

memories of their relations with Western Europeans are not altogether happy. It would be less than frank to say that their experience with European domination has left them without any suspicions even about us in North America. And it is important for us to realize that the peoples of Southern Asia, because they have had so little direct experience of Russian Imperialism, Communist or otherwise, are not inoculated as we are against the false ideas and illusory promises of Communist propaganda. On the other hand, they are apt to associate the whole Western world with the former Imperialism they resented so deeply and unless we can show them that we really want to be their friends and to treat them as equals we can hardly expect to enjoy their sympathy and enlist their support -- for the kind of peaceful world we are seeking to achieve.

Nevertheless, the nations of Southern Asia are bound to play an increasingly important part in world affairs. For some time I have been deeply impressed, and I am sure you have too, with the great and growing importance of these ancient Eastern civilizations which are striving to adapt themselves to this twentieth century.

It seemed clear to me that their power and influence would be certain to increase, and that in terms of our own self-interest we should seize every opportunity that presents itself to strengthen the bonds of goodwill and mutual understanding with them. Canada has a special opportunity because, like these nations, we too have emerged from a colonial status to a status of equality in the Commonwealth, and that common experience is itself a basis for mutual understanding.

My visit was certainly a rewarding one to me. I found traditions and achievements going back thousands of years which make our own history seem, by comparison, like a creation of yesterday. I was struck by the realization that the spiritual and philosophical insight, which has always been one of the glories of the East, is still a living reality.

And side by side with this ancient cultural inheritance are the new forces which are beginning to stir Asia in this period of history. The most powerful of these is a national sentiment, and closely associated with it, the insistence on the recognition of racial equality. In every part of the East this double force is at work driving men in new directions. One feels that in every part of the East the desire for national independence goes hand in hand with a new sense of the dignity of the individual and the equality of all men, regardless of origin or colour.

This feature of the Eastern scene is one which we in the West can neglect only at our peril. The peoples of Asia, who have so recently thrown off what they consider the last vestiges of colonial domination, are determined to manage their own affairs without interference. And I am confirmed in the view that no long-term solution of Asian relations with the West will be possible which does not carry with it full recognition of the common human brotherhood of all men in all countries.