



Boris Becker: Former German tennis star has appeared in court on tax evasion charges

Bermuda boring? Well, try living in Monaco!

by JONATHAN KENT

PEOPLE living in Bermuda need to fly away regularly to avoid getting bored, a reporter told a global audience of millions of the BBC World Service this week.

Patrick Middleton, an English reporter based in Nice in southern France, made his comments to Bermuda last July during a Wednesday morning programme. He was being interviewed about the case of former tennis star Boris Becker, who used to reside in the principality of Monaco to keep some his tax bill.

Three times Wimbledon champion Becker appeared in court this week in Germany, where he was facing charges of tax evasion. Yesterday, he was handed a two-year suspended jail sentence and fined around \$300,000.

During the course of the interview, Mr. Swisher asked why Monaco was the tax haven of choice for so many of the rich and why not Bermuda, for example?

His reply implied that Monaco was boring and he seemed to imply that Bermuda life could be dull as well.

When contacted, Mr. Middleton said he had never intended to relate that Bermuda was an uninteresting place to live.

"No way did I say Bermuda was boring," said Mr. Middleton from his home in France.

"In fact, I said Bermuda was a very nice and attractive place, but people who live there have told me that they feel the need to get away to somewhere like New York now and again.

"In fact, I went to Bermuda not long ago and stayed at Elbow Beach. I had a great time down there."

He went on to describe Monaco - just up the coast from where he lives - as being boring.

"There are lots of people living there just for tax reasons and the place is incredibly boring," said Mr. Middleton.

"There's nothing to do. You see people there walking their dogs and getting really downcast. In fact, the whole of the South of France is

'Fools and children': Scott slams his Berkeley critics

by JONATHAN KENT

WORKS & Engineering Minister Alex Scott has rubbished claims that the Berkeley Institute project is a year behind schedule.

Mr. Scott said he was still hopeful children could start in the secondary school on the intended target date of September next year - even if some blocks of the \$68-million project had not been completed.

And he said work was being stepped up with more people than ever, around 160 in total, now working on the site. More sub-contractors might be brought in to speed things up further, he added.

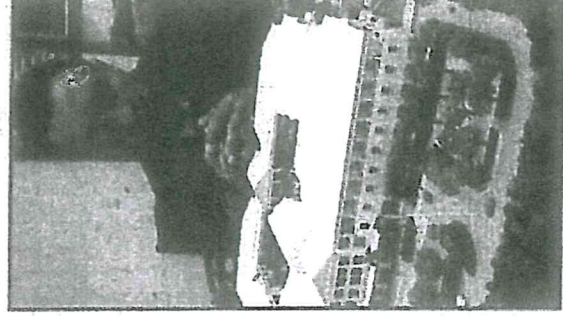
A variety of factors, such as a late start and delays in deliveries of con-

struction materials, meant the project was indeed behind schedule, conceded Mr. Scott.

But he added that delays were not unusual on such large construction projects and that any cost overrun was unlikely to exceed five per cent of the target budget.

Yesterday's Royal Gazette published quotes from anonymous "construction experts" who claimed it was unlikely that the school would be completed until at least September, 2004, 12 months behind schedule.

In response, Mr. Scott said yester-



Alex Scott, pictured with a model of the new Berkeley Institute

day: "I have a background in design and when I read that story, one specific thought came to my mind: 'Fools and children' should not see unfinished work'. That is two about Berkeley."

And the Minister appeared irritated by the comment in the Gazette report that "little had changed" since the paper had last photographed the site in July this year. He dismissed that as "a half-baked notion".

He went on to explain that sufficient blocks might be ready for the school to open next September, provided an occupancy certificate was granted.

"The project is a large one but it's not one large unit, it's a series of

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Senior lost property unfairly says DPP lawyer

Battling John scores a moral victory but he's run out of cash

by News Editor JONATHAN KENT

JOHN Nathaniel Darrell is a 64-year-old veteran of a battle against cancer, has limited resources and believes he has been cheated out of his property.

Even a lawyer from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, who studied details of his long-running, agreed that Mr. Darrell had been "unfairly dispossessed of his land".

Yet after numerous efforts to reclaim the Southampton property that had been in his family since the 19th century, he has now come to the stage where there is little else he can do to right the wrongs of the past, besides taking out a civil case that he cannot afford.

In effect, the DPP lawyer's report amounts to solely a moral victory for Mr. Darrell.

In today's *Mid-Ocean News*, Mr. Darrell has taken out a two-page advertisement, featuring many of the documents he has accumulated during the four decades or so that he has been fighting to reclaim his property.

Mr. Darrell has written to politicians, the Governor, the police and even the Queen during the course of his 40-year legal battle with the Government.

The cost of numerous unsuccessful court battles to reclaim the property he said was unjustifiably taken from him has used up almost all of the retired stonemason's financial resources. Mr. Darrell believed that when the Riviera Estate Road was built, it went through his property without his permission.

Anthony Blackman, the DPP lawyer who studied Mr. Darrell's case last year, said he had no doubt Mr. Darrell had been the victim of "professional negligence", particularly when a plan produced in 1932 named a non-existent person, Benjamin Darrell, as the owner of the

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Picture: Tamell Simons

Artist Vernon Chisno with "Copper Tops", the pair of tables to be constructed from recycled wood and copper to aid the Anglican Cathedral in today's fundraising auction.

Artist Vernon is delighted to aid Cathedral fund-raiser

by HEATHER WOOD

WHEN asked to participate in *Building the Future: A Celebration of Art*, a fund-raising auction for the Anglican Cathedral that takes place today, artist Vernon Chisno was intrigued for a variety of reasons.

The challenge presented - to produce original works using pieces of copper from the cathedral's old roof - agreed with his views on conservation and recycling, while the idea that he might assist in the restoration of one of the

Housing policy 'abysmal failure': Dunkley

by JONATHAN KENT

THE Government's housing policy has been an "abysmal and abysmal failure" which has seen the waiting list for emergency housing grow over the past four years, Shadow Health & Family Services Minister Michael Dunkley said yesterday.

Mr. Dunkley gave a cautious welcome to moves by new Housing Minister Senator David Burch to address some of the problems at the stricken Bermuda Housing Corporation.

He said this week's press conference in which Sen. Burch had promised Government would sue contractors who had been overpaid by the BHC was a start, but much more needed to be done - and quickly.

The revelation by Sen. Burch that many BHC contracts were verbal raised serious questions about why previously established practices had been changed, said Mr. Dunkley.

And the Shadow Minister also expressed concern over why BHC-built condos in Warwick remained empty while the number of those in need of affordable housing continued to grow.

"It's all well and good to sue the contractors, but it's not as if they walked into the Housing Corporation offices and took the money out of the safe - they were given the money," said Mr. Dunkley.

"If the Government is going after the contractors, let's hope they are also going after every single person who did not conduct business as it should have been done.

"Don't get me wrong, I am in full support of the police and their inquiry into the BHC, but at the end of the day justice must be seen to be done right down the line.

"Surely the responsibility goes right up the chain of command, the general manager, the board, the Minister and it goes right up to the Premier. I feel there are too many people taking no responsibility. You can't just shift the blame."

Mr. Dunkley, who first raised allegations of corruption at the BHC when he described the publicly funded organisation as "Bermuda's Enron" in the House of Assembly in March, was particularly concerned about the issue of verbal contracts.

When asked how much money had been overpaid, Sen. Burch said: "My assessment so

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Senior 'lost property unfairly'

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of the Darrell family's property. "I've been ready to go ahead with further action for a year now," said Mr. Darrell. "It seems that the police and Mr. Blackman agree with what I'm saying, but everyone just keeps passing me on to the next person. "Nobody wants to deal with this, but the issue of land ownership is very important."

Asked if he intended to pursue a civil case, Mr. Darrell said: "No, there's no money there and who do I fight?"

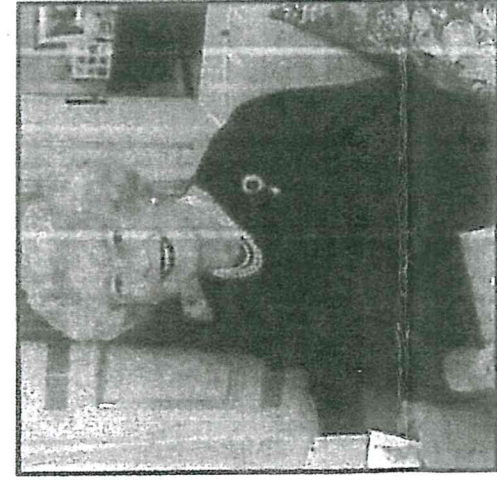
Mr. Blackman's work came after Mr. Darrell claimed to have been the victim of fraud. But no evidence of fraud could be found, so no criminal case was brought.

Mr. Darrell claimed there had been a cover-up over land he alleged had been stolen from his grandfather Emilius Darrell in 1962.

In 1979, a survey by Robert H. Clarke showed that the land allegedly owned by the non-existent Benjamin Darrell, Horace Cooper and the Government was in fact owned by Mr. Darrell and that the Riviera Estate Road had cut through a portion of his property.

Three years later, Mr. Darrell discovered two plans at the Department of Planning, both of which confirmed the Government's ownership of the property in question - in conflict with all the deeds and plans in existence.

In his report, dated August 8 last year, Mr. Blackman concluded: "There is no doubt in my mind that the virtual complainant has



Queen Elizabeth: She acknowledged Mr. Darrell's letter to Buckingham Palace

been unfairly dispossessed of his land.

"From the documents submitted, I am of the opinion that the Riviera Estate Road does in fact pass through the complainant's property."

Mr. Blackman added that there was "evidence of shoddy work by the professional surveyors and some attorneys" and he went on: "What is obvious to me is professional negligence and a blatant breach of the Rules of Natural Justice."

Mr. Blackman found no evidence of fraudulent conduct and concluded that Mr. Darrell's case was a civil matter.

He added: "Considering the amount of litigation that has already taken place and the

financial status of the complainant, I am afraid that unless he receives some gratuitous payment / compensation, his efforts to keep what appears to be his (the property) were all in vain, indeed a sad situation when one considers the quest by the Darrells to own their share of 'the littlerock' and the offending individuals have all passed."

Mr. Darrell took his case to Bermuda Police Service, alleging fraud by the Government.

In his report to the Commissioner of Police, dated June 5 last year, Det. Insp. David Cart wrote: "Mr. Darrell is an old man who has been pursuing his case for years. He is sincere in his claim."

"Whilst I cannot find a criminal offence worthy of investigation, there does appear to be some merit in his claim from a civil point of view. It certainly appears that the Riviera Estate Road was built over his property and the Government cannot or will not produce documents substantiating their ownership of the land they claim."

"Mr. Darrell is virtually penniless, having spent everything he owned to prove his point. He cannot afford to take out further court actions, which could drag on for years."

"The only solution I can see is for the Government Planning Department to undertake a full review of his claim, and the plans which he disputes, to determine once and for all whether he was disadvantaged by incorrect judgments in the courts and if he should be compensated in some way by the Government."

Mr. Darrell's documents appear on Pages 8 & 9.

Scott hits back at his Berkeley critics

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blocks, A, B, C, D, E and J," said Mr. Scott. "The so-called experts quoted by the Gazette did not break it down like this."

"We hope we may be able to complete some of these areas to the degree that we can get our occupancy certificate. If we can get that by May or June of next year then we will meet with the Education Ministry and see if they are prepared to introduce students to the site on time. That is our intention at this point in time."

"However, it may be that not all the students will be introduced at one time."

"If we look at major office building projects in the city, there have been cases where staff have moved in before the final details and landscaping have been finished. This is not unusual."

Mr. Scott said the project had started six weeks to two months late and had faced added challenges from factors such as last year's Sept.

