



Statements and Speeches

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THE COMMONWEALTH AND WORLD SECURITY

A Speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Don Jamieson, to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Ottawa, September 20, 1977.

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This morning I have been asked to speak briefly on the Commonwealth and international security. In the postwar world, global security has become an increasingly complex matter. It is no longer solely a question of vast military forces facing each other in a more or less static posture of wary watchfulness. Bipolarity and the balance of terror founded upon the deep apprehension of a short, massively-destructive, global nuclear holocaust have given way in the era of *détente* and interdependence to a much more complicated and subtle global situation — a situation of perhaps greater security in the relationship of the super-powers but with perhaps a greater variety of no-less-serious international problems. Nuclear proliferation, the continuing development of more awesome weaponry and the emergence of many local conflict situations still challenge our diplomatic skills and threaten the well-being — even the survival — of all of us. The confrontations that remain unresolved in areas like the Middle East and southern Africa represent potential flashpoints of international conflict, with the omnipresent danger of escalation. By a constructive contribution to eliminating such potential triggers of international conflict, the Commonwealth can strengthen global security.

At the same time, security can no longer be conceived in exclusively military terms. Economic security, in terms of access to raw materials and energy resources, as well as in terms of the distribution of the world's wealth and the striving of less-developed nations for a reasonable standard of living, has become a leading issue in international affairs.

As a group of sovereign nations, the Commonwealth, for reasons too familiar to enumerate here, occupies a unique place in the world. Membership in it confers undoubted advantages but it also imposes obligations and I shall refer to both this morning. An effective Commonwealth contribution on many fronts to political, economic and social progress and understanding can lead us to a more stable and secure world.

No one who reviews the history of the Commonwealth can fail to be impressed with the resilience it has demonstrated in the course of its evolution from a colonial empire to the free association of states it now comprises. This evolution was manifestly evident at the London meeting last June where 33 heads of government or their representatives met to confront some of the most pressing questions affecting the security of our world. That distinguished gathering of leaders collectively represented almost one billion of the world's population from all corners of the globe. In this respect, the Commonwealth is a reflection of our world, and as such cannot fail to be con-

cerned with the full range of pressing international issues of our times.

At the London meeting of heads of government, four basic themes predominated: (1) liberation in southern Africa; (2) the restructuring of world economic relations, or the New International Economic Order, as it is known; (3) the more positive commitment of the Commonwealth to the world community; and connected with this, (4) a clearer engagement on the part of the Commonwealth to finding solutions that will enhance the economic and social progress of its members.

The problems that exist in southern Africa are all closely intertwined. In South Africa the outrageous doctrine of *apartheid* continues to offend the conscience of the world. Until this wrong is righted, and justice and equality prevail, as they must, we must strive for its eradication, both because that is right and because the conflicts that it engenders work their harm upon other regions.

We are all of us only too familiar with the situation in Rhodesia, where a minority regime now in power and supported by South Africa seems resolved to rule or ruin the state. None of us can condone continued intransigence and denial of majority rule by the Smith regime in Rhodesia. The longer this situation prevails the less are the chances of a peaceful, negotiated settlement and the greater the prospect of escalating violence. By continued pressure and continued negotiation, we must seek a peaceful solution. We in Canada shall continue to support the current efforts by Britain and the United States to achieve a lasting, peaceful solution.

The existence of the Smith regime depends heavily upon external support. The Commonwealth Sanctions Committee, formed to monitor sanctions applied as a result of United Nations action, has reported "massive evasions", which enable the Smith regime to sustain itself. We hope that all states will take the necessary measures to respect the UN's decision on sanctions with respect to Rhodesia.

The problem of Rhodesia has imposed substantial burdens on the Commonwealth front-line states of Botswana and Zambia, as well as on Mozambique. These include large numbers of refugees, severe economic constraints caused by the closure of crucial rail facilities, as well as direct military clashes. The Commonwealth has here made a direct and necessary contribution of multilateral assistance through the Special Commonwealth Program for the people of Zimbabwe and the Commonwealth Fund for Mozambique.

In Namibia, Canada and the other Western members of the Security Council have been trying, through discussions with all interested parties, to facilitate a solution to end South Africa's illegal presence there. The Commonwealth recognizes the right of all the people of Namibia to participate in achieving self-determination and true independence for their country. Major problems on this path continue to exist, but we hope that the continuing efforts to find a peaceful solution will be successful in the not-too-distant future. In the meantime, assistance has been provided to the people of Namibia through the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation.

These African problems are more than Commonwealth problems, but the Commonwealth has played its part to encourage their resolution and thereby to improve the international atmosphere and hence our security. I invite all of you to encourage further support for the Commonwealth undertakings I have mentioned by the parliaments and nations you represent.

Another major issue discussed at the heads-of-government meeting in London was the so-called "North-South dialogue" and the restructuring of global economic relations. To put the matter bluntly, it is the question of rich and poor, of poverty and inequality — in short, of economic security. In this respect, the Commonwealth is more than just a reflection of the rest of the world. Eighty-nine per cent of the Commonwealth's people are from developing countries, and these represent 44 per cent of the population of the entire developing world. Eighty per cent of those people in the world who earn annual incomes of less than \$200 (the absolute poor) exist (for that is all it can be called) in the Commonwealth. It is clear that all of us in the developed nations, both within and without the Commonwealth, must be prepared to do our share to reverse the trend towards growing economic disparity in the world. Unless we can move rapidly beyond the stage of vigorous debate to practical measures to overcome this trend, economic insecurity may become perpetual and violent reaction, confrontation and conflict inevitable.

We have the resources for this effort; we must now marshal them effectively. Security from the oppression of grinding want and despair of the many is a goal to which all must contribute if we are not to imperil the security of all.

There must be a recognition by all of us of the importance of continuing in a constructive way the dialogue between the developed and the developing countries. This was fundamental to the discussions in London of all the issues arising in the context of the world economic situation. Of course this dialogue is only one step forward on a very long road, but it is an important step, in which we can take some satisfaction.

I think that we can say in all honesty that real progress has been made and that the contribution of the Commonwealth to this dialogue has been a positive one through formal and informal contacts, and through the work of the MacIntyre Group.

There have been concrete measures of progress since the 1975 heads-of-government meeting in Jamaica — for example, the Fifth IDA (International Development Association) Replenishment of over \$8 billion and the achievement of a \$1-billion target for the establishment of an International Fund for Agricultural Development. In other areas, a package of reform measures for the International Monetary Fund was approved in Jamaica last year and their application is now under way. Further consultation on energy between industrialized, OPEC (the Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries) and developing countries should deepen understanding of how we must work together for our mutual benefit.

Most recently, the Conference on International Economic Co-operation (CIEC) has agreed on positive measures to aid economic development: a special action program to assist the poorest developing countries; endorsement of an emergency grain reserve;

agreement that there should be a common fund to assist in the stabilization of commodity prices. All these represent distinct steps forward. I might mention Canada's own contribution to the special action program — that is, our cancellation of development-assistance loans to least-developed countries, which covers loans amounting to more than \$160 million to Commonwealth countries in Asia and Africa.

The Commonwealth finance ministers are currently meeting in Barbados. A number of the key financial aspects of economic security are being examined at that meeting. The report of the Commonwealth Group of Experts, *Toward a New International Economic Order*, was given support by heads of government in London as a significant contribution to understanding of North-South issues. Now the finance ministers are looking at how best it should be followed up. The regular meetings of Commonwealth finance ministers provide a useful forum for a frank and free exchange of views on several aspects of the "North-South dialogue".

Next week, at the United Nations in New York, I shall, in a broader context, set out my views and concerns on the effectiveness of the UN system and particularly on the future of the North-South dialogue in the post-CIEC period. What is necessary now is full and rapid implementation of the agreements at [the] CIEC, on issues such as development assistance, special action, a common fund and energy-conservation and -diversification. The disagreements at [the] CIEC on, for example, indebtedness of developing countries and on purchasing power of raw materials and energy resources, are areas that will require intensified work in the coming months to reach a meeting of minds on how to tackle these important problems.

Obviously, there are many steps still to take in what is a long journey. There will be those who feel that the progress that has been made has been too slow and tentative and who will call for radical changes in the world trade and monetary systems and massive resource transfers beyond those yet achieved. I would say let us move rapidly but certainly. We cannot strengthen the world's economy unless our own economies are sound. Inflation, unemployment and scarce resources are general problems, which we must combat at home in order to help abroad.

We must avoid extreme demands from developing countries, as well as reactionary responses in the developed nations, if we are to achieve our objectives. I believe there is a middle way. And we as parliamentarians must help to seek it out. In the long run, our own future prosperity and economic security will depend on ensuring that the developing world moves towards a more prosperous state.

Turning briefly to the theme of the Commonwealth's more positive commitment to the world community, I would underline the special advantages enjoyed by this, our association. We in the Commonwealth have common institutions and a common language that simplify communication between us and imply co-operation beyond the confines of the Commonwealth itself. The Commonwealth has, as I have suggested earlier, played a useful role in Africa and in the field of international economic co-operation. Delegations from our various countries have co-operated effectively in a variety of international forums, such as the Law of the Sea Conference, and we look forward to continued consultation and collaboration in the future.

We in Canada have been gratified by the closer links being forged between the Commonwealth Secretariat and l'Agence de coopération culturelle et technique. As you will appreciate, we in this country see both organizations as important channels for giving expression to our dual heritage internationally.

I also wish to take the opportunity to mention the important role played in Commonwealth affairs by a vast number of non-governmental organizations that range from the Commonwealth Foundation to this Association. These are the grass-roots of the Commonwealth. These various organizations encourage people-to-people dialogue in a spirit of mutual respect that fosters a sense of interdependence and common purpose. Involving people at all levels, they bring mutual benefits to our community as a whole. They are multidimensional in character, innovative, flexible, and supplement governmental undertakings. Giving, as they do, a human dimension to the Commonwealth, they are deserving of our support and encouragement.

I now turn briefly to another topic of capital interest to the Commonwealth, and that is the question of human rights. All of us in the Commonwealth share in the heritage of British parliamentary democracy and the rule of law. Respect for the rule of law must be guarded as a cardinal precept for us all. Unfortunately, this precept has not always prevailed and political freedom has on occasion been replaced by arbitrary treatment of citizens or political expediency. But these should be rejected by us all in favour of respect for the rule of an impartial law. We as parliamentarians have a grave responsibility to those we represent to ensure that the most profound respect is given to this principle. The arbitrary loss of freedom by one individual remains a threat to the freedom of all.

The Commonwealth must stand for the political and civil rights of the subject. We might recall that it was our resolute rejection of *apartheid* that forced South Africa to leave the Commonwealth many years ago. Obviously, we in the Commonwealth community are all equal nations and we have a long tradition of non-interference in one another's affairs. However, we cannot take refuge behind this principle when blatant oppression appears within our membership. The current situation in Uganda causes us grave concern and distress in this regard. Commonwealth heads of government took a forthright line on this question in London; we, as parliamentarians, can do no less.

While we cannot expect, perhaps, to achieve perfection in human rights, the Commonwealth must set an example for the world. And our commitment must be universal. We cannot vigorously demand respect for equality and basic rights in one area or state — for example, in southern Africa — unless we demand and apply the same standards everywhere. Our concern cannot be selective in terms of geography or race without undermining the public support we as representatives can count on when forthright statements are required.

But when I speak of human rights I do not restrict myself to political and civil rights. There are, as I have suggested earlier, those economic and social rights, too, which we must respect and strive for — the right to decent housing, enough food, the right to work. If our world remains entrenched in disparities of wealth and poverty, if we

remain deaf to dialogue that alone can lead us forward in a positive way, we cannot hope to make progress.

On a final specific issue, I wish to mention the recent Gleneagles Agreement, by which all our governments have agreed to take practical steps to discourage contact or competition by nationals with sporting organizations, teams, or sportsmen from South Africa or any other country where sports are organized on the basis of race, colour or ethnic origin. I believe [that] this is a reasonable and workable approach to this issue, and that we can be happy with the way in which the Commonwealth's statement on sport has been applied to date by members of the community we represent. I sincerely look forward to seeing full contingents from all your countries at the Commonwealth Games that will take place in Edmonton next year. It is important that our youths meet one another in friendly competition, for it is only on this type of solid basis that we can build the future.

In conclusion, may I wish you well in your deliberations. I commend to all of you a rereading of the "Declaration of Commonwealth Principles" adopted at the heads-of-government meeting in Singapore in 1971. It is an eloquent document, which attests to the high ideals and vitality of the Commonwealth. The membership of the Commonwealth reflects the world, and I would have, in many ways, the world reflects the Commonwealth. The search for global security is continuous. The challenges of security are varied and the threats many. We shall, however, persevere. Let us look to the future with optimism and a commitment to our common purposes. The Commonwealth is unique, and together we can build a more secure and just world.

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