



CANADA

# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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## CANADA AND THE COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES OF THE CARIBBEAN

Excerpts from an address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin, to the Toronto Branch of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, May 24, 1966.

I wish to say something about the way in which Canada's special relation with the West Indies has been developing. Recently the Prime Minister announced that a conference, to be attended by the prime ministers and premiers of the Commonwealth Caribbean countries and the Prime Minister of Canada, would be held in Ottawa, July 6-8. This will be the first time such a conference has been held, and it is intended that the full range of matters of common interest will be discussed.

Among the subjects on which discussions are planned are trade, development aid, transportation and communications, migration and cultural relations.

It is the earnest hope of the Canadian Government that out of these discussions will emerge a stronger and more meaningful relation between the Commonwealth countries of the Caribbean and Canada, which will continue to be characterized by mutual understanding and respect, and sound practical co-operation. The fostering and maintenance of such a relation is an important objective of the Canadian Government, and we regard the conference to be held this July as only the first of a series, the beginning of a new process of consultation, of a much closer and more significant nature than could have existed up till now.

The relation that we hope to develop with the Commonwealth Caribbean will not be one that can be measured solely by formal agreements or treaties, although there may be a place for such agreements. We are not, therefore, looking to the July conference as a means of defining, once and for all, Canada's relation with the Commonwealth Caribbean countries. We consider it rather as a first stage in what must be a continuing process of jointly seeking to ensure that our relation is not only close and cordial but is kept fully relevant to the changing circumstances of our times.