

Dear Editor,

Mr. Earl Deveaux could not have been serious when he admitted, while appearing on Jones Communications' 'Issues of the day' talk show on Monday 12th April, that his government had decided to engage, under contract, a foreign company to collect garbage and manage the Nassau city dump. This must be a cruel joke - you simply cannot be serious about this one, Mr. Deveaux. It is garbage collection and management of a garbage pile that we are talking about, for God's sake. It is not Buckingham Palace that we are asking to have managed. I must have been terribly mistaken and only thought I heard him say, what I thought he said.

What amazes me is the boldness of this government to think that they can sell any silly, crappy idea to the Bahamian people. And then, to add insult to injury, the man said that garbage collection would no longer be provided as a free government service to Bahamian households, as of July this year. He must have been mistaken about that, as well; he simply cannot be serious. The foreign company, he said, would be mandated to collect fees for their services from their customers who, of course, comprise all residents and businesses in Nassau and the Family Islands. In addition, if I am not further mistaken, I believe the minister alluded to an increase in the rates for electricity, provided by BEC, by some five percent (5%) and, lest we forget, national insurance contributions will also be increased by one per cent (1%) come June 1st, all this while the country is experiencing the worst economic drought in its history; what a reckless, inept, clueless Administration.

During the debate in the Honourable House of Assembly, several years ago, when the FNM government brought legislation for cable television to the parliament, Mr. Pierre Dupuch, a former cabinet minister in the Ingraham Administration, reminded his own FNM colleagues, at the time, that Bahamians could do anything; that there is nothing Bahamians can't do. He told the Honourable House that if there was a project that Bahamians couldn't handle for lack of the required equipment and or expertise that they could easily import those things, just like foreigners do to whom we so readily, anxiously and generously give away these contracts.

The Honourable former minister, I perceived at the time, was genuinely advocating for the cable deal to be given to a Bahamian group or a few Bahamian individuals or groups. He emphatically made the case as I recall because he, being a member of the Ingraham cabinet, knew very well that Hubert was up to no good; that he was up to his old tricks of awarding every contract possible to foreigners and this very lucrative deal, he knew very well, would be no exception.

Those of us who can recall the highlights of that event would remember that the PLP, which was in opposition under Sir Lynden's leadership during that debate, tabled a resolution asking the government to bind itself by voting "yes" with the PLP, for the resolution committing the entire Assembly to awarding the cabling franchise to a Bahamian-led group only. We should also recall that Ingraham and his FNM government would have none of it and they voted against the measure, defeating it.

The cash strapped- Canadian Firm was eventually given a 15-year monopoly. It was widely reported, shortly thereafter, that Hubert Ingraham's daughter became engaged and eventually married the Canadian man's son; so much for good ethics, transparency and 'trusted governance'.

I telephoned the Hon. Pierre Dupuch, shortly afterwards, thanked and commended him highly for standing firm on the side of the Bahamian peoples' interest. This took enormous guts and fortitude, on his part, as Mr. Dupuch was still a member of the governing FNM at the time.

The leadership of the FNM seems to have an ingrained aversion for anything Bahamian. They seem to feel that only foreigners can do anything right and they obviously rather consult with and take advice from foreigners. Bahamians seem to have little or no value to them except to perform those menial tasks usually relegated to the underclass among us.

The FNM government, and more particularly its leader, display great mistrust when it comes to their dependence on Bahamians to work well and or to perform contracts adequately and efficiently.

Let us take, for example, the major road works being carried out presently, in Nassau, by that Venezuelan road building company. When the PLP came to office in 2002, they met road works in progress being done by some foreign conglomerate, out of Europe, which was having grave financial woes at the time and indeed, as a result of their financial challenges, found themselves in breach of their contract with the Ingraham Administration.

The Honourable Bradley Roberts, who was given responsibility for public works by the incoming PLP government, wasted no time in determining the facts and eventually terminating that contract for breach; simultaneously bringing together a team of four Bahamian road building contractors (yes I said four Bahamian contractors) and the contract was completed in record time, and at a very high standard to boot.

Bahamians did the job and did it well and by international standards, I might add. Yet when the FNM, under the leadership of Hubert “Uncle Tom” Ingraham, came back in office in 2007, the major road works on the drawing board, left by the PLP government were, again, given to foreigners, as opposed to the Bahamians who had performed excellently under the PLP. The FNM gave the Venezuelans the contract, without any consideration to the involvement of those, extremely well qualified, Bahamians.

Why are they always in such a hurry to call in the foreign troops to do jobs that Bahamians, have shown us that they can do better I ask you? This, I conclude, tells me very vividly that the FNM have little or no faith in the ability of Bahamians to do any thing right.

It cannot be true that a Bahamian cannot be found, in this country today, who is able to manage the city dump in Nassau and collect the people’s garbage efficiently. There is no way, in hell, that I would accept those sentiments as being remotely truthful. The FNM and Hubert Ingraham would rather deal with foreigners than with Bahamians and that, I am convinced, is the plain truth of the matter.

I can personally recommend, to Mr. Earl Deveaux and his FNM government, a very talented Long Island Bahamian, who is presently the general manager of Sanitation services, here in Freeport. He is well able and would do an excellent job for the country, if given the opportunity to do so.

I know for sure, though, that the first thing they would want to know about the gentleman is whether his political views line up with those of the FNM or not; that would be the million dollar question to answer for them and would determine whether he would be considered for the contract or not.

It is shameful though, to say the least, to hear the Hon. Minister admit almost braggingly that his government would be hiring a foreigner to take care of the country's garbage collection and disposal problems. He spoke as if he knew the word "foreigner" would thrill Bahamians and give them comfort that the job would finally be done right. Are these guys for real?

I submit that this FNM government is made up of "uncle toms" that simply cannot emancipate their minds from slavery. Do they sleep comfortably at night?

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Freeport, Grand Bahama
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