

lasting difference in directions between public affairs and the academic sphere. A university, it has been said, should not be in the busy world nor quite beyond it. Far from being an ivory tower standing apart from the bustle and the demands of the forum the market place and the highway, I see the university as the very intellectual focus of society, the focus which provides our sense of direction, both individually and nationally. I maintain that, because the interchange between the academic world and public life has been a free and effective one, the Commonwealth has been so successful an undertaking. For the same reason, it continues to show resilience and viability in adapting to the profound changes which have swept the world.

I have spoken of the transformation of the empire and the emergence of new nations but the process has not been entirely one of fragmentation. As in the gyroscope there are within the Commonwealth centripetal as well as centrifugal forces at work. In the propagation of these cohesive forces, the university has played no less a part than it has in the development of diverse nationalities. Although these centripetal forces are intangible and elusive, they are nonetheless very real and impart to the Commonwealth its distinguishing cohesive characteristics.

Commonwealth Cohesiveness

What is the Commonwealth, is a question frequently asked. What holds it together if it has no common institutions and no jurisdiction applicable to all its component parts. The answer is, of course, as simple to explain as it is often difficult to understand. The Commonwealth is a free association of states, of independent governments choosing to remain in a particular and special type of relationship to each other because, even if they may not follow unified or even parallel policies, there are large areas of agreement between the peoples they represent as to values, ideals, principles and long range objectives. The common belief in the values and ideals on which the Commonwealth is based originates not in a political context but stems in large part from the association of students and teachers in academic pursuits. Our universities are not institutions of prescriptive dogma or paralyzing propaganda but centres of independent thought and action where the best is preserved, modified and cast into new configurations to meet the imperious demands of a universe rapidly changing in response to man's restless curiosity and striving.

Shall I say then that the Commonwealth is an attitude of mind, an attitude which does not demand unthinking conformity and which wisely recognizes that we may differ from one another without being divided?