



Central Manchester Member of Parliament's QUARTERLY REPORT TO CONSTITUENTS

Peter Bunting - Member of Parliament for Central Manchester

Issue No. 4 • October 2008

Dear Constituents,

I am pleased to present my fourth quarterly report as your Member of Parliament, covering the period July to September, 2008. Towards the end of the quarter I was appointed Opposition Spokesman on National Security and Electoral Affairs. While this is a heavy responsibility, I welcome the opportunity to help solve what is the most serious challenge facing Jamaica today. This is especially so for the parish of Manchester, where the murder rate has increased by an astounding 150% so far this year.

PARLIAMENT



Opposition Leader Portia Simpson Miller (seated 2nd left) with Spokespersons Council. Seated from left: Robert Pickersgill, Peter Bunting, Angela Brown-Burke and Noel Arscott. Standing from left: Natalie Neita-Headley, Ian Hayles, Colin Fagan, Phillip Paulwell, Anthony Hylton, Basil Waite, Wykeham McNeil and Mark Golding.

The main issues debated in The House during the quarter included the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between CARIFORUM nations and the European Union, the government's new proposed crime fighting bills, and the impact of the United States' financial crisis on the Jamaican economy. On the issue of the EPA, I opposed the government's view that the Opposition, and other critics of Jamaica proceeding hastily with this trade partnership, are "mendicants". The Opposition maintained that certain aspects of the EPA, including the MFN Clause and WTO Plus provisions, leave Jamaica's local markets vulnerable, and militate against our country's ability to break dependence on commodities. The government moved to sign the EPA, without any alteration to these terms, despite the warnings of the Opposition and trade experts from our region and Europe.

The Opposition also warned that Jamaica was not immune to the global economic crisis and warned the Government not to persist with the ostrich-like approach to this serious threat.

CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF)

During the quarter, several of our planned development projects were implemented with funding received from the CDF.

- Agricultural Assistance, benefiting 62 small farmers, costing \$430,000
- Constituency-wide Drain Cleaning, employing 85 constituents, costing \$1.4M.
- Road patching in Congo Town and Comfort Road areas of Royal Flat, costing \$1.5M.
- Secondary and Tertiary school grants, benefiting 260 students, costing \$2.5M.
- Housing Material Assistance, benefiting 352 constituents affected by Hurricane Dean, costing \$5M.

All of these initiatives proved timely in respect of the demands of the hurricane season and the new school year. Projects and their associated beneficiary evaluation are implemented by government agencies such as the Ministry of Housing, the SDC and the Parish Council, and not by the MP.

The table below outlines the CDF allocations by category for 2008 - 2009:

PROJECT CATEGORY	TOTAL ALLOCATION	PROJECT CATEGORY	TOTAL ALLOCATION
1. EMERGENCIES & WELFARE RESPONSE	\$2.0 M	6. DRAIN CLEANING & ROAD REPAIR	\$10 M
2. SOCIAL (INDIGENT) HOUSING	\$2.0 M	7. EDUCATION	\$10.3 M*
3. HOUSING MATERIAL ASSISTANCE	\$6.3 M	8. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	\$1.45 M**
4. AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT	\$3.75 M	9. PROJECT MANAGEMENT/CONSULTANCY	\$1.5 M
5. SPORTS	\$2.7 M	TOTAL	\$40M

*includes Anna Miller Basic School Construction (\$7M) not yet approved;
**not yet submitted for approval. Check website for more detailed project descriptions.

Central Manchester Member of Parliament's QUARTERLY REPORT TO CONSTITUENTS

PAGE 2

Issue No. 4 • October 2008

Resource Centre

The Central Manchester Constituency Resource Centre remained active during the summer months and the first month of the school year. We continue to accommodate on average, 16 constituents per day who utilise the centre for Computer Basics evening classes, job seeking, research on government services and homework. It is the efforts of our volunteers and support staff which keep the centre a success.

Local Government

In the last quarter I was invited to the Manchester Parish Council to participate in discussions to remedy the **illegal vending** situation in areas near the Mandeville Arcade popularly called "*the Bronx*". The Bronx area had become overcrowded, lacked necessary sanitary facilities and seemed to be facilitating criminal activity. Mayor Ramsay, the Councillors and I agreed on a stall demolition, cleaning and relocation exercise which saw Bronx vendors moving to appropriate areas of the Mandeville Market & Arcade, the erection of a bus shed as well as a reduction in congestion in the market's environs. A clear pathway was made from the former Bronx area to additionally constructed bathrooms in the Arcade. Importantly, a police post is in its final stage of construction to ensure a safe and orderly commercial district.



MP Bunting, Mayor Brenda Ramsay (second right) and councillors discuss responses to illegal vending in Mandeville at a Parish Council press conference.

N.W. Manley, Cultural Explosion Concert and Georges Valley Corner League



Left: from left Custos of Manchester Hon. Dr. Gilbert Allen, MP Bunting, guest lecturer Arnold Bertram and MP Wykeham McNeill at N.W. Manley's birthday celebrations. **Centre:** The Nexus Choir performs during Independence concert. **Right:** MP Bunting greets participants in Georges Valley Corner League.

On a lighter note, I was happy to be involved in three important recreational activities in Central Manchester. I participated in the annual commemoration of the birthday of **National Hero** The Right Excellent Norman Washington Manley at his birthplace in Roxborough on July 4. I co-hosted the Pablos-sponsored **Mandeville Cultural Explosion** concert at the Manchester High School during the Emancipation and Independence period, which was highlighted by the Nexus Choir's stellar performances. The **Georges Valley Corner League Football** competition is now fully underway.

I was able to meet with over 350 constituents in my regular office hours, and scores of others as I traveled throughout the constituency.

One year has now passed since you afforded me the privilege of being your Parliamentary representative. It has been a pleasure living in Central Manchester and getting to know so many truly special constituents.

Sincerely,

