

Who else is in that family of the Commonwealth? Canada is in it; Britain is in it; India is in it; Nigeria is in it; a number of other countries of increasing importance as the world matures and changes. That struck me as I watched the meetings of the Commonwealth Conference that there we had, in effect, the world at one table in the family of the Commonwealth. And, on a range of issues - on issues like international debt, apartheid, distance education - this country Canada, under Brian Mulroney, is playing a role of distinct leadership within that family which is not a reflection of the United States.

Let's take a look at other areas of the world. Let's take the argument that somehow our independence will be lost. Compare our position with the United States. Briefly look at Central America; look at Nicaragua. The United States has imposed a trade embargo on Nicaragua. We haven't. The United States assumes that the problems there are military and ideological. We assume that the problems there are social and economic. They are regarded as a source of a problem. We are regarded as potential peacekeepers. A fundamental difference. A difference that will be very clear when I go to Central America in two weeks' time representing Canada. A clear marked difference between this country and the United States. A difference that has not been difficult to pursue simultaneously with our pursuing a trade agreement with the Americans.

Look at southern Africa. For years, the Government of the United States followed a policy of so-called constructive engagement; trying to work with the Government of South Africa to encourage them to end apartheid. We have taken a different course. We have decided that the only way that system can be brought to an end is to follow a program of concerted pressure. That's an initiative John Diefenbaker began over a quarter a century ago. It then became becalmed. It has now been renewed again.

Today, in the newspapers we see that the first of the political prisoners in South Africa has been released. Do you think that was because of constructive engagement. It was because, in part, of a concerted pressure countries like Canada were able to exert. We have been following that different policy simultaneously with our pursuing a trade agreement with the United States.

Look elsewhere in Africa. Look to the question of famine relief. One of the proud times in the life of this nation was when so many Canadians came together to respond to the problems of famine in Ethiopia and in the Sahel.