



*Patrician Front leaders Robert Mugabe (left) and Joshua Nkomo are shown at the London conference in September. While the conference continued, rumours spread that there was a danger of 'civil war' between guerrilla followers of*

rocess — and might even engineer a coup. He was certainly adding to "the fear of the unknown" among his shallow whites.

African cultivators are jam-packed into Tribal Trust Lands — 3.6 million people subsisting where only a million can reasonably live. About 4,000 farmers are doing well enough in the African Purchase Areas to produce for the commercial market. On the other hand, at least a third of the 6,700 white farms are abandoned, and another third are much underused. Massive changes in land tenure and use are needed. "Set compensation for the expropriation of 4,000 white farms could cost one billion dollars.

#### Role for Canada

Canadian governments under Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau played an important part, directly and indirectly at Commonwealth meetings, in making sure that Britain did not conclude a sell-out deal with Ian Smith. Canada can take some credit that majority rule has eventually come to Zimbabwe. But that's the beginning of the job, not the end.

It is unfortunate that Zimbabwe's independence comes at a time when External Affairs and CIDA are cutting back on programs, and certainly not looking for

new commitments. There are 10 countries in southern Africa that will have to be covered from Canadian missions in Pretoria and Lusaka — until one is set up in Salisbury. Since one will certainly have to be established there some day, it is best to do it right away and gain the knowledge and the influence that comes of being there early.

If it is altogether too expensive to contemplate taking this step alone, then the government should try a daring new experiment and suggest sharing a mission in Salisbury with another Commonwealth country — Australia is the obvious choice. As for CIDA, its tied aid provisions made it difficult to help much with tropical agriculture, since few Canadians had such skills; but Zimbabwe is far enough south of the equator for Canadian farming experts to be useful there.

In the past 15 years, many Canadians — politicians and editors alike — have refrained from wholeheartedly backing the Zimbabwean nationalists on the grounds that they could not support violence (ignoring that the prime violence was white repression and racial discrimination). Even today the timid may hold back, pleading austerity. It will be a deep shame for Canada if we do not do all we can to help turn the promise of peace into a lasting reality.