

He is the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas

by Senator Philip C. Galanis

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In recent weeks, I have vigorously pursued what I consider to be the excessively negative and anti-Bahamian rhetoric on the part of some members of the Fourth Estate, particularly that found day after day in certain areas of The Tribune.

There were, as I expected, some people who took issue with my interpretation of the virulent and unreasonable attacks on all sectors of our society. There are some who would read the same incessant assaults on our national pride and our national image and see nothing wrong with these opinions. Sadly, like Mr. Marquis and the others at The Tribune, there are some Bahamians who believe that there is nothing right with our society and who live in denial regarding all the transformative changes that are happening daily throughout our Archipelago.

However, The Tribune has now unmistakably and clearly exposed itself as what I have long believed it to be: a newspaper that sets itself up as judge and jury of all things Bahamian, putting itself above the rest of us mere mortal Bahamians and not at all a part of the nation that the rest of us are

trying to build, notwithstanding their protestations of merely providing constructive criticism for the betterment of us all.

I am referring to the editorial of Friday, July 7th, which was devoted to explaining why their Independence Supplement did not contain any contribution from the Progressive Liberal Party or from the Government. I separate those two entities because I believe that, in a mature nation, a political party is that and a government, irrespective of whichever party is asked to form it, is that: the Government of the nation, for everyone in the nation. Bills are debated, laws are passed, monies allotted and the nation is governed for the betterment of us all, not just members of the party that formed the Government.

Similarly, those who hold high office in the nation, regardless of their party, should be shown the respect that the office merits. To do less is to risk being party to national destabilization. But it seems that no one has told that to The Tribune. No one has impressed upon them that by disrespecting those who govern us all, they are disrespecting the people of The Bahamas and the nation itself. And nowhere is that flagrant and cavalier disrespect more evident than in the three chillingly biased and downright rude words with which they closed that editorial last Friday.

After apologizing to their “PLP readers” for not being able to include anything from the Prime Minister’s Office in their Supplement – that was, by the way, once again full of anti-everything invective, all written by “a Tribune Staff Reporter” – they conclude by saying “despite The Tribune’s best efforts, we have failed to bring them news from their Prime Minister” (bold type my own).

How can a newspaper that has been in operation for over a century still insist upon demonstrating such a dislike, such a hatred, that they will not even acknowledge that the Prime Minister is the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, not the Prime Minister of the Progressive Liberal Party? It truly boggles the mind to think that this supposedly upstanding newspaper would stoop to this kind of blatant disrespect and contempt for the Prime Minister of a sovereign nation that they purportedly are a part of.

This is not a matter of interpretation any more. This is not a matter of being offended by what I believe they are saying. This is, for the entire world to see, the final three words in their editorial: “their Prime Minister.” Aside from being juvenile and contemptible, this is a dangerous way for anyone to think and a very dangerous way for a newspaper to write. These three words basically advocate that, unless you are a member of the PLP,

you need not pay any heed to the Prime Minister since he is not YOUR Prime Minister. These three words approach anarchy.

As I have documented in my recent letters, I have been affronted over and over by the attitude of The Tribune; however, nothing prepared me for this. I suppose it should not surprise me, coming as it does from a newspaper that owns a radio station that plays the most unrepentantly anti-social and poisonous music that can be found on the dial in this country. But it did surprise and sadden me to see their relentless attempt to split the nation and encourage their readers to disrespect and ignore the office of the Prime Minister.

Once again, I must, as a Bahamian, challenge this newspaper to correct this snide and dreadful attempt to discredit and undermine the Government of The Bahamas. It is only right.