

The Address—Mr. Fleming

the frankness with which both Indian and Pakistani leaders talked about them, and by their insistence that sooner or later they must find peaceful and just solutions for them. But I could not help being distressed by the intensity and bitterness of feeling on both sides in regard to these questions, and by the wide and serious differences which must be bridged before there is reconciliation.

I was distressed also, as I think any visitor would be, by the serious consequences which flow from the continuation of these disputes, which are spreading enmity between the people at a time when they should be concentrating on the many things they have in common. The disputes are also, I am afraid, destroying the natural economic links which exist between these two countries; they are causing the sacrifice of valuable markets in North America, and they are jeopardizing the solvency of the sterling area as a whole.

Our concern for these problems as Canadians is direct and urgent, because these countries are both friends and associates of ours in the commonwealth, and because we know that the dangers to peace and welfare in the Indian subcontinent are also dangers to the peace and welfare of the whole world. The governments of India and Pakistan themselves must, of course, find a means of settling their disputes over Kashmir and other questions. If, however, there is any way in which we can assist them in finding a solution—and I think we in Canada have given an earnest of our good intentions in this regard—we in the government shall certainly be glad to do what we can. We have already, through our participation in discussions in the security council of the United Nations, where our representative, General McNaughton, played such an active and constructive part in attempting to solve this problem, made one effort to assist; and we regret that it did not prove to be more successful. We must hope, however, that the fine qualities of statesmanship which the leaders of both India and Pakistan have already displayed will make it possible for these two great countries to work out, by accommodation and adjustment, solutions to the disputes which now so unhappily divide them, and that they will therefore be able to continue to make an important and progressive contribution to the political life of Asia and the world.

When we left India we were on our homeward journey from Burma, which is an unhappy country today; to Malaya; to Hong Kong, where on a few square miles around a rock are clustered more people than inhabit the dominion of New Zealand; from Hong Kong to Tokyo; and from Tokyo home.

In conclusion, I should like, in a word, to attempt to give you a general impression which I am afraid will be almost as confused as this statement has been. I feel certain, however, of one thing—and I am more certain of it now than I was before I left Ottawa on January 2—namely, that a great tide is moving in the affairs of more than one-half of the population of the world who live in Asia; a great tide which can lead to progress, peace and good things, but which also, if it sweeps in the wrong direction, can lead to chaos, reaction and destruction. But whatever the result, Mr. Speaker, our own country, Canada, which once may have seemed to be so remote from these matters, and which now stands on the threshold of such great developments, will be deeply and directly affected by the outcome of what is now going on in Asia.

Mr. Donald M. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Speaker, the house has listened to a very important and interesting statement from the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson). Since we in this part of the house have sought at all times to keep our external affairs on a non-partisan basis, perhaps the house will fully understand me when I say that if in this country we must, unfortunately, it seems, for the next several years, have a Liberal administration, nevertheless we are very glad that in that Liberal administration the portfolio of external affairs is in the very capable hands of Mike Pearson.

Sir, first, his review has emphasized again what is one of the miracles of all time, namely, the adaptability to changing conditions of this British commonwealth of nations, which, within the past year and a half, has extended its reaches to embrace three new partners in Asia. It seems to me that what he had to say to us this afternoon emphasizes again how valuable a contribution that commonwealth, buttressed, as it is, with the presence and active participation of these three great new partners, has made, and what a beneficent mission it has to fulfil for the benefit of all mankind. Think, sir, what a truly marvellous thing it is that our partners in India, whose leaders only so short a time ago were suffering confinement in prison because they were at variance with the policies of Britain, now find it in their hearts to dismiss all thoughts of bitterness and to regard British representatives, as well as those from the other partners of the commonwealth, as brothers, and to work with them toward common ends for the good of all mankind.

About four months have passed since this house last debated the vitally important subject of Canada's external relations. The