

democracy in a technological age or, in other cases, in societies which are just reaching their economic takeoff. And every time I meet a prime minister or a head of state I am always fascinated to know, for instance, how he holds his cabinet together, how his cabinet works, how he renews the membership, how he assures ethnic or regional representation, how the parliamentary system is prevented from bogging down in the particular countries with the particular sets of parliamentary rules that they have, how the more-developed countries can meet the challenge of an increasing number of questions to be dealt with in a seemingly non-expanding amount of parliamentary time available to them. How parliaments in Commonwealth countries with a federal form of constitution, like Australia, meet the conflicting problems between state and Commonwealth relations or federal and provincial relations. All these questions are absolutely fundamental not only to the techniques of governing but to the coherence of modern societies.

To me, to be meeting for ten days with people who in their countries are faced with similar problems and who are obviously trying to find answers to them, to me, this is too valuable an experience to miss the opportunity of exchanging techniques and exchanging ideas. How do they plan? How do they make the plan applicable? How do they shuffle their cabinets? How do they set the priorities, especially when there are two levels of government? How far in advance do they try to get their legislative timetable set up? How do they ensure the co-operation of the opposition parties? And so on, and so on. To me, this is the stuff that you cannot learn in any text-book; it is the stuff that is not taught in any political science seminar in any university of which I know; it is certainly not put in books.

Governments everywhere are facing the challenge of credibility, of relevancy. Will they be able to meet the tremendous turmoils which are shaking every country? Will representative democracy wither away and be replaced by either authoritarian or totalitarian systems, or, at the other end, by mob rule? You see, these questions are fundamental to all of us. They have much more far-reaching consequences than specific issues of what we will do next year about Rhodesia. These have to do with whether societies will survive in a democratic form or not, and this, I repeat, is something which I have been interested in not only in the Canadian Government, but I never fail to meet an important person in another country who can give me some clues as to how they are solving this relevancy gap and credibility gap.

If the Commonwealth were to be of no other use to me than that, I would think it indeed of great value, provided the people there are willing to not only discuss crisis issues but techniques of government. And I might say that I hope that the press of the world and the media of the world will see this value in the Commonwealth. Because, by looking at meetings of this kind merely as boxing-matches or other forms of competitive games, it is more exciting (You know: "Will it break up, won't it break up, who is going to take the lead, and who is going to save us?"); it is all very exciting, but I repeat, from one meeting to another, it is a completely new boxing-match that excites the people, but what stays on is the curability of democratic governments, and this is the issue that I hope we will be able to learn more about at the Commonwealth meeting.