

Co-operation

Co-operation is a comparatively modern theme in Cuba-Canada relations which has evolved through two phases. The first, phase began in 1969 when the well-known NGO, Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO), approved an experimental program sending recent university graduates with valuable technical skills to Cuba. Within a year, the newly created Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) had approved its first bilateral co-

operation program with a socialist country. Through provision of equipment and training, Canada substantially helped Cuba to build two key scientific institutions: CUJAE, Cuba's leading polytechnic institute; and CENSA, Cuba's centre for animal health research. This focus complemented the work of CUSO and Canada's commercial interests at the time, especially the export of live cattle. In 1974,



CIDA President, Paul Gérin-Lajoie, cutting sugar cane, 1974

CIDA's second President, Paul Gérin-Lajoie visited Cuba to review the early success of these programs.

The first phase of official bilateral co-operation ended in 1978. Nevertheless, certain Canadian NGOs remained committed to working in Cuba using their own resources. The International Development Research Centre, an institution funded by the Canadian Parliament, also continued to provide grants to Cuban researchers without interruption through the 1980s and 1990s.