

Box - Stanley Michael

Manley's 'sacred' task

FOLLOWING his return to power as Prime Minister of Jamaica in February, Michael Manley has declared that the stance of his government against apartheid will not differ from that of the 1970s.

While the Jamaican leader seems willing to keep his closest neighbour, and Non-Aligned Movement ally, President Fidel Castro of Cuba at arm's length to avoid provoking Washington, he says when it comes to the "anti-apartheid struggle" no one should expect any change from his well-known position.

Speaking in New York, Manley made it clear that the fight against the racist regime in Pretoria was a "moral" battle from



PM Michael Manley.

which his new government would not back away.

"I must tell you, without any apology" he said "The anti-apartheid struggle is sacred and will always be so, and nothing will ever back us away from that. We are not sure what it is we need

to do sometimes. But that struggle is the moral imperative of our time."

Earlier the Prime Minister had said that

a policy he did not intend to pursue was re-establishing close links with Cuba.

Indeed, he added,

the question of relations with Havana was not "a priority" for his government and in his talks in Washington DC with US President George Bush, and Secretary of State, James Baker, Jamaica had made it clear that such ties would be normal, modest and correct."

He went so far as to rule out a visit by Cuba's leader, Dr Fidel Castro.

As for his relations with Washington, the Prime Minister said that the unfortunate and self-escalating tensions and difficulties which characterised Jamaica's relations with the US during his previous tenure of office would not be repeated.

"It was nonsense and wouldn't happen again," he remarked.