

B/W - Seaga, Edward
Following Seaga's 'confrontation' call —

SECURITY ON ALERT

31 JUL 1979

Cabinet yesterday instructed that adequate security be put in place after considering the reported statement by Opposition Leader Edward Seaga that "the time has come for the Opposition to confront the Government and tell them it was going no further".

Mr. Seaga is reported to have made this declaration in a speech at a \$100 a plate JLP fund-raising dinner at the Bay Rock Hotel in Montego Bay on Friday night.

Deputy Prime Minister P.J. Patterson, in making the announcement about the Cabinet decision in a nationwide broadcast last night, said no Government could ignore the threat of confrontation which came from an Opposition.

He advised people to go about their usual business and said no element would be allowed to disturb them nor would any attempt to subvert the country succeed.

efforts to lock down the THREAT

Mr. Patterson described the statement as "a direct threat to embroil the society in acts that are calculated to promote violence and blood-shed" and added that the intention was to cause panic, fear, disorder and hysteria in the society.

"His central purpose is to keep the society unbalanced and the people divided against each other. His intention is to destroy our capacity to preserve and build our nation by our own determined efforts, to erode our confidence as a people in ourselves".

The Deputy Prime Minister said in addition, it should be noted that the Opposition Leader had now established the pattern of giving news and making statements outside of Jamaica which were designed to spread alarm within the Jamaican community abroad and to place the country in disrepute in the eyes of foreign nations and peoples.

Mr. Patterson pointed to attempts earlier this year to "strangle the economy" by organised demonstrations and

product sectors and said "the strategy is that on no account should any growth in the economy be permitted as this is fatal to their chances of ever becoming the Government".

Mr. Patterson noted Government's efforts to involve the Opposition in dialogue on matters of national importance including electoral reform but said "the path of confrontation is completely contrary to the search for an agreement".

He said the threat of confrontation came at a time when the Prime Minister was away from Jamaica to attend a crucial conference of Commonwealth leaders but stressed that during Mr.

Manley's absence "the country will remain safe and secure".

The Deputy Prime Minister took note of the recent flood damage and said efforts must be mobilised fully for reconstruction and not for tribal confrontation.

He said the prospect of confrontation was sufficient to frighten would-be visitors and even returning relatives and that the loss of tourist business would threaten the jobs of hotel workers.

He spoke of the significance of the Independence season and noted that "certainly the threat of political confrontation cannot harmonise with the spirit which the season demands".