

not just to risk being overtaken by events, it guarantees it.

### Major changes

Between 1970 and 1975, three major changes have occurred within the international system that have drastically altered the pattern of power. Each is advantageous — or prospectively advantageous — to Canada.

The first is the emergence of what might be called “le défi OPEC” — that sudden accretion of wealth to the low-cost, oil-bearing countries of the Middle East

that is currently netting their treasuries enormous “petrodollar” revenue.

It remains to be seen whether the assorted sheikhdoms and emirates that are the beneficiaries of this windfall can transmute their wealth to power, even whether they will enjoy the prosperity of Croesus or suffer the fate of Midas. (Shah Pahlavi and the late King Faisal show it can go either way.) Two consequences, however, are already clear.

One is that the power of oil-dependent industrial countries — all Western Euro-

## *Commonwealth and the Third World*

# The meeting in Kingston town

By any yardstick, the May meeting of Commonwealth heads of government in Kingston, Jamaica, was a success. It was attended by a record number of individual government leaders, and some difficult problems were grappled with in a friendly and constructive way. The agenda order for government leaders in executive session permitted the leaders to move from a preliminary examination of intra-Commonwealth relations and functional co-operation through an examination of world-power shifts and on to the main topic of “world trade, finance and development”. In the Commonwealth context this last subject stemmed from Jamaican Prime Minister Manley’s initiative at the 1973 Ottawa meeting of the heads of government. In a larger sense, of course, it followed on the active consideration of the topic at the UN in the past year. The timing of the Commonwealth heads of government meeting and of the proposed Commonwealth finance ministers meeting next August has engendered active interest in the Commonwealth discussion as an ideal bridge between the twenty-ninth General Assembly of the UN and the UN special session to be held in September 1975.

The initial days of the meeting are reported to have been marked by an undue number of the interventions by the heads of government being read into the record as prepared texts. Had this trend continued, it would have been difficult for the meeting to have reached

any valuable conclusions. By the first weekend, however, thanks in large part to Prime Minister Trudeau’s informal, off-the-cuff participation, the executive sessions had become more lively and productive.

The examination of the New Economic Order was remarkable for bringing together insight from all sides into the complexity of the problem. It also brought home the fact that “confrontation” in international forums is not simply a two-sided but a multi-sided problem, which cuts across both developed and developing country groups. Specifics were examined, and there is some hope that the study group established can move ahead on one or two particular points by August, when the Commonwealth finance ministers meet. This would be in keeping with Mr. Manley’s expressed hope that “some practical parts may be brought to fruition before the whole”. In other words, everything should not be held up until it is possible to move forward across the board. The achievements of the meeting in this area were the result of active and constructive lobbying between the advocates of the extreme of British and Guyanese proposals and long sessions in both sub-committee and committee of the whole, with the final compromise and consensus being reached in executive session.

The importance of this item on the Commonwealth agenda is underlined by the fact that this is the first time a