Other Commonwealth meetings

The Ottawa meeting was the most spectacular manifestation of Canadian participation in the Commonwealth, but it was only one of many governmental and non-governmental meetings attended by Canadian representatives. At the ministerial level, there were meetings on law, finance and youth affairs (the last of these laying the foundation for the Commonwealth Youth Program). There were also intergovernmental Commonwealth meetings to deal with such diverse areas as law, science, education, telecommunications and finance.

On the non-governmental plane, intra-Commonwealth gatherings were even more numerous and diverse in subject matter, covering fields such as education, architecture, engineering, mining and aeronautical research. The number of meetings and conferences held in the Commonwealth during the year thus reflected the association's value to its members and indicated the great scope for more extensive and varied contacts.

One of the most welcome developments regarding the Commonwealth in 1973 was that, as a result of efforts in a number of areas, with emphasis on the Ottawa Heads of Government Meeting, its image began to reflect more accurately the present realities of the association. The old image of an Anglo-centric association with each member linked to Britain was replaced by that of an association with no centre and no predominant member. It was a year when Commonwealth governments recognized not only the limitations of the association but also its inherent potential for positive action.

As summed up in the final communiqué of the meeting itself, 1973 was both a year of assessment and a milestone for the future of the association:

> "Heads of Government were convinced that the association had once again demonstrated its vitality and flexibility. They intend to make maximum use of the Commonwealth machinery to put the principles of the Commonwealth Declaration into practice and to accelerate the pace of social and economic development among the less affluent members."