

## **GENTEEL, BLACK AND PROUD**

Jamaican Prime Minister Portia Simpson-Miller had a successful trip to South Florida recently. She visited Nova University, was received by the Jamaican community in the elegance of the Westin Hotel and gave an important address to the Florida International Bankers Association., sponsored by the powerful Wachovia Bank in Miami. She poured oil on some divided community waters. Her speeches embraced patriotism and Marcus Garvey. She was welcomed with adulation everywhere she went .A Republican friend of mine quipped to me “I am glad that she is not running here for President”.

South Florida’s Jamaican population is very polarized. The wealthy, lighter-skinned, ethnic Jamaicans live mostly in the southern portion of Dade County. The darker Jamaicans live in North Miami and Broward County.

The Prime Minister’s inspired call for unity, racial dignity and her unrepentant references to Marcus Garvey gave the Jamaican community the ‘shot in the arm’ that it deserved.

The American Press welcomed her and wrote positive articles. A CNN crew already in Miami for the Heat NBA Parade wanted a video clip of her speech. No Jamaican leader since Seaga has attracted this attention in Miami or been so welcome. The three adjectives which associate themselves with her trip are genteel, black and proud.

David P. Rowe

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