

to interpret Western opinion in many sections of Asia and vice versa. There may be dissident voices in some of these countries but my judgment would be that for the most part those who at the present time have to do with the conduct of government in those great countries recognize that in the consultations of Prime Ministers and of Foreign Ministers and in the collaboration that takes place in the United Nations the Commonwealth serves as a valuable instrument in a world whose power blocs need to move closer and closer together rather than to diverge on an increasing scale.

I think I can give one further reason for these somewhat optimistic conclusions which I have reached. India, Ceylon and Pakistan are deeply dedicated to the democratic form of government and to the parliamentary process. They have no disposition to accept as efficient or as possible a totalitarian form of government suppressing the kind of freedom out of which political maturity can only grow.

Ceylon, which we visited for a few days before Christmas as the guest of the Government, is a lush tropical island that seems a veritable Garden of Eden. There is, in addition, something cheerful and encouraging about the Ceylonese. I became greatly interested in what I saw of Buddhism there. My conversations with the Prime Minister and with the Governor-General were most informative, and the generous hospitality which we were shown was an indication of the real warmth of feeling which Ceylon has for Canada. I was pleased to have the opportunity to see a great many of the Colombo Plan projects sponsored by Canada in Ceylon. During my visit I turned over three diesel locomotives as part of Canada's Colombo Plan aid to that country. It seems to me that the annual \$2 million contribution which we make there is of some significance in the development of that country, perhaps because the total amounts being spent on development are necessarily of a smaller order in Ceylon than those expended by her larger neighbours. Our visit to the old capital at Kandy afforded us an opportunity to see something of the beautiful tropical countryside and we enjoyed an unusual ride on the backs of two giant elephants.

Altogether I spent ten days in India, ten days which afforded me a new measure of understanding of the Indian people and their approach to world problems. The confidence which I have come to place in India, and in her Prime Minister, Mr. Nehru, was greatly strengthened by my visit. I was particularly moved by what I saw of the efforts towards community development in the villages where over eighty per cent of India's vast population lives. For two days I was privileged to visit several of these in the Punjab district, about one hundred miles from Delhi, moving among the people informally, telling them about the joint efforts which Canada and India are making toward the solution of common international problems. These two days spent in the villages were among the most impressive of my entire trip. I visited several villages but one has to remember that there are nearly half a million of these villages, many of which still continue to bear the form and the character of their, in some cases, centuries-old construction.

I spent several days in and around New Delhi, the Indian capital, where I was able to have talks with many of India's leaders. Prime Minister Nehru returned home from his North American visit during my stay, and I was on hand to greet him when he disembarked from his plane. I had a further