

# I

## REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

### AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

#### **Commonwealth Africa**

Africa is the poorest continent of all. It includes 18 of the 25 countries designated by the United Nations as the world's least developed. Furthermore, Africa contains the largest areas in the world which remain under European colonial rule; Southern Africa is the scene of a dangerous and growing confrontation between ruling white minorities and black majorities; and in various parts of the continent unresolved social or political tensions have erupted from time to time in violent conflict. In 1972, therefore, as in earlier years, Canadian activities in Africa concentrated heavily on development assistance programs, on working for peaceful change and on assistance to victims of oppression. These aims were pursued through bilateral relations and through the Commonwealth and United Nations institutions.

By the end of the year, Canada's first resident high commission was established in Lusaka, Zambia, making a total of eleven Canadian embassies or high commissions in Africa south of the Sahara. The establishment of the Lusaka mission provided the Government with more direct information on developments in this sensitive area of Africa. It also provided for more effective administration of Canada's expanding program of economic and technical assistance to Zambia.

One of the most significant events of recent years in the continuing dispute over the future of Rhodesia was the finding, in May, 1972, by the Commission on Rho-

desian Opinion under Lord Pearce that the terms proposed for a settlement in Rhodesia were not acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole. As the Secretary of State for External Affairs noted, this finding and its acceptance by the British Government mean that any solution that is now proposed must be one which can engage the confidence of the African people of Rhodesia. The Canadian Government made clear that it continued to support the aim of democratic majority rule in Rhodesia and, in accordance with its United Nations obligations, would maintain economic sanctions against the illegal regime. To assist African refugees from Rhodesia, Canada pledged \$75,000 to a Commonwealth scholarship fund for Rhodesian Africans. It also made contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Southern Africa and to the United Nations Education and Training Program for Southern Africa.

Like others around the world, Canadians were shocked by the abrupt decision of the Ugandan Government to expel virtually all residents of Asian origin on three months notice in August, 1972. The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs expressed regret at President Amin's action and Canada moved quickly to demonstrate its humanitarian concern for the expelled persons by offering to admit a substantial number of them as immigrants. The admission of more than 5,000 of these Ugandan Asians to Canada in a short time involved a massive airlift and strenuous efforts by the staff of several government departments