



DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

communiqué

No: 12
No.: 12

DIFFUSION: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
RELEASE: MARCH 6, 1980

MARCH 10 -- COMMONWEALTH DAY

Commonwealth Day will be observed in Canada and throughout the Commonwealth on Monday, March 10. This will be the fourth consecutive year in which Commonwealth Day will be marked, in accordance with a proposal made by Prime Minister Trudeau at the 1975 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Kingston, Jamaica. The first Commonwealth Day event will be held at noon on Friday, March 7 with the official opening by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mark MacGuigan, of a special Commonwealth artifacts display in the Lester B. Pearson Building.

A varied programme of events has been planned for the observance of Commonwealth Day throughout Canada. In Ottawa, a "Commonwealth Family Dinner" sponsored by the Royal Commonwealth Society will be held on Saturday, March 8. Special inter-faith services open to the public will be held on Sunday, March 9 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 82 Kent Street, Ottawa (4:00 p.m.); St. Andrew's Church, Halifax; Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver (with the Provincial Secretary in attendance); St. Philip's Church, Victoria; and Holy Trinity Church, Toronto (with the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario in attendance). On Commonwealth Day there will be a display of the flags of the Commonwealth nations in Confederation Square and a reception hosted by the Commonwealth High Commissioners.

Across Canada, schools, public libraries, numerous organizations and the branches of the Royal Commonwealth Society have been provided with Commonwealth Day posters, specially commissioned maps and informational materials to assist in the events planned to mark this occasion.

Commonwealth Day is not a statutory holiday; rather, its observance is intended to emphasize to people in Canada and around the world the importance of the Commonwealth and the value which Canada attaches to this unique association of 42 countries of all sizes, races and cultures.