

the one hand a steady march toward a known goal, nor, on the other opposition to all change. From time to time theorists suggested federal solutions, grandiose schemes for a centralized Parliament in London in which all the member countries would be represented. Others proposed - and, indeed, for a while it was tried - an Imperial Cabinet. But these schemes foundered and dwindled away, and by the most pragmatic of processes the Commonwealth association developed into what we have today. In this process, the necessities of war played an important part. In such times of common emergency, there is no time for fussing about problems of status. All efforts need to be bent to the task of survival. Co-operation and the joint endeavour flourished in the Second World War in particular - a war which unhappily reduced the relative power of the British Isles as it enhanced in varying degree the authority and prestige of the other Commonwealth nations. Furthermore, the relations between the "outlying" members became more important until there developed the present criss-cross of relationships between the seven nations and their peoples across the world.

So much for our origins. And it is necessary to know something of our history to understand our present. But what have we in fact achieved in our modern Commonwealth of Nations? What is the character of our present association? What reason have we to claim - as we do - that the Commonwealth has a value for the world beyond the boundaries of its member nations?

In the first place, it should be understood, not only that the Commonwealth has no central machinery of government, but also that it has no constitution. The Commonwealth consists of seven self-governing nations and a number of units which are in various stages of progress toward autonomy. One of the nations of the Commonwealth, the United Kingdom, includes a non-self-governing Empire. These are the colonies, reaching out with the encouragement and guidance of London toward their own eventual independence. The United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Ceylon have the same Sovereign. To Canadians, Elizabeth II is first the Queen of Canada, as to the British she is first the Queen of Great Britain - to the Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans and Ceylonese likewise. Valued as is the Crown to my country and to others in the Commonwealth, however, we have found that there is now no problem in including republics within our association. The Republic of India is a full member. A Republic of Pakistan is soon to follow.

Not only is there no Commonwealth constitution, but there is equally no treaty of alliance, nor, indeed, any legal instrument of any kind which binds our seven nations together. Even those countries who owe allegiance to the Queen are governed entirely separately, and, other than by negotiation and consent, there is no means by which common policies can be formulated. It is quite misleading, therefore, to think or speak of a Commonwealth policy in foreign affairs, or, indeed, in any other field. It is even more misleading on specific issues to expect a Commonwealth "point of view". The government of each nation will decide its policies on the basis of considerations which apply to it. And, since the several nations have very