

# Securing Bermuda's Future

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## REPLY TO THE THRONE SPEECH

Delivered by

**The Hon. Jarion C. Richardson, JP, MP**

**Leader of the Opposition**

15<sup>th</sup> November 2024



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## ***Mr. Speaker***

It's my distinct honour to start this debate on the Government's Throne Speech, and I look forward to the contributions to be made by all.

## ***Mr. Speaker***

There is a Bermuda where new opportunities are being generated everyday by stable families, active community clubs, thriving Bermuda-based and Bermuda-owned businesses.

A Bermuda where there is bustling shops, an entertaining nightlife, organised transportation, safe neighbourhoods, affordable food, healthcare and housing, and a financial path to secure pensions and no national debt/interest payments.

In that Bermuda, Bermudians don't have to work two or three jobs to make ends meet, our public schools provide students with a world-class education, creating a pipeline of talented individuals with the skills to attain any job they desire.

In that Bermuda, young people look forward to accessible home ownership, a decent standard of living and affordable healthcare throughout their lives.

## ***Mr. Speaker***

We will not get to that Bermuda if we let this Government continue to drive us down the road they've been navigating for eight years. This year's Throne Speech overcomplicates, misdirects and does not fix the actual cause of our problems.

The Premier likes to say, "*Promises made, promises kept*".

Take a quick look around at our families, our jobs, our pay, our buildings, our roads, our communities and everywhere else. They tells us that those promises were broken.

It's time for an election. The One Bermuda Alliance can fix this.

**Mr. Speaker**

Bermuda is a very dependent on what happens in other parts of the world. As the saying goes, if the United States sneezes, we catch a cold.

The election of a new president in the United States, the world's only superpower and on whom we are entirely dependent, clearly indicates a very new direction of travel for that country.

The President-elect said he's looking at reducing the US corporate income tax to the same level as Bermuda. This could directly impact the Government's projected revenues from the newly introduced corporate tax. Should the President implement the tariffs he promised during his election campaign, the inflationary pressures will increase the already high cost of living in Bermuda.

Further, global advances in technology and labour shifts continue to reduce the need for jobs in Bermuda.

The United Kingdom, responsible for our defence and diplomatic relationships, as well as the home to growing numbers of Bermudians fleeing our economy, just had an election. That new government is grappling with new ideas, and a shortage of funds to execute them. If the US is eyeing our financial potential, it's not hard to imagine the UK doing something similar.

Further afield, we've seen the enlarging of the Israel-Hamas conflict, drawing in Iran and the United States, and expanding the battlefield all the way from Lebanon to Yemen. This could easily affect fuel prices. The war in Ukraine, a major centre for wheat and related agricultural products, now involves the heavily sanctioned and global pariah North Korea. This could easily affect food prices.

**Mr. Speaker**

We are already living through dramatically high prices of food, energy and housing in Bermuda. Global events can easily increase those prices.

There is a global pushback against these risks. The United Nations will attempt to tackle those issues in Santiago, Chile in December 2025. Global trade will continue to be challenged by the US-China contest, while the European Union tries to survive the rising authoritarianism that plunged that region into war in the early 20th century. The G20 and G7 will meet, as will the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

But cybersecurity already challenges even the richest countries. And we have yet to deal with our own breach that disabled the Government.

Closer to home, we'll be adjusting to a new Governor while the UK Parliament continues to explore ways to modify our constitution. This Government last year reiterated its intention to adjust the constitution of Bermuda, though was conspicuously silent on the subject this year.

Navigating these risks requires the focus and discipline our Government has yet to demonstrate.

**Mr. Speaker**

A Government's first priority is to preserve and enhance the well-being of Bermuda and Bermudians. Given the state of the island, it's clear that this Government got distracted and committed itself other matters. Otherwise, it did all this intentionally – and that is too horrifying to imagine.

Instead of dealing with disaster after disaster, the Government has let our families be scattered across the globe, while our savings dwindled and our pay cheques paid for less and less things in Bermuda.

Promises made by this Government, have been broken by this Government. The OBA can fix them. It's time for an election.

Recent by-elections have shown that most Bermudians want to move past this Government.

**Mr. Speaker**

We have to move past the politics of disdain for those who are different. Year after year, we have been told how much we are valued by this Government. Cabinet Ministers have said they don't need our vote, and are confused why anyone who disagrees with them would bother to speak, since they will do the opposite of whatever is stated.

The Government has made it clear it sees the world as split between 'us' and 'them'. And 'them' should either go away or not speak. 'Them' should pay taxes and let the 'us' receive, especially to make up for the past.

**Mr. Speaker**

It's clear spending time on that battle, has distracted the Government from providing for and protecting Bermuda.

The Government spent eight valuable years letting this island slip into this state. This Government had multiple opportunities to change course and chose not to.

For years, the Government reduced the budget for maintaining and upgrading the roads. For years, the budget and manpower for those who police the roads shrunk. The less money and time we invested these issues, the faster they deteriorated.

The buildings that have trees jutting out of them started as buildings that needed only *'a lick of paint'*. Roads that now feel like a ride at Coney Island started as cracks and chips in the asphalt... or were perfectly fine until ripped up and slapped back with neither care nor diligence.

What started as a few patches of grass have become overgrown sidewalks, forcing walkers to share the road with cars and bikes racing by. The absent roads policing started as a few vacancies in the police service.

All this is now a disaster.

Too many authorities told us it's okay to not do anything about those buildings that needed paint. Too many authorities told us it's okay to not do anything about the cracked and chipped roads. Too many authorities told us it's okay to not do anything about the grass growing on footpaths. It's okay when the police reported there's fewer and fewer of them. It's okay when our kids told us they didn't have a teacher in class. It's okay, and you don't need to do anything about it Mr. and Mrs. Government. These aren't big deals, it's all minor.

Promises were made, promises have been broken. The OBA can fix it. It's time for an election.

**Mr. Speaker**

How do we explain the number of derelict buildings? They didn't appear to look like this overnight. They were falling down years ago, with trees growing out of them years before that.

How about \$3.5 billion in debt with \$125 million in interest payments a year, that could pave all our roads in one year. Again, that didn't happen this morning.

How many piles of illegally dumped trash, family houses with plywood over the windows, unusable sidewalks, closed businesses and violence increasing every year. None of this happened overnight.

A distracted Government can't hold people in authority accountable. How many Government members to this day would rather blame the wrongs of the past than accept the conditions of the present?

How many of them shrugged when the parliamentary calendar was manipulated to remove the Throne Speech? Integrity and accountability are key. It's a damning indictment when it's clear the governing party got access to our personal details which we did not share with them.

Bermuda is dying by a thousand cuts, each one explained away or ignored.

Promises made, promises broken. The OBA can fix it. It's time for an election.

**Mr. Speaker**

Conduct on Bermuda's roads has become unsustainable, encouraging the undisciplined amongst us to drive without care. Our standards have slipped across the island.

The kind of conduct that gets a fender-bender in Bermuda, ends with death on the German Autobahn.

There is a universal standard of skilled driving that we must re-establish in Bermuda. We have to be okay with no notifications for drunk driving check points. We have to obey the speed limit and road signs. We have to pay attention to the roads while driving. That's the standard in other countries were we'd like to drive in. Government has promised addressing this for years.

Promises made, promises broken. The OBA can fix it. It's time for an election.

**Mr. Speaker**

The first step to rebuilding Bermuda is overcoming the greatest challenge this Government left for us.

The general sense of powerlessness, which has rotted into apathy and cynicism. We've been fed a steady diet of *'be quiet, do as your told'* for so long, some of us actually believe that's how to get by in Bermuda now.

We've been fed *'you don't deserve a voice'* so we believe we shouldn't speak. We've turned our attention away from the civic participation, or should I say, been pushed away.

And we are so far from having participated in civic discourse and politics, many of us forgot that that is both a right and a duty. Some of us actually believe, and get this, *"white people don't belong in politics"*. Some of us believe that elections don't matter. Some of us have surrendered our hard-won rights. Some of us actually believe—that Bermuda is so feeble, so weak and so lost, that we can't change out the government.

Significant numbers of us no longer believe that politics is for decent, civil exchanges of ideas and the prompt resolution of problems in the community.

**Mr. Speaker**

US President Bill Clinton's Labour Secretary Robert Reich recently said, *"If we allow ourselves to fall into fatalism, or wallow in disappointment, or become resigned to what is rather than what should be, we will lose the long game. The greatest enemy of positive social change is cynicism about what can be changed."*

Bermuda now has a fantastic opportunity at this historic inflection point. We can continue down the road we've been travelling for 20 plus years – or we can navigate in a new direction.

That's what happens when we unite, not against an imagined enemy, but against our common problems.

**Mr. Speaker**

A Roman Stoic philosopher, Seneca once said, *"If one does not know to which port one is sailing, no wind is favourable."*

What is the destination of the good ship, Bermuda? The long game is a Bermuda where new opportunities are being generated everyday by stable families, active community clubs, thriving Bermuda-based and Bermuda-owned businesses, bustling shops, an active nightlife, organized transportation, safe neighbourhoods, affordable food, healthcare and housing, and a financial path to secure pensions and no debt/interest payments.

We can get there through a back to basics approach. Let's make the systems of Government work again. Let's make living in Bermuda easy again.

**Mr. Speaker**

We've got to move past the story of the foreign boogeymen. It has been an incredibly successful political talking point, but it is leading to ruin.

The Government has misled us, over and over again. It is trying to frighten us. How is it right to frighten Bermudians when the Government needs overseas labour?

Didn't the Government say we're going to need 75% of labour on the Fairmont Southampton to come from overseas? Obviously, we're going to need tax experts to staff and run the Corporate Income Tax Authority. How are we supposed to teach new topics in signature schools without overburdening already overworked teachers?

Without immigration, three additional promises made, three additional promises broken.

Firstly, yes, people have used and abused immigration to the detriment of Bermudians. Yes, some people will still try to abuse immigration to enrich themselves and diminish the role and values of the Bermudian community.

Secondly, there never has been nor will there ever be enough born-Bermudians to sustain our population and community. We need people from overseas to permanently join our community, marry into our families and have Bermudian children.

Thirdly, our economy is now so advanced that experienced and skilled specialists are needed to sustain and grow our primary economic driver, the international business sector.

**Mr. Speaker**

We now need to have a mature, insightful discussion about these realities because we know the approach to stigmatise, isolate and reject persons from overseas has only inflicted harm on our community.

To give an example of a successful immigration impact, think of our Portuguese descendent friends and family.

This year we celebrated the 175th anniversary since Portuguese emigrees brought additional depth, variety and richness to our shared culture. Only the unkindest person would say that the Portuguese descendants are not 'real' Bermudians.

History is full of wrongdoing and in their introduction into and successes in Bermuda, we have plenty of stories. But history is not the future – it is, by definition, a thing that has already happened that none of us here today had anything to do with.

I recently was told a story of a Portuguese boy who moved to Bermuda quite young. He made friends and found that he had some skill in football. He played for Dandy Town and attended Dellwood Primary. He spent his whole life on Parsons Road, going to school, packing groceries, and doing what the average Bermudian youth does.



Having qualified to represent Bermuda internationally, he was told he could not play with his teammates overseas because he was not Bermudian. However, he was Bermudian enough to be conscripted into the Bermuda Regiment, yet had to go through hell over high water before he could receive full rights and privileges of being recognised as a Bermudian.

I'm genuinely perplexed as to why, when we have access to Portuguese language, cuisine and culture, that our schools teach French, Spanish and Latin but not Portuguese. A quarter of Bermudians are of Portuguese descent.

There is a dozen more groups of persons from other countries – St. Kitt's and Nevis, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Philippines, Dominican Republic, India, Sri Lanka, Canada, America, the United Kingdom – who have similar stories of enhancing our communities.

To thrive in the future, we will need new friends – not enemies. We are going to have to rid ourselves politically, culturally and economically, of the foreign boogeyman.

***Mr. Speaker***

Let's review, discuss and debate the specifics of this year's Throne Speech. We can describe the Throne Speech as having four themes. First, the Rehash of Old Promises. Second, the Takes the Ideas of Others. Third, Some Of The Ideas Are So Bad, They Must Be Politically Motivated. Fourth, There's A Lot Of Things Just Missing.

***Mr. Speaker***

Yet another year goes by, with yet another promise of a grand unifying strategy to reduce violence. We've been here and heard this before. How is there still gang violence after all these strategies, projects and plans over the last two decades? How many more will this Government employ before it realises that it has to staff and equip the police to prevent, detect and deter crime?

The OBA will provide social services to ensure gang members can be freed from that lifestyle. and we will prioritise community and roads policing. Government promises made, Government promises broken. The OBA can fix it. It's time for an election.

**Mr. Speaker**

It's mind boggling to think we are going to expand the signature school experiment when the Bermuda Union of Teachers is warning us of an impending disaster. This experiment has effectively shifted millions of taxpayers' dollars from social services into consultants' pockets. And distressingly, the proponents of this experiment have failed to realise, our kids are not lab rats. Give the school leaders the authority and resources to run schools. Let teachers teach.

Government promises made, Government promises broken. The OBA can fix it. It's time for an election.

**Mr. Speaker**

Universal healthcare is a pipedream until we have enough of a population to spread healthcare costs. The \$125 million needed to pay for this is being used in interest payments on the burgeoning debt every single year.

The hospital is treating patients in corridors and, very distressing for a first-world international business jurisdiction, we ran out of key medical doctors in the field of oncology. As we hand out more and more health benefits, we don't seem to mention who will pay for them.

We need to address the hospital funding model while reducing the cost of healthcare through targeting excessive charges.

Government promises made, Government promises broken. The OBA can fix it. It's time for an election.

**Mr. Speaker**

The Government is failing as a property developer. Instead of enriching construction company bosses with taxpayer funds, we ought to focus on creating the economic conditions where developing housing is feasible.

Given it's clear that the reduced housing inventory has more to do with the choices of landlords, they clearly have something to say about the whole matter.

The Government's scattered approach to housing has resulted in over \$100 million being spent on affordable housing, no wait, hotel development, no wait, high-end housing – on the same piece of land. And Bermudians rightly take exception to the excuse that the Grand Atlantic failed because opponents didn't want black people on South Shore.

It's across from Dunscombe Road; not even five minutes to Astwood Walk, and Williamsholme Drive, where plenty of black Bermudians live. If this Government wasn't so busy living in the past, it might be able to participate in the present and plan for the future.

Sell the Bermudiana and stop throwing good money after bad. Government promises made, Government promises broken. The OBA can fix it. It's time for an election.

**Mr. Speaker**

A number of proposals within the Throne Speech are clearly taken from others.

In June 2024, The Royal Gazette made a troubling report.

*"In 2010, the Bermuda Census identified 82 people experiencing homelessness. By 2016, that number had risen to 138. As of December 31, 2023, Home [a non-profit charity who initiated these projects] recorded Bermuda's homeless population as 811."*

Our economy has forced Bermudians off-island to the United Kingdom. Can you imagine how many homeless there would be in Bermuda if we didn't have that escape hatch?

Thankfully, Home and its sponsors and donors saw the issue, spent the money, made the connections and conducted the research to address this growing problem. Government thankfully didn't get in the way of their work. But that's very different from doing the work yourself.

The OBA would directly address the causes of homelessness in Bermuda including the landlord-tenant imbalance, property inheritance, making climbing the property ladder easier and increasing the incentives for private enterprise to build.

Government promises made, Government promises broken. The OBA can fix it. It's time for an election.

**Mr. Speaker**

While it's heartening to see that Government will ring-fence tax revenue coming from Corporate Income Tax (CIT), it's frustrating to note it voted against that measure in the House of Assembly when the OBA tabled that amendment. It's also frustrating dealing with the politicking used in this space, instead of reason.

The Tax Reform Commission has yet to issue any reports so it can hardly be said to have recommended anything. Further, there are numerous risks around the CIT that can reduce what we'll earn. It's entirely possible that we will have to pay funds long before we receive them. The Government is implying a promise that we can pay off the debt in ten years. This is the next broken promise.

**Mr. Speaker**

As previously mentioned, many landlords have stopped renting their properties. The landlord-tenant legal relationship is so imbalanced that the landlords risk their investment when they rent. This has removed substantial housing stock from the market.

We see in the news and courts where landlords do rent, they get burnt if the tenant turns out to be taking advantage. We identified this issue and raised it at town halls and in our platform. We appreciate the compliment of co-opting OBA ideas, but there are pieces this Government is missing.

There are myriad reasons landlords don't want to rent, including the legal process, fees and regulatory pressures. If we really want to increase housing stocks and keep rents affordable, we have to address these issues.

**Mr. Speaker**

It is galling to see that this Government is playing games with St. David's again. After multiple Government Members of Parliament permitted dumping medical waste there without consulting the community as well as standing by while St. David's fought back against the closing of a historic school in the community, this Government has promised a '*St. David's Plan*'.

This seems awfully convenient as it takes place after the OBA candidate for St. David's, Maurice Foley, with no government assistance or official position, launched multiple projects to reinforce his community and start the long road to acknowledging St. David's as a full, proper historical treasure unique in all of Bermuda.

The '*St. David's Plan*' was started the day when a community organisation stood up against being abused again. The OBA will finish that fight by giving St. David's its own parish and ascertain how the organisation can better manage its own land.

***Mr. Speaker***

The same can be said of cheering the adoption of a United Nations Convention, or of finally paying attention to youth mental health only after a non-Government independent doctoral student organised multiple public events on the issue. Like Masterworks' adoption and restoration of the historic Superintendent's building in the Botanical Gardens, the Government wilfully ignores an issue, waits for others to address it, and then holds a press conference to take credit.

***Mr. Speaker***

Some of the ideas in the Throne Speech are so bad, they must be solely politically motivated.

The Government seeks to reduce the powers and authorities of the Office of Project Management and Procurement. Streamlining the Code of Practice sounds admirable, but there are already myriad exemptions and loopholes which can render the Code useless. It's difficult to see how getting less oversight and transparency, in a Government notoriously comfortable with the sleight-of-hand and pushing the edge of credulity, will improve anything.

OPMP's powers shouldn't be reduced – they should be audited. Let the facts tell us what needs to be fixed, not our interests.

***Mr. Speaker***

As previously mentioned, the Tax Reform Committee has yet to issue its report. And yet this Government continues to make statements relating to its findings and recommendations. The Committee members could not be blamed if they resign because of the pigeon-holing of their already difficult work. This Government would do well to remember that the Committee is not its servant but its colleague – please stop using them to justify the decisions of this Government before they can present their findings.

The OBA will leave the Tax Commission, and all similar groups, alone to get the job done by a certain date. We will not paint them into a corner by making public announcements about their work.

**Mr. Speaker**

Equally, the Government says that the 2023 cyberattack has driven a number of actions. Yet it is entirely unwilling to share the report into the incident with Parliament and the Joint Select Committee has not been given the chance to undertake the work assigned to it by this Honourable House. The Government has not informed Bermudians and residents what, if anything, was stolen, to what extent nor what we can do to protect ourselves. The Government is clearly executing its own agenda without public scrutiny whatsoever. It seems to be borrowing from Winston Churchill's playbook, where he said, "*Never let a good crisis to waste.*"

If the OBA was to act before the JCS could finish its work, we would publish the necessary reports that influence those decisions. Only where demonstrably necessary, would we redact portions of those reports. That information is the natural property of the public.

**Mr. Speaker**

Easing seniors' ability to work is a powerful pivot from the sad underlying fact that seniors have to work in Bermuda. Despite the multiple accolades the Government gives itself for astute financial stewardship and economic management, the fact that seniors must work to sustain themselves is an indictment on itself.

They must work because they must pay for food. They must work to pay for their healthcare. They must work to secure their housing. In other countries, pensions pay for these expenses.

Pivoting away from this fact is further proof this Government is aware of its failed obligations to the seniors of Bermuda.

The OBA would expand social programmes to reduce the need to work, while seriously addressing the key drivers increasing the cost of living for seniors especially. We will also enable our older citizens to live independently with easier access to health and social services in their communities.

Our seniors can't wait four more years. We definitely need an election.

**Mr. Speaker**

We hope this Government will refrain from continuing its assault on transparency and accountability by amending the Public Access to Information. While they have not made clear their specific actions, previous public statements did not indicate this Government was enthused or supportive of the public access to Government information.

You shouldn't need a privacy commissioner to force the Government to release your information to you.

The OBA would launch a comprehensive open data portal where government financial records, meeting minutes, and performance reports are publicly accessible. This will reduce the amount of information which is accessible only via Public Access to Information requests.

**Mr. Speaker**

The overly complicated and outdated legislative immigration framework continues to enable the Government's anti-foreigner policy. This Government continues to say we have an aging demographic, and we need more people, while doing everything it can to reduce the amount of non-born Bermudians. At some point, the Government must concede that Bermudians can be made by paper as well as by birth – and until they make that turn, all Bermudians will suffer as our population dwindles under the weight of our increasing financial obligations.

The OBA would restart immigration consultation, aimed at identifying and eliminating the risks that immigration poses to born Bermudians. This especially includes significantly increasing the quality of education, to prepare students for the best jobs in trade and services in Bermuda.

**Mr. Speaker**

The Government went after sugar with the infamous sugar tax– now it's going after trans fats. No rational person would disagree with the scientific evidence of the link between trans fat and heart disease, stroke and other life threatening conditions. The problem is that we have yet to see any evidence that this Government has fulfilled its promises in using the sugar tax revenue. Bermuda has no faith that a new health intervention will end in success.

The OBA will collaborate with healthcare professionals and payors to deliver efficient and effective care with streamlined administrative processes to produce favourable health outcomes, including targeting a reduction in chronic illness.

But our first priority will be to axe the sugar tax. Shortly after that, you can expect us to axe the AirBnB tax.

**Mr. Speaker**

Of the 16-page Government's Throne Speech, the first two are self-congratulatory and the last was written by Her Excellency the Governor. In the 12 intervening pages, the Government attempts to convince us that they have many ideas. We've addressed some notions at length, but we should address what was missing.

In 2023, the Aging Demographics report indicated that our workforce is reducing just as our seniors are increasing to nearly a quarter of people. The Government said, *"Bermuda is facing a demographic crisis that requires strong decisive leadership and urgent action to be taken."* The Government said it will *"aggressively"* implement initiatives to *"increase Bermuda's working population"*.

The only action they've taken is them saying we need more working population, but let's be scared of those that come from overseas. How will we get the people from overseas to volunteer in our schools and charities, keep our clubs open by joining, coaching, start charities, etc.

Given the crisis, its urgency and Government's commitment to *"aggressively"* attend to it, I'm shocked to see no mention of it in the Throne Speech. Undoubtedly, it is a genuine crisis and incredibly difficult to resolve given the Government's stance on non-born Bermudians. But this is a crisis of the Government's making, having implemented disastrous immigration policies over the last 20 years.

We definitely need an election to address the issue.

**Mr. Speaker**

In last year's Throne Speech, seniors were barely mentioned and the youth were clearly being courted. This year, it's vice-versa. While we can't be sure why the extreme pendulum swing of focus from youth to seniors, it's nonetheless disconcerting. While seniors are a more reliable voting block, the youth are quite literally the future of our country. Their multiple concerns are clearly being ignored. And it appears to be to attract votes from a key demographic.

We will not neglect the youth. We will encourage youth employment by cutting payroll tax for businesses that hire young Bermudians. We will ensure creative spaces.



**Mr. Speaker**

The Government proposes to add more powers to itself to “*tackle the challenge of derelict residential units*”. This seems to be a case where the Government should take the plank out of its own eye, before removing the speck from another.

Bermudians buy homes, fix them up, maintain them and take pride in them. Then the Government doesn’t maintain its own properties within those neighbourhoods. Vegetation, potholes, cane grass, rodent infestations on Government land, then reduce the value of that private property. The Government would do well to take care of its own obligations before reminding others of theirs.

**Mr. Speaker**

Simultaneously, the Government would do well to remember that the reason for a lot of derelict properties is because the Government’s archaic and slow probate system means that it takes years for families to take possession of inherited properties. So those properties deteriorate under the custody of Government.

The cause of derelict homes is a dysfunctional Government process, and the Government’s solution to reduce derelict homes is to take the derelict homes that they themselves caused to be derelict. It’s hard not to see intent in such a callous arrangement.

The Government should just mow its own lawns, facilitate the speedy resolution of probate matters and then enforce the pre-existing laws that allow Government to demand the care of roadside hedges and the like.

**Mr. Speaker**

In previous years, the Government mentioned infrastructure. This year, as the roads fall into disrepair, the Government has been conspicuously silent on the matter. It has also failed to mention the plan for the bridges. Especially the Bailey Bridge – a temporary structure which is now getting suspiciously bowed.

And having picked a fight with the United Kingdom over specific provisions in the proposed cannabis laws, it seems convenient now to drop the matter entirely. If the Government authentically meant to facilitate the legal production and consumption of cannabis, including cafes, why is it now silent on the matter?

Equally, Caricom does not feature in any meaningful way. Despite hailing the project as the vision of Dame Jennifer Smith, the Government seems to view that commitment as not worthy of a second mention in a Throne Speech.

The Government not mentioning these matters this year whatsoever, begs the question whether it ever considered these matters as important.

***Mr. Speaker***

So, all of this combined, Mr. Speaker, now 75% of our neighbours and family, have considered or are considering leaving Bermuda.

They broke it, we can fix it. It is definitely time for an election.

***Mr. Speaker***

Undoubtedly the question will be raised, what would the OBA do differently? Put simply put, the OBA would take care of its responsibilities to the public first, before trying to intervene in the private lives of the public. Pave the roads, make sure the single asphalt plant and incinerator always works, balance the financials, pick up the trash – do the things that people expect Government to do well.

More of our ideas can be read at [www.oba.bm/platform](http://www.oba.bm/platform).

***Mr. Speaker***

Bermuda is locked in a storm of this Government's making. There is no more meat on the bones of this Government. It is now a square peg trying to get into a round hole.

We can end this storm and like every hurricane in our history, we can come together and fix what is broken.

The way to fix it is an election.



One Bermuda Alliance

To view online go to: [oba.bm/reply](http://oba.bm/reply)

