

'Bajan' names Seaga West Indian Man of the Year

Prime Minister Edward Seaga has been named the West Indian Man of the Year in a January feature article in the Barbados magazine BAJAN, written by CANA chief editor Hubert Williams.

The article and the writer's judgment based on an interview concludes that the first year of Seaga has brought many significant changes, including the untangling of the United States purse strings, which had been drawn tight against Democratic Socialist Manley.

Mr. Williams declared that it was on the basis of Mr. Seaga's efforts to arrest Jamaica's economic spin and turn the country around, that the Prime Minister has won, hands down, the magazine's "Man of the Year 1981" accolade.

Mr. Seaga who advocates "head" before "heart" said in the article: "We lost 57 per cent of our standard of living over the last eight years by a Government that claimed it had the interests of the people at heart, but because they didn't have the 'head' to determine how to satisfy the interests of the people, they ended up doing something that was entirely in the wrong direction in

which they themselves wanted to go. So even if you have 'heart', you must start with your 'head' because your heart can lead you in the wrong direction. Your head never will, if you use your head wisely".

The BAJAN reports Mr. Seaga as feeling that the Jamaican pattern to progress must be a composite of such models as Singapore, the Philippines, South Korea and Mexico — a rich mosaic of economic dynamism and cultural vibrancy. His objective is the same as the other parties seeking to improve the lot of the people and narrow the gap between the "haves and the havenots".

"But", says the Jamaican Prime Minister, "in order to do that, you must first generate the revenues which will then enable the Government to have the resources to do the things which can narrow the gap ..."

Flowing from that strategy, "we have been able to restore the finances of the country to a level on the basis of which there are no more stops and starts, but a smooth functioning of the economy. Secondly we have been able to restart the

cycle of investment ... now pouring at a level that is totally unprecedented and unbelievable ... two new projects per day, a total of some 500 that are now before us being processed, with a total value of \$340 million in terms of U.S. dollars".

On foreign policy Hubert Williams' BAJAN article asserts that "Seaga rejects the vanguard image which Manley carved out for Jamaica on the international stage, and says instead that the "head" dictates a foreign policy of moderation".

"We do not believe in high profiles, for the simple reason that we are at the centre of the wheel, the spokes of which radiate out in many areas of relationships and influences ...

"All these radiating spokes of vital interests — our heritage, financial interests, trading interests etc. — are such that a country at that focal position has to carry the kind of foreign policy that retains its friends while building and finding new friends. You can't do that by taking high policy profiles in one direction which burn bridges in the other.

"So what we have been doing is continuing to build a solid reputation as one of the countries to which in any conference you can look to help find solutions, rather

than advocate positions".

Prime Minister Seaga, still the most optimistic among the region's leaders of the great substance in the U.S. proposed Caribbean Basin Initiative said he was "very satisfied with the direction in which the plan is moving and am very hopeful that it will shortly be put before the public".

Jamaican marijuana, its cultivation and illegal export and the hysteria it causes on the American market, drew Mr. Seaga's detailed explanation:

"Surveys have indicated that Jamaica's total production is about 2,000 acres, with an earning capacity of \$3,000 U.S. an acre, which means a total of \$6 million. That certainly is not a figure that should lead anyone to have hysterics.

"But the hysteria has been blown up because in Jamaica you have the new cults who delight in offering themselves as photographic models smoking marijuana; and so journalists coming to Jamaica can get a very lurid picture to go with the story, whereas when they go somewhere else, they can 'file' a story but they don't get the pictures to match up with it. So they continue to use Jamaica as the photographic model for a trade that is considerably smaller than elsewhere".