

Those lengthy discussions at Singapore were valuable too, I confidently believe, in other and broader respects, which transcend organizational considerations. The searching examination at Singapore of the arms-sale question led Commonwealth leaders to look at Southern African problems in broader perspective, and in relation to a longer time-span. The debate there also helped to focus world attention on the explosive situation in the region, which could have such serious consequences for race relations everywhere, and for world peace. If the Singapore meeting thus has contributed, in however modest measure, to the forestalling of a violent confrontation in Southern Africa, another Vietnam or Middle East situation, it will, I suggest, have demonstrated once again the value of the Commonwealth as a vehicle for top-level political consultation.

In evaluating the effectiveness of the Commonwealth in coping with potentially divisive political issues, we should not overlook the solid work carried on without comparable fanfare in its councils. A substantive achievement of the Singapore conference was agreement on a Commonwealth declaration -- the Singapore Declaration -- setting out the principles on which the Commonwealth operates, and listing certain goals and objectives held by member governments and the people they represent. The main objectives set out in the Declaration are:

- (a) Support for the UN; enhancing its ability to remove causes of tension and strengthening its influence for peace in the belief that international peace and order are essential to the security and prosperity of mankind;
- (b) individual liberty; equality of rights for all citizens regardless of race, colour, creed or political belief, and their right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which they live; the promotion of representative institutions and guarantees for personal freedom under law;
- (c) recognition of racial prejudice and racial discrimination as evils which must be combated; opposition to colonial domination and racial oppression; the fostering of human equality and dignity;
- (d) progressive removal of wide disparities of wealth which create world tension; measures to help overcome poverty, ignorance and disease and to create better living standards; the freest possible flow of trade on fair and equitable terms; the provision of adequate resources for developing countries in a spirit of partnership to help establish conditions which are conducive to sustained investment and growth;
- (e) international co-operation to remove causes of war, promote tolerance, combat injustice and foster development among the world's peoples.

The Declaration is not a charter or constitution. It is a statement of principles and objectives and nothing more. It defines Commonwealth aims in the world of today and provides a useful set of guidelines for the Seventies. It was sponsored by President Kaunda of Zambia with strong support from President