

This is the Expert Report of Quito Swan containing 85 pages not including cover pages, filed with the Commission Secretariat electronically on October 12, 2020. The report references as footnotes documents that have been filed by the undersigned separately with the Commission but forms part of this Report.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Quito Swan' written in a cursive style.

Quito Swan

Historic Land Grabs in Bermuda: St. David's, World War II and the US Base
Bermuda Government Commission of Inquiry into Historic Land Losses
Quito Swan, Ph.d

Background

On October 31, 2019, Premier of Bermuda, the Honorable E. David G. Burt, JP, MP appointed a Commission to inquire into historic losses of land in Bermuda. Under the direction of the Honorable Justice Norma Wade-Miller, OBE, JP, the Commission was given the charge to: “inquire into historic losses of citizens’ property in Bermuda through theft of property, dispossession of property, adverse possession claims, and/or such other unlawful or irregular means by which land was lost in Bermuda;” “collect and collate any and all evidence and information available relating to the nature and extent of such historic losses of citizens’ property;” “prepare a list of all land to which such historic losses relate;” and to “identify any persons, whether individuals or bodies corporate, responsible for such historic losses of citizens’ property.”

In the spring of 2021, the Commission contracted professional historians Theodore Francis and Quito Swan to conduct research and present evidence about this critical issue. The Commission had found that “allegations had been made that significant numbers of Bermudan citizens were either deprived of their land or were under compensated.” The period under question was “the twentieth Century, and in particular events around Tuckers Town and during WWII for military purposes.” Prior to being contracted, we were initially asked to submit a report in a month. However, as published scholars of Bermudian, Caribbean, and Africana history with international repute, were of the expert opinion that a project of this nature—one that had largely been marginalized in the public and academic domain and possessed limited secondary literature—would need extensive archival research.

We constructed this project based on the following questions: What were the nature of communities before the alleged land grabs occurred? Why did the alleged land grabs occur?

Who benefited from these grabs? What were the possible social, economic, and political rationale and impacts of the alleged land grabs? How did communities of residents respond to the land grabs? What is the relationship between these historic land seizures and systems of colonialism, racism, segregation and political power; as well as countervailing community-led expressions of environmental justice and sociopolitical activism? How do we define “historic land losses?”

We mapped out an initial research agenda that included travel to archives across the United States, London, and Bermuda. However, significant travel, legal and health restrictions due to COVID-19 severely impacted our ability to do so (numbers of repositories remain closed). This included Bermuda’s National Archives, which were closed to the public until late June. That being said, given our own personal archives, our ability to access digital repositories (such as the Bermuda National Library’s digitized copies of the *Royal Gazette* and the *Bermuda Recorder*), claims submitted to the COI regarding land grabs and the electronic transfer of hundreds of documents remarkably scanned and electronically sent to us since June by archivist Karla Ingemann at the Bermuda National Archive, our collective report is based on months of research and the scouring of thousands of pages of primary documents. Hence, we are confident in our finds.

In July 2014, Governor to Bermuda George Fergusson stated that

The compulsory purchases and other compulsory land transfers related to US naval and aviation requirements during the Second World War clearly disrupted communities and the Bermuda natural landscape. Compensation arrangements were made. Both of the major historic compulsory purchases which were highlighted in the debate—the purchases in Tucker’s Town in the 1920s and the purchases for military purposes during the Second World War—appear to have been completed broadly in accordance with the normal principles of compulsory purchase for public objectives, with measures in place to help ensure fair prices. In neither of these cases do I consider that there is a specific enough case that injustices were done that would merit the establishment of a Commission now.¹

¹ Governor G. Fergusson “Messages from the Governor” July 11, 2014. Official Hansard Report, Bermuda House of Assembly, 2652, 77.

Governor Fergusson's comments do not speak to the imbalanced nature of power dynamics that existed between the residents of Tucker's Town and St. David's islanders and the Bermuda, British Governments that facilitated the process. Also, *the determination of whether a land grab should be classified as such should not be decided solely on the proof of legality of transfer of property.* This critical perspective informs this report, which, written by Swan, is focused on St. David's and circumstances that led to the building of the US Army and Naval base in the island.

St. David's, World War II and the US Base

This report finds that the building of the United States military bases in Bermuda during World War II was facilitated by a discriminatory and irregular land dispossession in St. David's Island and surrounding areas orchestrated by a matrix of White internationalism—British colonialism, US imperialism, and Bermuda's oligarchy. This uneven process with consistent racist overtones consistently pitted the will and power of British colonial officials, US military authorities, and the island's white oligarchy against the desires of a small community of largely black Bermudians of African and Native American heritage who possessed limited economic, political, and social power. As such this process (the negotiations, media coverage, passing of Acts and Bills, compensation, displacement, legalities, arbitration and appeals)—must be understood within the context of the power disparities that undergirded these systemic complex interactions of colonialism, imperialism, racism, ethnicity, sexism, racism, power, and class that negatively impacted on Bermuda's black community in general.

A WWII "destroyers-for-bases" agreement between the United States and British governments allowed the construction of military bases in Bermuda via a 99-year land lease. Bermuda was regarded as a "gift," as no war ships were exchanged. After canvassing the entire island in September 1940, US military officials clandestinely initially chose to build a joint army

and navy base along the Great Sound, including parts of Warwick, Southampton, Granaway Deep and Riddell's Bay. Bermuda's white oligarchy rejected this plan under claims that it would impact tourism, and that substantial American residents and desirable (wealthy and white) tourists would go elsewhere. In collusion with the British Home Office, a Governor appointed Bermuda Committee that represented this oligarchy explicitly offered St. David's to US military officials for land dispossession because the latter was populated by a non-white community that was primarily racially black, economically and politically vulnerable, and geo-spatially expedient. This led to the US military acquisition of some 437 acres of land from 118 privately home properties, totaling some 65 families, and the subsequent addition of 750 acres of dredge fill.



Early Map of St. David's Island.



Map of Bermuda, St. David's highlighted.

The decision to build the base in St. David's was a racist and clandestine process in and of itself, and the community was targeted without any consultation. Before the land grab, St. David's was a largely sustainable and primarily black community that had developed a complex ecosystem of culture, internal economics and agriculture driven by farming and fishing. In the process of the grab this ecosystem suffered from loss of livelihood, land, and begrudgingly accepted the terms of the deal while demonstrating its grievances over the duration of the process which began in September 1940 and continued till after WWII ended. This discrimination and wrongdoing occurred in the processes of the selection of St. David's; the devaluing of the land, homes, and livelihood of St. David's Islanders; and the process of arbitration and displacement.

St. David's Island before the alleged land grab

Historically speaking, the development of St. David's Island was intricately linked to the Atlantic slave trade and the enslavement of African and indigenous American Pequot communities in the seventeenth century stemming from "King Philip's War" in Massachusetts. In 1637, the ship *Desire* brought enslaved Pequot persons to Bermuda in exchange for enslaved Africans; in February 1638 it returned to Boston with "cotton, tobacco and Negroes."¹ These Pequot were enslaved in St. David's, and along with enslaved African persons, forcibly worked in the industries of tobacco, livestock, shipbuilding, fishing and whaling. St. David's was also a site of resistance to slavery; On June 22, 1799, an ad in the *Bermuda Gazette* warned against taking a "Negro Man" named Thias off of the island without the permission of a Mary Brangman.² In 1824 an ad in the *Bermuda Gazette* suggested that Cretia, an absconded enslaved black woman may have been

harboured there; a ten dollar reward was placed for her return, having escaped four times prior.³ By the abolition of chattel slavery in Bermuda in August 1834, the island's ethnically diversified community produced arrowroot, onions, and potatoes. By the twentieth century, lilies emerged as a critical export crop. At the onset of WWII, St. David's it was a primarily independent agricultural community and a center of commercial farming for Bermuda.

In 1940, the population of St. George's and St. David's was approximately 422 white men, 383 white women, 955 black men and 905 black women.⁴ St. David's Island remained disconnected to mainland Bermuda until 1934. It was divided along racial and class lines marked by the Western and Eastern sides of the island. Historian Steven High, author of *Base Colonies in the Western Hemisphere* argues that St. David's was residentially divided along segregated racial lines. White families and individuals, owned larger properties in the West end and were engaged in some forms of "tourist speculation." In contrast, black communities owned and lived on smaller properties and, along with some white absentee landowners (such as MCP for St. George's Stanley Spurling, towards the East of the island).⁵

Churches were segregated. This included the oldest surviving church in St. David's, the Chapel of Ease. According to Annie Foggo, it was uncomfortable to sit in its segregated pews, and she was far happier at St. Luke's African Methodist Episcopal Church; when older, she refused to attend the Chapel until the end of segregation ceased.⁶

Since the era of enslavement, black St. David's islanders ethnically developed as a community largely of mixed Native American and African heritage linked by distinct kinship networks. Figure 1 below highlights these kinship dynamics.⁷

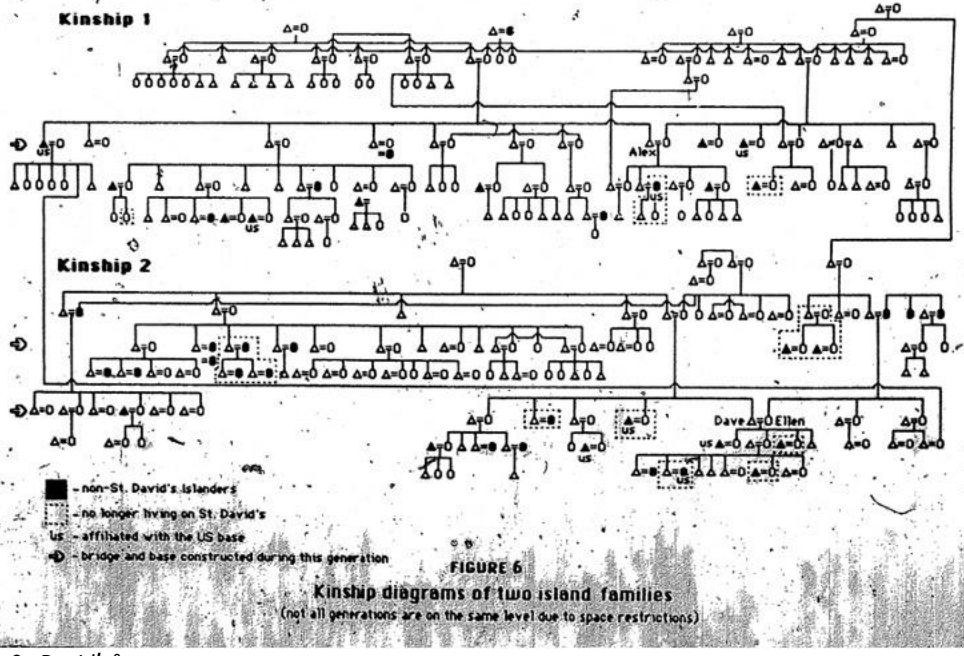


Figure 1. Kinship in St. David's.⁸

This geographical isolation and mixed racial heritage led to popular perceptions of St. David's Islanders as being outsiders, "country," "different" or backwards. Writing in *The Bermudian* in 2018, St. David's Island's historian, St. Claire Tucker asserted that

St. David's was completely isolated in those early days...The Native Americans of St. David's welcomed African and West Indian slaves into their community, but Bermuda's white population often looked down on them. This stigma caused the people of St. David's to intermarry over the course of the ensuing centuries...it was common for a native, in previous generations, to live his entire life without leaving St. David's Island.⁹

He continued,

St. David's Islanders looked different and sounded different; they had different accents, and they dressed differently...Education was not a priority. They were strong, clannish and hardworking. 'Town' people made fun of them. It still exists a bit today...St. David's Islanders have known of their heritage because of ridicule.¹⁰

These negative perceptions stretched beyond Bermuda. For example, historian and novelist Van Wyck Mason's 1938 *The Castle Island Case*, set in St. David's and St. George's, featured luggage carrying Negroes described as grinning "black sooty-skinned urchins," huge blacks, coal black Negroes, racist depictions of Voodoo and Gombeyes, black criminality, and a fisherman and boatsman from St. David's, "Creepy Smith, the Indian." Creepy was described as having a "hook nose and high cheek bones," very dark blue eyes that restlessly flickered, feline agility and dark skin with a coppery undertone. One reference to Creepy went as follows, "Say, Barney, that boatman of yours is one of the queerest looking shines I've ever laid eyes on. Where'd he get a nose like that? Oh, Creepy's descended from the Pequots of St. David's Island." These Pequot "simply wouldn't do slaves work. The only things they were good at were whaling and boat building." The protagonist pondered on the immutability of Mendel's law.¹¹

Pejoratively referred to as "Mohawks," these negative and misrepresentations of St. David's Islanders influenced the process in which their land was appropriated for the building of the base. Yet, St. David Islanders were critical members of the cultural life of black Bermuda. This included cricket legend Charles Hilgrove "War Baby" Fox. Fox, who would be displaced, was a well-known star of Cup Match. He frequently represented Bermuda abroad in cricket games, including a highly successful 1929 tour of the United States. Fox also owned a dance hall in St. David's.



Charles (War Baby) Fox's Touring Team in America, 1929.¹²

At the time of WWII, St. David's was a thriving agricultural hub for Bermuda. The black community was comprised of largely fishermen and farmers who raised gardens, kept piggeries, cultivated fruit trees, and grew crops such as arrowroot, cassava, potatoes, easter lilies, and a variety of other vegetables. The Southeast part of the island was home to forty of the sixty St. David's islander families of "modest income." They either owned or rented small plots and subsisted on their lands. Farmer Archibald Fox was the island's largest cassava grower. As cassava was not a critical export crop, Fox likely engaged a largely domestic market.¹³ Solomon and Rose Fox's family lived off of fifty banana trees, five orange trees, four lime trees and a grapevine.

The fishing industry in St. David's was a complex cultural and community ecosystem, whereby fisherman shared waters. The island boasted of generations of whalers, perhaps none

more popular than Tommy Fox who had done so since the nineteenth century. Three of St. David's farms produced half the total amount of lilies grown in Bermuda. In 1940, lily bulbs represented 12% (13,000 USD) of Bermuda's domestic exports, which went mainly to Canada and the United States. From 1929-1940, they were Bermuda's second largest export (7%, 145,000 USD). In 1939 some 1.5 million lily bulbs were planted—500,000 of this total were exported and one million replanted. As such, over 750,000 lily bulbs were planted in St. David's.¹⁴

Politically speaking, while the black population (1,860) more than doubled the white population (805) in the joint electoral parish, there were 177 registered white voters to 167 black voters. This was due to Bermuda's discriminatory electoral policies, which were designed to maximize the voting power of wealthy whites and minimize the voting potential of Bermuda's majority black population. Electors in the area could only be men who "possessed in their own right or in right of their wives within the electoral parish" a land assessment at not less than £60. Members of Assembly had to own property rated at £240. As such, Bermuda's House of Assembly, St. George's and St. David's constitutionally voted in four Members of Colonial Parliament (MCP) in Bermuda's House of Assembly —Stanley Spurling, E.P.T. Tucker, S.S. Toddings, and W.S. Cooper—all white men. This problematic dynamic would impact the dispossession of St. David's.¹⁵

St. David's had three churches representing the Church of England (50 persons), Wesleyan Methodist St. David's Chapel (30 persons) and St. Luke's AME Church (25 persons).¹⁶ Interestingly, the first President of the Bermuda Division of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), Dr. Richard Hilton Tobitt, pastored at the St. David's AME Church from 1914 to 1920. As such, despite not having a bridge to the mainland Bermuda until the 1930s, in the early twentieth century, St. David's held a connection to the broad threads of Black internationalism sweeping the world in that era.

Why, when and how did the alleged land grabs occur?

On September 4, 1940, a WWII “destroyers-for-bases” agreement between the British and United States and governments called for the construction of military bases in Bermuda via a 99-year land lease. Britain did not give up any warships in exchange for the land in Bermuda, which had significant strategic value for the United States during the War. Yet, it was not inevitable that St. David’s would be the site of the US Base.

On September 5, 1940, US Navy Rear Admiral John W. Greenslade arrived in Hamilton, Bermuda on the U.S.S St. Louis to scout the island for navy and army installations. He was flanked by a Committee that included representatives from the Army, Navy, Marines and Lt. Col. Omar T. Pfeiffer, U.S. Marine Corps, Member and Recorder. They were officially called on by U.S. Consul General, William H. Beck, British Governor to Bermuda, Lieutenant General Sir Denis Bernard, and Vice Admiral Sir Charles Kennedy-Purvis, Commander in Chief of the British West Indies Naval Forces. Meetings were arranged with British officials to extensively determine essential land, sea, and air requirements.¹⁷

The first official meeting to discuss the proposed Bases was held between the Greenslade team and British representatives (with Bermudian sanction), namely Governor Bernard, Colonial Secretary Hon. Eric Dutton (who was were there to supposed voice the opinions of Bermuda), Vice Admiral Kennedy-Purvis, and Rear Admiral J. Powell, Royal Navy Commodore of H.M. Dockyard naval authority.¹⁸

The Greenslade Committee covertly visited Dockyard, Riddell’s Bay, islands in the Great Sound, St. George’s, and St. David’s. On September 3, 1940, he announced to that his team had chosen land in the area of Warwick and Southampton Parish from North to South Shore, continuing from “approximately Spithead—in Granaway Deep, following the shoreline up to Jew’s Bay close to Gibb’s Hill Lighthouse, space for a landing strip and a 2.5 x .5 mile area for the US Navy at Riddell’s Bay.¹⁹

On September 8, 1940, Greenslade met with the Governor, who informed him that his original instructions from the Home Government stressed that the meetings in Bermuda were to be only for consultation purposes and that no commitments were to be made by local government officials. The Governor said he had cabled some of the information but had still been requested to make no commitments. He informed Greenslade that he “had appointed a Committee of prominent citizens, including members of the Legislative Council, to obtain their views on the question of the US establishing a base in Bermuda.”²⁰

Formed on September 2, this Committee of prominent Bermudian citizens—read, wealthy white men, was comprised of Colonial Secretary Dutton, Attorney General Trounson Gilbert, J.D.B. Talbot (member of Legislative Council), MCPs W.J. Howard Trott, J.W. Cox and Henry Jack Tucker (manager of Bank of Bermuda) and Hal Butterfield (managers of Bank of Butterfield). On September 4th, the Committee advised the Governor on three specific issues—to limit the amount of seaplanes operating in Bermuda in times of peace; that costs of land defenses be passed on to the British government, and that “advantage be taken of the negotiations to persuade the American Government to lift the “immigration ban on the entry of coloured persons into the United States.”²¹

Hoping to get feedback, Greenslade had difficulty in arranging meetings with the local Committee, which, according to his team, “maintained a quaint, if unorthodox attitude that a formal meeting with the Americans would commit them officially, yet they were quite willing to meet American representatives socially, discussing all angles informally, continuing, however, to religiously veer away from any official conference.”²²

Dutton, who presided over the September 8th meeting, was asked by the Governor to report on the “general attitude” of Bermudians in relation to the situation. He claimed that the “last thing” that the people of island desired to do was to “embarrass either the British or US Governments.” If it was a question of war, said, Dutton, the United States military could “take the

whole damned place.” However, “local citizens” were “upset at the extensive land proposals presented by the US” on two grounds. Number one, that the base would “take away a lot of charm from the island and spoil the tourist industry on which they greatly depended locally.” He claimed that people also feared that in the aftermath of the war there would be a loss of both the tourist trade and expenditures made in connection with the presence of the bases.²³ Furthermore, he added that the noise of 150 or more planes would drive away the thousands of Americans” who came to Bermuda to avoid such noises.²⁴ Greenslade interjected that he had heard similar expressions from local people at social gatherings during his visit to Bermuda, but he felt that this reaction was understandable but hardly warranted as Oahu and Panama had fared okay with similar military interventions.²⁵

Interestingly, Dutton referenced his concerns that the US base would significantly increase Bermuda’s population density of 1,600 persons per square mile with the addition of some 5,500-person related to US service personnel. The Colonial Secretary stated that Bermuda was considering to formally ask the US to remove the quota on Black persons entering the United States in order to relieve population pressure on the island, and for Greenslade to give this some consideration.²⁶

As the Greenslade team left the island, it was clear to Dutton that the Bermuda Committee strongly opposed the US proposal from the onset. The Committee felt that the British Government had “sold them out,” a charge that Britain’s Secretary of State denied, asserting that he had requested that the Governor use his influence to “transfer the scheme to the East End.” Meanwhile, the Bermuda Committee created a copious coded statement that was forwarded to the Secretary of State with the use of “1500 cypher groups.” Meanwhile, the Governor ordered officers to inspect alternative areas at East End and to report if these could be made available to the United States, and at a more efficient manner than Riddle’s Bay. This subsequent proposal, the Bermuda Committee’s report and US Committee’s proposal were sent to the Secretary of State between 8-

9th of September. At the end of September, the Bermuda Committee sought to go to Washington to press their case. There was considerable apprehension about the proposals, and the Committee felt that any pieces of legislation around the expropriation of property would not pass the House of Assembly. However, the Committee's *saeva indignatio* (savage indignation) "was tempered with a proper eye to the main chance"—they were claiming monetary compensation from the US Government for some \$10,000,000 a year.²⁷

Early in October, the Secretary of State approved the Bermuda Committee's request to send Henry Tucker and Hall Butterfield to Washington DC to speak to the British Ambassador about their position. There they stated their opposition to the Riddell's Bay proposals. Throughout the month it was reported that opposition to the Greenslade proposal continued to stiffen.²⁸

Due to this dissent among Bermuda's white elite, Greenslade and his team returned to Bermuda in late October 1940. They were met with what he referred to as a "rather alarmed voice of Bermudian citizenry" which strongly expressed dissent with the base development in Riddell's bay via an unsigned "Summary of Objections to Proposals of the United States Board." The US Committee expressed some sympathy for the position—"picture the average Bermudian realizing his livelihood—tourists—would be supplanted by thousands of American servicemen. The document apparently presented "social and economic problems of housing, middle class recreation, sanitation, health, policing, and diplomacy" and the notion of becoming "Americanized." The Bermuda Committee was opposed to the use of Riddell's Bay because "it contained many homes of wealthy Americans," and the waters there were used for the "favorite pastime, yachting, the islands for picnics." They were concerned that the development would "strangle normal communication between Somerset and Bermuda. Then, the Summary continued, "Bermudians favored the East End (St. David's) sector of the island, as less people would be displaced by choosing that spot."—this was, in fact, a blatant lie. "Bermuda," and certainly not St. David's islanders, had been consulted.²⁹ The Committee claimed that a base in the Great Sound

would disrupt social, economic and political life of the island, including Bermuda's tourist industry. It claimed that yacht racing and pleasure boating would be interrupted, and that more desirable American residents and several influential families lived in the area of the Sound. It suggested to US officials that St. David's would be an ideal because "less important" amenities would be disturbed, fewer persons lived, and fewer political problems might arise.³⁰

The Governor told Greenslade that the British Government preferred St. David's for the base as well. Economic dislocation by the base would deteriorate real estate values, "loss of business in high grade shops, hotels and guest homes." Furthermore, the "burden occasioned by displacing whole groups of Bermudians and transferring them to other homes to accommodate the bases seemed more than Bermuda could encounter."³¹

He again hoped to meet with the Bermuda Committee regarding the Summary of Objections, but was told by the Governor that this would be impossible, but there could be space for informal discussions.³² Greenslade was disturbed. The Governor had been instructed by the Home Government to tell Greenslade "not to seek a meeting with local Bermudians" as they did not "want such a conference to be held or mentioned in later correspondence," and that the approach to the Bermuda Committee needed to be informal. He continued, "a formal meeting would possibly subject some of the proposals to being misunderstood and the injection of bodies rather than this one her was not desirable—please do not have a round-table discussion with the Committee." Furthermore, it was falsely argued, as the Colonial Secretary was there, it would not be necessary to have a discussion with the Committee.³³ The Colonial Secretary remarked that if Greenslade wanted to get "a good picture" of what was in the Committee's mind than he should see Attorney General Trounson Gilbert later that evening at a social event they were to attend. After all, it was Gilbert, a white Bermudian, who had drawn up the comprehensive statement.³⁴

Greenslade was concerned that "the objections gave no idea whose opinions were stated, there being no signatures to identify the authors." There was nothing to authenticate the Summary.

The Governor confirmed that the views presented were those of the Bermuda Committee, whose chairman was Dutton. Greenslade read off “astonishingly large figures for the dredging required for St. David’s compared to Riddell’s Bay and the Great Sound – 12,000,000 cubic yards for dredging and 6,000,000 more for the landing field. This would also take years. The Great Sound was chosen due to its proximity to Dockyard, and plus fewer people lived in the requested areas than East end.³⁵

Later that month British Naval staff offered St. David’s Island to Greenslade. After revisiting the island’s East End, and facing strong resistance to his plans, he conceded. Members of Bermuda’s oligarchy had had their day, but his was a short-lived victory. Greenslade still pressed for use of the Great Sound for seaplanes and emergencies. In late October, Greenslade announced an agreement, via which the US would get the East End for the base as well as Morgan’s Island in the Sound. In early November, the Bermuda Committee sought to address the issue of compensation. This request was sent to the Secretary of State, which included an issue raised by the Governor on behalf of the Committee the lifting of the embargo of black Bermudians into the United States, the lifting of embargo on vegetables reduction of taxation on Bermudian incomes accruing in United States and an annual cash-down payment (lowered to 2.5 million per year as opposed to 10 million).³⁶

To surmise, St. David’s was chosen as the site for the base via covert discussions and debates between the US Military, British Colonial officials, and Bermuda’s white elite. These discussions largely took place behind closed doors and were not part of a public discourse. In fact, the Bermudian and British Governments sought to keep the talks as secret as possible. By and large the residents of St. David’s were not consulted on the decision and they had no representation on the “Bermuda” Committee. Through formal and informal discussions at official meetings and segregated social events, the Bermuda Committee spoke on behalf of the desires of Bermuda’s oligarchy and placed tourism, weekend yachting jaunts and part time leisure over the

daily livelihoods of St. David's Islanders, who had no representation at these meetings. This was unfair, and certainly irregular.

Announcing St. David's, Disloyalty and Empire

The Home Government instructed the Governor to have Bermuda's House of Assembly announce the decision to build the base in St. David's on the afternoon of November 18, 1940. This meant that several residents of St. David's would be displaced. Several MCPs expressed shock at the scope of the request, which begs further question. The following morning, Governor Bernard went to St. David's to speak to a large group of residents at Wesley Hall. Flanked by Dutton, his ADC, and the aforementioned MCPS for St. George's—Spurling, Tucker, Toddings and Cooper—he expressed his “deep concern” as Governor but also as someone who had land issues in the past:

I know it is very easy to say one is sorry, and I know that I can do little more than say that, for money does not really count in these circumstances. I know that the houses you have been living in all your lives, and in which your ancestors lived will be hard to leave. I shall do my best.³⁷

Governor Bernard continued to tell the crowd that he had come to St. David's to acquaint them with the defense scheme, which had “come as a bombshell.” He pledged to appoint a Committee whose first duty would be to make sure they left their homes under the best possible terms. Bernard also stated that it was “a dreadful thing to think that one man was responsible for all this, that abominable man Hitler.” It was difficult to realize that “one man, a devil, had brought all these dreadful things to pass throughout the world and that, even in faraway Bermuda,” the effects of his wanton war were being felt. However, said the Governor, “Mr. Winston Churchill, whom they all knew, admired and studied, thought it was wise to have these bases leased to America. And if he said so, it was so.” While these

residents might have been surprised at the amount of land taken, the Governor was “sure that they would take it in loyal spirit.” Printed in the *Royal Gazette*, the Governor also said, “Mr. Hitler is primarily responsible for this base, yes, the one devil Hitler is responsible.” However, he claimed, the Americans were “anxious to help.” He continued, “We must make the best of the job; it is not a bad job. Bermuda is taking a big part in the Empire scheme. Demands are being made on all parts of the Empire, and this is their demand on us. We must all get to work.” There was no empty space, and “*as bad luck would have it*” Castle Harbor suited the needs of the US officials, who needed a large space for planes, airfields, ships, guns, barracks and soldiers.³⁸

But as we have seen, bad luck had nothing to do with the decision. The Governor took out a huge map of the plans and placed it on an easel. “There is a map here, and I shall be pleased if Sir Stanley Spurling will explain it.” Stanley proceeded to do so, which raises some suspicion.³⁹ If Spurling, a landowner in St. David’s had just heard of these plans for the East End the day before, how could he have adequately explained these plans?

MCP Tucker bluntly informed the crowd, “There is no question of your livelihood being taken away from you. Take it all in good spirit,” for the benefit of the British Empire. He would later state that in HOA that St. David’s, “the poor and insignificant Parish” of which he happened to be a native of” had “at least demonstrated its material importance to the defense of Empire and the protection of the American continent.”⁴⁰

At the end of the meeting, a statement was read and allegedly accepted by the group: Resolved, that his meeting of people vitally affected by the establishment of the USA defense base on St. David’s Island, record their deep sense of remorse at losing their homes in which their families have lived for centuries, but wish to express their loyalty to

the British Empire by accepting the sacrifice in a spirit of support for the ultimate winning of the war against Germany and Italy.⁴¹

Colonial Secretary Dutton recalled that Toddings informed the group that their fellow citizens at home [England] had been bombed and they had given their homes and their lives to bring this war to a successful conclusion. Everyone realizes that we are sorry for you; it is all caused by that fiend Hitler. Everything will be done as near as circumstances will permit to make you happy and comfortable, as you have been in the past.⁴²

Toddings claimed that there would be a wave of prosperity that this end of the island that could not yet be imagined. Still, no amount of money would compensate the group for what they would “have to do.”⁴³

The meeting and issues surrounding the selection of St. David’s continued to be discussed in the House of Assembly. When asked by Henry Watlington why the meeting was kept secret, the retort was that public knowledge would have prejudiced the discussions. But these discussions misled the public. The Bermuda Committee claimed that Americans came to the island twice, reviewed entire country and made their decision based upon those assessments. The Committee sought to avoid clearly stating that they offered St. David’s to US officials. Watlington himself still would concede—“It was only Adolf Hitler made everybody do this.”⁴⁴

The white power structure hypocritically used the notion of “disloyalty” to the British Empire and the need to be fight against Hitler to pressure St. David’s Islanders. Indeed, it is remarkably troubling to note how white MCP’s threw words, concepts and phrases such as “empire, duty, citizen and home” at black Bermudians whose ancestors were violently enslaved and colonized in the name of the British empire, who, to this day, are not British citizens, and were, in the moment, not able to emigrate to America under racist immigration policies, yet were told

that Hitler was the enemy. This is particularly striking, given white Bermuda's preexisting admiration for Germany and Nazism.

Case in point, in 1936 the Bermuda Athletic Association (BAA) handpicked an all-white swimming team to represent the island at Berlin's 1936 Olympics. The black owned newspaper, *Bermuda Recorder*, claimed that Bermuda and South Africa were the only majority black countries to send all white teams to Germany. The paper launched a vendetta against the insulting decision, which placed Bermuda in the same category as Germany and South Africa. Bermuda had catered "to the feelings of superiority of Herr Hitler and his Nazi Regime" by sending "lily-white contingents." In fact, during the Olympic opening ceremony, the team hailed Hitler with a Nazi salute and had the "dubious distinction" of being the first country to do so.⁴⁵

The *Recorder* reminded its readers that Bermuda and South Africa were the only countries to send "lily-white" teams to London's 1934 Empire Games. It critically asked, "Perhaps they reason that if colored troops who served at the front in the Great War cannot be members of the Bermuda War Veterans Association, why should colored people be amazed if they are not allowed to represent Bermuda in the Olympic games?" The "colored people are good enough to die for it. They must be good enough to live for it, and represent the colony on the fields of sport as well as in the arena of war...How long must we be shunned, insulted and degraded on the altar of race creed and color?"⁴⁶

Bermuda's "alliance with Hitlerism" continued later in the month, when its Government organized a publicity event with a German aircraft company, Lufthansa. Organized by MCP Percy Tucker and the local agents for Lufthansa, John Darrell and Company, the Dentche A.G. Lufthansa Aeolus flew to Bermuda from the Azores in record time. The plane landed next to the Darrell and Company boat, which was flying a large Swastika flag. The flight crew disembarked with a Nazi salute.⁴⁷

Yet, in September 1940, the Acting British Governor responded to “ill-founded rumors of impending disturbances” by having numerous meetings with Black leaders. One G. A. Williams who came before the Governor to speak on behalf of Bermuda’s “coloured people.” He stated that the “colored people felt that no matter what future trails might lie ahead, whatever their King desired of them in the common cause that would gladly give.” On 21st of September, Robert Crawford, “senior colored member of the House of Assembly,” said that he had not heard one person regret that he belonged to the British Empire.⁴⁸

The Uncrowned King of St. David’s/How did St. David’s Islanders react to the land grab?

While the mainstream narrative is that St. David’s islanders largely accepted the land grab, this perspective needs to be unpacked within the context of war, white power and misinformation. Indeed, all of these factors undermined the capacity for landowners to challenge the seizing of their land. Put another way, black Bermudians were placed under political, economic and social pressure to pledge allegiance not only to the British Empire, but also to acquiesce to American imperialism as a response to Hitler and Nazi Germany.

The day after the meeting the *Gazette*’s headline read, “Governor Explains U.S Bases at St. David’s: Residents Accept Decision in Loyalty to Empire.” The article included the supposed reasons for why St. David’s was chosen—the protection of the tourist industry and life in the Great Sound. MCP Trott would claim that there was not one dissenting voice among the St. David’s Islanders. “They were sad, naturally, because they had to leave the homes which they had occupied for generations but felt it was for the good of the Empire and therefore were perfectly satisfied.”⁴⁹ According to Dutton, at the meeting it was “impossible not to feel the utmost sympathy for this simple folk, many of whom were in tears as the Governor moved among them.”⁵⁰

There were some voices critical of the situation. One letter to *Royal Gazette*, written by an American resident, read, “Think it over Bermudians, before it is too late. The US is entitled to a base. But why make people like the St. David’s Islanders suffer—while the Somerset Colony, and Riddell’s Bay golf “fans” smile.⁵¹ News of the decision spread across the United States. Reprinted in several newspapers, Alan Waters reported that the decision was going to “force Bermuda families to leave land” that their ancestors had lived on for more than three centuries. These descendants of some of the oldest persons in Bermuda, shed tears at the Governor’s statement.⁵² One internationally read news report remarked that St. David’s Islanders had a unique way of life. The account problematically expected that they would “express indignation,” but the Pequot Indian blood in the St. David’s Islanders kept them silent.⁵³

MCP Toddings claimed that there was one person present at the meeting at Wesley Hall, who had told him not so long ago that if he was paid one pound for every minute of the day, he would not give up his home. “I see by the look on his face now,” stated Toddings, “that he is willing to do that for the Mother Country.” That one person was Henry Mortimer “Tommy” Fox. According to Dutton, Fox had long been regarded as the “Uncrowned King of St. David’s.” Fox had been bitterly opposed to the idea of land loss. He reported that he had said “if the taking of my land will help to do in that son-of-a-bitch, Hitler, they can have it for nothing.”⁵⁴

Born in 1861, Fox was a living legend, and the largest landowner in St. David’s. A former Sergeant of the Bermuda Volunteer Rifle Corps of WWI in 1940 he owned some forty to sixty acres in the area. He also cultivated arrowroot. In December 1940, he informed the *Bermuda Magazine* that when he learned that most of St. David’s Island was to be utilized to construct the U.S. naval base, he remained pretty close-lipped about his feelings. “I can’t say what I feel like saying,” he muttered. “I know what I’ve got to give. I don’t know what I’m going to get.”⁵⁵

Upon his death in 1942, the *New York Times* described Fox as being “tall as a ship’s spar,” with skin “like tanned leather” that was “burned with the suns of eighty-one summers.” He “carried himself with kingly dignity” and was known and loved by “every Bermudian and a host of Americans.” A whale hunter, he had once crawled into the belly of a captured one (which was on shore) to prove true the Bible’s story of Jonah. The *New York Times* described Fox as being “a tribal chieftain,” who St. David’s Islanders brought their troubles and their feuds and that he settled them with “patience and common sense.” It claimed that prior to the building of the base, numbers of Americans had offered to buy Tommy’s home and land, to which he responded, “This is my home...I’ll live here till I die.” However, now the *Times* claimed, as he had always been “loyal to his island and to the Crown, he accepted the inevitable sorrowfully but with the dignity that characterized his life.⁵⁶ As poetic as this description sounds, St. David’s Islanders showed their displeasure for the years to follow. For example, on January 1, the *New York Times* reported that two hundred St. David’s Islanders were not relishing the idea of having to find new homes to make way for the base.⁵⁷

The St. David’s Committee: Notes on St. David’s Islanders

In December 1940, the British Governor appointed a five membered St. David’s Island Committee Board of Arbitrators to “advise and assist the people” who were to be “dispossessed of their lands” or who would “suffer damage” by the establishment of the Naval and Air bases by the Government of the United States. The Committee also had license to pay fixed sums of money to disposed persons. Yet again, the Committee was comprised of all white men who represented the island’s oligarchy—Chairman MCP N.B. Dill, Esq, MCP W.S. Cooper, Esq, MCP Captain E.P.T. Tucker, W.E.S. Zuill, Esq., and R.S. McCallan, Esq. Their first meeting occurred on December 13, 1940 at the offices of Conyers, Dill, and Pearman.⁵⁸ The Committee rented an office in St. David’s from Gosling Brothers Ltd in the Flashing Avenue Restaurant (located across

the street from Black Horse Bar) for 100 pounds a month to operate from. Its office was open from 9-12 and 1:30-4 pm for interviews.⁵⁹ It was also tasked with finding available land in St. David's, Smith's Island, and any Colonial or Imperial land for persons that would be dispossessed. In this first meeting Dill submitted a memorandum for a procedure for conducting the dispossessions. The Colonial Government spent some 500 pounds on the Committee's expenses.⁶⁰

During the Committee's second meeting of December 24, 1940, it discussed ways to discover available land owned by the Imperial Government, the Colonial Government and non-residents who owned land in St. David's Island for the rehabilitation of dispossessed persons. In addition, it discussed the "necessity of adopting an attitude of paternalism in relation to the persons being dispossessed." It was claimed, on the one hand, that if some of these persons "were granted monetary compensation that it would probably be spent foolishly and not used to rebuild" a "proper house." On the other hand, it was noted that if the Government built them homes that they would not be satisfied and would feel that "too much money had been spent on the house and not enough cash left over for them to spend." It also discussed suggesting to the Colonial Secretary the legislation be passed to prevent land speculation in St. David's and Smith's Island, but not St. George's for the duration of the Committee's work. The Committee had also visited persons who were liable to be dispossessed and claimed that some families wanted to remain on St. David's and others wanted to go to Smith's Island.⁶¹ High took this to mean that the Committee had decided to buy new homes for nonwhite persons, as black people could not be trusted with cash awards.⁶²

The Committee's paternalism towards St. David's islanders was laced with the previously noted negative perceptions of St. David's islanders. These views negatively influenced how the Committee handled the "rehabilitation" of St. David's Islanders, who were dehumanized in the process. As part of the process, the Committee conducted interviews with persons who were about to be dispossessed and made visits to their homes. In doing so, it kept notes about the supposed

character and physical characteristics of St. David's Islanders. It compiled these notes into a document called "Notes on St. David's Islanders," which, while completed in at least in June 1941, was a compilation of the Committee's perspectives of both black and white St. David's Islanders. It included racist and sexist descriptions of the physical attributes of the interviewees. This suggests that they used these characteristics in determining compensation for dispossessed St. David's islanders. It is important to place these notes in the context of social perceptions that marked St. David's as being available for the base. In this context, it was not just a question of *where* was the land, but who inhabited it.

For example, one Chester Frith was described as being a red-haired "big man" and light housekeeper. Ivy Pitcher, "rather plaintive," was a "huge woman, flashily dressed and touched with rouge; looks something like a rather cheap Jewess. Her husband Claude was "thin and rat like."

"Notes on St. David's Islanders" spent some time describing the Foxes on Westcott Island. Miss Grace Fox was depicted as the mainstay of an aged mother, nondescript brother, Trotter, and a sister, who was married to a native of the Channel Islands. Grace was said to have been "jilted" by a Mr. Evans, a civil servant in the Agricultural department. Her sister was alleged to have said after seeing a tub in a prospective new home, "Every time I went up there we looked at what you might call a ruin and it made you blue as ink and when you went in the door you felt as if something was going to happen...I want water...I've had water around me all my life; we see water from every door and window. At "35-40 years of age," she possessed "very staring eyes." She "rubbed her hands a good deal and was emotional." Trotter inquired about moving their piano, as the only road was a two-foot-wide bridge which held a sign, "Walk Your Horses."

Winnie and Susan Lightbourne were described as being sad, lacrymose, repressed Victorians and "spinsterish ladies" whose livelihood was "one of St. David's mysteries." The Notes described their cotton print dresses, and the umbrellas they carried. Susan was "not very

intelligent looking-gray.” Winnie had a few remaining “black teeth,” dark hair and sharp features and was the “brighter of the two.”

Seventy-three-year-old Willie Lamb was a fisherman and once a sexton. He wore gold glasses, a ragged moustache and gold watch and chain. He had a fifty-one year old cedar boat, “Lemon Pricker.” He had bought the watch and chain after catching a large whale some 43 years prior.” Things looked very dark that night; we lost the West end light. Could just see its glare. Took him (the whale) in tow by Argus Bank.” The Committee noted that, some years before, the Parson found a “crudely written note” left by Lamb –“take bell out of box, hang it on de bough, hit it a couple of licks I had to go down to de bay to git a gurt school of breams.”

Willie’s nephew Ira, son of Benjamin (Red Benny) John Lamb, weighed some three hundred ½ pounds. A pilot, when asked by the Committee, “You must weigh more than Holly Fox, responded, “Oh yes, I got him beat, he only weighs about 250.” Holly was frequently sick and had been put on a diet, which made him feel “real bad.” He had lost 23 pounds in two weeks. His family wanted a house at sea level on account of his heart.

“Red Benny” Lamb’s mother was known as “Gurt Mary,” as she was a “huge woman.” Gilbert Lamb had 6 cows and 32 pigs. He was married to one of Jerry Pitcher’s daughters and one of Red Benny’s sons. Francis Hinson Lamb, who farmed Hammon Fox’s land, did not want a stone house because “when the stone gives way it is all gone.” One Nellie Hall, married to Clifford Casey, mother had been killed by an American sailor during WWI, and said that she would not live on the island with them. Apparently, the sailor had asked a carriage driver to find him a woman. He pointed out Nellie’s mother as an option and stabbed her when she ignored his advances.

Thirty-year-old Alred Gale Foggo was a “young mullato,” with “four, no five kids. “I was a widower once and someone adopted my child.” John Wesley Brangman had served in the all-white BVRC, and he would take a 4d loaf bread, split it in half, butter it and “proceed to munch.”

Raymond Hayward was the Committee's "biggest trouble." He was the "illegitimate" son of Eliza Wood Hayward. The Committee asked a Percy Tucker who was his father, to which he wrote "Mike Marshall," a Portuguese ambulance driver.

Clarence Sarfield (Scarface-a nickname that offended him) Frith was "white, a farmer and a bachelor." He made all £120 pounds a year from his farm and wanted a three bedroom house, 12 x 25 feet, bedroom 10 x 12, but when asked if he wanted a bathroom, he replied, "No." The Committee was of the opinion that Vivian Trott, daughter of Stanley Fox, had "Indian blood." Lloyd Vincent Fox was "very black," large, and looked prosperous as he wore a double-breasted lined coat, helmet, and yellow socks.

John (Jerry) Benjamin Pitcher allegedly described his brother, Hevred Walter Pitcher (Dixie) to the Committee. "You can't do anything with Dixie; the only way to get Dixie here is to tell the constable to tell Dixie to be here at 9:30." "What is Dixie's name, Herman? No, it ain't Herman, I can't pronounce Dixie's name; I'll write it out and bring it down. Jerry He allegedly had two daughters who "lived in sin" in a wooden house in the area. Jerry Pitcher lived in a wooden house on $\frac{3}{4}$ acres. "Who built the house, Will John Fox and some of them." Mr. and Mrs. War Baby. Dixie lived in the other half of the house and worked for Reeve Smith.⁶³

A Richard Lamb liked to eat a little shark every "hand while." Eliza Lightbourne did not like the looks of a modern bathtub, as it "looked like a coffin;" she did like the feel of water running over her fingers from the basin. George Minors was an unreliable pilot who had no gigs and no one would take them in theirs. He once begged a pilot to let him row in a gig. He ran the ship on the rocks below the lighthouse while listening to talk on the bridge. The document also added notes on St. David's roofs, which were made of corrugated iron, flattened out kerosene tins with wooden ceilings.⁶⁴

Rehabilitation

The building of the base resulted in the claiming of 118 properties owned by some 65 families in St. David's and surrounding islands. It involved the acquisition of some 437 acres of land and 750 acres of dredge fill for the base. This was facilitated by the passing of several acts, such as the United States Bases (Acquisition of Land) Act, the United States Naval and Air Bases (Survey) Act 1941, and the United States Bases (Acquisition of Land) (Rehabilitation Act, 1941) on April 3, 1941.⁶⁵



United States Base (Acquisition of Land) (Rehabilitation Act), 1941.⁶⁶

The Committee visited every house that was to be affected by the base, and in its third meeting on January 2, 1941, summarized the St. David's islanders (and their families) who were about to be dispossessed into three groups:

- (Group 1): Persons to whom monetary compensation only needed to be paid (31 persons)
- (Group 2): Persons to whom monetary compensation could be paid, but needed to be helped in acquitting suitable land to build (9 persons)

- (Group 3): Persons to whom no monetary compensation could be paid but needed to be rehoused in other localities (35 persons).

It prepared a memorandum along these lines to send to Colonial Secretary Dutton. In the memo, Group two was comprised of persons that the Committee felt were “reasonably well-educated persons” who wanted to “rebuild on some other part of St. David’s.” The third group, ostensibly considered to not be educated, would be entered into a Government housing scheme. They would not be paid directly but their compensation would be given to the Committee in trust. Land for this group would be acquired by the Bermuda Government in the East End of St. David’s, surveyed and split into lots and resold to the disposed persons at fixed prices. Those persons in Group 2 were to be resettled in West End (Westside) of St. David’s, and Group 3 were to be resettled in East End (Eastside).

Persons to be resettled in
East End.

1.	Felix Borden.	(2)
2.	Gerald Brangman.	(1)
3.	Solomon Fox.	(2)
4.	Stanley Fox.	(1)
5.	Charles Fox.	(5)
6.	Mrs Oliver Foggo.	(4)
7.	Tommy Fox.	(4)
8.	Mrs Annie Fox.	(4)
9.	Archibald Fox.	(7)
10.	Fred Foggo.	(2)
11.	Andrew J. Fox.	(3)
12.	Sidney T. Fox.	(6)
13.	Mrs John B Fox.	(2)
14.	Alfred Foggo.	(6)
15.	Granville Fox.	(7)
16.	Frank Lamb.	(1)
17.	Vera Lamb.	(8)
18.	William T. Lamb.	(1)
19.	Grovesnor Lamb.	(5)
20.	Fanshaw Lamb.	(5)
21.	Benny Lamb.	(4)
22.	Quinton Lamb.	(1)
23.	Ira Lamb.	(5)
24.	Mrs John Lamb.	(1)
25.	Bella Millet. and Frank Lamb.	(2)
26.	Helen & Billy Millet.	(2)
27.	George H. Minors.	(4)
28.	Mrs Fred Minors.	(4)
29.	Herbert Pitcher.	(9)
30.	Stanley Pitcher.	(1)
31.	Irene Pitcher.	(3)
32.	Mrs Norgard.	(1)
33.	Mrs Heber Pitcher.	(5)
34.	Jerry Pitcher.	(5)
35.	Mrs Fred Pitcher.	(3)

Persons to be resettled in
West End.

1.	Aldrich.	(6)
2.	Clifford Casey.	(2)
3.	Grace Fox.	(4)
4.	Harry Hayward.	(1)
5.	Vera Lamb.	(4)
6.	Mrs Ethelred Richardson.	(3)
7.	Nathaniel Minors.	(3)
8.	Raymond Hayward.	(3)
9.	Ada Mahoney.	(1)

Persons to be Compensated.

1.	Lercy Furchall.
2.	A. J. Douglas.
3.	Mrs Elsie Foggo.
4.	Ledrew Fox.
5.	Ethelen U. T. Fox.
6.	Clarey Fox.
7.	Victoria Hayward.
8.	Sarah Hayward.
9.	Charlotte Hughes.
10.	Roy Higgs.
11.	John B. Lamb.
12.	Orville Wilkinson.
13.	Mrs Albert Lamb.
14.	Gilbert Lamb.
15.	Mrs Winnie Light bourne.
16.	William Lowe.
17.	Pauline Moorehead.
18.	Archibald Minors.
19.	George Minors.
20.	Mrs Robert Pitcher.
21.	Mrs Claude Pitcher.
22.	Stuart Roberts.
23.	Andrew Richardson.
24.	Mrs Wears.
25.	Howard Smith.
26.	Reeve Smith.
27.	Marjorie Cuterbridge.
28.	Charles Alden.
29.	Berry Smith.
30.	Mission House.
31.	George Walters.

However, on January 9, 1941, the Chair of the Committee, N.B. Dill wrote to Dutton, stating that he had come to the conclusion that it would be "impossible to have any publicity" around the memorandum of compensation due to the distinction around who would receive financial compensation and who was not capable of receiving said compensation. The Chair redrew the memorandum so that this was "not so apparent."⁶⁷

The subsequent memo divided St. David's islanders into two groups—those with legal title and those without. It recommended that the Bermuda Government obtain the land by private agreement with the owner and at a price agreed upon by the US representative. If agreements

could not be made, then a body of three appraisers appointed by the Governor to Bermuda would determine the amount of the award and if the amount would be paid directly to the persons or put towards buying a home—these decisions would be binding. Any balances left over (if a house was built in return) would be paid to the owner. It was decided that the Government would buy unoccupied land to sell at fixed prices to dispossessed St. David's islanders to build new homes on. For persons who had no legal title (Group 2), it was advised that the Government implement a housing scheme. "Take it as axiomatic that dispossessed persons shall in one way or another find themselves in better circumstances after being dispossessed than before."⁶⁸

The machinery for determining beneficiaries for compensation was to be decided through a semi-judicial tribunal (an informal law court) and called for a President to be "someone with a great deal of legal experience." Each property was to be assessed three times, by the owners, Bermuda's Board of Public Works, and US surveyors. US officials would assess the land at significantly lower amounts, than those proposed by the landowners themselves, as they did not take into account loss of crops or businesses. This was a serious point of contention.

Five appraisers were appointed by the Governor. Categories included arable, waterfront, advantageous building site, compensation for expropriation, additional compensation where business was affected and buildings.⁶⁹

Another issue was with those persons who were renters and who would not receive compensation because they did not own property. The Committee found it desirable to keep these persons in St. David's because, allegedly, there were not any available houses in St. George's. It suggested that the Government build houses on the leftover property after rehabilitating landowners who were being dispossessed, and persons would enter into agreements with the Government – subject to a mortgage in favour of the Government at 5% interest every five years.⁷⁰

A Committee memorandum on the “cost of houses for rehabilitation purposes” expressed concern at the “large cost involved in building houses for the St. David’s Islanders.” On January 11, 1941, it was agreed upon in the HOA that the Bermuda Government would bear the additional cost of rehabilitation and reclaim this amount from the US Government. This procedure was adjusted, in that it was decided that the Imperial Government would repay the Bermuda Government in cases of compensation or arbitration awards. The Committee felt that it would not be fair if persons received larger houses than the ones in which they were being dispossessed from. It claimed that there were a few cases that where the rehabilitation was not equitable, where a person had “a barn to live in and his valuation was far below what it would cost to rehouse him” in a stone house costing several hundred pounds, having being vacated from a barn worth only a few pounds.” Yet, article 20 of the agreement between the US and British Governments gave the US the right to enter neighboring property “for the purpose of taking measures to improve sanitation and health.” This suggested that the local Government had to implement its housing scheme along the lines of modern sanitation and provide houses of at least a minimum size to do so, in consultation with the Public Works department. It was agreed that the Government would pay for any additional costs that exceeded the awards giving to those dispossessed. However, any additions in the size of a rehabilitated house that was over and beyond the initial homes of those rehabilitated would be paid for by the persons themselves.⁷¹

Meanwhile, in January 1941 the Bermuda Committee traveled to London, where they submitted a secret document to the Home Government with their grievances. The delegates asserted that from the beginning “the negotiations had been badly handled.” It also claimed to address the question of additional costs of rehousing certain families whose property award would be inadequate to provide proper housing elsewhere. Many titles in St. David’s were incomplete or defective and some direct awards could not be aid to residents. There was also the question of additional awards for property valuations, disturbance and loss of livelihood. The

position of farmers, especially growers of lilies, whose whole earning power would be impaired if they had vacated these farms. It is striking that these concerns were not raised when this same committee chose St. David's over Riddell's bay.⁷²

In early January 1941, the Committee was informed that some St. David's Islanders wanted to build on their land as early as possible. However, for those persons who had legal right to the land, but did not have the finances to do so, this was an issue as government compensation would take time to process. The Committee thus recommended that a Government loan scheme be applied in these cases. It recommended that the Government exercise its right of entry onto parcels of land that had been recommended by the Committee, so that building could commence. Also, it recommended that the Government give the Committee a total sum of £10,000.00 that it could use for interest free loans to rent temporary properties, those with legal title to build new homes, and those without. They would not be available for persons who had commercial means to do the same.⁷³

In January, the Committee "pointed out" that the area known as Texas, owned by Henry Fox, and amounting to about 25 acres, was outside the area to be used for the Base. It was claimed that Fox was prepared to sell this land for resettlement purposes. It was also discussed that there was land owned by non-residents of St. David's that could be acquired by the Government for resale to persons who lived at the West End of St. David's. The Committee decided to interview Fox about Texas.⁷⁴

At the next Committee meeting, Chairperson Dill informed the group that he had interviewed Fox twice and was informed on both occasions that the latter was not willing to give Texas as an option for rehabilitation, one reason that he planned to move there himself. Written on the minutes, was a note "I feel it is hardly fair to take Texas from Fox if he doesn't want to sell while leaving say Gosling and Spurling in possession. After all Fox has already been called upon to make a great sacrifice." At the same meeting, the Committee discussed their memorandums.

They decided that they should use the second memorandum. The Committee also instructed the chairperson to inquire if Gosling, Ltd and Stanley Spurling had property outside of the area to be taken for the base and if they were interested in selling this property to the Government.⁷⁵

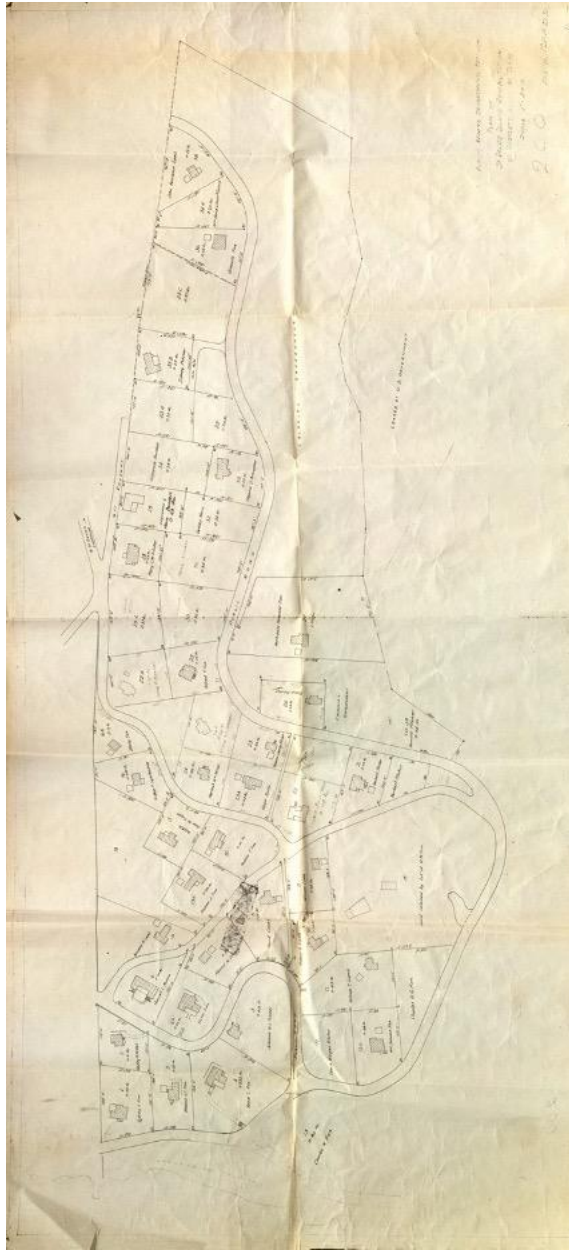
The Committee also reached out to the Berkeley Educational Society about land that the later owned in Ferry Point. They met with Reeves Smith who stated that he wanted to move to St. George's on Rankin Estate. They then agreed to survey a number of areas, included the estate of Sophia Hayward.⁷⁶

Eventually, in February, Fox had expressed some willingness to sell some of Texas but that he wanted to retain a four-acre piece of planting land known as Kate's Bottom. The Committee approached him, and they agreed on a price of 500 pounds per acre.⁷⁷ On March 18, 1942, the Committee decided to explore the lands of Fox, Sophia Hayward, Spurling, J. Brownwell Carris and Edmund Smith on St. David's. In St. George's, Henry Roberts, Frederick Barron, Samuel Crofts Rankin, and Bermuda Railway co.⁷⁸

In April, Fox stated that he wanted to exclude building lots between his quarry and the house. He further felt that if the Government did not need the whole of Texas, they needed to take only what was required.⁷⁹

The Government proceeded to purchase land in the northwestern part of St. David's (Sophia Hayward estate) and Fox's 28-acre Texas in the northeast. They divided these areas racially—whites were primarily moved onto the Hayward estate, and black St. David islanders onto Texas across 34 lots. The homes were built out of funds that were attributed to the value of their lands. The Government arranged to build them stone homes of comparable size to what they had before. In total, the St. David's Committee had forty-two new homes built.⁸⁰

*Map of East End, St. David's*⁸¹



MINUTES of the 9th meeting of the St. David's Committee held at the office of the Committee on the 18th day of March, 1941. at 10:15 o'clock in the forenoon.

Present.

Capt. N.B.Dill, Chairman.
R.S.McCallan, Esq.
W.S.Cooper, Esq.
E.P.T.Tucker, Esq.
W.E.S.Zuill, Esq.

1. The minutes of the meeting held on the 25th day of February, 1941 were read and confirmed.
2. The Chairman informed the Committee that the Honourable, the Attorney General had prepared legislation for the purpose of authorizing the acquisition of land outside the area to be leased to the U.S.Government, for rehabilitation purposes, and that he was awaiting definite recommendations from the Committee for inclusion in the schedule to the bill.

After discussion the Committee decided to recommend the undermentioned properties to be acquired by the Bermuda Government for rehabilitation purposes.

In St. David's Island.

1. Land of Henry Mortimer Fox - known as "Texas".
2. Land of the Estate of Sophia Hayward.
3. Land of Sir Stanley Salisbury Spurling.
4. Land of the Estate of J.Brownell Carris.
5. Land of the Estate of Edmund Smith.

In St. George's.

6. Land of Henry C. Roberts, Wellington.
7. Land of Frederick Barron, Cut Road.
8. Land of the Estate of Samuel Crofts Rankin, Cut Road.
9. Land of the Bermuda Railway Co. Ltd. at Mullet Bay.

At the 10th meeting on April 5, 1941, it was decided that 74 persons would get compensation only, 10 persons compensation and helped with buying new homes, 36 persons whose homes would have to be built.⁸² On May 1, the Committee was instructed to forward to the Board of Works a list of person who had made claims but to emphasize that this was the idea of the applicant and the Committee's recommendations. They also sought to outline to the Board of Works their ideas about the percentage rates for compulsory dispossession: it argued that those persons being dispossessed of houses that they used for homes should be allowed the full 20% that Arbitrators were allowed to reward. Those who owned land and had no intention to build or who were absentee landowners were to be allowed 10%. Those who had a piece of land were intending to build, it suggested 15%. These percentages were to be calculated on the value of house and land and would not incorporate damages such as loss of earnings. Another issue involved tenant farmers, and persons whose leases were no longer valid. As Bermuda had a shortage of available rental units, these persons had no where to go. The Government thus sought to assist them in purchasing homes via a deferred purchase scheme of 240 monthly payments—a twenty-year process.⁸³

It was not until May 7, 1941 that the Committee discussed the question of damages arising from loss of earnings. It debated over whether loss of income should be calculated by the difference between what the applicant was now making as opposed to what they could earn in their new habitation, capitalized at 5%. The other perspective was that loss of earnings was already included in the value of land and that to capitalize annual loss of income would double this item.⁸⁴

This discussion was continued in the following meeting, where it was debated that the capitalization of loss of income should take the life expectancy of individuals into consideration. The Committee decided that there probably twelve persons who could claim loss of earnings and suggested that the Government provide an annuity along the lines of laws governing pensions,

and that life expectancy should be taken from insurance statistics and multiplied loss of annual income to determine payment.⁸⁵ It was decided that those who wanted annuity for life in the amount of an estimated loss of income, this could be purchased by the Government from a “reputable” Insurance company.⁸⁶

In May 1941 Fox informed the *New York Times* that he did not think much of the displacement. “I think its bloody hard on me. I got to build a house like this, take £4,000. They didn’t tell me when I had to move, just tell me what they required. They didn’t say who’s paying, what they’re going to pay, when they’re gonna pay. I suppose they’ll pay for it in time but I’d a damn sight rather have my house.” The *Times* described the eighty-year-old Fox as being outspoken on the change, and “spare and whiskery, weather beaten and assertive.”⁸⁷

Claims & Arbitration

According to High, the Committee spent four days in total evaluating property on St. David’s and adjacent Long Bird Islands. One day was spent evaluating two properties on Long Bird Island, two days were spent on the west end (35 properties) and one day inspecting the entire east side (77 properties).⁸⁸ White families made the bulk of the early 35 claims. As stated previously this reflects the segregated nature of the island. Whites lived primarily on the West side of St. David’s, and black families to the East. Only six persons accepted the initial US offers, and the rest went to arbitration; these arbitration tribunals ran beyond 1943; in 1948 one case remained open. The Arbitration board was comprised of all wealthy landowning white men, and led by Sir Herbert Henniker-Heaton, an English man who lived in Bermuda. In total, the Board saw 156 cases (including Morgan’s island) in which property owners sought over 4 million USD in compensation; the US Government offered circa 1.5 million. US officials barked at the fact that

many of these previous homes were wooden “negro shacks.” Land was largely valued at £500 an acre.

Compensation was to also take value of land, value of buildings, damage caused by severance, loss of earnings, loss of crops, other financial loss (additional cost of reinstatement, and compensation damage for dispossession 15-20%) in consideration. These cases demonstrate consistent dissatisfaction in the awards given and the conditions of rehabilitation. They also reflect how financial compensation could not address the loss of life and sustainability suffered by St. David’s islanders.

Forty-one-year-old Archibald Ambrose Fox (lot D93) resided on 4.4 acres of land. He was the largest cassava grower on Bermuda. He shared ownership of the land with his five brothers and sisters on land that had a good view of Great Bay, sparsely wooded with cedar trees. In 1940 he sold three tons of cassava and grossed about £112. It had taken him twelve years to develop this stock. He had been unable to get land to transfer his stock. He also grew potatoes, carrots, beets and melons. He also worked on motor and sailing boats, fished, and was a laborer who took on odd jobs from time to time. The farm included 1 new wooden house with four rooms. He sought 3338 pounds. Arbitration settled at £2,697.⁸⁹

Solomon Thaddeus James Fox’s (D66) land spanned .2 acres. He described it as having a good view of Castle Harbor, eight feet of right of way to the waters and a small amount of planting land. He and his wife lived in a four-room wooden house with a wooden roof, open ceiling and no running water. He valued his land as £1125 pounds, while the US offered him £422 pounds. His house consisted of a banana patch of fifty bananas, three loquat trees, five large orange trees, four lime trees and one grapevine. He and his family had lived there for 44 years. They were moved to Texas in a house “reasonably equivalent in size.”

He was represented at the arbitration tribunal by his wife, who rejected the offer in a letter dated August 11, 1941. Fox could not accept the offer. She felt that it was out of the question for the US Government to make such offers when they did not know the conditions. It was not fair to put them out of their home, which they had lived in for years and been satisfied in doing so. She valued her home as at even more than first stated. Her husband was an invalid, and at their current home they could at any time⁹⁰

step out into [their] little garden and gather vegetables, and fruit, such as grapes, oranges and lemons. You all realize I am sure that in giving up this, we are giving up something that is a part of us. We have to practically start a new life under different circumstances, and we would like to start out of debt, as we are at present, we feel however that that would be impossible under the conditions offered us by the American Government.⁹¹

The arbitrators awarded the Foxes £748.00.

5

Copy of a letter dated August, 11th, 1941

From: Mrs. Solomon Fox,
St. David's Island.

To:- The Director of Public Works,
Hamilton.

Dear Sir:

In reference to your offer submitted by the U.S. Government in settlement of my claim for lot and house marked D.66, of S422.C.C., I must state that I cannot accept.

It is out of the question for the United States Government to make any offers such as this, as I do not believe they are in any position to know values as they do not know conditions here.

It does not seem fair to me, as they are putting me out of my home, where I have lived for years and have been satisfied, and to me the value is even above that which was submitted to me in your first compensation offer. I considered that offer fair, as I know that under present conditions the cost of a home would have been somewhat near that sum.

I hope that your board will give my objections fair consideration, as my husband is an invalid, and unable to be of any help to me, and here we have been able at any time to step out into our little garden and gather vegetables, and fruit, such as grapes, oranges and lemons.

You all realize I am sure that in giving up this, we are giving up something that is a part of us.

We have to practically start a new life under different circumstances and we would like to start out of debt, as we are at present, we feel however that that would be impossible under the conditions offered us by the American Government.

Sincerely hoping this matter will be taken up shortly and adjusted to the satisfaction of all concerned,

I remain,

Yours Truly,

(Signed) Mrs. Solomon Fox.

Rose Fox to Director of Public Works.⁹²

George and Herbert Pitcher (Case 31, D73) argued that their property of .025 acres had a good view of Castel Harbor, and they shared a surrounding property and waterfront lot that was used for drying fish nets and pulling out boats. George had a new wooden house with a tin

roof. Herbert's was a galvanized iron roof. Their fish pots were lost by dredgers. Their case was not heard until June 1942.

Herbert and his family (his wife, her foster mother and six children) were rehabilitated to Texas on a 0.25 acre of land. The Committee had a five-room stone house built for him. His earlier house was four room wooden house with a metal roof. He was a fisherman and claimed loss of earnings due to the fact that his previous home was on the South Shore of St. David's where he could easily fish the waters of Castle Harbor. He now had to fish from North Shore and there were days when he could not get to Castle Harbor. The dredging operations also killed or drove away large stocks of fish from the area. He and his brother George were the only fisherman who used the South side to fish.⁹³

Ethelind Ursula Thelma Fox (D96) lived on a thickly wooded .023 acres with small cedars. She valued her land at 500 pounds. Herbert Pitcher farmed all the arable land on the lots of 96-99, and divided the harvests among the group, including his mother-in-law and interested families. Ethelind would now have to buy vegetables. The last time a crop had been harvested was in August 1941 (eggplant, carrots and broccoli). The Committee claimed that the loss of crops was included in the revised land values. The US Government offered her £120.⁹⁴

The arbitrators launched their own pejorative comments at St. David's through the process. For example, Jeremiah William Landward Pitcher (D45) valued his .44 acres at £885 and received 15% for compulsory dispossession. His land was good for planting. His two daughters lived there but did not pay rent. His land was farmed by Gilbert Lamb for at no cost, but he ate there. There were pig styes there, but all were owned by Lamb. Pitcher was granted £695, but it was joked that he should be deducted 25% from his award for being able to escape from the vicinity of Lamb's pig styes.⁹⁵

Prison warden Howard Higgs (D-11) lost his milk and egg business on 2.47 acres. He also had a cow shed, horse stable, and a large chicken coop £2577.⁹⁶ C.H.L. Hayward lost 6 acres of

land that included a house, barn and other buildings. He grew lilies and tomatoes—half of which was planted at the time his land was taken. He could not continue farming on his new property because the soil was poor. Alfred Richard Gayhle Foggo lived on .22 acres. He was the only barber in St. David's. He valued his land at 2,500 pounds. He was questioned about his plans to build a new house. Foggo asked to be moved next to a road so he continue his work as a barber. He received £2,082.⁹⁷ Charles A.L. Fox, sought £500 for his .23 acre. He was offered £160.⁹⁸ Hellen Foggo (D406) lived on .4 acres of land. She planted sweet potatoes all year and rarely had to buy vegetables. and last crop was lifted in November 1940. Her son planted the land. She received only 10.389 percent and was awarded £170.⁹⁹

Charles "War Baby" Fox launched two claims on his .45-acre plot (D101) that he lived on and ran businesses on. His property had a view of Great bay, and he cultivated plants and shrubs around his house. His wife ran a laundry business on the premises. The property held a six-room stone house, a five-room stone house and a workshop. He valued his property at £5320. His arbitration value was at £3297. The older stone house was about 200 years old. He also ran a dance hall and moving picture business known as Casino. His income included Casino, dances and parties, movies and a clinic. His case was not heard until October 24, 1941, and his award not granted until December 1941.¹⁰⁰

Temporary Housing

On May 28, 1941, the St. David's Committee held its 22nd meeting. They discussed demands being held by the U.S. authorities to the Chairman of the Board of Works, J.H.Trott, to have immediate access to some dozen plots of land that were occupied. Residents on those lots were given between 10 and 20 days to evacuate. The Board of Works called a meeting with the St. David's Committee, stating that the US required the whole area within three months. It was clear that permanent homes could not be built in that time, and it was decided to ask the

American contractors to erect prefabricated houses as temporary shelters. This could be done, it argued, with soldiers of the all black Bermuda Military Artillery (BMA) supervised by foremen from the all-white Bermuda Volunteer Engineers (BE). These homes could cost less than 1,000 each. The Bermuda Military Infantry was formed in 1939 at the St. David's Battery. Its racist formation included black soldiers but maintained its Officers as being all white.¹⁰¹

On May 28, 1941, the St. David's Committee informed the Colonial Secretary of the situation. The Public Works department found that it would be impossible to build houses in St. David's or St George's to accommodate people in that time. The Committee then recommended that "as many people as possible" be put into the few vacant houses across St. George's and St. David's and that the temporary prefabricated houses be imported from the United States and built on the Colonial Government property near the Pilot Station. The Committee felt that the temporary houses for dispossessed persons could be built for less than 10,000 dollars. It argued that these builders would be in a better position to build these homes than anyone else because the US contractors wanted to get on with the St. David's project. The Committee felt that this raised the question of temporary housing and that the matter needed to be faced at once. It decided that the majority of houses would have to be built by the Government on Texas.¹⁰²

PERSONS FOR WHOM TEMPORARY ACCOMODATIONS WILL HAVE TO BE BUILT.

Bed Rms in Temp

1.	Felix Bodden	1	(2)	
2.	Gerald Brangan.	3	(3)	
3.	Marie E.A.J. Borden.	2	(7)	
4.	David C. Casey.	1	(2)	
5.	Alfred R.G. Foggo.	3	(6)	
6.	Annie Louise Fox.	3	(3)	Black H. prof.
7.	Stacey Fox.	1	(1)	
8.	Charles Hilgrove Fox.	3	(5)	Black H. prof.
9.	Archibald A. Fox.	3	(6)	
10.	Clarence G. Frith.	1	(1)	Sophia H. Estate.
11.	Granville Fox.	3	(7)	
12.	Grace Fox.	3	(4)	Carris prof.
13.	Mrs Oliver Foggo.	2	(4)	
14.	Frederick W. Foggo.	1	(4)	
15.	Sidney T. Fox.	3	(6)	
16.	Solomon Fox.	2	(4)	
17.	Andrew J. Fox.	2	(5)	
18.	J.T. Fox.	2	(4)	
19.	Raymond A. Hayward.	2	(3)	Sophia H. Est.
20.	Roy Higgs.		(3)	
21.	Charles H.L. Hayward.	2	(3)	Sophia H. Est.
22.	Malcolm Hollis.		(3)	
23.	Benjamin M. Lamb.	1	(3)	
24.	Francis H. Lamb.	7	(1)	
25.	John B. Lamb.	1	(1)	
26.	Gilbert A. McK. Lamb.	2	(3)	
27.	The Misses Lightbourn.	2	(2)	Sophia H.
28.	Hilton P. Lightbourn.	1	(1)	Est. or Carris prof.
29.	Grovesnor M.F. Lamb.	2	(3)	(5)
30.	Franshaw Lamb.	3	(6)	
31.	William T. Lamb.	1	(1)	
32.	Harriet Louise Minors.	3	(5)	
33.	Nathaniel A. Minors.	2	(3)	Sophia H. Est or Carris prof.
34.	Archibald E. Minors.	2	(4)	
35.	George A. Minors.		(4)	
36.	Jeremiah W.L. Pitcher.	2	(1)	
37.	Heward W. Pitcher.	2	(1)	
38.	Mary Claudine H. Pitcher.	3	(5)	
39.	Irene Pitcher.	3	(4)	
40.	George S. Pitcher.	1	(1)	
41.	Herbert Pitcher.	3	(1)	
42.	Fred Pitcher.	2	(3)	
43.	Rebecca Richardson.	2	(3)	!
44.	Eliza Woods.	3	(3)	Sophia H. Est.
45.	Vera Lamb.	3	(5)	
46.	Lamb (Westcotts)	2	(4)	Carris prof.

11 (1s)
15 (2s)
14 (3s)
40

Temporary Housing.¹⁰³

In addition, it found that those persons building their own homes were having difficulty finding labor to do so. The Committee suggested that "prison labor could be used to help excavate [the] foundations for these homes. Similar to the prefabs, it was argued that the all-

black BMI and BMA under the supervision of the all-white BVE could do this labor. These men, it argued, could also build the houses on Texas and save the labor situation.¹⁰⁴

In June 2, 1941, J. H. Trott outlined the temporary housing scheme of prefabricated houses—perhaps along racial lines— to build two framed houses on the Carris property, four frames on the Sophia Hayward Estate, one frame on the Gosling property, and some thirty homes to be built on the Pilot Station property—at St. David’s head on the most eastern end of the Island.¹⁰⁵ The Carris property was used to temporarily house the Fox family who had lived on Westcott Island and a Hilton Lilghtbourn. The Hayward Estate accommodates C Hayward, Raymond Hayward, Eliza Woods (Hayward’s mother) and Clarence Frith. Gosling’s property would accommodate Charles Fox.¹⁰⁶ On June 11, 1941, the St. David’s Committee spoke with the Director of Public Works about building permanent plots on Texas. They aimed to being building permanent homes the following week.¹⁰⁷

Most of the black families were forced to live in four prefabricated barracks until their permanent homes were constructed. The prefabs totaled six apartments. The first six persons temporarily housed there were Solomon Fox (D66), William Millett (D37), Harriet Minors (D61), Oliver Foggo (D104), Andrew T. Fox (D60B), and Andrew J. Fox (D53). This was based on the needs of the US Military.¹⁰⁸

This all came to a head in July. At a Governor’s Executive Council meeting in July 9, 1941, the Governor was informed by SS. Toddings that the dispossessed St. David’s islanders requested another meeting from the Governor to ask him questions and get assurances on specific matters. His council advised that “he should be very careful as to what assurances he gave to the people.”¹⁰⁹

On July 15, 1941, when the Governor returned to speak with these dispossessed families at Wesley Hall. The group wanted to know why it had taken so long for them to be told how much money they would receive for their land and houses, when they would be paid and when

would their new homes be constructed. The meeting included MCPs for St. George's Spurling, Cooper and Toddings, as well as Chairman of the St. David's Committee, Dill.¹¹⁰

According to the *Royal Gazette*, there was a "slight air of opposition" as the Governor opened the meeting, but soon a "feeling of cordiality rapidly developed." The Governor repeated a message from the past March, was a "friend" of the community and that he wanted to help as much as possible. He asked the group to submit questions to Dill. He understood that the speed on part of US officials "had caused and was causing considerable hardship, but he felt that it could not be avoided." The people objected to have not been paid as yet. There were also cases where properties had been taken over by the United States, but payment had not been made. The residents also raised questions about if the development on these lands would affect other cases still in arbitration. Raymond Hayward stated that there had been considerable challenges in building homes at Texas due to lack of labour and building materials. A Ms. Percy Fox had nowhere to go. Harry Hayward wanted to know when and how he was going to be paid. Emeline Borden had to move her restaurant. She did not ask for compensation, for her loss of business, but wanted to be relocated to a central location. Borden owned one of two restaurants leading up from the Black Horse ferry dock and said that it would be almost useless to have a business up the hill "in the bushes." She had received most of her trade from passers by. Similarly, R.D. Minors sought compensation, as he owned a restaurant next to Borden.¹¹¹

The meeting, which was designed to let the community "air out their grievances," was discussed at the Governor's next executive council meeting. In response, the Governor felt that one important idea that had come out of the meeting and needed to be followed up on was that some of the houses that the St. David's islanders had been ousted from were now being occupied by American personnel. The Governor asked the Chairman of the Board of Public Works to take this matter up with the US authorities and have it ceased.¹¹²

A meeting of His Majesty's Executive Council was held in the Council Chamber on the 9th July, 1941, at 10:15 A.M.

PRESENT: His Excellency Sir Denis John Charles Kirwan Bernard, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Lieut.-General, Governor and Commander-in-Chief.
Major E.A.T. Dutton, C.B.E., Colonial Secretary.
Lieut.-Colonel H.D. Maconochie, M.C., R.E., Second Senior Military Officer.
J.T. Gilbert, O.B.E., Attorney General.
J.T. Trimingham, C.B.E., Colonial Treasurer.
W.J.H. Trott, C.B.E., M.C.P.
A.T. Gosling, M.C.P.
E.H. Trimingham, C.B.E., M.C.P.

1. The minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd July, 1941, were confirmed, subject to minor amendments to items 3 and 25.
2. The despatches received from the Secretary of State for the Colonies between the 2nd and 9th July were laid on the table for the information of members.
3. Council were informed by His Excellency of the visit which he had paid to the camp of the Bermuda Cadet Corps the previous day, and of how pleased he was at the manner in which it was being run this year.

4. With reference to Council Minute No.25 of the 25th June, Council were informed of the letter which had been received from the American Consul General, regarding the motor vehicles being used by Captain Jules James (Commandant of the United States Naval Operating Base), and the letter which it was proposed should be sent to the American Consul General in reply.

IT WAS ADVISED that the despatch of a letter such as the one proposed should be approved.

5. His Excellency informed Council that he had paid a visit to the headquarters of the Prize Court on Monday morning, and that he was very satisfied with the manner in which the work was now being carried out under the supervision of Sir Roger Hall.

6. Council were informed by the Honourable the Colonial Secretary that Mr. S.S. Toddings had come forward and stated that the residents of St. David's Island, who were being dispossessed of their homes, had expressed a desire to have another visit from His Excellency

Colonial Secretary Dutton remembered it differently. The Governor claimed that everything just took time—the setting up of committees, etc. However, his reception was quite different than the one in November. According to the Colonial Secretary, “a number of very indignant citizens jumped to their feet” and expressed in succession “in the strongest language (somewhat out of place in a place of worship)” their thoughts on the unfair arrangements. Several of them collectively shouted that “they had lived all their lives in decent houses and they flatly refused to be housed in barracks and would go to prison first.” They then turned their complaints against Dutton,¹¹³ who pleaded with the group to “keep one thing clearly in their minds,” that the Government was working as fast as possible and for the US it was vital for them to build their defenses. He urged the group to “be patient” and to have a “spirit of cooperation.” He told them that “it should be remembered” that they could have been “worse off, having their homes bombed around their ears.”¹¹⁴

Shortly afterwards, they submitted a list of grievances to the Government about the ordeal, including compensation amounts, the demand that they vacate their property before they had received their funds and delays in “rehabilitation.”¹¹⁵ E.P.T. Tucker of the St. David’s Committee felt that the published report of the public meeting had contained complaints made by “certain individuals” from the island’s West End that “nothing was being done for them.” He regretted that they had made these concerns public, because to his knowledge the Committee and its chairman had “gone out of their way to help the individuals who voiced the complaint.”¹¹⁶ In discussing the public meeting, the Committee responded to Bodden’s case. Her complaint was that any land at “Texas was out of the business center and would be useful for reestablishing her restaurant.” The Committee decided that compensation should not extend for the purpose of reinstating businesses, but a monetary compensation would allow the owner to make their own arrangements to establish a particular business.¹¹⁷

To add insult to injury, only the day before W.B. Smith had received £14,500 pounds (some £763 pounds) for his six building 19-acre property on Longbird island. He had sought £25,000 at £1,315 per acre. Disparities in compensation are further displayed in US military records of the arbitration.¹¹⁸

St. David's Island Properties (Cont'd)

Parcel No.	Owner	Approx. Acres	Appraised Value	Owner's Asking Price	U.S. Offer	Final Award
D-6	McCallan, N.B.	1.80	\$ 3,040	\$ 8,888.00	\$ 3,454.00	\$ 4,003.64
D-7	Smith, H.R.D.	1.58	3,551	8,776.90	3,838.00	4,064.24
D-8	Smith, Heirs of Susan E.	8.80	16,256	39,107.20	17,877.00	20,630.16
D-9	Smith, H. Reeve T.	9.57	24,773	187,496.40	27,249.80	55,594.44
D-10	Smith, Essie M.	2.07	16,644	30,712.08	18,309.28	22,939.12
D-11	Higgs, H.R. et al	2.47	9,833	20,463.41	10,818.08	20,145.56
D-12	Alden, C. S.	16.28	24,564	33,000.00	26,635.72	26,635.72*
D-13	Blake, J. F.	6.26	8,012	16,422.60	8,811.24	10,811.04
D-14	Richardson, A. W.	0.04	3,294	3,555.20	3,555.20	3,555.20*
D-15	Richardson, R.	0.11	1,764	3,797.60	2,020.00	2,828.00
D-16	Minors, N. A.	0.56	2,591	4,953.04	3,232.00	4,839.92
D-17	Gibbons, M. A.	0.74	952	3,030.00	1,090.80	1,276.64
D-18	Smith, H.R.D.	19.10	67,095	187,496.40	73,802.72	95,100.16
D-19	England, Church of	4.72	6,408	12,120.00	7,049.80	8,308.24
D-20	Darrell, J.D.W.C. Est.	0.18	216	399.96	282.80	282.80*
D-21	Fox, Mrs. J.E.C.	1.33	1,736	--	1,818.00	2,424.00
D-22	Lowe, Eva T. et al	1.21	2,214			
	3/4 Int.			1,827.09	1,827.09	1,827.09*
	1/4 Int.			858.50	809.03	1,207.96
D-23	St. David's Soc. Club	3.81	11,289	39,996.00	12,418.96	18,131.62
D-24	Hayward, R. A.	1.49	7,446	19,876.80	8,181.00	14,382.40
D-25	Smith, Mrs. S.	3.94	8,926	27,827.52	9,817.20	16,963.96
D-26	Hayward & Lightbourne	1.00	1,175	2,424.00	1,292.80	1,846.28
D-27	Hayward, Ada	2.15	2,795	4,888.40	3,070.40	3,943.04
D-28	Redmond, J.T.O.	1.71	2,166	8,714.89	2,424.00	3,070.40
D-29	Mahoney, Ada G.	0.96	6,767	7,942.64	6,464.00	6,464.00*
D-29	Woods, Eliza (TENANT)	None	None	364.61	None	404.00
D-30	Roberts, S.W.	2.59	5,602	11,990.72	6,161.00	6,714.48
D-30	Hollis, M. (TENANT)	None	678	6,088.28	707.00	
D-31	Hayward, C.H.L.	6.21	18,461	40,400.00	20,809.08	27,407.36
D-32	Hayward, V.	0.92	4,009	7,320.48	4,407.64	6,185.24
D-33	Hughes, C.E.P.	0.20	6,908	8,080.00	7,595.20	7,878.00
D-34	Frith, Est. of W. D.	2.83	9,289	21,214.00	10,504.00	16,525.60
D-35	Brangman, Mary E.	0.19	337	1,212.00	367.64	424.20
D-36	Outerbridge, Belle T.	3.14	4,593	4,040.00	4,040.00	4,040.00*
D-37	Ingham, E.F. et al	11.51	15,550	37,774.00	17,105.36	22,474.62
D-38	Cooper, John H.	0.74	4,394	10,782.56	4,831.84	6,060.00
D-39	Lightbourne, J. Est. of	0.52	5,253	11,196.06	5,777.20	9,296.04
D-40	Saltonstall, J. Lee	5.01	10,291	14,325.84	11,320.08	11,158.48
D-41	Spurling, S. S.	9.44	13,532	23,108.80	14,883.36	22,042.24
D-42	Fuller, W. P.	3.26	6,697	8,484.00	7,368.96	7,368.96*
D-42	Lamb, W. M. (Crops)	None	None	282.80	None	40.40
D-43	Beals, Jr., E. M.	3.09	3,132	5,490.36	3,498.64	4,512.68
D-44	Beals, Jr. E.M. & Beal P.	8.08	9,719	14,362.20	10,689.84	12,895.68
D-45	Fitcher, J. Wm. L.	0.44	1,407	3,575.40	1,547.32	2,807.60
D-46	Foggo, A.R.G.	0.22	5,251	10,100.00	5,858.00	8,411.28
D-47	Lamb, G.A.M.	1.80	4,463	8,540.56	4,908.60	6,698.32

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St David's Island Properties.¹¹⁹

On July 26, 1941, Raymond Archibald Hayward, told the arbitration committee, "I hope you remember me anyway." After one of the arbitrators stated that compensation had to be

based at market value, he replied, “I am not concerned with market values. Do you understand, my property was not in the market. I would not have sold my land for any money—no, not even if Mr. Vincent Astor asked me.” He owed 1.5 acres and wanted £4,920 but had been offered £2,000 pounds by public works.¹²⁰ Hayward rejected the amount of £2,025 offered him by the US government for his lot (D24). He sought 19,376 USD, the US offer was 8,181. His was awarded 14,382.40.¹²¹ When Hayward evacuated his house, he took all of the electric light fixtures, window sashes and inside doors, picture molding and mantel piece, bathtub and wash basin.¹²²

Spurling owned 9.4 acres of land (D41) in St. David’s. He claimed that his property was being “sold to wealthy Americans and a piece of waterfront on both Castle Harbour and Dolly’s Bay was reserved for purchasers to have access to the waterfront on both sides. He would only make sales to persons who had already previously bought lots. He valued his land at £500 an acre. It held one whaler’s cottage that’s dated from 1780s, a partly built cottage, and 600 cedar trees. He asked for £5720 and rejected an initial offer by the US military for £3684. His total property was 12.66 acres, but the US Government sought 9.44 and left with over 3 acres. He received 20% compulsory, and the arbitrators agreed with his £1000 valuation of his buildings.¹²³ Spurling was one of the few landowners in St. David’s to actually get an award close to his own valuing of his land. The S.S. Berkshire was being used as a “hotel ship” for the workers. It accommodated some 600 workers and was anchored in St. George’s harbor.¹²⁴ On August 15, 1941, Spurling wrote to the Committee hoping to lease property to the US authorities at Dolly Bay to allow the Berkshire to moor there. The Committee decided against this.¹²⁵

By July 23, 1941, the St. David’s Island Land Titles Tribunal, led by F. Goodwin Gosling, had looked at close to 100 cases. Gosling asserted that the arbitration process would take at least another year. Three hundred pounds were paid to the St. David’s Committee members. During a discussion in the HOA, Talbot remarked that some of the families felt “pretty badly

about being dispossessed, especially when they did not know how much they would get or where they would go.” Some of the US base personnel were being housed in the homes of some St. David’s Islanders who were in the prefabs. This was “a sore point...It looks like very hard luck for the people who are being put out.” Talbot, who recall, was on the Bermuda Committee, stated that it was “just an unfortunate circumstance” that it did not know how to cure but deplored “for the poor unfortunate people.”¹²⁶

In August 30, 1941, Fox’s arbitration case for Texas was heard. In February 1941 Fox had agreed to sell 27 acres on Texas to the Bermuda Government for the rehabilitation of the other St. David’s Islanders at £500 an acre for a total of 13, 500, with the exception of Kate’s Bottom. In June they offered him £10,000. After this moment, Fox then stated he needed £18,900. The Board of Works had offered him £10,000 in June and wanted to stick with this price. Fox had arrowroot and seaweed—the arbitrators trivialized this ---“some talk about arrowroot, some talk about seaweed.” Up to three years before he had sent some £800 of arrowroot to London. He had made more than £2,000 selling lilies in recent years. He housed a shop sea view restaurant on the property which was owned by a Ms. Martin and harvested 59 to 100 loads of seaweed off of Great Bay. He wanted to keep his land on an area called Majuba Hill. He also farmed land 4-5 acres. They arbitration award totaled £12,905.¹²⁷

In December 1941 Susan Fox called on the Committee to give her funds and she would look after herself as the Department of Public Works had done nothing towards building her home. The Committee stated that they were still trying to locate proof of title.¹²⁸ In January 13, 1942, Fox reiterated that she did not want the Government to build a home for her.¹²⁹ In 1948, there remained one unsettled case, that of the estate of Jonna E.C. Fox (lot D21).¹³⁰

On December 11, 1941, the St. David’s Committee discussed the question of sending a social worker to St. David’s. It felt that this would be a good idea if done without publicity. A letter was sent to Dutton on this matter.¹³¹ It returned to this idea in early 1942 and was awaiting

a response from the Colonial Secretary. It was decided to write to the health department and Spurling to “see if some organization set up could take care of this matter. The issue—allegedly “conspicuous want of care of houses or surrounding property.”¹³² On May 6, 1942, the Committee read a letter from a Mrs. Frederick Allen regarding a social worker to help St. David’s Islanders in “adjusting to their new quarters.” The suggested candidate was twenty-eight-year-old Ada Banker, who worked at New York’s settlement house, Hartley House. She had visited Bermuda as a tourist and had an “attractive personality and experience in Community work.”¹³³

Who lost and benefited from the land grabs?

This report has shown evidence of the following in the case of land dispossession in St. St. David’s during WWII for the US base: unusual and unethical activities regarding the passage of the laws authorizing the land grabs; undisclosed dealings and relationships between foreign speculators and Bermudian lawmakers; racial, class and ethnic biases towards the communities targeted for removal; unfair standards and/or practices of land valuation; power disparities between those carrying out the land acquisition and residents; limited avenues of redress for displaced landowners; individuals and groups that benefitted from the land grabs; individuals and groups who were disadvantaged by the land grabs; individual and societal impacts of the land grabs; and local and/or colonial government participation, authorization, and/or non-intervention in the land grabs.

The US received its Army and Navy base, which included areas beyond St. David’s in the east of Bermuda, and Bermuda’s white elite kept the Great Sound. In the name of empire and imperialism, St. David’s islanders lost more than their homes. As High notes, they lost their “island.” This included their livelihood, sustainability, space, ecological infrastructure, land, farms, fishing spaces, and living cultural spaces. They were made to suffer via a white power structure that devalued not only their property but their lives as human beings. Without question, colonialism,

racism, segregation and white political power created a context via which black St. David's Islanders were treated less fairly than their white counterparts.

How can we account for the impact of agricultural loss on this community? For example, what was the impact of Archibald Fox's loss of his cassava farms. As the largest grower of a domestically used plant, how did this impact not only him individually but also Bermuda's community that consumed and utilized cassava? How even would this impact on agriculture impact on the diets and food knowledges of St. David's?

On the other hand, the white community in St. David's responded more favorably to the grabs. To reiterate, they filed the first thirty-five claims. They were also directly compensated. Individuals such as MCP Spurling clearly benefited from the grab. While not a resident in St. David's, he owned property on the island, which he claimed he was going to use to build a segregated resort. His property was thus evaluated with "tourism speculation." It stands to reason that Spurling was aware of the St. David's decision. Furthermore, this places Spurling at the center of the land grabs in Tucker's Town and St. David's.

It was not inevitable that St. David's island would be chosen for the building of the base. The building of the United States military bases in Bermuda during World War II was facilitated by a discriminatory and irregular land dispossession in St. David's Island and surrounding areas orchestrated by a matrix of White internationalism—British colonialism, US imperialism, and Bermuda's oligarchy. This uneven process with consistent racist overtones consistently pitted the will and power of British colonial officials, US military authorities, and the island's white oligarchy against the desires of a small community of largely black Bermudians of African and Native American heritage who possessed limited economic, political, and social power.

The land grab cases of St. David's and Tucker's Town speak to a number of systemic issues in Bermuda that could be addressed by Bermuda's current Government. Before the land grabs, both areas were models of black agricultural sustainable and relative food security, and

environmental sustainability. The Government should make concerted efforts to invest in agricultural and economic sustainability in Bermuda in the areas of farming, fishing and other counterparts. The grabs also reflect the unfortunate relationship between land ownership and political power in the island; sustained efforts and investments should be made to ensure that all Bermudians have access to land ownership, particularly in the context of black Bermudians beings systemically denied such opportunities for generations. The investigation of these areas reflected an unfortunate absence (hidden history) in the narratives of Bermuda; conducting this research was an arduous task that lacked a blueprint to follow. The Bermuda Government should invest in educational programs to ensure that these kinds of historic episodes that dramatically impacted on Bermuda are visible in the education system. The closure of the US base should have been an ideal opportunity for land redress for St. David's islanders. The Government should undertake the difficult task to investigate a land reclamation programs in Tucker's Town.

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² *Bermuda Gazette*, June 22, 1799, 2.

³ "Absconded," *Bermuda Gazette*, November 6, 1924, 1.

⁴ *Bermuda Blue Book*, 1940.

⁵ Steven High, *Base Colonies in the Western Hemisphere* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 56.

⁶ "St. David's," *Bermudian*, December 3, 2014, <https://www.thebermudian.com/heritage/heritage-heritage/st-david-s/>.

⁷ Geoffrey Scott Rothwell, "Mohawks in the Onion Patch: The Creation and Maintenance of a Group Distinctions in Bermuda," M.A. Thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1988, 113.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ “Restless Natives,” *Bermudian*, May 12, 2018,

<https://www.thebermudian.com/heritage/heritage-heritage/restless-natives/>

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *The Eagle*, May 5, 1938, 2.

¹² <http://www.expobermuda.com/index.php/latesthof/723-edward-bosun-swainson>

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¹⁴ *Bermuda Blue Book*, 1940.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Iris Vaughn, *1939 – 1945, Historical Notes for NOB/NAS History*, 1945, US Bases Collection, Bermuda National Archives, Bermuda, 10.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

²¹ Dutton, *A History of WWII*, BNA, 58.

²² Vaughn, 14.

²³ *Ibid.*, 21.

²⁴ Dutton, 61.

²⁵ Vaughn, 21.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 23.

²⁷ Dutton, 61, 63-65.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 82-83.

²⁹ Vaughn, 25.

³⁰ High, 49.

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- ³¹ Vaughn, 25.
- ³² Dutton, 87.
- ³³ Vaughn, 29-30.
- ³⁴ Ibid, 30.
- ³⁵ Vaughn, 27.
- ³⁶ Dutton, 87.
- ³⁷ "Governor Explains Bases At St. David's," *Royal Gazette*, November 20, 1940, 1, 5, 8.
- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid,
- ⁴¹ Ibid, 1.
- ⁴² Dutton.
- ⁴³ Ibid.
- ⁴⁴ "Assembly Debated US and Naval Base Yesterday," *Royal Gazette*, November 21, 1940.
- ⁴⁵ "Love's Labor Lost?" *Recorder*, August 29, 1936, 2; "Bermuda and the Olympics," *Recorder*, February 1, 1936, 1.
- ⁴⁶ "Never again," *Bermuda Recorder*, September 5, 1936, 2, 7.
- ⁴⁷ "Bermuda and the Olympics," *Bermuda Recorder*, February 1, 1936, 1; *Bermuda Recorder*, 12 September 1936, 1.
- ⁴⁸ Dutton, 5-6.
- ⁴⁹ "Assembly Debated US and Naval Base Yesterday," *Royal Gazette*, November 21, 2021.
- ⁵⁰ Dutton.
- ⁵¹ M.S., "Letter to the Editor," *Royal Gazette and Daily Colonist*, November 21, 1940, 2.
- ⁵² Alan Waters, *Coshocton Tribune*, "US Defense Bases Force Bermuda Families to Leave Land Held Three Centuries," December 23, 1940, 2.

⁵³ *Sunday News*, "Families Must Leave Bermuda As US Shapes Up New Bases," February 23, 1941, 2.

⁵⁴ Dutton.

⁵⁵ "Tommy Fox: The 'King' of St. David's," *Bermudian Magazine*, December 1940.

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⁵⁷ "Bermuda Works out Compromise on Base," *New York Times*, January 2, 1941.

⁵⁸ Colonial Secretary Dutton to W.E.S. Zuill, December 11, 1940, St. David's Island Committee Board of Arbitrators Correspondence, BNT/03/0072/1, Bermuda National Archives.

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⁶¹ Minutes of the Second Meeting of the St. David's Committee, December 13, 1940. St. David's Island Committee Board of Arbitrators Minutes BNT/03/0072/1, BNA.

⁶² High, 61.

⁶³ E. Laing, Minutes of the 19th Meeting of the St. David's Committee, May 15, 1941; St. David's Island Committee Board of Arbitrators Minutes BNT/03/0072/1, BNA.

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⁶⁵ United States Bases Acquisition of Land & Rehabilitation Act 1941, BNA.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ N.B. Dill, January 9, 1941, St. David's Island Committee Board of Arbitrators Minutes BNT/03/0072/1.

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⁷⁵ Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the St. David’s Committee, January 10, 1941, St. David’s Island Committee Board of Arbitrators Minutes BNT/03/0072/1, BNA.

⁷⁶ Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the St. David’s Committee, January 14, 1941; Minutes of the 6th Meeting of the St. David’s Committee, January 16, 1941; St. David’s Island Committee Board of Arbitrators Minutes BNT/03/0072/1, BNA.

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⁷⁸ Minutes of the 9th Meeting of the St. David’s Committee, March 18, 1941; St. David’s Island Committee Board of Arbitrators Minutes BNT/03/0072/1, BNA.

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⁸⁸ High, 58.

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⁹¹ St. David's Arbitration Case No 28 Solomon Thaddeus James Fox, W.B. Records of the Arbitrators, BNA.

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