

TRIBUTE BY MOST HON. P.J PATTERSON, ON, OCC, PC, QC TO MR. RALSTON SMITH, CD,

ON THE OCCASION OF HIS PASSING

The passing of Ralston Smith CD, pathfinding communicator and businessman, represents for me, a personal loss. Ralston personified the quintessential professional who gave his best in every occupational area he chose to pursue. He helped to pioneer the field of corporate communication in Jamaica with the founding of Public Relations Associates, an enduring communications outfit which survived the test of time for some fifty years. During that time, Ralston willingly became recruiter, mentor, teacher and guardian for a long list of media and communication professionals, who later rose to great heights of accomplishment in their vocations.

He provided long, loyal and distinguished communication advisory service to me in various capacities during my periods of Ministerial tenure from Industry Trade & Tourism in the 70s to Minister of Development Planning & Production after 1989. As my Communication Advisor, Ralston led the communication team at the Office of the Prime Minister up to the time of his untimely illness in 2001. He was also a dependable strategic communication resource at various times to the People's National Party from our 1972 campaign to the Third Term Victory in 1997.

Public Information became the forte of this outstanding graduate of the Jamaica Agricultural School. He was humble, quiet, unassuming yet incisive with an amazing physical constitution for long hours and consistent hard work. In the public information field he served the Agency for Public Information as Executive Director; was Executive Chairman of the Government News Agency, Jampress; gave service to the Jamaica Information Service as Chairman of its Advisory Board and on occasions, was asked to oversee the operations of the JIS between the appointment of Executive Directors.

Not as well-known as his public information and public relations pursuits, was his pioneering role in the garment manufacturing industry as owner and operator of Apparel Exports Limited and an important employer of skilled and unskilled labour.

/...

As I extend sincere heartfelt condolences to his widow, Pearl, his children, other relatives and friends, I am mindful that Ralston Smith made sterling contributions to the development of Jamaica over many years and in several fields of professional engagement. His legacy lives on through his enduring work, the development and progress of the national institutions he served, and the countless persons whose lives he touched so deeply.

May his soul rest in peace and may the light of the Saviour continue to shine on him.

23RD January, 2015