

Young Jamaica demands immediate retraction of Mayor's Statement

Young Jamaica is furious and outraged at the ignorant and callous comments of Mayor of Savanna-la-Mar, Bertel Moore, at a recent sitting of the parish council.

We consider any suggestion that, members of the security forces ought to shoot first and ask questions later reckless, irresponsible and beneath the dignity of the office of Mayor. Our outrage is set against the backdrop of a history of extrajudicial killings in this country, where decent law abiding citizens are often gunned down in questionable circumstances by our security forces. This is being done in a fail bid to curtail this monster called crime, which has been allowed to meander endlessly by this PNP government. The Mayor's unfortunate comments reflect the general desperation and frustration which exists in the country as it relates to the national security portfolio. Peter Bunting has been an abject failure, without any clear plans or any control whatsoever over this monster which has been holding our citizens at ransom. Mayor Moore's comment is a further testament to the complete breakdown in the confidence of our citizens that the government can provide credible and legitimate solutions to the crime problem. With as many as in excess of one hundred (100) such killings since the start of this year alone, it is a fallacy to suggest that turning police guns on civilians is a credible crime strategy. Further, we demand that the Mayor immediately withdraw his ill-advised and unsolicited advice to the members of the force, and apologize to the people of Westmoreland or resign from his post immediately. We are pleased to see that the commanding officer, Assistant Commissioner Warren Clarke, has rejected the Mayor's proposal as contrary to the rules of good policing. Still, this situation underscores the serious consideration which must be given to the quality of leadership being offered in parish councils across the island. We urge both political parties to lift the standards of their local government candidate. Young Jamaica yearns to see more educated and transformational leaders in these councils. We also urge the Minister of Local Government and Community Development to move with urgency to publish a revised code of conduct to guide the behaviours and deportment of parish councillors.

The time has come to elevate the quality of political leadership being offered to Jamaican citizens.