

G-G welcomes Seaga to 'club' as he marks 25 consecutive years as MP

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL, the Most Hon Sir Florizel Glasspole, yesterday welcomed Prime Minister Edward Seaga to the "club" of politicians with 25 consecutive years in the House of Representatives, in a simple ceremony at Kings House.

"Good morning to you, sir and welcome. You've have joined the club which now has six members," Sir Florizel greeted the Prime Minister as Mr. Seaga walked into the Morning Room at King's House dressed in a dark blue suit and blue and white polka dot tie, some 10 minutes late for breakfast.

Five M.P.s prior to Mr. Seaga have achieved the distinction. They are: the late Mr. Leopold Lynch, the late Mr. Edwin Allen, Mr. Winston Jones, Mr. Lynden Newland and Sir Florizel.

It was exactly 25 years ago today, April 10, that Mr. Seaga was first elected as Member of Parliament for Western Kingston, a seat which up to then was never retained by any incumbent, including the first Chief Minister, the late National Hero, the Rt. Excellent, Sir Alexander Bustamante. Mr. Seaga has represented the constituency since 1962.

After talking with the Prime Minister for some five minutes, Sir Florizel invited him to breakfast in the downstairs Dining Room, where the two ate ham and eggs and discussed political developments in private while the media waited outside.

After breakfast they returned to the Morning Room where presents and kind words were exchanged beneath the glare of the gold coloured chandeliers swinging around the room.

Sir Florizel said of Mr. Seaga "It is interesting that nobody else had ever held that seat (West Kingston) for more than one term. But, he has by his capacity for leadership and by his ability to serve the people been able to hold them by his side for all these 25 years.

"I would like to congratulate him, because I know what it is to work and maintain a constituency for so many year. I had the pleasure of

holding my seat for 29 years and three months and he has four years and three months to catch up with me.

"I think that he must feel very proud this morning. This was a special breakfast morning for himself and myself. You know we meet from time to time and month to month and we do a lot of things quietly, but this morning was a special morning because 25 years of consecutive service to Parliament is something for celebrating.

"Over all that time he has made an extremely valuable contribution to the development and advancement of Jamaica. I would like in congratulating him to express the hope that his life will be spared to continue his service to our country, because we want as many men with brains to represent us in our House of Parliament. And, I would wish him good luck and happy hunting."

Mr. Seaga in reply said that he could not think of a better way to kick off the celebration of his 25th anniversary in Parliament than having breakfast with Sir Florizel who, he said, was the most universally accepted politician so far produced by the country.

"In addition, you sir, as you have mentioned, are a member of the rather limited club of six individuals who have served 25 years or more in the House of Representatives.

"Your 29 years plus and Mr. Lynch's 32 years stand as the two longest periods of service in the House. Having just attained the level of 25 years of continuous service and therefore being the new boy to the club, I think it is only fair to warn you that I am after your record and, indeed, I will be pursuing Mr. Lynch's record as well: God willing and the people."

The Prime Minister said that anyone who had served 25 years in Parliament had played his part in the development of the country, and to that extent he was glad he had had the privilege of serving.

"I never intended to be a politician. I never had the ambition and I never thought that this would be

my lot in life. But as circumstances unfolded and it became inevitable, in looking back I would say that if I had the chance to do it all over again, I would not have chosen another course.

"Public life has its ups and downs, yes, but there is no question that public life has a great reward of feeling good when you know you have been able to do something that is enduring and that is a part of the development process of the country."

Sir Florizel presented Mr. Seaga with copies of two photos: one was

a picture of the 1962 Cabinet after being sworn-in by the island's first Governor General, Sir Kenneth Blackburne, and including Mr. Seaga; and, the other showing Sir Alexander dressed in tails and top hat leading the JLP Members of Parliament down Duke Street to the ceremonial opening of Parliament that year, with Mr. Seaga also pictured in the ranks.

Mr. Seaga described himself in the first picture as that "little infant in the back," and commenting on the second he said: "in those days,

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you will note, the attire was, somewhat, different.. you will note I am directly behind him (Sir Alexander), to his right, replete with dark glasses."

Sir Florizel noted that: "Sir Alexander never enjoyed himself better than when he was in his top hat and tails."

The Prime Minister noted that his present to Sir Florizel was also a picture, this time of the late Rt.

Excellent Norman Manley leading the PNP's Members of Parliament up Duke Street at the ceremonial opening in 1962.

Sir Florizel noted, then, that he, Mr. Seaga, the Hon. Robert Lightbourne and probably two others, were the only persons alive who were members of the committee which drafted the Jamaican Constitution.

The two leaders then said goodbye and Mr. Seaga left to resume his duties at Jamaica House.

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF JAMAICA

Da Friday April 10 1987

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B/n - Seaga Edward

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B/N - Seaga Edward.



THAT'S ME... Governor General Florizel Glasspole, says to the Prime Minister Edward Seaga, who had just presented him with the picture of PNP Parliamentarians walking up to Gordon House during the 1962 ceremonial opening of Parliament. Sir Florizel earlier presented Mr. Seaga with pictures of the 1962 Cabinet and of the JLP M.P.s walking down Duke Street on the same occasion. The encounter was at yesterday's breakfast at King's House hosted by Sir Florizel in honour of Mr. Seaga's 25th anniversary in the House of Representatives.

Sterling photo

D/G P. 10/9/87

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