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THE Democratic National Alliance (DNA) has promised to work toward legalising gambling and the numbers industry in the Bahamas if it wins the next general election.

Speaking on a radio talk show, DNA leader Branville McCartney said when his party becomes the government he will revisit the gambling issue and take it before the people for their views.

He said: "While God should always come first and He is in everything, I do not agree that gambling is ungodly. I could be wrong, but I have not seen any proof that gambling goes against the teachings of the Bible.

"With that said, I will advocate to legalise gambling in this country because there is so much that can be done with the proceeds. I will put it to the people in a referendum and let them decide what should be done."

Mr. McCartney also talked about crime, the fear of crime and his personal views and his party's views on capital punishment.

He said: "I will say this, this is one leader of a political party who believes in capital punishment.

"If you vote for DNA you are voting for the enforcement capital punishment. Do not vote for the DNA if you are against capital punishment. The whole issue of hanging not being a deterrent is nonsense because it was not intended to be. Hanging is punishment, point blank, not a deterrent. If you commit a murder you will see your death. We will remove all the hindrances to ensure that justice is served."

Mr. McCartney challenged the leaders of the two major parties, Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham and Perry Christie, to publicly state their views on capital punishment. He alleged that both leaders do not believe

in capital punishment and that is why it is not being enforced despite being on the books.

Last night, the DNA held their first of a series of town meetings intended to introduce the party principles to the public.

Last night's meeting dealt with "crime and the fear of crime." Mr. McCartney said the party intends to have similar meetings over the coming months on immigration, job creation, the economy, education, health care, the environment and science and technology.