

SOCIAL DEMOCRAT

B/N - Seaga,
Edward.

If there are reports of earth tremors in Europe, particularly in Scandinavia, Germany, Poland, the United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Czechoslovakia, Austria and even Soviet Russia, it will probably be caused by generations of Social Democrats revolving in their graves.

This will be accompanied by similar geographical gyrations in most other parts of the world.

Reason is the incredible claim by Opposition Leader Eddie Seaga that he is a Social Democrat, a statement that any but the most politically naive will find completely at odds with the accepted meaning of the designation and the political stance of Mr. Seaga, particularly in his most recent peregrinations.

Universally accepted as the darling of the most reactionary right wing spokesmen in the United States, Mr. Seaga, normally a most unhumorous man, is either indulging in heavy farce or is undergoing a political metamorphosis of a kind rarely seen and certainly most unbelievable.

It is true that during his period as Minister of Finance he started the trend towards astronomical taxes on income and business earnings, the practice of exit permits for businessmen and others wishing to leave the island on business or pleasure, and vigorous investigation of incomes.

In these he displayed the utmost willingness to look out for governmental interest and no special love for the entrepreneur.

This, however, falls far short of entitling him to be described as a Social Democrat. And while it reveals a tendency to think of Government as a sort of Big Brother it again is no qualification to brand himself a member of the social democratic fraternity.

Mr. Seaga has achieved a high level of credibility among people who feel that Jamaica should be a sort of satellite state which conducts its affairs in the interests of what is best for the West.

He makes it clear that he envisions Jamaica safely and securely snuggled in the armpit of the United States, relieved of any need for self-sufficiency in matters of state and comfortable with a status of economic dependence.

He is not likely to inspire confidence in Washington among his friends by such rash claims.

He is less likely to inspire serious belief in his claim in a country which obviously knows better than he does just what being a Social Democrat (or, Democratic Socialist) implies.

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