

*Business of Supply*

each of those countries, but they all sit down and frankly discuss their problems.

**An hon. Member:** When did they do so?

**Mr. Fleming:** I will give the hon. member an opportunity to make his remarks later.

Canada has the opportunity—and this is a word that seems to have an evil connotation these days—to have what I consider to be an efficient intelligence system in the sense of our being able to sit down informally, without the pressures of negotiating treaties and without the pressure of having to make concessions and receive concessions, but simply to sit down and say, “Here are our problems, we want you to understand them. What are your problems, may we understand them?” Only the Commonwealth can allow that to happen, and for that reason it is invaluable to Canada.

During those brief few days in Jamaica it was suggested to me that Canada is held in the highest regard—and I say that without giving it any political tone. I have great respect for our opposition parties and I say that if something were to happen that they would be in power rather than ourselves, I am sure they would do their best to carry on the traditions which have brought us the kind of respect which is extremely rare for developed nations to receive from the developing nations which are so troubled to see us with all our advantages, opportunities, and wealth. The Commonwealth continues to be an association of independent, sovereign nations. Its members are under no obligation. They come because they care to come.

The Commonwealth Secretariat in London, over a period of only 10 years, has grown to be a sizeable organization and is able, through its auspices and through the support of various countries, to help bring contact between more than 200 organizations in the various Commonwealth countries, to interrelate their interests and responsibilities, and to learn how similar organizations in other countries operate.

Canada played a major role in the initial years of the Commonwealth because a distinguished Canadian civil servant, Arnold Smith, led the Commonwealth as Secretary General for the first ten years. He is succeeded at the beginning of the new term by the foreign minister of Guyana, Sonny Ramphal, who, I am sure, will again do an excellent job in making the path of the Commonwealth a progressive one and in fostering better understanding and maintaining peace in the world.

It is interesting to me when I talk about the particular respect and regard in which Canada is held by the Commonwealth nations to note that it was a Canadian who carried out a key role and who managed, with the support of the Canadian government, to make the Commonwealth grow. Now, as he leaves, an outstanding member of the third world will take over and will lead and guide the Commonwealth under the direction of the various governments involved. Again this is proof that the Commonwealth is not composed of “have” nations telling “have not” nations what to do, but rather is composed of all nations with a common cause working together.

Now I want to mention briefly some of the particular programs and divisions within the Commonwealth

[Mr. Fleming.]

Secretariat because of the important role Canada plays in them. First and perhaps foremost would be the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation, a technical assistance scheme incorporating a technical assistance program, an education and training program, and an exports development program. The CFTC budget this year is £3.5 million or \$7.5 million approximately. Canada pays approximately 40 per cent of CFTC budget costs. So you can see again this major initiative in the role we are playing in making the Commonwealth work.

Another major area within the secretariat is the Commonwealth Youth Program, a program intended to involve young people in the development of their country. I learned in the brief time I was at the Commonwealth Conference that some of the greatest political pressures, the real crisis in some of the developing nations, are indeed problems with youth, in training them, and also effectively moving them into areas where they can be productive. This program has six constituent elements, including an awards scheme, the establishment of three centres for advanced studies in youth work, and a fellowship bursary and information service. Again Canada has a role in the Commonwealth Youth Program. The CYC budget this year is \$1.4 million and Canada pays 30 per cent to 40 per cent of the cost of that program.

Another program is the Commonwealth Foundation which was established to facilitate and encourage contact between professional organizations throughout the Commonwealth. The foundation budget this year is \$1.1 million and Canada pays approximately 15 per cent of its costs. We are paying 40 per cent of the costs for technical co-operation and understanding. If we are to be a peaceful world and be fair in the sharing of our wealth with other nations, we should play a major role in the Commonwealth, especially in technical assistance where we have much to offer and in aid for youth.

With regard to the Commonwealth Secretariat itself, Canada pays about 20 per cent of the budget costs.

The Commonwealth heads of government meeting in Jamaica this year gathered with four achievements towards which to work. First was the continued expansion of Commonwealth functional co-operation. Canada played a major role in increasing its financial assistance and re-stating its dedication to the development of the Commonwealth and the importance of the work being done.

Second was the reduction of economic disparities between nations. Of course, that is the crisis which the UN will have to face in the fall at its 7th special session, and it is the crisis that the whole world is facing at present. It is a reflection of the situation in the Middle East, of the international monetary crisis. It is something to which the Commonwealth countries, because of their common appreciation of situations as they gather together and discuss candidly, can bring a better understanding before the event of the UN confrontation of the views and desires of the so-called new economic order by all those who must participate in it and seek a solution that would be reasonable to all.

The third goal of the meeting in Jamaica was the shifting balance of political and economic power, to appreciate better and understand the views of the various members on what is happening in that regard.