

subjects. No charter binds us together; in the Commonwealth, we follow no common flag; apart from the Secretariat, we do not support a large executive machine. And yet the thing works. If this sounds like a vote of confidence for the Commonwealth, then I can assure you it is. The Commonwealth in its way reflects some of Canada's own characteristics - diversity in climate, peoples and traditions, of prosperous and less prosperous areas. It is perhaps because of this parallel, the fact that despite this diversity we have common bonds, the fact that we can talk frankly to one another, that we in Canada are so deeply attached to the Commonwealth and the role it plays in the world. As our former Secretary of State for External Affairs told the Royal Commonwealth Society in Toronto in 1974, support for the Commonwealth remains a central element in Canadian foreign policy. It remains so.

But if the Commonwealth is to continue to have real meaning for all its members; it must touch people at all levels. As Prime Minister Trudeau said at the 1973 Heads of Government meeting, "We are concerned with the dignity of individual human beings and the improvement of the lot of ordinary men and women." If we forget that message, if we cease applying it with patience every day, then associations such as the Commonwealth lose their relevance and turn into rather expensive talking shops. Obviously talking is important as it permits a fruitful exchange of ideas, however at the same time, we must be doers, we must make maximum use of the machinery created within the Commonwealth to fulfil the aspirations of our people. This has been recognized by Heads of Government who have encouraged the expansion of the scale and the increased tempo of