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years of the sixties and in July, 1970, the *Toronto Globe and Mail* applauded its vigor of debate: "The whole battle has its uses and where else could it be fought so vigorously and so honestly? If the Commonwealth has become no more than the Hyde Park of the World, it has become a lot. We are a little short of soap boxes where men may freely stand to shout their differences."

Prime Minister Trudeau had also given the shape and purpose of the organization some thought and he offered a favorable conclusion: "There is no charter, no constitution, no headquarters building, no flag, no continuing executive framework. Apart from the Secretariat, which is a fraction of the size one might expect for an organization which encompasses a quarter of the people of the earth, there is nothing about the Commonwealth that one can grasp or point to as evidence of structure.

"The Commonwealth provides an opportunity for men of good will to discuss with one another their problems and their hopes for the future. It is a forum for men who are as different as God has made them. It is a meeting place where men are able to demonstrate the advantages of dissimilarity, the excitement of variety. Is this not what life is all about: to learn, to share, to benefit and to come to understand."

In March, 1971, the Commonwealth prime min-

isters met in Singapore for the first regular session outside London. (There had been an earlier extraordinary session in Nigeria.) From the Singapore meeting came the Singapore Declaration, offered by President Kaunda of Zambia, and approved by all. It gave shape to the organization and its aspirations. (For an interpretation of the Declaration, see "What the Commonwealth Is", pages 4-5.)

Debate on questions of a nature that admit of no easy solution — such as Rhodesia — has occupied the center stage of Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings in recent years. This year, the agenda will survey the international scene with focus on specifics such as the implications of Britain's entry into the European Economic Community. The Heads of Government will consider Comparative Techniques of Government and will review cooperative efforts such as those of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth Youth Program. They will also review decisions and recommendations made at lower level meetings such as the Commonwealth Telecommunications Conference last November. The meeting will have an emphasis on informality, and the Heads of Government will meet alone with the Secretary General with no record being taken.

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## Ottawa As An International Meeting Place

The selection of Ottawa as the site of the Commonwealth meeting in itself suggests the organization's continuing change. The regular meetings were first held only in London for London was indeed the heart of the body. London is still a heart — and Britain is the eldest member — but the Commonwealth now has as many hearts as it has members. The meeting places rotate and each gets to know the host on the host's own representative grounds.

Ottawa is very Canadian.

It has 400,000 people and it is both English and French speaking. The river that flows below it presents a romantic if no longer inclusive picture of Canadian industrial wealth — swirling booms of logs on their way to pulp and paper mills. It is a relatively new city, the capital of one of the oldest of the new nations, and its most distinctive feature, the 19th century Parliamentary Library on Parliament Hill (*on cover*), links it to an older age and the culture of its mother countries.

The August visitors will miss the winter skaters on the old Rideau Canal and the spring display when 600,000 daffodils, half a million crocuses and two million tulips are in bloom, but they will be able to catch the changing of the Guard on the Parliament Building lawn when the scarlet and black of the Governor General's Foot Guards, the Canadian Grenadier Guards and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police contrast sharply with the bright green grass.

They will find Ottawa peaceful. As the American writer Edith Iglauer noted in an article in *The Atlantic Monthly*, its people move "easily through the clean streets, purposeful but not pushed. Even during the morning and evening traffic rushes, Ottawa seems to remain sane." Visitors will be surrounded by nature — flowers and trees and lakes and the splendour of the Gatineau hills. Ottawa is chilly in December but it is fresh, lovely and certainly warm on a summer day.