

Shearer biography launched, Trade Union Institute renamed

published: Friday | May 27, 2005

Barbara Ellington, Senior Gleaner Writer



Prime Minister P.J. Patterson receives a kiss from Dr. Denise Eldemire Shearer after presenting her with a copy of 'Hugh Shearer-- A Voice for the People', written by Hartley Neita, at the launch of the book on Wednesday. - PHOTOS BY WINSTON SILL/FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHER

PRIME MINISTER P.J. Patterson has announced that following his recommendation, the Trade Union Institute at the University of the West Indies has been renamed the Hugh Lawson Shearer Trade Union Education Institution, in honour of the late Prime Minister. He was delivering the main address at the launch of the book Hugh Shearer, A Voice for the People, authored by Gleaner columnist Hartley Neita, at Jamaica House on May 25.

In his address, Mr. Patterson noted Mr. Shearer's outstanding accomplishments during his term in office. These include: establishment of the Urban Development Corporation; the island's most massive school-building programme to date; laying the foundation for the establishment of CARIFTA and the Caribbean Development Bank; the Jamaica Unit Trust; the satellite earth station in St. Thomas; the national insurance scheme and some of the foundation work for the Caribbean Court of Justice.

A MOST FITTING TRIBUTE

Mr. Patterson said, "The labour movement was Mr. Shearer's abiding passion" and a most fitting tribute was the renaming of the trade union institute in his honour. This was just the start of plans to more fittingly pay tribute to Mr. Shearer later.

In a programme smoothly compered by talk show host Hon. Barbara Gloudon, Senator Dwight Nelson of the Joint Trade Union Education and Research Centre spoke of the appropriateness of the launch which happened in Trade Union Week and extolled the virtues of the late Prime Minister who had been a staunch campaigner for workers's rights.

Finance Minister, Dr. Omar Davies, recalled the events leading to the authorship of the book and in a witty delivery, chronicled the long but colourful friendship between Mr. Shearer and his dear friend, the late Prime Minister Michael Manley. But he noted that Mr. Neita had omitted the more "juicy" details of some of the late friends' escapades.

In his acknowledgements, Mr. Neita singled out several editors, family members, researchers, colleagues of the late prime minister, as well as Lady Gladys Bustamante and Mr. Shearer's widow for their contributions to the work.