

To this end, the support and co-operation of the Commonwealth will be needed also. I am sure that it can be assured. The Secretariat has already provided personnel assistance to the nationalist delegations in Geneva in response to their requests and in fulfilment of the commitments of Commonwealth Heads of Government. The Secretariat itself has Observer Status at the Geneva discussions and you can be sure that we shall do everything within our capabilities to contribute to their success.

Nor are Commonwealth Governments merely detached spectators; for the consequences of failure can have implications for many Commonwealth countries and for their relationships with each other. Indeed, failure can have the most serious global consequences - some too alarming to contemplate with equanimity. It behoves us all, therefore, to be ready to contribute in all those ways in which Commonwealth contributions can be of practical assistance. We can do no less consistent with our commitments at a Commonwealth level and our obligations to the international community.

The problem of Rhodesia is not, of course, a problem for the Commonwealth only; but it is one with respect to which history has imposed rather special responsibilities on us - including a responsibility to the international community. If it transpires that Commonwealth action can help to bring a just quietus to this troubled issue it would be a contribution by which we serve not merely the Commonwealth but the international community itself. Pray God that at this time of decision, wisdom and vision and realism prevail.

While the issues of colonialism and racism have been dominant ever since the new Commonwealth began to take shape, recent years have propelled another to join in at the head of the Commonwealth agenda. This is the issue of poverty and development. The Commonwealth's collective concern with this matter has been growing in recent years, with greater priority given to it in Commonwealth discussions; but the subject itself and the Commonwealth's appreciation of it are, of course, not new.

It was as long as 1950 that Commonwealth leaders signalled their concern with poverty by deciding to establish the Colombo Plan to buttress the development efforts of the emergent countries of South and South East Asia. The issue of development was to gather urgency as global disparities widened - as deprivation deepened for the many while wealth accumulated for a few. The 1960s saw development elevated as a major topic for international debate and action, and the launching of the first Development Decade by the United Nations. The remarks I am about to quote were made at that time - fifteen years ago:

"We are beginning to realise the dangers in a situation where some countries are enjoying all the fruits of material progress and others none at all. There is a growing feeling that this unbalance is neither morally acceptable nor is it likely to improve the chances of peaceful conditions".