

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF JAMAICA



The Most Honourable Hugh Lawson Shearer, ON, OJ
May 18, 1923 – July 5, 2004



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Hugh Lawson Shearer, ON, OJ**
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The Most Honourable Hugh Lawson Shearer
Emeritus Lecturer address in
Vero Technical High School

The Most Honourable
Hugh Lawson Shearer
1923
July 05, 2004



“This Jamaica today is our country. It took us years to struggle to earn the right to become Jamaicans, and now that we are our own people and no longer subjects of others we can no longer shelve our identity by hiding among the nationals in other societies.”

“Where there is no pride there can be no glory, where there is no identity there can be no satisfaction in accomplishments.”

“Here in this country, every Jamaican can look around him and see the things that he and other Jamaicans have built, and be proud of them. Here, we are part of our earth, part of our society, part of the events which take place everyday, part of the people we live among, part of the progress and developments that are changing the shape of our country; and we can identify ourselves with these things and feel a sense of satisfaction in these our accomplishments.”

“Nowhere else in this wide world can this pride and satisfaction be a part of us.”

The Most Honourable Hugh Lawson Shearer
Excerpt from an address to
Vere Technical High School

*The Most Honourable
Hugh Lawson Shearer,
ON, OJ*

(May 18, 1923 - July 05, 2004)



**THE MOST HONOURABLE
HUGH LAWSON SHEARER, ON, OJ**
May 18, 1923 – July 05, 2004

The Most Honourable Hugh Lawson Shearer, ON, OJ exerted robust energies and commitment to Jamaica over his more than six decades as a nation-builder. Mr. Shearer approached his responsibilities with forthrightness and courage: characteristics that commended him to national, regional and international governments and institutions.

Also as Prime Minister, Trade Union Leader and politician his passion and panache lead him to carve indelible inroads in local, regional and international spheres.

“Our future depends on service and hard work. We have not only to maintain our political and economic stability but we must take our successes and multiply them and build up a momentum of force and strength - and goodwill too - that will move the mountains of our problems.” (The Most Hon. Hugh Shearer in his first broadcast to the nation as Prime Minister, 1967)

Mr. Shearer’s belief and commitment to hard work are borne out in the testimony of rich legacy he has left behind from which all Jamaica, and indeed the entire world, can benefit.

A MAN OF HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

The Most Honourable Hugh Lawson Shearer, ON, OJ, Jamaica’s third Prime Minister, was born at Martha Brae, Trelawny on May 18, 1923.



His father, James Shearer, was a World War I ex-serviceman; and his mother, Esther Lindo, was a dressmaker.

He attended Falmouth Elementary School, and distinguished himself in 1936 by winning the Trelawny Parish Scholarship, which earned him a place at St. Simon’s College, a privately owned high school in Kingston. He graduated from St. Simon’s in 1940.

Immediately following his studies, he was recruited as assistant to Mr. Lynden G. Newland, editor of the ‘**The Jamaican Worker**’, the official newspaper of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU).

He rose to be editor of the paper, and became a protégé of National Hero The Right Excellent Sir Alexander Bustamante, after his release from detention in 1942.

Mr. Shearer joined the BITU at a period of intense political and labour turmoil in Jamaica. Sir Alexander Bustamante, the undisputed head of the labor movement and founder of the BITU and National Hero The Right Excellent Norman Manley, head of the first organized political party in Jamaica – The People’s National Party – were both engaged in the struggle to reshape and redefine Jamaican society in the period 1938 – 1944.

Hugh Shearer’s position as a trainee journalist at the Jamaica Worker marked the beginning of his illustrious career in the trade union movement. As trainee journalist, he understudied Mr. Newland until he assumed the position of General Secretary of the BITU.



Mr. Shearer continued working on the paper and eventually became its editor.

TRADE UNIONIST

"Our trade union movement has not only preserved the rights and liberties of the working man and his family, but has also made a major contribution to the re-distribution of the resources and incomes produced in the society. Indeed, the trade union movement is probably more advanced and more developed in Jamaica than in any other country in this area of the world. I am now telling all Jamaica that our country owes a great deal of gratitude to the trade union movement for the preservation of our democratic rights." (The Most Hon. Hugh Shearer)

While still editor of the paper, Mr. Shearer began to serve his apprenticeship as a trade unionist. He took part with Alexander Bustamante and other union officers in union organization and in negotiations with employers in some of the most important labour disputes. Mr. Shearer got his first taste of party politics during the 1944 elections, when he campaigned for the "Chief", as Bustamante was then popularly called, in the Western Kingston constituency. The Jamaica Labour Party won the election and Mr. Shearer continued his work in the BITU.

Three years later in 1947, Mr. Shearer was appointed Assistant General Secretary of the Union, and in that same year, contested and won the Central St. Andrew seat on the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation (KSAC) Council.

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In 1948, he attended a Colonial Development and Welfare Trade Union Scholarship course in Barbados.

His quick grasp of facts, speaking ability and affability made him a master organizer and negotiator, rising through the ranks to become Vice-President and Island Supervisor until the death of Sir Alexander Bustamante in 1978, after which he became President General.

His achievements as a Trade Unionist are numerous.

- He has been a member of Joint Industrial Councils for all major industries since these were first established in Jamaica.
- He negotiated the first island-wide agreement for paid maternity leave (with the Sugar Manufacturers Association).
- In 1977 he organized the major expansion of trade unionism into the middle class when he won the rights for employees of the Bank of Nova Scotia.
- He was the founding President of the Joint Trade Union Research and Development Institute, the co-ordinating body for the major trade unions.
- He pioneered educational benefits for the workers in sugar cane industry and other employees.

Through all these offices, he retained a position of leadership at the BITU, and never wavered from his first commitment to the well-being of the Jamaican worker.

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In 1994, Mr. Shearer, then president of the Jamaica Confederation of Trade Unions (JCTU) distinguished himself by merging eleven leading trade unions into a single body. That same year, the JCTU staged a conference on the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) to which were invited leading American trade union representatives.

The Sunday Gleaner report states:

“The JCTU prepared a thoroughly researched paper on trade policy and need for social clauses in trade agreements. Shearer cautioned on the danger of goods produced in markets that used child and prison labour. The JCTU under Shearer’s leadership showed the value of a pro-active approach to trade and was an example for the private sector to follow in doing homework and to prepare for trade issues in a professional way” (Sunday Gleaner, January 8, 1995; page 10).

POLITICAL LIFE

In 1947, at age 24, he was successful in winning a seat on the KSAC Council contested under Universal Suffrage. In 1949 he lost the General Elections in Western Kingston.

In 1951, at 28 years, having completed a course in trade unionism in Barbados, he was appointed to the Legislative Council, the Upper House of the Legislature.

In 1955 he was successful in his second attempt at national representation by capturing the Western Kingston Constituency, and serving as an Opposition member.



His representations were always geared towards the improvement of the rights of the workers, the under-privileged, children and women.

Mr. Shearer vigorously lobbied against the formation of the Federation of the British West Indies in the Referendum Campaign in 1961. The people of Jamaica voted against Federation and for Independence. The Jamaica Labour Party won the next general elections and this stalwart Jamaican was appointed to Jamaica’s first Senate in 1962, and served as Deputy Chief of Mission to the United Nations.

In 1963 he introduced a landmark resolution at the United Nations calling for greater emphasis on human rights, and moved a resolution calling for a year to be dedicated to this cause. His submission to the United Nations was his first address to the international body.

“If the world can benefit as it did from an International Geophysical Year – and many of the spectacular achievements we are now witnessing are a direct result of the effort – then surely we may expect that out of a worldwide human rights campaign there may come some equally spectacular gains in man’s relationship to man.

“I propose, therefore, that the United Nation’s concern in this area be intensified through an International Year for Human Rights.” (The Most Hon. Hugh Shearer, 1963)

Mr. Shearer’s proposal was approved, and 1968 was celebrated “International Human Rights Year” – a stellar achievement for one of the organization’s newest members.

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He was successfully returned to Parliament in 1972, 1976, 1980 and 1989, and established a large industrial complex at Hayes, while seeing to the expansion of Vere Technical High School, one of the top producers of female athletes in the world. After the JLP lost the elections of 1972, he returned to trade unionism with vigour, and successfully moved in Parliament for the minimum age for voting to be reduced from 21 to 18 years, and for compulsory maternity leave payments to be made by all employers.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

In 1980 when the JLP was returned to power, Mr. Shearer became the first Prime Minister to serve under another, and he performed with distinction as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister until 1989.

Committed to the ideal of the economic and social well-being of the people of this Region, Mr. Shearer will also be remembered for his participation in the ACP/EU negotiations of the Lome Conventions, through which Europe granted assistance to developing countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. He was noted for using his renowned negotiating skills to resolve issues within the ACP, including those related to staff welfare, much to the enduring satisfaction of all.

In his role as elder statesman, his was always a voice of toleration and compromise, stressing the need for improvements for the working class and the under-privileged.

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PRIME MINISTER

"The purpose of this Government is prosperity for all. Our purpose is not to build Jamaica in the image of a chosen few. We recognize that you chose us to represent you all and to govern you all, and nothing will budge is from the duty and responsibility of working for the good of every Jamaican.

"The interest of this Government and the nation is one and indivisible, and we intend to apply ourselves to cementing this interest so that our voice will be your voice, our actions, your actions and our successes, the success of all the people of Jamaica." (The Most Hon. Hugh Shearer)

In 1967 Mr. Shearer succeeded Sir Alexander Bustamante as Member of Parliament for Southern Clarendon, and on the death of Sir Donald Sangster in April, he was elected by the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) parliamentarians to be Prime Minister. He also served as Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs.

Described as a 'dynamo' for the social and economic development programmes undertaken in the 1960s, he directed his government on a path to attract new investments and expand existing industries and services.

Additionally, Mr. Shearer worked at widening training programmes to meet the increased demand for skilled labour and professional posts.



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During his tenure as Prime Minister, Jamaica attained its highest ever-gross domestic product (GDP) per capita – US\$2,300 – based on rapid growth in agriculture, mining and tourism.

He also started a system of major highways, the first being the Kingston to Spanish Town Highway, and laid the plans for other by-pass routes, which would remove bottlenecks in all major towns.

During this period, the country's largest alumina refinery, Alpart, was built in St. Elizabeth; in Trelawny the first convention hotel, Trelawny Beach, was constructed; and, in Ocho Rios a new beach with a complex of over 1,000 rooms, the largest such complex in Jamaica at that time, was built. In Kingston, the old, clogged, inefficient waterfront was closed, and the port moved to a new area and renamed Port Bustamante.

“Leaders of political parties, do not in the final analysis, belong only to their political party. The leaders respect each other. Each has, and expresses pride in the other's achievements. These examples should be followed by our young men and women. Parliament belongs to all of us. Our leaders, too, belong to the nation.” (The Most Hon. Hugh Shearer)

EDUCATION

“The national interest in education today, is an indication of the personal involvement of our people in the social and cultural development of their children, and it is also a



reflection of their close interest in, and their awareness of, the programmes of expansion in our educational system. It is a demonstration of the fact that human ambition is satisfied only with the best.” (The Most Hon. Hugh Shearer)

Mr. Shearer had a special interest in education, and courtesy of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), he was able to make marked improvements to the existing system, under the New Deal Education Programme. The New Deal Programme was designed to provide a sound education for every child in Jamaica, and, for the first time, the prospect of a totally educated population became a real possibility.

“It is our belief that every Jamaican deserves the best possible education within his individual capacity and within the capacity of the country to provide the necessary educational facilities. That is why this Government is proud of its New Deal Education Programme, the purpose of which is to make education available to everyone, in every parish of this country.” (The Most Hon. Hugh Shearer)

In the first loan to education by the World Bank in the Western hemisphere, 60 Junior Secondary Schools were built. This programme gave Jamaica the distinction of being one of the first non-European countries to have 100% capacity for all children of primary school age, and provided secondary places for over 70%. (The Junior Secondary and many of the primary schools have all since been upgraded to full high school status).

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This had been one of Mr. Shearer's dreams, since in his youth, less than five percent of the children had access to secondary schooling, and education was used as a means of social and economic discrimination.

FINAL YEARS

He retired from active public life in 1993 after serving in both Houses for 29 years, with a single break, 1959 – 1962. In 1968 he was made a Privy Councillor by the Queen, and he was awarded the Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa* degree, by Howard University in 1968 and the UWI in 1994.

The Most Honourable Hugh Lawson Shearer was fearless in his attempts to develop Jamaica and having youth, a strong personality and forceful leadership skills on his side, he charted several courses for his country. Through his actions, he lifted the morale of every Jamaican and propelled them towards believing each one had a stake in the advancement in the present, and the ultimate success in the future of this country – Jamaica land we love.

"I speak with passion about the future of my country, for I am anxious that every Jamaican must become fully aware of the urgency of the times in which we exist. Today, with the pace of technological advancement, and with the speed with which methods of application are changing and advancing, man's ingenuity is making man's achievements obsolete at a fast rate. Jamaica cannot afford to stand apart, and not identify itself and adjust its methods

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and production attitudes to international standards. The rest of the world cannot be marching left foot forward first, while Jamaica remains the odd man out, marching right foot forward first.

"We have no vast inexhaustible natural resources of things material. Our wealth comes from the talents and skills of our people, and we must develop and train these talents and skills, and then apply these newly developed talents and skills to develop the economic and social conditions of our country with the knowledge of personal understanding." (The Most Hon. Hugh Shearer)

Mr. Shearer is survived by his wife Dr. Denise Eldemire Shearer; sons, Howard and Lance; and daughters, Hope, Hillary and Heather.

*Jamaica Information Service
July 2004*

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MILESTONES

- 1941-1946 – Journalist, Jamaican Worker newspaper
- 1947 – Assistant General Secretary, Bustamante Industrial Trade union (BITU)
- 1947 -1951 – Member, Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation
- 1947 – Awarded Colonial Development and Welfare Trade Union Scholarship
- 1953 – Island Supervisor, Bustamante Industrial Trade Union
- 1966 - Member, Jamaican delegation at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference
- 1967- 1993 – Member of Parliament, Southern Clarendon
- 1967- 1972 - Prime Minister of Jamaica
- 1977 – President, Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU)
- 1980 -1986 – Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
- 1986 -1989 – Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Industry and Commerce
- 1990 – The Order of Jamaica
- 1992 – Chairman, Joint Trade Unions Research Development Centre
- 1993 – Founder and Patron Association of Senior Citizens Clubs
- 1994 – President, Jamaica Confederation of Trade Unions
- 1994 – Conferred with the Honorary Degree of Laws by the University of the West Indies (UWI)
- 1998 – Married Dr. Denise Eldemire
- 2002 – The Order of the Nation

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TRIBUTES

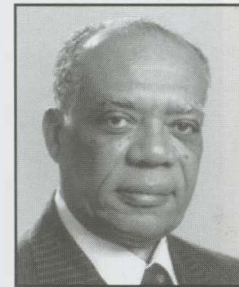
On the passing of The Most Hon. Hugh Lawson Shearer former Prime Minister, there was a large outpouring of sympathy from people worldwide. Locally the political and trade union leaders have expressed their sympathy in tribute to this Jamaican who served his country well. Following are some of the tributes that have been distributed in the media.

A GREAT LEADER OF OUR TIMES

The Most Honourable Hugh Lawson Shearer, ON, OJ, was one of the great leaders of our time. He was very profound, full of knowledge, yet never bumptious or arrogant. Whether it was at the United Nations or some small meeting in the village, he was a leader who impressed all those around him. He was one of those persons who was so blessed that he was comfortable whether he was with royalty or the sugar worker.

With unusual tolerance he would examine every problem presented to him and you could rely on him for objectivity. On many occasions I sought his advice, particularly when I was Minister of Labour. At each time he showed how much he was full of knowledge, always ready to express compassion towards the worker.

As one of the first Prime Ministers of Independent Jamaica, Mr. Shearer did much to advance the upward social mobility of our people and country and this was particularly



*Governor-General
His Excellency The Most Hon.
Sir Howard Felix Hanlan Cooke,
ON, GCMG, GCVO, CD*

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evident in his programme on school building, which broadened the accessibility to persons from all levels of society. He did much also to improve on the country's infrastructure, primarily its roadways and saw to the strengthening of its economic base.

Personally, I have lost a great friend and the nation, one of its finest leaders. Lady Cooke and I extend heartfelt condolences to Dr. Denise Eldemire Shearer, his children and indeed his entire family.

*His Excellency
The Most Hon. Sir Howard Felix Hanlan Cooke
Governor-General of Jamaica*

CHAMPION OF WORKERS' RIGHTS

I have been deeply saddened by the news of the passing of former Prime Minister of Jamaica, the Most Hon. Hugh Lawson Shearer. Indeed, Jamaica and the entire Caribbean region will be plunged into mourning by his departure.

The news of his passing came as CARICOM Heads gathered at Grand Anse, Grenada for the 25th Regular Meeting of Heads. It also comes at a time when the region was already mourning the passing of Sir George Charles, the first Chief Minister of St. Lucia.

It is a reflection of the high esteem in which Mr. Shearer and Sir George Charles are held that Heads of Government paid their respect for the contribution of these two Caribbean stalwarts, by observing a moment of silence in their honour.

Hugh Shearer, who was involved in the regional integration movement in the early years, later represented CARICOM at trade negotiations with Europe and the ACP.

He served Jamaica with honour and distinction as Prime Minister and for a considerable period was the country's Foreign Minister.

He was widely acknowledged as the doyen of Trade Union Leaders throughout the Caribbean. He championed the rights of workers through the trade union movement which he led with conviction and total devotion for many years.

Former Prime Minister Shearer's passing is for me a tremendous personal loss. I will miss his friendship greatly. His death has deprived Jamaica of a quintessential nationalist and dedicated political leader.

Mr. Shearer was beloved by Jamaicans from all walks of life. He will always be remembered as one who could tower above the partisan divide when the demand for unity in action was required.

I extend condolence to his widow, his entire family, the Bustamante Trade Union and his many colleagues in the labour movement and the Jamaica Labour Party.

*The Most Hon. P. J. Patterson
Prime Minister of Jamaica*

*The Most Honourable
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A GENTLE GIANT

The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) announces with deep regret the passing of former Prime Minister, the Most Honourable Hugh Lawson Shearer, ON, OJ. He died at his home in Hope Pastures this morning after a prolonged illness.

Mr. Shearer served Jamaica as Prime Minister from 1967-72, succeeding Sir Donald Sangster who passed away in April 1967 after a sudden illness.

Mr. Shearer was a gentle giant straddling the trade union movement and holding the reins of government, the two pillars of Jamaica's modern history. He served as a Parish Councillor in the Kingston & St. Andrew Corporation (KSAC) in 1947-51 and a Member of Parliament for West Kingston, 1955-59, and later for South Eastern Clarendon, 1967-93. He served also as Senator in the intervening years.

His seminal achievement as Prime Minister was the expansion of the secondary school system in Jamaica by doubling the number of institutions with the addition of 60 new secondary schools.

This opened the gate to secondary education for thousands of young Jamaicans whose education previously ended at the All Age School post-primary level.

In 1963, Hugh Shearer in giving Jamaica's country statement to the United Nations

presented a proposal for 1968 to be declared Human Rights Year. The proposal was accepted.

A life long advocate of workers rights, in keeping with the traditions of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU) and the Jamaica Labour Party, Hugh Lawson Shearer ascended to the pinnacle of the trade union movement when, with the complete support of all trade unions, he was elected Chairman of the Joint Trade Unions Research Centre in 1992, a position from which he retired this year.

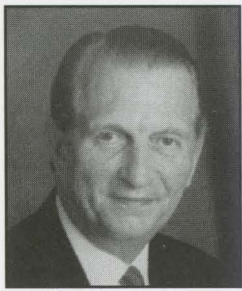
Hugh Shearer, despite his enormous authority and power, was a humble man who never forgot his roots and never failed to use his high office in protection of the poor and disadvantaged.

A captivating personality, his raucous laughter and strong advocacy will always ring in the staterooms and boardrooms where with consummate negotiating skills, he found solutions to the most difficult problems as he brought each argument to a close with a statement of finality.

The Jamaica Labour Party grieves the passing of our elder statesman, our friend, our leader. We express the deepest sorrow to his family and appreciation to his widow Dr. Denise Eldermire for the long and dedicated personal care she gave to her husband in his final years.

*The Most Hon. Edward Seaga
Leader of the Opposition*

*The Most Honourable
Hugh Lawson Shearer,
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*Leader of the Opposition
The Most Honourable
Edward Seaga,
ON, PC, MP*

*The Most Honourable
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A SAD MOMENT FOR JAMAICA

The Government and people of Jamaica regret the passing of the Most Hon. Hugh Lawson Shearer, former Prime Minister of Jamaica and President-General of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU).

In expressing condolence to his widow, Dr. Denise Eldemire-Shearer and other members of his family on behalf of the government, Dr. Peter Phillips, in his capacity as the Minister-In-Charge of the Government in the absence of Prime Minister P. J. Patterson, said Mr. Shearer has had a great career as a trade unionist and politician who was loved and appreciated by all Jamaicans.

Dr. Phillips said on the instruction of the Prime Minister who is attending the CARICOM Heads of Government Conference in Grenada, that Mr. Shearer be accorded a state funeral.

Mr. Hugh Lawson Shearer was a central figure in the early chapters of Jamaican political history in which the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union emerged as one of the leading trade unions in the country.

His role in the political life of the country through the Jamaica Labour Party was equally exemplary. He was selected as a candidate for the JLP in the Local Government Elections of 1947 and served as Member of Parliament for West Kingston from 1949 to 1955. Mr. Shearer continued his political career representing the constituency of South East Clarendon from

1967 to 1993. He also served as Prime Minister between 1967 and 1972.

Beyond Jamaica's shores, Hugh Shearer was well known and respected in the world community. He was a formidable foe against the apartheid regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia and at times led the Commonwealth and international bodies in the fight to remove these two countries from the councils of the world.

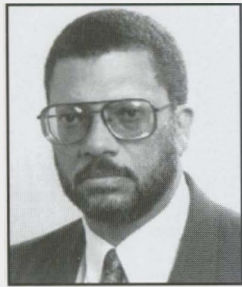
His was a great Jamaican life in which he made a remarkable contribution to national development. We offer condolences to his widow and family.

*Dr. The Hon. Peter Phillips
Minister of National Security
On behalf of the Government & people of Jamaica*

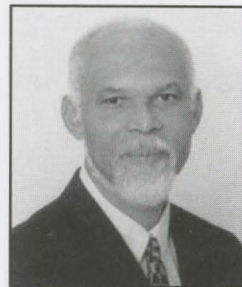
DISTINGUISHED SON OF JAMAICA

It is with regret and deep sorrow that I have received the news of the passing of the Most Honourable, Hugh Lawson Shearer, ON, OJ, former Prime Minister, and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, champion of the labour movement in Jamaica and a true Statesman of the Caribbean.

We in this Ministry are particularly saddened as Mr. Shearer having delivered Jamaica's first Policy Statement to the United Nations in 1962 shortly after Independence, had been closely associated with the Foreign Service throughout his career in Government.



*Dr. The Honourable
Peter Phillips, MP*



*The Honourable
K. D. Knight, MP*

*The Most Honourable
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With over sixty years of public service, the contribution of this distinguished son of Jamaica to national and regional development cannot be over-emphasised. He has undoubtedly been a landmark in the political, economic and social history of our advancement. Mr. Shearer's political, career of almost forty years equipped him with a wealth of experience and knowledge which enabled him to tackle not only local and regional issues, but to confront present and emerging challenges on the international stage, representing the interests of small developing countries fearlessly and with distinction.

In this regard, his powerful advocacy for human rights, culminating in his initiative for 1968 to be declared International Human Rights Year, will long be remembered in the United Nations as one of the major catalysts towards the promotion of fundamental freedoms and self-determination worldwide.

His affable personality, forceful oratory and contagious sense of humour will be sadly missed. Our deepest expressions of sympathy to Denise, his wife, and his family. May his soul rest in peace.

*The Hon. K. D. Knight
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade*

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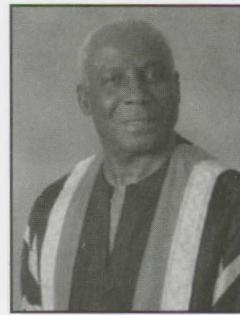
JAMAICAN PATRIOT

Vice Chancellor of The University of the West Indies (UWI), Professor the Hon. Rex Nettleford, has expressed sorrow at the passing of former Prime Minister, The Most Hon. Hugh Lawson Shearer, who died today at the age of 81.

Professor Nettleford received the news of the death of Mr. Shearer's death while attending the meeting of the CARICOM Heads of Government in St. George's Grenada and delivered the following statement on behalf of the University.

The passing of the Most Honourable Hugh Lawson Shearer, former Prime Minister of Jamaica and trade unionist extraordinaire, is a huge loss for Jamaica and the region. His contribution to the development of the trade union movement in the English-speaking Caribbean was extremely important. The support and encouragement he gave to the Trade Union Education Institute at the University of the West Indies, in particular, and also to the establishment of the Joint Confederation of Trade Unions as well as the Joint Trade Unions' Research Development Centre, are some of the enduring legacies of this Jamaican patriot. In acknowledgement of his outstanding contribution to nation building, the UWI conferred on him, in 1994, an honorary Doctor of Laws degree (LLD).

As a politician, Hugh Shearer, like Sir Alexander Bustamante and Michael Manley, loomed large as a charismatic and extremely popular figure. He brought civility to political



*Vice Chancellor
of The University
of the West Indies,
Professor the Honourable
Rex Nettleford, OM*

*The Most Honourable
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life and to trade unionism and in negotiations had the knack of knowing how to disagree, agreeably. He was undoubtedly one of the great leaders in post-independent Caribbean public life and will be greatly missed.

The University of the West Indies salutes Hugh Lawson Shearer and will endeavour to ensure that future generations of West Indians continue to hold him in high esteem.

*Professor the Hon. Rex Nettleford,
Vice Chancellor of
The University of the West Indies*

DOYEN OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

I am deeply saddened by the passing of former Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Hugh Lawson Shearer, who served this nation and the Caribbean Region with distinction.

A personal friend, Mr. Shearer was also the doyen of the Trade Union Movement in Jamaica. He became President of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU) in 1977 and built it to become one of the largest in the English-speaking Caribbean. It was in that context that we sat across many negotiating tables to ensure that the Movement ably represented the workers of this country at the workplace, and not always by our respective unions. He was a strong advocate.

As a stalwart in the Movement, Mr. Shearer was instrumental along with former Prime

Minister, the Most Hon. Michael Manley, in the founding of the Joint Trade Unions Research Development Centre (JTURDC) and Joint Confederation of Trade Unions (JCTU). These institutions laid the foundation for the continuing quest for unity and cohesion in action and purpose that was not constricted by divisive competition.

Members of the BITU, and the people in the Trade Union Movement that he served, can therefore take great pride in the enduring legacy of this unique and remarkable Jamaican icon. His passing saddens us. However, future generations will honour him as a leader whom they can emulate.

*The Hon. Hopeton Caven
General Secretary of the Trade Union
Congress*



*General Secretary
of the Trade Union
Congress,
The Honourable
Hopeton Caven, OJ*

*The Most Honourable
Hugh Lawson Shearer,
ON, OJ
(May 18, 1923 - July 05, 2004)*

*The Most Honourable
Hugh Lawson Shearer,
ON, OJ.
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