

Marcus Jones

Pembroke West Constituency 19

Roll Out Speech – September 1, 2020

Today marks the culmination of a political journey that began as a teenager, born and raised in Somerset whose only exposure to politics was through the Progressive Labour Party. I did not know anyone who sided with the other party in my neighborhood and like a fanatic follower of English football (Go Man United) we never changed our allegiance, which included our politics.

So it was quite natural for me to jump on that band wagon and espouse the ideals of all the PLP personalities that I had looked up to through my adult years. But I have taught my children, to be critical thinkers, ask questions and don't settle for the status quo. I followed my own advice and after some serious soul searching I realized that I could no longer be a standard bearer for a party who by its political posturing demonstrated that it put black, Bermudian working class people above everyone else. I believe that was necessary for a racially divided 1960 Bermuda, where persons within my community had been disenfranchised from the political and economic process. But with the strides that have been made, a predominantly black political party that has been in power for almost 20 years, black business ownership that would be the envy of our brothers and sisters in the US and the percentage of highly educated black Bermudians that reside on our island, the victim mentality that the establishment was keeping us back and the reference that the sins of slavery defined us was too much for me to bear.

I wanted to be a part of an alliance of community minded, fiscally responsible and forward thinking people, who have sincere concerns for the hardships of its residents and believed in advocating for the vulnerable and disadvantaged. A party that is inclusive, embracing Bermuda's diversity of people, provides opportunity for everyone to succeed. A party that puts all Bermudians first, not just a certain sector of the community based on ethnicity, class or economic status.

So that "Come to Jesus" moment led me to the One Bermuda Alliance. The list of values that I have mentioned is what this party aspires to be. This party has not

always reflected the ideals of its mandate outlined in its name and enshrined in its constitution, which is to strive to create an environment both in perception and reality, a **ONE BERMUDA**. That is reflected in our theme for this election, **WE WILL DO BETTER** which demonstrates humility in admitting past shortcomings and a commitment to improve on our performance as parliamentarians both individually and as a party.

This brings me to the fine people in Pembroke West, who I am soliciting for support to be the representative of Constituency #19. On the door step, you have told me about the poor conditions of Spanish Point Road and the need for some major clean-up of old discarded boats and the like just off of the Spanish Point Boat Club. You have impressed upon me the need for a future economic plan for a post COVID19 Bermuda, a public education system that provides equal quality access to every boy and girl and the removal of divisive political rhetoric that is common place in this arena.

As the OBA's proposed candidate I commit to addressing these concerns of yours and by God's help I know I will make a difference in Pembroke West and Bermuda as a whole.