

Sangster

WEST INDIA REFERENCE LIBRARY

INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA  
PARLIAMENT AND POLITICS

INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA  
WEST INDIA REFERENCE LIBRARY

# Sangster—Political man of the year

IT IS exceedingly difficult to pick the political man of 1955. So many persons can lay claim to the title.

There is of course, the Chief Minister, Mr. Manley, who won his first general election in January and transitted smoothly from Leader of the Opposition to Chief Minister. There is Sir Alexander Bustamante, who was knighted in the Queen's Birthday honours. There are three Ministers, Mr. Wills O. Isaacs and Mr. Florizel Glasspole, both of whom have done a remarkably fine job as Ministers, and Mr. Noel Nethersole whose work in the Finance Ministry is just beginning to be revealed.

Beside these there is Mr. George Peryer, who proved himself a good politician towards the end of the year.

Normally, I would have picked the political man of the year from among these persons, but this is an extraordinary year. It is the year of Jamaica 300 and for that reason I pick Mr. Donald Sangster as 1955's Political Man of the Year.

What Jamaica 300 has meant to this country will only be properly assessed in historical perspective and we would not have had it but for Mr. Sangster, who has enhanced his claim to this title by being—I don't know of another case—the first

man to lose an election in one constituency and then going across the country to win a by-election in another constituency all in the same year.

True it is that the imagination and work of the members of Jamaica 300 Committee made Jamaica 300 what it was. They shaped it with loving care and placed before the country a mirror to our accomplishments.

In this year all overtones or undertones of individuality were erased by the community enjoyment in the events of Jamaica 300.

In this year thousands of

that Jamaicans no longer considered themselves as individual British subjects but as Jamaicans regardless of creed or colour. Indeed, I have heard people who by their race might be mistaken as expatriates rushing to let those around them know that they are Jamaicans.

All this was brought about by Jamaica 300, and I am proud that this column lent ready support to Mr. Sangster when he broached the celebration of this year from as far back as 1951.

Mr. Sangster fought to get his idea accepted. He lobbied and struggled against people

tee it gave Jamaica a year which should never be forgotten.

It is for this reason principally that I choose Mr. Sangster as the Political Man of the Year.

He created something with which every Jamaican is now satisfied. The pity of it, of course, was that the Government did not think to associate Mr. Sangster more closely to the events which took place; but that is the way of politics. If you are in, you are in. If you are out, you are out.

Mr. Sangster is returning to the House of Representatives having created a new record in the political history of the island. In a sense, he has justified party politics. In another sense he has justified his own belief in a political career, a belief which must have been badly shaken after the January elections when a constituency in his own parish rejected him.

He can return to the House now with the knowledge that the dream he started dreaming when he visited New Zealand in 1951 and saw one of the Dominion's cities celebrating the anniversary of their association with the British Commonwealth, came to full flower in 1955 and that his own bonus in having created this year for Jamaica was the confidence of people in a constituency strange to him in electing him at the by-election this month.

*by the Political Reporter*

Jamaicans realized for the first time that their people had scored achievements in arts, in music, and in a number of other things.

In this year, people who were proud before to call themselves Jamaicans were even more proud in expressing their origin as if it was indeed a nationality.

The people of Jamaica grew up this year. It was strange how as the year progressed and we witnessed event after event we discovered the calm recognition

who thought of the expense and did not consider what a year of community celebration could do to the growing nationalism of the people.

Finally, after strong opposition, his idea was grudgingly accepted. I say grudgingly because there was no positive support, no really worthwhile financial backing. It was not until he proposed that Princess Margaret should be invited to visit Jamaica this year that the idea caught on, and then in the hands of a really ~~competent~~ commit-