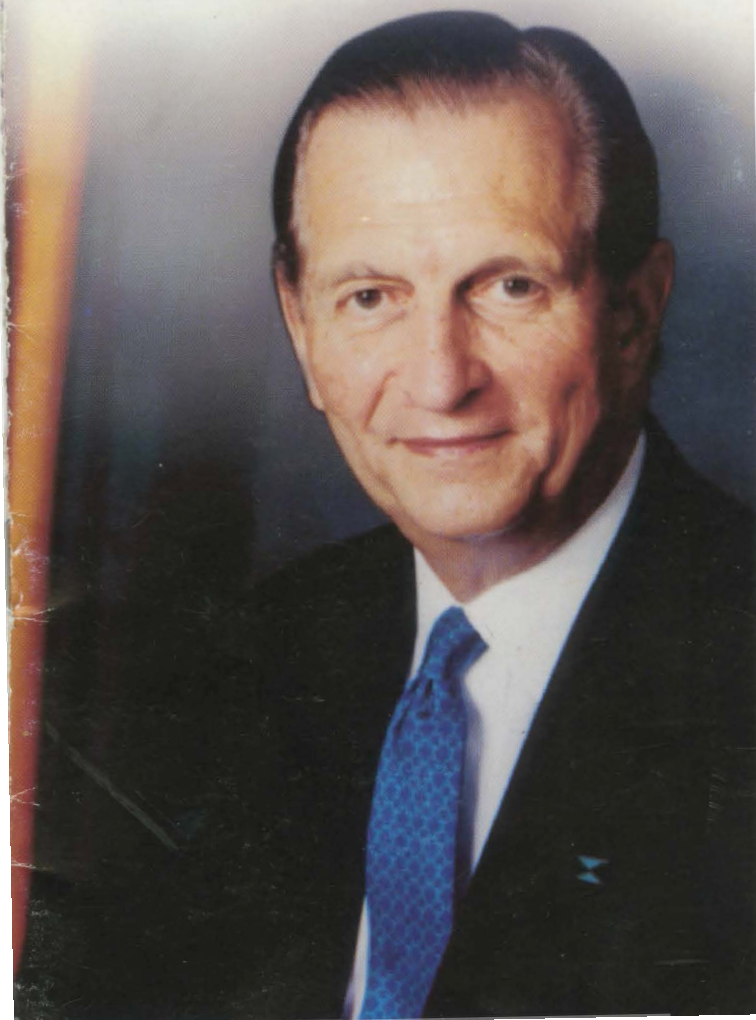


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*The Rt. Hon  
Edward Seaga  
PC, MP, BA.*



**T**he Right Honourable Edward Phillip George Seaga, PC, MP, BA, LL.D. (Hon), former Prime Minister (1980-89), Leader of the Opposition since 1989, was born on May 28, 1930 to the late Phillip George Seaga and Erna Seaga (nee Maxwell). He was educated at Wolmer's Boys' School in Jamaica and graduated from Harvard University in 1952 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in the Social Sciences.

### **POLITICAL CAREER**

Mr Seaga's political career began in 1959 when Sir Alexander Bustamante, the founder of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), nominated him to serve in the Upper House of the Jamaica Legislature, the Legislative Council (later the Senate). His appointment at age 29 made him the youngest member ever appointed to the Legislative Council, which established the framework for national independence in August 1962.

In April 1962 Mr Seaga was elected Member of Parliament for Western Kingston and he has held that seat for 35 consecutive years. He is the only person who has been re-elected as Member of Parliament for that constituency for more than one term and is the longest serving Member of Parliament in the history of Jamaica.

Immediately after winning his seat in 1962, Mr Seaga was appointed to the Cabinet as Minister of Development and Welfare. Following the 1967 General Elections, he was made Minister of Finance and Planning and in 1974 he became Leader of the JLP and the Parliamentary Opposition until the 1980 General Elections. Edward P.G. Seaga became Prime Minister of Jamaica following the General Elections of October 30, 1980 when the Jamaica Labour Party won a landslide victory over the incumbent Peoples' National Party (PNP).

The mandate of Mr Seaga and the JLP was re-newed in the uncontested 1983 General Elections. He remained Prime Minister until February 1989.

Mr Seaga was also Minister of Finance and Planning, and his portfolio included responsibilities for information and culture.

Several economic and social programmes, which have had a significant impact on Jamaica's growth and development, were conceived and initiated by Mr Seaga.

### **CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT Financial Development**

Mr Seaga has established, encouraged, promoted or introduced several institutions, which have contributed to the modernisation and development of the financial sector. These include the Jamaica Stock Exchange (1969), Jamaica Unit Trust (1970), Jamaica Mortgage Bank (1973), National Development Bank (1981), the Agricultural Credit Bank (1981), the Ex-Im Bank (1986), and the Students' Loan Bureau.

He promoted the modernisation of commercial-agriculture by introducing agricultural high technology and stimulating agricultural enterprises in new crops. He put unused and under-used publicly-owned lands to work. The highly successful Jamaica National Investment Promotion Ltd, (JNIP) now JAMPRO was created by him in 1981 as a one-stop investment organisation to promote local and overseas investment in Jamaica.

Under his administration, in the 1980s the Income and Corporate Tax System was comprehensively reformed and modernised to make it more equitable and efficient. The rate was substantially reduced to a flat 33 per cent from a high of 90 per cent, for both individuals and

corporate entities. Mr Seaga also introduced modern computerized technology into the administration and organisation of revenue collection in which each taxpayer would be assigned a Taxpayer Registration Number (TRN). He overhauled the indirect tax system by combining a number of taxes into a single General Consumption Tax (GCT).

As Minister, of Finance, Mr Seaga represented Jamaica as a governor of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Urban and Rural Development and the Environment**

In the 1960s Mr Seaga transformed the country's then worst slum — "Back-O-Wall" — into a modern, low-income residential community, re-named Tivoli Gardens. Tivoli Gardens has a full range of cultural and social amenities for all age groups, and remains a model of successful urban community development.

Mr Seaga established the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) in 1968. Through the UDC the waterfronts of Kingston, Ocho Rios and Montego Bay were developed into major resort, residential, port and office complexes.

Among other accomplishments, the UDC has spearheaded the development of Negril as a resort area. Notably, two-thirds of the choice land for development was acquired by the UDC at Mr Seaga's initiative to establish a land bank. This has formed the basis for planned developments such as Hellshire, Bloody Bay (Negril) Seville and Auchindown (Westmoreland).

Perhaps the largest of all urban development projects will be the 30,000 acre Hellshire area on the outskirts of the over-populated capital

city. Mr Seaga initiated the purchase of this prized area, together with nearby Caymanas lands, for the creation of a new city through the UDC.

In 1985, Mr Seaga established the Metropolitan Parks and Markets (MPM) as a subsidiary of the UDC to be responsible for public cleansing, beautification and the maintenance of the parks and markets in the city of Kingston and other specified urban areas.

### **HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

Mr Seaga's most satisfying area of creative endeavour has been the creation of several outstanding social programmes especially for young people. Among them are the Human Employment and Resource Training Programme (HEART), which began in 1983 and provides job-related training for school leavers and drop-outs on a wide scale throughout Jamaica. This has had a most positive impact on the expansion of skills and job capabilities of young people.

In 1985, he launched Solidarity, a programme to finance and stimulate entrepreneurship among young people by giving them loans and guidance in establishing their own micro-businesses.

### **Food Aid Programme**

The Food Aid Programme was established by Mr Seaga in 1983 to assist the poorest groups in the society by supplementing their food supply. The most significant beneficiaries under this programme are primary school children, who receive a high protein lunch daily. In addition, pregnant and nursing mothers, children under three, the indigent, disabled and elderly receive food stamps to assist them to improve dietary needs.

### **Golden Age Homes**

The Golden Age movement was launched by Mr Seaga in the 1960s and a new concept in modern community care for the aged Golden Age Home was launched in the 1980s, with the construction of modern, planned homes for the aged.

### **CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Mr Seaga has often said that his first love is culture, and his monumental achievements in this field stand as a testament to this.

He created and established the Jamaica Festival, (in which institutions, groups and individuals compete annually in the literary, performing, plastic and graphic arts, as well as culinary skills, leading up to the Independence celebrations). He also introduced National Heritage Week. Jamaica Festival has become the showcase of Jamaican talent and the cradle of our traditional cultural expressions.

In the 1960s while he was Minister of Development and Welfare, Mr Seaga gave Jamaican popular music (Ska) its first exposure to the international scene by promoting overseas tours of Jamaican artistes. This laid the foundation for the international emergence of Reggae, now popular worldwide. He established a craft development company — Things Jamaican — in 1961 to nurture the development of Jamaica's handicraft; made Devon House a national monument to showcase our heritage and craft; and completed plans for the re-development of Port Royal, Seville and Spanish Town as historical monuments of international significance.

He conceived and designed the Cultural Training Centre for all the arts (drama, music, painting/sculpture and dance), and donated his own extensive collection of folk music of Jamaica to the School of Music.

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Mr Seaga influenced the careers of several internationally acclaimed Jamaican popular artistes and played a major role in introducing the work of the world-famous Jamaican intuitive artist Mallica 'Kapo' Reynolds.

He also inaugurated the respected *Jamaica Journal*, published quarterly by the Institute of Jamaica, which is devoted to promoting the arts, natural history, sociology and science through publications.

Mr Seaga played a principal part in the return of the body of Marcus Garvey to Jamaica and in establishing the nation's highest order, that of National Hero, of which Garvey was the first recipient.

#### INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

Mr Seaga promoted the concept of an international "cultural bank" leading to the establishment of the International Fund for the Promotion of Cultural (IFPC) by UNESCO in the 1970s.

In the 1980s, he played a leading role in the establishment of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) conceived as a "Marshall Plan" for the Caribbean and promoted the concept of a human facility (or "manpower bank"), later adopted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as the Short Term Advisory Service (STAS) to provide low-cost short-term expertise from the international private sector for developing countries.

He has also been in the forefront of the international campaign to intensify and expand economic sanctions against South Africa as a means of bringing apartheid to an end.

Mr Seaga addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1985 and made his memorable call for an intensified attack on the South

African rand. In October 1987, at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Vancouver, he demonstrated that sanctions were working against South Africa.

#### HONOURS AND AWARDS

In 1981 Mr Seaga was appointed by Queen Elizabeth II as a member of her Majesty's Privy Council.

Mr Seaga has also been honoured by several countries:

- the Republic of Venezuela—Grand Collar de Libertador (1981)
- the Republic of Venezuela—Gold Mercury International Award (1981)
- the Republic of Korea—Grand Gwangwa Medal, Order of Diplomatic Service Merit (1981)
- the Federal Republic of Germany—Grand Cross of the Order of Merit (1982)
- Mexico—Order of the Aztec Eagle (1987)

He is the recipient of several prestigious international awards:

- Gleaner Honour Awards: Man of the Year, 1980, 1981
- Avenue of the Americas Association, N.Y.—Gold Key Award (1981)
- Pan American Development Foundation Inter-American Man of the Year Development Award (1983)
- Dr Martin Luther King Humanitarian Award (1984)
- United Nations Environment Programme—the Environmental Leadership Awards (1987).

#### HONORARY DEGREES

- University of Miami, LL.D. (1981)
- Tampa University, LL.D. (1982)
- University of South Carolina, LL.D. (1983)
- Boston University, LL.D. (1983)
- Hartford University, LL.D. (1987)

## PUBLICATIONS

*Parent Teacher Relationships*, published by the Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies.

*Revival Spirit Cults* (Jamaica Journal), published by the Institute of Jamaica. Folk Music of Jamaica (Album of music recorded by Ethnic Folkways Library).

## PERSONAL

Mr Seaga, who was born in the Evangeline Boothe Memorial Salvation Army Hospital in Boston while his parents were in the USA, was also a Jamaican citizen by virtue of his parentage, but he made the momentous decision to formally give up his American citizenship.

On August 22, 1965 Mr Seaga married Marie Elizabeth "Mitsy" Constantine, Miss Jamaica 1965. They have two sons, Christopher, Andrew and a daughter Anabella. This marriage dissolved in 1995 and the following year, on June 14, 1996 he married Carla Frances Vendryes, MPA.

He plays tennis, hunts and collects Jamaican folk music.

A keen gardener and amateur landscaper, Mr Seaga has translated his love for plants and flowers into the beautiful Enchanted Garden Resort, which has become a unique attraction in Jamaica.

He is a member of the Kingston Cricket Club, various hunting clubs and the Jamaica Skeet Club.

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