

I think that the real link between the various members of the Commonwealth is their common ideals, their memories of association in the past, their intimate conviction that that association in the past has been for the benefit of their people, and their desire to conserve that association in the future for the benefit of their people. I do not think that we are being presumptuous or conceited when we believe, and even when we express the belief, that this Commonwealth group not only works for the benefit of its own peoples but is an effective instrument for the good of free mankind throughout the world.

I know that my predecessor had an influential part in the decision that was reached that, in spite of the fact that the situation in India required the constitution of a republic for that great country, India would remain a part of the Commonwealth. I think that the influence he exercised at that time was in the right direction and that the result was something beneficial to us, beneficial to India and also beneficial to free men throughout the world, and that the conservation and development of that feeling of common ideals, common purposes between the great Republic of India and the other members of the British Commonwealth will continue to be of service to free mankind. And it is I think something for which the realistic genius of the British people has reason to be proud, that it can accommodate itself to the requirements of new situations in the lives of men and can conserve the essentials without having to conserve forms that to some appear to have become so outmoded that they can no longer be accepted. I think it is a magnificent thing that the peoples of India and the peoples of the Occident can look upon each other as human beings equal in every respect; and I was not going beyond what the fact requires when I said in Ottawa to Mr. Nehru that we hoped and trusted that in spite of the many more centuries of their social experience and civilization there would never be any indication by their own people that they looked down upon us as their inferiors, and that I hoped and trusted that in spite of our rapid development of industrial processes and industrial know-how there would never be any feeling among the people of India that we thought that because of that we were human beings in any way superior to the millions who inhabited their country.

We all know from our own Canadian experience that unity between us, unity between all the elements of our population, is and must be based upon that recognition by us all that we are all equal to each other and that all have the same rights to Canadian citizenship, and that Canadian citizenship gives us equality in every respect with all our fellow-citizens, whatever their origin, their traditions and their cultures may be. It is because our forefathers had the wisdom to recognize that it was not going to be necessary in this Canadian nation to pour all the elements into the same mould that we now have a Canadian nation.

We are all proud of being Canadian citizens because we can be so and can exercise all our rights as such without forgetting our racial origins, our ancestral traditions, and without there being any effort by any of our fellow citizens to make us over into any other kind of Canadian than we happen to be because of our racial origins and with our ancestral traditions.