



Of Controversy and Contradictions

There is an old African proverb which says "when the elephants fight it is the grass that suffers most". And in Barbados when corporate campaign financiers fight it is the people who suffer most.

There is also a saying "the more the merrier" and this seems to have been the principle that guided the Barbados Labour Party in having the largest Cabinet in the history of Barbados sworn into office. The corollary is that "too many cooks spoil the broth".

If the ongoing Barbados Water Authority saga is anything to judge by, the more the merrier principle is not working. First of all after promising to remove the Solid Waste Tax, and indeed many Barbadians marched against it, the tax was reintroduced. But a tax by any other name is still a tax.

Then Barbadians felt the heavy hand of the BWA which said to poor people that they must pay this new tax or their water supply would be disconnected. This included those people who had only a pipe running to their home and had no sewerage system, government provided or otherwise.

Then Innotech took up its tanks. Barbados thought it was about non-payment but then we also heard that the tanks were removed to be sanitised. A trail of e-mails seem to have supported this. But since there is no transparency in Government no one knows for sure. The BWA apparently then received tanks from Corporate Barbados which agreed to provide tanks and cement and all manner of things to install the said tanks.

Then the tanks burst and there were immediate accusations of sabotage. But cooler heads have subsequently stated that the tanks as this new administration would say "were not fit for purpose".

So the people have been taken back to the days of the stand pipe. There is no credible solution to the water woes of many of our citizens.

So now that the principle of "the more the merrier" is not working for Barbadians and the question is "Will heads roll?"

And the subtext to all of this is that elephants enjoy a tussle when they are young and rarely fight each other. The truth is likely to be the same in Barbados when the Government appears to fight with elements of Corporate Barbados it is really just a friendly tussle.



Current direction of the Barbados Water Authority

*"Coming together
is a beginning.*

*Keeping together
is progress.*

*Working together
is success."*

- Edward Everett Hale

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PSV - Persecuted Servants and Victims?

There is no doubt that public transportation is in need of effective regulation and over the years the Owners of Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) have formed themselves into groups to represent their own interests. The travelling public over this past week experienced severe disruption due to the strike action of the PSV workers. The workers stepped outside the framework of the owners to represent their own interests which are sometimes not on all fours with that of owners.

Comment on the sector is often filled with emotional rhetoric and is a reflection of the growing pains of an industry. Most Barbadians would like to have a safe and quiet trip to work, school or leisure. Visitors would also like to use our public transportation as they are used to doing at home if they so choose. Neither Government, owners nor operators have taken us there as yet.

The discussion is about more than shirts although it is comes as a bit of a shock that a Government regulator would insist that a member of the private sector to wear its logo. The Fair Trading Commission, the Central Bank come to mind. Will those who they regulate be required to wear their logos as well? There are issues of discriminatory Government policy concerning road tax and duty free concessions. And then there are the unmentionable bribes which PSV operators have been required to pay. As the cost of doing business rises the hustle becomes worse.

Are PSVs wrong for taking action? Enforcement of uniform requirements alone cannot fix the unacceptable behaviour of a few bad seeds in the system. Reform must begin with an appropriate Code of Conduct policy which is fair and enforceable. PSV owners and operators are not the enemy. We commend the workers for unifying in the pursuit of their right to a level playing field. This sector is also important to the stability of our economy..

On a Point of Order

The existence of Law and Order is paramount in any democratic nation. There however is concern in Barbados as January 2019 has opened with two shooting deaths and related injuries already recorded. Once again the UPP is calling on the Minister of Home Affairs to provide guidance on what measures this administration will implement to eradicate and arrest this ongoing situation.

Where's Our Road?

ONE OF THE FIRST ACTIONS TAKEN BY THIS NEW GOVERNMENT WAS TO REPAVE ROADS WHICH ALL COULD SEE WERE NOT DESERVING OF THEIR PRIORITY. WHAT ABOUT THE ACTUAL BAD ROADS?



MEANWHILE IN ST. LUCY...

Government resurfaces 2KM of smooth road from Checker Hall to St. Lucy's Cemetery

United for all Barbados

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information

United Progressive Party
"The Cottage"

Dayrells Road
Christ Church

BARBADOS

(246) 426-2244

UPPBarbados@gmail.com

Visit us on the web at
www.UPPBarbados.org



UPPBarbados



@UPPBarbados

@unitedprogressivepartybarbados

