

ciation also provides the perfect context in which to enrich and deepen our bilateral relations with its member countries.

### **Political reality**

Describing the nature and activities of the Commonwealth does not really explain the whole story of Canada's membership. We have found in the Commonwealth association a practical way of promoting international peace and security. These two ideas are, naturally, very important to us. The then Secretary of State for External Affairs, Allen J. MacEachen, put it this way to the Toronto Branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society in 1974:

For Canada, Commonwealth activity has a direct and distinct impact on three levels. Nationally, it satisfies the aims and aspirations of Canadians; it meets a very real need, whether conscious or unconscious, to find expression for a wider range of contacts; it provides satisfaction for an altruistic wish to do something about the problems of the world. Within the Commonwealth itself, it reinforces the association; it helps strengthen Commonwealth identity and character; it assists continuity of Commonwealth activities. Internationally, it reinforces the "thrust" of foreign policy generally, and helps us to do a job that must be done with Commonwealth colleagues. At all these levels, the association will continue to figure prominently in our calculations.

The future of the Commonwealth will lie not only in the survival of its association but in the growth of its ideals, rooted as they are in a sense of community and a commitment to co-operation. Canadians are dedicated to the flourishing of the Commonwealth in all its aspects, both for their own good and for that of their fellow men.