



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CANADA AND CEYLON

A speech by Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker, the Prime Minister of Canada, to a joint meeting of the two Houses of Parliament of Ceylon, in the Grand Oriental Hotel, Colombo, on November 26, 1958.

To visit this island has been an experience that only those who have it for the first time can fully appreciate. As you spoke Mr. Prime Minister, and referred to those points of divergence between the story of the Garden of Eden and the plants particularly indigenous to this country, I thought for a moment of Shakespeare's words, that are so applicable to the beauty of this country: "This sceptred isle, ... this other Eden, demi-paradise". And that's the appeal that it has to me - kindness personified, friendliness exemplified - a spirit that is only in keeping with those qualities. Through the years I have been one of those who have believed in the strength of the relationship that is maintained by such tenuous bonds between the members of the Commonwealth, because after all, Mr. President, as I visited with you this morning, and with you Mr. Speaker, I felt at home. Your Senate may be different from ours, because if you are appointed to our Senate you stay for life, and there are those who seek a life interest in an institution such as that.in our country, the Senate is not elected, it is appointed. The House of Commons is the same as your House of Representatives. Your rules are our rules in the main; your courts our courts, and as the Prime Minister said so well, we have in common the heritage that is ours as people within the Commonwealth - the heritage of parliamentary government, the common dedication to similar principles, the realization that in co-operation there is strength, and in the maintenance of the rule of law whereby each of us through an independent judiciary is able to secure and maintain his freedom.

And, having said that, may I just for a few moments refer to the kind words of both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition with reference to Canada's stand on the Colombo Plan. Our attitude is one wherein we ask nothing;