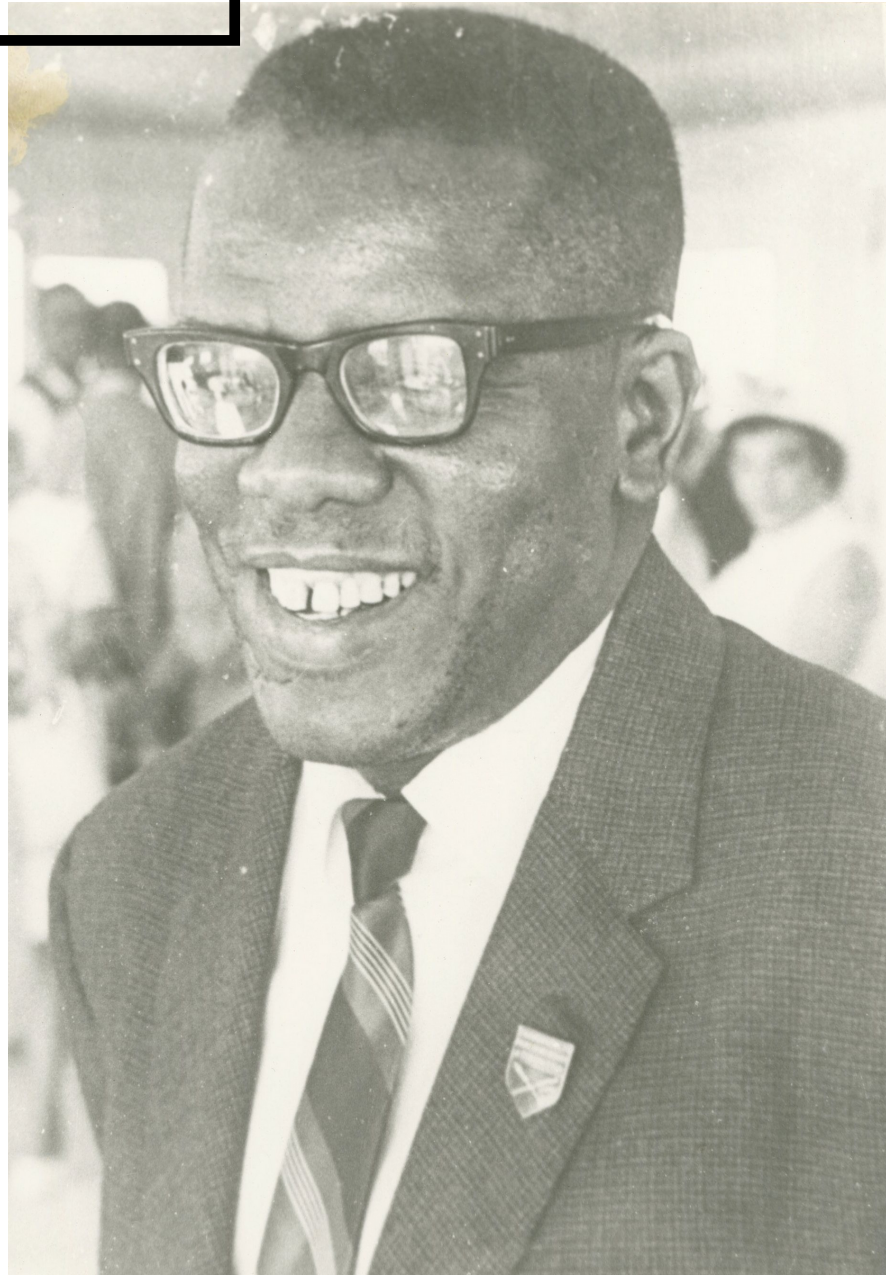


ON HIS 97TH BIRTHDAY, PHILIP GOLDSON'S LEGACY RESONATES

Jineen Roches
Coordinator
The Goldson House for Democracy and
Patriotism

Philip Stanley Wilberforce Goldson was born on Wednesday, July 25, 1923, to Peter and Florence Goldson. He was devoted to changing the narrative of British Honduras as a colony, dedicating six decades of his life to the movement for democracy and freedom. His commitment to Belize ultimately led to his recognition as a Belizean National hero.

From an early age, Mr. Goldson recognized the importance of education and the pursuit of purpose despite all the obstacles he faced. He independently achieved higher education and transformed into a revolutionary political thinker. Luckily, the budding leader found like-minded young men, such as Leigh Richardson and Rt. Honorable George Price, with whom he explored activism, journalism, and politics. As his political activism matured, Goldson transitioned from his role as a radical journalist and editor to a minister and attorney, using his platform and portfolio to improve the lives of Belizeans.





A couple weeks ago, as I contemplated on Philip Goldson's birthday and how The Goldson House would celebrate this year, I was led to a deep reflection on his legacy. Knowing he would have celebrated his ninety-seventh birthday, I felt the sudden urge to explore the symbolism of the number ninety- seven. Upon researching, I discovered that the results were pleasantly accurate.

The number ninety- seven signifies tolerance, intuition, introspection, wisdom, and analysis, and represents humanitarianism, compassion, and care; truly fitting of Philip Goldson's legacy.

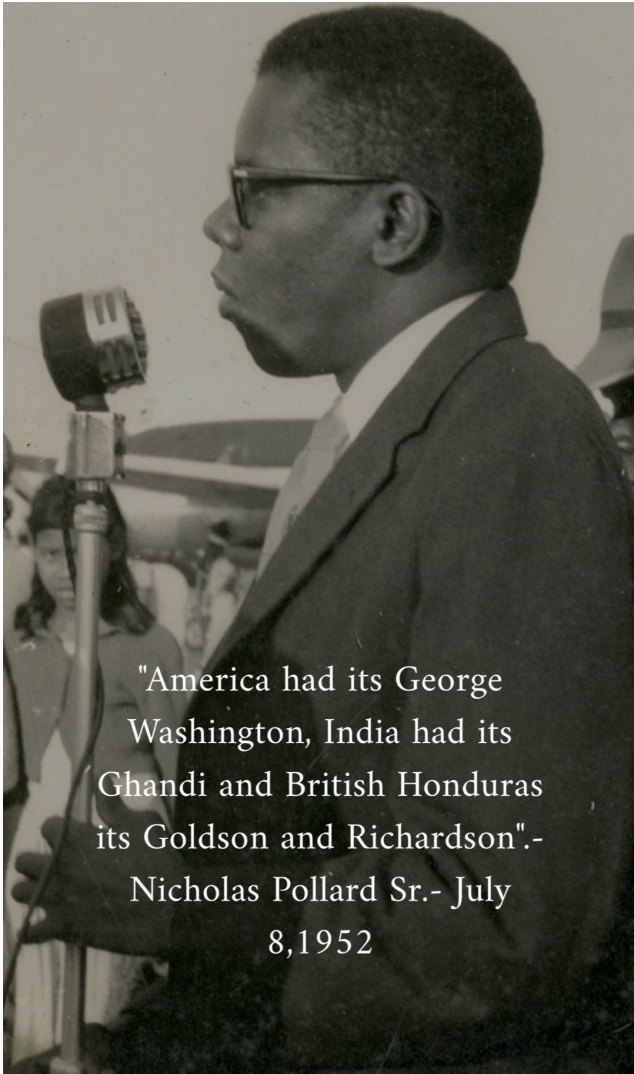
Philip Goldson channeled frustration and hope into a radical "evolutionary" movement for the accomplishment of social justice, equality, and prosperity.

He wrote in a 1951 Belize Billboard article, "There are two roads to independence; Evolution and Revolution. We are now trying Evolution". He had an intuitive vision for British Honduras and actively sought to develop and evolve the colony into a democratic free nation. His vision for Belize was beyond understanding, for some, but with time his diligence was convincing enough to prove greatness was possible.

Resilience is the most accurate word one could use to describe Philip Goldson's response to the relentless harassment by the Colonial Officials to sabotage the Nationalist Movement and Belize Billboard progress. He served eight months, hard labor, in prison for a charge based on "seditious intention" in 1951. Nonetheless, Mr. Goldson committed his time to teach fellow prisoners to read and write. That was the type of care and compassion Philip Goldson had for people. He had immense concern for the welfare of humanity.

As Minister, he utilized his portfolio of Social Services to develop our country and improve the lives of Belizeans through different initiatives. He pioneered the Village Council System, established the Teacher Pension Scheme, the Disabilities Service Division, and the Department of Women Affairs, which we still benefit from today.

Truthfully, many fail to recognize his fight for freedom of speech. Despite all obstructions against him, Goldson never silenced himself. He empowered people through either his speech or writing, even after he was blind. Philip Goldson submitted his freedom for eight months, to secure a lifetime for Belizean people. He once stated in Belize Billboard October 29, 1950, article that "We regard ourselves as guardians of the people's right to free speech. We consider it our duty to defend the right to the bitter end", and so he did.



Our national hero was a man of wisdom, who analyzed every matter relating to Belize's sovereignty. Consequently, he coined Guatemala's claim as "unfounded". For decades he disputed all attempts made to jeopardize Belize sovereignty. It is with this conviction that Belizeans today have taken the matter to the International Court of Justice and continue to resist all threat against Belize's sovereignty.

Moreover, Goldson's sincerity, political integrity, and unapologetic love for his country set in motion the events that would help to solidify Belize's exercise in democracy. He combined a righteous fight against oppression and a defiant hope for prosperity and freedom.

Philip Stanley Wilberforce Goldson was a man for humanity, Compassion, equality, freedom and prosperity. It is only right that we as Belizeans reflect on his legacy, and find inspiration to build our own. Given all that this year, 2020, has taught us about resilience and endurance, we must look to our elders and be inspired by their vigor and persistence to move forward successfully. Philip Goldson, our Belizean National Hero, may we inherit your vision, strength, and willpower.

Happy Heavenly 97th Birthday Philip Stanley Wilberforce Goldson!

May you continue to rest in power.