

Another reason why great value is placed on membership is that the Commonwealth is steadily growing and growing in a way that sets an example to all the rest of the world. On October 1 of this year Nigeria is to become a free nation and of its own free will a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Nigeria is one of the leading countries in Africa with over 30 million people, the most populous country on that continent, and I believe it has the stability and the organization to make a splendid contribution, not only in the Commonwealth but also in the United Nations and in world affairs generally. This nation is one more that is being launched as an independent nation under the leadership of the United Kingdom and the other members of the Commonwealth.

We think of the launching of India, that great country which has been such a friend of Canada from the time it first got its independence, of Pakistan and Ceylon, both similarly great friends of Canada, of Ghana, Malaya and now Nigeria; and, shortly to come, the West Indies Federation, Uganda, Tanganyika and Kenya, and sooner or later the problems of the Central African Federation will be worked out. When we think of these developments going on in the Commonwealth at this time, we have every reason to be proud of our membership in that organization.

I know from my own discussions in London with Lord Home, Secretary for Commonwealth Relations, and Selwyn Lloyd that these British statesmen are deeply concerned about launching these new nations. They are putting much thought into working out the best plan to help these nations gain their independence. Here is statesmanship of the highest order.

In these short months the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth will be meeting and there further great steps forward will be taken. I think of the contribution our own Prime Minister made in 1957 when, within a few days of taking over his present position, he got on a plane and went to London to participate in a Commonwealth Conference and there gave splendid leadership which had a great deal to do with making the Conference the success that it was. He will be leaving us again for the meetings which commence early in May. Because of the contacts and friendships he made with leaders of all the other Commonwealth nations at the Conference in 1957 and during his tour in 1958, I believe that Canada can do a great deal at the Conference in May of 1960 to strengthen further the Commonwealth and to help to implement the plans for launching new members on the world scene.

There is one other aspect of Commonwealth relations which is very important to us at the present time and that is the plan for Commonwealth scholarships. It was in 1958 at a Conference in Montreal that arrangements were made to set up a Commonwealth Scholarship Plan and that Plan is now about to function. Last summer a Commonwealth Conference on Education was held in England which took further steps toward implementing the Scholarship Plan. It approved a Canadian proposal for an exchange of high-level academic scholarships between different parts of the Commonwealth. It was agreed that a total of 1,000 scholarships