

## Commonwealth Caribbean

Canada has long enjoyed close relations with the countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean. Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, and Jamaica maintain high commissions in Ottawa, and Trinidad and Tobago opened a high commission in April 1974. There is also a Commissioner for the Eastern Caribbean in Montreal who represents the West Indies Associated States. Canada has a high commission in Barbados which is also accredited to Grenada and the Leeward and Windward Islands; one in Jamaica, which is accredited as well to the Bahamas and Belize; and others in Guyana and Trinidad.

Grenada, the most southerly of the Windward Islands, which had had various forms of political association with Britain and France since 1674, became an independent state on February 7, 1974. Canada was represented at the independence celebrations by the High Commissioner-Designate. Independence came in the midst of large-scale anti-government demonstrations and some incidents of violence. Food and gasoline were short as a result of a dock-workers' strike, and another strike shut down the electricity plants.

Early in the year the media gave extensive coverage to the petition of the elected members of the State Council of the Turks and Caicos Islands which requested permission from the British Government to seek a political or economic association with Canada. The Canadian Government, after studying the proposal, considered that such a Canadian extension into the Caribbean would introduce a destabilizing factor into the region, that it was not evident that such an association would be of mutual benefit compared with the friendly relations which continued to exist, and that Canada should not seek to alter its present boundaries.

In May, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and St. Kitts established a commission to review the constitutional status of the Associated States and Montserrat, with a

view to ultimate political union among the remaining non-independent islands of the Commonwealth Caribbean. Grenada and Montserrat expressed interest only in economic integration, and Jamaica, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago agreed to meet the commission's costs. The commission at year's end was continuing its work, despite the death of its chairman, Sir Hugh Wooding.

### Economic developments

The Caribbean Community, including a Common Market (CARICOM), formed in 1973 as the successor to the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA), continued to work toward regional policies on trade, agriculture, investment and air transport. At heads of government meetings attention was directed towards such matters as regional air services, foreign investment and the establishment of a Research and Development Institute.

Negotiations for association with the EEC continued with a meeting at Kingston between representatives of the EEC and 44 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. Agreement in principle was reached on an association involving free access to EEC markets, stabilization of the ACP countries' export earnings, industrial co-operation and aid. Discussions concerning future Canadian trade and economic relations between Canada and CARICOM continued to be postponed pending the negotiation of a detailed agreement between the EEC and the ACP countries.

During the year increased world oil prices combined with increased production of petroleum in Trinidad and Tobago to change that country's balance of payments from a deficit to a surplus on current account.

*Kingstown harbour, St. Vincent. Canada assisted in construction of a deep-water pier and provided a technical adviser for port management.  
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