

New State of Jamaica Celebrates Nationhood

Vice President Johnson Delivers Kennedy's Greetings at Flag-Raising

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KINGSTON, Jamaica — Three centuries of British rule ended at one minute past midnight today when this Caribbean island became an independent sovereign state within the British Commonwealth of Nations.

U.S. Vice President Johnson, in a speech to the crowd at National Stadium before the flag-raising ceremony, said America will aid Jamaica in working for a world "in which all are well-housed, well-fed and properly educated."

'Lovely Boy'

Officially welcoming Johnson, Prime Minister Sir Alexander Bustamante said:

"We greet the Vice President who comes as a representative of the boy we know as President. Just a boy. But a lovely boy at that."

Bustamante said "We've always been loyal to the Crown but we are very pro-American. We see in the United States a warm friend of Jamaica."

The Vice President said he brought the warm, personal greeting of President Kennedy on the occasion of independence. He said he had already talked to the prime minister about problems confronting Jamaica's future and added, "We will plan the future to attain peace and prosperity for all."

Unprecedented Welcome

Continuing, he said: "Our great leaders (U.S. and Jamaican) will work together shoulder to shoulder."

Earlier, this capital city greeted Johnson in a "manner almost unprecedented in Jamaican history," according to a high official.

Enthusiastically waving American flags, an estimated

10,000 Jamaicans shouted words of welcome to the Vice President.

In the party were Johnson's wife, Ladybird, and daughter. Other members of the U.S. delegation included William Doherty, vice president of the AFL-CIO; Adam Clayton Powell, Democratic congressman from New York, and New York State Sen. James Watson.

Johnson's speech and personality dispelled rumors which swept the city beforehand that Mr. Kennedy had not given Jamaicans the importance they felt was deserved. "If Kennedy feels strongly about cementing ties with the Americas," one Jamaican observed, "why didn't he come himself to the independence of the first new American nation in 50 years?"

But Johnson's statement, "We of the United States look forward with enthusiasm to a new relationship with your country; we anticipate working together in the cause of peace and progress and good neighbors of this hemisphere," brought loud cheers from the crowd.