

- (6) that, in spite of reluctance in earlier years to consider joint measures in external affairs and in spite of the dissensions about the Rhodesian situation, there has been a significant agreement on action to deal with the illegal declaration of independence by the Smith Government.

It would be wrong to think of the Commonwealth as an association providing only for occasional consultation. On the basis of a new relation among its members, it is engaging in collective action in support of certain common interests. There are some examples which I have chosen, Mr. Chairman, to stress the substance of Commonwealth connections.

There must be compelling ideas also to guide the development of these activities. The most important political feature of the Commonwealth is its multi-racial character. By providing important links among many races, among nations in different parts of the world, and among economically-advanced and developing countries, the Commonwealth supports the United Nations in its work of universal peace making and economic and social development. The Commonwealth nations can scarcely hope to be free from the conflicts of interest found elsewhere in the world. They do not form an alliance or a tightly-knit regional group. They are unlikely to arrive at similar viewpoints on many matters of world affairs. Nevertheless, by means of their unique connections, they are able to do many good things -- good for themselves and good for the world.

This broadening of the racial basis of the Commonwealth has not ended the natural adherence of those of British descent to certain traditions. It has opened to them and to others wider ideas of political and cultural growth. This is particularly important for Canada. The chief external associations of the country must be meaningful to all the main groups in our population. I am glad that French-speaking Canadians and others not of British descent can benefit from scholarships which could take them to almost any part of a world-wide association of nations, and that students from elsewhere in the Commonwealth can come here to benefit from our French-language, as well as our English-language, culture. It is significant in this connection that at the Third Commonwealth Education Conference, held in Ottawa in 1964, the conference chairman was the Minister of Education of the Province of Quebec, the Honourable Paul Gérin-Lajoie.

It is also significant that, in recent years, as we have helped in the development of the Commonwealth, we have also extended and deepened our relations with France and other French-speaking nations. Many of the conditions of our closer relations with these nations are different from those on which our Commonwealth connections are based. Nevertheless, some basic objectives are the same. We seek to preserve, deepen and apply to the broad purposes of our external policy traditional associations which are particularly meaningful to Canadians.

In trying to analyze the nature of the Commonwealth or predict its future in world affairs, we perhaps create unnecessary complications. In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that the role of