

I would like to recall to you briefly two examples of joint Commonwealth action on a grand scale in which both New Zealand and Canada participated. First, there is the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, which allowed us to become acquainted personally with many of your airmen. This experiment in collective action organized within the Commonwealth is now a matter of record and can be viewed as an unqualified success. The second, the Colombo Plan, is, of course, a continuing project. It has gained momentum and gives every evidence of developing in scope and depth. It makes manifest the desire and ability on the part of the older members of the Commonwealth to provide economic and technical assistance for the newer members who are, at the same time, faced with acute problems in their social and industrial life. Its underlying assumption is that whatever contributes to the health of one must be for the good of all.

Since the end of World War II, there have been cataclysmic shifts in the balance of power throughout the world, caused chiefly by the intrusion of Communism into Asia. In these post-war years, three new members of the Commonwealth, India, Pakistan and Ceylon, have appeared in that continent. These newest members of the Commonwealth have, at the same time, the longest history. The emergence of these peoples as independent nations and their voluntary entry into the Commonwealth, where every race and creed work together on terms of equality, illustrate what vitality there is in this free association of nations. The membership in the Commonwealth of these Asian nations provides a bridge between East and West, which has already served, and will continue to serve, I am sure, the interests of peace. Perhaps the metaphor of a bridge is misleading because it suggests something rigid and fixed, whereas the Commonwealth by its nature is flexible and loose. Yet, we value greatly the intimate link which the Commonwealth affords between its great Asian and its older members. This association helps us in Canada to view international affairs from a global viewpoint. It serves as a stimulus to that provincial self-centred attitude which comes so easily to those living in a vast country such as Canada.

One aspect of Commonwealth relations which, while it cannot be measured in terms of military divisions or financial profit and loss, is perhaps the richest, namely, the constant consultation of the leaders of the various governments within it. These frequent and informal consultations allow each of us to share in the wisdom and experience of the other. In this fashion we learn fresh lessons in the school of public and diplomatic relations, the necessity for fair play and compromise.

One may well ask does Canadian membership in NATO, for example, or our close association with the United States, conflict in any way with our position within the Commonwealth? My answer would be definitely "no." Our membership in NATO is designed to strengthen the defences of the Western world against possible aggression. This contribution to security in Western Europe serves the interests of the other members of the Commonwealth, and indeed, of all countries who desire to maintain peace. Geographically, of course, we are in North America and inevitably we are closely associated with our great neighbour, the United States. While we have one foot in the new world, however, we also have a foot in the old world, and in our relationship with the