

## • Venezuela helps recovery plan

# A \$25M 13 SEP 1981 BOOSTER

THE JAMAICAN economic recovery programme is to be boosted by a \$25 million input from Venezuela, it was reported yesterday on the return of Prime Minister Edward Seaga from Caracas.

A Press release issued on Mr. Seaga's arrival at Manley Airport described his 48-hour visit as successful, accomplishing all its objectives and reaching important agreements with the Venezuelans.

But journalists expecting the usual Press briefing after such a mission were disappointed when the Prime Minister, his wife and delegation were whisked away after only brief words with the welcoming party.

Observers felt he might have been unwilling to field questions on his strong reaction to the new Franco-Mexican policy on El Salvador, among other things, which he described in Caracas as a

threat to the Caribbean Basin aid plan recently formulated by the U.S., Canada, Mexico and Venezuela.

Some of the mission's successes concerned financial deposits at the Central Bank, bauxite and alumina, oil and private sector mechanisms to aid investment flows, according to the Press release.

At a plenary meeting, decision was taken "to give active consideration to the Jamaican proposal that Venezuelan accord, which would allow the same 30 per cent credit to be given to the purchase of much cheaper fuel oil, than is now produced from the more expensive Venezuelan crude. This would allow some of the cheaper costs of oil, which now prevail in the world market to be made available to Jamaica".

The Venezuelan Vice Minister of Mines and Energy, Mr. Moreno Leon, will visit Jamaica next week to discuss with the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica details of the proposal.

During the Prime Minister's official visit, meetings were held with VENALUM, the Venezuelan smelter company, which has a contract to purchase 100,000 tonnes of alumina from Jamaica in 1981. It was decided that there will be no cutback in Jamaican alumina purchased under the Venalum contract for 1981.

Venalum had advised earlier this year that it would not be able to take up approximately 20 per cent of this contract, because of the present low level of the world market and its own production problems.

"It was also intimated that the contract with Venalum for 1982 to purchase 210,000 tonnes of Jamaican alumina would be cutback by 20 per cent next year", the release said. However, "Dr. Carlos Rodriguez Soto, President of Venalum, has confirmed that steps will be taken to ensure that this proposed cutback will not affect Jamaica".

These decisions will realise US\$9M of foreign exchange earnings on the sale of alumina which would have been lost, it is anticipated.

Prime Minister Seaga also discussed the Jamaican bid to supply bauxite to the new Venezuelan refinery which is to commence operations late next year.

Among the distinguished guests who met the Prime Minister and his wife at the airport were his children — Andrew and Anabelle, Chief of Staff Robert Neish and Police Commissioner Bill Bowes and Minister without Portfolio Dr. Ronald Irvine.

Those representing Venezuela in the plenary meeting included the Venezuelan Foreign Minister Dr. Zambrano Velasco, the acting president of the Venezuelan Investment Fund, Jose Luis Revenga, Dr. Ignacio Moreno Leon, Vice Minister of Energy and Mines, Ambassador Pedro Luis Echeverria, Venezuelan Ambassador to Jamaica and representatives of Venezuelan Government Agencies.

The Jamaican team with the Prime Minister included Dr. Neville Gallimore, Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; H. E. Excellency Reginald Phillips, Jamaican Ambassador to Venezuela; Carlton Alexander, chairman of Jamaica National Investment Promotions; Hugh Hart, chairman of Jamaica Petroleum Corporation; Dr. Carlton Davis, executive director of the Jamaica Bauxite Institute; Pat Durant, acting director of the Political Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Eyadne Coye, Counsellor of the Jamaican Embassy in Venezuela.

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**MISSION ACCOMPLISHED:** Prime Minister Edward Seaga and wife Mitsy alight from a Venezuelan government aircraft yesterday at Manley Airport after an official two-day visit to that country.