can speak to that in more detail. Do we really know nothing about passenger counts? Is it all anecdotal evidence, as the Green Paper says? You would think we would have something better than that and, hopefully, there is a timeline for getting something better than that.

Now, with respect to going to greener buses, the idea of renewable fuels or hybrid diesel-electric or battery electric vehicles, in some places they use propane or LNG buses, [they are] saying that Government is currently reviewing all options. And, you know, it can be difficult and time-consuming changing to new systems and it would be good if the Minister would keep the House up to date on those [options] on a

regular basis. There are many things in here that we should be hearing about on a regular basis.

I agree that the fleet in general is too old to try and switch it to electric, which is what it says here. That is a fair point.

Now, it talks about “advocates for smaller buses, minibuses or shuttles—either private ventures, public-private . . . or . . . subsidized by the public purse.” Now, this raises one of my bugbears when you talk about minibuses. I think the paper later on talks about capping minibuses at 180. They talk about getting, I think, 20 more that are for the physically challenged. I think the report says that there are 147 minibuses now. And one of my bugbears is well, what are the service level agreements for each of those 147 minibuses?

Now, it seemed to indicate that once upon a time there was . . . when they first started there was a very rough agreement that they would serve in certain parishes. But now I do not think this applies anymore. And I would like to be corrected, but I think they just do whatever they want to do.

So while you get the Minister complaining about—and in the Green Paper complaining—that taxis are not on the road 16 hours a day, well, how many hours a day do minibuses have to be on the road? And what do they have to do? Who do they have to carry? Where do they have to go? I hear anecdotal stories saying someone has got a number of minibuses and they sit in their backyard until the cruise season starts and then they all go to Dockyard where they can make money shuttling people back and forth from Horseshoe Beach. And as a public service vehicle, I do not think that is really serving the public if they are just providing sort of that minimal level of service.

So while you are reviewing the service level of taxis, I would not let minibuses off the hook. I do not think Bermuda is being properly served by these minibuses.

But I agree with the idea to look at some smaller vehicles because it talks about some of the minibuses being up to 30-seaters and the Government bus being 38, so it is really not much between them. But I am sure one costs several hundred thousand dollars less than the other because our big buses are customised in Europe and they are very expensive.

With regard to the ferries, you know, I take the point that the ferries are extremely expensive and they are probably the least cost-effective mode of public transport that we have. It costs a lot of money and relatively few people, in terms of people who take public transport, are travelling on the ferries. And so we need to somehow rationalise that. Whether there is a way of privatising any of it, I am not sure, but it is something we need a proper study of again with some proper analysis, and for the Minister to come to the House with some concrete proposals.

Here it says, “Government will pursue a ferry service strategy that focuses on the purchase of fast ferries” (and I think that is as opposed to high speed ferries), “as those are less expensive to run and they will provide more flexibility in terms of routes and scheduling.” And that sounds like it is sensible. But I would like to see some analysis of what they cost. There is no statement here saying, well, a high speed ferry costs a million dollars and a low speed ferry costs half a million dollars. I think the figures are actually much higher than that. The figures I remember were up towards \$30 million when I remember the high speed ferries being bought.

And I do note that the only reference there to financing really is in 1.2.3.5 on page 36 where it says, “It is subject to capital project funds becoming available” (for these fast ferries and saying), “Capital costs may be partially offset by selling the current fleet.” But obviously that indicates we are still at a very early stage. That underlines the need for a White Paper, because we need to know, again, what the timeline is. A lot of these things are built-to-order so the process takes years. We need to know what the . . . the idea of what they cost and what the timeframe would be if we were to buy these ferries.

The idea of transport fare media is talking about getting rid of paper tickets and, you know, using smartphone apps and being able to pay by credit card, et cetera. It is a great idea. They say they have an RFI out there now and they are waiting for an RFP. And I congratulate them on that; that is a good idea.

And under the Student Transportation, at page 53, the Government is saying that they are moving to “a dedicated free school bus service” which can take the children straight to the school up to the end of secondary school from the age of 5 to 19. And then I note that “27 per cent said that they take the public bus to school and 40 per cent” (a higher number) “said that they take the public bus home from school.”

So, again, you need a timeframe. Perhaps the Minister can give us a timeframe on this dedicated free school bus service, what that involves, how many buses, et cetera.

There is a section on page 62 on Government’s Perspective on Accessible Transportation. They talk about increasing the number of public service vehicles that are accessible. We on this side fully support that.

The Government says it is going to “review options for disabled transportation service for residents” and saying that they have 20 applications for minibuses which are wheelchair accessible, and we fully support that.

It does say here at page 62 at 2.6.5, “Minibus operators who receive permits for, and licence, wheelchair accessible vehicles will be encouraged to establish a booking or dispatch service for prearranged transport.” But now what that basically is saying is that minibuses need to be more organised for

the physically disabled. But the truth is minibuses just need to be more organised, in my view.

When the Government speaks to private transportation, they talk to poor driving habits, talk to drinking and driving, inattention, red lights and we will all agree with that.

In 3.7.2, I am not sure if that is a misprint. It says, "Recognising that minicars appear to present a safer alternative to motor cycles or auxiliary cycles, the Ministry of Transport will not pursue legislative changes to enable minicars to become a second car . . ." Is that correct? They will *not*? Because it is saying here that it would be a good idea and then it saying *this is a really good idea but we are not going to do it*. Maybe it means—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: —maybe it should read "will now pursue." It says "will not pursue," so that does not make any sense.

It is saying that "the TCD Traffic Officers will carefully monitor the impact of minicars" and I am dubious about that. Again, I suspect that any evidence from traffic officers will be nothing more than anecdotal, they will not be keeping a computerised record or anything like that, and I do not think that this is really sufficient. But we in general agree that minicars are doing a great job and we can probably do [with] more of them. The dark visor saying is as usual.

The complaint about LED headlights is interesting. I mean, you know, the thing about . . . it really talks about LED headlights when they are on high beam. And when we have a lot of Bermudians—particularly older Bermudians—who drive around Bermuda on high beam on a permanent basis, why do they do that? They do that because they have poor vision. And why do they complain? It is the same people who use the high beams who complain about them because the people who use them have poor vision and the people they bother have poor vision.

And you might say, *Well, how do you know that?* Well, I know that because I just got implants in both of my eyes. I can get a free bus ride now, I am 65. I had cataracts and when you have cataracts you have blurred vision. So you may prefer to use high beams to enable you to have better vision at night and when other people use them you have blurred vision so you cannot see a darn thing. And what people need to be encouraged to do is to have their eyes tested for cataracts and get their eyes tested on a regular basis.

Recently I was abroad with someone who got his eyes tested. He was 45 years old and he was badly in need of glasses—prescription eyeglasses—and he had been driving in Bermuda since he was 18 without any glasses at all. And the optician abroad was shocked by that.

Now we come to page 90, which is Government's Perspective on Public Service Vehicles, and this also covers . . . that is, 4.8.2. It says "Government is not prepared to restrict, ban or put a moratorium on the number of commercial vehicles already licensed, including tractor trailers and large construction equipment. The increase of 338 more commercial vehicles is not sufficiently alarming to put any new legislation in place to reduce this category of vehicle."

[Section] 4.8.3 says "Legislating the times when large trucks are allowed on the road is not a practical solution to solving congestion issues. Continuing with strict measures via policy to restrict the hours of large commercial vehicles on the road in the morning and evening will only impede commercial growth and raise prices on goods to residents and visitors."

And that was, you know, what concerned me about the Minister because I know he has an interest in a company which has a number of those vehicles.

There it also talks about minibuses, but I have already addressed those. And it says "Minibus Regulations are under consideration and will be introduced" and I am very happy to hear that. And perhaps the Minister could give a bit more background on that.

With respect to the minicars as opposed to the minibuses, they are talking about the rental pool, and they are saying they will make final decisions "at the end of the 2019 summer season, after further consultation." I am glad to hear that.

But with respect to the minibuses, again, I think there need to be service level agreements.

Typically, the Government says that it is going to encourage the take-up of electric vehicles and I hope the Minister can bring those to the House to encourage people to use those as they, hopefully, become more affordable and have a greater range.

Page 121 refers to Government's Perspective on Road Traffic, and I am sure we all agree with that, better education, better driving habits. It would be nice to have a little bit more meat on the bone there about our timeframe and who is doing this. It says . . . TCD, they are saying, is reviewing the current Traffic Handbook and their licensing requirements. Maybe the Minister can get a detail there on a timeframe and when we are likely to see that.

We do not want things, you know, obviously, in these sorts of areas . . . happy for it to fall between the cracks.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Trevor G. Moniz: Yes.

Talking about sidewalks, you know, I remember when the PLP were in power before they were going to bring a sidewalk all the way down Harbour Road in Paget. They got somewhere up in Warwick and then quickly stalled. But I think there are lots of places in Bermuda . . . I know there is a map at Public

Works with the strips of land that they already own. Rather than getting new strips of land, I would encourage the Government to look at the strips of land they already own and, just on a regular incremental basis, continue to build sidewalks, which we all agree are positive. And everyone wants to see more people use bicycles and we encourage all of that.

Again, there is some talk there about Government transition on page 145, the Government's transition of the government fleet of vehicles (like at Public Works, et cetera) to electrical hybrids. And it says there is a current investigation regarding the transition of the bus fleet. In general, it would be nice to have a more detailed report on where that is going and sort of a timeframe.

With regard to the taxis—I am looking at page 154—Government's Perspective on Visitor Transportation, as you were talking about an app for buses, it would be conceivable that we would have an app for taxis, you know, either run by Government under government contract, an app that would allow people to call a taxi. And that is also how you can, if you want to monitor taxis, that they are doing more hours on the road, et cetera, and where they are at any given time, it would make sense to have GPS in an app working. And perhaps the Minister could speak to that in a more concrete fashion.

You know, there is talk in the back about Gypsy Cabs at [page] 156, but obviously, you know, they provide a cheap alternative for less well-off people and I would be the last one to tackle that. And a lot of the Gypsy Cab drivers know their customers personally and while it is technically illegal, if you cannot get a taxi and there is not a decent bus schedule, and you have ladies carrying bags of groceries, it is hard to know what their alternative would be.

So we are generally looking for timeframes on all of these things, including, you know, speed cameras, et cetera. So we look forward to, as I said, the Minister putting more meat on the bone.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

We recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 1. Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Mrs. Renee Ming: Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker: Good afternoon.

Mrs. Renee Ming: —and listening audience.

First of all, I would like to just commend the preparers of this report, because it definitely delves into all the areas that we probably think about or we have discussed, whether it be with friends, family around the living room, or the dining room tables. So, I was refreshed to read it and then see that some of

those things that you normally would not find in a report to be in there.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we as a country can accept that we have transportation issues. And so I am hopeful that what we see coming out of this report allows us to address our issues head-on and through a meaningful consultative process because that is what has already been started, so I do not believe that we would, as a Government, stray away from that.

The report in itself is very long because I believe it is 192 or 196 pages, and so, for today, I have actually selected some areas which I believe that my people have spoken to me about and would like to hear about. So you and I both know where I hail from, which is the best parish in Bermuda, which is St. George's.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: I think we have got a hearing problem over at this end.

An Hon. Member: Me, too, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: It is a hearing problem.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mrs. Renee Ming: There is nothing wrong with the [microphones] in here today.

The Speaker: Yes.

Mrs. Renee Ming: But, Mr. Speaker, St. George's has challenges in terms of transportation. And I know that in my time of sitting on the Corporation of St. George's we have talked about, you know, and in some capacity tried to address some of our challenges.

Some of the things that we . . . like we have talked about our ferries. We have talked about the buses, the minibus service, the Gypsy Cabs. So these are not unknown issues to us. These are issues that are well known to us. And so having some of them addressed in this document, I believe, gives us some way of how we actually are going to move forward.

My colleagues are smiling probably because I am talking about St. George's, but I do not know why they would be surprised, Mr. Speaker. I do not think anybody in this room should be surprised.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mrs. Renee Ming: Anyhow, we are going to continue to deal with transportation today.

And to be truthful, Mr. Speaker, some of the general lift issues that St. George's has have [carried over] into other areas, especially probably into our tourism product. And so when you look at the situation with general transportation issues and you look at our

tourism product you can see that there is a correlation between the challenges we have in transport that are spilling out into the challenges we have in terms of our tourism product.

So Mr. Speaker, it is, for me, and I believe that this report in some way touches on it, but I would hope that there is some priority for the St. George's transportation issues to be addressed. I am pretty sure that the Minister knows I will probably be front and centre making sure—

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: I know that.

Mrs. Renee Ming: —that those issues stay highlighted. But one of the things . . . I know on page 28 it speaks to East End . . . East End . . . yes, the bus service. And so in the report, I think it primarily addresses St. David's, because it says the East End bus service. I lost my pages a little bit, but I think it primarily speaks to St. David's and the challenges that they have with bus service.

But I also wanted to say that there are other . . . I know, like, for instance, if you know St. George's well, we have an area called Cut Road. And we continue to have transportation issues on the Cut Road side. And so when I say "transportation issues" it is that my constituents that live on Cut Road, they have bus service in the morning—first thing in the morning—the bus is at 8:05 and then they have a bus service in the afternoon which basically brings them home. So throughout the day there really is not anything that takes you down into the Cut Road area. And the bus stop—the main bus stop—if you actually lived down by Gates Fort, and you have to go up out to that bus stop, it is not a short walk, Mr. Speaker.

So I am hopeful that things like this area get addressed within this report as well because I have senior residents that stay down there and they talk about when they have to go get their groceries. And if they do not have transportation, part of the reason they are buying half of their groceries or things that are very light is because they would have to either walk down or hope that they would get a ride, maybe by a Gypsy Cab or something, so that they can take their groceries home. And so that would be something where it may not warrant full bus service and maybe it warrants looking at things that are incremental throughout the day that can be either consumed into the regular bus service or maybe we can look at mini-bus service for that area.

And although it is not outside of my area of our old St. George's, Ferry Reach has that same struggle as well in St. George's. And the residents that . . . can you imagine . . . you know where the main radius is, I know you know that far, Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker: Yes.

Mrs. Renee Ming: But it used to go all the way out to the Martello Tower. That is not a short walk either, and we have people that live all the way out there. So I hope that consideration would be given for those persons who live in those areas.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that . . . in this . . . on page 28, under the East End Public Bus Service, Stakeholder Comments & Thoughts, they actually say, "Run a feeder service for this area using smaller public buses; outsource these runs to private mini-bus operators using public transportation fares; and/or sponsor a private minibus service for this area."

So, the fact that the stakeholder comments are sort of in line with what I am saying tells you that the people who use these buses or live in these areas see that it is a bit of a challenge, but we do not see it as something that there is not some sort of a solution that can be given.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking on page 30 because I am going on . . . page 30, section 1.1.7.6 talks about the use of data to determine bus routes. And I think that this is key because as we begin to look forward, the data will be important in determining which buses go where, pretty much. So, as I said to you, these two areas that I mentioned they would not necessarily fall within in a regular bus route, but they would be, I would hope that they would be considered because there is not any data for it. Okay? There is not . . . you know, I cannot say that "X" amount of buses is here, but I do know that the bus that comes out of Cut Road every morning is full, so there is some data in that.

That the anecdotal data or evidence, which is going to be interesting, I do not know how we would figure that out other than someone coming and telling us that something is needed, but hopefully we will find a way to be able to do that. Data is key in this time that we live in because it is the data that is going to tell you or give you some level of solution.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that I want to talk about is ferries, so that is just actually on page 31. And it talks about the use of ferries. And I actually found this information to be interesting because I know in my area we have ferries, we do have lift-off ferries. Do I think it could be improved? My answer would be yes. Would I like to see a commuter ferry for St. George's? My answer would be triple yes. Because I think that this is something that we had at one point and we actually . . . because we do not have it now. And if you used it, then it is something that you would actually miss. I was a person who used the commuter ferry when we had it and I think there should be some consideration around putting that back in place again. Because if I am using the ferry, Mr. Speaker, that is one less car that is coming into Hamilton. And if the boat is going out full that is several cars that are not coming into Hamilton.

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Mrs. Renee Ming: Because every time I am in town the first thing I hear people saying is, *Can't find anywhere to park.*

And so as we start to look at whatever the solutions are going to be, I think we need to look at them on a more holistic level of *if we do this it impacts this, if we do this it impacts this*, so that we are not working in silos and saying, *I'm over here and I'm doing this*, but we want to be able to look at what the impacts are on the other areas.

So I do think that the information that was garnered in reference to ferries was interesting. And then the fact that, basically, we were told via this report that people would like to see more ferries. But there is no way we can discount the actual cost of what it takes to run a ferry. And so one of my suggestions would be that would we consider options for a less expensive ferry and maybe a consideration for less expensive fuel options? Because if we . . . and I believe that this is something that we will achieve because the data here tells us that persons would like to see more ferries.

On page 33, Mr. Speaker, the ferry system actually gets a really good rating in terms of reliability. And under the very reliable almost . . . well, about 47.57 per cent of the respondents to the survey said that they think that it is very reliable and 8.31 per cent say "extremely reliable." And so that is information there we can . . . there is obviously some confidence in the ferry system. And so that is something that we can use definitely to ensure that as we move forward, the fact that people feel comfortable using it or they believe that it is reliable, that is something that I believe that we can capitalise on.

And then on the exact same page, Mr. Speaker, Graph 9, where it says, "How do you usually get to work?" And the largest column is "Drive alone." And so is that a number that we can change? Because that is 46.81 per cent of the people saying, *I drive alone*. But if you drive alone in your car maybe you would be okay riding the ferry and maybe that number . . . because there is not a statistical data breakdown of it, but I am pretty sure that some of these people that are here would not mind parking the car and jumping on the ferry—

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Mrs. Renee Ming: —especially if they believe the ferry to be reliable. And I think "reliable" is the key word in this because you have to believe that it is coming, it is going to be able to allow you to make your commitment, wherever that is, and that you do not have any issues with that.

So maybe my question here is, If we improve what we believe to be our public ferry system, can we possibly change the number that is in Graph 9? And to be honest, I believe that we can, Mr. Speaker.

One of the questions that I have been questioning for years, Mr. Speaker, because it never made sense to me, and for me things just generally have to make sense, because in St. George's we have used ferries. And over the last few years we had the *Millennium* ferry, and then we allowed NCL to bring in their own ferry for their users. And I did not understand it at the time, I mean, I know that we are in a five-year thing and maybe at 2021 when we begin to look at planning for these things, do we actually want to have direct competition for our own ferries? Because when you look at the revenue later on in the report for the actual ferries and what we spend and what we actually make, is there not revenue that is being lost in the fact that we have an additional ferry?

And I remember when I sat in another place, Mr. Speaker, a few years ago and I questioned this, it was the fact that those ferries are directly tied to the cruise ship and they are going to transport their visitors. Would we not benefit financially if they were using the public ferry and actually paying for it? But, of course, there has to be an expectation that the ferry is reliable, it meets the needs, and that we have the lift capability to be able to do that. But that is something that I had questioned at that time.

On page 36 we get the Government's Perspective on Public Ferries and I thought that section 1.2.3.2 was interesting. It says, "The decision to move to a fleet of high speed ferries was made so that Bermuda's ferry service could directly compete with the private car commute. As that fleet ages, a decision must be made whether to continue with this strategy—which involves the further purchase of expensive bow-loading vessels using jet propulsion engines."

So that is going to let me segue into my next thing which is the bow loading. St. George's has gone through a huge exercise—and I thank the Corporation of St. George's for that—in taking the side-loading ferry and they did modification work on Hunter's Wharf and we created bow loading. Now, somebody may say *well, what's the difference?* Well it was a big difference, and definitely in terms of our disabled visitors because side-loading did not allow you to put a wheelchair on the boat. And so for the years of having the *Millennium* that was the case. So our visitors who may have disabilities or use handicap vehicles were unable to board the ferry or use the ferry.

So the fact that we now have the bow loading, I believe that it was completed . . . it was early . . . it was in 2018. But I had actually someone who wrote to me and said, *Thank you for allowing this to happen*, because they were not able to use the ferry before when they visited Bermuda the previous year. And the fact that the bow loading had been completed, they were able to come down to St. George's. Because, you know, to me, if you come to Bermuda and you do not get to go to St. George's, then what was the sense of coming, right?

[Laughter]

Mrs. Renee Ming: Yes. So, I definitely think that, you know, whilst it was an exercise where we spent, I believe it was just . . . it was over a million dollars, but it was an exercise that was worth it and needed at the time.

It is funny, because when you go back . . . when you have these types of reports sometimes you have to expand outside of the report and you need to go back and look at other things. And I went back to . . . my gosh, I am going to get the year wrong, but anyhow, it was 2005 or 2006, I believe, where we were considering bringing in fast ferries. And I feel that at this time, because when you speak to people now we almost act like we cannot live without the ferries, okay? We do, because they have almost become like a necessity in terms of our public transportation and I think that . . . I thank Dr. Brown because he was a former Premier, but he was also the Minister for Transport, for having that sort of a vision. Because I think that if any of us are honest, we would say that the ferries are here to stay. And although we have reached the stage now where maybe some of the ones we had from those years are ageing, we have an opportunity to be able to look for less expensive, cheaper fuel options for our ferries. So I would be pleased for us to be able to give that consideration.

Now, mentioning that we have an ageing fleet, if you look on page 39, Mr. Speaker, and this is actually, it says "Context" and I am keeping it in the context in terms of costs. I am a numbers person. So I am always looking at the cost for something or how that revenue is going. Because I believe if you spend a dollar, you have got to find a way to make a dollar . . . and maybe two, if we could. So the fact that we are . . . our expenditure, though, for ferries . . . so in the ferry revenue and buses, as well . . . so for buses we actually take in—based on this table anyhow—it is saying \$6.4 million. But our expenditure is \$21 million. And for ferries it is \$1.495 million, but the expenditure is \$8.646 [million].

So I think that it would be in our best interest to find a way to work this number to have a greater revenue amount because, if not, if we are making . . . and the overall expenditure is \$30 million a year, but what we are actually taking in is \$7.979 [million], that is less than 10 per cent of what it is we are actually spending.

So, Mr. Speaker, that would be something that would have a wider discussion and, like I said, I just believe we are at a space where we have that time, like we have the opportunity to be able to do that.

One of the things that was mentioned in the report, and I saw it in several sections, was the need to have sufficient signage. And it is funny because I went around and I had a look and it is absolutely correct. I know because I know. Like for St. George's, I

know because I know. But if you go around and you actually look . . . and especially St. George's, we are definitely guilty of it. We could definitely do with better signage with regard to our ferry and bus thing. So I believe that that is actually a very minor thing that we can fix rather quickly.

Another section of the report that I thought was interesting, Mr. Speaker, and it is funny because it spoke to traffic. Oh, my gracious! Have any of you ever spent a lunch time on the square in St. George's? Just come down one day between 12:00 and 2:00. You do not even have to stay until 2:00, you can just come for about 15 minutes. At times it is chaotic, okay? The decision was made quite some time ago to not even have public buses there because if you fill that into the equation of there are two banks right there on the square, you used to have BELCO in the area, so everybody was trying to get into the square area.

We then pedestrianised the square area, so we took away the parking based out in the middle, which probably from a safety standpoint made a lot of sense. But we still have . . . you know, people that want to just drive on, go around the bridge, you have the minibuses, you have bikes, you have cars, and so in there you have a serious mix of . . . you have visitors who want to appreciate the town, and then on the flipside you have residents who want to use the town, because what we have in St. George's, which is our uniqueness, is a living and working town. So all of these things when they come together can be chaotic at times. But we just have to try and make sure that we find ways to make sure because the first thing on my mind would be safety. Because, you know, obviously, we want to make sure that everyone is safe.

So I am hopeful that . . . I read section 6 and it speaks to better legislation and better enforceability. In some cases I believe we already had the legislation before us, it is just a matter of enforcing what we already have to reduce the congestion.

Mr. Speaker, I definitely wanted to make sure I spoke on the section where we talked about Active Transport, which is like moving around and getting around, because those of you who know know that I have a community walk that we do every Saturday. And although we do it in St. George's . . . you are looking at me now, so you are quite welcome to join us at any time tomorrow at 7:00 am. But for those of you that know, we walk all around St. George's. So we touch the Railway Trail, we touch just about anything anywhere. Trust me, we have done it. So when I looked at the section on that I was like, *Ah, okay*. So what do we see when we are out? And I have to admit I walk with a bunch of people who definitely are aware and they like to make sure that they take pictures. And if they see something that they believe to be an issue, they let the area MP know and then, by virtue of that, Colonel Burch knows.

So there are things, I believe, that can be done to improve and encourage people to use those byways because there is a . . . we, especially for St. George's, Mr. Speaker, which is what I am particularly speaking about today, I touch on our history a lot. And I do not really think that we can get away from the fact that this is where it all started and so I truly do believe that it deserves its due. I am not going to say that there is a lot of improvement that can happen there, I definitely would like to make sure that the paths are clear and that we can always walk freely because that, you know, those are some of the concerns that we see that come out of our walk.

So in the Active Transport thing, I do believe that there could be some improvement there in terms of how we actually keep it.

And my last point, Mr. Speaker, was on section 8. And if you live in St. George's, you would know that this is almost like if you hit a beehive, okay? And the particular thing that I am talking about there is the widening or deepening of the Town Cut. So to look at the results that you get from this survey that was taken, especially if you look at Graph 50, it says 24 per cent agree with widening the Town Cut, and we have 15 per cent that strongly agree. But you would have to break these numbers down for me and let me know how many were St. George's people that took this . . . that gave you this data right here because I canvassed, and I know what St. George's people say.

And what is funny is that years ago, I think, you could have a very strong, *Absolutely no*. But as times are changing and evolving, you are beginning to hear some people say, *Yeah, that might not be such a bad idea*. I used to get an earful of this from my Uncle Phoopa during his time because he strongly believed that modification was the way to go. But I used to tell him, *Well, convince the people that stay down on Cut Road that their house is not going to be underwater, all right?* And I know that may sound crazy, but that is what people think. They are like, *If you open up that water and those floodgates come in, my house would be underwater, okay?*

[Inaudible interjections]

Mrs. Renee Ming: So . . . so . . . but I say all of that to say, Mr. Speaker, that you . . . over time . . . and the time that I am noting is that time that I used to sit on the Corporation of St. George's to the time of being a representative here, you are seeing . . . there is a changing mind-set. So maybe, based on this report, it is time to have that wider conversation of if that is something that would be considered.

Or . . . I am going to say the "or" because in the Graph 51, it says, "Do you agree with building a new cruise ship pier in the Murray's Anchorage area of St. George's?" Now, this has strong support as well. And so it does deserve, I believe, a wider conversation and it should fit into our wider plan of what it

is that we actually even see for St. George's. Because if persons are willing to consider the cruise ship pier, maybe that would be the way to go. I am not trying to get my people all up in a tizzy down there.

But I hope that I have been able to convey some parts of this report to you and maybe even offer some solutions. And I know it may be very one-sided to St. George's, Mr. Speaker, but the suggestions that I have made can be used in other areas. But I believe that when I stand up and speak I am always for St. George's, so I have given you that aspect of it. And if Mr. Tyrrell wants to use some up in Warwick where he does not necessarily have any other things to do anyhow, he can use those things.

But I want, like I said, I hope that I have offered support and solutions with regard to the report. I thank the preparers of the report. I thank the Minister for bringing it forward and on that note, Mr. Speaker, I will take my seat.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

I now recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 8.

Honourable Member Simons, you have the floor.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, I have been here 20 years.

The Speaker: Yes.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: And I make it a habit of trying to read the Green Papers that are produced by governments on various national issues. I find them very, very educational, enlightening, and informative. It gives me a true insight of what is going on in other ministries, be they health, transportation, works and engineering, basically it just presents a compendium of ideas, recommendations with . . . of strengths and weaknesses.

I think these Green Papers should be made available to most of our schools so that our students could have access to them because they are very, very informative. And if we are going to talk about Bermuda's infrastructure then I believe this would be a great document to pass onto our young people so that they can understand the transportation system here in Bermuda. And, as I said, make these Green Papers available to all of our schools so that our schools can have a better understanding of health care, transportation, works and engineering, and things like education and other aspects of Government.

So like other Ministry's Green Papers, to me, Mr. Speaker, this Green Paper was very productive. I thought it was thorough, and I want to commend those people who had a hand in its production. I want to commend the Government for bringing it forward, and

I also learned quite a bit from it, Mr. Speaker. The topics that they covered, I think, were quite relevant and appropriate and I think that it is good that we are here debating it today.

My only challenge, Mr. Speaker, and it was mentioned earlier, is the White Paper, because we could have a compendium of ideas, topics, but at the end of the day we want to know what the priorities of Government will be. What instrument do we have to ensure that there is discipline in ensuring that what is mentioned in the White Paper or the issues in the Green Paper will be delivered to this country?

I was watching a television show where the Minister said there was no intention of having a White Paper and I said, *Oh, this is strange. No White Paper?* To me that just basically does not allow discipline to be brought to the government process, Mr. Speaker, in regard to what priorities and what important issues the Government are going to do first during their terms in Government. It just allows, without a White Paper, it allows the Minister in Government to pick and choose from all over the place and there is no rhyme or reason for addressing the issues in a methodical fashion.

So I would have liked to have seen like most governments do, this Government follow tradition and have a White Paper after the Green Paper. And, in fact, I think on page 14 of this Green Paper they said they would probably have a White Paper to follow this Green Paper. But the Minister has made it clear that you are not going to tie him down and that there will be no White Paper following this report.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to go through the whole report because a lot has been said already. I am just going to address a few issues. I am not going to be, you know, a long time, I do not think I will use the full half hour.

As was said, the general issue for me is our transportation system here in Bermuda has to be an integrated transportation system whereby the public transportation—the buses, the ferries—are linked and connected under an integrated schedule and, in fact, it will also embrace the [minibuses]. Right now we have strong capacity going from the East End of the Island to the West End of the Island. The buses, the ferries, they are all connected.

But we have challenges out in the periphery from going to North Shore to South Shore. We all know about St. David's, the transportation challenges going from St. David's Island to St. George's. I know in my constituency after 6:00 pm it is difficult to get a bus going down to South Shore Smith's Parish after 6:00 pm, or even 7:00 pm. and the same thing if you live along Harrington Sound Road. If you have a resident who lives in the dense area up in the Minister's constituency, Horseshoe Bay Road, if you have families living there and they want to go shopping down at Heron Bay, you know, there is no public transportation that will go from south to north or south to the Middle Road.

As I said, I think, going from east to west is well-managed and well-defined, but from north to south or south to north across country, I think that more work needs to be done in this space. And I particularly believe that the [minibuses] can be used to supplement what we have today. They could be used with better regulations, better infrastructure, and better support.

Now, I am going to get into the report proper. The issue that basically had the most impact on me was when I read section 6. Section 6 speaks to the Road Traffic. And they gave a history of accidents and deaths in Bermuda and I will read some of it, Mr. Speaker.

The report says, "There were 227 deaths attributed to road traffic collisions between 1997 and 2017, which is an average of 11.3 deaths per year."

Mr. Speaker, to me we have to something about the accidents that we have on our roads in regard to motorcycles and vehicles. I do believe that the minicars could be part of this solution, if we are going to save some of the lives of some of our young people on our roads.

The report indicates that the Government may consider allowing households to have a [minicar], as well as a regular vehicle, on an assessment number. I hope that they do pursue this option, because if it can get our young people off of these cycles, which are basically [death] traps that are taking the lives of our young people and our tourists, then I think one life saved is good enough of a result for me. So I would encourage the Government to consider allowing minicars to be added as a second vehicle to households, purely for the safety.

And the report has provided statistics that basically confirm that there are fewer fatal accidents . . . fewer fatalities in these minicars. The fatalities all, primarily, involve motorcycles. So if we get these young people off of these motorcycles, then I think we can try and save some of their lives. In fact, the report said in 2016 1,685 people had accidents, 189 people were admitted to King Edward Memorial Hospital, and [there were] 15 fatalities. In 2017, there were 1,689 persons attended [to in] the King Edward Emergency Room, or the [Lamb Fogg] Urgent Care Centre in St. David's, as a result of road traffic collisions. These are high numbers, Mr. Speaker, and they are consistent numbers. As I said, in 2016, there were 1,685 people requiring hospital services because of road accidents. And in 2017, there were 1,689.

I think these statistics speak for themselves and that we need to do things differently so that we can get these young people off the roads in regard to these motorcycles and reduce the number of accidents and people who harm themselves on our roads. I truly believe that the minicar is something that we can examine, and they will be safer for everyone. In fact, it is not just the young people who would use it. The seniors! I mean, seniors still ride motorcycles up

into their 80s, 85, 86 years old. At that age their responses are not as positive as they ought to be and I think the minicar would provide some added security and will reduce the risk of them injuring themselves.

I note that the Government has said that they have no intention of lifting the current requirement that assessment numbers only allow one car per household. As I said, I think this needs to be examined so that, yes, you can have one car per household, but you can also allow the household to have a minicar. So I will move on.

The other issue that caught my attention is student safety. The issue there is not just safety. When I was Minister, we had challenging issues in regard to consistently getting our students to and from school, based on the availability of buses. Now, there were many challenges in the bus scheduling, the bus supply, and union issues; I accept that. But at the end of the day, I did not feel that our students' education should suffer because of what was going on in the transportation industry. They had an important role to play. They had to, basically, address their educational needs. And for me, the fact that these issues were going on when they were doing some of their external exams just caused additional anxiety to our young people. So I believe that our schools should have dedicated transportation for our young people so that they can get to school on vehicles that are reliable and safe. And get them to school on time on a regular basis.

Now, these vehicles can, in my estimation, be minivans. Again, more work has to be done in this space. I would encourage the Minister of Transportation to examine the possibility of having a more integrated system when it comes to our schools. I know that in other jurisdictions, in the Caribbean, there are a number of minibuses assigned to each school to ensure that their students get there on time on a regular basis.

So I would invite the Minister to take that under advisement and consideration so that our schools can, basically, function and our students can get there on time.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Point of information, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Beg your pardon, Member.

POINT OF INFORMATION

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Yes, for the edification of the Honourable Member, there is an example of a school bus that leaves St. George's at 7:20, at Cut Road, all the way down at the end by Gates Fort, and goes through and services all the way up to Bermuda Institute.

An Hon. Member: Wow.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: So it encompasses Warwick Academy and all those . . . and goes right up the South Shore, and doesn't go into town. So, Spice Valley . . . it even goes by Purvis. And someone who works up the West End sometimes can jump on.

An Hon. Member: Yes.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Member, continue.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Thank you very much. I thank my colleague for his contribution.

As far as student safety is concerned, as we all know, there has been a history of bullying before and after school, and a number of parents have raised their concern about the safety of their children. Again, I believe that if we have an integrated, effective transportation system for our students, then the opportunity for this bullying around the school premises or on the way to school will diminish.

The other issue is that we have a lot of young people meeting in Hamilton and loitering and basically finding themselves in situations that are not that positive from time to time. And so I think if we keep them moving, keep them out of town, keep them on their way to home (where they should be) so that they can get their homework done and other things done around the house, then I think it will help.

The other issue is, as I said earlier, reliability. A number of parents have indicated over the years that the buses are full and so they bypass some of the bus stops where the students are waiting for them to get to school. And as I said earlier, we need to ensure that our children are not compromised because of the challenges faced by the scheduling and the number of buses that we have available for the community.

The other issue is sidewalks, and walking along the road. I ride a bike to work every day and I see a number of children walking to school. Some children are as young as five years old and they are walking by themselves. I just get concerned when I see them walking along the road and there is no sidewalk. In fact, again, when I was the Minister of the Environment, I was coming along North Shore Road and I saw that the sidewalk was all overgrown. I called the people in Parks and said, *I need these sidewalks done immediately because if any child can't walk on a sidewalk, and walks in the road and gets killed or has an accident, then, to me, it would be devastating and it will not be good enough and it would reflect badly on this Government, or any Government.* So, to me, it is crucial that we have these sidewalks cared for.

I have to give the current Minister kudos in that I have been looking at these sidewalks and they are in fairly decent condition. So I give the current Minister kudos for the work that he has done to date.

The other issue is the crossings. I see that most of the schools have guards there to help our

young people cross major roads. Again, I think it is money well spent and they should be recognised for the work that they do. I believe that all schools should have guards for all major crossings if they are close to any school.

[Pause]

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Okay. I have spoken about the one car per family. I would like to basically talk about taxis a bit, Mr. Speaker.

The issue of taxis is a very interesting one because taxi drivers are not a harmonious group. Some taxi drivers drive a taxi because that is their profession. Some taxi drivers drive a taxi because they want to get out of the house. Some taxi drivers drive a taxi because they want to make a contribution to tourism. They are retired from their other careers, and so they say, *Okay. Well, this is my contribution. I am doing it. I make a little change here because it is something that I wanted to do to help Bermuda.* So the motivations for driving taxis are different. Therefore, when you try to get the taxi drivers together it becomes challenging because they are all in it for different reasons.

I am not saying that one reason is better than the other; the reasons are different. As a consequence, we have to somehow bring all of them to the same page, and get the same level of commitment to ensure that the industry improves and that everyone buys in on what is the best way to move forward for the industry in regard to legislation and regulations.

One thing the report raised that I found was quite appropriate was the issue of having debit card and credit card [machines] in our taxis. I travel quite a bit, and I noticed that taxis, almost everywhere, have credit card and debit card machines in them. In fact, someone, an executive of a bank, told me that once a millennial who . . . you know, a very successful millennial who is a CEO of a business in New York City, came down and had no cash. He only had his debit card. He got into the taxi, went to Southampton Princess, and the driver said . . . say it was \$60 or \$70.

So the tourist said, *Well, I have no cash. I can't give it to you. I can give you my debit card.*

[The taxi driver said], *Well, we don't have debit card [machine]. We need cash.*

That, to me, is an indication that we have to move ahead with the times. That young man had to call his father to see who on the Island (because it was Sunday evening) he knew who would, basically, provide this man with some cash to pay this taxi driver.

[Crosstalk]

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: But anyway, the guest got the cash and paid the taxi driver. So I am saying this, you know, *Come on, taxi drivers. We have to get with it.* I think it is time that we put infrastructure in place

that will allow these drivers to have debit card and credit card [machines] in their taxis.

Uber and other such carriers, I will leave that one alone because I have heard so many positive and negative comments on these Uber-type services that I would let the Government do their own research. I have heard a lot of positive things about Uber and Uber drivers, and I have heard negative things. I think the issues are around vetting the drivers, vetting the suitability of the vehicles, setting the standards for these types of licences (if they are issued), and standards of performance and conduct. So, to me, if we are going to go down this route, we need to make sure that we have adequate and sufficient regulations in place in regard to the drivers, the vehicles, and the code of conduct that is required for having these vehicles. Because I know, I speak to many taxi drivers in London and they will give you an earful if you mention the word "Uber." And it is the same thing in Canada.

And then, you know, I read stories . . . when I was in South Africa, Uber drivers having their passengers' lives threatened. So, again, we have to be very careful, and I ask the Government [that] if they go down this route, [to] do their research. Assess the risks associated with this business and make sure that at the end of the day we come out with a product that is safe, reliable, and improves the services offering of our public vehicles.

Minibuses: As I said, minibuses create jobs and I am a proponent of minibuses if they are well-regulated and if we have a proper plan for them being integrated into our transportation network. As I said, the minibuses can supplement and complement the existing public service vehicles and public service transportation that we have from the East End of the Island to the West End, from the ferries to the buses. And for the harder-to-reach remote areas, they can do circular routes and pick up those people who live in areas where it is difficult to access the public transportation. So I think there is a role for them. Again, they can also be used in the school routes on a more regular basis. Again, another opportunity for the minibus drivers.

As was said in the report, right now, because of the challenges we have with the number of buses that we have in our fleet, and the number of buses on our roads, the minibuses are used to service our guests who arrive by ship. Again, Mr. Speaker, I believe that these minibuses basically can be the saviour for our public transportation system, and it can be an avenue whereby our young people can basically start their business and be entrepreneurial. So I would encourage that we basically set some framework around minibuses and work with the minibus drivers so that they can be integrated into the transportation network with the public vehicles. Because if we have an efficient transportation system, and efficient transportation hubs, then I think it will work well for everyone.

When I talk about the network, the integrated network, I also like to extend it to not only just minibuses, but the Park N Ride services and infrastructure. Again, keeping people out of the city, be it is St. George's or Hamilton, people would be willing to park their cars out on the public docks in Southampton, and Warwick, and Smith's, and Hamilton Parish if there was a proper infrastructure for them to leave their cars and motorcycles and also pick up other public transportation or minibuses on a regular and reliable basis.

I know for a fact—I mean, I have a car and I hardly ever use it. And when I come to town on the weekend, I never ever bring my car to Hamilton on the weekend. I ride my bike, because I can find a parking spot and I can get close to where I want to go. As far as the car is concerned, there is always [the problem of finding] parking and meters, and you know, you drive around and around, and there is congestion. So, I believe that if we have a stronger Park N Ride infrastructure and support system that we can alleviate some of the traffic that is currently plaguing our cities, Hamilton and sometimes St. George's. You heard the Member from [constituency] 1 talk about congestion in the square in St. George's. So, I think this could be a means of helping to fight congestion.

I spoke about the minicars. Yes, I believe in them; there could be opportunities.

Electrical cars [EVs] and hybrids. I embrace the recommendations that are here. The challenge that we have is ensuring that the infrastructure to support these electrical vehicles and hybrid vehicles is in place in this country. In addition, the issue is cost. Hopefully as time passes the cost of the electrical vehicles will be reduced. Because on page 93 of the report it says, "Current pricing of EVs in Bermuda is 1.5 to two times more than that of similarly sized internal combustion engine vehicles."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I bought a car last year because my car died after 20 years, and, as I am tall, I needed a larger car. So, I said, *Let me see what's available*. When I saw the price of a . . . and you know, I am environmentally conscious and, you know, I am for the environment. And when I saw the price of an electric vehicle for a car that would suit my size, and then I saw a car that size, [an internal] combustion vehicle, to me, unfortunately, there was no choice because I was paying almost double for the electric vehicle.

An Hon. Member: In your size.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: In my size, yes.

[Crosstalk]

[Timer beeps]

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: I'm not finished, am I?

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Oh, Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker: [Microphone off]

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Anyway, Mr. Speaker, thank you. I had a few other things to [say], but my time is up. I enjoyed making my contribution, and thank you for the opportunity.

The Speaker: Thank you, Member.

Does any other Honourable Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 4. Honourable Member Furbert, you have the floor.

Mrs. Tinee Furbert: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First, I want to thank the committee and persons who put together this Transportation Green Paper because I know it was a hefty task and they did such a wonderful job in accumulating all this data and information, so for that we are thankful.

I wanted to touch on four areas in this Green Paper, and those are minibuses, commercial trucks, the East End transport, and of course, accessibility transportation. As I was going through this pretty long paper, it is definitely a step in the right direction when you see the term "differently abled" used multiple times throughout this document. So it is definitely an issue or something I am hoping that our community and our Government is wanting to address, the transportation for the differently abled population. But more to that, I mean, this issue is so very important it brings to mind at one point when we started to hear the outcries from our community in regard to the inconsistency of the bus schedule and routes. I think I remember hearing a little boy, how he made a song about how inconsistent the bus scheduling was. And then also incidents where we saw mechanical issues with buses carrying school children. And so it is a significant concern, and we do [need to] hash out many concerns that are included in this Green Paper.

I want to start with the commercial trucks. There is a small segment on page 11 in regard to commercial trucks and the concerns centred on the truck size and weight as there are now more trucks on the Island and they carry heavy items and they damage our roads and our bridges. But not only that, Mr. Speaker, there are times when some of these commercial vehicles are carrying loads that are much heavier than what they are supposed to be carrying and so there is . . . I do not know if anyone studies these trucks, but they have something on them called . . . help me out . . . load end . . . tare load?

The Speaker: Tare load, yes.

Mrs. Tinee Furbert: And so there is actually a capacity in which these trucks are able to carry and a lot of times they are definitely carrying more than their load, and they are not even securing the items that are in their trucks. You see trees all hanging off, and we have actually seen incidents where people have recorded actual accidents that have occurred because things have flown off of these vehicles. So it is my hope that we do address these concerns so that it does not cause a tragedy to someone in our community. We just need to get a little bit stricter with enforcement when it comes to what loads these trucks are actually supposed to be carrying.

I also want to thank . . . I was just reading, or I noticed in one of the explanatory notes, that there were a number of persons who responded to the Transport survey. Actually, 65 per cent of those persons were female, and 35 [per cent] of those persons were male. So I want to thank all the women who took the time to actually respond to this survey. I do not know if they are the majority of the transportation users, but we want to thank the women for taking the time to answer the questions as it related to the Green Paper and Transportation survey.

So I am going to move right along to the accessibility . . . sorry, before I get to accessibility, I do want to address the East End bus service.

One of the questions that I currently get when I am out canvassing is, *How are you going to address the issue with transportation to the St. David's area?* Because this is an area which is not serviced enough, with the frequency, and it is actually one of the areas that becomes least frequently travelled when we are experiencing issues with the mechanics of the buses. And so one of my colleagues has mentioned already in regard to the service of buses to the East End, particularly all the other small areas in which buses cannot get to. It is a significant concern, particularly to the residents of St. David's. So, we hope that when our fleet is better complemented that the . . . whether it is through regular buses or whether it is through mini-buses that this issue is addressed, because I believe there is supposed to be even more development going on in that area, particularly around the Battery area, which will mean there will be an increase in people. So those persons will need access to transportation. So the hope is that we can highly consider proper transportation out to St. David's.

I do want to thank the Paradise transportation company that is currently providing transportation to the St. David's area. I frequent out there quite a bit, so I do get to see them transporting clients in and out of St. David's and even in the St. George's area, so we want to give great thanks to them for being able to provide that service to the residents. I think they have definitely complemented a short fall in regard to transportation to the residents in St. David's. So, I would just like to thank them and congratulate them for

providing that service to our residents in the St. David's area.

[Pause]

Mrs. Tinee Furbert: So now I am just going to go on to accessibility transport, which is something that is very important to me.

The other day I was in a nursing home and I was talking to a former . . . well, retired senior PTB manager. He is now wheelchair bound. When I first saw him he was in sort of a bucket chair, and in this bucket, sort of wheelchair, he is unable to propel himself independently. Then he moved from one facility to another and we were able to get him the proper wheelchair that was suitable for him. And now with his new wheelchair he is able to mobilise and move himself around the facility.

I remember having a conversation with him and I said, *Well, what accessible buses or accessible transport, is this important to you?*

And he said, *Well, you know, today I never thought about it, but yes, it is important.*

So something that was never really thought about is now becoming a more important and relevant issue. Particularly as our disabled population does increase in Bermuda, it is vital and important that we allow mobility within our community. Some of you may see persons . . . because that is not actually in this paper, but we see persons more frequently in our community using power chairs, or using scooters, and they are driving around the roads. Power chairs or scooters are not necessarily intended for road use; they are actually intended for short distances within neighbourhoods or around stores or grocery stores. That is what they are intended to be used for, or on sidewalks, but we are actually seeing the use of these vehicles . . . sorry, not vehicles, these power chairs and scooters on the road. And sometimes you may find yourself behind someone, you know.

But it is a very unfortunate situation because if they had access to proper public transportation then we would have [fewer] power chairs and scooters having to drive around on our roads. So, I do not want us to limit [them] because right now they do not have any other choice. Those ones who are very active and want to maintain an active lifestyle should have some option or some way of being able to get around the community when the options right now are very nil.

I would also just like to speak to having visited some of the other islands and seeing what accessible options there are for persons with disabilities or wheelchair users. And, you know, I have seen . . . you order a taxi, you order a minivan and they come and they roll out their ramp and you can just wheel right up into the truck, and some places even, you know, you have access to a companion if you want to. I have seen this in the other islands, Mr. Speaker. So my hope is that we will see this as an important issue to

be able to address for both our locals and our visitors alike.

There is one particular issue that I would like to bring to mind, and that is within the realm of financial assistance. We know that most of our financial assistance users are our seniors and our persons with disabilities. However, there is an allowance in the Financial Assistance regulations that speaks to transportation, but that is public transportation. So there is an allowance in the Financial Assistance regulations that speaks to public transportation. So if the majority of our users are seniors and persons with disabilities on financial assistance, then they definitely can access public transportation. So what are we going to do about allowing an allowance for other modes of transportation, if the public transportation system is not going to allow them to take advantage of that particular transportation? I think that we need to make changes to that Financial Assistance regulation allowance to be able to allow persons to have access to some mode of transportation.

Also, I wanted to bring up the issue of disabled parking bays and permits, because it is addressed in this Green Paper. There is a social media site called "Parking Badly" and many times you see on this site people posting pictures of vehicles parked in disabled parking spots which are not supposed to be parked there, Mr. Speaker. That even occurs on our House grounds sometimes where we have [owners of] vehicles who are inconsiderate of persons with disabilities, parking in disabled vehicle spots.

This paper has outlined very clearly and made suggestions in regard to how we can actually address this issue. What the public is saying is that we need to deter people from parking in disabled bays by increasing the fine, also establish better enforcement for disabled parking spaces, install cameras and clamping mechanisms to be able to catch offenders who illegally park. This is not something to take lightly, Mr. Speaker. It is a lot of work having to take someone who is in a wheelchair or a power chair and be able to unload them from the vehicle. Actually, you need quite a . . . if it is a back loader, you need quite a bit of space in the back to be able to load someone off safely.

The hope is that with disabled parking bays you can get them as close to the facility or the place in which you are trying to get to, and that is the aim of a disabled parking spot. There are disabled parking spots around our City of Hamilton, and in reading through this paper we do note that there are increasingly more of the disabled spots throughout the City of Hamilton. So we are also grateful that someone had some insight to be able to provide more disabled parking spots throughout the City of Hamilton. I do notice that throughout our community that there are more disabled parking spots, but probably not nearly enough as there should be.

In September of 2017, the Disability Advisory Council had a town hall [meeting] on accessible transportation. I just wanted to share, if I can, Mr. Speaker, some concerns that they actually had. Some questions that they had were: Who can or cannot operate an accessible vehicle? How does one prove the ability to drive? What protocols do physicians follow to determine who can or cannot drive?

They wanted us to note that there were limited choices when it does come to taxi transportation, and it is not economical for users to be able to use taxis that are for disabled users. There is no centralised way to provide info on options for transportation.

Some vehicle owners said they were bringing in vehicles for persons with disabilities, and the taxes are waived on [such] vehicles, but then they actually never use the vehicles as intended. And that is very important. I believe it highlights in this paper that if minibuses are going to be allowed or given permission to [be brought] in as accessible vehicles that they are somehow labelled so that people know that this is the intention of this minibus, to be able to provide assistance for persons with disabilities.

Somebody just showed me a picture of a vehicle in a disabled spot that is not supposed to be there. It is a police vehicle.

[Laughter]

Mrs. Tinee Furbert: So we seriously, seriously, seriously need to respect this, because we do not know what our condition is going to be like one day, and we ourselves might need to have access to a disabled parking spot.

But I will continue with what some of the community had expressed in the town hall meeting held in September 2017. Some solutions that they wanted to provide or to share were to hold people who obtained the PC licences and accessible vehicle permits accountable, hold them accountable and provide more standardised identical takes of accessible vehicles. I do see that some vehicles out there have the symbol of a wheelchair, but not all of them are standardised. So we should standardise them so we know who is to have permission to carry those persons with disabilities.

To enforce parking spaces, support the City of Hamilton with the proposed legislation, provide subsidy programmes, centralise our resources so that it is easy to determine what is available for persons with disabilities, keep an up-to-date record of the number of accessible vehicles on the roads so that Transport Control Department can determine what we need. We need to be able to equip persons with disabilities driver's assessments. There are occupational therapists who are available to assist with this, where they can actually assess someone who may find themselves with a disability, whether it be through a stroke or some other neurological condition. Because some-

times we think that persons with disabilities, once they acquire a disability, they will have no function in our community thereafter. But we are able to rehabilitate people so that they are able to drive thereafter, and there are all sorts of accommodations and modifications that can be done to a vehicle to be able to allow persons with disabilities the ability to drive again.

The other thing that was important was to provide training programmes for those persons who do drive accessible vehicles and making sure that they are trained with mental health first aid. I know that mental health is an important topic particularly with clients . . . sorry, users using the bus and the drivers not knowing how to manage. There are resources that are out there. There is the Mental Health First Aid programme, which is down through the Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute. There is Action on Alzheimer's & Dementia. There is the Ageing and Disability Services and there is also the Bermuda Society for the Blind. Those are just a few to name. There are many more organisations that can perhaps help those persons who have accessible vehicles and are driving our public members.

Some years ago there was a paratransit report that was done for Bermuda, a very expensive one, and hefty . . . and I do not know how we can fulfil that demand right now. But there is information out there in regard to a paratransit system that is probably the best option for us for our disabled population in Bermuda.

But there definitely needs to be a needs assessment. I [read] in the report in regard to a registry so that we can collect data to find more closely what that need is when it comes to transportation with persons with disabilities. Because it was interesting, by reading this report, that we did not get too many persons with disabilities actually participating in the actual surveys. So that needs assessment, or that national registry, is very vital in being able to collect such data.

So there is a question that we have to pose and that is: Is transportation for special needs a right or a privilege? And just like any person is afforded the opportunity to be able to ride public transportation, then that right should be able and be extended to persons with disabilities. There are people who are captive in their own homes because they are unable to get about because there is no mechanism for transportation for them in the public. This also affects our students.

[In] reading this report it is noted that the majority of public transportation users are our students and our visitors. There are students in our communities who have disabilities who do not have access to public transportation. The Ministry of Education does provide a bus system for some students to get to schools and day programmes, but we are also having issues with those by not taking into consideration proper maintenance programmes or taking into consideration budgeting for maintaining the fleet or buying

a new fleet for our students so that they can also have the right to transportation so that they can get to school.

So some of their concerns, again, which I reiterated, students with special needs, they have community-based instructions as part of their curriculum and they would like to be able to get out to those programmes. There also needs to be proper training in regard to the use of accessible vehicles. I have seen times where wheelchairs have been in some of the minibuses and they are not secured properly. And I have seen accidents where the driver will go around the corner, and because there is no proper securement system in place, I have seen chairs actually tip over. I have seen guests, visitors, who visit Bermuda who have scooters and they go into these vehicles and they actually tip over . . . and end up having to go to our hospital.

So there needs to be proper securement systems, particularly for wheelchairs, so that they are not able to move or shift when there is a sudden stop or where we are having to turn a sharp corner. We have many sharp corners in Bermuda, and so securement and training of that is very important for transportation.

And I would also just like to skip to minibuses as well, because someone had mentioned before (I believe the Opposition Leader) in regard to transportation services that give children rides to school, or afterschool pickup as well. Right now it is not mandated that children wear seatbelts in the minivans. And, I mean, I have seen just driving on the road, observing some of the children in the minivans. They are standing up and they are having a good old time. And should something happen where they have to stop short, children are going to go flying.

And so it is very important that even if there is no securement or seatbelt policy as it relates to seatbelts in minivans, that there should be because we want to be able to protect our children when they are riding in minivans, or at least the driver should make sure that they are seated at all times, and that should be important to them to maintain their safety.

I just want to add, Mr. Speaker, in regard to accessibility because there are some recommendations I am hoping that we can definitely push for. And that is, I hope that our Government can definitely push for greater fines for persons who are parking in disabled parking bays, Mr. Speaker. It is very important. And also encourage minibus operators who receive permits and licences for wheelchair accessible vehicles that they will be encouraged to establish a booking or dispatch service for prearranged transport. We are hoping that this can come into play.

[We are] also hoping that proper training and standards needed for drivers of public service vehicles are provided, that they are able to have sensitivity training or even know how to help persons using accessible vehicles so that they are driven around safe-

ly, and that we can address this provision in the Financial Assistance regulations.

There is one thing I would also like to mention and that is there is a bus route to Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute (MAWI) . . . but it only has two runs. There is one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and then it stops. We have a hospital, King Edward VII Memorial Hospital [KEMH], where we have constant transportation and frequency of buses going directly . . . I mean, you walk a couple of steps and you are right there and the hospital is there. Right? And so it is unfair that we do place more significance on transportation to our local hospital, King Edward, which provides physical care, but there is less of a significance to have access to public transportation to our Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute. And so it is my hope that we can provide some sort service as well where there are more frequent visits or opportunities for transportation, whether it is through a minibus service, whether it is through public transportation bus service, that these same persons who have to use the services of the Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute, also have the opportunity to be able to get to Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute whatever the time of the day they need to.

So, I just want to add that I am hopeful and grateful that this paper is complete. It is a lot of information. I think that if anyone has the time to delve through it and read through it, it is definitely a lot of information and a lot of good things can come out of this. It is just my hope that we continue to highlight the importance of fixing our transportation industry which provides mobility for all of our public persons and users of the public transportation system, and also that we use this as an opportunity to address accessible transportation in our community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Does any other Honourable Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Honourable Member Smith from constituency 31. Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Mr. Ben Smith: Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Good afternoon.

Mr. Ben Smith: First, I would like to thank everybody who was involved with putting together this report. It was extensive. Obviously, a lot of work went into getting the information that we have been provided. The thing that is interesting about transport is that most of the time people do not think about it until it is something that is not working, until it is something that is frustrating us.

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Mr. Ben Smith: The situation is . . . you know, recently we heard about the buses a lot because that has been something that has been causing frustration, and it has been a difficult thing for everybody to try to come up with a solution that was going to work. As we know, with different kinds of vehicles and the different pieces that have been discussed about how we solve that problem, it is just interesting that when you have the opportunity to look through a document like this that shows all the potential solutions to a lot of the problems, these problems really get discussed by all of us at some point, depending on what the frustration is for us.

So I am just going to take this opportunity to go through a couple of the specific things that I know I myself have gone through over the last couple of years, and piggyback on some of the things that we have already heard today, specifically, starting with the buses.

You know, if you drive a car, most of the time you are not really thinking about the bus. And I am one of those people. But when my car is in the shop, I have to take a bus. And, to be honest with you, on the bus from Southampton into Hamilton, I actually thought it was a really good experience. The bus was on time. It was a smooth ride. So, for me, the experience was really good. So going forward, I have my car, the next day and I do not think about the bus.

But then recently I had some people come in to visit. And they travel quite a bit around the world and they are used to using buses. So, for them, it was not a big deal to try to do tours all around the Island using the bus service. The problem was that their experience was not the experience that I had. They were seeing long delays, not getting the bus to pick them up because, at the time, I believe, we were going through some real struggles with the scheduling, and what it meant was that sometimes we would have to send somebody to go and pick them up and take them to their destination. Well, it is an interesting conversation when you are dealing with a visitor and they are saying, *You know, this seems like a basic thing for us to get public transportation, and here we are having to struggle.* And then explain that to a visitor.

So, with that first-hand knowledge, when you hear the struggle of people trying to get from point A to point B, and using the bus service, I think that any solutions that we can put together that will alleviate some of these problems, and kind of put us in a situation where we are more environmentally friendly, where we are also looking for a system that is going to be reliable . . . I believe it was MP Swan that spoke earlier about some of the early runs.

Specifically, you have people who do shift work who do not have access to that bus that would get them there on time to go to an early job, or sometimes late at night. When you are in other jurisdictions, you can actually get on a bus at any time during the day. So, if you are an elderly person who needs to go

to an appointment or, you know, we have people who are working late into the night and now the only option for them is to get a taxi, where we all know that the difference between a taxi fare and a bus fare is quite significant. If you are somebody who is used to riding a bus, potentially, some of those kind of outside-the-norm schedules could be important to the workers and to some people where that is their mode of transportation from one end of the Island to the other.

Moving on to the taxi industry, as I just started to kind of touch on it, I guess I will start with the sobriety checkpoints. I guess starting with the point that really we are trying everything we can to stop people from drinking and driving. This is a great initiative, but the side of it that is important is, how are we going to make sure that people have a way to get home safely if they go out?

The difficulty is that we have a system that we already know is stretched. So, if you are going to go out to dinner and you make an appointment because, you know, that is how you do it. If you have a reservation at 7:30 and you are going to say, okay, you are going to call a taxi. I want the taxi to pick me up at seven o'clock, there is going to be four of us, and we are trying to go to this place. And then the taxi does not arrive, and you are calling again and again. And now it is 7:30 and now you are arriving to your destination late. Your whole evening has changed because of a situation which is completely out of your control. But there are two things that happen. Either people then say, *Well, maybe I am just going to drive my car*, which is the opposite of what we are trying to do. Or, they are actually going to say, *Well, I am not going to go out because I do not want to deal with the frustration, so I am going to have people over to my house*. Right?

Now, that's fine. But what impact is that having on our hospitality industry? Right? We have a lot of Bermudians who are working in that industry, and it is actually an important part of our workforce. So, if people are making a decision to not go out because they do not have reliable transportation to get them home safely, what impact is that having on restaurants and bars? And maybe it is an interesting piece just to know what that number is, if there has been an impact.

And specifically, on the taxi side of that, recently we went out and . . . exactly what I was referring to. Right? So you make the appointment, you go for dinner, and we had that problem in the beginning, where the taxi did not come at the right time. And then at the end of the evening when you are trying to get home, because there are not a lot of taxis out and about, so what is happening now is that there is a 45 minute [to] an hour delay at the end of the evening when everybody in the restaurant is cleaning up and trying to go home because you do not have a vehicle. The vehicle that you are expecting you cannot have access to. Obviously, that is a challenge that before,

when people did not think about it and just got in their vehicle, was not an issue that we are dealing with at the level that we are presently.

So in the conversation, with the taxi driver who actually picked us up on the way there, his comment to me was that this run that he was doing . . . he stepped in for another taxi driver. He picked us up and he dropped us to the restaurant. But during that time we had a really good conversation with him about kind of how business was going and what he was seeing in the taxi industry. And what he said was that this run that he was doing was just so that he could pay for gas, because he actually was not going to be driving that day.

Well, that is a difficult thing. Right? Because if they are supposed to be on the road for 16 hours a day, and you have a taxi driver that is pretty much telling you that [his] taxi is not going to be on the road, when you look at that number of . . . I think it is 590 taxis, is that a real number? Are all of those taxis actually being utilised at the level that they are supposed to be. So, if they are not, what you are really looking at is a much smaller number. So, now not only do you have to go out and get more taxis because we probably do not have a sufficient fleet totally, but we have to figure out how we get the taxis that are supposed to be on the roads, actually on the road.

So that is a two-part issue which, obviously, is a difficult one to deal with because you have to have some kind of system which lets you know whether these taxis are on the road. And then you have to have everybody buy in to the fact that they have to be part of that system, which is never going to be an easy subject to deal with. But, obviously, having a Green Paper that starts to discuss the fact that we need all of these options and how we are going to fix it is an important one.

Still talking on taxis, but I guess it is just transportation in a kind of overall range, both the Members from constituency 1 and 2 were talking specifically about St. George's, but I recently was in Dockyard at Bone Fish. So we are out to dinner and we are all having a good time, and it is at the end of the service time. And what happened was, there is actually a group of visitors sitting at a different table. They have called a taxi; no taxi is going to come to Dockyard at that time. There is no bus service for them. So now you actually have a group of visitors that are there, and they are stuck at one end of the Island. So what ended up happening was, after a long discussion, we took them. We drove them into town.

But in the conversation we realised that what has happened a lot of times, is that people who are working in these restaurants are actually giving these people a ride because there is no other option for them. Well, the difficulty is, does this stop people from actually going to Dockyard? And . . . you know, I mean, there are great facilities at both ends of our Island, but if we are not giving people an opportunity

to have transportation to these parts of the Island it makes it very difficult for us to support them.

There has been a bit conversation today about the addition of the Twizy, the minicars. I believe the Minister actually spoke to it on *Let's Talk*, and he spoke specifically about . . . you know, I think a lot of people are supportive of it, but there is also the frustration of you drive into town and there is a little car in a big bay, right? So there is some kind of information and some talking about what that is going to look like if you continue to increase that number.

But on the flip side of that is the safety issue. So, I know everybody here has seen a tourist on a bike who was probably given a very short kind of demo on how to ride a bike, riding around Bermuda, and you are saying to yourself, *There is no possible way this person should be on a bike*. Like, it is a danger to them; it is a danger to anybody else who is around them. And, really, what kind of experience is [it] when that person [falls] off the bike and they get the famous road rash of Bermuda? That is what they are taking back with them.

The Twizy option moves away from that. It gives them . . . because most of the time they are going to come here . . . they have driven a car. But they might not even have ridden a pedal bike for a long time. And now they are on this bike on narrow roads, not fully understanding kind of how we use our vehicles, and it puts them in a difficult spot.

Well, when you think of that concept you move it toward what we see with our young people. So, Project Ride has done a really good job of trying to prepare our young people to be on the bikes and how they can be as safe as possible and all the rest of it. But there have to be parents who are thinking to themselves, *Wouldn't it be better for me to put my child in one of these vehicles rather than have them on a bike?* Because the danger of it . . . and everybody here probably has some kind of mark on them from when they were 16, 17 years old and they came off their bike at some point.

But it is one thing if it is just a little road rash; it is another thing when you have broken something or you have injured yourself significantly worse, or obviously, the road fatalities that we are having on our roads on an ongoing basis. If we can do anything to prevent that it is important that this is what we are looking to do.

On our roads, specifically when it comes to just how people are treating our roads, I think it is important for all of us, at any opportunity we can, to just talk to young people about how they are acting on our roads. The Opposition Leader spoke to something that I personally have seen several times. Just people riding around, popping a wheelie on a public road, riding along, and it is as if they are just playing a game while there is regular traffic around them. It is a very dangerous thing to do. But they do not seem to un-

derstand that they are on a public road and it should not happen.

But it is part of a bigger issue, because you see people doing things on the road that they know they should not be doing. So, you are on your cell phone and you are driving with one hand while you are talking on the cell phone and paying attention to what is on the phone call instead of the road.

You see people riding around on a bike with their helmet undone and their cell phone shoved up inside of the helmet. The second that the cell phone shifts, they are going to grab the cell phone. It is automatic. And then they are going to come off the bike and they are going to wonder what happened.

But this is just the behaviour that has become the norm. When you see a yellow light, you run it. The person behind you actually sees a red light. Well, they are going to follow you. That is the behaviour that has become the norm instead of the exception, and the more that it is the norm, the more we have all of the accidents. And then we wonder why the fatalities are so high, and we wonder why we have more people ending up in the hospital with injuries. All of those things are adding to our health cost.

So, if we can come up with ways of trying to educate people, and trying to figure out a way to make things safer, then I think having the cams on the road that are going to test for speeding and potentially send somebody a ticket in the mail because they were running a red light or [not] having due care. I think anything we can do to try and curb that behaviour, I think we should be doing.

I guess, overall, I would say that the ideas coming from the report are important. I think you have heard from several of our Members, and I am going to echo it, the hard part is, as you have heard different people speak today, everybody has their thing that they think is important. Right? And different speakers have really honed in on what they think is important from out of this huge document. Well, I think it is important that we actually have a plan that leads to that, and information that would tell us, *Well, this is what we think the priorities are. This is what we are going to focus on first. Then, from that point, once those are achieved, potentially we are going to move on to these.*

On one hand, with our tourism product, it is going to be important that we are going to do things that are going to affect them. On the flipside of that, the safety of our citizens is also going to be a priority. So, if we can potentially have a second thought of moving from Green Paper to White Paper, so that we have an idea of what the plan is, and that we can hold everybody accountable to that plan, then I think that this is a good idea and I do not see a reason why we would not want to move in that direction.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to give a few remarks and with that I will take my seat.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 22. Honourable Member Pearman, you have the floor.

Mr. Scott Pearman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think this debate has probably gone on longer than most people anticipated it would, but there is a considerable amount of material in the Green Paper, so with transport as our theme, let me just give a very quick whistle-stop tour of 10 specific points. And I believe I am the last speaker on our side, so we can move along after this. But first and foremost, I also thank those involved in preparing this. This is a pretty hefty document with a lot of ideas, and I commend those involved, including the Minister.

Second, I am delighted to see that this report considers the role of differently able persons. They are an element of our society who are often unheralded and perhaps do not get the due regard that they deserve, so I commend the report in that respect as well and I echo the comments made by the Honourable Member from St. George's who spoke two speakers before me.

Third, I do note that this Green Paper envisages ditching high-speed ferries and replacing them with fast ferries. For those who are looking at the report, page 36 of the report speaks to that. My understanding, and it is really just anecdotal from speaking to people who are involved in the ferries and Marine and Ports, is that this is probably a good thing. And the high-speed ferries were not very well suited to Bermuda's waters and would encounter difficulties. I do not quite know what the difference is between a high-speed ferry and a fast ferry, but no doubt we will learn if this ditching of the high-speed ferries is progressed.

I also just would pause quickly and echo the sentiments of the Shadow Minister who spoke first for us in the debate, Ms. Leah Scott, who suggested the possibility of a ferry terminal at the airport. I do not know how feasible that is. I do not know how much that would cost. But it would be a lovely and charming way for people who are first setting foot on our islands to get on board a boat to have the opportunity to go to their hotel accommodation or elsewhere.

Fourth, and this has been a sad theme from almost every speaker in this debate, and that is our collective poor driving habits. We all know [this], and yet nothing is done. I can think of only two things. One is that as a society as a whole, we need to start thinking differently. We need to start approaching life differently. It is not a race. I mean, the number of times that you are overtaken by someone, only then to be parked behind them at the next red light, it is just stupid, and people are dying. We need to think differently and encourage others to think differently.

I know that the Honourable Member, Mr. Cole Simons, spoke about how minicars may be a safety

option as well. And so I do hope . . . it wasn't quite clear from the report whether the word "not" or the word "now" was the correct word there, but if it is "not," I would invite the Minister and those involved to have a little bit of a rethink because there is a safety element here. It is not just a matter of providing . . . (I think someone referred to Twizys earlier) to our tourists, but it is also the possibility that people who are not safe or steady or accomplished or routinely accustomed to being on a bike, can travel around our Island, whether they are residents or whether they are foreigners, with a higher degree of safety. So, I think that is worth thinking about.

Fifth, as to the dark helmets, at page 72 of the report, the Government says this . . . and this is a Green Paper, I accept it is just proposals and suggestions. But it says, "the Ministry of Transport" . . . I am quoting, with your leave, Mr. Speaker, paragraph 3.7.6.

The Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Scott Pearman: "[The] Ministry of Transport will seriously consider in light of the robberies that have taken place in broad daylight by persons wearing dark visor helmets." Well, respectfully, and I mean this criticism constructively, I think we are beyond the "seriously considering" stage. Why don't you just do something about it?

Six of ten, there is some delightful comments and support of the Railway Trail, the Tracks, as most Bermudians like to refer to them, at page 125 and 127. Again, with your leave, Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker: Continue.

Mr. Scott Pearman: —I was quite shocked to see at page 125 of this report the fact that in a survey, and I do not know how many people participated in this survey, but some 22.59 per cent—I will repeat that, 22.59 per cent—so 23 per cent of people surveyed do not use the Railway Trail. Well, if any of them are listening, let me commend the Railway Trail, the Tracks, to them. It is probably one of the nicest opportunities to get out and see Bermuda and to get some exercise and be healthy in doing the same.

Seventh is on electric vehicles. This is an amazing opportunity for our Island. We are in the luxurious position of having a small landmass, having a relatively small population. We could, if we had the vision and the determination, be a shining beacon to the rest of the world by having electric cars, and actually, just having electric cars. And somewhere, I am sure, there is an electric car company that would love the opportunity to have Bermuda as its testing ground, or as its showcase. And so to the extent that that can happen, I would encourage it. Not just for environmental reasons, but also as an opportunity for Bermuda to be a brand in that way on the world stage. That is

dealt with at page 90 of the report, should anyone wish to look.

Eight of ten, and that is taxis. That is also dealt with at page 90, and with your leave, Mr. Speaker, paragraph 4.8.4, "Government recognizes the issue surrounding the lack of taxis at certain times of day . . ." And again, it is constructive criticism. Well, it is fine to recognise an issue, but we really need to know what is going to be done about it.

Nine of ten, is the Minister's comments on the MOU, the Memorandum of Understanding, with Rocky Mountain, the electrical fleet. That is a great idea; a great opportunity for Bermuda and hopefully we will hear more about it from the Minister when he closes. Because we have not really heard much about it since the original announcement. It would be wonderful to see Bermuda take that road.

Tenth, and finally, and this too is criticism, but I hope it is constructive criticism, and that is the fact that at page 14 of the report, it explains why this is a Green Paper, what a Green Paper is. Again, with your leave, Mr. Speaker, I quote, it is "To offer options and to pose questions . . . It is not a statement of Government policy . . ."

Many of the people who spoke earlier this afternoon have invited the Minister to rethink his opposition to providing a White Paper. And, respectfully, I think that is a good idea for two reasons. One it is that we actually know where the Government is going to go. It is not just a menu of opportunities; we know the route they are taking. But secondly, as a matter of good governance, it is sensible to have a White Paper so Bermudians know where we are going. So, with those 10 whistle-stops along the way on the transportation tour, I believe I am the last speaker for this side, and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

I recognise the Member behind you. The Member from constituency 11. Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Mr. Christopher Famous: Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues, and good afternoon to the people of Bermuda.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to start with a quote from a song [by] Jacob Miller. "Jolly Joseph" the people's transportation. The song was about—

The Speaker: I thought you were going to sing for us.

Mr. Christopher Famous: No, no, no, no, no. I will sing on Cup Match.

The Speaker: Well, you will be singing a sad song, but that's all right.

Mr. Christopher Famous: The song was about the minibuses in Jamaica. Mr. Speaker, I am going to take

a slightly different tact than everybody. I am going to start by recognising some legendary bus operators. Mr. Albert Cann, I think you may know him.

The Speaker: Somerset fellow, yes.

Mr. Christopher Famous: Mr. Bernard Woods, I think you may know him.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Christopher Famous: Sorry, the late Albert Cann, the late Bernard Wood.

Ms. Lydia Matthews, the first woman bus driver. Ms. Grace, another woman bus driver. And my uncle, and Mr. Neville Tyrrell's dad, the legendary Boo Brown. The great Boo Brown.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: Yes, Lillian Outerbridge. Actually, her mom was a bus driver. Lydia Matthews, that's her mom.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: You gentlemen can direct your conversation this way.

Mr. Christopher Famous: Mr. Speaker, it is very . . . maybe people do not understand, maybe they do not know this, but Bermuda is one of the few Caribbean islands that has public transportation. If you go to most Caribbean islands, there is no such thing as public transportation.

The Speaker: You jump in those little vans.

An Hon. Member: That's right.

Mr. Christopher Famous: You get it in Barbados. You get it in . . . somewhat, in Jamaica in Kingston. But outside of those islands, you are on your own. You have got to pay for private transportation. Now, there are going to be those who say, *Well, that takes a strain off of the government's budget.* But what it also does is has an impact on people's pocket. Because as we know, when you pay for private transportation, it is much higher.

So, the first question we have to ask ourselves is, Do we want to keep providing transportation for our people? The word I want to use, "affordable" transportation. The answer is yes. Then there come the critics in the budget who say, *What about the costs? We heard earlier the figures, what we are taking in, what we are paying out.* It looks kind of daunting. But let's go by the fact that we are going to continue.

Mr. Speaker, do you know that the government of the British Virgin Islands have studied our public transportation system so much that they want to come here and look at what we are doing right, what we are doing wrong, and they want to modify that for their own country which has no public transportation. People down there, after certain hours of the night, have zero chance of getting home. They have to walk. Or they have to pay almost extortion-type [fees] for taxi drivers.

So I want people to bear in mind that Bermuda is one of the few islands that has public transportation and it does come with a cost. Mr. Speaker, we heard about tourism numbers, so I am not going to go over that. But the fact is, in order to move our tourists around this Island, we need public transportation that is heavily subsidised. In order to move our people in and out of small areas like Spanish Point [and] Prospect, we need transportation. But do we need big buses? Do we need a half a million-dollar bus to do that, to carry 10, 15 people? No. So, I support the fact that we are possibility looking at public minibuses. Because that would service the areas like the St. David's, the Ferry Reaches, the Pond Hills, the Prospects, the Spanish Points, the Knpton Hills, all of those things. So these are the things that we have to be innovative with. One size does not fit all. Size does matter.

In all of this, Mr. Speaker, I hear people talk, but we have to understand. These buses do not drive themselves, at least not yet. And they sure do not fix themselves. So in all of this, we need to have skilled professionals, Mr. Speaker—skilled professionals who drive these buses and, more importantly, skilled professionals who service these buses. As we know, about 5, 10 years ago we had a problem, and even now, with these buses breaking down. So what did this Government have to do? We had to hire 10, 14 mechanics to keep our fleet up and running, or attempt to keep it up and running. We still do not have enough.

Mr. Speaker, let me move on. The ferry system, 10, 12 years ago, when Dr. Brown wanted to introduce it, we had all these people complaining. *We don't need no fast ferries. We don't need this. This is just spending money we don't need [to].*

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: Yes, yes, you remember it.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I have never lived up west, never ever. But one night—

The Speaker: You lost out.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: It was your loss.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Definitely your loss.

Mr. Christopher Famous: One night a long time ago, I happened to sleep up there.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: We aren't going to ask the circumstances. You don't have to let the circumstances out.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: Yes, the car broke down. I ran out of gas.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: Yes, this is before the 24 hour gas station times.

[Inaudible interjections and laughter]

Mr. Christopher Famous: So, this was somewhere in Southampton, Mr. Speaker. Not quite God's country, but on its way.

So anyway, I come off the hill, Scenic Heights Pass and I am like, *Wow! All these cars. Must be an accident.* And I said, *Okay, well, I am going to ease up by Burnt House Hill.* I get by Burnt House Hill and there are just as many cars. I am deciding, do I go Middle Road [or] do I go Burnt House Hill, Middle Road? There is the same [number] of cars. So, I said, *Wow! Something must be happening in Crow Lane why cars are backed up.* I finally got to work, late. And I tell my boss, *Yes, man, there must be some accident along the way coming from west.*

So, I don't know, a couple of nights later, the same thing happened, and I am saying, *It can't be another accident.*

The Speaker: You ran out of gas two nights in a row up there? Well, well. All right.

Mr. Christopher Famous: Hey, that's what happens. The gas station was closed. What can I say?

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Mr. Christopher Famous: So anyway, Mr. Speaker, what happened was that was when I realised this is what people from the west have to deal with every day going to and from Hamilton. And I am saying, *I could never live up west because I can't deal with this. I would have road rage every moment.*

The Speaker: It's scenic. You can enjoy the scenery coming in, you know.

Mr. Christopher Famous: Beg pardon, sir?

The Speaker: It is very scenic. You just enjoy the scenery coming down.

Mr. Christopher Famous: And I notice when you drive east, you got to wear glasses and when you drive west, you got to wear glasses. So, I don't know.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: So, what's my point, Mr. Speaker? That was the year 1995. And when they had the fast ferries put in place, I haven't tested it out, but I think the traffic load has gone down. My point, Mr. Speaker, is that whether we have fast ferries, high-speed ferries, slow-speed ferries, we need to have ferries. It is a must, so I support that.

But, again, in the midst of this, these ferries need to be maintained. We need to have adequate staff. We need to have adequate access to parts. Let's not forget the human part in this equation because these ferries do not drive themselves.

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Mr. Christopher Famous: They will not service themselves. Let me move on, Mr. Speaker.

Taxis. Mr. Speaker, I live in Friswell's Hill, five minutes from town. Five minutes. If I call a taxi right now, I would probably be waiting an hour before a taxi comes. That's ridiculous . . . ridiculous. There is no excuse. Taxis say, *Well, I don't know. I don't want to come to Friswell's Hill. People may rob me. Oh, the roads are too small for my H1 taxi.* All sorts of excuses why we cannot get a taxi. If I was sick and I needed to get to the hospital, and I called a taxi, I would probably be dead, or I would have to call an ambulance, and then we run up health insurance bills. My point, Mr. Speaker, is that I sympathise with taxi drivers because they have to work hard.

The Speaker: As long as you do not have to call Augustus, you are all right.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: Well, if he comes there and I am alive then he might just keep driving. You know?

I sympathise with the taxi drivers; they have to work hard. But I do not sympathise with them parked up somewhere while Bermudians are calling looking for cabs, and you are telling me [there are] 550 on the road, and somebody on Friswell's Hill cannot get a cab? No.

Do I think we should go to Uber? No. Contrary to what the Deputy Opposition Leader says—

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: You backstroke?

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: Okay. All right. I will check that later on.

But anyway, the Uber model cannot work in Bermuda, Mr. Speaker. The Uber model only serves Uber. Uber drivers get robbed. Taxi drivers get robbed. So what is the solution, Mr. Speaker? We heard a proposal earlier this last week for 20 actual permits with a possibility of actual 88. The taxi drivers got upset. Rightfully. Then we heard the price. On average, \$5,000. Now, if I pay \$5,000, but you paid \$100,000, you have a right to be upset. Let's be real. Because I am devaluing the value of your permit. But if your \$100,000 permit means that I am sitting myself up at Friswell's Hill waiting, I do not care how much it costs you. I really don't!

So, rightfully, Bermudians are upset when they call a taxi and they have to wait 20 or 30 minutes. Rightfully they are upset when at three o'clock, when some people have come out of places—I did not say "Place's Place, certain places—and they cannot get a taxi. Rightfully, the restaurant owners and bar owners are upset when people stop coming out because they cannot catch a taxi. So what is the solution?

The Transportation Minister, the Honourable Zane De Silva, I do not know if he convened it or he was summoned, but 400 taxi drivers met with him up at Warwick Workmans [Club] the other day.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: And he was there like in the lion's den, I would say. But he stood his ground, and he said to them, *Shout. Carry on. I'm used to this from Alaska Hall.*

But my point, Mr. Speaker, was this here. He laid down the law to them.

[He said] *Listen, I am going to give you guys time to get your act together, whether it is one group, two groups, three groups, four groups—it doesn't matter. You all have to get your act together because the people are being neglected. And if the people are being neglected, the tourists are being neglected, we have to do something. We cannot grow tourism; we cannot grow the economy if people can't get around.*

If people come here, put our pictures on Instagram, Facebook and whatever, and say 'Oh, we waited in long lines. We can't even move.' This, that and the other. That can't work! If our people in this country are upset, something is wrong. We have to do something about that.

Mr. Speaker, one night I was in St. George's. I am talking a little bit about St. George's.

The Speaker: Run out of gas again?

Mr. Christopher Famous: No, no, no, no, no. Different.

The Speaker: Okay.

Mr. Christopher Famous: I was patronising a St. George's establishment.

I got a ride down and I said, *Okay. I will catch a taxi back. I will catch the bus back.* Eleven o'clock comes and I am standing by the bus stop, no bus; 11:15, no bus; 11:45, no bus; twelve o'clock, no bus. So for one hour I stood in the bus stop. I ended up calling the taxi service. The taxi was like, *Well, I don't know. You are all the way in St. George's.* So, from the outset, they gave me no hope. I sat there until one o'clock in the morning.

[Inaudible interjections and laughter]

Mr. Christopher Famous: I don't even want to comment on that one.

I sat there until one o'clock in the morning waiting for a taxi. In total time, two hours, whether it was a bus or a taxi. No transportation.

The taxi guy came and said, *Yeah, man, you are lucky, man. I was at Crawl Hill so I picked up this ride.* How am I supposed to feel lucky? So I was lucky I was not abandoned? That is how the transportation system collectively makes Bermudians feel, that, after certain hours, you are lucky if you get a ride.

What if I was a young lady? Would I feel safe? I do not know. So, these are things that this Green Paper, and common sense prevailing, needs to address. Because there is no way you are going to tell me there is 400 taxis, 550 taxis, and somebody is supposed to be waiting an hour for a taxi. Whether you are five minutes from town or you are in St. George's, where are all these taxis? They are not on Front Street, they are not at Friswell's Hill, they are not in St. George's, where are they at? They are all parked?

Mr. Speaker, let me move on. I spoke about what is in the report. I am going to speak briefly about what is not in the report that should find itself in a report soon. I looked through the report and I saw nothing about the possibility of bringing in second-hand cars from Japan. Think about it, Mr. Speaker. We have a responsibility as a Government to bring down the cost of living for people. As Honourable Cole Simons says, he went to price a car, a vehicle, because his family is worried. And it was about \$50,000—\$50,000—that money could put somebody through university for two years, possibly. You could go online and you could find that same model vehicle, maybe

one or two years earlier, for \$5,000—landed in Bermuda, \$5,000—one-tenth of the cost. One-tenth!

Now, who is this going to hurt? Who is this going to help? Let's start with who it is going to help. The single mother who needs transportation to take her children around—\$5,000 for a vehicle, a reliable vehicle. The senior who is retired. [He] cannot afford \$50,000, cannot afford \$30,000. A \$5,000 vehicle could help him. Who else is it going to help? It is an industry that we could create for young entrepreneurs, who bring in second-hand vehicles, for a fraction of the cost, and are able to sell these to Bermudians. We have to think about that. We have to be outside the box. Over 10 years ago we thought outside of the box when it came to fast ferries, and look at what it has done. We have to think about that.

Now, there are going to be those who say, *Oh, but that is going to hurt the pockets of . . . who?* Who is it going to hurt the pockets of? Those who already have. Right? There are going to be those who say, *Oh, what about the import duty?* Sometimes we have to make a little sacrifice as a country to help those in need. That is not in the report. And that is something that we need to talk about.

What else am I going to talk about, Mr. Speaker? I got a video; maybe a lot of people got a video. There is a car going the wrong way at Paget stoplights. Who was in the car? Tourists. Little, small, mini rental car. I see provision in there for expanding the possibility of rental cars, those small rental cars. So my question is, Why aren't we talking about regular rental cars? In every island in the Caribbean you can rent a regular car, but not in Bermuda. Why not? Cannot use the excuse, *Oh, the tourist wouldn't know which way they are going.* They do not know which way they are going on a bike anyway. Right? We do not want tourist going back in a body bag or all bandaged all up. So why aren't we talking about regular rental cars?

Again, we have a responsibility as a Government to help young entrepreneurs start a business. They could bring in a second-hand car and use that as a rental. It might cost you over \$50,000 or \$100,000, properly insured, to start a rental car business of 10 cars. Or are we just going to let those who already have keep having more? Are we going to keep letting our tourists get these road rashes? No, we [are not]. We have to change that.

Another thing that I did not see addressed in the report was abandoned vehicles, Mr. Speaker. Abandoned vehicles fall under the Ministry of Transportation. This year and last year I had to take pictures of approximately 10 vehicles—abandoned cars, bikes—abandoned all around Devonshire, Back o' Town. These cars have just been sitting there for years in some cases. You go there, the car is ticketed, how can you ticket an abandoned car? The people ain't coming back to pay the ticket!

[Laughter and inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: They abandoned it; it has been there for years!

Now, some may say, *There is a process.* Right. But there is also a thing called “a chassis number.” There is also a thing called “registration.” You look up a chassis number, or the engine block number, you know who that car belongs to. So if they cannot produce a bill of sale to say, *Hey, I sold that there to Cole Simons last year,* it is still your car. We need legislation that is going to fine these people because it is pollution.

Just this morning I stopped down at Parsons Road, where we took away about four abandoned cars that had been there for a year, and now there is an abandoned taxi. Then we wonder why there are no taxis on the road. One of them is down at Parsons Road abandoned. I am glad that the authorities from Transport are here now. There is a blue Toyota taxi down on Parsons Road. Please go and mark it and fine him. These are things we have to talk about.

In order to get around this Island, we need to have properly paved roads. So I thank the workers in the Ministry of Works and Engineering who are doing their best to pave the roads. I also thank the workers at Works and Engineering and the Parks Department who are keeping the roads trimmed. Because if your roads are not trimmed, somebody has got to go out wide, and somebody might be going out wide the other way, and you know what is going to happen. Two cars in the middle of the road, two vehicles in the middle in the road—we are going to get carnage.

Mr. Speaker, let me go back to something. Again, this Government has a responsibility to create employment, to create opportunities for employment. Every one of these vehicles, whether it be a bus, a ferry, a taxi, minibus, or rental car, they all require a mechanic to fix it. If those mechanics do not fix those cars, within a year they will not be able to be driven. That is a fact. If you look in the Digest of Statistics, half of the mechanics in this country are not from this country. If you go to any high school and you ask, *How many of you want to be mechanics?* Very few are going to put up their hands. Yet, five years later they will be complaining that they do not have a job. We have to be real with our people.

The Speaker: Teach them the trades.

Mr. Christopher Famous: We have to be real. We need our Bermudians to be motor mechanics. A motor mechanic can make upwards of \$100,000, if not more. If you are a marine mechanic, you are rich!

So I am thanking those who put this together, but let's not forget there are things that supplement our transportation situation here. Let me reiterate, Mr. Speaker. We are one of the few Caribbean islands that have public transportation. We will continue to be

one of those islands. Other islands are looking at us for examples, and we have to use that and instil pride in our people in our public transportation system. There are going to be those who, *Oh, the buses smell like this . . . Oh, the buses are dirty.* But they still catch the bus, right? Ask them, *Do you want to pay \$5.00 for the bus or do you want to pay \$30 for a taxi?* They will catch the bus, right?

So I say this, Mr. Speaker: I am not going to be like the Opposition and say we need a White Paper, because I have faith in my Government that Green Paper, White Paper . . . no paper—that recommendations are going to be taken and action is going to be taken that these things will be done. In closing, Mr. Speaker, I know that there is some level of discontent by our bus operators, but I want to thank them for their service. They have a right to stand up for what they need, not necessarily what they want, but what they need.

And there is another thing that needs to be considered, Mr. Speaker. We have parents that say, *I am willing to pay money for my child to go to school on the bus.* It might be a dollar. It might be fifty cents. But they are willing to pay. So, in closing, Mr. Speaker, thank you to the Department of Transportation, thank you to those who wrote this, thank you to those who provide public transportation—the bus drivers, the ferry drivers, [and] the mechanics who service them. Thank you to the taxis and thank you to Jacob Miller. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Does any other . . . oh, Deputy Speaker. You have the floor.

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a letter was written to the editor some years ago and it was signed by a taxi driver. That taxi driver said that if 70 per cent of the taxi drivers, taxis, were on the road 10 hours a day, we would not have a problem.

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: I tend to believe that that statement is still correct. It may be out a few points, but I think it is correct.

Mr. Speaker, at one time we had 600 taxis, now we got 44 less. I am not sure why that is. But, Mr. Speaker, I think we have some good investors driving taxi. And then I think for some reasons a lot of them do not drive at night-time, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think we need to have strict legislation in place to protect our taxi drivers, particularly from the unsocial behaviours that some have encountered over the years. I think it is what has led many of them to not drive certain hours in the night or during the day—not the day, but particularly in the night-time. And some do not

drive in certain areas because of this here. So I think that we have to protect them with very strict, mandatory sentences. That if you harm or attempt to harm a taxi driver in his duties as a person trying to make a living, and particularly if they have a family—

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: —then you need to face the stiff arm of the law, the very strict arm of the law.

Mr. Speaker, also, many years ago when you had [William] “Cheese” Ray and Malcolm Terceira own taxis, they owned a lot of taxis, and those taxis were on the road at least 16 hours a day. But they controlled them in a way that we do not do today. They had locks on the gas tank tops. So you had to go to their gas station to fill up.

[Laughter and inaudible interjections]

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. That is what they did.

So, those taxis, they operated at a time when we had 10,000 hotel beds. We had many tourists here and so that is how . . . and we did not have the problem that we have today. Now we have 5,000 hotel beds, still the same number of taxis (minus the 44) and we have got problems. In addition to that, we have the minicabs.

So I think what we have to do, we have to protect our drivers with legislation so when they are out there, they know that if anyone is trying to rob them, or whatever, that they are well protected under the law with mandatory sentences and mandatory fines. So I think that is something that taxi drivers should never ever face, or anyone, when they are out there trying to make a living and feed their families, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that in one of the reports it says that they want to increase the taxi rates by allowing Rate 3 to start at 10:00 [pm] instead of midnight. I do not know if that is the way we should go when we compare our taxi rates to other parts of the world. You know, right now we pay \$2.75 per mile. Even places like the Bahamas, they charge \$1.60 a mile. That is one of our competitors in the tourism industry. But ours, when I look at the report they have here, ours is the most expensive. And so I think we have to be very careful on that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I sympathise with the Minister for Tourism when he says they give 20 extra permits. I understand that. Mr. Speaker, I think it was about two Saturdays ago we had a cruise ship in, and this was after 1:00. I got a (what do you call it?) WhatsApp picture. Tourists were waiting for transportation. There were no buses. No minibus. No taxis. On a Saturday. Mind you, many of the taxi drivers are Christian. Some go to church on Saturdays and some go Sundays. But we should not suffer because, as in the past, as I said

earlier, the Terceira and the Cheese Ray taxis, they were on the road seven days a week. But we have to find a way to make it comfortable for taxi owners to let someone drive their car, because, at present, if they drive and they mess up, they are on that particular taxi's insurance. Maybe we need to think about having an insurance for drivers, other than the owner, so that whoever the driver is, and if they have an accident, that that driver's insurance would be responsible.

So we can sit here and say, *Taxis should be on the road 16 hours, 12 hours*. But I think if a lot of us faced the situations that they have, we might think and say things different, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to dress code, I do not think that the dress code is strictly adhered to. We need to have people who are driving taxis adhere to the dress code. And I am not sure if we have a dress code for minibus drivers, and if we don't, we need to put one in, because we cannot expect taxi drivers to have a dress code and minibus [drivers] do not. The bus operators, they have a dress code. The uniforms are provided as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Mr. Speaker. So we definitely have got to do some things to help our taxi drivers to do better and also feel comfortable that if they rent their taxi out to a driver, that they are covered, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the . . . and again, right now I know the law does not say this, it says the taxi should be on the road 16 hours. I really think that is even long even if you have another driver because that is a lot of wear and tear on that taxi. But I do not think taxis have to be on the road 16 hours. I think, like the taxi driver wrote some years ago, that if 70 per cent of them operated for 10 hours a day, we would be okay, Mr. Speaker.

Now, even though we have 5,000 hotel beds as opposed to 10,000 years ago, we have more tourists in the cruise ship tours. So we have to accommodate them. And we have done that because we have got these minibuses, we have got quite a few minibuses on the road. There are 147 minibuses on the road as compared to 1999 when there were seven. And let me say that the minibuses that we had on the road in [1999], they were from ASB. That little, probably, eight-seater; they were small ones. And they had maybe one or two bigger buses. They carried maybe about 30 passengers. So, with all the minibuses that we have on the road, taxis, the 556 taxis, we should be able to provide adequate transportation to those who need it. So I will be with the Minister with everything he does to try to improve that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's go on to the bus operators. I can tell you, we have got some good bus operators in this country. When you look at our safety records, our safety records are probably amongst the best in the world. I say that because if you look . . . well, we know the size of our roads. They are very narrow. So you got to be on the ball when you are driving those buses. You know, you are manoeuvring

the whole time . . . unlike if you are on a big highway, you can relax a little bit. But in Bermuda, at least 90 per cent of the time of your route on the road from Somerset to Hamilton, or vice versa, you got to be on the ball. You have got to be all hands on deck because of the size of the roads. And [consider] the number of other vehicles that we have on the road, Mr. Speaker.

You know, we got . . . what? 48,000 vehicles on the road. That is a lot, almost 49,000. And, Mr. Speaker, we have not had any new roads in over 30 years. I think the last addition to our roads was Palmetto Road, parts of Palmetto Road. And that was probably over 30 years ago. And we do not have any land for any more roads. So, we are not going to get any more roads. So we have to . . . you know, we got to be careful.

Now, a lot of our roads that are constructed today are taking a beating. They are falling in because of the heavy vehicles. When those roads were constructed years ago, they were not designed to carry the heavy vehicles that we have today. That was proven just out by . . . is it Marsh Folly? Just before you get to where the pond used to be. Well, the road caved in a couple of years ago, maybe five, six, seven years ago. And when it was dug out to repair it, there was no rod in there. No rod whatsoever. So you got a lot of these roads that we have today that weren't constructed . . . I guess in those days they did not think that we would have the heavy vehicles that we have today. I just hope the Bailey Bridge and the rest of them will hold up until we are able to fix [them].

And then again, when they even used the asphalt on the roads, you know, that . . . when you have that heavy equipment, the thickness [of] the asphalt, all that has to be taken into consideration. So it is a lot of expense, when you have these heavy vehicles, to the taxpayer. So, it is a challenge here, Mr. Speaker.

Now, just like the taxi driver, I think our bus operators need the protection . . . because there have been some incidents where you have folks come on the bus with weapons. And, just like taxi drivers, we have female drivers also. It just makes it worse. And some of these folks are rude. So I think the legislation that I would certainly discuss with my colleagues that needs to be put in is, again, mandatory strict imprisonment when you mess with somebody when they are trying to earn a living for their family.

And, Mr. Speaker, our bus system is very, very expensive. It is, in my opinion, too expensive, too costly, for us. We are trying to run a Rolls-Royce schedule on a Toyota budget, Mr. Speaker. I think presently if we want to run by the schedule that we have in place, we need about, I guess, between 85 and 90 buses. Well, I think that is too much for Bermuda. I think we need to have a schedule, one for what I call off-season, when we do not have the cruise ships, and I think that [we need] anywhere from 60 to

65 buses [on that] schedule. And then when [the tourists] are here, probably 70 to 78 buses on the road.

But I am not suggesting that we need to take and get another schedule. What I think needs to happen is you cut and paste. Because right now you have buses leaving town during rush hour, with not even 10 passengers on board. We should be able to fix that. And then I am seeing, I think within an hour and a half, five buses leaving St. George's going to St. David's [with] not many people on those buses. To me, that does not make much sense. So, I think we need to do some cutting and pasting and get the system right. We do not need to go and pay a whole lot of money for another new schedule, just cut and . . . they would know what to pull out and what to keep in, Mr. Speaker.

And then there is a lot of discussion about bus fares, we gave bus . . . yes, our Government, and proudly we did, gave free bus routes to students, and all my friends who are over 65. Well, I certainly think we should leave what we did for our friends over 65. And I think there should be some modifications [for] students. I think students should be free up until 4:30. And if after 4:30 they pay half price, half price of an adult schedule, of adult fare, because a lot of students come into town, and they are on the bus. That bus is taking our folks back home. And they cannot get a seat. They are free.

Now, Ms. Smith has laboured all day. And she cannot get a seat. They are not like when you came up, Mr. Speaker, many years ago, that if a lady got on the bus, we got up. And I would encourage even today, as our parents, to teach our children, when a lady or an elderly person gets on the bus, you get up and give them a seat. In my country, the UK—

[Laughter]

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: I think it is the first five seats.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: Yes, my place in the back there.

But the first five seats on both sides of the bus are reserved for seniors, pregnant women and the physically challenged. And it is not a problem. You get on the bus, everybody, they leave it. And if they have to get up, then they give a seat. That is what we used to be like years ago when you were coming on, Mr. Speaker. You are much older than me; you know that.

[Laughter]

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: So, we have to get back to that. Because even though I am happy to say I had that word with the former Minister and the present Minister about marking our seats, the first three

to five seats on each side of the bus for seniors, pregnant women and the physically challenged. And it is done. He showed me the picture this morning. They were not on every bus, because sometimes I ride the bus, and they are not on every bus. And I am hoping that it is on every bus now.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: Yes. I have seen it. So, it should be put on every bus. But we have got to get back to that culture where we respect our elders.

But our children only do what we tell them to do or what they see us doing. I remember one time I was in Barbados, Honourable Member Kim Swan and I. We were at a CPA meeting [Commonwealth Parliamentary Association], and we went downtown, and we caught the bus back to the hotel. We went to the terminal, caught the bus. The bus was full. And, you know, good Christian boys like we were, are, when ladies got on, we got up and gave them a seat. People were looking at us like we were crazy. I said, *Well, Kim, I guess I'll have to be crazy, because I'm going to give this lady a seat. That is what we do. That is how I was brought up.*

Even today at my young age, I get up if I am on the bus and a lady gets on, I give her a seat. That is what you are supposed to do.

An Hon. Member: That is right.

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: That is what you are supposed to do; regardless of if that lady is 30 years old or 65 years old. That is what we did. We got up. In school, we got up for the girls who caught the school bus! That is what we did during high school. Young boys got up for the girls, the young ladies. And, you know, I am proud to have done that. That is how I was taught. And I think we have got to start teaching our children.

But back to the fares, Mr. Speaker. I think we have got to look at the fare system for students. I think students, all students, should be free Monday to Friday. After 4:30, Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays and summer holidays, they should be paying half price of an adult fare. Because, you know, Mr. Speaker, the cost, the cost to run these buses is very, very expensive. It has gotten better from the 1999 pricing. But it is nowhere near what it should be today, because back in 1999 the cost was 40 per cent. And that is the revenue and cost ratio. But today, 2017/18, it is 26 per cent. But that is still high, Mr. Speaker, because we are footing the bill of about \$30 million. Yes. In fact, the revenue for buses was \$6.4 million. The expenditure was \$21.7 million—much too high, 29, almost 30 per cent! And the ferries were 78 per cent.

But, Mr. Speaker, I read about what it cost to run the ferries. We have got to look at cheaper ferries, and that is what we are doing, because in order to

alleviate the congestion on our roads, we only have one choice—the water. So, we have to look at that and make sure that we have the facilities and where the ferries can park and pick up if you want to stop the congestion.

But, Mr. Speaker, let me go back to our token. Right now, I think we have got it wrong. Mr. Speaker, we have got it wrong, because if an adult orders a token for [the] 14-zone, it would cost you \$5, cash, or \$4.50 in a token. But that is not so bad. But if you purchase a booklet of tickets, of 15, your fare one way is like \$2.50. It is cheap. It is a giveaway.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr.: Yes, it is a giveaway, very cheap. We cannot afford to . . . and I am not trying to put expense on everybody, because we are putting expense on the taxpayer right now, right? But we have to fix that, that part of it. We have got to make that . . . because if a token—it is cheaper to get a token than to pay cash. And that is fine. We have got to bring the . . . If you buy a booklet of 15, we have got to make it a little, just a little higher than it is. Because we are giving it away, and we cannot even cover our expenses on that.

And then in one comment and thoughts in this here, they said about introducing two fares, one for the tourist and one for Bermudians. I could never be in agreement with that, Mr. Speaker. I do not like it. I know that in some parts of the world, I am told that it is a price for tourists and it is a price for the locals. And I have never heard of that in Bermuda, and I hope it never happens. It is one price for all in Bermuda. If it is two prices in Bermuda, then it is news to me. But I think we just need one price, one price for all. Because why would we charge a tourist more than a local? What are you expecting, for a tourist to pay for everything? We have got to pay for something, too. So, I do not agree with that, Mr. Speaker.

(One second, Mr. Speaker.) And then, I think with what they have done with the tourist . . . no, not tourist, but the sightseeing buses, they gave that to the minibuses. That is \$1 million in revenue that we do not take in anymore, Mr. Speaker. So, I think we have to . . . I do not know if they can go back and do that. But we have got to look at that.

And then, there is a concern. I know it is a concern, and it is this report, about lights on cars, LED lights. Some, particularly seniors, have a problem with those lights at night-time. I see in the report you can buy what they call *night glasses* that will cut down that glare. I know it would be very difficult to—I do not know. I am saying it would be, but I really do not know. Let me take that back. If we can get the proper lights or what we call the proper lights on our cars, with these small roads, narrow roads, we can never be compared to those big countries, and that is what

they use out there. So far, they are not very good for us here in Bermuda.

And then, I see in the report about some of the cyclists riding the Hellman with the headphone on and talking on the phone—not very good. Not very good at all. You cannot be at your best—you are riding that bike with all the traffic that we have and talking on the phone—and still maintain safety. That is not the way it should go.

Mr. Speaker, one thing I am glad about, and it happened under the previous Government, the introduction of minicars for our tourists. I like that. I get a little nervous sometimes when I see tourists, particularly older tourists, riding bikes. But with the cars, to me they seem safer for them. And with that, you know, I certainly applaud that. I like that, and to me I would not let many tourists over a certain age right the bike. I would put a rule to that. And they can do the car. But I would not want them to have the bike. You know, they should have the minicar. They look very comfortable in there. So, I think that is the way we should go with that, Mr. Speaker.

Before I sit, Mr. Speaker, let me check one other thing before I sit. I think I have got everything that I intended to say today, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Thank you, Deputy.

Does any other Member?

I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 26.

Honourable Member Tyrrell.

Mr. Neville S. Tyrrell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: How are you this evening?

Mr. Neville S. Tyrrell: I will try not to delay things too much.

The Speaker: Well, I would like to hold you to that.

Mr. Neville S. Tyrrell: But I certainly feel compelled to support the Minister in this Green Paper. I think it is a well-done document, and I certainly give kudos to whoever else assisted, the technical officers and everyone else.

Mr. Speaker, let me start off. I have a few points. I will say that most of the points I would like to have covered have been covered. And I will only mention them for the sake of my constituents who mentioned them to me. So, those ones I will mention. But let me start with a quote. And it might have to start with a bit of thought for some of us. "You can't understand a city without using its public transportation." That is where I will start, Mr. Speaker. It will sink in eventually.

Mr. Speaker, transport is really one of the many drivers of the Bermuda economy, and that is no

pun intended. It is one of the drivers of our economy because it gets people from A to B. And if they do not get from A to B and back again, then, you know, they are not able to work. They are not able to come into town and that sort of thing. And that is whether it is public or private transportation. And I certainly feel that there should be a smooth connection between the two. And I think the Green Paper is speaking to it, with neither side having a disadvantage. They should be able to co-exist. And I think that is what I get from reading as much as I have done of this Green Paper. And I certainly applaud, as I said, those persons for doing this.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it has been far too long a love/hate relationship between the stakeholders when it comes to transportation, whether it be the users, the operators, owners, we as Government. You know, we have all taken a stake, and that is both governments. So, it has not just been this Government presently. And there have been several attempts to try and sort out our transportation woes, if I can call them that. In fact, I can remember sometime, I think it was 2005 when the then Minister of—no, 2012 that time when the then Minister of Transport had asked me to head a committee to look into some of the taxi woes at that time. So, you know, everyone has had an attempt at doing that.

Which leads me to say that there is really nothing new under the sun. You know, it has all happened before. And throughout every consultation process, and even this one included, there seem to have been three areas of main concern. And they seem to have been, again, highlighted in this Green Paper. The three main ones are *safety*. Everyone wants to know that, you know, they are safe on the roads. They want *reliability*, because, as I said, people want to get from A to B, and they need to know that they want to get there on time and back safely, as well. And of course, there is always the desire for *frictionless transport experiences*, which again the report speaks to.

I certainly would like to know that we have a reliable bus service. I know right now we are having some challenges with the schedules. We seem to have come to the end of the mechanical problems, or at least arriving to the end of those problems. And I would hope that we can sort out that scheduling problem very soon.

The taxi service, we seem to have always had this issue. One of the things is that taxi owners consider themselves independent businessmen, of course. And they feel that they should run their business the way they [want to]. But they need regulation, and they need, obviously, to adhere to the regulations that . . . and for that, I think we need traffic enforcement. It needs to be stepped up.

Certainly, in terms of bad driving, I mean, Mr. Speaker, some of the driving on our roads today is just frightening. I can certainly say that on a daily ba-

sis, I have the pleasure of taking my grandson to school every morning. And he and I, that is our bonding time. And when I drop him off, I leave up west, and I take him down to Devonshire. But the woes start when I come back. Because I am going down with the main flow of traffic, as most of the traffic is going from west into town. But when I am coming back, I am coming back almost on a road that is clear.

But the danger is that third lane. Mr. Speaker, it is really becoming frightening coming back, because there are a few turns in the road. And I come around a bend, and I see a cyclist in the middle of my lane. And I am saying, *You know, come on now*. And obviously, he is expecting me, I guess, to go over. But somebody . . . you know, he is coming at a speed where he has put himself in danger. I say he or [she]. And sometimes it is not just the young. It ranges. The ages range all over.

We also certainly need to modernise our transportation system. It has been mentioned that we have something like 48,000 vehicles on the road. And we need to adhere to some of the road rules. And it is not like when I certainly learned how to drive, or I was taught when I went to the [Bermuda] Tech under an English learning/driving something. And it told me about all the rules of the road and that sort of thing, which is fairly similar to something else I am going to talk about, Project Ride, as I get in further on the points.

In my study in looking through this report, I just happened to say, *I wonder how many dispatch systems are in Bermuda?* And I looked in the phone book, and I saw at least five different dispatch companies. I am saying like if we have, or we think we have like 550, short of 600 anyway, taxis on the road, or supposed to be on the road, having five dispatch companies to me seems to be like an overkill maybe. And something centralised needs to be done. In an island 21 square miles, I am sure that we can do something.

I certainly like the idea of trying to get the taxi drivers to accept credit cards, because I certainly have had persons, whether they be tourists or even locals, using the taxis and have no cash. But they have cards. And someone mentioned a really serious situation where the person did not have any cash at all. And the taxi driver seems to have gotten a bit upset about it. But I believe that it is now the time that our taxi drivers look at having the credit card system in there.

Mr. Speaker, if I could refer to page 59 of the report, which talks about wheelchair access vehicles. I like the term “differently abled persons.” I do believe that we have not serviced that population well enough. My colleague, MP Furbert, went into great detail telling us about the needs of that population. I really think that this is something that we need to look at. They need to get about just as much [consideration] as we able-bodied persons, if I could use that term.

Now, I am going to go onto one of my pet peeves, on page 119, which talks about Project Ride. Now, I mentioned that when I—it has been some time ago. When I learned how to drive even, as I said, I was put in a training which is similar to what the police training, driving instructions, give. And as I said, we had that ability up at Bermuda Tech. The problem with, I think, our school students taking Project Ride—it is good because they are all passing and that sort of thing. But, Mr. Speaker, you watch them on the road. Coming down between eight and nine in the morning, when I am coming back up South Shore Road, and I see the ties, so I know which schools we are talking about. They are like a crazy bunch. You know, I hate to use that term, but I do not think they are applying the Project Ride principles on the road.

And I appeal to parents to instil in their children that if they are on the road, they have a responsibility. Those machines that they ride, they may not be that quick. But if they hit a 3,000-pound vehicle coming at them, you know who is going to win that one, simply.

Another one of my issues, Mr. Speaker, is those dark visors that the riders use. Now, there is always good and bad for everything. I mean, for those who need the glare cut, the dark visors are, obviously, the thing for them. But I believe some of these riders who wear those dark visors believe they must have some protection built in that stops them from getting hurt on their bikes, because they are some of the crazier ones. And you can tell by the way they are coming at you that they are looking right at you. You can tell. You probably cannot see their eyes, but you can tell by the shape of the head that they are looking at you as if, *You had better move*. And I cannot—I just cannot understand how this is really happening. So, I do not know the solution to the wearing of dark visors. But I certainly feel that this is another one of our problems on the road that needs to be curbed.

As I said, our driving habits have just like gone out the window. I mean, you take, for instance . . . first of all, no one drives at 20 miles an hour now. I know it. I do not. Because the cars in front of me are moving, at least, and I am talking kilometres now, 40–45. The car behind me is right up on my bumper. So, you know, somehow or the other you have to measure your distance between the cars. And the normal speed right now, obviously, seems to be somewhere between 45 [kph] to 50 [kph]!

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Neville S. Tyrrell: So, you know, and my honourable colleague says, *It's because the police don't stop*. So, therefore, they are getting leeway. Next it is going to be 60. Pretty soon, it is going to be 60 [kph]. That is going to be the norm of driving on the road, which is going to make it even more congested with 48,000 vehicles on the road. So, I certainly think that

penalties need to be looked at. If TCD are going to do a review of the driving rules, I certainly think that they need to look at the penalties, as well.

My next point that I want to talk about concerns the Railway Trail. On page 126, there was a question asked about the use of the Railway Trail. And it did not seem as if it was such a high percentage of people who actually use it. And I am a little surprised, because I am a proponent of using the Railway Trail for exercise, in terms of walking, pedal biking from . . . because I think Warwick has one of the best structured railway areas in our area. And I use it a lot because I come off the hill from my house, and I either go west or east. I see my colleagues laughing. Yes, I do go out on my bike occasionally, pedal bike, that is.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Neville S. Tyrrell: Yes. All right. I will take your point.

And I certainly take the point where the Minister in his brief said that the Government “will continue to assist with the work of the Friends of the Railway Trail by taking on the maintenance and repair of each new connection and . . . the landscaping of the Trail as a whole.” I certainly commend them in that, because I certainly again am making an appeal for a portion of the Railway Trail in my area, which is Warwick, that probably needs some attention at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I think I have maybe two more points that I wanted to bring up. I do believe that this document is work in progress. So, a lot of the things that my colleague, Honourable Famous, mentioned that are not in the report, I am sure are things that they can now have another look at, or have a look at. So, I certainly feel that there is much to do about this. And it is a work in progress.

Mr. Speaker, there is a point that talked about public ferries, on page 31. And I am not being pedantic about it, so I want to actually read it, if you do not mind, page 31, the Public Ferry, yes. That is also, “How frequently do you use the [public] Ferry?” There were like 20 per cent of people who said that they never use the public ferry. Well, again, I would like to encourage some of my people to go out. It is probably one of the best stress relievers that I know of right now in terms of just getting on the water. I will drive my car into Hamilton, find a spot, of course, a parking spot, and take the ferry and just go to Dockyard. Take my grandson with me and just have a good time. And you are seeing some of the best areas, points of interest, in Bermuda. And it is a very relaxing opportunity. So, I would certainly encourage persons to use it.

But there was also another point that came to my attention, where the report talks about putting handrails near public ferries. Well, that I definitely applaud. But I am going to say that I have been asking for a handrail near one of the bus stops in my area.

And I would hope that maybe that could be looked at, as well. And that fact is on page 36. So, I will actually go right to it, as I have the number here. It is “1.2.3.4. The Ministry of Transport is supportive of installing handrails at ferry stops and erecting more signage where possible and necessary.”

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that there are some of the bus stops near that need handrails, as well, because I certainly had a concern from one of my constituents, who gets off the bus on South Shore Road. They are going down to Warwick Lane. And there are steps there. But she is like 80-something, and she would feel a lot more comfortable if there was a rail. I am making an appeal, Mr. Speaker. I have probably gone through the proper channels, yes. But I am also making the appeal here.

Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that Project Action, which offers some free transportation for seniors, which is used for Bermudians traveling to and from their dialysis appointments, is something that, you know, we want to support, as well. And I understand they are celebrating 20 years of being in that sort of business.

Mr. Speaker, I think those are the points that I really wanted to bring to our attention. As I said, those are the ones that were put to me by my constituents. And I felt that I was obliged to bring them. But let me end with another quote that I found as I was doing my research. And it says, “Bicycles are the most efficient vehicles on the planet, 50 times more efficient than cars and twice as efficient as walking.”

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Member.

I now recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 36.

Honourable Member, you have the floor.

Hon. Michael J. Scott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it has been 72 years since the introduction of automated transportation in our fair Island. It mirrors with the same period of years that is now being celebrated and was particularly celebrated yesterday, June the 6th, with the commemoration of the Normandy landings. Interestingly, though, the connection between the Second World War and transportation on our Island does have some links. It was after the world war that the introduction of automated cars was introduced into our little Island after the abandonment of the 1931 to 1941 experiment with railway travel in our Island.

And I just looked at the googled history on the history of the Railway Trail. And it was described as the costliest transportation experiment ever in our history, possibly in other transportation histories, of around \$40 million, based on 2008 prices, \$40 million to build a 21-mile single-gauge line between Somerset and St. George's to carry freight and passengers.

But today, 72 years later, we are examining what has grown into a rather large change from the few cars that began to be regulated by the 1947 Road Traffic and Motor Car Acts of the day, the few cars that were being introduced into the Island in that era. And an examination, just a short examination of the legislative references in the report by the Honourable Transport and Tourism Minister documents that the Road Traffic legislation and the Motor Car legislation all begin in 1947.

And you can just imagine that, at that time, with the number of cars that first became registered in our country, things went along rather genteelly. There were not many cars. There were not many policemen chasing speeding drivers. There were not many traffic offenders appearing in the courts for driving in excess of the speed limit, or driving whilst under the influence of alcohol, or driving without a licence or insurance. But typically, as our history progressed, as in all matters, we start seeing the need to better regulate the uptick and usage of cars and motorbikes and auxiliary cycles and motorcycles. And the legislation reflects just these kinds of developments.

Mr. Speaker, the taxi industry has a history of the very noble taxi. It has been used to educate families, support families, educate children, build homes. It has a noble history, Mr. Speaker, of being a business, a business that was incorporated by many, many of our men and women of the 1940s, the 1950s. And as the industry, the tourism industry became more pronounced, the taxi integrated into that industry. And then there was the ordinary Bermuda hack who used his or her taxi to transport and respond to the local demands for moving and transporting our residents.

And its noble history of building families—Radnor Road was built on the back of the taxi, the noble taxi, and many other parts of our country. And kids returning home from school would drive mom's or dad's taxi to fund the remainder of their school year. The taxi, as I say, has . . . and it is the reason, I believe, that it becomes such a passionate, emotive discussion when it comes to making changes to it, as we seek and as we inevitably must do. It becomes a challenge to do it because of this deep and abiding history that the taxi has had.

Contrastingly, too, the motor car industry has an equally noble history. The taxi industry, on the one hand, had a huge placement in the black community as a black business asset. Certainly, the motor car industry, Bermuda Motors, largely the Gibbons family, after 1947 have seen that this history has grown into an industry which has been extremely beneficial and profitable as an industry, a burgeoning industry, to supply private vehicles and trucks and motorbikes to a modern Bermuda.

So, both histories of the taxi and the motor car have been important in our country. And they both have had a role in organising wealth and wealth being built around these two industries.

There was a time when the taxi was capable, as I was indicating, of supporting the family. But the question to ask today is whether the millennial, new taxi operator can do it. The answer, I think, is an emphatic no. And the answer, this answer I give really finds many of its, much of its evidence in some of the things we have been discussing, Mr. Speaker, about the cost of living in our country. So, once upon a time, the taxi was able to cause men and heads of families to start their homes, start a family, support a family, pay for the education for their children.

Today I do note that, because the cost of everything, the cost of living has gone up, it is becoming a greater challenge. And whilst I have noted that Minister De Silva has itemised in the analysis of his report the cost of the permits and the cost of operations we have heard discussed here today, today the challenge of financing the \$100,000 permit at the bank is a little more challenging than it was in the opening gambit, the opening bat of this taxi industry. And so, I would commend for the consideration of the House, as we examine this Green Paper, and certainly for the Minister and his team, that this be a factor that we list and take into account how we may assist with this whole question of how banks, for example, rate lending for borrowing for the taxi permit.

Now, you know, really, the banks do the usual risk assessment for this \$100,000. And they make sure that the debt-to-income ratios are all working. But I have encountered the banks' concern about bringing into the mix whether the taxi will earn throughout the shoulder season what is meant to be an un-risked income from that vehicle during the shoulder seasons, versus its being perfectly agreeable to the lenders, the bankers, during the high season. But it is a challenge which I invite the Minister to put into the mix in consideration, how some members and operators of taxis face these challenges and whether there can be some consideration given as to assist the taxi operators managing the whole question of funding a taxi permit in a modern Bermuda.

Well, I am glad to see that the Minister is ready to make a wind-up of this important debate on transportation. And, Mr. Speaker, with that I take my seat.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member, for your contribution.

And, Minister, I believe you are the last speaker at this point. Would you like to do your wrap-up at this point?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Yes, I would, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank all Members for participating. Transportation in the country is going to be very, very important, going forward. As you will know, we have increased our cruise ship visitors over the past several years, with yet an-

other increase expected for this year. We continuously work hard with regard to the airlines and the air lift to the country. And we have a team that is working on that, I would say almost *daily*, Mr. Speaker. It is a challenge with regard to airlines coming to Bermuda. It is not the profitable route unless your airline is named BA, or Delta coming out of Atlanta. But it is a challenge.

The Speaker: You do not want to do anything to help with the cost.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: And as we continue to try to increase our visitors to the Island, whether it be through cruise or air, the transportation issue will continue to be just that, a challenge. I think the steps spoke to it very well where we were in 1999 in terms of the tourists we had and in terms of the available transportation that we had. So, I think that spoke volumes as to where we are.

But there have been some good suggestions today by all Members. And I appreciate their contributions and feedback. There are a few other people I would like to thank, Mr. Speaker, none other than the Deputy Premier, Mr. Walter Roban, because this project started under his watch. And I am happy to say that it gives me great pleasure in being the one to bring the final version here to this House.

But there are also some other people, Mr. Speaker, that I think, whilst I am in the thank-you mode, I would like to thank all of my colleagues who sit on this side of the House for their contributions over the past six months.

And in the House today, we have Ms. Stacey Evans, from the Ministry of Tourism and Transport, who did, I must say, most of the heavy lifting. She did a lot of the research, a lot of the writing, a lot of the interviews, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So, I would like to thank Ms. Evans for her hard work and her stick-to-it-ness, because it was not an easy task.

I think the Permanent Secretary told me, when I was talking to her one day, I think she said that this is the 14th version, something like that. So, that is how many versions they actually went through. And I would certainly like to thank my Permanent Secretary, Ms. Aideen Ratteray Pryse, for all of the work that she has done.

Mr. Gilbert Rowling, from the Policy Unit, collated all of the survey results. And there were many, as you know, almost 20,000. Honey Adams, of course, from the Department of Communications, who assisted with those surveys. Julie Marshall, Department of Planning, she assisted. Creative Service, for the final product, which was not an easy task, either, Mr. Speaker. And last, but not least, Theresa Ince, my secretary, for doing a lot of the reviewing and proof-reading and formatting. And it certainly was no easy task, Mr. Speaker. So, I do thank them all for what

they accomplished; and [they] accomplished a major feat indeed.

Now, Mr. Speaker, and for those who asked for and requested, I will declare my interest. As you know, I do have a container hauling company. I have a trucking company. I have a tire business. I am just trying to think if I need to cover anything else whilst I am making a declaration.

An Hon. Member: Do you have any bicycles?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: No, I do not have any bicycles.

An Hon. Member: You are a Liverpool supporter.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: I am a Liverpool supporter, Mr. Speaker. I say it just in case.

The Speaker: Too bad. Too bad.

[Laughter]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: So, but of course, Mr. Speaker, let us put that to bed.

But I must say that it is interesting because, who was it who said that if you do not have a conflict in Bermuda, then—

An Hon. Member: You are in conflict.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: —you are in conflict?

[Laughter]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: But a couple of things, you know, I would like to touch on, Mr. Speaker. And there were several questions. And I will try to cover as many as I can. But there was a question from MP Scott Pearman with regard to dark visors and what we plan on doing with that. And I think he had some questions about the importers. But we will talk to the importers.

You know, it is not like we are going to ban them overnight. We know that people are in business. We will deal with that. It is no different than if we decided in this House that we are going to eliminate all fossil fuel vehicles by 2030 or 2025. If we decided we are going to make this Island entirely electric, we are not going to do it overnight. So, we will have consultation. We will think about it. We will talk to the people in the industry. And if I have to lay down a marker, that is one that I will lay down. That is something that we are going to consider in the future, in the near future, setting a timeline where we are going to set an example, hopefully, for the world. So, that was that, Mr. Speaker.

The Honourable Member Trevor Moniz had a few questions. He wanted to know the cost of high speed versus fast ferry. High speed ferries are \$11

million; fast ferries are \$7 million. And, of course, they burn less fuel. So, we will be looking at that very seriously in the near future, as we are now.

There is a question: What are we doing about the time frame for student bus service, and how many buses will be needed? It has been estimated that we need approximately 20 buses to accomplish that feat. Of course, the challenge we have right now is with buses in general. But, hopefully, in the near future, we will have an announcement on that, too.

I think the Honourable Member Trevor Moniz also asked about organising minibuses. Well, we are in the process right now of drafting instructions for minibus regulations, and we anticipate that this will be laid in this House before the year is over, Mr. Speaker.

And there was some talk about the bus schedule. And again, Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is any secret—the bus schedules have been a challenge. You know, there is no way that you are going to get 20 people in a four-seater taxi, are you? You are not going to have that happen. It is not going to happen. So, that is the challenge we face. You cannot get a square peg in a round hole unless you trim the edges. So, I think that is well documented. It is certainly my intention to resolve the issue with regard to the bus challenge that we have. I have said it before, and I will say it again tonight: If I have my way, it will be sorted and sorted as quickly as we can. But I am working on that, and I hope to have some news soon.

The grey schedule, there were, I think, a couple of questions on the grey schedule. And the grey schedule is used . . . maybe it was about the overtime, I think, maybe, someone wanted to know what we are spending on that. But the grey schedule is part of the overall service. The overtime is paid as needed. So, as we work it, the overtime is paid.

Ms. Leah K. Scott: Point of—

The Speaker: Point of order?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Sure.

Ms. Leah K. Scott: —clarification?

The Speaker: Clarification? Okay.

POINT OF CLARIFICATION

Ms. Leah K. Scott: Yes. I wanted to know why we have a grey schedule, the number of bus drivers who drive it, when the schedule actually occurs, and do they get compensated for driving it?

The Speaker: Thank you.
Minister.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Thank you. Thank you, Opposition Deputy Leader.

Why do we need it? Because sometimes, we just have to juggle the schedule. And overtime is required. And the 1998, the old schedule, is insufficient to meet the 2019 requirements. So, without the grey schedule, it is going to be a challenge. They call it the grey schedule, and I think it is more for explanation purposes. It is like the night train or the night run that we were talking about. And of course, I was happy to announce that finally, after I don't know, umpteen years, we finally got night train times resolved. And we agreed on a time. So, that is just one of those things.

Someone asked, how much is a new bus? It is between \$360[,000] and \$370[,000].

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Yes. It is actually on page 23 of the Green Paper. But I think Mr. Moniz, the Honourable Member, asked that question. I think it is on page 23, and [the approximate cost is] \$369,000.

And the other question MP Moniz asked was, Are the buses with GPS, are we not getting any wider info? Well, GPS is just to tell you where the buses are. They are not going to tell you how many people are riding. Not yet. But technology is coming, and you will hear me talk a lot about technology and the buses and transportation and ferries and all the transportation in the country, going forward, because that is the way the world is going. That is the way the world is going.

How many hours do minibuses have to be on the road? There are no prescribed hours at this present time, at this present time. Now, Mr. Speaker, there were several Members opposite who asked the same question, or made a statement, *Why are we not having a White Paper? They are disappointed we are not having a White Paper.* And almost everyone, to a person, when they said they were disappointed we are not having a White Paper, also said, *We need to get on with things right away.* They are almost . . . you know, it is . . .

So, the challenge is, Mr. Speaker, I could tell you. I made that decision. And the reason I made that decision is I know how long it took to put together a Green Paper, right? And I know how much work went into it for my people. And like hell if I was going to sit here and spend months and months and months with us producing a White Paper. No way, Mr. Speaker! It is not happening. Look. We have the Green Paper. We have had a full debate today. And I can assure you I will keep Members updated as to what we are doing with transport in the country as we do it. Okay?

We want to get moving. We want to get things done. We want to get people transportation when they want it. Our visitors—I spent three hours up at Dockyard on Wednesday, three hours. And I am going to spend more and more time up there. I spent three and a half hours meeting with all the taxi drivers last week.

Yes, all of us in a room together. And I will tell you, what a meeting it was, Mr. Speaker! But that is the type of thing I am going to do. In order to understand it, we have to do it. We have to live it. And if I have to get on buses and ride from Somerset to St. George's, I am going to do it.

I spent a couple of hours in St. George's yesterday looking at that depot down there. I do not blame the operators. How many of us want to go sit in a porta-potty at this time of year?

An Hon. Member: Or any time?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Or any, but in particular this time of year? And sit down in a porta-potty for 20 minutes in this blazing sun.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: After sitting on a bus for three or four hours?

[Crosstalk]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Now, Mr. Speaker, you know what else I found down in the East End yesterday? That is why it is good for Ministers to get around.

An Hon. Member: Yes.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: I went down in this building that was—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Yes. But I did not catch a bus.

[Laughter]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: But I went down, Mr. Speaker. The building had been condemned. It had a letter on the door, dated July 2014! Now, I am just saying 2014, July, was three years before we got elected. I am just saying. That building has had a letter on it. I have a picture right here on my phone, if you let me bring it up to show Members. July 2014, the building was condemned, almost three years to the day when we took office. So, I ask the Opposition, why was that situation not fixed then? You had three years. I am not going to say five; I am going to say three.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Oh, so because we have been there two years? Well, I tell you what, Mr. MP Cole Simons, who made that comment. I have been in this seat six months, and it is going to be fixed in the

next week. In fact, it is fixed today. In fact, if you have not heard, the work to rule is finished. The work to rule is finished. It is over.

An Hon. Member: All right! All right!

[Crosstalk]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: The work to rule is over.

But, Mr. Speaker, let me say this, right? I am going to end on this note, Mr. Speaker. And I heard Members opposite asking for that White Paper, almost to a person. And every one of them said that they wanted some work done. *Let us get on with it!* Now, Mr. Speaker, I am going to give them one out of two, and it is not going to be a White Paper. We are going to get on, and we are going to get the work done. Trust me; the work is going to get done.

And before the PLP came into power, Mr. Speaker, buses did not have air conditioners, you know. And you remember the old saying when the Opposition, when we brought in those first fast ferries. I think somebody opposite coined the phrase, *It is a figment of your imagination if you think Bermudians are going to use ferries in this country.* But the last I heard—well, you probably have not been around long enough. But I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, you were around. And I remember that phrase very clearly. *It is a figment of your imagination.* The Transport Minister, Ewart Brown at the time, our Premier, that is what he was told.

An Hon. Member: Ferry fantasy.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: *Ferry fantasy* is correct.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have made inroads with regard to transportation in the country. And I think that, if you look back over time, I think the improvements that we have made in both buses and transportation, and our taxis and our minibuses, because these taxis have improved. They have gotten larger. We have gone from horses to wagons, you know, taxis and minibuses. And people are asking for permits for bigger minibuses. So, we have made inroads, Mr. Speaker.

But I would just like to finish on this note, I thank all Members for their contributions, and I look forward to us completing a lot of the things that are in the paper. We will get them done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

That brings us to a close of the items that are on the Order Paper for today.

Deputy Premier.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Oh, yes, yes. You have to resolve that. I forgot, for your motion, for that particular motion, yes.

[Pause]

The Clerk: Okay. It has been asked in the resolve that this Honourable House supports the recommendations and priorities set out in the Green Paper on Transportation 2019.

All those in favour?

All those against?

AYES.

The Speaker: It sounds like it passed.

The Clerk: It has been resolved. The motion stands.

[Motion carried: The House supports the recommendations and priorities set out in the Green Paper on Transportation 2019.]

The Speaker: Yes.

Deputy [Premier].

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Walter H. Roban: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I do move that the House do adjourn until June 21st, Friday, at 10:00 am.

The Speaker: Thank you, Deputy.

Does anyone wish to speak to that?

We recognise the Minister of Education.
Minister.

T. N. TATEM MIDDLE SCHOOL

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to the listening public.

Mr. Speaker, last week I announced in this House something that I did not take very lightly. It was the closing of one of our middle schools for the upcoming school term.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to start by asking your indulgence as I quote, first from my Statement and then from the Hansard.

The Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: And I am quoting from my Statement, Mr. Speaker, wherein I said, "In regard to the future of T. N. Tatem, this decision to close is, at the moment, applicable to the upcoming school year only. As we move forward with our plans to reform education and phase out middle schools, the outcome of those discussions will frame the decision-making process on the future of T. N. Tatem."

Mr. Speaker, I would like to now quote from the Hansard from last week, Friday.

The Speaker: Continue.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: And I quote . . . And this was in response to a question from Member Susan Jackson. And I said, "Mr. Speaker, I will reiterate and try and say it much more clearly. We will not invest any money in the school until we know what we are doing with the building. And until we get to that point, then we will have the conversations of what will be done, what will be invested in the building, what remediation, what rebuilding, what renovations. We will have that total conversation once we have reached that point of what we are going to do with the building as it relates to the entire school system."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I bring that up because no more than 30 minutes after I made that speech in this House, the Opposition Leader spoke to ZBM. And unfortunately, I was unable to speak to ZBM because I was dealing with the situation at the BUT [Bermuda Union of Teachers], which took me until 9:30 that evening to deal with. But, Mr. Speaker, you can imagine my surprise when I listened to the ZBM news that night, and I heard the Opposition Leader say, and I quote, "Wouldn't it be best to plan forward the things that this school is deemed necessary to close it down, rather than put \$3 million into a school for remediation work, fixing it up, when after the fact we end up closing it down? Is that, will that money be well spent? I do not think we got an answer to that."

Mr. Speaker, I thought the answer was quite clear. But, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that some Members opposite just do not listen when we read these Statements. It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that—

The Speaker: They may have misinterpreted it.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Misinterpreted it.

The Speaker: That is a better way of putting it.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Mr. Speaker, it is clear from this erroneous statement that Mr. Cannonier made . . . I went up to the station on Monday and cleared it up. And they produced it, and they put it on the news, and they put it out there and said, *The Minister disputes that*. And I passed him the Statement, and they saw that.

And if they had listened to any of my previous statements to the press, anyone would have known that there is no intention to carry out any repairs to T. N. Tatem until we know exactly what we are doing with our realignment of the school system. And that was quite clear.

But, Mr. Speaker, I understand. When people leave here, they get in front of the camera, and they kind of just kind of try and remember what they are

doing, and they just say things. And they say things, grandstanding, politicking, whatever. But, Mr. Speaker, I would never normally even touch this, because I am used to their selective hearing. I am used to their politicking. And I know that it does nothing to further what we need to do to get our education system moving on.

The Speaker: Well, just speak to the Chair.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: But, Mr. Speaker, why I rise to my feet today is because I was shocked to see that the Shadow Minister of Education, after that being cleared up on Monday, put out an opinion piece, entitled “State of Uncertainty in Education.” Now, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the absolute disconnect this article had with the actual issues of the day and what is going on in education, and I am sure his handlers had read the various comments on his article in *Bernews* and on social media, and taking into account what the people are saying about what he actually did say, there is no need for me to go into that part of it.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to quote the part of his op-ed that got to me. Mr. Speaker, I quote from the Shadow Minister’s op-ed. And he said, “¹The other crucial issue which the people of Bermuda must pay careful attention to is the future of T.N. Tatem Middle School.

“The Minister confirmed the school will not be reopened for the 2019/20 school year. He also confirmed that \$3m will be invested to refurbish in the school.” I do not understand how he got that. But I continue. And he says, “What is the Government’s plan for the school and how does this fit into the bigger scheme of the reorganization of Bermuda’s schools with the elimination of Middle Schools and introduction of signature schools?

“How will the restructure impact the intake of students at other schools in 2019/20?” He went on further to say, “What will happen to the current teachers and staff members in the school? They must be involved in this process.

“As I indicated once before, there needs to be more synergy and better communications with all stakeholders so that there is a higher level of trust.”

Mr. Speaker, the Shadow Minister has a habit of finishing these ghost-written op-eds by saying, *We need to take politics out of education*. And I agree with him. I absolutely agree with him. But, Mr. Speaker, it is now time for the Shadow Minister to follow his own advice. As if he was asleep when I read my Statement, Mr. Speaker, I will refer to it again, where I said—

The Speaker: Well, we heard it just now. We heard it.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain:—where I said, “This decision is critical and was not made lightly, as a safe and healthy learning and teaching environment is paramount for our students and staff at T. N. Tatem Middle School. We are invested in ensuring that this remains at the forefront of all decisions made in regard to our schools . . . To date I have met with the T. N. Tatem PTSA Executive, the T. N. Tatem School Principal, the T. N. Tatem Health and Safety Chairperson, T. N. Tatem staff, and the parents of current T. N. Tatem students . . .”

Does that sound like no one has been contacted, Mr. Speaker? Does that sound like no one has been contacted, Mr. Shadow Minister?

I also went on to say, “I have also corresponded with the parents of current P6 students who have applied to attend T. N. Tatem . . . It was critical to meet with school staff and the parents of T. N. Tatem students, to listen and obtain feedback as we discuss next steps . . . My goal is to maintain a transparent and collaborative approach with all stakeholders in the best interest of our children and staff.”

So, the question befalls us, Why write such an article, which is in direct contrast to everything that was said in this Honourable House?

Mr. Speaker, most of the comments under this article alluded to the fact . . . and I wondered why the Shadow Minister was doing a statement like this. What was he doing while I was reading the Statement? You know, this is the danger of just signing your name to ghost-written articles done by political consultants, Mr. Speaker. Because you will get called out every single time that happens.

Mr. Speaker, we are in a very sensitive place when it comes to education. There is a fear of what the future holds, because when the data are looked at objectively, the only path for us is to have a long, serious look at how we are going to restructure our system to ensure optimum outcomes for our students.

This means change, Mr. Speaker. And this means change to some who are very used to the status quo. This breeds fear, and that is understandable. And I understand that, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, change will come. Change will come to our system, and change will come after proper consultation. Fearmongering, using [nonfactual], incorrect and nonsensical trash attacks, like what happened in the newspaper this week, has no purpose but to score political points. To the same article that said, *We need to remove politics from education*, Mr. Speaker.

As a former Minister of Education, MP Simons should be much more aware of how the Department of Education works and how it administers education to the system in Bermuda. The Shadow Minister needs to stop using politics to score points and follow his own advice: Remove politics from education. Members opposite need to finally grasp that they have been weighed, they have been measured and they

¹ [Bernews](#), 4 June 2019

have been found wanting by the electorate, and they showed them that in July 2017.

An Hon. Member: Ooh. Put a mark on you. Ooh.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Mr. Speaker, we will not—

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Members! Members!

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: I will not be deterred by the drivel I hear from the Opposition Leader.

The Speaker: Members!

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: An Opposition Leader who stood up in front of Bermuda and said, *I will tell you about Jetgate*, and we are still waiting. And we are still waiting for that, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: Oh, wow.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: The comments on *Bernews* and the comments on Facebook—

[Gavel]

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: —to the Shadow Minister's article are telling. And I challenge him to go and read those articles, because the people see through the drivel, and they see that what is coming from that side has no place in what we are trying to do, Mr. Speaker.

To help Members opposite, I offer this, Mr. Speaker. I will reach across the aisle and invite any single one of them to come and visit me in my office. I will show them what goes on in Education. I will have them sit down, and I will have them see how it works and how they failed with their five Education Ministers in five years.

So, Mr. Speaker, hopefully, if they come and they find out, they can relay this to their ghost writers so we can have accurate articles depicting what is happening in education. They can actually begin to start helping us get to where we need to be in education instead of impeding progress, Mr. Speaker. Because that is all they are doing is impeding progress.

Mr. Speaker, we need all hands on deck in order for education to be where it needs to be. Education is too important for either party to fail Bermuda, Mr. Speaker, for either party to fail Bermuda. I am willing to work with anyone on that side who wants to work, Mr. Speaker. But if they will come with anything less than wanting to better education for Bermudians, they can continue to sit over on that side, snipe as they wish, and get the type of reaction that this article got in the newspaper when it was just branded as

rubbish by pretty much everyone who read it, because they know.

And I have lost count of the number of teachers who commented on that article and told that Shadow Minister, *Please, sit down*. So, Mr. Speaker, if you cannot, if [Members] opposite cannot manage to see that what we need to do is work together to move forward with education, if all they want to provide is less than that, I implore them to be quiet and get out of the way of our progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 8.

Would you like to take the floor?

An Hon. Member: Ah!

Another Hon. Member: Oh!

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes.

T. N. TATEM MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: I sat here quietly, intently. Obviously, I have gotten under the skin of the Minister. Mr. Speaker—

[Inaudible interjections and laughter]

The Speaker: Members!

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: As the President of the BUT has said, *The Minister is long on words and short on actions*. And that is why we have the challenges that we have today, Mr. Speaker. He talked about, Mr. Speaker, consultation with the parents, consultation with the students. My article was about the teachers. And the teachers feel that they have not been heard, they have not been listened to. Yes, you can have meeting with the teachers. But are you listening?

[Crosstalk]

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Point of order! Point of clarification, Mr. Speaker!

The Speaker: Wait, wait, wait! One second, one second, one second. One at a time.

POINT OF ORDER

[Misleading]

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. Point of order, Mr. Speaker. He is misleading the House.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first Minister out of all of the OBA Ministers, who has met with the teachers on three separate occasions—the first Minister. And if he can point-of-order me and tell that he met with the entire body, I invite him to do so.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Okay. Okay.
Continue. Continue. Continue.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Mr. Speaker, during my tenure, I did not have the problems that he currently has, Mr. Speaker.

[Laughter]

[Gavel]

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Point of order, Mr. Speaker! Point of order! Point of order!

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Wait, wait, wait, wait! Take your time! Take your time!

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Point of order!

The Speaker: Take your time. Take your time. Take your time. What is your point of order?

POINT OF ORDER
[Misleading]

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: The Member is misleading the House. Because if he was truthful, he would stand up and tell Bermuda that when he was voted out of office, the entire body was on work to rule.

An Hon. Member: Oh! Oh, my word!

The Speaker: Rise up, [Shadow] Minister.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Mr. Speaker, I stand by my comments.

The Speaker: Speak to the Chair.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: He is talking about work to rule. Ask him about his principals. They are *still* on work to rule. And you had the strike last week.

An Hon. Member: Cleaning up your mess.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Cleaning up my mess?

The Speaker: Just speak to the Chair. Speak to the Chair.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Mr. Speaker, again, same story—talk, talk, talk. And the principals are where they are on work to rule because, again, as I said before, I stand by my article. They have not been heard.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Point of order, Mr. Speaker! Point of order, Mr. Speaker!

The Speaker: Well, well—

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: He has been up here speaking!

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: I have a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Go ahead.

An Hon. Member: Calm down.

POINT OF ORDER
[Misleading]

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: The Member is misleading intentionally, because I have pointed out where he has said there has been no consultation on T. N. Tatem, and I have pointed out where I said there has been consultation. So, he needs to withdraw that comment.

[Crosstalk]

The Speaker: Just speak to the Chair.
Members! Members!

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Mr. Speaker, does consultation mean, *I am here. This is what you are going to do. I have heard you, but this is what we are going to do?* A good example is that of the middle schools—

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Point of order! Point of order, point of order, Mr. Speaker!

The Speaker: Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: Point of order!

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: A good example of that is middle schools.

The Speaker: Let him just go on a little bit. Let him go on a little bit more.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: He is misleading the House!

The Speaker: Let him just go on a little further.

Hon. Diallo V. S. Rabain: He is incorrect and misleading the House!

The Speaker: Have a seat. Have a seat. Have a seat. Continue on a little bit more. I am trying to follow where you are going. Go ahead.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Mr. Speaker, I wish that Minister would calm down.

The Speaker: Just talk to the Chair. Just talk to the Chair.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: Talk to the Chair.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Talk to the Chair.

[Inaudible interjections and laughter]

[Gavel]

[Pause]

The Speaker: You do have the floor if you want to continue. Talk to the Chair. If not, we can pass on to somebody else.

An Hon. Member: I think he has lost his concentration.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: I did lose my concentration that second.

An Hon. Member: It is easy to do when you are making it up.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: Come back.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Mr. Speaker, a number of teachers and principals have said to me, *Listen. I want to do a world-class job in the delivery of the services that we provide to our young people. I have values, ideas and contributions that will increase the value of what I can do to the system.* And they feel that they are not heard.

Mr. Speaker, I said to one . . . one principal came to me—

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Members, Members!

[Gavel]

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Mr. Speaker, one principal came to me and said, *All the Minister needs to do is meet with their principals on a quarterly basis or semi-annual basis. And they, the Ministry and the Minister, will get a lot of their answers to the challenges that they face today.* Because the principals are the lynchpins between the Ministry and the teachers, the teachers and the parents. They have experience. Most of the principals have 30 or 40 years of experience in education, leadership and development of policies within their schools. And they have indicated to me on many occasions that they are undervalued, under-appreciated and under-respected. And that is why they are having the problems they are having today.

Mr. Speaker, I understand the Minister's sensitivities. Mr. Speaker, I also understand that the job that he has is very difficult. But at the end of the day, we have to be truly honest and bring—

An Hon. Member: Be honest!

The Speaker: Members!

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: —the stakeholders along. Bring the teachers along.

[Inaudible interjections]

[Gavel]

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: Bring the principals along. And listen to them! And not just promote and rush through your agenda.

The issue of the middle schools and the signature schools . . . people have said, *This is a major shift in education in this country. And to have anecdotal reasons as to why it is shifting and getting rid of middle schools was not good enough.* You heard it from the President of Bermuda College. You heard it from foreign educational professionals. Mr. Speaker, you have reputable people saying, *Okay. Well, you're going to make this decision. Make the decision based on analytical data.* Because this is shifting education in Bermuda.

But yet, to date, we do not have it. The Minister said he has been consulting with the community on the shift to signature schools. But at the end of the day, he has not told us why the middle schools are not working. He has not told us why—

[Inaudible interjections]

[Gavel]

The Speaker: Member.

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: —the principals are not doing a great job in leading the middle schools. He has not

said what deficiencies in performance the middle schools currently have, Mr. Speaker. No! He has just said, *We're getting rid of middle schools, and we're going to signature schools because . . .* I presume he means that the middle schools are not working effectively. But if that is the case, what resources has he given to ensure and remedy the situation in the middle schools which he feels that they are deficient? None, Mr. Speaker. None!

And so, these are the issues that bother professionals within the industry, that bother the teachers. They are saying that they are making all of these changes. They do not understand why they are making them.

Now, I have to agree. I totally support the new strategic plan because it is a plan that was driven and developed by the community, by the stakeholders. And it is incumbent upon all of us, including myself, to ensure that this plan is delivered and that the teachers, who also form a significant part of the plan, that there are strategies to help them to be the best that they can be. That section of the report needs to be given priority to ensure that our teachers feel good about themselves, they feel that they can make a valued contribution, that they can better perform their functions in helping our children to be the best that they can be.

To me, that should be a priority. And if it were a priority, we would not have what we have today. Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker. I was horrified when the Bermuda Union of Teachers said to us, to the public, that they took a vote of no confidence and that they indicated that the Commissioner and the PS were not up to scratch in regard to the vote of no confidence. I have also been told what they wanted to do the Minister. But they were influenced not to do the Minister. And so, they went with the—

An Hon. Member: That is because they did you while you were there.

[Gavel]

The Speaker: Member!

Mr. N. H. Cole Simons: They went and did a vote and said, *Okay. We cannot get the Minister now. So, we will go with the Commissioner of Education and the PS.*

So, again, somebody may have exerted pressure on them, Mr. Speaker. But at the end of the day, there was unrest because of the leadership, direction and decisions that were made in a bellicose fashion in the management of education in this country, Mr. Speaker.

Now, the Minister can be sensitive to the issues all he wants. His job now is to stop making a whole pile of noise, and deliver the Education Plan

2021 and ensure that he does so in a respectful manner and show leadership that is required in education.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

[Desk thumping]

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

I recognise the Honourable Member from constituency 2. Honourable Member Swan has the floor.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Mr. Speaker.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Members, just be respectful of your comments going across this floor, please.

PGA TOUR EVENT IN BERMUDA

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Mr. Speaker, for the last few months, particularly in sittings, I have listened to the Opposition, and I have listened to people out in the community walk up and say, you know, *What are you doing? When are you going to get any inward investment in this country?* I have heard it. I have heard them alluding to it.

[Hon. Derrick V. Burgess, Sr., Deputy Speaker, in the Chair]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: The news this week, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Bermuda will host a \$3 million PGA Tour event is more than proof certain that this Government is fishing where the fish are. I would venture to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it is an opportunity for this country to reach out and connect globally where the money is. In my trade that I am blessed by God to have come into, I have travelled the four corners of this earth. I have met some of the wealthiest people in the world. I want to today pay homage to a man, Mr. Jack Moseley, the President of USF&G. He died in 2003. But in 1983, he met this country boy down in Castle Harbour because he went to Auburn, I went to Troy, and he invited me to play in the USF&G New Orleans Open as his guest.

And he said to me, he says, *You can play whenever you want in the New Orleans Open. I used to open my tournament up to Charlie Sifford before you.* I say that because USF&G went out of business in 1998 and was bought by Travelers Insurance. I look on the PGA Tour, and I see companies like Chubb, who have a presence in Bermuda, who used to be ACE. I see companies throughout the PGA Tour like HSBC, who have a presence in Bermuda.

But if you looked at the top 50 reinsurance companies in the world, they are not just in America. They are all around the globe. I would venture to say that the opportunity that golf presents to this country is one, is a model that helped build Bermuda's tourism from the get-go, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You understand it probably better than I because you grew up and you are a Tucker's Town man. His family . . . Tucker's Town is where his family comes from. He knows. He grew up caddying just like I did. I could not go down to Tucker's Town and caddy. I tried once. I said, *I will stay Belmont where I'm going to get a rip*. They looked at me and said, *Boy, you ain't going to rip here unless we're desperate*.

Well, I am saying that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to say that the origins of Bermuda, when Castle Harbour and Mid Ocean were built by Charles Blair McDonald and Seth Raynor and banks, the understudies, the owners and principals of Castle Harbour, who sponsored me on the European tour, owned Pan Am! There was no reason why . . . it was no secret why Pan Am used to have that flight that left at eight o'clock in the morning, because they had people living here who wanted to stay here on the weekend and be back at work. And they could do so conveniently, from Bermuda. That is the type of money that does not only exist in America. It exists all around the world, in Africa, in Asia, in South America, in North America to a lesser degree than it once did. And we need to tap into it. They play golf!

Now, I am saying this. This PLP Government, led by the Honourable David Burt, and this particular Tourism Minister, the Honourable Zane De Silva, have brought a tournament here for five years that taps into golf in a real way. Bermuda was a pioneer in televised golf. I am talking about things that I have written about and spoken about for many years. The Shell's Wonderful World of Golf at Tucker's Town back in the 1950s, late 1950s, when Mason Rudolph played Sam Snead. That is right. Sam Snead on the front line had three pars, three bogies, and three birdies for an even par, front nine, at Mid Ocean Club.

When Tony Lema came to Bermuda with Bermuda relatives nonetheless, you talk about the Portuguese connection. No, people do not know that! He won the British Open, Tony Lema. The type of people whom I looked at when Archie Compston was the pro at Mid Ocean. But who were the people whom we golf pros, lowly golf pros, country-boy golf pros some of us, interacted with? The wealthiest in the world. Archie used to teach King Edward, educated the Crown. Many stories about that. I know, but I am sworn to secrecy until the person who told me dies. She told me, *You'd better not tell those stories until I'm gone*.

[Laughter]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Oh, yes! Yes. Money—you have to fish where the money is.

And why am I making this speech today? My cousin, the late Reginald Burrows, made a similar cry in the early 2000s. Money in Bermuda? Get on board! Get on board with this event. Because it is an opportunity for you, for us, for your goal!

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: I've heard this before.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Yes, you have heard it before. And let me tell you this, Mr. Opposition Leader, who is interpolating under his breath, the opportunity is for all of us. And let me say this. The black people in this community do not enjoy the spoils of this community. We do not enjoy it. But I can tell you what. If done right, which I feel very confident it will be, it will not be the way in which it happened under your watch.

An Hon. Member: Ah! Ah!

An Hon. Member: Come on. Come on. Come on!

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: That is why. And in my trade, oh, my, my. You know? I am not afraid to tell people what time it is in my trade!

[Desk thumping]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: You want me to tell you why? Because I rode on the backs of people like Herman "Santucci" Bascome, Earl Anderson and the likes, to get where I am.

An Hon. Member: Ooh!

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: And I am here to tell you, the money that can come to this shore will benefit the ones on the opposite side who would cry *Wolf!* against it before it is likely to benefit those of us on the PLP side. And it is business!

[Inaudible interjections]

An Hon. Member: Nobody is crying *Wolf!* We support this! We support this! We support it.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: No, no. Mr. Deputy Speaker—

The Deputy Speaker: Hey, hey, hey. Hey. Let us—

[Gavel]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: I know of which I speak!

The Deputy Speaker: We are going to have some order here, you know. Yes. Let us have some order.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know of which I speak. I just happened to be around a little bit. And I am saying, when you look at some of the countries, I would invite anybody, google some of the top 50 reinsurance companies in the world. And there are some opportunities for them to partner with this initiative that the Government has put on the table and for the country to be recognised globally as the PGA Tour traverses around the globe.

And I am saying that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because this is an example of a Government committed to making all of Bermuda's economic fortunes better. You know, I say that because I know what it is to be a professional naysayer. I know it! I practiced it.

Some Hon. Members: Yes.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: I do not mind confessing. I have nothing to . . . not today. I know what it was to tell you, that refer to fine argument against the fast ferries that people that benefited the country or to criticise the dock up at Dockyard that now provides the basis for the 500,000 tourists. I know that . . . I know that argument. And I know how the undercurrents of behind the scenes, and I know how the power of money operates because I was trained by them, with them. And I have travelled the wealthiest of clubs throughout the world with them.

And I know this much. When I sat in Opposition to the PLP at one time, Bermuda enjoyed its greatest economic buoyancy between 2000 right up until the Great Recession. And you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? The narrative during the recession that left the PLP holding the bag for a global recession, if properly analysed, was probably one of the greatest political tricks played on an organisation.

Want me tell you why? Because many in Bermuda felt that the PLP . . . we are the ones that caused the recession that impacted Bermuda. And it was not so! It was not so. But—

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: It wasn't so!

[Inaudible interjection]

The Deputy Speaker: Mr. Richards!

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: You know, Mr. Richards is in financial services. He will know that in 2007 and 2008 when ACE, who now are Chubb, were in difficulty, he will know that when Mr. McGavick came to Bermuda, his stock was down to two dollars. That was not caused by anything the PLP did. They will know that Madoff caused a lot of . . . They all know that my friend in Mississippi, who is a lawyer, who said to me,

Look, Swanny. My job is to go after some of these predatory lenders around the United States, you know what I mean? But you have got laws down here that protect people. You have got people making decisions. And in my country, they would have been held to account! You would have had people who are now in decision and policy boards who were part of boardrooms that made decisions that caused the whole world trouble. That is the truth!

I am here to say that the people who are out there concerned about inward investment . . . let me tell you that there is an opportunity, and it starts now, because it was announced this week. And let me say this, because I always want to give Jack his jacket. The Port Royal experience goes into its 50th year in October. To God be the glory! And let me tell you this. As a young boy, I remember when Uncle John Swan caddied for Jack Nicklaus in the 1970s. I remember the year I won my first Bermuda Open. And that year a young Australian guy came here without anyone knowing who he was, in 1978, to play for the same people who sent me away. Tour golf, John Mason, brought Greg Norman to Bermuda. Look where he went on. Right? I remember those days.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: And I am here to say that the opportunity has presented itself today under a PLP Government. So, in closing, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I am here to say this. I am here to say to the Munich Re, who is listed as the number-one ranked insurance company in the world; Swiss Re, number two; Berkshire Hathaway, number three; Hannover Rück, number four; SCOR S.E., number five; Lloyd's and Reinsurance Group of America, [numbers six] and seven; China Reinsurance, my Chinese cousins, number eight; Great West Lifeco, [number nine]; Korean Reinsurance Company, number 10, the opportunities are here in Bermuda because these countries are also connected to their base through golf.

And let me say this. The impact that Bermuda has in the reinsurance world on devastated communities over the years has been a story we have not correctly, properly told. My friends down in the wiregrass area down there in Mississippi and Louisiana and Florida and Alabama, down there, who have been devastated by hurricanes, they need to know that when those policies were written, they were coming out of this little country here punching above its weight. Even when a PLP Government has been in power for 14 years! They need to know that.

The Deputy Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: And they need to have some connection to know that, hey, if I can be here and support my event somewhere else, there is no reason why I cannot encourage somebody to support

Bermuda in real ways. Because there are many other types of events that we can have that would be of mutual benefit. I have been around long enough, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker. I have been around long enough and been around enough wealthy people to know that the decision to do something like that is not done in a meeting room. Relationships are not made looking at a person across a business boardroom table.

Relationships are made . . . You know, when you play golf, you can find out the character of a person. President Trump has a little bit of trouble because, you know, the government community knows that he can count sometimes when he plays golf. And I just want to say that, globally, through my trade that I thank God for . . . Because I grew up as a boy and wanted to play football for Chelsea. And he took me to the City of Chelsea where the PGA Headquarters were, in Kensington, then moved to Wentworth in 1981. That is the way the Lord works.

I am here to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there is economic opportunity of significant magnitude connected with this PGA event. More than the 120, 60 get paid, make the cut, can realise in the \$3 million. The relationships that this PLP Government needs to make will be there when you sit and you meet someone, and you go and talk. I have seen it done. As I mentioned Mr. Jack Moseley, the late Jack Moseley, the President and CEO who lived in Baltimore, who died in Dothan, Alabama hospital, where I lived. We had a connection because we had an Alabama connection and we both loved golf. Those are the types of things, relationships, that this event, for over five years, will provide this country with in spite of those who would like to trip us up.

And the reason why I mention “trip up” is because I have seen it at play with FinTech. Yes! Because the Government, young minds, young people in leadership who understand the role of FinTech far better than many others, were bold enough to move in that space and put legislation. And companies here and other jurisdictions are moving heaven and earth to understand some of the things that were understood by persons in the Cabinet of the Progressive Labour Party. A young man, a young Minister who worked in telecommunications—I am speaking about Mr. Caines. A young Premier who I know understands this space.

But they would put the doubt out there, because our people’s minds have not grown. They do not have the capacity yet to understand that our place in the world is bigger than being subservient to a system that has made us play second fiddle. And I am here to tell you, in my trade, where shakers and movers move, where money flows, I give credit to the Minister. I give credit to the Minister. And I feel there is opportunity.

And I am calling on the businesspeople who may hear my voice or may hear somebody talking about it. If you are not sure what I said, get the paper,

listen to it. I am speaking to *you!* Do not listen to the naysayers who do not care to make Bermuda work for all.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Yes. You know, I hear someone interpolating, *Why am I not in charge of the Government?*

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: No, no. I am not going to take . . . Because that is the type of divide-and-conquer rhetoric that I was speaking about when I got on my feet!

[Desk thumping]

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: I do not have to stay in my lane. I am a man who showed up at the place unbeknownst to anybody, and they did not realise I was black! And I know how to walk in a space.

[Timer beeps]

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member. Thank you, Honourable Member.

Any further speakers?

The Chair recognises the Honourable Member Christopher Famous.

Mr. Famous, you have the floor.

DOING WHAT IS BEST FOR BERMUDA

Mr. Christopher Famous: Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, let me start by saying today is June the 7th. No more Theresa May.

[Laughter]

Mr. Christopher Famous: She is no longer the leader of her party because she did not listen. Because she thought she could keep telling people, *No, let’s change course.* And they did not want to hear it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am going to start with a quote: “Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer.” Let me repeat: “Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future.” President John F. Kennedy.

Let me put it in a Bermuda context. Let us not seek the PLP answer. Let us not seek the OBA answer. Let us seek the right answer.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we come up here every week, or for every week that we come up here we have a motion to adjourn. And, you know, we have a fair bit of jousting and fun, to some extent. But really, the people out there, they do not care who is saying what. They want things fixed. Last week, the Honourable Sylvan Richards says, *As I was walking through the supermarket, people came to me and said, I'm PLP, but . . . I'm PLP, but . . .* But the reality is that whether that is true or not, who knows? But the reality is that our PLP people, our OBA people, our I-don't-vote-for-nobody people are upset.

Two weeks in a row, we had people—our people (I will proudly say “our people”)—march on us. Well, they marched on us; but they did not surround the place. Let us get it straight now. They are upset. Are they wrongly upset? Are they rightly upset? Do they have valid concerns? It is not for us to say yes or no. They have concerns. Our people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, allow me to read something from Facebook.

The Deputy Speaker: Continue.

Mr. Christopher Famous: This is what somebody [posted] two days ago. “I personally have never seen a politician in a grocery store. I guess their housekeepers do the shopping. So, I will march on them.”

This person used their name. The next person said, “I have said for years that the grocery stores should be investigated for pricing. But it always seems it has always been on deaf ears because, in my opinion, the majority owners of the large chains are paying politicians to look the other way.” This person alleges that they are paying politicians.

Now, they did not say PLP politicians. They did not say OBA politicians. They said politicians. I am going to revert to something Honourable Member Sylvan Richards said last week. *Certain things that happen make all politicians look bad.* I will not get into that right now, but what I will say is when prices keep rising, they just blame everybody. They think we are just supposed to go to MarketPlace or wherever and say, *Hey! You have to lower your price.* It does not work that way.

But let me speak about what is and what we are doing, because at times the message gets lost that the PLP is actually working for the people. So, let me just speak on a few points. Let me start off with the Price Control Commission, headed up by Senator Anthony Richardson. For two hours, two weeks ago, he sat [during the] Orders of the Day with the Honourable Kim Swan and explained the work of the Price Control Commission. He explained it is not a simple thing to go in there and just tell grocery stores they have to lower their prices. However, things are being put in place to mitigate it.

So, I would say to the people of Bermuda, we understand your frustration. The same two dollars you

have got to spend for a Mars bar is the same two dollars we have got to spend. The same \$12 they are charging you for a watermelon, a quarter of a watermelon, is the same they are charging us. We do not get any discounts from any grocery stores.

Let me move on, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker. The passion we heard earlier about St. George's, coming from Honourable Renee Ming, is all about improving St. George's, the infrastructure of St. George's, the tourism flow to St. George's, the life of St. Georgians. She is not sitting up there, *I'm doing it the PLP way.* [She says,] *I'm doing it for St. George's.*

Now, there is a gentleman, the Honourable . . . what did they used to call him, “Kip Rock”? Oh, sorry, Kenny Bascome. He and I do not see eye to eye politically. But he is just as passionate about St. George's. He may have his ways of how he deals with it. It is not the PLP way; it is not the OBA way. It is what is best for St. George's.

Speaking of best, we were handed a deal for an airport that I do not know how it got signed; I really do not. But I will not get into that. But we have the Honourable Lawrence Scott as Chairman of Bermuda Airport Authority doing his best to mitigate some of the issues. I will not get into the details. That is for him to talk about. But next year, when that airport is open, L. F. Wade International, there will be things that have been done behind the scenes to make it better for Bermudians, for the taxpayer, for our budget. That is what we are doing. We are not doing it because it is the PLP way or the OBA way. We are doing what is best for Bermuda.

There are people who . . . Let me declare my interest. I work at BELCO. I have shares in BELCO, not as much as I would, but I work there. And I work amongst 300 people who have invested their lives into BELCO. But we know that people are crying for alternative energy. We know that people are expecting to see solar farms go around this Island. It is not a reality, but that is what they are expecting. But we have the Honourable Walter Roban in charge of that, in conjunction with the Regulatory Authority, that are insisting, as he said earlier, the potential new owners have to meet the IRP [Integrated Resource Plan]. And even if the Regulatory Authority does not do what they are supposed to do, in his opinion, the Government will take action. Not because we want to take over BELCO, but we want to make sure that alternative energy comes into place. That is what we are doing, not because we are PLP, but doing what is best for Bermuda.

Let me move on, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker. We heard the Premier talk earlier about FinTech. FinTech is a reality. The Cayman Islands are investing in FinTech. Barbados are investing in FinTech. The British Virgin Islands [BVI] are investing in FinTech. So, for those who think we should not do it, let me not get into that, but the point is that not only are we investing in FinTech, but we are investing in Bermudians learn-

ing about FinTech. They may be black, they may be white, they may be St. George's, they may be Somerset, but they are Bermudians. We have to invest in human capital. That is what we are doing for Bermuda.

Let me touch on something my honourable cousin, Wayne Caines, . . . immigration. As the Honourable John Barritt says, it is the *third rail*. As my folks on this side know, messing around with immigration the wrong way. You will find yourself surrounded in this House. We have a situation called "mixed status." These are people with different reasons for why they are here. But they are not going anywhere. We do not want them going anywhere. Honourable Renee Ming, Honourable Leah Scott, Honourable Ben Smith and myself have sat down in rooms for the last year and a half trying to work this out. Not the PLP way, not the OBA way, the right way. We have to strike balance not only for born Bermudians, but for those who find themselves in this mixed status category.

Shortly, you will hear announcements about that. That much I can tell you. But it is not about partisanship. It is not about Ben and I bickering over, *No, we're going to do it this way! No, we're going to let it . . . No.* We have to do what is right.

Let me move on to education, a third rail. We saw how passionate the Minister and Shadow Minister were a few minutes ago. Who is right? Who is wrong? I am not going to get into that right now. But the reality is, if we do not get education right, we are going to find ourselves in some problems, bigger problems. Right? We talk about why middle schools might have to get eliminated? Let us do the numbers. People are not sending . . . Fewer and fewer people are sending out their children to middle school. That is part of the reality that we have to have a hard conversation about.

There is no one . . . I say no one (I put my neck on the chopping block) on the Front Bench, there is no one in the Robin Hood Corner, and I know there is no one over here who is as passionate about education as Honourable Diallo Rabain. Is everything going right? No. Are teachers upset? Yes. Are principals on work to rule? Yes. But who else is going to dedicate their life the way this man is?

It is not a matter of nobody else wants the job. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I may want the job. But I know I cannot do the job. He may want the job, but he knows he cannot do it. The reality is if you take a list of Education Ministers since 1995, UBP, PLP, OBA, PLP again, most Education Ministers have not even lasted a year. The longest one was two years and a little bit. Why is that? What is the one common denominator why 25 Education Ministers have quit? What is the one common denominator? It cannot be that they do not care. Some people were there for two months and left. Some people's Education Minister left, went back . . . It is no consistency.

Am I saying that the PLP has all the answers? No. Am I saying the OBA has all the answers? No. But what I am saying is, when you have someone who dedicates every waking moment to bettering education, not just for now, but for the long term, who are we to say, *Make him resign! Take his job?* That is the divide-and-conquer that we are not going to fall for. No one is going to fall for that.

So, I am saying to the OBA, listen. We could go to war on any given date. We could be up here arguing every given week. That is not solving the problems that our people are facing. Some of your people are rich; some of my people are poor. But they are all Bermudians. I am not saying, come up here and sing *Kumbaya*. But as the Education Minister said earlier, he will work with anyone who is willing to really work. It is easy to write op-eds or have op-eds written. Is it easy to actually work with somebody? That is the question we have to ask. It is easy to say, *Oh, let's do away with the Ministry and just get an Educational Authority.* Is that going to solve the problem?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am going to close up here. I spent my entire life hating the UBP—not disliking them, *hating* them for what they did to Bermudians. That transferred to the OBA. But in getting to know some of these OBA persons . . .

[Laughter]

Mr. Christopher Famous: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in getting to know some of these OBA persons, I realise they are just as passionate about Bermuda's success as anybody on this side. They might have a different way of how they think we should get there. As you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, within our own circle we have different ways of how we think we should get there. But the reality is that the people listening do not care about bickering up here. They really do not. I mean, you are going to have people on the far left and far right who will say, *Yeah, man! Sylvan got you good, brah!*

[Laughter and inaudible interjections]

Mr. Christopher Famous: I am gassing you up. Right?

But at the end of the day, did that cause the price of rice to go down? No, it did not. Did that cause more affordable houses? No, it did not. Did it cause our children to score better on IGCSEs? No, it did not. So, in our deliberations, that is, the Green Paper on Transport, in the motion to adjourn, the people want to hear solutions. They do not want to hear, *Oh, she got paid for being on this commission. . . . Oh, no, I did not.* They do not care! That is the fact. They do not care. As a matter of fact, it gets them angrier.

So, in closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we understand the frustration of the people. We understand the frustrations because we have lived those frustra-

tions. Mr. Deputy Speaker, over the last five years prior to 2017, there were, according to MP Ming, 27 demonstrations. Right now, we have had two. Are we going to reach 27 under this PLP? I do not know. But what I do know is that whatever we do, we are doing it for the best of Bermuda. We have to do a better job at explaining that to Bermudians. We have to do a better job of sharing, and not just here and today, but where we are going to be under this plan tomorrow.

Because I could guarantee you when the next election comes and the results have poured out, it is still going to be the PLP. There might be fewer of us or more of us. It will still be the PLP. But the problems are still going to be there. Theresa May is gone. We do not know who is coming. And I could guarantee you if the other party gets in, it is going to cause us more problems. So, I am asking my colleagues on the OBA side, every now and then they come to me and say, *Hey, you should think about this and think about that*. And I am going to think, *Are they trying to bait me up?*

An Hon. Member: Yes.

Mr. Christopher Famous: Are they trying to bait me up? Then I go and do some research, and I say, *Okay. This has a little bit of validity to it*. You see? So, we cannot be dismissive of each other all the time.

In closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, again I want to thank those officers who came here today. They came and showed discipline. They came and showed solidarity. That is what we need to do as politicians.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

We recognise the Honourable Member.

Mr. Richards, you have the floor.

PGA TOUR EVENT IN BERMUDA

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I get into the crux of what I want to talk about, I just want to reflect on what the MP from constituency 2, Mr. Kim Swan, said earlier. And, you know, Mr. Swan is a very passionate man. I admire his passion. There is nothing wrong with being passionate. But I just want to make it clear, and I do not think I am speaking out of turn. The Opposition Leader just slipped out for a quick second; he will be back. But the PGA event that was announced this week, this side supports it 100 per cent. And we will continue to support it. Why would we not?

See, the difference between the PLP and the OBA is that we brought a massive sporting event to Bermuda called the America's Cup.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Forgot it already?

An Hon. Member: Yes, he did.

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: I almost said World Cup. I almost said World Cup; I have got football on my brain right now, Mr. Liverpool.

We brought the biggest sporting event Bermuda has ever seen to Bermuda. And leading up to that event, during that event and after that event, the PLP, which was Opposition at that time, gave us grief about that event—gave us grief about that event and turned it into a political football.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: And price . . . what is all the talk about, *Let's hold hands and support each other*. See, it has gone out the window already. It has gone out the window already.

The Deputy Speaker: Speak to me.

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Mr. Deputy Speaker.

After that event, PricewaterhouseCoopers put out an economic impact report on how that event benefitted Bermuda from an economic perspective. And this ties in with what I am going to speak about. So, there is just a theme here. And I would hope that this PGA event will have an economic impact assessment done by PricewaterhouseCoopers also, laying out the numbers, the benefit to Bermudians of this new event.

So, to be clear to everybody in this place, outside this place or who may read it online, the OBA supports this event! And we hope that it is successful. See, we do not play this partisan, create-faux-outrage about a political event.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: So, I am reaching out across the aisle to the Minister for Sport to say in clear, and certain terms that we will support . . . I do not know why this is creating such an effect from the opposite side. I do not understand it. I am being honest. I am being honest! You are not going to sit here and tell me I am not being honest. I am calling it like it is, like I always do.

ENDEAVOUR COMMUNITY SAILING IMPACT PROGRAMME

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: So, with that being said, with that being said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am now going to pivot to talk about one of the legacy programmes from the America's Cup that I feel does not get enough attention.

You see, in the lead-up to the America's Cup, I was the Minister for Sport. We were all taken up to Dockyard, and we were shown the renovations on

those historic buildings and the new structures that were being built and the jobs that were being created. And Bermudians were up there happy and enthusiastic. I saw some people who I know had not had jobs in years, and they were up there working. And it made me feel good as a Bermudian. I said, *Yes, this is going to put us on the map in a whole different way.*

And when I spoke to the members of those teams—Oracle, SoftBank Japan, Artemis—the most impressive thing that impacted me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was when they started talking about the Endeavour Programme. They said, *This programme will carry on past the five weeks of the America's Cup. This programme will re-introduce to our young people, our students, the importance of sailing.* Students who probably spend most of their time indoors playing videogames, not moving, sitting on the couch, eating snack foods that are going to make them obese before their time and cause illnesses before their time. And when I heard about this programme, I was excited. I did not know anything about it. They explained, said, *Look. This will carry on after the America's Cup is finished.*

So, here we are, four years later. And PricewaterhouseCoopers recently released the Endeavour [Community Sailing] Impact Report [2017/18]. Now, what this report did was examine, over the last five years, what impact the Endeavour Programme, which would not have been here if there was no America's Cup, what it has done for our young people—our black young people, our white young people, our Portuguese young people. So, I am going to speak about the Endeavour Programme, which is intermingled with the America's Cup. You would never have seen this programme without the America's Cup.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Endeavour Programme was established in 2015. And there are two parts of this programme, the Endeavour Middle School Programme and the Endeavour After School Programme. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, since 2015, there have been 2,756 young people who have engaged in this free programme. Let me say that again. It is free to the students. The Endeavour Programme ensures that our young people from across all backgrounds have an equal opportunity to learn to sail while—this is the important part—learning about science, technology, engineering, arts and math, STEAM.

We have heard about this enhanced learning in other arenas. But the America's Cup joins up physical activity with learning about the sciences and math. You cannot go wrong with that type of combination.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with your permission, I would like to quote—

The Deputy Speaker: Continue.

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: —a Ms. Leatrice Oatley, who is the Chairperson for Endeavour Community Sailing.

And I quote, Mr. Deputy Speaker: “Endeavour’s programmes leverage sailing as an effective tool for teaching Science, Engineering, Arts and Math, or STEAM education that enriches the learning experience and develops critical thinking skills amongst young learners. Endeavour’s interactive curriculum engages youth in hands-on activities that are complimented [*sic*] by on-water sessions applying what students are learning in the classroom to create a fun, unique way of learning.”

Mr. Deputy Speaker, another beautiful part about this Endeavour Programme—a legacy programme from the America's Cup—is that inclusivity is a key element of this programme, as students from all backgrounds participate in Endeavour school-based programmes. This provides an equal opportunity for students to be exposed to our water whilst instilling an application for learning.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to speak briefly about the two programmes because there is a distinction between the two. The Endeavour Middle School Programme immerses students from the public, private and home schools in a five-day learning experience during their first year of middle school. Once again, the programme introduces STEAM through sailing, learning models based on the Cambridge Curriculum learning objectives that are implemented in Bermuda’s public schools. Students connect what they learn on the water with what they learn in the classroom, strengthening their understanding of real-life applications of math and science concepts. So, that is the Endeavour Middle School Programme.

The second programme is the Endeavour After School Programme, which is offered to P5 and P6 students at 13 government primary schools across the Island in the fall and spring school times. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this programme is offered on conjunction with the Department of Youth, Sports and Recreation. Students eight to ten years old participate in an eight-week programme to learn about water safety, sailing fundamentals and weather patterns. And for the listening public, a bit of information, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The registration for the fall 2019 after-school programme will be available at the beginning of the school year at September via the schools participating.

Now, the PricewaterhouseCoopers report surveyed the students who participated in these programmes. The survey results indicate that 88 per cent of students agree that they benefited a great deal from their participation in the Endeavour Middle School Programme.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Yes, I will go back. There were 2,756 young people—2,756—since 2015.

So, 88 per cent of the students agreed they benefited a great deal. And 82 per cent of students stated that they feel more confident as a result of their participation in the programme.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I saw a commercial on TV. It has been a while; I have not seen it lately. But it was about, I think it was a young Bermudian girl who joined the Endeavour Programme. And the instructor was saying that when she first got in the boat, she was nervous. She did not have confidence. She was struggling to sail and to use the water. And over time, the instructor said you could see this young lady grow in confidence. And she embraced sailing. Now she loves sailing. That is something! And like I say, I cannot over-emphasise the fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Bermuda is a sailing nation.

The Deputy Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: That is how we made our name with the Bermuda Sloop and the Bermuda Rig. But over time, due to changes in technology and whatnot, our young people got away from that. Now, a certain segment of our community stayed involved. And we know what those predominantly of that segment look like.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: So, this programme . . . I do not have to say it. You said it.

So, this programme, Mr. Deputy Speaker, has levelled the playing field. It has levelled the playing field in terms of our students getting involved in sailing. That is what I am talking about.

We have young black Bermudian males. A gentleman named Mustafa, because of the America's Cup, raced in the America's Cup on those foil catamarans. And the last I heard and read, he was being offered a place on a top sailing team. I saw this young man at the gym training with the other Bermudian crew—all young people in a gym. I was amazed at the workout, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They were doing incredible stuff. I wish I could do that. You know, my back . . . But these guys were in top physical shape.

And I can guarantee that, from those 2,756 young people who were introduced to sailing through the Endeavour Programme, we may get some sailing participants in a future Olympics, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our chances for getting a medal in the Olympics are in sailing, horse riding and triathlon.

An Hon. Member: Say it again. Thanks to the America's Cup.

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Sailing, horse riding—

An Hon. Member: Say it again. Thanks to the America's Cup.

Another Hon. Member: How many of them are going to look like you, bye?

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: That medal is gold. So, you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I understand that there are Members who have a jaded view of the America's Cup. This is not what I am talking about. I am talking about the benefit to our students. Nobody here can argue against that. Nobody here should be throwing shade against our students being introduced to an integral part of our heritage, Honourable Member!

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Honourable Member.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: So, I will continue.

The majority of students who participate in the Endeavour Programme had limited to no prior sailing experience. But 96 per cent of the students said their interest in sailing had increased. And 92 per cent said that their confidence increased as a result of participating in the programme.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I look at our young people, a lot of times what is missing is confidence. For whatever reason, maybe they have been told in the home, *You cannot do this*, or, *You will never amount to that*. Or they look at their peers and they feel shy. They do not have the confidence. Confidence is everything in this world. So, any programme that builds confidence in our young people, I will support it 100 per cent. Now, you cannot be overconfident and start doing stupid stuff. But this is a win for Bermuda.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, after four years, the non-profit Endeavour Community Sailing Programme offers six impactful programmes that create positive impact for Bermuda's youth. And I would like to read them out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because my memory is not that great.

The Deputy Speaker: Mm-hmm.

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: There is the Endeavour Middle School Programme; the Endeavour After School Programme; the BF&M (Bermuda Fire and Marine) No Limits Sailing Programme; the Endeavour Graduate Programme; the Endeavour Club Development Programme; and the Endeavour Maritime Careers Springboard Programme.

Now, I wish I could go into more depth about what each of those six programmes does. But I will

not because I do not know. I have to do some more research. And I could speak on it another time.

In wrapping up, Mr. Deputy Speaker—

[Timer beeps]

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Well, my time is up.

The Deputy Speaker: Your time is up.

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Any further speakers?

The Chair recognises the Honourable Member, Minister De Silva.

ENDEAVOUR COMMUNITY SAILING IMPACT PROGRAMME

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not going to say, like many people in the House, I am not going to be long, because it has been a long day.

The Deputy Speaker: Yes.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: But I just feel I have to respond to the speaker who just took his seat because he made a couple of . . . Maybe he has been up here all day and he is a little tired. But when he says that Members on this side of the House did not support the America's Cup, do not talk that nonsense. All right? Because we did support the America's Cup. And we said it many times when we were on that side of the House. We supported it wholeheartedly. So, do not say we did not support it.

What the Honourable Member forgot is what we disagreed to. And there were several things that we disagreed to. It was the cost, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When they were telling our seniors that money does not grow on trees, when they were cutting scholarships, when they were cutting programmes for our at-risk youth . . . Now, you want to talk about the Endeavour Programme? Talk about our at-risk youth that they cut! Talk to the Minister of National Security and the challenge he has with our youths who were at risk, probably up in Westgate now for the rest of their lives!

Now, do not come with that nonsense to me, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, because I am going to call you out!

[Desk thumping]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: I will call you out! I will call you out!

An Hon. Member: When did it start? When did it start?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: When did it start?

No, you had better just keep quiet.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: See, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you see what happens? You see what happens when you call them out?

When did it start? It started 400 years ago, bye! That is right!

[Desk thumping]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: It started 400 years ago! You want to ask me when it started, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Let us peel back the layers! Let us peel them back!

An Hon. Member: Yes!

Another Hon. Member: Yes, let's peel them back.

An Hon. Member: That is right! You would not know!

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: I would not know.

Now, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, yes. Let us go back. I will get back to him. I will get back to him.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is amazing, is it not, how you can get a Member to talk for 20 minutes about an Endeavour Programme and how good it is for the youth of this country?

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Would you disagree?

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: And then, no, I do not disagree. It is a great programme! It is a shame we paid \$100 million to get it! It is a shame we paid \$100 million to get an Endeavour Programme.

And look. And look! The Honourable Member said that Bermuda is a sailing nation. Well, let us talk about the sailing nation. Where does sailing take place in this country? Right down on Front Street!

[Desk thumping]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Right down on Front Street at the place called the Yacht Club. Why did we have to spend—

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: Point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: What is your point of order?

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: History and sailing did not start at the Yacht Club.

The Deputy Speaker: What is your point of order?

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: We were whalers, we were sailors, we were traders. That Honourable Member needs to read a book called, *In the Eye of All Trade*.

The Deputy Speaker: All right. Take your seat.

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: He says it only goes back—

The Deputy Speaker: Take your seat, Mr. Richards.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: You see, Mr. Deputy Speaker? You see?

Mr. Sylvan D. Richards, Jr.: *In the Eye of All Trade*, the book. Read it.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr. Richards, take your seat, please.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: See, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the Honourable Member's zest to quiet me down, he does not listen. I said, where has the majority of sailing taken place in this country? And where does the majority of sailing still take place in this country? St. George's? Wake up. Stop lying to the people of this country.

[Crosstalk]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the majority of sailing in this country takes place right down the end of Front Street, down at the Yacht Club. Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know who the members of the Yacht Club are. And we know the size of their wallets. Where have they been for the last ump-teen years?

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Now, if you want to talk about our young black men and the Endeavour Programme helping our young black men, like I said just now, it is a shame we had to spend \$100 million to get it.

An Hon. Member: It did not come from the Yacht Club.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: When that Yacht Club down there could have long supported black young men in this country.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member talked about the Endeavour legacy from the America's Cup. That is great. But if you are going to pump up the America's Cup, what about the other legacy that was supposed to happen, the \$330 million injection into the economy? Where has that gone? Where is that legacy? Because the last time I checked, this Island was struggling in 2017. Our seniors were struggling. Everybody was struggling. The workers were looking for work. Where is that legacy?

I will tell you what. I will tell you what. BC&M did not have any problem with any legacy. They got \$12 million to carry them through for the next couple of years. Maybe that is the legacy they were talking about. The same person who got an MBE. Imagine that, Mr. Deputy Speaker! Imagine that.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Look. They do not go out to tender. They do not go out to tender. They get \$12–\$15 million. And then, the OBA, in their infinite wisdom, give the man an OBE. Imagine that!

An Hon. Member: Incredible!

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Get an OBE for getting paid to do a job that you did not even tender on.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member is asking me how much I got out of it. Any work I did up in Dockyard I bid on.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Tell me something about that. And I can tell you, you want to talk about some jobs down on Southside? I bid on those, too.

An Hon. Member: The recent one, the recent one.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: The recent one, yes, got another one today.

The Deputy Speaker: Honourable Members!
Honourable Member, speak to me.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Yes.

The Deputy Speaker: I want to hear the Member, please.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if they want to talk about bidding on things, I bid on Port Royal, too.

[Desk thumping]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: That is right. The same one . . . watch out now. Watch it. It is going to come. Watch out when they start working. Zane De Silva, PGA Tour, Port Royal.

[Inaudible interjections]

An Hon. Member: You brought it up.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Oh, no, no. Your bloggers have been to work this week, my dear friend, the Honourable Member. Look on the bloggers; it has started already. Do not say I brought it up. Do not say . . . But here we go. Here we go, bloggers.

Now, you are the last person over there, Mr. Opposition Leader, that should talk to me about bloggers. Because he knows about bloggers. He paid \$350,000 for bloggers. Oh, yes, he did! And he knows what I am talking about, too. I do not hear a point of order.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: They paid \$350,000 for bloggers. I know what they do with their bloggers. Oh, no. This was the man himself, admitted it in the news. Look! Interview in the newspaper. *I was paying \$350,000 for an underground campaign, which included blogging.*

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not making it up. It is on public record.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Oh, yes, he did!

An Hon. Member: No, he did not.

Another Hon. Member: He is making it up.

An Hon. Member: No, he did not.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Well, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I tell you what. Prove me wrong. Prove me wrong. Look at the *Bermuda Sun*. Too bad I do not have that file with me tonight, because I would show it to him. Because you know I like evidence.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: That is right. No, partner, I do not play my game that way. My work gets done right here. My work gets done right here.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, see, I am glad to hear the Honourable Member Sylvan Richards say that he supports the PGA and this tournament. And I am sure that all Members will. We can put some stuff aside. But watch out, watch out, watch out! We have got five years, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I know some of the things that are happening already. It is okay. It is all right.

But I will tell you what. What I would ask Members opposite is this. If their people start getting up in arms because the Honourable Member Kim Swan touched on it tonight, and I know where he was going, what we need to do is embrace. Embrace this tournament. Because there are plans to help out youngsters. We have already announced we have two young black men who are trying to ply their trade. Now they will not have to go through what the Honourable Member Kim Swan went through, because when he was trying to ply his trade at that time, with the racial tensions the way they were back then, I give him a lot of credit. He did well, played on the European tour. He played all over the world. He had to fight enemies within and without.

And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you play a little golf, too. Can you imagine trying to play golf and then putting up with all that stuff at the same time? Not easy.

But all I am saying is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you want to get up in this House and talk about legacy programmes, let us make sure you get the whole story. Because I have no problem with the Endeavour Programme. Everything I have heard about it, mostly from Members on this side, is how well the programme is. I cannot say anything about it at all but support and praise. I just said it is a shame that we paid \$100 million to get it. Because I feel that there are people with powers in this country who can not only help programmes like the Endeavour, but what about football? What about cricket? Let us be real. You go up to the Rugby Classic. You see all the light-coloured folks. You go to a football game up there, where are all those people to support? Where were they the other night when Bermuda played?

An Hon. Member: They love football, they say.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: They say they love football.

An Hon. Member: They do! They do!

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: I mean, I think we have got some of the most loyal followers of football anywhere! But where are they when it comes to supporting our young black men? Where are they?

An Hon. Member: Was he there? I am wondering.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Well, what colour am I?

[Laughter]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: So, what I am saying is, what I am saying is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is just true. It is a fact.

Look. The Honourable Member Sylvan Richards mentioned three sports just now. He said sailing, triathlon and horseback riding. Well, how many of our young black people are involved in those sports? How many?

An Hon. Member: A lot of them.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: A lot of them. Look.

[Crosstalk]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Mr. Deputy Speaker, listen. If we are not going to be honest up in this place, you know, you might as well get out of politics. You might as well get out of politics. All I am saying is one thing. All right? I could chew gum and walk at the same time, literally.

[Laughter]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: But, no, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Let me say this: I hope what the MP Kim Swan touched on today does carry through and that we do get the support. It has been a lot of work put into this PGA tournament. There is a lot of work to be done. There are a lot of volunteers who are going to be needed. I hope Honourable Members opposite will encourage their friends and family to support. I hope we are not going to get . . . and I will table it next week, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker. I saved the letter to the editor when we had the Grand Slam. And the letter was written, at least he put his name on the bottom, by Robert Henderson. And some of the Members opposite might know him; he is an OBA supporter. I am from Somerset. I know him well.

He wrote a letter to the editor encouraging people of Bermuda not to come out and watch the Grand Slam because it is going to make Ewart Brown look good.

[Pause]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: I am sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was just given some information. I will put it right here for Members if they wish to see it. The article, July 23rd, 2014. Title, “JetGate: ‘Here’s how the \$350k was spent.’”

So, when somebody says . . . look, “Steven DeCosta says grassroots election campaign—which

he ran with Derrick Green and was funded in part by \$350k donated by US businessmen—was critical in securing victory for the OBA at the polls.”

He then goes on to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker (you know, because I want to finish on my other thing), goes on to say what he did with it! It goes on to say that this is what we did. The total cost of the stealth operation came to \$428,000. We could not do this campaign “without the funding.” And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will say this. I had occasion to speak to Mr. DeCosta myself. And this is not hearsay, and it is not *Royal Gazette*, and it is not any party. He is the one who told me, he said, *I ran a hell of an underground blogging campaign against you guys*. He told me that to my face, told me to my face, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And the Honourable Member, Mr. Cannonier, knows that I had many a conversation with Mr. DeCosta.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: So, let me just say because I was on a track. All I am going to ask, Mr. Speaker, is that we as a consolidated group in this House support this PGA. It is earth-shattering! It is earth-shattering. This PGA Tour event, it is earth-shattering! The America’s Cup was great, too. The Grand Slam was great for Bermuda. Not as good as this. This is a full PGA tour event. The Honourable Deputy Speaker knows what I am talking about. He plays golf, he watches golf! It is huge for Bermuda. For five years!

Mr. Speaker, I am looking. I am positive. You know my cup is always three-quarters full. Even if it is empty, it still looks full. But the thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this particular tournament, we are actually replacing what was an opposite event. It is now on the tour as a full-stage event, which will include every player, the top 50, the next 120—all of them. And it is replacing what was an opposite event. So, it is our hope, Mr. Swan, that one day maybe we will see it sooner than we think, the likes of Tiger Woods, Rickie Fowler (who is the other superstar?), [Jordan] Spieth. We are going to have [Harold] Varner here; Varner is coming, the other black male on the PGA Tour. He will be here in this tournament.

And I tell you what, he was in the last group, you will know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the PGA tournament just two weeks ago.

The Deputy Speaker: Yes. Yes, he was.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: All right? Okay?

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Yes, yes. He was in the last group.

But anyway, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I am saying is that these players . . .

How much time do I have left, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

The Deputy Speaker: You have got three minutes.

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: Okay.

What I am saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that these players who will be coming and embracing Bermuda's shores are the superstars of the future. They are the superstars of the future. I mean, eight, ten years ago, no one knew who Jordan Spieth was, or D. J., or Rory McIlroy. We did not know Justin Rose. We did not know who these guys were. They are the superstars of today. And the people who will embrace this and will be playing in this tournament are the superstars of tomorrow. I mean, we have a superstar, he is still here—Pat Horgan III, former PGA Tour player, currently playing for the senior tour.

Welcome to Bermuda again!

[Desk thumping]

Hon. Zane J. S. De Silva: It is people like him who made sport what it is. It is people like Pat Horgan who come to this Island in 1986, best friends, very good friends with Kim Swan. They played a lot of golf together; they competed together. But you know what? What I say to people like him is, *thank you*. Thank you from all of us in Bermuda for sticking with us, being an ambassador for Bermuda for 30 years, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But you know what? There is nothing stopping some of the current superstars, our world future superstars, from being just like Pat Horgan when they come to Bermuda over the next five years, fall in love with Bermuda and continue to come back year after year after year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Hon. Dennis P. Lister, Jr., Speaker, in the Chair]

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member.

I recognise the Minister of National Security. Minister, you have the floor.

Hon. Wayne Caines: If it pleases you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes.

PRISON OFFICERS ASSOCIATION MARCH ON PARLIAMENT

Hon. Wayne Caines: Mr. Speaker, this morning we saw an exercise in democracy. MP Famous talked about what we need to do as a Government, because in just under two years we have had two marches. And people look at the disquiet as a bad thing in certain quarters. I think it represents an opportunity for us to take a barometer, for us to look at, to be introspective and for us to make an opportunity to measure

what we can do differently to make our country a better place.

I have been given the responsibility of uniformed services in this country. It is a solemn responsibility. It is something that I hold at the forefront of my mind morning, noon and night. I go to my bed, and I reflect on that which I have done. The weight of leading and leadership in this country is heavy. The responsibility of having the dominion, the budget, the responsibility to lead the uniformed services in this country is significant. I am blessed to be a Member of Parliament. I am blessed to have the Ministry of National Security under my purview.

I listened this morning, and I saw the uniformed services. They rounded the corner two by two, uniforms immaculately pressed, walking in lockstep, left-right, as their arms swung in unison, disciplined. No one speaking. Everyone standing in step. We all stood downstairs, and we looked with pride as we saw the men and women of the Department of Corrections. Some would say that that was a show of strength. It was a positive, strong exertion of strength. It was an exercise in democracy.

Sometimes, if people march, we all are skittish. We are nervous when we see people march on Parliament. This morning, I saw it as an opportunity. I was able to listen; I was able to take the criticism. I was able to listen. But let me say today was not the day where I started to listen. I have been in this role for almost two years. And I have met with the Prison Officers Association on six occasions—on six occasions.

And each time when we met, they went through a litany of matters that were going wrong with the Department of Corrections. They shared with me the concerns about the physical plant, about the mould, about the matters pertaining to GEHI and their employment. They shared with me their concerns, and on each occasion the matters were chronicled. We shared their concerns with the prison leadership team. Never did they leave our chambers and our offices with us deflecting, not measuring, not taking their concerns seriously. That is the first issue.

We value the work of every member of the Department of Corrections. Anything short of that . . . anything short of that is incorrect. And so, when we see the men and women of Corrections march on Parliament, those are our brothers and our sisters. I am mindful that when they speak of their challenges, they are the challenges that many people face in their employment, trying to do more with less.

They mentioned certain challenges that they had this morning around employment. They talked about the employment numbers. This year, in September, Mr. Speaker, 25 new officers joined the ranks of the Department of Corrections under this Government, under this leadership. In March of this year, we started another campaign where we are going out into this community. And they are going through the pro-

cess now. Twenty-two new officers are going through the process right now of the administration part to join the Department of Corrections.

They talked about the issues in the prison. They talked about the mould in the prison. Well, in front of me, I have, Mr. Speaker, the maintenance logs in one hand. In the other hand, Mr. Speaker, I have a list of items that they are working through on a weekly basis. So, what does this look like, Mr. Speaker? Because I cannot let this go unchallenged. The narrative cannot be that this Minister and this Government do not concern ourselves with the members of Corrections. That is not true.

When we look at the things that have been done, Mr. Speaker . . . And I crave your indulgence and seek your permission to read from this paper.

The Speaker: Continue on.

Hon. Wayne Caines: I am grateful, Mr. Speaker.

When it comes to the mould, the first inspection took place in September 2018. A cleaning regime was put in place. An external company has been hired. On the 27th of May, we have been getting quotes from cleaners. And the cleaners will go in to clean the mould, will go into the prison within the next three weeks. In other words, the prison officers spoke about their health and their safety. We cannot let the people of Bermuda think that this Government is not concerned about the health and safety of our schools, of our government buildings and, more importantly, these circumstances, our Department of Corrections. We have a plan in place, and we believe that will be fixed.

There is an infestation of mosquitoes. The plan is there, Mr. Speaker, and it is giving dates and times that we will work on the plan for the mosquitoes. Looking at the AC and dealing with the mouldy conditions . . . again, the technicians. Mr. Speaker, I am looking at the plan, the dates, the times that we are going through every week with the Department of Works and Engineering, the Ministry of National Security and the Department of Corrections. Having meetings every week, update meetings, Mr. Sheridan Ming from Works and Engineering along with our Ministry, sitting, looking at the plans. *What plans did you make today? How can we increase?*

I received an email from Mr. Ming this week. And the email said the lights in the library and the programmes areas have been addressed. The AC in the dental office has been repaired. The AC in the classroom was repaired. The AC for class and rooms B and C have been replaced. This report, Mr. Speaker . . . every day we are asking for the reports from the prison. *What have you done today? How can we do this?* I do not know if this is being cascaded down to the members of the POA [Prison Officers Association]. But I can tell you, I share this with my colleagues in Cabinet; every week I send them this update. They

can vouch that we send them the update of the litany of things, Mr. Speaker, that I hold in my right hand for each one of the facilities that are being shared with the Acting Commissioner of Corrections, that is showing what we are doing with reference to mould.

There was a concern about the prison officers having to deal with mentally challenged inmates. We are working, Mr. Speaker, and I will say this in this House for the third time, with Bermuda Hospitals Board, with the Bermuda Hospitals Board, with the Minister of Health, getting together, looking at, *What does mental health look like in Bermuda, and what is the plan for this country?*

There were concerns, Mr. Speaker, about specific things and the razor wire at the prison. That is a plan for the razor wire. The camera system has been replaced, Mr. Speaker. The telephone system in the prison, the PIN system in the prison, that has been replaced. That has been looked at. How can we not share all of these things that are being done in the prison on a daily basis, and someone say that we are doing nothing for the lives of our prison officers? I cannot let that go unchallenged, Mr. Speaker.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. Wayne Caines: There are things that are being done on a weekly basis. And we will continue to work. And guess what? This is not a popularity contest, you know. I am going to stand and work for the members of the Department of Corrections even when they are mad, even when they do not believe that we are doing right. Because guess what? We know that our heart is in the right place. This is not done because we do not want to do it. There are limitations based upon what, Mr. Speaker? Based upon budgetary concerns.

The Speaker: Yes.

Hon. Wayne Caines: We are looking at things that we can do and making sure that we can measure. We had a budget in the prison for upgrades, and that was limited. And so, we had to do things on a basis that allows us to look at the most significant things first and work on things as we go through.

We are now with the Ministry of Works and Engineering, and they have the lion's share of the renovations in their budget. Colonel Burch has put together a sub-team, and they are working on those issues.

I go directly into what I believe are some of the bigger challenges. Now this matter has been sent to arbitration, so I will tip-toe through the tulips. There is a government health insurance programme, GEHI. GEHI is the health insurance programme, and we have over 5,000 people in the civil service. And each one of the people in the civil service is responsible for paying into GEHI. And so, the teachers and Works and Engineering and all of the people at each one of

the government departments, they have to pay into GEHI.

There are two entities that do not pay anything into GEHI. And the rest of the entities within Government are looking at, *How does this thing become fair for everyone?* We believe that the police officers and the Department of Corrections should pay into GEHI. We know that this is not popular in all of the quarters, especially the Bermuda Police Service and especially with the Department of Corrections, because this was a benefit that they did not have to contribute to, and now they are being asked to contribute. I understand that. But a big part of what this Government is doing, we are trying to look at what it is like to be fair for everyone. And they are being asked to pay into the GEHI. This is an opportunity for us to discuss this, when we are talking about a wage increase.

Well, if this were my money, if I were paying with my won lottery money or my salary, everybody who walks into the door, everyone whom I meet with, we would want to give them a raise. There are limitations. We talked to the Minister of Finance, and he shared with us some of the challenges that we have around the \$2.4 billion debt and what we need to do if this country is to make it through a very difficult set of circumstances.

I must be clear, Mr. Speaker. GEHI and the salary increases are not done by the Minister. That is done by the Public Sector Negotiation Team. So, this entire time, and they have been negotiating this for quite a while, I am not running away from any responsibility. I am simply saying that there is a part of this that is with a specific entity, and it is not the Minister.

When it comes to looking at the maintenance, when it is coming to look at that, that is my responsibility. I want the members of the public to know, I want the prison officers who are listening to know that no matter what you say we are going to go back to the drawing board. And like MP Famous said, this is an opportunity to see what we can do differently. Today I was racking my brain, and I was talking to my PS, and I am saying to my PS, *How can we do this differently? How can we look at the challenges through this set of circumstances? How can we learn from this to make sure that we continue to work for the people of Bermuda?*

Sometimes, as a Minister, you are put in a situation. But guess what? You have to say difficult things and do difficult things. Sometimes, you have to look at something and somebody, or some entity might be mad at you. But when you talk to your colleagues and when you talk to people around the country, you realise that you are actually going in the right direction. We are going to continue to push. We are going to continue to work hard.

To the members of the Prison Officers Association, today I listened to the Chairman of the POA, Mr. Timothy Seon. My heart was full with respect and

admiration for him. I know how difficult it is in this country to make a stand. I know how difficult it is in this country to walk and to say to your members, *These are the things we are going to press for.* But I am here to tell the people of Bermuda, *The Prison Officers Association are not our enemies. They are our brothers, and they are our sisters.* And sometimes, you have to have the opportunity to get at the table and work things out.

I have a twin brother, Mr. Speaker, and we are identical. When we were young, we would have these really difficult fights.

An Hon. Member: About who is prettier?

Hon. Wayne Caines: Who is the more handsome, of course.

[Laughter]

Hon. Wayne Caines: And I will make light of it. And our mother would sit us in the room, and she would say, *At the end of the day, you are brothers! You sit in that room, and you work it out.* This Government is willing to sit in the room and work it out. This is not an easy set of circumstances.

An Hon. Member: Yes.

Hon. Wayne Caines: If you want to hold us to account, look at the 27 things that we have done to make the prison better. Challenge me when it comes to the gate that was repaired, the razor wire! Challenge me when you are talking about the safety. Are people taking drones into that prison and trying to drop contraband? They are. Ask my colleagues what we are doing now to parachute people in this country to fix it. How many technology companies have we brought in to look at these challenges?

But they talked about the CCTV that is not working. Ask them, how did we go up to that prison and make sure that the CCTV is working? The PIN phone system, pushing to get it working. The razor wire, pushing to make it work. But let me tell you something. See, the difference between a perspective and having the responsibility for it all, I have to have responsibility that the people have given me, that I hold as a sacred trust. I have that responsibility for the prison officers, for the civilian staff. But guess what? For the men and women who are incarcerated.

And so, when people come to me, and I am talking to the mothers of the lifers, their main concern through all of this palaver is, *Is my son getting the right treatment? Are we adhering to the Mandela guidelines with the requisite amount of rec time, the requisite number of visits, with the proper food/nutrition?* So, understand that when we are talking about what this looks like, as the Minister, [I] have to balance the HR part of it, the unionised part of it.

But I am also responsible for managing the husbandry of the men and women (guess what?) who are still our brothers and sisters who are incarcerated.

The reality of it is that when we look at where we need to go, I need to be able to say to a mother with her son incarcerated for life that we are working through these issues. But your son and his plan, his treatment, is still a priority. When somebody is going through the system now, and they are saying, *Minister! I was to see the Treatment of Offender Board two weeks ago. I have not had the opportunity to see them, to go in front of the Treatment of Offender Board*, we are balancing that. We have to balance that to make sure that they have the opportunity to get the right mediation for their issues so they can be able to transition through.

Mr. Speaker, my goal is not just to have this matter resolved. My goal is to have the circumstances regularised. It is our responsibility to work towards not only a resolution with the Department of Corrections and the POA and the senior management team. We have a deep and abiding concern for the inmates and making sure that their needs are taken care of. We have a deep and abiding concern for the \$25 million budget that has been put in our charge and using that effectively, making sure that is mixed with training, making sure that is mixed with the opportunity to get the right equipment, making sure that they have the right clothing on and the right equipment, making sure that we have the right security provisions going around the facilities—Westgate, Co-Ed, the Farm. There is much to do in this portfolio.

And I believe that today was another opportunity, Mr. Speaker. And I will speak personally for five minutes. It was difficult to stand there, because I remember being one of the protestors and standing for the other Government. And I found it an interesting position to be in when they were speaking and they were directing it at me. And I had to go deep within myself, and I told my colleagues in the kitchen this afternoon, and not take it personally. I do not take it personally. Because at the end of the day, we are all in this country doing what we feel is best for the people of this Island.

So, I get it, members of the POA. It is not about me and the PLP. You want a better way of life for your family. I get it that you are trying to get a better raise for your family. I get it. But do not forget that we, too . . . the only reason why we are here is for a better way for this country. The only reason why we are here is to make sure the prisoners and the people in Corrections, the inmates, have a better way of life. It is our responsibility to look at every nuance in all of our Ministry.

We will continue to work within the Ministry of National Security. We continue to take advice. We will continue to listen. And we will continue to work hard. Mr. Speaker, this is an opportunity for the Ministry to learn, for the Government to learn. I believe that pro-

testing is healthy. I believe it is a sign of a vibrant democracy. I believe that this is an opportunity. I believe this is an opportunity for our Ministry and the Department of Corrections to keep talking, to keep the dialogue open, because we are all working for the betterment of Bermuda. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

We now recognise [Microphone off

[Crosstalk]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: He is getting up to speak.

[Crosstalk]

The Speaker: I had not acknowledged him. I was asking him, was he aware of the fact that he closes the House? That is basically what I was asking. I did not acknowledge him to speak. I said, *Are you aware?* Okay.

An Hon. Member: Would you like to speak?

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Yes.

The Speaker: Okay.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Most definitely. Oh, no, we are not making it hard.

The Speaker: Opposition Leader, you have the floor.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: If I had acknowledged him, you would not have been able to get on your feet, see?

DEPARTMENT OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Right.

Actually, I have, quite frankly, appreciated a lot of what has been said this evening. I do believe, as I just listened to the Honourable Member who just sat down, that there certainly are some realities that Bermuda has to face. There certainly are some realities that office politicians have to face.

And one of those realities, Mr. Speaker, and I have been speaking to this for some time now, and I am sure that everyone in this House of Assembly does not appreciate when they open up the paper and they once again see that we are having challenges within the Department of Child and Family Services. And we see where people, individuals, private citizens are speaking out about some of the conduct and some of the things that are going on within this Minis-

try. And I believe that we have been patient, and we have been sitting and saying, *Something needs to happen really to get this particular department on its feet.*

And I believe at this time, after having looked at the newspaper just now, it is extremely challenging. And I am encouraging this Government, and it is my opinion that there needs to be a shuffle in the management within that department. Something needs to happen.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Department of Child and Family Services.

We continue to see, week after week, one director, supervisor, whatever you want to call it . . . there needs to be a shuffle there because people are extremely concerned.

We now see that not only are the kids within the service complaining, we have seen non-profit organisations that assist are concerned about what is going on. And I believe that our Government really needs to take a close look at exactly what is happening there, because it is evident that, week after week after week, we are continuing to see the revelations of more and more things.

What would be appreciated is that, if there is not going to be some real addressing of the leadership there, then we hear exactly what is going on and what is being done to improve the situation there so that we do not continue to see what we are seeing week after week in the newspaper.

PGA TOUR EVENT IN BERMUDA

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: I also take to heart the other subject that, for most of the evening this evening has been talked about—the new PGA. And I must say that most of us—all of us on this side—have been excited about the fact that. Okay? Well, we have another opportunity here. And many of the Members of the PLP Government will know, some of them I have spoken to them, and I said, *Listen, man. You guys have got to come up with some kind of event that is going to bring some sizzle to the economy, that is going to bring some excitement about.* And we now are seeing that.

I find it interesting that the Honourable Member from constituency 2 talked about, *We fish where the fish are.* We finally are getting something after almost two years. So, I am not quite confident in the fact that we are fishing where the fish are.

But, be that as it may, the beauty is that we do have another event, a PGA event, that apparently seems to be, on the surface as we are listening to the Minister lead it out, that it is going to be bigger than the one before. These are good things. These are honourable things. And I am hoping that it will contin-

ue to do good for this Island regardless of what economic background you come from.

I certainly know that with the OBA, in all of the events that we took on, whether it was the Triathlon that spawned after the America's Cup, it was all in an endeavour to improve the livelihoods and opportunities for Bermudians.

And many times we will get up in this House and we will spar back and forth about whether or not, you know, people benefited from it. Well, we know that people benefited from it. And we know also that there were many who benefited more than others. But the context of the America's Cup was not just the America's Cup, but many of those things that were to follow out of that. And we were showing the world that we had the ability to entertain and to put on a first-class show. But not just a first-class show, a world-class show, which has spawned, and I am sure, even interest in getting this PGA done, that we can perform and put on a first-class show.

But the context of the America's Cup was not just the America's Cup, but many of those things that were to follow out of that. And we were showing the world that we had the ability to entertain and to put on a first-class show, but not just a first-class show, a world-class show, which has spawned, I am sure, even into getting this PGA done that we can perform and put on a first-class show.

That goes without saying that, I mean, just like we banter back and forth *Oh, the America's Cup was for a certain kind*, maybe white. But, you know what? Golf is a primarily white sport. And we just heard this evening that maybe two black guys may be coming. But it is a white sport.

An Hon. Member: A rich white man's sport.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Rich white male sport.

So, we are going back and forth over this whole idea of who benefits based on race. And we are both out there, whether it be the PLP Government or when we were Government, trying to bring to this Island economic stimulus—

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Point of information.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: —that will allow us—

The Speaker: Point of information?

POINT OF ORDER

[Misleading]

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: Point of order.

I believe the Member is inadvertently misleading the House. I just wanted to just clarify that in Bermuda it is probably the one example where a sport, which is globally dominated by whites, is probably enjoyed by more persons of African descent, proportion-

ately, than any other country in this world. I would say that is probably true. So the opportunity for—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: —is huge in that respect.

The Member makes a correct [statement] about the global sense, in Bermuda—

The Speaker: You have made your point.

Mr. Hubert (Kim) E. Swan: —there is . . .

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think what I have had to say still stands. We are bringing a white event to Bermuda, and that is the bottom line.

So, again, I appreciate this effort and I am looking forward, quite frankly, to seeing how this pans out to ensure that . . . and I must say it will be important for whatever opportunities that are brought to Bermuda and for Bermudians that we take advantage of it. One of the things that was disappointing, as far as the America's Cup was concerned, was that bids were being put out, but Bermudians were not coming and putting in their bids for the things by the deadline. And after the deadlines had come across, many of them were coming to the likes of me, and many other Ministers, saying *Well what can I do? What can I do?* Well, we have to step up our game as well to ensure that we participate in many of the events when we have these opportunities.

So, again, I appreciate and we are supporting. We are telling the Minister, the Honourable Zane De Silva, that we support this wholeheartedly and are looking forward to how this whole thing creates opportunities for Bermudians throughout the Island itself.

THE REALITY OF TODAY

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Now, Mr. Speaker, I do want to speak to the issue of the reality of where we are today. And I believe that the Government is facing those realities. I believe that as we continue to see some of the things that are plaguing us at this present time in our history in 2019, and as this Government seeks out opportunities, we also recognise that there is great opportunity to speak to our people to ensure that they understand exactly where we are going. So, I was taking a look at a speech that was given by our Premier. It was a keynote speech at the 36th Labour Day Banquet. I took note of a few things as we are acknowledging some of the realities (as the previous speaker who just sat down) of where we are.

In his speech he said, "I have been waiting for almost two months to be able to address a room of friends like this. I am grateful for the opportunity, because ever since the General Election, people

have been asking our MPs, Ministers, and Members, 'What now?' or 'What comes next?'"

And, amongst all of the things that we had just listened to about the good things that the Honourable Minister of Security spoke to that he is doing to help improve the lives of the prisoners and the prison officers, the reality is that people are asking the questions, *What now?*, and *What comes next?*

Our reality as of today, Mr. Speaker, what has become next is a march—we saw that—an education march last week. What has become next is prison officers marching on the House of Assembly. And when asked by the prison officers if they had confidence . . . when asked by Gary Moreno, if they had confidence that these issues would be addressed, the reply was that they did not have confidence, no.

So, we recognise that a lot of work has to be done and we will support this Minister because they are our cousins, our relatives who are working up there. They are our cousins, our relatives who are even incarcerated there. But the reality of right now is that when the president says he has no confidence, it goes beyond the things that are being done; there is more to this story. And not to say that there is more to this story that there is a conspiracy, or something is being hidden, there is more to this story that needs to be addressed. And we have heard that the Minister is seeking, and will be seeking (which is encouraging), to address these issues.

As I asked the question, and I looked at what the Premier had said, as people were asking *What comes next?* we are now seeing the reality of today, that what has come next is work to rule, Mr. Speaker. The reality of today has said that what has come next is 12 months of declining retail sales, Mr. Speaker. What we have seen come next is news and more news of jobs being lost and more layoffs. What we are seeing today, Mr. Speaker, the reality of today, is business closures due to people not being able to keep their businesses alive and thriving, whether it is due to service tax and the likes. What has come next, Mr. Speaker, is increased cost of living. What has come next is increased cost of doing business.

And I take to heart that it is a challenge to govern. We have been in that position. I understand it well. I have been there in part of the marches and seen the concern, and have never taken it personal, because I recognise that the people coming forward to the Government are screaming out. They are looking for assistance; they are looking for help. What behaved me a bit was Honourable Members who have spoken to me on many occasions saying, *Oh, it's not personal, Cannonier; it's just politics.*

Those exact words coming from Honourable Members in our Government. So the reality of today is setting in.

So I read through, because the Premier can give some wonderful speeches. And as I read further through I realised that he also said that . . . he spoke in reference to Aecon and how marches were happening all before Aecon came about and Aecon was given our airport. I take exception to that. It was not *given* to them; they have a 30-year lease. But yet, our reality today is that we will be getting that airport back which was leased, after 30 years. The reality of today is this, though, Mr. Speaker. We have a Canadian company, a foreign company, no Bermudian interest, who is about to purchase an infrastructure to this Island that will bring down the cost of living. And that is BELCO. Not Bermudian. Once it is purchased and sold to this foreign company that is it. It does not come back to us at all. So, we have a 30-year lease with Aecon at the airport—

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Point of order?

POINT OF ORDER
[Misleading]

Mr. W. Lawrence Scott: The Honourable Member is misleading the House. He is making it seem as though there is a Bermudian interest in the airport. There is no Bermudian interest in the airport at this time and, right now, not for the foreseeable future. So, none of the concessionaires will be Bermudian, none of the operators will be Bermudian. So it is exactly like BELCO. That was done under the OBA.

The Speaker: I think you are stretching from a different perspective there.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My goodness, man. My goodness. That is why we have this going back and forth. The airport is coming back to us. It has not been sold. BELCO has been, and is being, sold to a company that is all foreign.

Hon. E. David Burt: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Point of order?

Hon. E. David Burt: If I may . . . and it might be more of a point of clarification for the Honourable Opposition Leader will yield.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. E. David Burt: You won't yield?

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: No.

Hon. E. David Burt: Okay.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: No. No.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just gave you the truth. That is the truth. BELCO is being *purchased wholly*, it can never come back. It will not come back.

So, we had an opportunity—

Hon. E. David Burt: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: We will take your point of order.

POINT OF ORDER
[Misleading]

Hon. E. David Burt: The Honourable Member is unintentionally, again misleading the House, because in this type of debate he is trying to create equivalence. So I would hope the Honourable Member in his statement as he is trying to compare what was owned by the government to something that is owned by a private entity if he will actually state whether or not he supports the government purchasing a private entity.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Oh, listen, listen . . . no, that is not a point of order. You are asking me a question for a belief on something, again skirting from what it is I am saying.

[Inaudible interjections]

An Hon. Member: What are you saying?

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: I just said it.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Well I can explain it to you, but I can't comprehend it for you. So, that is the bottom line.

[Laughter]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: I can't comprehend it for you, it's basic. It is basic, Mr. Speaker.

[General uproar]

The Speaker: Members, Members.

[Gavel]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: It is basic, Mr. Speaker. BELCO is being sold outright. Outright! The public knows it, we are hearing from the public the same thing. I mean, certainly, one of the opportunities is that this Government could nationalise BELCO. I mean, let's get all Bermudians involved in this thing. No problem. You know, if that is the route you want to take, then take that route. But here we are, Mr. Speaker—

An Hon. Member: Amazing!

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: *Amazing* is right. Amazing, when we are going to give the . . . the . . . the—

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Members, Members!

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: —to Canadians as well. But yet, the OBA, when it was Government was getting flak because a Canadian company was coming down to run Aecon.

If we just pause for a moment, Mr. Speaker, the public is paying attention. And that is why we are seeing the marches, Mr. Speaker, because they are now sifting through what is going on and beginning to understand.

Listen, throughout this whole political career, I said it many times before. I have seen the good, the bad and the ugly. I have seen the lies perpetrated, and continue to be perpetrated—

[Inaudible interjections]

[Gavel]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: I have seen the sleight of hands and it continues on, Mr. Speaker. But here we are not facing up to the fact that we were slighted . . . it is rather interesting. I said this one time before, we were slighted about the fact that we were giving away a beach, but then this Government came along and is trying to take two cities as if people are not going to sit up and pay attention to this. And that is why we are seeing the unrest that we are beginning to see. That is why, because it is not the things that they may be doing well, it is the fact that we are beginning to see that people are beginning to lose confidence. That is what we heard word-for-word today. No, they do not have confidence, despite the fact that they know that certain things may be getting fixed, no confidence.

And I can rest assured, and guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, that as we go . . . and a month from now, whenever that new confidence level report comes out, I can guarantee you, by the same compa-

nies that we heard from the Honourable Member from constituency 2, talking about the many companies that are here, the international companies, I guarantee you that that report is going to come back and say that confidence is low. Low; even lower than the last report.

So, there is some work to be done. What I am speaking to is the reality of where we are today, Mr. Speaker. So there is a lot of work that has to be done. The Government may get exercised if they want, but there is a lot of work to be done.

We heard about the many number of marches that took place as an OBA Government. And now we are seeing marches with the PLP Government. And now that they are Government these marches are a positive thing. It is very interesting when you look at things and you see what is going on here. But I am encouraged by the Minister who did speak to this, that he is going to keep fighting for the good of the people of Bermuda. The reality, however, is that we have a confidence challenge. We have a confidence problem, and it has got to be saved, Mr. Speaker.

“So, what next?” That was a quote directly out of the Premier's speech. So, what is next? I am hoping, Mr. Speaker, that we begin to see these issues seriously addressed. What I have learned about the people of Bermuda is that when they reach a frustrated point, it has had to happen already—

[Timer beeps]

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: It can't be a half an hour already.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Actually, it never got reset when we were talking. You started at 8:53. You have a few more minutes.

Hon. E. David Burt: Oh?

The Speaker: Yes.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Thank you very much.

[Inaudible interjections and laughter]

The Speaker: Working it out right now.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: So, Mr. Speaker, I will fast forward—

The Speaker: You actually have just two minutes left.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: I will fast forward to my summary, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: You have two minutes. We have already confused you where we were trying to—

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: You are taking up my time, Mr. Speaker.

[Laughter and inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: You have two minutes.

Hon. L. Craig Cannonier: Mr. Speaker, the Premier ended out . . . and I must say that if I were sitting there listening to him I would say that was a wonderful speech. He said, “Well we are the people who we serve; . . . we [do] not forget . . . We cannot forget.”

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that we will hear, and we have already heard from the Premier, and he loves to say we will not be moved; we will stay the course. Well, Bermuda is saying as of today, with this march, *We will not forget*, Mr. Speaker, *We cannot forget*.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier will again say that the OBA is the past and that the PLP is the future. Yet the present escapes him. And so, last week we had a march; this week we are having a march. Last week was the past, if you look today. Today is the present. We had the prison officers marching, saying *no confidence*.

Mr. Speaker, I will close with this: I am imploring upon our Premier, what will be the future? Maybe, as we have joked many times in here, he needs to find that crystal ball, because as of today, Mr. Speaker, we have some challenges that we need to face up to. And until we face up to those challenges and stimulate this economy to get people happy about where they are, then we will continue to see lower confidence and more people marching on this House of Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Member. I recognise the Honourable Premier.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Hon. E. David Burt: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and good evening to you.

As the Honourable Deputy Premier moved the motion to adjourn, and I believe that the House is adjourned until June 21st, I wanted to take this opportunity as next weekend will be a holiday weekend where we celebrate our National Heroes Day, to recognise that we will not be here until after National Heroes Day. And I think that it is important that we recognise the holiday which was brought in place under the last Progressive Labour Party Government to say *thank you* and recognise our national heroes.

We certainly want to recognise, and I will read the names, Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Sir John [W.] Swan, [KBE, JP]; Sir Edward Richards, [Kt., CBE];

Gladys [Misick] Morrell; Mary Prince; Sir Henry James Tucker; Dr. Paulu [R. N. O. B.] Kamarakafego; Dr. E. F. Gordon; and Dame Lois Browne-Evans, [DBE, JP, LLB]. Those are our national heroes. And next week we will have the opportunity to celebrate them and the contributions they made to the Island of which we call home, Mr. Speaker.

Also, next weekend there will be a few young people in the country that may be celebrating Bermuda Carnival. And I sincerely hope that persons will remain safe, will be safe, and will make sure that they take care of themselves and enjoy the spirit of the holiday in peace and harmony, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I just returned from an event that Honourable Members were invited to. And, of course, we are here inside of this House debating matters of the day. So I recognise that some Honourable Members could not make it. But I was joined by all 23 members of Bermuda’s National Men’s Football Team who are part of the 2019 Gold Cup. And the next time that we come back to this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, our Men’s National Team would have started competing in this competition and will have faced Haiti and Costa Rica and the country of Costa Rica in the great state of Texas.

On behalf of all Honourable Members who were able to attend, but I will say on behalf of the people of Bermuda, we wish our players the best. And I say that, Mr. Speaker, because they are part of I would say the new golden generation of footballers. But I think it is important, Mr. Speaker, to recognise and understand, and I think that it goes very well along the lines of which the Honourable Opposition Leader just spoke, talking about the past, the present and the future. And here is what it is, Mr. Speaker.

There are quick wins that cost a lot of money, the America’s Cup is one, and there are investments which are made, which take a little longer time to show their return. Honourable Members will remember I would say around the point in time of 2006/07 the then Government made an investment in our young people that was roundly criticised in some quarters. And we made an investment in sports. We made an investment in cricket, and we made an investment in local football, Mr. Speaker. And in the speech that I gave a few hours ago, I reminded persons that the young people on our national team today, many of them came of age under the support which the Government gave to our football programmes, Mr. Speaker.

Now, just be clear; 13 months later, we are seeing the fruits and the benefits of that particular investment, Mr. Speaker. But when you invest it takes time to see return. So, I can understand and recognise that the Honourable Opposition Leader would want to make hay. And just be clear, Mr. Speaker, I do not in any way shape or form enjoy coming outside the steps of Parliament and meeting our public officers who have challenges that they would like re-

solved. But I also recognise, as the leader of this Government, that I am oftentimes my own harshest critic. And I am happy to accept the responsibility of the changes which need to be made. But here is the thing we have to remember, Mr. Speaker.

The Honourable Opposition Leader said the past, the present and the future. We know very clearly what the past was, Mr. Speaker. And we know very clearly what we want the future to be. And just like the investment that took a long time to germinate with our national football team, the structural changing we are making inside of our economy may take a long time. Just like the noise that was made with the investment that we made at that point in time, there is a little bit of discomfort in the transition, Mr. Speaker.

But here is what I will say: The election manifesto that this Government was elected on . . . we still have confidence that that was the right way to go, Mr. Speaker. We are still committed to executing building that better and fairer Bermuda. And not everyone will like what it is we are doing, but the fact is that in politics and in Government, every decision we make is not going to be a popular one. But you must make the decisions which are in the best interest of the people, Mr. Speaker.

So, here is where I will end, Mr. Speaker. Our young people are going to represent us overseas. They are going to represent us as part of a golden generation that was forged from investments that were made in the last decade. The future is bright, Mr. Speaker. I have no doubt about it. And that is because there is a new generation of young Bermudians who are working every day to make sure that their future is better than their past. I, Mr. Speaker, will not only put the confidence in this Government, I will put the country's collective confidence in their abilities. And just like our football team will make us proud on the field, Mr. Speaker, our next generation continues to make us proud every day.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I wish all persons a very happy Bermuda National Heroes Day, and I sincerely hope that our football team will represent us well on the field.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Premier.

And, with that, we will bring the House to a close. And we will resume again at 10:00 am on Friday, the 21st of June.

Members, as we have heard, in between there will be the National Heroes Day. Enjoy your holiday and reflect on the contributions of those who came before us, and that we too must leave a legacy that will be lasting in this country.

[Gavel]

[At 9:26 pm, the House stood adjourned until 10:00 am, Friday, 21 June 2019.]

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