

**ANTHONY NEWBOLD, PRESIDENT – BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB
ACP PRESS CLUBS CONGRESS 20-21 OCTOBER 2016, KIGALI, RWANDA**

GOOD AFTERNOON..I BRING YOU GREETINGS HERE IN THE LAND OF A THOUSAND HILLS, FROM THE COUNTRY OF 700 ISLANDS, THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS. THANK YOU ORGANIZERS FOR YOUR KIND INVITATION.

IT IS A SIGNAL HONOR TO ADDRESS THIS GROUND BREAKING AND HISTORIC CONFERENCE ON BEHALF OF THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB AND THE PEOPLE OF THE BAHAMAS. MY WISH IS FOR THE MOST SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION TO OUR DELIBERATIONS.

BEFORE I TELL YOU ABOUT THE BAHAMA PRESS CLUB, LET ME SKETCH A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE MEDIA LANDSCAPE IN THE BAHAMAS.

WE'VE HAD PUBLIC RADIO FOR 80 YEARS BUT PRIVATE RADIO FOR ONLY 22 YEARS. PUBLIC TELEVISION FOR 40 YEARS BUT PRIVATE TELEVISION FOR ONLY 21 YEARS, SO FOR 60 AND 20 YEARS RESPECTIVELY, MEDIA HAS BEEN DOMINATED BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE BAHAMAS.

SO, PRESS CLUBS IN THE BAHAMAS BOAST A COLORFUL HISTORY.

STRETCHING BACK TO THE 1970'S AND MUCH LATER IN THE 80'S SEVERAL ATTEMPTS WERE MADE TO ESTABLISH A VIABLE PRESS CLUB IN THE COUNTRY.

ONE OF THOSE ATTEMPS, HEADED BY A COLONIAL TRANSPLANT PRACTISING AS A PUBLIC RELATIONS PRO, BEGAN WITH AN UNEASY TRUCE BETWEEN HE AND THE LOCALS AND WAS SHORTLIVED BECAUSE OF THAT TENSION, BUT ALSO PARTLY BECAUSE, AS LOCAL COLUMNIST AND FORMER OUTSTANDING REPORTER NICKI KELLY PUT IT, THEY COULD NOT DECIDE WHETHER THEY WERE FISH OR FOWL.

LATER, THE SON OF A LOCAL PRIEST AND PART TIME IMPRESSARIO WHO WENT BY THE MONIKER, WOULD YOU BELIEVE "BAZZ JAZZ", CREATED A ROBUST VERSION OF WHAT MAY HAVE BEEN MORE APTLY DESCRIBED AS A SPEAKERS CORNER, BUT THAT ALSO DID NOT LAST LONG.

THERE WERE NO MORE ATTEMPTS UNTIL TWO DECADES AGO, WHEN I WAS PRIVILEGED TO BE THE FOUNDING TREASURER OF THE PRECURSOR TO TODAY'S BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB. IN THAT NOW PRE HISTORIC MEDIA LANDSCAPE, ANY ONE OF VALUE TO THE GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY, FOUGHT FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE PRESS CLUB, INCLUDING THE FIRST PRIME MINISTER OF THE BAHAMAS, AND A NAME SOME OF YOU MAY RECOGNIZE, THE LATE SIR LYNDEN OSCAR PINDLING. EDUCATION WAS A MAJOR PART OF THAT INITIATIVE.

UNFORTUNATELY FOR ALL OF US, THAT PARTICULAR ITERATION DIED A PAINFUL DEATH JUST 4 SHORT YEARS LATER.

SINCE, AS A FOUNDING MEMBER I HAD A FULL APPRECIATION FOR THE VALUE, IDEALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CLUB, TO ADVOCATE FOR ALL THINGS MEDIA WHILE SEEKING TO INCREASE

**ANTHONY NEWBOLD, PRESIDENT – BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB
ACP PRESS CLUBS CONGRESS 20-21 OCTOBER 2016, KIGALI, RWANDA**

KNOWLEDGE AND UPHOLD THE STANDARDS OF THE PROFESSION, I COULD NEVER LET IT REMAIN BURIED.

SO, IN 2009, WITH ONE OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THAT GROUPING, WHO IS NOW THE BAHAMAS HIGH COMMISSIONER TO THE COURT OF ST. JAMES, HIS EXCELLENCY ED BETHEL, I ATTEMPTED A RESSURECTION THAT NEVER HAPPENED.

BUT IN PROPER NEVER SAY DIE FASHION, I INSISTED THAT WE HAVE A LOCAL PRESS CLUB AND IN SEPTEMBER 2014, AFTER CANVASSING SOME 72 MEDIA OWNERS AND PRACTISING PROFESSIONALS, THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB 2014 WAS BORN WITH 22 OFFICIAL MEMBERS. THAT NUMBER HAS NOW GROWN TO 35 AND WE EXPECT IT TO GROW EVEN MORE IN THE COMING MONTHS. THE 22 MEMBERS INCLUDE A LOYAL CORE OF PROFESSIONALS ON WHOM I HAVE DEPENDED: VICE PRESIDENT, ANTHONY CAPRON (RETIRED MANAGING EDITOR OF THE NASSAU GUARDIAN); SECRETARY, LINDSAY THOMPSON (SENIOR REPORTER WITH BAHAMAS INFORMATION SERVICES) AND TREASURER, VINCENT VAUGHAN, A NOTED FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHER OF SOME 45 YEARS.

IN 2015 THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB HELD THE FIRST EVER PRESS AWARDS BANQUET WHEN WE RECOGNIZED SOME OF THE PIONEERS IN LOCAL MEDIA. PUBLISHER OF THE TRIBUNE, MRS. EILEEN CARRON, AT 53 YEARS, THE LONGEST LIVING SERVING NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE (IN ANOTHER YEAR SHE WILL TIE HER FATHER, THE LATE SIR ETIENNE DUPUCH FOR THE HONOR) RECEIVED THE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD.

OUR PATRON THAT YEAR WAS FORMER GOVERNOR GENERAL AND ONE OF THE BAHAMAS PRE-EMINENT JOURNALISTS, AND A PROTÉGÉ OF SIR ETIENNE, SIR ARTHUR FOULKES.

ALSO RECOGNIZED WERE SIX OTHER PIONEERING MEDIA OWNERS. WE ALSO HAD PRESENTATIONS FROM THE FIRST ADVISOR TO THE PRESS CLUB, FORMER JOURNALIST AND NOW BAHAMAS MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE HON FRED MITCHELL, A PRESENTATION ON CITIZEN JOURNALISM BY CANADIAN-GUYANESE TRANSPLANT, JOHN “ISH” ISHMAEL, AND DR. NICOLA VIRGILL ROLLE, HEAD OF THE BAHAMAS NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN COMMITTEE.

EARLIER THIS YEAR, ON BEHALF OF THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB, I HAD THE HONOR OF HOSTING A TOWN MEETING WITH 2 CANDIDATES SEEKING TO LEAD THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION PARTY (A FIRST) AND ALSO TO PRESENT ON THE PRIMARY ROLES OF THE PRESS IN A DEMOCRACY, AT “THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY CONFERENCE” SPONSORED BY THE COLLEGE, SOON TO BE UNIVERSITY OF THE BAHAMAS.

THAT PRESENTATION WAS ON THE 4 PRIMARY ROLES OF A FREE PRESS: TO HOLD GOVERNMENTS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS; TO PUBLICIZE ISSUES THAT NEED ATTENTION; TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC SO THAT THEY CAN MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR LIVES AND TO BRING

**ANTHONY NEWBOLD, PRESIDENT – BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB
ACP PRESS CLUBS CONGRESS 20-21 OCTOBER 2016, KIGALI, RWANDA**

PEOPLE TOGETHER. I HAVE SPENT MANY MAN HOURS ON RADIO SHOWS, REMINDING JOURNALISTS OF THEIR ROLES AND EDUCATING THE PUBLIC, BECAUSE A LOT OF THEM ARE NOT AWARE OF THOSE ROLES.

4 WEEKS FROM NOW ON NOVEMBER 19TH, THE SECOND ANNUAL BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB AWARDS BANQUET WILL BE HELD AT THE BRITISH COLONIAL HILTON. FORMER JAMAICAN PRIME MINISTER P.J. PATTERSON WILL BE OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER. OUR OWN BAHAMIAN PRIME MINISTER THE RT. HON PERRY CHRISTIE WILL ALSO BRING REMARKS.

IN ANOTHER HISTORIC FIRST, THE CEREMONY WILL BE BROADCAST LIVE ON ALL OF THE LOCAL TELEVISION STATIONS. WE WILL BE PRESENTING 16 AWARDS, WITH THE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD GOING TO THE FIRST BLACK JOURNALIST OF RENOWN AT THE FIRST RADIO STATION, ZNS, BAHAMAS HIGH COMMISSIONER TO CANADA, HIS EXCELLENCY CALSEY JOHNSON.

EACH OF THE 16 AWARDS IS NAMED AFTER AN OUTSTANDING JOURNALIST, WHICH, OBVIOUSLY ALLOWS US TO RECOGNIZE THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS, BUT ALSO PROMPTS THE YOUNG ONES TO DO SOME RESEARCH AND FIND OUT WHO PAVED THE WAY FOR THEM. THE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WILL BE NAMED IN HONOR OF SIR ETIENNE DUPUCH.

THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB IS LOOKING FORWARD TO THE COMING YEAR WHEN WE WILL FOCUS MORE ON EDUCATING THE PUBLIC AS WELL AS OUR MEMBERS. WE HOPE WE CAN CONVINCE RENOWNED JOURNALIST AND ANNENBERG FELLOW, DR. ELLEN HUME, WHOSE PRESENTATION ON THE ROLES OF A FREE PRESS LED ME TO DO THE SAME.

CHALLENGES FOR THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB ARE PROBABLY MORE COMMON THAN ANY OF US CARE TO ADMIT.

THE AMOUNT OF OUTSIZED EGOS RESIDENT IN MEDIA IS OUTSTRIPPED ONLY BY THE AMOUNT IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY. THOSE EGOS, OFTTIMES PROHIBIT PRODUCTION AND PROGRESS! AND, THE TRANSIENT NATURE OF OUR INDUSTRY ARE TWO STUMBLING BLOCKS.

YOUNG JOURNALISTS, ATTRACTED BY THE LURE OF MONEY, AND HAVING THE ABILITY TO ACCESS IT BECAUSE OF THAT SAME ACCESS TO THOSE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO PROVIDE IT IS ANOTHER.

ALSO, A FEW OF THE RECENT EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH A PRESS CLUB IN THE BAHAMAS WERE MET BY RESISTANCE FROM MEDIA OWNERS WHOSE INSTINCT WAS TO VIGOROUSLY RESIST ANY CREATURE THAT RESEMBLED A TRADE UNION.

THE STATED OBJECTIVES OF THE CLUB, INCLUDING TO PROVIDE A HAVEN FOR MEDIA PROFESSIONALS TO INTERACT IN SOCIAL INTERCOURSE, ADVOCATE FOR HIGH STANDARDS WHILE SEEKING TO PROVIDE EDUCATION TO ENSURE THE SAME, ADVOCATE FOR A FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT AND TO INSIST ON FOLLOWING A STRICT CODE OF ETHICS, AND MY

**ANTHONY NEWBOLD, PRESIDENT – BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB
ACP PRESS CLUBS CONGRESS 20-21 OCTOBER 2016, KIGALI, RWANDA**

INSISTENCE ON ALL OF THESE BEING ADHERED TO, HAS GONE A LONG WAY IN ESTABLISHING A CREDIBLE FOUNDATION FOR THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB. IN FACT, EARLIER THIS YEAR WE ADOPTED A CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE CONDUCT OF MEMBERS OF THE CLUB.

HANDLING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTINUES TO BE A CHALLENGE AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE ONE, IF ALL OF US DO NOT COMMIT TO FINDING A WAY OF INTEGRATING IT INTO OUR OPERATIONS. IT IS NOT GOING AWAY. I CALL IT THE GREAT EQUALIZER, WHICH ALLOWS EVERYONE TO HAVE A VOICE AND CHALLENGES THE CONSTRUCTS OF TRADITIONAL JOURNALISM.

OF COURSE IT ALSO EXPOSES ITS WEAKNESSES WITH AN UNDERBELLY OF UNTRUTHS, DEMAGOGUERY, SENSATIONALISM AND GRAMMAR THAT IS MORE ANTI GRAMMAR AND ADDS TO THE FURTHER POISONING OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

ALL OF THESE CHALLENGES PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW AND PROVE WHAT SOME OF US VETERANS BELIEVE WITH ALL OF OUR HEARTS. THAT IS, TRADITIONAL JOURNALISM IS HERE TO STAY AND THE STANDARDS AND MORES THAT GOVERN US WILL ALWAYS BE THE BEDROCK OF OUR PROFESSION.!!!

LET ME SAY THIS BEFORE I SPEAK ABOUT CHALLENGES AND BEST PRACTICES....BEST PRACTICES HAVE THEIR ROOTS IN THREE WORDS...FAIR, ACCURATE AND BALANCED..THOSE WORDS HAVE **THEIR** PROVENANCE IN A CODE OF ETHICS.....ANY CODE WORTH IT'S SALT WILL BY IT'S VERY NATURE CAUSE YOU TO BE ACCURATE, FAIR AND BALANCED.

SO, CHALLENGES, BEST PRACTICES, OPPORTUNITIES I'M ROLLING THEM INTO ONE: 1) NOT TOO MANY PEOPLE TOOK ME SERIOUSLY. TOO MANY EMINENT PERSONS HAD TRIED AND FAILED TO ESTABLISH A VIABLE, FUNCTIONING PRESS ORGANIZATION. I HAD TO SHOW A COMMITMENT TO THE CAUSE OF MEDIA AND THAT I WAS PREPARED TO DO WHATEVER WAS NECESSARY TO MAKE IT HAPPEN; AND THAT SOMETIMES MEANS DOING EVERY ONE ELSE'S JOB!!YOU'RE THE LEADER, YOU BETTER BE PREPARED TO LEAD AND BRING YOUR GROUP KICKING AND SCREAMING IF YOU HAVE TO. MY GOAL IS TO CREATE SUCH A PRESENCE FOR THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB THAT ANYONE WHO WISHES TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY, WILL TRY TO SPEAK AT THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB, SHADES OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB IN WASHINGTON D.C.

2) HOW TO ATTRACT AND KEEP MEMBERS. I HAD TO DEMONSTRATE A HIGH LEVEL OF CONSISTENCY AND PROFESSIONALISM AND SHOW EVERYONE THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING TO THIS PRESS CLUB. I HAD TO GIVE THE CRAFT AND THE PUBLIC SOMETHING TO GET EXCITED ABOUT. THE PRESENTATIONS FROM EMINENT PERSONS; THE AWARDS SHOW TO RECOGNIZE THEM. LANDING SOMEONE LIKE THE MOST HONORABLE P J PATTERSON, A FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF JAMAICA AS THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER. PLANNED EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS... ADVOCATING FOR A FOIA...THERE IS A ROBUST PRESS CORPS IN THE BAHAMAS. YOUNG AND

**ANTHONY NEWBOLD, PRESIDENT – BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB
ACP PRESS CLUBS CONGRESS 20-21 OCTOBER 2016, KIGALI, RWANDA**

AGGRESSIVE. THEY NEED TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED AND CHALLENGED, AS THEY ARE DAILY ESPECIALLY BY THE GOVERNMENT WHO HAS NOT SEEN SUCH A GROUP AS THIS ONE IN MANY A YEAR. SPEAKING OF YOUNG, TO ENCOURAGE THEM, I GAVE ONE YEARS FREE MEMBERSHIP TO 2 STUDENTS OF THE LOCAL COLLEGE OF THE BAHAMAS. AND THEY DO ATTEND MEETINGS.

3) I HAD TO FIND A HOME, EVEN IF ONLY TEMPORARILY. WE BEGAN MEETING IN THE BOARDROOM OF A LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATION (BNPA) AND EVENTUALLY MOVED TO OUR PRESENT LOCATION IN THE HILTON HOTEL ON OUR MOST PROMINENT STREET, BAY STREET, IN DOWNTOWN NASSAU. MY GOAL IS TO FIND A BUILDING WITH SPACE FOR OFFICES, MEETINGS AND A FOOD AND BEVERAGE OUTLET.

4) MONEY IS WHAT I AM LOOKING FOR. TO BUY OR BUILD A PERMANENT HOME FOR THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB. DONATIONS, GRANTS, BENEFACTORS. YOU ARE ALL WELCOME!

5) ESTABLISH CREDIBILITY. PEOPLE IN THE BAHAMAS KNOW IF ANTHONY NEWBOLD IS INVOLVED WITH SOMETHING, IT IS NOT ONLY ABOVE BOARD BUT IT IS OF THE HIGHEST ETHICAL STANDARD.

MY ATTENDANCE AT THIS CONFERENCE SAYS TO THE PEOPLE BACK HOME, THIS IS SERIOUS...THE BAHAMAS PRESS CLUB IS TAKEN SERIOUSLY...LET'S TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THIS ORGANIZATION...THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS...WITH THE CROSS POLINATION OF IDEAS FROM AROUND THE WORLD, WE CAN RESHAPE OUR SOCIETY AND THE WORLD...I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING MORE OF WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER, YOUR EXPERIENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

CHALLENGES ARE MADE TO BE OVERCOME. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THIS GROUP OF EMINENT PERSONS IS CAPABLE OF SUSSING OUT MANY OF THE SOLUTIONS WE NEED. IN FACT THE COMMUNITIES THAT MADE US ARE DEPENDING ON US TO DO SO.

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING.