

RT. HON. HUGH LAWSON SHEARER has been Leader of the Opposition since 1972 when the Jamaica Labour Party lost the General Election held on February 29. He was Jamaica's third Prime Minister, appointed to office on April 11, 1967.

Mr Shearer was born in Martha Brae, Trelawny on May 18, 1923. He received his early education in the parish and then at St. Simon's College in Kingston.

On leaving school, Mr Shearer entered journalism, working on the staff of the weekly "Jamaica Worker", the official organ of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union, one of Jamaica's leading workers unions. He later became a trade unionist rising to the post of Island Supervisor of the BITU and has been Vice President since 1960.

In 1955 Mr Shearer won the West Kingston Constituency seat in the House of Representatives for the Jamaica Labour Party and sat in Opposition until the 1959 General Election when he lost. He was subsequently appointed to the Legislative Council - the nominated Upper House of Parliament.

The Jamaica Labour Party won the General Election of April 1962 and Jamaica attained Independence in August of that year. The Legislative Council of which Mr Shearer was a member was replaced by the Senate and Mr Shearer was appointed a Senator and made Leader of Government Business and a Minister without Portfolio. When Jamaica was admitted to the United Nations later that year, he was appointed Deputy Chief of Mission and delivered Jamaica's policy addresses at each General Assembly. It was in his first address to that body that Mr Shearer presented the proposal that a year should be designated "Human Rights Year". The proposal was

accepted and 1968 was declared International Year For Human Rights.

On June 7, 1968, the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, from the Howard University of Washington, was conferred on him.

He was appointed a Privy Councillor to Her Majesty the Queen on January 7, 1969.

In addition to having been Prime Minister, Mr Shearer was simultaneously Minister of External Affairs and Minister of Defence. He is now Leader of the Jamaica Labour Party.

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