

In attempting such a reconciliation, it will help, I think, for us to recognize that not all the concepts of international law, or all the assumptions on which our Charter is based, are realized with equal fullness and precision in all parts of the world.

Commonwealth Example

We in the British Commonwealth of Nations, for example, are independent sovereign countries, freely accepting the obligations which arise from our membership in the United Nations and in the international community. At the same time, we attach a high degree of importance to the special relationships, often very hard to define and delineate, which link us, one with another, in the Commonwealth connexion. We do not think of the other members of the Commonwealth as "foreign". There is a large body of opinion in each of our countries within the British Commonwealth which would, I believe, resent and resist any suggestions which might come from other parts of the world that we should reduce our mutual relationships within the Commonwealth to the bare minimum that international law expects of the relationships between members of the international community.

I cite the Commonwealth example because I venture to suggest that we would do well to recognize that the members of the Arab region in the Middle East may feel that they too are in a special relationship with one another. Their relationship with one another may come under the heading of external affairs, but it is probably misleading to regard them as foreign affairs in the classical meaning which diplomacy gives the term. The relations among the Arab nations in the Middle East have been developing and evolving very rapidly. Similarly, national sentiments and aspirations are rapidly taking political and constitutional shape in what not so long ago were the non-self-governing parts of the British Commonwealth and Empire. In a sense, the emergence of new national governments and groupings in the Arab area represents a challenge to the imagination and sympathy of older and longer-established members of the international community in somewhat the same way as the emergence of new Asian and African Commonwealth countries has represented a challenge to the sympathy, the understanding and the support of older members of our British Commonwealth.

It is for reasons like these that I should be doubtful of the wisdom of anyone attempting from the outside to prescribe and codify any very precise pattern for the relationships of the Arab countries inter se, or even for their individual or collective relationship to the countries that make up the rest of the world. The United Nations has, perhaps, a collective responsibility to show its sympathetic