

Carl: We are going to be talking with Calvin Kemp here and the project he is associated with.

Calvin: With respect to the Channel House Resort Club, Carl, about four weeks ago I signed a contract with Mike Bass, the owner, to manage the property and also to sell the club memberships on timeship basis. Presently we are developing a program - the marketing and sales, and that includes the on-sight and off-sight marketing program. As Mike Bass indicated, he was the first person that I know who introduced time-sharing to Freeport. In 1975 when I was with First Atlantic Realty as Manager of Resales and Project Development, Mike came into our offices and explained the project to us and gave us the material and in fact asked us to provide a sales program for him. Unfortunately, at the time we were mostly into land sales and were going pretty well and it was difficult to attract salesmen out of that program which they knew so well and were making money at, to move into something that was completely new to them and which was somewhat difficult to explain, so we never really got into marketing this property. However, in the last year time-sharing has taken on a new attraction for realtors in Freeport and the Bahamas, mainly because of the government's new land-sales policy with respect to the restriction of sales of undeveloped land to foreigners, so the time-share unit which is developed property related to vacation in the Bahamas is mostly about foreign people is concerned. It has become a very attractive proposition and so after a few months of negotiations, Mike and I finally signed a contract about a month ago, and as I have said, we are now in the process of developing and hope to start the program on June 4th, which is about two weeks from now.

Carl: Calvin, tell us a little bit about your background - where you came from, what island, where you were raised, etc.

Calvin: Well, I was born in Eleuthera, Carl, and went to two high schools in Nassau.

Carl: What part of Eleuthera did you come from?

Calvin: Alice Town - which was named after my great, great/g^{great}grandmother, ~~who lived in that town, and~~ My family was the first people who lived in that town, and I went to school in Nassau, and after school in Nassau, I went to school in Canada - St. Francis Xavier in Nova Scotia. I studied and came back and worked for the government, in the Ministry of Works, mostly in highway design primarily, in building of roads. I ~~was~~ transferred to the Dept. of Statistics as I had done some work in Economics and Business Administration, and subsequently I left the government services and came to Freeport in 1972, and was Credit Manager at the Bahama Princess Hotel, and I worked myself in that hotel to the Accounts Dept. as Accounts Analyst, in charge of 1,000 computer operations there, having spent it with IBM in Miami and Jacksonville, and then I became I became Special Project Manager, and also just before I left, the Personnel Director of the Princess Hotels, which included Xanadu, Bahama Princess and the Princess Towers with a 1400 staff at the time. After I left there, I went to Holiday Inn as Assistant Manager for a short while in '74 and '75, and in '75 got involved in the real estate business. Subsequently,

(Interview with Calvin Kemp)

Calvin Kemp

I was Manager of the Resale Dept. for the First Atlantic Realty, and since then I have been in the real estate business ever since, except for - even while I operated a night club in the Lucayan Beach Hotel which cost me a lot of money.

Carl:

Tell us, Calvin, what future do you see for Freeport. ~~XXXXXX~~ You saw it come up from nothing twenty-five years ago - this place was nothing but bush and pine trees and now it is about to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary, and it is the second city of the Bahamas and it is thriving and booming apparently, so tell us a little bit about what you think.

Calvin:

Well, Carl, since I came here in '72, which was not the best time - I think we were just on the side of that time, I think the peak time was '69 and '70 - ~~XXXXXX~~ and started sliding right after that - I came here when it was on the slide, and as you know, in 1975 it was really the worst time, because according to some statistics that you and I worked on and compiled together, the marketing program that we did for the Promotion Board, 46.5% of all the hotel rooms in this area were closed; subsequent to that there had been some improvement in the Ministry of Tourism and the Lucayan Promotion Board had made some efforts to improve the product here, to improve the attitude of the locals who were involved in the tourist industry, the Port Authority had begun to do some things so far as providing some interstructure to do some building and the Development has taken a fresh look at Freeport as the second city, and they recognize that it has the potential that no other area in the Bahamas, including Nassau, has. It is a well-layed out, carefully planned town; it is new and there is a lot of area yet to be developed. I look at this town I understand, ~~XXXXXX~~ it is planned for some 600,000 people, and I know that the population now is something like 30,000, so this town has reached only 5% of its potential, and that to me is fantastic, having looked at what has happened in the last twenty-five years, and I know that what has happened is a lot less than was planned for the twenty-five year period, but nevertheless there is a lot that has happened, and I see a number of people from outside the country coming in - Europeans, Americans, Canadians, English people - I see some plans for some large scale industrial and ecological development - the new electrical auto companies coming in, and I understand there are plans to build a new pharmaceutical plant -BORCO, I understand, might have plans to expand their refinery, probably a chemical plant; I understand that the oil facility might be expanded, even with putting up a small refinery up there, so I am excited, and also part of that whole excitement has to do with the time-share concept, which I think has great potential here, and provides an outlet in the area of real estate that is now somewhat dampened by the new policy. Not that I am criticising the new policy; it is having an effect on the realtors, but which slack I think will definitely be taken up by this concept, and I think this town has tremendous potential and it is to the interest of everybody -to the Grand Bahama Port Authority, the Development

(Interview with Calvin Kemp)

Calvin: Company, the government and the people themselves who live here should begin to explore the opportunities that they have to become involved in the growth of this town in the future.

Carl: Calvin, one more question. I lived in the Bahamas twenty-five years, but I notice that the integration of the races in the Bahamas is a much smoother affair than it is in any other place that I know - whether it is Florida or New York or Chicago or any other place, and I would like to hear your comments on that.

Calvin: Well, in a lot of the Bahama islands the whites and the blacks have grown up together. In some areas where there has been a concentration of whites or a concentration of blacks, no whites, there has been that lack of contact which created some problems. Of course, I believe that the old United Bahamian Party government for some reason did not encourage integration, but that has changed because of the good sense of the Bahamian people among the whites and the blacks, and they recognize that their futures are tied together and rather than fighting one another -and there have been times when there has been conflicts - not any violent conflicts, but there have been some conflicts over race. Nevertheless, I believe that the people recognize sometime ago that their future is tied together and rather than kill each other off, they found it sensible to try to relate as human beings and work together and I think that the politics of the last ten years have indicated that the formerly primarily black Progressive Liberal Party - the PLP - has gone out of its way to attract our white people to come in - our white Bahamians to come into the party. They have made some tremendous efforts and strides in Spanish Wells, which both of us knew was the sebastian of white supremacy in the country. They have made tremendous strides in Abaco, and in Marsh Harbour, where the PLP now has a white Bahamian Senator - Senator Burling Keith (sp?) sitting in the Senate, which years ago probably would have been unthinkable. I have seen these people sit there and become excited and involved, and they are accepted and it is also true that the blacks and the whites now get along fairly well; that is not to say there is an occasional conflict, and more often than not, the conflict is more economical than racial while some people see that ^{some} ~~make~~ whites than blacks have more opportunity than blacks. There is a ratio of 6 to 1 of blacks to whites natives in the country, and of course that number may affect relationship, but basically, I think it is just the good sense of the people in the last couple of years recognizing that they need to live together and make positive contributions rather than fighting

Carl: Okay, Calvin, thank you very much. I know that I always enjoyed living in the Bahamas. I never felt any race pressure here from the black people, and I hope they never felt any race pressure from me.