



# Statements and Speeches

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## THE COMMONWEALTH AND WORLD SECURITY

A Speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Don Jamieson, to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Ottawa, September 20, 1977.

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This morning I have been asked to speak briefly on the Commonwealth and international security. In the postwar world, global security has become an increasingly complex matter. It is no longer solely a question of vast military forces facing each other in a more or less static posture of wary watchfulness. Bipolarity and the balance of terror founded upon the deep apprehension of a short, massively-destructive, global nuclear holocaust have given way in the era of *détente* and interdependence to a much more complicated and subtle global situation — a situation of perhaps greater security in the relationship of the super-powers but with perhaps a greater variety of no-less-serious international problems. Nuclear proliferation, the continuing development of more awesome weaponry and the emergence of many local conflict situations still challenge our diplomatic skills and threaten the well-being — even the survival — of all of us. The confrontations that remain unresolved in areas like the Middle East and southern Africa represent potential flashpoints of international conflict, with the omnipresent danger of escalation. By a constructive contribution to eliminating such potential triggers of international conflict, the Commonwealth can strengthen global security.

At the same time, security can no longer be conceived in exclusively military terms. Economic security, in terms of access to raw materials and energy resources, as well as in terms of the distribution of the world's wealth and the striving of less-developed nations for a reasonable standard of living, has become a leading issue in international affairs.

As a group of sovereign nations, the Commonwealth, for reasons too familiar to enumerate here, occupies a unique place in the world. Membership in it confers undoubted advantages but it also imposes obligations and I shall refer to both this morning. An effective Commonwealth contribution on many fronts to political, economic and social progress and understanding can lead us to a more stable and secure world.

No one who reviews the history of the Commonwealth can fail to be impressed with the resilience it has demonstrated in the course of its evolution from a colonial empire to the free association of states it now comprises. This evolution was manifestly evident at the London meeting last June where 33 heads of government or their representatives met to confront some of the most pressing questions affecting the security of our world. That distinguished gathering of leaders collectively represented almost one billion of the world's population from all corners of the globe. In this respect, the Commonwealth is a reflection of our world, and as such cannot fail to be con-

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