

*External Affairs*

These three nations are headed at the moment by men of great value, Nehru in India, Mohammed Ali in Pakistan and Sir John Kotalawala in Ceylon. I was privileged to have a long interview with Mr. Nehru and Sir John Kotalawala. Mr. Ali was out of Pakistan at that time. I had an interview with Sir Zafrullah Khan, the foreign minister. The impression I gained was this. We can entertain great hopes for our sister nations of the commonwealth.

I may say in passing that the Prime Minister's trip over there was looked forward to with great anticipation. They were anxious to see him, and if the only result of the trip to our sister nations of the commonwealth was that we showed we want to understand them, to fraternize with them and to know them better and that we consider them strong elements in the commonwealth, then the trip itself would have served a useful purpose. Judging by the accounts we have seen in the papers, the expectations were really fulfilled, and the message of brotherhood of man, of friendship of one part of the commonwealth to another brought by the Prime Minister, helped to strengthen, unify and consolidate the links between us and this important part of the world which is, after all, if we glance at any map, such a subcontinent that in itself it may balance—if it succeeds in its present adventure of trying to improve the conditions of the people through democratic means—the efforts of China to do the same under the communist regime.

Much has been said about the vagaries of world politics, and history provides us with examples of strange shifts of national feelings toward former enemies. None of this will appear stranger in years to come than the change of attitude of the western democracies toward Germany and Japan, the enemies of yesterday, whose then leaders ordered or condoned actions that were considered unforgivable for generations. Yet today we find ourselves courting those same nations and hoping that they will side with us in the eventuality of another conflict.

I have no time to go into the question of German rearmament or the situation prevailing in Germany, but I should like to say just one word about Japan where I was for three weeks. The most acute political question there at the moment is the revision of the constitution with the right to rearm without any control from the outside, and of course disguised under the veil of self-defence. How can we object to it if we ourselves say that we must help make secure the east for those who want to carry on with the system of government we have instead of their falling under the Moscow alliance?

We are faced with the same problem in Germany. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew) spoke a moment ago about China. The same may be applied to communist China in a way, although it may be argued that in China it is the present regime that committed the atrocities that he talked about, but yet we are ready in a minute to be friendly and to shake hands with the Germans and Japanese who committed the same atrocities in the last war.

Of course in Japan and Germany we are dealing with a new government, and after speaking to some of its members in Japan I have no doubt about their sincerity to determine whether democracy as exists here will prevail in their country. I hope I was mistaken but I have not come to the conclusion that it was yet part of the Japanese mentality. But I hope it will be proved that the constitution set up by General MacArthur will bring the Japanese to adopt the sort of democratic ideas that we have in this part of the world.

But I fear that there, as in Germany and in Italy, the former ruling cliques are ever ready and waiting in the shadows to see whether they can get a chance to come forward again. That, of course, is much less true of Japan than it is of Germany or Italy.

When we look at the lessons of history I do not think we would be condoning the actions some of these people have committed whether they be Japanese or Germans, by accepting them as our allies; yet is it not strange how differently we look at things when we need someone, and is it not strange how history demonstrates the practical attitude adopted by men when they find they are in need of the help of such nations as were their enemies?

Japan might very well be the first bastion of defence in the Far East and we have got to assist them to amend their constitution so that they will be in a better position as regards self defence, and so that if it ever becomes necessary they can assist us. I venture to predict the day is not too far distant when Japan will again become a world power industrially and even militarily, even although economic conditions are bad and they have lost their markets in China and Indonesia. They have had a very difficult time in restoring their economy but they are a hard-working people and, like the Germans, I do not think it will be long before they have fully recovered, with the generous help granted them by the United States.

Let us talk now of the line of defence in the Far East should there be any attack made by the communist countries. As I just