



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
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## A DEVELOPING COMMONWEALTH

Notes for a Speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin, to the Ontario Association of Rural Municipalities, Toronto, February 14, 1966.

I should like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your invitation to be present at this banquet of the Ontario Association of Rural Municipalities. I should like to express my good wishes and those of the Government to the representatives of the rural municipalities. I take pleasure in paying tribute to the zeal with which officials both advance the welfare of their own municipalities and serve the nation generally by an enlightened interest in public affairs.

My own comments on public affairs this evening will deal with the topic "A Developing Commonwealth". I have chosen this topic because I believe that Canadians are sometimes concerned about conflict between Commonwealth nations, about reports of serious dissension over matters such as Rhodesia, about changes in the familiar patterns of Commonwealth activity. They may ask whether we are faced with a declining rather than a developing Commonwealth.

I do not propose to begin by trying to define what the Commonwealth means in general terms or to trace the development towards the present relations among Commonwealth nations. We may understand the present situation better if we examine one or two current or recent developments.

I have chosen some positive and welcome developments to begin with. Canada is taking important steps to develop its relations with Commonwealth members in the West Indies.

We in Canada have a long history of association with the West Indies, going back to the years before Confederation. Our present trade is regulated by an agreement which is more than 40 years old. There are strong ties in the past, and they have grown stronger in the present. We look forward in the future to even closer links with these territories as they take over the direction of their own affairs. In 1962 we welcomed as members of the Commonwealth Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago and we look forward