

developing countries, and on the impact of protectionist economic policies on international development.

Within the Commonwealth, Canada has been active in calling for an early consensus in the new round of multilateral trade negotiations. At the United Nations, Mr. Clark was emphatic in setting out Canada's position on international trade: "The industrialized countries must keep markets open to Third World products if the developing countries are to maintain the export earnings necessary to service their external debt and to improve living standards," he stated. "All of us will lose if our borders close."

The Nassau summit also urged Commonwealth members to renew and expand their commitment to international assistance. Canada has traditionally taken a leading role in Commonwealth aid, standing as the largest single supporter of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) in 1986 with a total contribution of \$16.7 million. In 1985, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) provided some form of assistance to each of the 44 developing countries in the Commonwealth.

Over a five-year period, at a time of severe economic restraint, Canada doubled its aid for development projects in the Caribbean Commonwealth, providing \$75 million for the modernization of 22 airports on 13 islands and allocating \$9 million to a hydroelectric project in St. Vincent. In addition to direct development assistance, Canada allows duty-free access for 99 per cent of the goods exported from the Commonwealth Caribbean and was instrumental in persuading the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund



to maintain preferential lending conditions for smaller Commonwealth Caribbean nations.

*Canada has always been one of the Commonwealth's most solid supporters. . . . In recent years, Canada has been the second-largest financial contributor to the Commonwealth, and has been deeply involved in pioneering a number of important policy initiatives.*

The Commonwealth's co-operative aid initiatives may be more modest than the development programs undertaken by the United Nations. But their flexibility enables donor nations like Canada to address specific problems in the areas of export development, training and education. Current CFTC initiatives are aimed at assisting smaller countries with debt management, and at identifying long-term solutions to the economic problems of sub-Saharan Africa.

The agenda for the Vancouver summit may also include discussion of reports on co-operative education

programs, and of efforts to integrate women in the development process. At the meeting in Nairobi in July 1987, Commonwealth Ministers of Education are expected to recommend steps that can be taken to encourage student mobility within the Commonwealth, for instance, by the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, and generally to promote greater collaboration in education. Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Issues will meet in August 1987, and may recommend ways of increasing public and private-sector awareness of women's social and economic contributions to society.

#### **A True Partnership**

For nations with a wide variety of political, economic, and regional agendas, the Commonwealth provides a valuable opportunity to seek consensus on a range of pressing world issues. Its strength is reflected in the 1971 Declaration of Commonwealth Principles, which noted:

"Members of the Commonwealth come from territories in the six con-

**"Informal consultation" and "mutual respect" characterize Commonwealth meetings. Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, with Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.**

tinents and five oceans, include people of different races, languages and religions, and display every stage of economic development from poor developing nations to wealthy industrialized nations. They encompass a rich variety of cultures, traditions and institutions.

"Membership in the Commonwealth is compatible with the freedom of member governments to be non-aligned or to belong to any other grouping, association or alliance. Within this diversity, all members of the Commonwealth hold certain principles in common. It is by pursuing these principles that the Commonwealth can continue to influence international society for the benefit of mankind."