

Remarks by
Hon Dr. Hubert A. Minnis, MP
Leader of the FNM
FNM Rally
Tuesday, May 6, 2014
Party Headquarters, Mackey St.

FNMs tonight we begin our assault on this talking, do-nothing, promising, all-for- PLP Government.

Perry Christie told the media last week Thursday that getting to the second anniversary of their victory at the polls was an achievement.

We agree with him.

His Government's performance in office over the last 24 months has been an abysmal failure.

Failure to act on rising crime

Failure to produce jobs

Failure to deliver on their promises

So they must consider it a masterful achievement that they have delivered on virtually none of their promises to the Bahamian people.

Christie says when he speaks to the nation tomorrow he will speak on some of what he considers his Government's achievements.

He should tell us what and for whom he achieved whatever it is he has fixed in his mind that he has achieved because we cannot see anything.

And he should tell us who did they do what for?

Let's hope he looks in the mirror and sees that he is running a rudderless ship.

Every man is his own man.

What the Government has not done in 24 months in office

We know what this PLP Government has not done. We know what they can't do: many simple things to make life easier for countless Bahamians.

They have proved that they cannot reduce the number of Bahamians on trolleys in the halls of the Emergency Room at PMH.

Some patients are there for days and days on end. Meanwhile the new Critical Care Block, built by the FNM remains un-opened.

The truth is they care little about sick Bahamians.

They can't get the Children's and Adolescents Facility at Sandilands opened either. That's still on their "to do" list.

They can't get the new Leonard Thompson International Airport in Marsh Harbour opened. Every new date is missed and a new date given for its opening.

Just like the Referendum to bring equality to women under the Constitution; they just can't get it scheduled!

This Christie led PLP Government is failing the Bahamian people on every front.

They claimed they believed in Bahamians. They claimed that they would put Bahamians first. In office they have done the opposite.

The record shows that they put themselves and their friends and associates first.

Very few crumbs are left for the rest of us.

Twenty four months of PLP Government has meant misery for tens of thousands of Bahamians. They said they would invest in Bahamians. They have not.

- They have not kept their promise to double the budget allocations for education! In fact they have decreased budgeted amounts for education in the national budget.
- They have not introduced a programme to help Bahamians save their homes from foreclosure. Even when the PM tried to intervene inappropriately to save the house of a former PLP Senator and election candidate – now tax advisor – from mortgage default; he failed. The man and his family were evicted in front of newspaper cameras! That’s the level of help you can expect from this Government,
- They have not closed the web shops which they promised to close if the people voted against them in the Referendum. The people voted no to wen-shops in the Referendum. Now, after wasting somewhere between \$1.5 and \$5 million on the Referendum, they say they will not close the web-shops; they will regulate them!
- And, they most certainly have not implemented effective programmes to reduce crime.

What the PLP Has Done to Bahamians

What they have done is to tax Bahamians; taxing us into the ground.

Under this PLP Government:

Everything is up except wages and salary

Business Licence Fees are up

Customs charges are up

Food prices are up.

The price of gas is up.

And,

Unemployment is up – dramatically so.

Instead of the promised 10,000 in the first year in office, the economy lost jobs!

They said they had the solution to crime all wrapped up in a present called Urban Renewal 2.0.

What they have delivered is record increase in crime disguised in “mambo jumbo” talk as miraculous decrease in crime. Not even their most ardent, blind supporters believe that.

Crime is up.

House burglaries, car thefts and robberies are all up.

Rapes are up.

Murder is dramatically up. And to disguise the rise in crime, increased numbers of unlawful killings are being left as “unclassified deaths” for weeks and months on end. We have just entered the 5th month of the year and already the murder count tops 40!

By the new definition being used to classify unlawful killings people found buried in a hole with bruises to their heads may not be a murder victim.

- A man found burned up in a car may not be a murder victim.
- An elderly man found dead with a stab wound in his back can't be classified as a murder right off the bat! Really?
- When they find a dead person wrapped up in a sheet they have to investigate to determine if it is a murder. What do you think it is?
- And when they find 4 bodies burnt with car tires on top of them – they can't determine that these people have been murdered.

Still, subtracting all of those cases, the murder count is still up. The newspapers say it's up to 43. My count brings it to 47; the 4 Anguilla Cay bodies take it to 51! And we're in the first week of May!

The list of persons suffering grievous bodily harm but still alive today - by God's Good Grace and the talents of our doctors, surgeons and nurses - must be many times greater than that!

We're being listed among the dangerous vacation destinations in our region.

But we still don't know how the *nolle* was granted in the illegal gun possession case involving the former client of the Attorney General? Who authorised that? And then they claim they are concerned about the smuggling of weapons into our country.

We still don't know who authorised the wedding in the police station -- over the objection of the Commissioner of Police?

How could this happen in The Bahamas?

How is it that we cannot hear from the Minister of National Security or the Prime Minister on this matter?

We are becoming a laughing stock!

Most murders are taking place in the PM's and the Minister responsible for the Police constituencies. That's the heart of their heralded Urban Renewal 2.0.

If the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Security cannot control crime in their own constituencies, with their people - people they know, how do they expect us to believe that they can control crime for the rest of us?

They can do nothing to impact crime in their small constituencies. And then the prime minister tell us that the Minister of National Security is working "with due speed" with the police to do something about their strategies which have not been implemented.

The prime minister said he would control crime if he had to put a policeman on every corner. Why doesn't he begin in his and BJ

Nottage's constituencies? Those constituents deserve to be able to sleep in peace.

And in the middle of all this mess what does the prime minister do?

He travels. And he does a lot of it.

And there is no accountability on moneys being spent.

The PM has yet to account for the cost of his extravagant delegation to Sri Lanka, Rome and London last fall.

The PM says he met with senior members of the Police Force. The Commissioner of Police was not at that meeting. Why did he wait until the Commissioner is out of the country on a planned trip to meet with senior police officers?

If the Government has lost confidence in the COP, as some in the public have, they should do something about it. But they should not seek to work around him and undermine the structure of the Royal Bahamas Police Force.

The FNM left a law in place where the COP's term in office would come to an end after 5 years. That would be in January coming.

They changed the law. The current Commissioner of Police can spend another 7 or 8 years in his post until he reaches the mandatory retirement age.

The Government must not be seen encouraging a break down in the chain of command in a disciplined force.

If they have lost confidence in the Commissioner of Police then they ought to act – not make end runs around him. That's not good for the Force or for morale.

The Abysmal Failures of the PLP

The list of this PLP's failures in Government, **Abysmal failures**, can be found in every segment of our society.

Like the experiment with Cascarilla trees. They managed to kill all the 400 plus plants they rooted up from Acklins to transplant to Andros. And Andros has cascarilla. Do you think they didn't know that?

Now there is a shortage of limes. Well that's a crime in itself. We must be able to grow limes. How many people have lime trees in their back yards – for years? Do you think they could have grafted some of them? No, they spend \$1 million importing lime trees from California!

And, they have proven to be abysmal failure in collection of garbage.

The massive corruption being perpetrated in the award of contracts is shameful, disgraceful.

And still, they cannot keep streets of our capital city clean!

New Government Office Complex

It is scandalous that this Government would consider award a contract for the construction of a replica of the OAG Building on JFK Drive.

The thing is that the building looks good from the street. It is still true that all that glitters is not gold.

The building was poorly designed. And then they messed with the design adding another floor and compromising the roof.

The building was poorly constructed – the floors are slanted, the windows leaked, the plumbing leaked, the air-conditioning leaked; one big leaky mess.

Millions of dollars spent to correct those original building errors could not adequately and satisfactorily fix the building.

Now this Government wants the same contractor to replicate his mistakes on another building using the same design.

Imagine that!

A \$20 million Rip-off in Broad Daylight

A \$20 million contract award for the construction of a replica of that building is a rip off.

You remember that when the announcement was made that a contract had been awarded for the construction of a duplicate to the OAG Office it was said that the amount of the contract had not yet been determined. Imagine that the Minister would not give the tendered or agreed cost of a public building!

They must have still been in discussion on what else it was and who else it was that had to be included in the contract scam.

Some days later after the squabbling, dabbling, sharing and distributions, they announced the big number! The contract would be for \$20 million.

Jessie James and Frank James and their pose must have come to town.

Professionals, who know better, say that at the very most, that building can be replicated at a cost of not more than \$15.

We are reliably advised that the additional \$5 million is not justified. So where is that extra \$5 million going to go?

Rumor has it that the contractor is already around town bragging about the \$5 million profit he's gonna make on this one.

The Government typically pays 10% of a contract in professional fees. That's \$2 million. Are these in addition to the \$20 million announced contract with the contractor?

They say they believe in Bahamians. Let's hope they awarded this contract to a Bahamian citizen!

Instead of Darron Cash, the police should go pick up the Jessie and Frank James's of The Bahamas and their pose.

FNM Chairman

The Commissioner of Police was out of the country.

Who sent the police to the Chairman of the FNM for his computers and cell phones?

From whom did that inspector get instruction?

B.J. Nottage was all over the newspapers yesterday claiming that he knew nothing about it. Just like he claims he didn't know anything about the wedding in the police station! So who's in charge?

B.J. needs to start taking the same advice he gave Perry Christie in the past; that is 'stop holding your head and start using it man'.

The vindictive abuse of the FNM Chairman's rights is the sort of harassment of political persons that takes place in dictatorships - not in The Bahamas.

This is not some unfortunate country torn by decades of civil war and tribal antagonisms.

This is not Serbia or the Ukraine.

This is The Bahamas. We are a country of laws. This has never happened before.

This is a dangerously slippery slope the PLP is taking our country and our democracy down.

For 24 months they have flouted our democratic traditions.

In Parliament the Speaker permits Government Members to ceaselessly interrupt the contributions of Opposition Members rendering them almost silent – mute, in discussions on the people's business.

They suspended the Leader of the Opposition from sitting in the House for defending a Members right to speak the truth and for refusing to retract the truth.

Now they have sanctioned the police seizing the computers and iPhone of the Chairman of our Party. They claim its business as usual! No big deal. B.J. Nottage says he didn't look into the matter even after the

abuse was reported in the newspapers. And he expects us to believe him!

The same person or people who authorised the wedding in the police station had to have had a hand in the raid of the Chairman's house!

This is nothing other than an attempt, a shameless attempt, to intimidate the Opposition. Let's send a clear and unequivocal message to the Government: The FNM will not be frightened by Gestapo tactics.

FNMs we must stand up; stand up for our rights and the rights of all Bahamians.

Stand up against the PLP and its intimidation.

Stand up against their 'all for them' policies.

FNMs stand up.

We are Red and we ain't scared!

Red and Ain't Scared!

Thank you and good night.