

## MISSION TO COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEAN

The Canadian Government recently took a number of decisions based on a report prepared by Senator Paul Martin on Canadian relations with the Commonwealth Caribbean.

In September and October, Senator Martin undertook a special mission to 13 countries and territories in the area on behalf of the Canadian Government. His report emphasized that relations between Canada and the Commonwealth Caribbean remained fundamentally good and that he had found no evidence in the area of a failure of goodwill toward Canada. Problems had, of course, existed, the Senator admitted, and would undoubtedly continue to exist. Canadian relations with the area cover a complex series of activities, and each country in it has its own marked characteristics and preoccupations. The intent of the current Government decisions is to help the Commonwealth Caribbean countries in their economic problems, to confirm or modify existing Canadian policies towards the area and to improve the machinery for the carrying out of Government policies.

### REBATE PERIOD EXTENDED

Among the recommendations approved by the Government was extension for the calendar year 1971 of the current rebate system of paying to Commonwealth Caribbean countries amounts of duty collected on sugar imported from them. This decision will be reviewed at such time as the Government considers the Tariff Board report on sugar, expected in 1971. With the introduction of an International Sugar Agreement in 1969, it had been the opinion of the Canadian Government that sugar rebate payments might be drawn to a termination. In the light of representations from the region, however, about difficulties the sugar industry was facing and the need for a longer adjustment period, the Government decided, during last year, to continue payments for 1970. The current decision extends the period to 1971, during the course of which year Government decisions will need to be taken on the Tariff Board report on sugar. This

further extension represents a positive response by the Canadian Government to requests made to Senator Martin by the Commonwealth Caribbean countries.

### DEVELOPMENT FUND

The sugar payments are separate from, and additional to, the proposed \$5-million Agricultural Development Fund, which the Canadian Government has also decided to launch immediately. Earlier misunderstandings about the ADF were cleared up during Senator Martin's mission to the area, and it received a very favourable reception. It has been agreed that the Fund will be substantially "untied", on liberal terms, and replenishable. Details remain to be worked out with eligible recipient countries about criteria for selecting projects and operational structure, but it is the intention of the Canadian Government to move ahead rapidly with its implementation. The Canadian Government proposes to explore the use of regional institutions in the implementation of the Fund, but in the meantime is open to applications for projects from eligible governments.

Other matters considered by the Canadian Government included encouragement of responsible investment through programs currently administered by the Canadian International Development Agency and the Export Development Corporation, maintenance of Canada's non-discriminatory immigration policy, resolution of bilateral trading problems, the desire of the area to export more to Canada, the need to improve administration of Canada's substantial development assistance program for the area, the possibility of closer co-operation in a number of fields, and the means of strengthening co-ordination of policies in Canada.

Senator Martin's report to the Canadian Government is based on his exchanges with the governments in the Commonwealth Caribbean. On December 8 he made a comprehensive statement to the Senate of Canada, which provides further background to current Government decisions.

### ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES REPORT

On the basis of evidence made public on December 8, the Minister of National Health and Welfare Mr. John Munro said that the risk of coronary thrombosis from the use of oral contraceptives containing 50 micrograms of estrogen was not of sufficient significance to demand special precautions.

The advisory committee on oral contraceptives formed early in 1970 pointed out, however, in its final report, that women using the pills should be

reminded of the need for continuing medical supervision and remain alert to signs of potential trouble.

The committee found that the "combined" type of oral contraceptive was virtually 100 percent effective in preventing unwanted pregnancy, while the effectiveness of the "sequential" type was slightly lower.

"The report reviews in considerable detail the present state of medical knowledge of the mode of action and the short- and long-term effects of these drugs," Mr. Munro said.