

UWI fraternity welcomes Seaga

Petrina Francis
Gleaner Writer

UNIVERSITY OF the West Indies (UWI) faculty members and student body are expressing support for the pending appointment of Opposition Leader, Edward Seaga, to a 'high-ranking academic position' at the institution.

Yesterday, some spoke animatedly of Mr. Seaga's coming and said his very strong views on topical issues will only add to the wealth of knowledge at the institution.

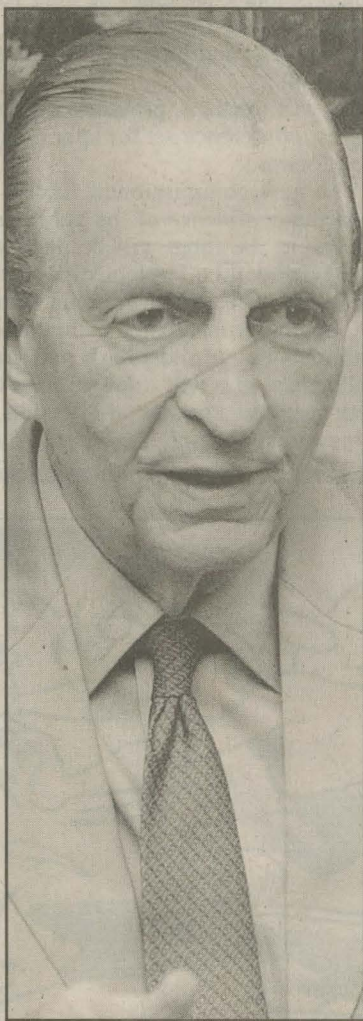
"We welcome him (Seaga) with open arms and look forward to his contribution," said Dr. Anthony Harriott, a lecturer in the department of government.

A KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSON

Dr. Orville Taylor, lecturer in the social sciences department, also supports Mr. Seaga's appointment to the university. "He is a social scientist and in particular, he is a sociologist/social anthropologist. Not to mention the fact that he has garnered a lot of insights over the years and whatever anyone might feel of him politically, he is quite a knowledgeable person," said Dr. Taylor.

Mr. Seaga holds a solid reputation as a sociologist, having done extensive research in inner-city communities in the Corporate Area, on revivalism and other aspects of Jamaican life. Though a highly controversial politician, Mr. Seaga, in a radio interview said, his '...years in government and opposition have qualified me as a political historian'.

Holding the reputation as a contentious leader, Mr. Seaga has not minced words on the sub-



SEAGA

ject of federation in the region and the impending CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ). These two issues are central to current debates on the Mona campus about the role of the university in the region.

Dr. Taylor noted that Mr. Seaga's knowledge would be

beneficial to the university. He said that Mr. Seaga's philosophical views would not be a conflict of interest because a university or an academic should thrive on diversity, noting that any system that does not have space for opposition is one that would be highly suspect.

NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Dr. Harriott concurred with Dr. Taylor that Mr. Seaga's views would not be a conflict of interest. "Absolutely not. Members of faculty have varied opinions on different things and that makes campus life interesting," he said. "We celebrate diversity and I think he will make a useful contribution."

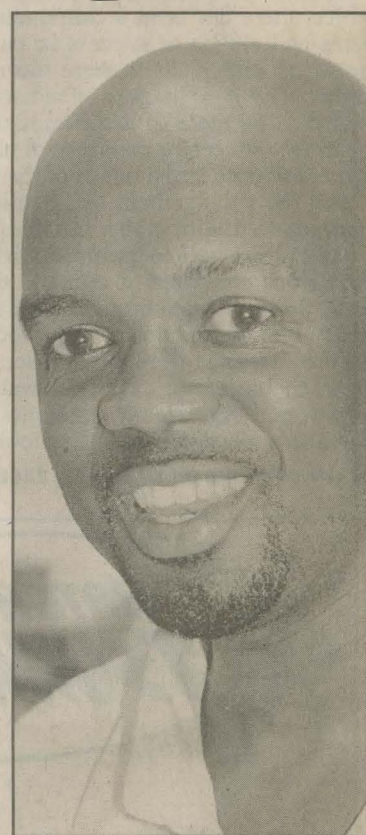
And Damion Crawford, president of the guild of students, said the guild does not have a problem with Mr. Seaga's imminent appointment. He said students would benefit from the knowledge that he possesses.

Mr. Crawford said he is convinced that Mr. Seaga is capable of working in whatever position he is and his age would not be a factor because "experience comes with age".

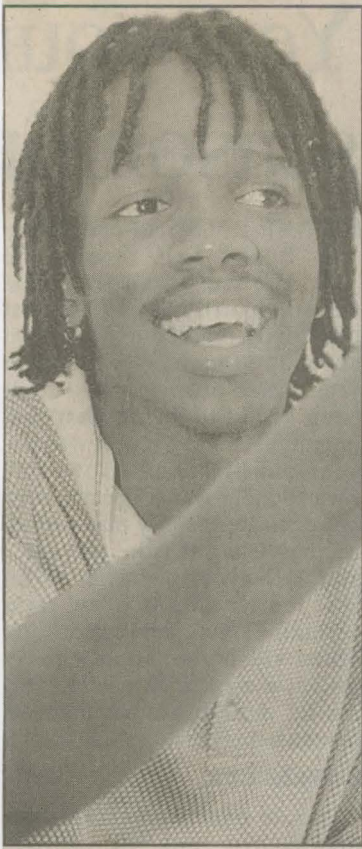
RETIRING AS MP

Mr. Seaga announced last week that he would be retiring as Member of Parliament for West Kingston by mid-January to take up a "high ranking academic position at the UWI. He has served the West Kingston constituency for more than 40 years.

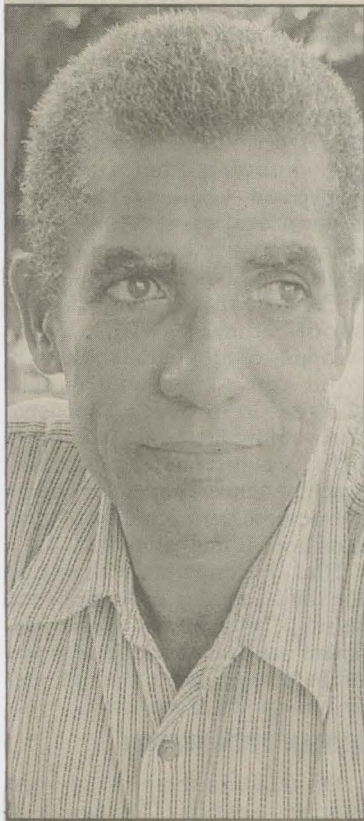
Contacted yesterday, Joe Pereira, deputy principal of the university, said he was not at liberty to disclose Mr. Seaga's position as all appointments are confidential until the individual is appointed.



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The Gleaner January 4, 2005 A3

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