

*Supply—External Affairs*

to join with others who have commented on the value of the commonwealth in this day and age. I do not think the commonwealth of nations is something to be placed in the same category as the British empire, because I believe that if this community of nations, not tied together by treaties or formal bonds, yet having a greater base for understanding and unity than any group of nations, could get into high gear on the economic front and in friendly diplomacy, it could have a tremendous role to play in current affairs at this time.

We live in an age of machines and mechanical organizations. Many of our international institutions such as the United Nations and subsidiary bodies reflect this thought. Often enough we forget the power of something which has not been manufactured but which has grown, the power of something that is an organism, not just an organization. We forget that a concrete sidewalk can be cracked by a mushroom growing underneath it, as well as by a compressed air drill. We seem to be at a loss, not knowing how to organize the commonwealth in order to get results.

The point is that the commonwealth, however, is already here in that it is a living institution and as such does not need organizing. What it does need is to be set a task. Let it recognize its task, and as the experience of wartime has proven, every part will respond to meet the challenge as a whole. I have been in practically all of the countries of the commonwealth, if not all of them, and I have found that bond of affection and understanding which is difficult to explain. But it is that something which stands as one of our great potentials. In the commonwealth there are 700 million people. If we take both the developed parts and the undeveloped parts of the commonwealth we have, on the one hand, one of the greatest sources of productivity giving the things people need to live on, and on the other hand one of the greatest market areas in the world.

Therefore I suggest that we might use the commonwealth to this advantage. We do not need elaborate conferences; all we need is common thinking among commonwealth nations about the problems of ignorance, poverty, hunger and disease that plague the less developed nations of this world, and perhaps a common agreement to allocate different spheres of responsibility for foreign aid and assistance between the commonwealth nations.

To do this it is said that we need money. How can we trade if we do not have money? If there were 100 cattle in a field without pasture, and there was another field across

the road where there was good pasture but no cattle, it would not take too long for the two farmers to get together for their mutual benefit. There is no reason at all why such a policy could not effectively be put to work in our commonwealth of nations. This could reach out to other friendly nations as well, because in this commonwealth of nations the friendship that forms its basic foundation along with a democratic form of government common to most, would immediately include other friendly nations of similar background, once they saw this thing begin to work. I believe we can work out between ourselves common policies of economic self-help, common exchange policies which can greatly help the trade difficulties of commonwealth nations and supply the goods and services we need.

At the Ottawa conference of 1932 the foundations of the preferential tariff arrangements were laid which made the commonwealth a great trading entity. I feel that Ottawa in 1963 could have some very useful things to say about international exchange arrangements and the supply of raw materials between member nations. It would be a tremendous thing for the secretary of state, one of the most sound actions he could take, if he took the initiative to bring together another commonwealth conference in Ottawa. It would prove that the commonwealth could be something of an international force, not to the exclusion of other states but as an example to the rest of the world. Economic considerations led Britain to wish to abandon the commonwealth for the sake of the common market area. At the same time, Britain is the heart and centre of 700 million people with the richest endowment of natural resources of any trading bloc in the world. I say that something must be wrong with our understanding of the commonwealth and its potential when this happens. I do not think we should be content to see Britain slough off her commonwealth connections so lightly. And she would not if our attitude were different. Only a few months ago a senior official in the British government said to me: "If we could be convinced that Canada would take the lead in doing something to make the commonwealth work, we would be the first to swing in behind her". I think that was meant very seriously. I believe he was thinking back to the days when Britain did make such an offer towards the development of a commonwealth free trade area, but we in Canada turned our backs on it.

Third, I should like to spend a few moments on Canada's relationship with the communist countries. I believe our government deserves praise for its part in promoting the test ban treaty signed in Moscow in August of this