

# The marijuana lobby wins Jamaica's election

*The new prime minister, Edward Seaga, is a protégé of cultists and the IMF, reports Gretchen Small.*

Amid mounting political violence which has left over 600 dead in the course of this year, a deeply polarized Jamaican population went to the polls on Oct. 30. When the dust had settled, Edward Seaga of the Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) had swept left-leaning prime minister Michael Manley from power, with over 53 percent of the popular vote.

Before, during and after the election the international press had edified its readers with tale after tale about how a Seaga win meant a victory for "free enterprise capitalism" in the Caribbean. Dozens of Washington "Caribbean experts" philosophized about new "trends" and "tendencies" for democracy in the region, about how the pro-Castro tide is turning, and so on. Both Carter and Reagan have hailed the Seaga victory a triumph for America's interests in the region.

Yet, outside of this magazine, no one has yet printed the single most important fact of the Jamaican elections: that the man who won last week's general election, Mr. Edward Seaga, is a practicing voodoo cultist who is planning to legalize that island's already booming marijuana trade. If Seaga's victory is a victory for "free enterprise," it is so only for Milton Friedman's variety, which would have every nation legalize not only marijuana production and consumption but also cocaine and heroin as well.

In fact, the ouster of Michael Manley as Jamaica's prime minister is a four-year-old project jointly executed by narcotics-linked financial interests centered in the City of London, the prodrug Carter administration, and the notorious International Monetary Fund (IMF). It is the IMF which pulled the plug on the Jamaican economy, and which since 1976 has been pushing it to legalize its more than \$1 billion yearly drug trade.

All three institutions are now expressing restrained elation over the electoral results. A rather dazed Michael Manley has only been able to report: "What we did, was challenge the power of the Western economic structure. This is one country that tried to challenge hegemony, and was not successful."

As a result, Jamaica will now effectively return to the British colonial status that it abandoned only in 1962,

and will follow the International Monetary Fund's dictates to pay off its foreign debt through dope exports.

## Seaga's 'recovery' program

Seaga ran his campaign around the slogan of guaranteeing "deliverance" from the economic devastation Jamaica is now suffering. He pledged to come to terms with the IMF, and to open up the island's economy to as much foreign investment as can be enticed in.

But the real way that Seaga plans to put Jamaica's financial house in order is by legalizing the drug trade. The new prime minister and his major backers have been explicit about this policy for months:

- In April 1980, Bruce Golding, Seaga's second-in-command in the JLP, told the *Chicago Daily Defender* that marijuana has "become a way of life here," and that "there is a resolution before parliament which was moved by one of our deputy leaders, seeking to decriminalize marijuana." Since the JLP also just won a clear majority in the parliament, the law can be expected to be approved shortly.

- In July 1980, Winston Mahfood, Seaga's cousin and principal economic adviser, who also heads the Jamaican Manufacturing Association, called for using the country's drug earnings to buy "legitimate imports of needed raw materials."

- And earlier in the year, Kingston's *Daily Gleaner*, the most violently partisan press backer of the Seaga campaign, was particularly blatant: "The salvation of this country lies in ganja [the local term for marijuana]. . . . We should stop producing so much sugarcane and produce more ganja instead. We wouldn't have any strikes because smokers would be glad to help with production."

The victory for the international drug lobby goes beyond Jamaica itself, however. If Jamaica can be induced to crawl back to the IMF and publicly legalize its marijuana production and trade, then it will serve as an example and precedent for other countries.

As a top U.S. narcotics control officer confided to *EIR* upon learning the results of the Jamaican election: "Colombia has prestige as a democratic country; it

must protect its reputation. But there are other smaller countries like Jamaica which would have nothing to lose if they violated the 1961 Single Convention Against Psychotropic Substances, and of course that would set a precedent for countries like Colombia.”

Jamaica today sells more than \$1 billion of marijuana per year, primarily to the United States. Colombia sells the United States nearly 10 times that amount.

### Manley's blunders

Manley and his PNP party were not merely beaten in the elections—they were trounced. Although the popular vote was 53 to 47 percent, of the 60 parliamentary seats up for election, 51 will reportedly go to Seaga's JLP.

Ten PNP candidates who were ministers in Manley's cabinet were voted out of parliament—including Finance Minister Hugh Small and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister P. J. Patterson. Manley himself was reelected from his local district by a slim margin.

The reasons are not hard to find.

Although Manley did stand up to the IMF and rejected their “conditionalities,” he was the first leading political figure from the Third World to argue that the alternative to the IMF was the proposals of the Brandt Commission. The Brandt proposals are in fact nothing but a version of the same IMF monetarist policies, sugar-coated with anti-imperialist rhetoric designed for the Third World.

In endorsing the Brandt proposals, Michael Manley demonstrated that he was one of the Third World's leading suckers.

One of the ways that Manley and Co. blinded themselves was by availing themselves of the counsel of the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) on all matters of economic and foreign policy. IPS, a leftist Washington think tank, is one of the controllers of the international terrorist movement, and has played a major role in conducting suicidal policy recommendations into credulous Third World governments and “revolutionary movements.”

Equally significant is the fact that Manley and his followers never really attacked Seaga for what he is—a puppet of the international drug lobby. In fact, large chunks of Manley's own party favor legalizing marijuana.

One example is the PNP's director of overseas affairs, Paul Miller, who told *EIR* before the election that he was not interested in stopping Jamaica's drug trade, since “the majority of Jamaicans support the ganja trade, you know.”

The majority of Jamaicans have now also supported Edward Seaga, a cultist drug-runner, as their new prime minister. In so doing, they have handed the IMF a dramatic victory in their drive to make narcotics the Third World's leading export crop.

## The IMF record in Jamaica

Jamaica was targeted as a key production center for marijuana by the international drug trade several years ago. Long-standing British and Canadian families well embedded in the political structure of the former British colony, the existence of significant if mainly small-scale marijuana production, and the island's proximity to the U.S. made Jamaica an ideal place to scale up marijuana production.

A two-sided operation was carried out to turn Jamaica into the third major supplier of marijuana to the U.S. in a period of about four years. On the one hand, international traffickers moved in, following the heavy crackdown on marijuana production in Mexico in 1975-76. Equally important was the role of the International Monetary Fund in forcing through an economic program that systematically destroyed the real economy and *forced* many to turn to the booming illegal economy to survive.

Jamaica turned to the IMF for loans in April 1977, when the combination of zooming oil prices and collapsing agricultural export prices had driven down their reserves. As in all cases, the IMF demanded that the Jamaican government draw up an economic package

### Edward Seaga: portrait of a 'voodoo economist'

Jamaica's new prime minister Edward Seaga has been widely praised in the eastern liberal media as a “quiet and thoughtful man,” a “champion of capitalism,” a “virulent anticommunist,” and a “technocrat.” At various times, he has represented Jamaica as governor before the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Interamerican Bank. Seaga's last Jamaican government post was as minister of finance in the late 1960s, when he instituted a national lottery as the first step toward legalized gambling in Jamaica.

His supporters in the Jamaican Labour Party, however, call him both “financial wizard” and “culture leader,” a reference to a less well-known expertise of Edward Seaga: his sponsorship of voodoo and the cult of Rastafarianism as the “real culture” of the Jamaican population.

that met with their approval before granting any more credits. The core of the IMF program was to channel all available monies out of both production and consumption and into debt repayment.

Between the spring of 1977 and the beginning of 1980, Jamaica implemented a series of IMF-designed programs. For the first year, Jamaica had to undergo quarterly reviews of its economic performance. When Jamaica failed to "pass" even one of the agreed-on requirements, a new program had to be renegotiated, each time demanding more austerity.

From January to March 1978, while bitter negotiations took place over the degree of austerity to be implemented, an international credit embargo was imposed on Jamaica. By March, only essential food was being imported, and the government faced a \$34 million income shortfall.

In the new agreement, the IMF required "on-site surveillance" of the Jamaican economy: IMF officials controlled day-to-day decisions on the economy from new offices in the Kingston central bank.

Throughout the period, a series of devaluations drastically raised the cost of all imports, including food, fuels, and raw materials for industry. Government expenditures were limited, cutting services, and taxes increased to marshal more of the economy's surplus into debt payments. Wages were limited to a 15 percent ceiling while inflation ran at 78 percent. The IMF acknowledged in an official press release that its program had forced the government to significantly "reduce consumption" by the population.

IMF officials demanded that the government "drastically limit," as one official put it, internal credit, even though business screamed for money for vital imports simply to keep their plants running.

The result was predictable: industry turned to marijuana dollars to stay in business. The London *Economist*, commenting last June on the well-known practice, said that the ganja trade, as it is locally called, is good business: "Industry thus manages to pay its foreign suppliers just before they cancel the next shipment, while the ganja money has taken the edge off some of the hardship in the hills."

The IMF is now proposing the legalization of this black market in marijuana dollars, according to a Washington-based IMF official. As the official explained it, the idea is to allow commercial banks to accept dollars earned abroad—no questions asked—for local currency, thus tapping what are now huge economic transactions taking place in "parallel" to the "real" economy.

Today, marijuana is the focal point of economic activity in the country, earning \$1 billion annually, an amount equal to all legal export income combined. The standard of living has dropped by 25 percent over the period, the *Economist* estimates, and unemployment is officially acknowledged to run over 30 percent. An estimated one-fifth of the population now relies on marijuana for some significant portion of their income.

Even the London *Observer* commented a few months ago: "In the complicated and topsy-turvy world of international finance, the International Monetary Fund is now effectively helping those who want to legalize pot."

Seaga personally epitomizes the connections between International Monetary Fund economics, cultism, and the drug trade. Seaga began his career studying sociology at Harvard University in the early 1950s, specializing in spiritualist cults and "faith healing." He continued his studies in Jamaica, then went to Haiti to study voodoo. Seaga then worked under the direction of one of Jamaica's top social profilers, M. A. G. Smith, and became a leading figure in a group of Jamaican sociologists and anthropologists who applied Smith's theory that the mass of Jamaica's poorest people should be treated as a virtually distinct species.

According to the theory, this "bottom class" has its own "evolved indigenous culture," totally different from the "Western imitative culture" of the middle classes. Seaga has specialized in using religious cults as the central organizing element for that bottom class. Since the Boston-born Seaga is white, and 99

percent of Jamaica's population is black, the racist nature of this social theory is blatant.

Seaga achieved prominence in the 1960s when he was minister of culture and welfare. During his tenure, Seaga established a National Festival of Folk Arts as an institution which largely created "reggae," the barbaric music used to promote the Rastafarian drug cult worldwide. Seaga's festival culled the future stars of reggae from local groups, who were raised to international prominence.

Seaga continued his cult studies as a central activity when the Jamaican Labour Party was voted out in 1972. Seaga then dropped out of politics altogether for a year, emerging after his studies to write a brief treatise in praise of the Rastafarian cult.

Faced now with the task of imposing another ratchet of IMF-dictated austerity, which Seaga has promised will be at the top of his agenda, he will need his cult background to "organize" the population to accept even more poverty.