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# CANADA

TODAY / D'AUJOURD'HUI

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From the 2nd to the 10th of August, the Prime Ministers and Presidents of 31 sovereign nations will be in Ottawa for the periodic meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Canada's Head of State, will be in residence there from July 31 to August 4, at the invitation of Prime Minister Trudeau. She is the Head of

## the Commonwealth

and a symbol of the free association of the member nations.

This is the first time Canada has been host to this unique gathering, and it will be covered by some 700 representatives of the electronic and written press. Many Americans are not quite sure what the Commonwealth of Nations is.

It is the result of the gradual evolution of the relationship between Britain and her former colonies. Each of these became independent, but for Commonwealth members independence did not mean the complete severing of old ties.

It has been variously described though it does not lend itself to easy definition. Prime Minister Trudeau has called it "A forum where free men try to find ways to progress in a difficult world."

In the following pages CANADA TODAY/D'AUJOURD'HUI attempts to tell you how it has become what it is and what the Heads of Government plan to do this summer.

## **The Commonwealth:** A forum where free men try to find ways to progress.

As the late Lester Pearson phrased it: "In my own lifetime we have moved from the Empire without sunset—which God had made mighty and was implored to make mightier yet . . . we have moved from that Empire to today's Commonwealth of Nations."

The changes have been both specific and elusive. The principle of self-government for the colonies had been approved and implemented in Canada as early as 1849. The colonial conferences of the late 19th century and the early 20th set the tone for future association. The men at those meetings represented autonomous self-governing units; discussions were consultative, meetings informal and private and decisions by consensus. A common allegiance to the Crown was the hall-

mark. After World War II, the new Commonwealth emerged as "independent" states, some of which were monarchies, some republics, and there was even one which had an elected King. One vital link was maintained—the Prime Ministers, meeting in 1949, agreed that the British Monarch would be Head of the Commonwealth and the symbol of the free association.

The new Commonwealth was vaguer in form and intent than its predecessor, and this vagueness caused some to dismiss it almost before it began; but Pearson saw its lack of rigidity as a strength, not a weakness. "This association of free states is going through difficult times," he said. "But no international arrangement or system offers a more hopeful example of the kind of flexibility and

## **The Queen and Canada**

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and The Duke of Edinburgh will be the guests of Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau in Ottawa from July 31 to August 4.

She is the titular head of the Commonwealth of Nations, but her relationships to its individual member states are varied and subtle. While all member nations are totally independent, Her Majesty is Head of State of Britain and Canada and of several other Commonwealth nations. For them she signs legislation into law, though she has no responsibility for the draft and content of the legislation. All Commonwealth countries whether self-governing or dependent accept her as the symbol of their special fraternity.

While in Ottawa, she will have interviews with those heads of government who request them, and she will entertain all the national

leaders at a state dinner on August 2 at the residence of the Governor General.

The Queen summed up her sentiments in a recent message to the peoples of the Commonwealth: "In this unique organization we are fortunate in having endless opportunities for cooperation. Through its informal structure we have created a web of relationships between peoples of many races and creeds and now between a great number of sovereign independent states . . . Britain . . . (has joined) her neighbours in the European community and you may well ask how this will affect the Commonwealth. The new links with Europe will not replace those with the Commonwealth. They cannot alter our historical and personal attachments with kinsmen and friends overseas. Old friends will not be lost."

adaptability that is required . . ."

Still, the post-war change necessitated profound adjustments. Some saw the Commonwealth as simply the Empire in a new suit of clothes, but this was an illusion. As early as 1964 an anonymous writer signing himself "A Conservative" was asking in *The Times* of London, "Is the Commonwealth a Gigantic Farce?" "Not merely the non-European members . . . but the so-called 'old Dominions' have no present real ties with Britain other than such as history might have left between any two foreign nations."

Bruce Hutchison, writing in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, saw the Commonwealth as having indeed few ties to the past and ". . . no future except as an entirely new concept without any parallel in history." He added a phrase which describes the Commonwealth as well today as in 1964: "The structure is amorphous, delicate and constantly changing."

When the Commonwealth's Prime Ministers met in July of that year, they made some vital adjustments. First, they established a Commonwealth Secretariat which was to be "at the service of all Commonwealth governments and as a visible symbol of the spirit of cooperation which animates the Commonwealth."

Arnold Cantwell Smith, an Assistant Under-Secretary of State in Canada's Department of External Affairs, became the first Secretary-General. Mr. Smith, a former Rhodes Scholar,

had been the Canadian Ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1961 to 1963. (His tenure was renewed in 1970 for another five years.)

In June of 1965, the Prime Ministers met at Marlborough House in London and among the prime topics for consideration was the question of the newly founded Secretariat: should it be strong or weak? The question would be hotly debated for some years. And, as Hutchison had suggested, the new organization was "constantly changing." South Africa, which through Field Marshal Smuts had originated the concept, was expelled in 1961, and Ireland, which had in its treaty with Britain given it legality, had withdrawn in 1948. India and Pakistan, two members, had engaged in a war, and Pakistan would also leave in time. But Mr. Smith and the Secretariat and the members collectively and apart were emerging as something more than a postal system for the polite exchange of views. The Commonwealth members were by no means always polite, and they had strong views on difficult issues. Pearson, for one, felt this was absolutely necessary: "It can be said and categorically that if the Commonwealth does not reject racism in any form and wherever it shows itself; if any of its members base their policies on such discrimination, then the Commonwealth is not going to survive."

The Commonwealth did survive the troubled  
*Continued on page six*

## Prime Minister Trudeau's Statement On Commonwealth Day, 1973

"The technology of the seventies permits Canadians to be neighbours of persons in every other country in the world. We can travel from one point in the globe to any other in a matter of hours. We can communicate over those same distances in a matter of minutes or micro-seconds. Yet with all this speed, with all this knowledge, we find that the pace of life gives us too little opportunity to know well other persons whether they live near us or far away. Those few associations which provide this opportunity should be preserved and nurtured, for they represent in real measure the balance wheel of human society. One of those associations, in my view, one of the most effective, is the Commonwealth. Largely by accident of

history, 860,000,000 people in the world living on every continent and in every major ocean, speak the same language, share many of the same values, understand the same idiom and treasure alike the advantages of informality. We should not underestimate the many immense benefits which flow from talking frankly to one another, understanding better one another, eliminating areas of prejudice and irritation, helping one another. These things the Commonwealth permits us to do as between governments, as between professional bodies and as between individuals. I salute the Commonwealth and welcome the Heads of Government of 32 independent nations to Ottawa this August."

The perennial question concerning the Commonwealth is the basic one: What is it? André Ouellet, now Canada's Postmaster General, attacked the problem directly when he was Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Here is an excerpt from a cogent address which he made at the University of Manitoba:

"Defined in positive terms, and drawing on the declaration issued at Singapore, the Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 32 sovereign independent nations, each responsible for its own policies, consulting and co-operating in the common interests of their peoples and in the promotion of international understanding and world peace. There are members from each of the six continents and from five oceans; the member countries comprise peoples of widely different races, languages, religions and cultures, embracing between a quarter and a third of the world's population. Members

## What The Commonwealth Is

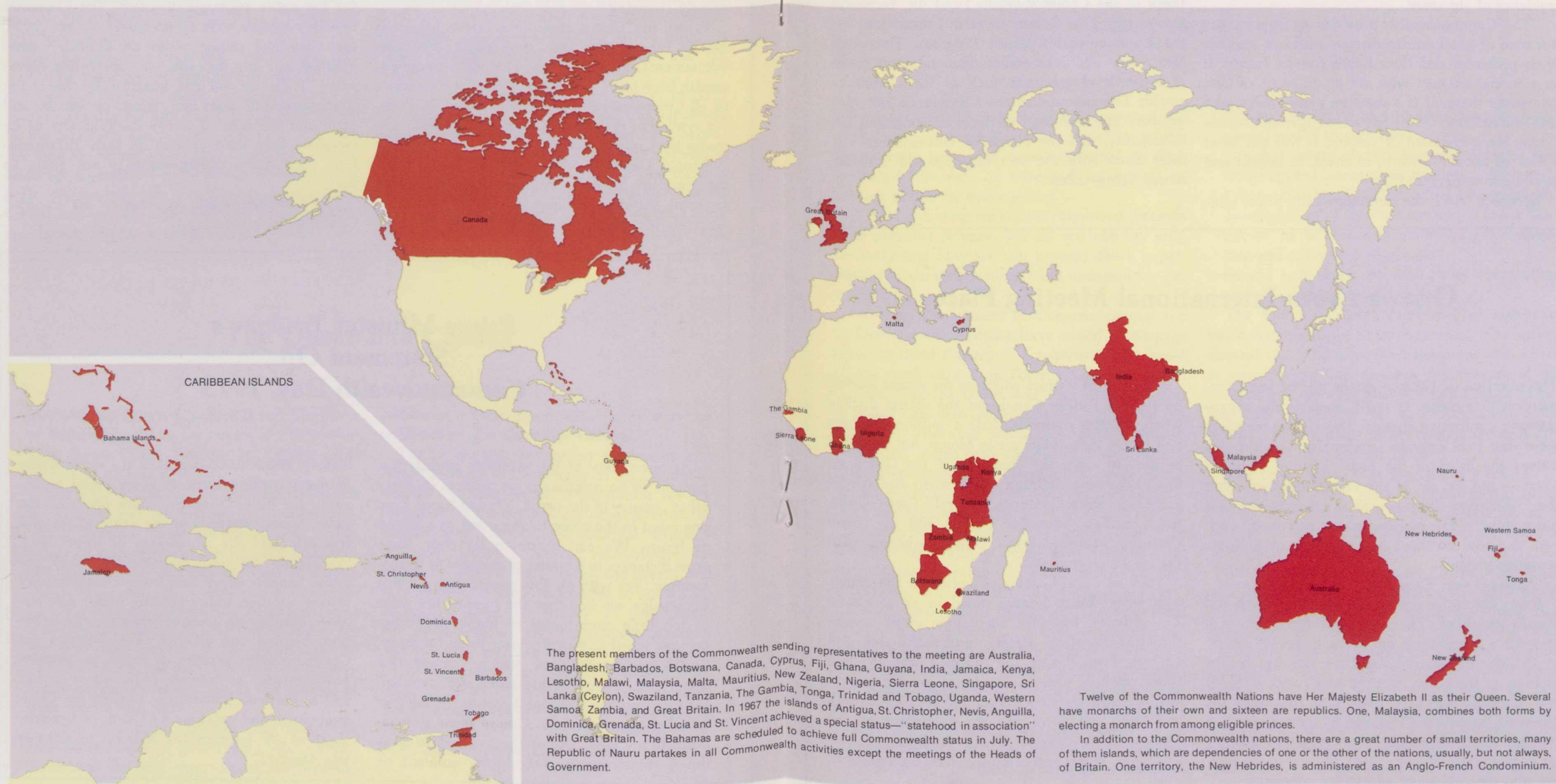
[AND WHAT THE COMMONWEALTH IS NOT]

have complete freedom to belong to any other grouping, association or alliance or to be non-aligned. They range from poor developing countries to wealthy industrialized nations like Britain, Canada and Australia. With the exception of Britain, they share a common history as former British colonies, which have now become sovereign, independent nations. At the government level, they still share a common language—English, though most of them are multilingual plural societies, embracing more than one cultural group. Their administrative systems are broadly similar, owing much to their having been former British colonies, though generally administrative practices and pro-

cedures have been adapted to meet local requirements or the peculiar circumstances of their history and culture. Throughout much of the Commonwealth, legal systems are still extensively based on the British common law, though here again there are variations to meet particular circumstances as, for example, in the Province of Quebec, where the Civil Code is derived from the French legal system. Also, in many parts of the Commonwealth, particularly among the newer members in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, education still owes much to the British influence and tradition, though here again the pattern is changing rapidly.

"But perhaps even more important than shared

colonial experience, a common language, similar systems of government administration, law, and education is the strong tradition of consultation and co-operation derived from historical experience, which amounts to a sense of neighbourliness. Indeed, one authority has described the Commonwealth as a 'unique experiment in international living.' Two thousand years ago, one young Jew asked another: 'Who is my neighbour?' The response, instead of a definition, was the story of the Good Samaritan, and the reformulation of the question into 'Who was more neighbourly?' Throughout the ages this question has transformed and inspired new patterns of behaviour and institutions. While neighbourhood itself is merely a fact governed by physical location, good-neighbourliness is a moral and political achievement of the highest order. In the present age . . . good-neighbourliness is becoming more and more essential."



The present members of the Commonwealth sending representatives to the meeting are Australia, Bangladesh, Barbados, Botswana, Canada, Cyprus, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, New Zealand, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Swaziland, Tanzania, The Gambia, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Western Samoa, Zambia, and Great Britain. In 1967 the islands of Antigua, St. Christopher, Nevis, Anguilla, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia and St. Vincent achieved a special status—"statehood in association" with Great Britain. The Bahamas are scheduled to achieve full Commonwealth status in July. The Republic of Nauru partakes in all Commonwealth activities except the meetings of the Heads of Government.

Twelve of the Commonwealth Nations have Her Majesty Elizabeth II as their Queen. Several have monarchs of their own and sixteen are republics. One, Malaysia, combines both forms by electing a monarch from among eligible princes.

In addition to the Commonwealth nations, there are a great number of small territories, many of them islands, which are dependencies of one or the other of the nations, usually, but not always, of Britain. One territory, the New Hebrides, is administered as an Anglo-French Condominium.

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years of the sixties and in July, 1970, the *Toronto Globe and Mail* applauded its vigor of debate: "The whole battle has its uses and where else could it be fought so vigorously and so honestly? If the Commonwealth has become no more than the Hyde Park of the World, it has become a lot. We are a little short of soap boxes where men may freely stand to shout their differences."

Prime Minister Trudeau had also given the shape and purpose of the organization some thought and he offered a favorable conclusion: "There is no charter, no constitution, no headquarters building, no flag, no continuing executive framework. Apart from the Secretariat, which is a fraction of the size one might expect for an organization which encompasses a quarter of the people of the earth, there is nothing about the Commonwealth that one can grasp or point to as evidence of structure.

"The Commonwealth provides an opportunity for men of good will to discuss with one another their problems and their hopes for the future. It is a forum for men who are as different as God has made them. It is a meeting place where men are able to demonstrate the advantages of dissimilarity, the excitement of variety. Is this not what life is all about: to learn, to share, to benefit and to come to understand."

In March, 1971, the Commonwealth prime min-

isters met in Singapore for the first regular session outside London. (There had been an earlier extraordinary session in Nigeria.) From the Singapore meeting came the Singapore Declaration, offered by President Kaunda of Zambia, and approved by all. It gave shape to the organization and its aspirations. (For an interpretation of the Declaration, see "What the Commonwealth Is", pages 4-5.)

Debate on questions of a nature that admit of no easy solution — such as Rhodesia — has occupied the center stage of Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings in recent years. This year, the agenda will survey the international scene with focus on specifics such as the implications of Britain's entry into the European Economic Community. The Heads of Government will consider Comparative Techniques of Government and will review cooperative efforts such as those of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth Youth Program. They will also review decisions and recommendations made at lower level meetings such as the Commonwealth Telecommunications Conference last November. The meeting will have an emphasis on informality, and the Heads of Government will meet alone with the Secretary General with no record being taken.

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## Ottawa As An International Meeting Place

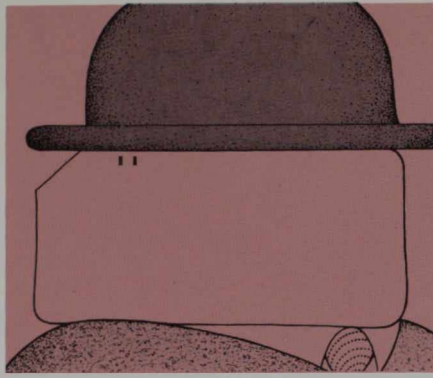
The selection of Ottawa as the site of the Commonwealth meeting in itself suggests the organization's continuing change. The regular meetings were first held only in London for London was indeed the heart of the body. London is still a heart — and Britain is the eldest member — but the Commonwealth now has as many hearts as it has members. The meeting places rotate and each gets to know the host on the host's own representative grounds.

Ottawa is very Canadian.

It has 400,000 people and it is both English and French speaking. The river that flows below it presents a romantic if no longer inclusive picture of Canadian industrial wealth — swirling booms of logs on their way to pulp and paper mills. It is a relatively new city, the capital of one of the oldest of the new nations, and its most distinctive feature, the 19th century Parliamentary Library on Parliament Hill (*on cover*), links it to an older age and the culture of its mother countries.

The August visitors will miss the winter skaters on the old Rideau Canal and the spring display when 600,000 daffodils, half a million crocuses and two million tulips are in bloom, but they will be able to catch the changing of the Guard on the Parliament Building lawn when the scarlet and black of the Governor General's Foot Guards, the Canadian Grenadier Guards and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police contrast sharply with the bright green grass.

They will find Ottawa peaceful. As the American writer Edith Iglauer noted in an article in *The Atlantic Monthly*, its people move "easily through the clean streets, purposeful but not pushed. Even during the morning and evening traffic rushes, Ottawa seems to remain sane." Visitors will be surrounded by nature — flowers and trees and lakes and the splendour of the Gatineau hills. Ottawa is chilly in December but it is fresh, lovely and certainly warm on a summer day.



“There are realms—in a physical and in a psychological sense—in which an individual may . . . demand to be let alone.”

## Computer Privacy

We are statistically surrounded by computers.

The computers are inaccurate as well as impersonal—one insurance company found its files contained hundreds of thousands of errors, an average of one for every policy.

A third of Canadians believe computers threaten their personal privacy. But no one can say with certainty just how we can prevent these impersonal, inaccurate machines from undermining our well being.

Canada's Department of Communications and its Department of Justice have issued a 184-page report entitled *Privacy & Computers*. It is based on the work of a Task Force which interviewed experts, solicited briefs and sent questionnaires to 2516 Canadian organizations—financial institutions, insurance companies, public utilities, merchants, credit card companies, charities, private investigators and government agencies involved in health, education, taxation, law enforcement and regulation. Half of them (1268) replied.

The report notes that “information of all types has been used and is being used for planning, research and operations by government, business, universities and virtually all sectors of society.”

It recognizes a basic dilemma: “There are great benefits to be derived . . . from computers (in) almost every activity from measuring the extent of pollution to administering a welfare program”, but there is also realistic “concern about (their) potential use for invasions of personal privacy.”

The Task Force posed several questions:

- Under what conditions should an individual have access to files containing information about him?

- What right should an individual have to delete, amend or add to such files?
- To what extent should personal data be protected against intrusion or accidental disclosure?
- What right should an individual have regarding dissemination of information that is in his files?
- Should he be informed about such dissemination and advised of all its uses?
- Should individuals be told about information stored in foreign databanks?

The first two accept databanks as legitimate but deny their right to be inaccurate. The survey showed that “there are more inaccuracies . . . than is generally realized. Seventy five percent of the respondents reported discovering mistakes.” During the conversion of one American police agency's filing system, errors were found in nearly one-third of the individual folders.

The report notes that inaccuracy is caused by the slipshod way organizations gather data: “Those who actually collect information are often among the lowest-paid, least-trained members of their particular organization.”

Three Canadian Provinces, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, give citizens the right to see information on themselves and to insist that their own views on the data be included in the bank. But people do not know of the existence of some databanks which carry information about them; nor do they know when or how often the files on them are updated or changed.

The problem of inaccuracy adds to the problem of dissemination. A single inaccuracy can be multiplied a thousandfold and live at least as long as the person whom it misrepresents. As the

report says, "The exchange of information between databanks, a growing practice, may result in a single item of inaccurate information causing harm to an individual on different occasions and in different contexts." A few databanks — Statistics Canada is one — are forbidden by law to distribute any information about identifiable individuals, but most presume a proprietary right to exchange or sell all the information they have gathered. A man's statistics, divulged to obtain a driver's license, may be sold to commercial organizations who will use it to solicit his business, or his medical record may find its way from his doctor's office into a medical lecture room.

For Canadians the most difficult question may concern data stored in foreign banks. Eight per cent of the information about individual Canadians was stored in part or entirely in the United States (four labor unions had all data on Canadian members stored in the United States), and many American organizations — oil companies, insurance firms, health service organizations and lending institutions — stored some of their Canadian information there.

The Task Force concluded that the storage of data abroad threatens Canadian identity and "raises questions that relate to (other) invasions . . . Business activity may be lost to the country; so also may be that fragile entity, Canadian culture, which is and certainly will be increasingly sensitive to the content of computerized information systems as it is to the content of broadcast programs."

Having raised rather specific questions, the Task Force found it difficult to provide equally specific answers. It concluded that invasions of informational privacy are not yet sufficiently widespread to be a "social crisis," but suggested that appropriate measures be taken and offered some basic facts in determining what measures are appropriate:

- "Privacy is . . . in part . . . a synonym for political grievances, (there is concern about) the use of information systems by institutions to enhance their power.
- "The principal areas of specific concern . . . reside in the accuracy . . . of the data . . . the extent to which the individual concerned has been informed . . . and the uses to which it may be put.
- "The role of computers is ambivalent . . . computers as a function of their efficiency can be programmed to provide increased protection for privacy.
- "Canada faces particular problems. A great deal of personal information about Canadians, much of it highly sensitive, is stored beyond Canadian borders and therefore out of reach of Canadian law. This flow of information should be monitored and recorded and consideration given to encouraging the development of databanks in Canada.
- "Government as the principal collector and instigator of the collection of personal information has a key role to play."

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