

ideas in itself. It provides a particular perspective on international questions and, within the limits to which any international assembly is subject, a vehicle for their possible solution or amelioration.

The ideas and experiences exchanged and the programme operations may not be critical to continued Canadian development. They are, however, useful and do influence, however moderately, the pattern of development in Canada.

Within the ambit of Canadian foreign policy the Commonwealth provides one outlet for the national personality to be given some manifestation abroad. In this respect the Commonwealth provides a real theatre of action for an interested domestic constituency, such as the Royal Commonwealth Society, which wishes to participate in an identifiable and specific manner in international affairs. The Commonwealth is in the words of Prime Minister Trudeau, "our window on the world". It provides one more forum for our active participation in world affairs. Membership in the Commonwealth also represents a reinforcement and further extension of the calculated policy of diversification of Canadian interests and engagements throughout the world to offset the pull of continentalism.

The Commonwealth is the oldest international association to which we belong. It may be viewed as parallel to our involvement in the Agency for Technical and Cultural Cooperation, the Agence, its francophone counterpart. Our policy towards it will necessarily be conditioned by its aims and purposes, its composition, and the policies of member governments towards it. The larger number of developing countries within the Commonwealth, and their requirements, understandably orient its activities in this direction. This is not, however, an exclusive orientation. All members participate with equal status, and contribute collectively to Commonwealth endeavours. All share the benefits. This sense of community is imperative to the continued welfare and existence of the association, and it is our intent to nourish and to cultivate this sense.

We will continue to strengthen the association and preserve the candour and informality of its discussions, to encourage more active participation in it by members, and to support its development, and that of its non-governmental organizations, as instruments for greater practical co-operation.