

*An  
End  
to  
Otherness*

*Shridath S Ramphal*

*Commemorative Addresses  
by the Commonwealth Secretary-General*



*An  
End  
to  
Otherness*

*Shridath S Ramphal*

'Some men have become famous because of the service they have given to their countries, others have become well known because of the manner in which they have taken up issues affecting their regions, and others have become famous because in their fight for human justice they have chosen the entire world as their theatre. Shridath Ramphal is one of those men.'

*Nelson Mandela, Abuja, Nigeria, 1990*

## *An End to Otherness*

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# **INTRODUCTION**

*by Lloyd Searwar*

**S**hridath Ramphal, a selection of whose commemorative addresses is here re-issued, has been Commonwealth Secretary-General since 1975. He was elected to a second term in 1980 and even more significantly to a third term in 1985. There is general agreement that his tenure as Secretary-General has been characterised by remarkable Commonwealth achievements in both the economic and political fields including the expansion of programmes of assistance, the concern with the problems of, and support for, small States, the resolution of conflict in Rhodesia leading to the emergence of the new State of Zimbabwe and the re-admission of Pakistan. His last months in office were to see the release of Nelson Mandela and the beginning of the end of apartheid in South Africa, Namibia's independence and admission to the Commonwealth as its 50th member and, not least, the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Commonwealth Secretariat. He could hardly have asked for a more fulfilling finale. But while the Commonwealth Secretariat has provided him with an important platform from which he has sought to advance ideas towards the solution of rapidly evolving global problems, Ramphal has in his own right achieved an international stature as reflected in his membership of those major Commissions of Independent citizens which have been entrusted in recent years with the search for solutions to emerging planetary problems, including the Brandt Commission on International Development Issues, the Palme Commission on Disarmament and Security, and the Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development. More recently he has been invited by Julius Nyerere to serve on the South Commission.

He is today recognised as the English-speaking Caribbean's foremost public servant. But he is far more than just an effective international bureaucrat. He is a man of ideas whose vision has left its stamp on nearly all that he has touched including the Caribbean Regional Integration Movement; the Non-Aligned Movement; the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of Countries; and the Commonwealth.

The publication of these addresses thus provides another occasion for the study, however tentative, of his ideas and approaches to international politics. In this task we are already indebted to the earlier studies by Barbara Ward in 1979<sup>1</sup> and more recently by Ron Sanders in 1988.<sup>2</sup> Ward has provided a definitive analysis of the contemporary international economic order in which Ramphal has pleaded so eloquently for reform and for change. She has remarked on how his insights and approach to international change have been guided by his study of the realised history of the industrialised nation states:

The whole skewed, bleak, aggressive, cruel yet dynamic structure of early industrialism was changed over time by three main forces—the increasingly self-conscious struggle of the dispossessed majority, the gradual acceptance by the holders of power, in part through fear, in part through reason, of the need for change, together with their subsequent discovery of its advantages and, at all stages, by the insight, inventiveness and eloquence of individual men and women of vision....<sup>3</sup>

Barbara Ward is certain that Ramphal is, for our time, one of the men of vision.

Sanders, writing some nine years later, in his preface to a further selection of speeches, *Inseparable Humanity*, has shown how Ramphal's profound concern with human survival has been powerfully shaped by his nurture within a West Indian society which derives from slavery and indenture.

Sanders has chronicled Ramphal's widening concerns, as his career unfolds, from the regional integration movement in the Caribbean to the inter-regional negotiations leading to the foundation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of Countries and the conclusion of the first of the Lomé Treaties and beyond that to the global levels of the Non-Aligned Movement, the United Nations and the Commonwealth.

This introduction has more limited objectives than these earlier studies, namely to identify, within the context of the speeches herein reprinted, as far as possible, the elements of the vision and the methods of its translation into action as

factors which have contributed to Ramphal's effective leadership at the international level.

However, one is aware that leadership, especially within international organisations, is dependent not only on such "personality" factors but also on the interaction between the international system and the organisational context within which the vision is pursued.<sup>4</sup> This study does not essay any exhaustive analysis of the systemic and organisational factors but, in passing, takes note of some of their relevant aspects. The first is that there has been significant change in the international system itself in the decade and a half during which Ramphal has been Secretary-General. Where the North, in the seventies, was characterised by expansion, outward-looking policies and some adherence to multilateralism, the eighties were marked by introversion and the collapse of multilateralism. Except for the Uruguay Round and a number of monetary and fiscal issues being negotiated within working groups in the context of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, North-South negotiations have been largely suspended. Moreover, certain developments in the global environment, namely emerging Super Power bilateralism, the development of major trading areas in the North, trends in technology which have lessened the dependence on the raw material of the South, the increasing control of the internal policy process of developing States through the assertion of conditionalities, the clear benefits which the North has derived from depressed commodity prices, all these have encouraged perceptions in the North that the future relationship with the South may require no more than "fire brigade" action to ensure that fires in the South do not cross over.

Such fundamental change in the context of North-South relations has made it more difficult for the goals to which Ramphal is committed to prevail.

Turning to the organisational base, the Commonwealth exists as the product not of treaty but of shared history and commitment to similar ideals. Its Secretariat therefore cannot play the dominant role which international bureaucracy so often affects within a treaty-established intergovernmental organisation. On the other hand, Commonwealth arrangements do provide for biennial meetings of its forty-nine Heads of Gov-

ernment, several of whom exercise powerful catalytic and shaping influence within the international community. Such Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings give undertakings and make commitments of a level and importance not duplicated by any other Summit Meetings.

Within such systemic context and organisational arrangements, a Secretary-General's chief resource in propelling action must clearly lie in the capacity to communicate his vision to Governments of Member States and to the wider international community.

In identifying the elements of that vision from the close study of the text of the speeches which follow, the author of this introduction has been significantly assisted by the use of the "Operational Code" approach to the study of political leaders.<sup>5</sup> This approach is founded on the assumption that political behaviour derives in large part from the way in which the leader perceives and interprets his environment. It aims to uncover:

- (i) his philosophical beliefs about the world;
- (ii) his instrumental beliefs or working assumptions.

It has been suggested by the architect of this approach, Alexander George, that the answers to a number of philosophical and instrumental questions encompass the essence of the leader's political beliefs. In the study which follows, a modified set of questions is utilised.

However in terms of preliminary considerations there are two questions to which attention must first be given, namely:

(i) whether the Operational Code approach could be utilised in the study of political leadership where action must in practice be indirect as distinct from the case of, say, a Foreign Minister who can bring to bear directly his beliefs in action through his Government;<sup>6</sup>

(ii) whether the speeches herein printed are appropriate for such a study.

Regarding the first question, while it is agreed that the "Operational Code" approach is more suited to the study of political leaders who exercise direct action through their Governments,

it is considered that this technique of analysis, applied in a more limited way, can nevertheless throw light on the sources from which effective leadership derives within the constraints of international organisation.

Second, while the speeches are avowedly commemorative of a number of dominant personalities—Nkrumah, Nehru and Norman Manley—it seems clear that Ramphal identifies for commendation those personal qualities of the leaders mentioned which strike him as significant precisely because these are salient elements in his own vision and approach to implementation. In any event, much of these speeches consist of personal analysis and comments.

In the analysis which follows, the author of this introduction draws not only on the speeches themselves but on his own knowledge of Ramphal's mode of operation in other areas of action before his assumption of the office of Secretary-General. Ramphal has himself noted the importance of such earlier experience. In his preface to the earlier collection of his speeches and writings, *One World to Share*, he wrote:

Each phase of work draws on the experience of past pursuits even as it shapes the character of future endeavours. The speeches and writings herein extracted were made and done in my first four years of office as Commonwealth Secretary-General. But, in part at least, they derived from much earlier intimations of our human condition. And they were intimations that came to me from many varied sources: a father's passionate belief in the basic goodness within all men; the multi-racial ambience of my own society and its compulsions of inter-racial tolerance and harmony; the lessons of unity which the fragmented conditions of an inseparable West Indian region impressed upon me; the manifest need for a practising internationalism as the shield of a small State entering the arena of world politics; work on behalf of Latin America, and later of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, confirming that the solidarity of the weak can attenuate imbalances of power and even alter the basic premises of relationships; the faith which the highest

(though much threatened) ideals of non-alignment nourished in a world freed of dominance and obsession with power; above all, the vision which a few great men and women of our time possessed and shared of that one world which our one earth enjoys.<sup>7</sup>

In keeping with the Operational Code approach a number of questions are proposed to elicit Ramphal's Philosophical and Instrumental Beliefs. Wherever possible, the answers to the questions proposed are given in Ramphal's own words, as indicated.

### **RAMPHAL'S PHILOSOPHICAL BELIEFS**

#### *1. What is the essential nature of the emerging world reality?*

While many factors will shape the world of the 80s, none, perhaps, will play a greater formative role than the reality that we have actually begun to move from a world of dominance and power to one of growing interdependence and shared responsibility; one, therefore, in which, increasingly, global affairs will have to be decided by consensus and governed by contract. I feel that, quintessentially, the last two decades before the 21st century will confirm important limits to the power that so much of the 20th century was concerned with accumulating: limits that are already emerging. Cuba-Suez-Vietnam—were all testimony to those limitations on the ability of crude military power to determine events; and, even now, the same message echoes from the roof-top of the world in Afghanistan.

And limits to crude power are also appearing in economic relations. Mutual dependencies arising, for example, from the need for unimpeded expansion of world trade, from the prospect of mineral shortages and, more specifically, of oil depletion, are now imposing compulsion for global consensus on fundamentally new arrangements and relationships.

(‘Nkrumah and the Eighties’, *The Political Domain*, p. 120).

Our closely-knit, interlinked human society is a contemporary reality, however much the instincts of yesterday recall us to old nationalisms and summon up the adversary habits of crude sovereignty and separateness. What interdependence means in the global context is that we all need each other, in some measure: for prosperity,

for subsistence, for survival even. Our shrinking world holds no human sanctuaries. There are no shelters that insulate anyone, anywhere, from disease, from poverty, from nuclear holocaust, from environmental collapse. The rich might be able to prosper in a world from which the poor had vanished; the poor might be less poor in a world without the very rich; the West might be able to dwell in harmony if from the East there came neither torment nor threat; the East, the centrally-planned economies, might be able to accept a procrustean bed if capitalism were not there to provoke envy. The simple truth is, however, that these are wholly irrelevant scenarios; for neither rich nor poor, West nor East, have the option to go it alone—as all are finding. For better or worse, all of us must share this planet, acknowledging our mutual needs, and acknowledging too that in their fulfilment lies a mutual interest.

(‘The Black must be discharged’, p. 274)

2. *Is the Political Universe essentially one of Harmony or Conflict?*

...the truth is that this issue of sharing—sharing of power, of management, of responsibility—lies at the heart of the present stalemate between North and South. No good purpose is served by calling it other names or pretending that the contention is about other issues. Nor should we be surprised that the sharing of power, the relinquishing of privilege should occasion difficulty. Has it not always in human history? Yet the overcoming of such reluctance and resistance is the story of the enlargement of economic, social and political justice within national societies everywhere. But to understand the selfishness and even the contradictions of human nature is one thing; to acquiesce in their supremacy is quite another. We must therefore convert governments and people everywhere, but especially in the rich industrial societies, to the urgency of the need for change responsive to change itself.

(‘Nkrumah and the Eighties’, *The Economic Domain*, p. 150).

Man has stood on the moon and looked on the earth's oneness; yet centuries of preoccupation with ourselves—in family, then tribe, then nation state—still stand in the way of those holistic global perceptions and solutions that are essential to human survival.

(‘Endangered Earth’, p. 287)

3. *What is the Fundamental Character of one's political opponents?*

Let me give you just a small example of what I mean; an example of how the shadow of habitual thinking, outmoded thinking can fall between contemporary perception and action—how old attitudes despite enlightenment can frustrate progress. In 1974, the West, at the height of what it called “energy crisis”, turned down OPEC’s offer of a price regime for oil based on indexation, rejected it as rhetoric and condemned it as heresy. The ‘Chicago School’ actually predicted that the price of oil would be back to \$3.00 per barrel within the year. In effect, it was rejection of an offer of contract in this critical area of energy, a rejection that relied on old-fashioned notions of power—economic, political and military—while ignoring the reality that its dispersal had already occurred. Today the reality is not the avoidance of indexation—for it is applied unilaterally, if convulsively, by OPEC; what was missed was the chance to apply it in a consensual and well-ordered manner. Behind the lost chance was a failure of political perception....

(‘Nkrumah and the Eighties’ *The Economic Domain*, p. 149).

...race is at heart ‘otherness’—by which I mean a view of another individual which wrongly sees him or her as ‘the other’, alienated from the observer by perceived or imagined differences, without shared human qualities, and so not only unequal but also, at the worst extreme, less than human. And when the question of colour is introduced, it merely becomes a new and potent factor in distinguishing between groups of people, in identifying the types of behaviour expected of them, and in influencing perceptions.

(‘The Black must be discharged’, pp. 263-264)

4. *What are the prospects for the eventual realisation of one’s fundamental political values and aspirations? Can one be optimistic or must one be pessimistic on this score?*

...global realities must in the end change our narrow national perceptions. Already it is becoming clear that the world’s major problems must be confronted in holistic rather than in narrow national terms. Few of those problems on our agenda of anxiety fit neatly within national frontiers.

(‘One World to Share’, p. 244).

We proclaim our world to be a society of free nations yet we use sovereignty as a sword not as a shield. We have a long way to go in translating our perception of the world as a global village and its people as our neighbours into moral and, above all, legal obligations

to other States and other people. Indeed, if anything, the trends are the other way. We are in danger of moving towards a more authoritarian world; one less constrained by principles and rules, one more prone to uncertainty and arbitrariness; a human society not governed by world order but ordered by the strong.

(‘Rekindling Nehru’s Internationalism’, p. 168).

We are clearly in transition from a world in which the ‘few are more than the many’ to a world that is less elitist and autocratic in its global structures; from a world governed by a small directorate of the strong to one whose future must be determined by negotiation and by consensus with the many who are weak; from a world in which we misused sovereignty as a sword to one in which we must increasingly fashion it only as a shield. We must make the transition in all these areas with swiftness because as the old premises of our global order fall away we court the danger of instability, disintegration and chaos unless we erect the new order in time. It is, alas, a danger that is upon us. The old order is passing and the new one is not yet here.

(‘Nkrumah and the Eighties’, *The Economic Domain*, pp. 150-151).

5. *What is one’s role in “moving” and “shaping” history in the desired direction?*

The moving finger of history, having written, does move on. But conjunctures of this kind help to remind us that every piece of history our actions inscribe today helps to determine the nature of tomorrow’s entry and, in so doing, to bind the present to the future and the future to the past.

(‘A Heritage of Oneness’, p. 34)

... human history is not predetermined. It is for us constantly to strive to move the course of events in desirable directions. We shall have to do so in the 80s; certainly the Third World must do so; but so also must all those of the other worlds in this one who share their hopes and see in their fulfilment implications their own future.

(‘Nkrumah and the Eighties’ *The Political Domain*, p. 119)

## **RAMPHAL'S INSTRUMENTAL BELIEFS**

### *6. How much control can one have over historical development?*

Ramphal's writings and his approach to action show that he profoundly believes in the role of ideas as a shaping factor in history. As he writes finely of Nkrumah, one must be "restless to invent the future". While it is not possible to identify in these speeches a single paragraph which adequately describes the role which he assigns to ideas, it is seen in his admiration for Nkrumah as "a man of ideas who believed that ideas should find physical institutional expression". It is seen also in the words which he quotes with approval from a biographer of Nehru (and which could be applied to himself):

... throughout his life [Nehru] lived and worked in the realm of ideas. Filled as he was with the qualities of imagination, perception and intuition, he used them to identify norms and trends which were taking shape in every field of human progress.

(Quoted from B.N. Panday, *Nehru* (Macmillan, London 1976), p. 438; *infra* p. 164).

Nowhere is this belief in the catalytic role of ideas more clearly seen than in the initiatives which he has taken as Commonwealth Secretary-General to appoint Groups of Experts whose main task in the various fields in which they worked was to formulate programmes of ideas. Such idea groups have advised, *inter alia*, on the implementation of the New International Economic Order and some of its main elements, North-South Negotiations, Protectionism, the World Economic Crisis, the need for a new Bretton Woods, and Ocean Management. Of particular importance were the findings and recommendations of the Eminent Persons Group on Southern Africa which commanded attention throughout the international community.

The Expert Groups can be viewed as the deliberate utilisation by Ramphal of a technique to accelerate the shaping role of ideas in at least the following ways:

- (i) by formulating ideas which act as a catalyst in promoting

- consensus and policy co-ordination in the loosely knit organisation which is the Commonwealth;
- (ii) by mobilising or focussing international public opinion;
  - (iii) by supporting existing international norms or assisting in the creation of new norms.

This concern with the role of ideas as an instrument of change has given a distinctive mark to Ramphal's leadership as Secretary-General. For Ramphal, El Dorado is "always a city of the mind".

*7. How are the goals of action pursued most effectively?*

Ramphal, despite current setbacks to multilateralism, is convinced of—

... the need in the 80s for human society to proceed on the assumption that we have entered the era that Alistair Buchan foresaw as the "era of negotiations"—an era in which the old premises of power will no longer suffice as the touchstone of human destiny. At the heart of those negotiations, whatever their form and content, will be the issue of sharing—sharing of power and responsibilities; and the question for us all in the 80s should really not be 'whether' but 'how' that sharing is to take place.

(*'Nkrumah and the Eighties'*, *The Political Domain*, pp. 120-121)

However the Third World, always his major concern, will need to put its house in order.

The Third World will need to harness all its strength for this new era; and the effort must begin at home.

Democracy, ... needs no more justification than the manifest right of all human beings to be treated as equals. It is, therefore, as imperative in the Third World as it is elsewhere. But the Third World's search for equity in global relationships imposes a further obligation on it. Third World credibility on the world stage is too often eroded by domestic imperfections. Its case for global redress is weakened when it fails to promote social justice at home and denies democracy within its national societies.

(*'Nkrumah and the Eighties'*, *The Political Domain*, p. 121).

But always there is an overarching concern with institution-building or renovation as a vehicle for the incarnation of ideas,

or as a forum within which to seek consensus or to promote the dynamic for change. Of Nehru, he writes:

It was not enough, however, to dream dreams about the future without the instruments to shape it. Nehru's institution-building within India was, of course, a monumental achievement, but it was mirrored by a comparable endeavour at the international level: without Nehru the future of the United Nations could well have been jeopardised; the Commonwealth could hardly have existed; and the Non-Aligned Movement might also not have been born.

(*'Rekindling Nehru's Internationalism'*, p. 170).

Of Nkrumah, he had earlier noted that as—

A man of ideas who believed that ideas should find physical, institutional expression, he contributed creatively to the modern Commonwealth, was a founding father of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), a vigorous champion of the United Nations and a leader in the Non-Aligned Movement.

(*'Nkrumah and the Eighties'*, *The Political Domain*, p. 112).

Speaking of Nkrumah but clearly also expressing his own belief, Ramphal asserts:

... the belief, the assurance, that organisations, and where necessary institutions, are critical to the political process whether within nations or between them .... for the Third World in the era of negotiations, effective unity is the mandate of the world's poor. But without organisation, real unity will be forever a mirage. Certainly, without it, that strength that is supposed to be unity itself will be forever elusive. It is time that the domestic lessons of organisation were applied by the developing countries to their global objectives.

(*'Nkrumah and the Eighties'*, *The Political Domain*, p. 122).

There is also the perception that the institution, once established, can develop a dynamic of its own, deepening consensus and widening the areas of agreement in its environment. Thus he expresses his conviction that, had the ill-fated West Indies Federation been maintained,

... the tenuous Lancaster House patchwork would have held, that the Federation would have grown stronger and faith in it firmer; that, ultimately, Manley's early vision of a strong West Indian nation would have been fulfilled ....

(*The Norman Manley Memorial Lecture*, p. 96).

Institution-building or renovation, never a headline-catching achievement, has loomed large in Ramphal's career. In the Caribbean, as Foreign Minister of Guyana, he had been instrumental in designing and making operational the Institutions of the fledgling Caribbean Community. At a time when the Non-Aligned Movement was in disarray, the occasion of Guyana's hosting, in 1972, of the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries provided Ramphal with the opportunity to carry out an overhaul of the Non-Aligned Movement's organisation, clarifying its membership and working procedures including the definition within it of the meaning of consensus as its method of decision-making. It was Ramphal who conceived the idea and took the initiative leading to the establishment of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of Countries, arguably the most effectively organised grouping of Third World countries. In keeping with this belief in the role of effective institutions, Ramphal has, in recent years, argued tirelessly the case for a Third World Secretariat.

### **THE ELEMENTS OF THE VISION AND THE APPROACH**

What then are the elements of Ramphal's vision of world reality and his approach to effecting change within it? One can in the light of the foregoing tentative analysis identify the following elements and approaches:

- (i) there is the overarching belief that somewhat similar processes as those which led to the integration of tribe and village into a national society and to the adoption of an ethic and techniques of national solidarity are now operating at the global level;
- (ii) it is a world in which the limits of crude power are increasingly apparent. In the same way in which the crudities and power relationships of early industrial societies were transformed through wider perceptions of justice, so affairs at the global level will have to be decided increasingly by consensus and governed by contract;

- (iii) the reluctance of those who hold power to share derives not from evil nature or doctrine but from outmoded thinking and narrow perceptions. Hence, there is room for persuasion, for converting governments and people everywhere;
- (iv) however, while the emerging global reality must in the end change outmoded attitudes and ways of thinking leading to a world determined by negotiation and consensus, there is in this period of transition the danger of instability and disintegration;
- (v) to take advantage of change the Third World must put its house in order. Unity must be translated into organisation. It must promote justice at home as the failure to do this weakens its credibility;
- (vi) human history is not pre-determined;
- (vii) well-conceived ideas can play a decisive shaping role in history;
- (viii) however, to effect change, ideas must be translated into effective institutions. Institutions, once established, can develop their own dynamic;
- (ix) in effecting change, one must be ready to accept partial beginnings as these can be deepened and universalised.

It is considered that those are the central beliefs which have enabled Ramphal to exercise, in the course of his remarkable career, a shaping influence on change whether it be at regional, interregional or global levels, despite the onset of forces, especially in the eighties which have tended to reinforce inward-looking tendencies in the industrialised countries and to promote division and conflict at regional levels.

This tentative study of one aspect of Ramphal's work and personality is put forward in the hope that it may provide a pointer to deeper and more comprehensive studies by other hands.

## Notes and References

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7. *One World to Share*, p. xxix.

## **A HERITAGE OF ONENESS**

*The 'Genesis of a Nation' Inaugural Lecture  
National Cultural Centre, Georgetown,  
6 May 1988*

**I** greet most specially the President of Guyana, my former colleague Hugh Desmond Hoyte, whose address yesterday in inaugurating this week of Commemoration was such a sparkling mixture of scholarship and statesmanship. In national political terms, it was a statement of historic proportions. And I salute as well the eminent Vice-President of India, Shri Shankar Dayal Sharma, who I last greeted in his Commonwealth Capital of New Delhi and am now pleased to join in welcoming to my Commonwealth Capital of Georgetown.

You have honoured me by the invitation to inaugurate this Series of International Conferences: 'The Genesis of a Nation', and to deliver the plenary address at this First Conference on 'The Origins and Development of the Indo-Guyanese'. It is an honour, and a special privilege, because these Conferences are more than a commemoration of things past; they must be a herald of fresh endeavour, perhaps ready to show itself in us, awaiting only articulation in such discourses as we begin today to give it permanence in our society.

This process of examining Guyana's roots—as distinct from, though obviously in the context of, the roots of its several peoples—is a quintessential element in our nation-building. That is why the title of this series—*The Genesis of a Nation*—is so apt. It looks to the beginnings of the wholeness of Guyana, not merely to the beginnings of the different elements within its society. This must be the central thrust of all you do together here in May and later in July. That it has taken over 150 years to embark on such discourses in an integrated way is itself a measure of the significance of this occasion.

But while I applaud unreservedly the timeliness of these Conferences emphasising the nation's beginnings, let me admit to a personal reservation over the labels 'Indo-Guyanese' and 'Afro-Guyanese'. I know they are a kind of transit station on the way from calling ourselves (and thinking of ourselves) as 'Indians' and 'Africans'; I wonder, however, whether we have not

travelled far enough already along this terminological path to have become simply 'Guyanese': Guyanese, it is true, whose ancestors came at different times, in different boats, from different places; who all acknowledge and honour those ancestral links and treasure the cultural variety that is their heritage; but Guyanese whose shared experience of finding ourselves for so long in the same boat has now subsumed those separate origins in an inseparable common identity. Indeed, it may be easier, less jeopardous, to talk of those separate origins, as we will do in this Series of Conferences, from a position of assurance that 150 years later, we have indeed arrived at that national identity.

That identity is in fact no longer an optional matter. As we explore, now and in July, the pathways that brought us to Guyana, it must be our basic premise—axiomatic and incontestable—that we all belong to Guyana and our West Indian region, and belong to nowhere else. Africa and India, both expect us to be first and foremost Guyanese. They know that Guyana is now the land of our ancestors; that to be true to ourselves we must first be true to the inheritance they bequeathed us of belonging to Guyana. And not only do they know this as an historical fact, they also value it as a present reality—one that allows new strengths to emerge for the Third World as a whole from our success in nation-building here. Africa and India share our need to make our several origins the genesis of a united Guyanese nation. As we relive the past in this Commemoration, let us not mistake it for the present or the future.

And there are further acknowledgements to make as we begin this process of reminiscence about Guyana's genesis. The first must surely be the reminder that 'in the beginning' were Guyana's Amerindian people. In slavery and indenture lay the genesis of modern Guyana; but there were other beginnings. This is an ancient land—as our Timehri figures bear witness—and here on the 'wild Guiana coast', before others came from Europe and Africa and Asia, dwelt its indigenous people. There once were other, earlier societies.<sup>1</sup> As a nation that has come to freedom out of colonialism, with our common experience of subjugation and alienation, it is specially incumbent on us not to be guilty of the arrogance of implying that our Guyana world began with us. It would be even worse to believe this; for then we would not merely be ignoring the historical wrong done to

those who were the victims of dominion before we were, we would be giving legitimacy to that wrong and making ourselves mimic men and women of our own oppressors.

And we must acknowledge, too, in no less unambiguous a manner, that while from Africa and India came the majority of Guyana's people, others came as well: from Europe and from China in particular. Britain and Holland shaped the beginnings of our nation as imperial powers and in governance that went beyond proprietorship; but Portuguese and Chinese came to labour and stayed on to belong and, in belonging, to contribute in notable ways to the nation's evolution. They, too, are part of its genesis. If, because of the commemorative structure of this series, Guyanese of Portuguese and Chinese origin are not spoken of as specifically as others, let it be clear from the outset that this does not signify a lapse either of memory or of judgement.

And, lest it go unsaid, let it be acknowledged as well that many contributed to the process of nation building who do not today fit into neat categories of provenance. Guyanese evolved from those who crossed the original ethnic lines have helped in fundamental ways to shape Guyana's character as a nation. That cross-ethnicity is the ultimate reminder that no one community has paramount claim to Guyana's past or preferential title to Guyana's future. In time, we shall all assuredly be one—whatever our beginnings or the instincts that seek to rule our ends. Much of what I have to say today is rooted in the perception that not 'otherness' but 'oneness' must be the hallmark of this commemoration: not difference, but sameness; not our time of arrival or the nature of the journeying, but the reality of our being here and the mutual need of living together.

In what follows in these Conferences there will be many opportunities to look in depth at particular aspects of indenture and slavery and, in the process, to enrich still further the treasury of scholarship that already exists. Such is not my ambition. I should like more modestly to set the scene for your discourses with some reminders of the overarching unity that was always implicit in the several twists and turns of slavery and indenture; twists and turns which, in themselves and by design, kept their victims in a state of vertigo: social, cultural, economic and, inevitably, political.

The occasion, of course, allows me to do no more than offer a vignette of the common history of bondage that 5 May and 31 July 1838 so uniquely symbolise. And, since my purpose is to highlight how much was common, how much was shared, I shall try to focus my reflections upon one of the many plantations that bear mute witness to the bitter taste of sugar to those who were most central to its production throughout the inglorious era of slavery and indenture: around Plantation Vreed-en-Hoop.

When the *Hesperus* arrived at the mouth of the Demerara River 150 years and a few hours ago, 70 of the 156 indentured immigrants then on board were bound to Vreed-en-Hoop. Fourteen of those who set out with them from Calcutta did not reach Demerara—the earliest victims of indenture.<sup>2</sup> Forty-three years later (on 1 January 1881), with the system in full flow, another ship—the *Ellora*—arrived in Demerara with another human cargo. Among them were a young widow and her son of nine bound also for Vreed-en-Hoop: my great grandmother and her young son.<sup>3</sup>

She would serve out her indenture and, in time, the young Daniel Ramphal would leave the plantations, in fact, leave Demerara for Berbice, where his son, my father, 'J. I.', would commence his life's work in education—and begin a family of which I would be the first born: in New Amsterdam. Vreed-en-Hoop has for me, therefore, a special relevance; but, as we shall see, its relevance to the genesis of the nation goes far beyond those personal links. Vreed-en-Hoop serves to tell the story of the unifying historical experience of slavery and indenture in a particularly dramatic way. To recall that shared experience I must first go back to the years before 1838, before the beginning of indenture; with Vreed-en-Hoop, however, always as a focal point.

Two and half years ago (in late 1985) I found myself in England's far north as the honoured guest of the ancient University of Durham founded in 1832 just before slavery's abolition. The occasion was a degree ceremony, and Durham's public orator chose Charles Dickens' Mr. Pickwick with a nice appropriateness to illustrate the 'oddity', as he described it, of 'how easily we may leave in obscurity the background to what we take for granted'. He made the point (in the style of public orators) that, while there can be no character in English fiction

better known and better loved than Mr. Pickwick, a close reading leads to the awkward conclusion that the accumulation of Mr. Pickwick's fortune has been connected with the slave trade: connected through an acquaintance whose office is in Liverpool, 'that metropolis of the Middle Passage', and whose sugar plantations—slave plantations—are in Demerara.

*The Pickwick Papers*, which first appeared in 1836, were set in the England of the 1820s. It was a serialised work which fused a journalistic style with the format of fiction and, like so much of Dickens' writing, was a biting social commentary on contemporary evils. We know that one of the characters in *The Pickwick Papers*, Alfred Jingle, was actually believed in Demerara 150 years ago to be based on the real Dr. Dodson of Plantation Vive La Force.<sup>4</sup> Could Mr. Pickwick's influential friend, his 'Liverpool acquaintance' with slave plantations in Demerara, have been Sir John Gladstone—Vreed-en-Hoop's owner?

By 1821, John Gladstone was already a Liverpool merchant of substantial means with something like a half of his fortune deriving from slave plantations in Demerara, among them, prominently Vreed-en-Hoop. It was a proportion that was to rise substantially.<sup>5</sup> Frustrated in his own desire to represent the Corporation of Liverpool in Parliament, John Gladstone was to have two of his sons go to Westminster—and William rise to be one of Britain's great Prime Ministers. William Gladstone came to Westminster in 1832 when the abolition of slavery was an inescapable political issue and one which, as events turned out, he had to face immediately. On 14 May that same year, Lord Howick, a former Under-Secretary of State of the Colonies, laid specific complaints in Parliament against the management of John Gladstone's sugar estate at Vreed-en-Hoop: alleging 'that the increase in sugar cultivation was in direct ratio with overworking and loss of life on the part of the slave population'.<sup>6</sup> William made the best of a bad job in his father's defence—a vindication of slavery Eric Williams was later to attribute 'more to filial feelings than Liberal principles'.<sup>7</sup> But, for the owner of Vreed-en-Hoop, this was not the first complaint to reach Westminster; nor was it to be the last.

Let me recall the first occasion by way of a personal reminiscence. After reading Law at London, I returned to Georgetown in 1953 as a young Crown Counsel in the Chambers

of the Attorney-General, Sir Frank Holder. The Attorney-General then had supervision of the Magistrates Department and on my first day in the Public Buildings he put me under the wing of Guy Sharples—already a senior Magistrate—to take me on the rounds of the Law Courts to meet the Chief Justice and Judges and, eventually, the Magistrates. He was a man whose aptitudes and interests went well beyond the law, as those of you who remember his landscapes—some of them reproduced in Webber's *Centenary History of British Guiana*—will appreciate. As we did those rounds, Sharples made the point to me that it was on the site of these present courts that the Rev. John Smith had been detained in 1823 pending a trial condemned by all save the West Indian plantocracy as a tragic parody of justice; a trial which led to his conviction and eventually to his death in prison.<sup>8</sup> There is a place for argument about the overall role of Christian missionaries in the evolution of our nation; but Smith's Church is a permanent memorial to this man of God who saw in the slave only his fellow man. That moment of remembrance has always remained with me; for I have come to realise what I think Guy Sharples understood well and hoped I would realise one day: that recalling the events that brought Smith to his end in the cells of a Demerara prison was not just a leap over centuries but a backward glance along a continuous line.

The decade or so before the Abolition of Slavery Act was passed in 1834 was a particularly turbulent time throughout the West Indies: a slave rebellion had taken place in Barbados in 1816, a revolt in Demerara in 1823, an uprising in Jamaica in 1824, an insurrection in Antigua in 1831 and the much larger Jamaica revolt in Christmas of that year.<sup>9</sup> Eric Williams sums up well the situation that had been reached on the eve of emancipation:

In 1833, therefore, the alternatives were clear: emancipation from above, or emancipation from below. But EMANCIPATION. Economic change, the decline of the monopolists, the development of capitalism, the humanitarian agitation in the British churches, contending perorations in the halls of Parliament, had now reached their completion in the determination of the slaves themselves to be free.<sup>10</sup>

Nowhere in Guiana was that determination more evident than on some of Sir John Gladstone's plantations—estates of the Vreed-en-Hoop stable. The Demerara Revolt of 1823 really sounded the death-knell of slavery in Guiana. It was a mighty thunder clap in the gathering storm of slave rebellion. Its reverberations were felt far beyond Guiana's shores—not least because of the indescribable cruelty with which it was eventually put down.

The story of that Revolt has been told many times and its details are well known to this audience; but some elements bear retelling, especially today. On the evening of 18 August an uprising started on two estates on the East Coast of Demerara: Plantations Le Resouvenir and Success. The Revolt centered on the demand for immediate emancipation, which the slaves genuinely believed the Crown had approved but was being denied them locally—a belief substantially, if not yet technically, true. A contemporary account was set down by the artist, Joshua Bryant, in meticulous, if undifferentiated, detail.<sup>11</sup> Later accounts were given with a pro-planter bias by Rodway and, more sympathetically, by Webber.<sup>12</sup> A version which highlights the manoeuvrings at Westminster is in Robin Furneaux's recent work on Wilberforce.<sup>13</sup>

Those varying presentations reflect some of the disparate factors influencing the tortuous course of bondage in Guiana—factors that were to remain at work over the transition from slavery to indenture. The suffering of those crushed down by the system was of course the bed-rock factor. The ruthless efficiency of their oppression held in check the will to rebel; it never induced acquiescence across the board. Sugar was ever a bitter crop for those who toiled at producing it in Guiana's inhospitable conditions. But at least three other groups of actors would influence the outcome: the planters, the imperial government and the humanitarian movement led by men like Wilberforce and Thomas Buxton.

Too, often, and certainly for too long, despite the efforts of the Anti-Slavery Movement in Britain and individual voices of conscience at Westminster and in Whitehall—the British Government remained the protectors of the oppressors rather than the oppressed. British economic interests, the claims of kinship, imperial considerations: all stood in the way of the Government

at Westminster tipping the scales in favour of justice and freedom. When, occasionally, it did, it was often so half-hearted and reluctant an effort that the planters could continue to oppose, to stall and, sometimes, to prevail. The Demerara Revolt of 1823 was a classic example of this; but there were earlier victories of the planters: more pointed but just as pyrrhic. One of these deserves mention here both because of its intrinsic importance and because it has received inadequate notice in the literature to date.

One of the early successes of the Anti-Slavery Movement was securing the passing of the Slave Trade Abolition Act of 1807 over the fierce objections of the West India lobby and the sugar planters in the West Indies in particular. Emancipation would not come for another thirty years; but at least there was in sight an end to the pernicious trade in slaves. It has been estimated that starting with that Act of 1807, no less than 120,000 slaves were liberated from foreign slave ships between 1810 and 1846.<sup>14</sup> What is not well known is that the approaches to that Abolition Act of 1807 had been skilfully prepared by Wilberforce and his friends and that Guiana played a central role in the overall scheme.

Defeated on a succession of foreign slave trade Bills and despairing of progress through parliamentary action, the anti-slavery campaigners in Britain seized on the capture of the Dutch colonies in Guiana in 1803 to secure an executive order—the ‘Guiana order’ of 1805, authorised as a war measure—to abolish the slave trade to the captured Guiana colonies. They then deftly devised the Foreign Slave Trade Act of 1806 confirming the ‘Guiana Order’ and attaching to it all the provisions of previous defeated Foreign Slave Trade Bills.<sup>15</sup> The Slave Trade Abolition Act the following year became undeniable. The planters had been overcome; though, of course, the abolition of the trade did not render slavery itself illegal.

Wilberforce thus moved again on the Guiana front. When Berbice fell to the British in 1803 those sugar estates in the Colony which were the property of the Dutch Government became the property of the British Crown—along with the slaves attached to them.<sup>16</sup> The abolitionists seized the opportunity to put forward a plan for the actual administration of the Berbice estates on the basis of ‘such improvements as the Government itself... had recommended to the colonial Assemblies to adopt and enforce

upon private masters'; arrangements which 'could not... be safely left to the colonial Government, or to individual agents on the spot, without the intimate superintendance and control of some authority in England'.<sup>17</sup>

That 'authority in England' duly turned out to be Wilberforce and five others all appointed (on 23 April 1811) as Commissioners 'for the management of the Crown's estates in Berbice' and 'for the preservation, protection and improvement of the negro and other slaves belonging thereto'.<sup>18</sup> The Berbice estates were some of the worst anywhere—as my fellow Berbician, Edgar Mittleholzer so well dramatised in his *Kaywana* trilogy.<sup>19</sup> Among them was Dageraad—a name that has now passed into the history of Guyana and of slavery generally as a symbol of the bestiality of the system and the courage of its victims in resisting it.<sup>20</sup>

The attitude of the planters to Wilberforce's Berbice Commission was open hostility; even the Governor was opposed, urging the Crown to lease or sell the estates 'on almost any terms'.<sup>21</sup> Wilberforce's zeal to demonstrate the practicality of a more humanitarian approach was in sharp contrast. The first instructions of the Commissioners for improvements on the Berbice estates ran to seven closely printed pages. Typical of them was the direction that 'the cart-whip in the hands of the driver, as an instrument of compelling labour, should be laid aside'.<sup>22</sup> But the Anti-Slavery Movement had come too close to home for the liking of both the planters and the local administration. They struck out vigorously against Wilberforce and his Commissioners, and a campaign for the withdrawal of the Commission was conducted at high levels of influence. This time, the planters won.<sup>23</sup>

Withdrawal of the Commission was, of course, not politically feasible. Instead, by the 'Convention between Great Britain and the Netherlands relative to the Colonies of Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice' in 1815, the British Government agreed that the estates in Berbice would revert to their former owners—now identified, however, not as the Dutch Government but as the 'Berbice Association':<sup>24</sup> the proprietors whose monogram appears on the cover of Rodway's *History of British Guiana*. Wilberforce and his colleagues were aghast and pleaded against retrogression. Their principal agent wrote from Berbice in outraged distress: 'Methinks I hear the whip sounding again

without mercy'.<sup>25</sup>

But it was all to no avail; reform by example was not to be; the planters could not be fought in the lands where slavery flourished. Only emancipation would suffice; and for that the Anti-Slavery Movement had to struggle in London. The failure of the Berbice Commission demonstrated the neanderthal myopia of the planters, the immense strength of the West India lobby, and the malleability of the British Government; and it demonstrated as well the differing perceptions of those disparate factors that I talked about earlier.

On 15 May 1823, Thomas Buxton moved the following motion in the House of Commons:

That the state of slavery is repugnant to the British Constitution and to the Christian religion and that it ought to be abolished gradually throughout the British colonies with as much expedition as may be found consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned.<sup>26</sup>

The Government's response was amelioration not abolition; but, through a series of resolutions, it directed that these reforms (like an end to the flogging of female slaves and the carrying of the whip into the field) be put into effect.<sup>27</sup> The planters and the Court of Policy procrastinated and prevaricated. The slaves knew change was at hand and sensed that the planters were resisting what were their rights. They felt they had to strengthen the hand of the Governor against the planters. They were only half right, but they moved, naively, to compel 'without bloodshed' but by a show of force the freedom which they believed the King had decreed to be theirs. The Revolt was crushed with frenzied brutality and followed by savage vengeance. Thirteen thousand slaves from 37 plantations had joined the rebels; it was a colossal show of strength; but they were badly armed and easily subdued.

The clemency and overall restraint they showed while briefly in charge of the plantations was not reciprocated. Quamina, their leader, was killed in the revolt. Nearly 50 were hanged, three given the dreadful sentence of 1,000 lashes and condemned to be worked in chains, two for the remainder of their lives. Quamina's son, Jack, was among those hanged; his head, like

those of the others executed, was stuck on a pole for public viewing: in the words of the local *Gazette*, as 'a monument of personal guilt' and 'a caution against like criminality'.<sup>28</sup>

The Rev. John Smith was convicted by court martial of complicity in the Revolt. He was sentenced to death and died in the Georgetown Prison awaiting the outcome of a petition for clemency which the Governor had cautiously referred to the authorities in London.<sup>29</sup> The planters believed they had won again; but, had they? Re-enter Vreed-en-Hoop and John Gladstone! It was from the Gladstone estate of Success that the revolt had been initiated—on the middle walk dam on Sunday 17 August 1823. Quamina was from Success, and it was there that his son, Jack was also enslaved: a son who bore not his father's name but that of his master, Gladstone. It was on the adjoining estate of Le Resouvenir that the Rev. John Smith had his Bethel Chapel, of which Quamina was one of the leaders.<sup>30</sup> Jack Gladstone epitomised the reality of slavery; his execution was a symbol of the evil that sustained it; but in the halls of Westminster it was John Smith's 'martyrdom' that most spurred the anti-slavery cause. Despite the initial victory of the planters, the Demerara Revolt, in all its implications, dealt slavery a blow from which it never recovered.

But that, of course was not how Vreed-en-Hoop's owner would have seen those events. Wilberforce pamphlets calling for emancipation had been circulating on the estates. The local *Gazette* did not conceal the planters' wrath:

Perhaps the intriguing saints at home had a hand in it— if so, they will hear with disappointment and pain that a superintending and just providence has frustrated their diabolical intentions.<sup>31</sup>

The abolitionist cause was diabolical; the vengeance on the slaves was part of the interposition of a superintending and just providence: how cosy an inversion of right and wrong! Slavery was at its height when, in 1758, Voltaire wrote *Candide*: his satirical commentary on a philosophy of complacency and acquiescence—the supremacy of hypocrisy over truth, the pretence that however evil and abhorrent the state of individual things, 'this world of ours is the best of all possible worlds'.<sup>32</sup> Its

relevance for us could hardly be more pointed.

In one unforgettable incident, Voltaire pictured the innocent Candide entering Surinam and encountering a negro slave lying on the ground. The slave, who has lost both a hand and a leg, tells Candide that this is 'the price paid for the sugar you eat in Europe'. 'Oh Pangloss!', cries Candide, 'This is an abomination you had not guessed; this is too much. In the end I shall have to renounce optimism'. 'What is this optimism'; asks Candide's footman. 'Alas'. says Candide, 'it is the mania of maintaining that all is good when all is bad'. And Candide weeps as he enters Surinam.<sup>33</sup> By 1838, as the *Hesperus* entered Demerara, some things had changed; but not such basic attitudes as the supremacy of hypocrisy over truth, the mania of maintaining that all was good when all was bad.

Clinging to illusion as a prop for the *status quo*, emancipation to the planters was just an interlude in the story of sugar; an imposition they fiercely resented, but one which they had to overcome and continue in business. First, however, they would collect what was on offer: twenty million pounds sterling in compensation for emancipation—the equivalent today of close to one billion (US) dollars. The Guiana planters' share of this was £4,924,989 (nearly £5 million) for 82,824 slaves.<sup>34</sup> That was almost a quarter of the total compensation paid by the British Government on the abolition of slavery. Vreed-en-Hoop's owner John Gladstone, alone received almost £85,000.<sup>35</sup> The handwritten calculation of his father's Guiana slave compensation by England's future Prime Minister, William Gladstone, (in 1835) is a document that conjures up images of that time 150 years ago even more evocative than the sums it records<sup>36</sup> But, as Alan Adamson says in *Sugar Without Slaves*: 'It occurred to no one to compensate the slaves for their previous bondage'.<sup>37</sup> Of course it occurred to no one. Remember *Candide* and 'the mania of maintaining that all is good when all is bad'. In the 1832 debate in the House of Commons on the management of Vreed-en-Hoop, William Gladstone was recorded in *Hansard* as follows:

He deprecated cruelty—he deprecated slavery: it was abhorrent to the nature of Englishmen; but conceding all these things, were not Englishmen to retain a right to their own honestly and legally acquired property?<sup>38</sup>

So, on slavery's abolition, John Gladstone got £85,000; while his slaves got apprenticeship.

In Guiana, the apprenticeship code appears to have been the harshest of all, but that deferral of freedom was to last only four of the six appointed years.<sup>39</sup> Meanwhile, John Gladstone did not loiter. Supply and demand should have dictated a new economics of the sugar industry—increased wages for the freed slaves who chose to remain on the sugar plantations. But that would have meant higher costs, lower profits—perhaps, closure. Instead, the planters pocketed the compensation for their unpaid slave capital and set out to invent 'a new system of slavery'<sup>40</sup>—with Vreed-en-Hoop's John Gladstone leading the effort. In the beginning, it was not so much a strategy of replacing the entire labour force as a tactic of reducing the bargaining power of the freed slaves by having a reserve labour pool 'to use as a set-off'<sup>41</sup>—and the promise of enlargement if need be.

The English expatriate firm of Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. worked from Calcutta. One of its members, F.M. Gillanders, was a cousin of John Gladstone's wife.<sup>42</sup> They had already supplied Indian labour to the sugar plantations of Mauritius. Through the family connection they offered their services to do likewise for Gladstone's Guiana estates at a cost of 'not one-half that of a slave'.<sup>43</sup> John Gladstone jumped at the offer; there might be problems in London where anti-slavery sentiment was still strong; but he had by now powerful political friends. There might be problems in India; but it was not lost on him that another Guiana proprietor, Andrew Colville—who owned Bell Vue estate—was a 'near relative' of Lord Auckland, India's Governor General.<sup>44</sup> He was to involve Colville in the enterprise.

I have now seen the full texts of that early correspondence between Sir John Gladstone and the Calcutta firm. They are every bit as bad as the contemporary account by John Scoble of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society suggested in his pamphlet on *The Deplorable Condition of Hill Coolies in British Guiana and Mauritius* published in 1840.<sup>45</sup> The full text of the principal letters is in an Appendix below (Appendix B).<sup>46</sup>

Let me interpose here a personal reflection encouraged by those letters to remind us of the way history permeates our lives, guiding destinies in mysterious and unseen ways, revealing the past through unseen links to the present. All of us in our lives

have been touched thus by the course of history. All of us are what we are because of its turnings centuries ago; we are here because those pathways brought us here. The correspondence to which I have just referred (Appendix B) shows that John Gladstone's letter to the Secretary of State forwarding his correspondence with Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. was written in 1838 from Carlton Gardens, London. In June 1833, John Gladstone, abandoning his nomadic existence, though not yet his sugar interests in Demerara, bought as his London residence Number 6 Carlton Gardens—the address from which so much of those early negotiations, crucial to Guiana's future, was conducted. One hundred and forty-two years later to the month, in July 1975, I took up my appointment at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London and moved into the Secretary-General's residence—at 5 Carlton Gardens. Numbers 5 and 6 Carlton Gardens by then were in fact one, both incorporated into Wool House—sugar was no longer 'king'.<sup>47</sup>

How full a circle the wheel of history thus described! John Gladstone's letter of 1836 had started a system that would eventually bring my ancestors from India to Guyana—to the same estate of Vreed-en-Hoop he once owned. Three generations later, those very events would combine with others to take me to London in the service of a Commonwealth of which Gladstone could never have dreamt—to dwell at the address in London he had chosen for his own retirement. The moving finger of history, having written, does move on. But conjures of this kind help to remind us that every piece of history our actions inscribe today helps to determine the nature of tomorrow's entry and, in so doing, to bind the present to the future and the future to the past.

But let me return to those letters. What they show with starkness is that continuum of which I spoke earlier, the continuance beyond emancipation of that state of mind *Candide* had encountered in Surinam which accepted massive human suffering as a valid low-cost factor in the price of sugar. But it is, perhaps, the letter from Calcutta (6 June 1836) in response to John Gladstone's enquiry that most clearly reveals the underlying perception of 'otherness' which linked slavery and indenture and gave human bondage under both systems a common root:

We are not aware that any greater difficulty would present itself in sending men to the West Indies (than to Mauritius), the natives being perfectly ignorant of the place they go to or the length of voyage they are undertaking... The Dhangurs are always spoken of as more akin to the monkey than the man. They have no religion, no education, and in their present state no want beyond eating, drinking and sleeping; and to procure which they are willing to labour.<sup>48</sup>

Note what Tinker described as the ‘curiously proto Darwinian tone’; the same dehumanisation that had sustained slavery to the extent that the Anti-Slavery Movement had made a credo of the question: ‘Am I not a Man and a Brother?’ Once dehumanise the victim and any inhumanity becomes possible. In the accountancy of an Eichmann the Jews sent to Nazi gas chambers were not ‘people’ but ‘pieces’. Apartheid’s victims are much the same today in the eyes of the system. Indentured labourers, like slaves, were mere factors of production in the crudest sense. Indenture’s chains were of paper; but the mental condition which managed to justify bondage under each system was the same; and race was at the heart of both.

The original Gladstone letter was written on 4 January 1836; the reply from Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. in Calcutta on 6 June that same year. The correspondence that followed in 1837 was to do essentially with the details of that initial voyage of the *Hesperus* and the *Whitby*. The *Hesperus* belonged to Gladstone’s firm—‘John Gladstone and Co.’. It was a three-masted barque, square rigged on the first and second masts and gaff rigged on the last. It was a mere 329 registered tons.<sup>49</sup> It was the *Hesperus* that brought the Gladstone labourers, most of them bound for Vreed-en-Hoop—the first real movement of people from the East Indies to the Western Hemisphere and, in particular, to the West Indies that Columbus had mis-named in 1492, convincing himself that he had reached Asia from the West. That was why he called the first people of the Caribbean—‘Indians’. But, between the voyages of the *Santa Maria* and the *Hesperus* were to pass nearly 350 years; and when the *Whitby* actually anchored in the Demerara River in the early morning of 5 May 1938 its Captain, James Swinton, would be singularly unaware of the

historic significance of the moment. It would be lost on him because the newcomers he had brought to the 'new world' were essentially 'cargo' not people; yet they were the very people of India Columbus thought he had reached three and a half centuries earlier.

However, there was more for Gladstone to do than merely arrange the transportation of these first immigrants from India to the 'New World'. By 1836, the planters were getting distinctly anxious about the situation that would arise after the apprenticeship system ended and slave labour was finally withdrawn from the plantations. In a letter of 23 February 1837, which he wrote (from Carlton Gardens) to Sir John Hobhouse, then President of the Board of Control (a copy of which he subsequently sent to Lord Glenelg, then Secretary of State for the Colonies), Gladstone set out the situation and the thinking of the planters with a frankness normally reserved for private correspondence.

A considerable Degree of Uncertainty prevails in all our West India Colonies whether the Apprentices, when the Period of their Services expires, on the 1st August 1840, will be disposed to hire themselves to work on reasonable Terms, and on a System of Continuance such as will ensure the regular Cultivation and Manufacture of the Produce, which it is considered can only be ascertained when that Period arrives. It is also thought that by obtaining the Services of other Classes of Labourers in the Interval, and for a Period beyond the Termination of the Apprenticeship, it may materially influence the Conduct of the Apprentices, and induce them more readily to meet the Wishes of their Employers; with this View Labourers have been sent from Germany, Madeira, Ireland, and elsewhere, but these Experiments have not succeeded, from the Influence of the Climate generally producing reluctance to labour, and increasing the Desire for Spirituous Liquors, which the low Price and Abundance of new Rum enables them to gratify.

—a desire, of course, which was perfectly legitimate and readily gratified among the planters themselves who invented that most potent of spirituous liquors, the 'Demerara rum swizzle', and

made it virtually a legend.<sup>50</sup>

That letter represented the beginning of the other half of Gladstone's preparation for the voyage of the *Hesperus* and the *Whitby*. He needed an assurance from the British Government whether an Order in Council or any other authorisation was necessary for the purpose of 'carrying this experimental measure into execution, in order to secure us against interfering or prevention by the authorities at Calcutta'. He had good reason to seek that assurance.

Already, on 27 June 1836, the Court of Policy had passed "an Ordinance for the Better Regulation and Enforcement of the Relevant Duties of Masters and Employers, and Articled Servants and Tradesmen in British Guiana". It had been transmitted by the Governor, Sir James Carmichael Smyth, to the Secretary of State with a statement that he had 'very little Doubt but that the several Enactments of this Ordinance (prepared as they are in the Spirit of perfect Equality and Reciprocity in compelling the Performance of the Engagements by which the Parties in question may severally be bound) will meet with His Majesty's most gracious Approbation'.<sup>51</sup> Again that same perception that all was good when all was bad. Such approbation was not forthcoming. Under pressure of the Anti-Slavery Movement, the political situation in Britain had become highly sensitised and the British Government was obliged to proceed with caution. In his reply to the Governor, of 31 October 1836, it fell to the Secretary of State, no less, to draw the Governor's attention to the reality that this legislation—which was to be the underpinning for the indenture system—really was ushering in a new system of slavery:

The general Effect of this Ordinance (wrote Lord Glenelg) may, with little Inaccuracy, be said to be to continue, in respect of all Persons who shall enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship, the existing Relations between the Employer and the apprenticed Labourer, although without the Intervention of a special Magistracy. The most material Exception is, that the Apprenticeship to be constituted under this Ordinance would not render the Apprentice liable to personal Chastisement in case of Misconduct.<sup>52</sup>

At least initially, that latter exception was to prove hollow—especially at Vreed-en-Hoop. In any event, this ‘Indenture Law’ was allowed to stand with a reduction in the period of indenture from seven years to three and the exclusion of any person recruited ‘on the Continent of Africa or in any of the adjacent islands, inhabited wholly or in part by the Negro race’.<sup>53</sup> So obvious was it to the authorities in London that what was about to begin was a new system of slavery that Africans simply had to be excluded from it if the Government was to have any chance of rebutting what Lord Glenelg described to Governor Carmichael Smyth (31st October 1836) as ‘a plausible, if not a just, Reproach against this Country of Insincerity in our Professions on that Subject’ (of slavery).<sup>54</sup> The system of bondage would continue; but with different bondsmen.

Yet even this did not suffice for the requirements of Vreed-en-Hoop and the plantocracy in general. John Gladstone returned to the charge arguing forcefully, in a letter to Sir Geo Grey of 23 March 1837, that:

it is only by a Supply being obtained of other free Labourers, to such an Extent as may incite Competition and induce our present ‘Apprentices to believe that it may become practicable to carry forward the Cultivation on a moderate Scale independent of their Aid, that they are likely to be influenced for such Terms of Remuneration as the Planters may be enabled to give them. ... We therefore (he concluded) would require Powers to enter into an extended rather than a shorter Period of Service, nor could we entertain a Hope of Remuneration, or to overcome the apprehended Difficulties, if the Hiring was restricted to a shorter Period than Five Years.<sup>55</sup>

Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. had told Gladstone that they could supply Indian labourers at a cost ‘less than half that of a slave’. Nearly a year later (29 April 1837), Gladstone was representing the very opposite to the Secretary of State, namely, his certainty:

that the Labour of our present People has not cost us One Half of what we should have to pay for the Services of the Hill Coolies.<sup>56</sup>

He was inverting the cost factor to sustain the argument that a longer period of indenture was required to secure a reasonable return on the investment in indenture. The lives of our forefathers were being measured as in a counting house. But the Secretary of State yielded. On 19 August 1837, he instructed Governor Carmichael Smyth that as a result of the argument produced:

Her Majesty's Government have agreed to Mr. Gladstone's Proposal that the Terms of Apprenticeship of Natives of any Place within the Charter of the East India Company imported as Labourers into Guiana should be extended to Five Years.<sup>57</sup>

On 20th May 1837, Gladstone was able to write to his Calcutta recruiters:

I have now made the necessary Arrangements with the Colonial Department, and an Order in Council corresponding with them will be immediately published.<sup>58</sup>

He forthwith increased the order for Coolies from 150 to 200, and added a reminder in the numerate tradition of the merchandise trade:

One-third for the Messrs. Moss, Two-Thirds for me, to prevent any Difficulty when they arrive at Demerara (20th May 1837).<sup>59</sup>

An Order in Council of 12 July 1837 duly gave effect to this further amendment of the Guyana 'Indenture Law'; but the Order in Council was not published and did not come to light until 3 January 1838 when it was denounced in the *British Emancipator* (the official organ of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society) as 'giving birth to a new slave-trade'.<sup>60</sup> John Scoble of the Society, who was later to visit Guiana and write his celebrated exposure of *The Deplorable Conditions of the Hill Coolies*, and of 'the Nefarious Means by which they were Induced to Resort to British Guiana and Mauritius' was later to claim that this Order in Council:

gave a carte blanche to every villain in British Guiana, and every scoundrel in India to kidnap and inveigle into contracts for labour for five years, in a distant part of the world, the ignorant and inoffensive Hindoo!<sup>61</sup>

On the fly-leaf to that pamphlet Scoble quoted from the newspaper, *The Friend of India*, published in Calcutta, of 3 August 1839:

Under the colour of a Bill for protecting the Indian labourers, it is proposed to legalize the importation of them into the colonies. ... It was in this manner that the Slave-trade crept in, under the shadow of Parliamentary regulation; a race was then begun between abuses and legislation, in which legislation was always found to be in the rear. AND SO IT WILL BE WITH THE COOLEY TRADE. We must tread the same circle; and, after years of the most poignant misery, come to the same result, that in the case of the new, as of the old, trade, THE ONLY PATH OF SAFETY LIES IN ABSOLUTE PROHIBITION.

We were indeed to tread the same circle; but absolute prohibition was not to come for some eighty years.

Let there be no doubt whatsoever in our minds as we begin this Commemoration that what we are marking are stages in a continuous process of bondage which began with the induction of the first African slaves into the Guiana colonies and ended with the prohibition of indenture in 1917. It was one experience with differing shades of brutality, differing methods of coercion, but a common experience of human bondage. The condition of slavery in the days, for example, of the 1763 Rebellion at Magdalenenberg were very different from that of indenture in the end years of the system. As Dr. Basdeo Mangru has reminded us in *Benevolent Neutrality*, the fact that the slave was private property and that slavery implied permanence were basic differences—however much they tended to be overshadowed by the similarities.<sup>62</sup> Yet, at the moment of transition 150 years ago, apprenticeship so shaded into indenture that Brougham could speak in the House of Commons of ‘indentured apprenticeship’<sup>63</sup>

when referring to slavery between 1834 and 1838 and Lord John Russell could himself describe (and reject) indenture in 1840 as 'a new system of slavery'.<sup>64</sup> Apprenticeship was indenture; indenture was slavery; in an important sense, they were all one.

But the truest testimony to the bondage in continuum that May and July 1838 marked was not that given by words in the British Parliament but the experience of those who were to labour on the sugar plantations. Like the slaves before them, Indian indentured labourers had first to endure their own passage across the *Kala Pant*<sup>65</sup>—The Black Waters—their own diaspora, not so unlike that earlier pernicious traffic in human cargo. Arthur Seymour has described the Middle Passage in these terms:

A ferry of infamy from the heart of Africa  
Roots torn and bleeding from their native soil  
A stain of race spreading across the ocean.<sup>66</sup>

And so, indeed, it was. It remains an apt description of the ferry that was to succeed it, beginning with the *Hesperus* and the *Whitby*, crossing from the heart of India, spreading another stain of race across the ocean.

And the identity of experience continued beyond the journey into the labouring—an experience in its totality well described by Hugh Tinker as an 'exile into bondage'.<sup>67</sup> Perhaps the truest symbol of the unbroken chain between slavery and indenture was the tenement range or 'logie' of the inherited 'nigger yard': the squalid, foul, degenerate, huddled pens that passed for housing for slave and indentured labourer alike. 'Nigger Yard', 'Coolie Yard', 'Bound Yard' were all one, only the labels changed to match the changing style of servitude.<sup>68</sup> Like the slave, the Indian immigrant was subject to the coercion of the whip and to the new coercion of criminal law applied for labour offences such as absenteeism and lack of identity documents which were not crimes under the general law.<sup>69</sup> No wonder the Royal Commission in 1870 described the indentured Indian as trapped by the law, 'in the hands of a system which elaborately twists and turns him about but always leaves him face to face with an impossibility'.<sup>70</sup>

In his Foreword to Walter Rodney's *A History of the Guyanese*

*Working People, 1881-1905*—a history whose central thesis was that shared common experience between indenture and slavery—George Lamming sums up the cruel realities of indenture thus:

Indentured labour was bound labour. It was deprived of all mobility and was therefore condemned to provide that reliability of service a crop like sugar demanded. The planter class, with the full permission of the metropolitan power, had given itself the legal right to deploy this labour as it pleased. As Rodney emphasises, here, with great relevance to many a contemporary situation, what the ruling class could not acquire by the normal play of the market forces had now been appropriated through legal sanctions. Indentured Indian labour was enslaved by the tyranny of the law that decided their relations to the land where they walked, and worked and slept.<sup>71</sup>

Rodney himself emphasised the link with characteristic penetration:

... indentured labour had as its ultimate function the guaranteeing of planter control over the entire labour process ... this alone justified the continuation of indentureship, irrespective of the cost to the individual proprietor and to the general taxpayer ... More than anything else, it was the regimented social and industrial control which caused indenture to approximate so closely to slavery.<sup>72</sup>

In his original letter to Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. of 4 January 1836, John Gladstone had painted a picture of life on Vreed-en-Hoop (or any of his other estates) which was not merely an embellishment of reality but a total travesty of truth:

Our Plantation Labour in the Field is very light; much of it, particularly in Demerara, is done by Task Work, which for the Day is usually completed by Two o'clock in the Afternoon, giving to the People all the rest of the Day to themselves. They are furnished with comfortable Dwellings and an Abundance of Food; ...They have

likewise an annual Allowance of Clothing sufficient and suitable for the Climate; there are Schools on each Estate for the Education of the Children, and the instruction of their Parents in the Knowledge of their Religious Duties. Their Houses are comfortable and it may be fairly said they pass their Time agreeably and happily.<sup>73</sup>

He was describing slave labour and promising those same idyllic conditions to those who took the place of the slaves. The same conditions did prevail for the newcomers; but they were hardly idyllic. Indenture, like slavery, was rooted in massive self-induced illusion of the kind *Candide* encountered in Surinam: 'the mania of believing that all is good when all is bad'.

Only a few years later, John Scoble was to reveal the conditions at Vreed-en-Hoop which the passengers of the *Hesperus* actually encountered. Complaints had been made to the Governor that they were being ill-treated and an enquiry resulted. Scoble was by then in Guiana and imposed himself on the proceedings. The result was a devastating indictment of conditions at Vreed-en-Hoop. Flogging and confinement were proved beyond all dispute. Two of the women who gave evidence (both presumably freed slaves) spoke in these terms:

According to Rose:

They appeared to me as severely punished as my matties were, during the apprenticeship; when flogged, they were flogged with a cat, the same as was formerly in use; they brought all from the sick-house together, and took them to the negro-yard to be flogged; they were tied to a post.

Elizabeth Caesar said:

The Coolies were locked up in the sick house, and next morning they were flogged with a cat-o'-nine-tails; the manager was in the house, and they flogged the people under his house; they were tied to the post of the gallery of the manager's house; I cannot tell how many licks; he gave them enough. I saw blood. When they were flogged at manager's house, they rubbed salt pickle on their backs.<sup>74</sup>

The report of that enquiry was dated 2 May 1839. By 3 August, Gladstone was writing to the Marquis of Normandy that:

The people continued cheerful and contented; but evil disposed persons have recently gone among them, and have endeavoured to create a bad and dissatisfied feeling, in which they have partially succeeded, as is at present too generally the case in England, where similar effects are produced by the Chartists and others, among the lower classes.<sup>75</sup>

The truth is it needed no 'evil disposed persons' to persuade those trapped by the 'Gladstone experiment' to flee its horrors. Perhaps the most pathetic story of all is that of the twenty indentured labourers landed by the *Whitby* who, trying to escape from Plantation Highbury in April/May 1839, 'cut their way, due east, for many miles through the bush, in the hope of reaching Bengal';<sup>76</sup> plaintive resonances of that first Gillanders letter: 'the Natives being perfectly ignorant of the Place they agree to go to, or the length of the Voyage they are Undertaking'.

Not much had changed in the Vreed-en-Hoop stable from the days of Jack Gladstone and the 1823 revolt. By now, however, its squalid realities were becoming a problem for its owners' son—the future Prime Minister of England. John Gladstone sold up: Vreed-en-Hoop went in July 1840 for £53,000. 'The Coolies', he remarked, 'are excellent bait for effecting the sales':<sup>77</sup> 'pieces', not 'people'. With the proceeds, Gladstone set up a trust for his children, including William: Demerara contributing to the future British Prime Minister's financial independence, though he protested at the time that 'this increased wealth so much beyond my needs with its attendant responsibility is very burdensome, however on his part the act be beautiful'.<sup>78</sup> The meaning of Vreed-en-Hoop is 'Peace and Hope'. 150 years ago it helped to bring both to the Gladstone family; but neither to the children of slavery and indenture.

On the final division of Gladstone's estate in 1848, the house in Carlton Gardens went to William.<sup>79</sup> John Gladstone had never lived in Guyana; but the sale of Vreed-en-Hoop, and later Success, was, in a sense, his act of retirement from Demerara and the West Indies. He left behind, however, the legacy of indenture

which he had begun with the *Hesperus* in 1838, and which resumed in 1845 despite the earlier protestations of Lord John Russell. For 80 years after that first arrival, indenture would tread the same circle towards prohibition as slavery had done before emancipation.

In 1929, the Rev. C. F. Andrews—Gandhi's trusted friend—visited Guyana and my parent's humble home in New Amsterdam. My father had managed the Berbice end of his visit to Guyana and he in turn was interested in J. I.'s efforts for the education of Indian girls; efforts that were to contribute to the withdrawal four years later of the Swettenham Circular which since 1904 had retarded the education of the daughters of indenture. That evening in New Amsterdam I was still a tearful infant not yet a year old. It is now part of family lore that the old priest took me in his arms, quieted the crying and gave me his blessing.<sup>80</sup> My mother, at least, had hope for me thereafter. Later, in 1936, C. F. Andrews, at the end of a sentimental visit to Fiji, placed his faith in the 'powers of recovery' of the indentured Indians.<sup>81</sup> That power of recovery—what I have earlier in this Lecture called 'the process of renewal'—was a power and a quality which the children of Indian indenture shared with their brothers and sisters of African descent who are the children of slavery in its cruellest form. When Martin Carter proclaimed:

From the nigger-yard of yesterday I come with  
my burden  
To the world of tomorrow I turn with my strength.<sup>82</sup>

he spoke for all who were the victims of both slavery and indenture; he spoke of all who shared in Guyana the common experience of bondage and, out of bondage, in the genesis of the nation. And he spoke with truth of hope well justified. How the children of slavery and indenture would use their powers of recovery however, what pathways the process of renewal would follow, would depend in large measure on whether slavery and indenture were indeed perceived as the unifying experience that it was. This process of renewal was crucial to Guyana's future; it, too, was part of the genesis of the nation.

But something else needs to be acknowledged. Indenture could not have thrived if the many who came had not first felt the need to leave. When everything is said about the deceit and

coercion and sometimes outright kidnapping of indentured immigrants, there remains the uncomfortable reality that the great majority who crossed the *Kala Pani* did so because of a desperate urge to escape from destitution and despair. Crushed down by poverty, by landlessness and landlordism and, for some at least, by the hopelessness of the caste system, they were in flight from bondage. What the fraudulence and iniquity of indenture did was to lure them from one trap into another; they exchanged a familiar servitude at the base of the Indian economic and social system for the even more alienated inequality of plantation serfdom. Their escape from bondage would turn out to be exile into bondage of another kind.<sup>83</sup>

Yet it was not a meaningless exchange. Although the shackles of the plantation system were not easily cast off, and despite the exploitative and lifeless character of indenture, there was always the prospect of eventual release and renewal: a prospect not vouchsafed them in the ancestral home of 19th century India—as some who returned discovered. Certainly, for the generation that would follow, after the ignominy of indenture would come opportunity. There are many lessons here; among them the sobering one that the arrival of the *Hesperus* and the *Whitby* are worthy of commemoration for the additional reason that, in a paradoxical way, that arrival, along with slavery's abolition, was the beginning of recovery in a more ultimate sense—the sense in which together they marked the genesis of the nation.

You and I, my generation and the one that followed, are heirs to a formidable tradition of individual effort for recovery. That effort gathered momentum in the end years of the nineteenth century and reached a high point in the 1920s and 1930s as the capacity of the children of slavery and indenture for self-improvement enlarged directly through education—education which they rightly prized almost above all else. In the families of each of us is that record of striving upwards, of working assiduously, often quite modestly, but always steadily towards the goal of self-improvement—a generation for whom the work ethic became an almost natural element of the process of survival.

We have a lot to retrieve from those years, and from the traditions of our parents' generation. When I went to London in 1947 to study Law, my father went with me. He was fulfilling his

own life-long ambition to be a lawyer and had already done most of the first part of the Bar exams in Guiana. In the six months it took me to settle down and tackle one subject at the Bar, he had passed his finals. I was 19; he was 44. He hardly practised law, and I would guess that he was a better teacher than he would ever have been a practising lawyer; but he had fulfilled that driving urge for further education—for betterment, fulfilment of potential. And that was typical of his generation. Can we use this Commemoration to recapture some of that enthusiasm for learning? Unless I am much mistaken, we are in danger of going in another direction—making a culture of the pork-knocker's materialist dream. Yet *El Dorado* always was a city of the mind.

And there are other victories for human fulfilment still to be won in Guyana, as in many countries. In the last decade in particular, international economic conditions have been cruelly harsh for developing countries and have taken a heavy toll of vulnerable economies like ours. But we must admit also that mistakes have been made. The richness of our natural resources, good levels of education and the resourcefulness of our people should have provided greater resilience. Venturing out boldly in largely uncharted waters and remembering the exploitation and repression that was so much a part of our history, we had to be pioneering and, therefore, to risk making mistakes. But we would be bad pioneers if we fail to admit to such mistakes, and to learn from them—as others are doing throughout the world, including major nations like the Soviet Union and China. To fail to do so is to fall far behind, and it will be little comfort then to applaud our consistency if it be consistency in error.

But the need not to fall behind is even more pointed in the context of this Commemoration; because the challenge that faces developing countries, Guyana included, is not merely the challenge of economic development, but the fact that in failure lies the danger of returning to a new dependency—a new kind of colonialism—deriving from economic weakness: a return along the path from whence we have come. We cannot afford such retrogression; and circumstances surely are now propitious for renewal and a real leap forward. The vision we have of a prosperous Guyana is not an empty one. It is attainable with sustained effort at economic and political reform; with continuing endeavour to liberalise the environment so that Guyanese

can give of their best; with positive action to remove insecurity and fear on the part of all sections of our society. But leadership and good direction are not enough. Much must be contributed by the people of Guyana in a great movement of change and reconstruction.

Relevant to that process of rebuilding, is a cardinal lesson from the events of 150 years ago: the lesson that a special obligation devolves on us as the children of slavery and indenture and colonialism. It is the obligation to ensure that no trace of servitude lingers or re-emerges in our society under whatever guise. The legacy of bondage is a continuing one; one which only a vigilant society can eradicate. Wherever racism, oppression, intolerance, authoritarianism, dominion of whatever kind, encroaches on human freedom it stalks in the shadow of slavery and indenture. We must never allow ourselves the complacency of believing that their shadows have been lifted for all time from our country or our region; we must be vigorous in ensuring that they never fall again upon us from any quarter.

In truth, slavery and indenture have left Guiana a legacy of challenge. Almost everything about them—about the systems themselves and about the linkages between them—emphasised difference and prompted division. How else but with resentment could newly freed African slaves react to immigrants arriving to deny them the right to the economic betterment which should have been the very fruit of freedom? Yet, how were the new arrivals to escape the fate of being pawns in a game of life and death they endured but scarcely understood? ‘You make human beings the subject of your commerce, as if they were merchandise, and you refuse them the benefit of the great law which governs all commercial dealings—that the supply must ever adapt itself to the demand’: thus Brougham (quoting Pitt) inveighed in vain at the very start of Indian indenture to Guiana.<sup>84</sup> Slavery, apprenticeship, indenture were ingredients of a poisoned brew which left a toxic residue of race. From that cup, we must decline to sip; for us to do so would be to stage the final act in a tragedy of others’ making played out by ourselves. Far better, to create a propitious denouement of our own: one that denies a victory to ‘otherness’ and makes our national motto of ‘one people’ reflect not just a pious hope but a present living reality.

If this Commemoration—now and in July—is to fulfil its highest purposes, it must help us to rise to the real challenge that events 150 years ago have bequeathed to us: the challenge truly to make those events the genesis of a nation. We will be able to do so only when we understand truly that slavery and indenture were a continuum, that their victims shared a common experience of bondage, that the same history which tempts us to mutual alienation created a primordial kinship—a heritage of oneness we have been prone to squander but need ceaselessly to cherish and enlarge. Beyond genesis, that surely must be the final revelation.

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43. *Ibid.*, p. 318.
44. Letter of 10 March 1837 from John Gladstone to Gillanders, Arbuthnot and Co., (1838) 13 *Colonial Papers Parliamentary* No. 2, House of Commons No. 232, 22 March 1838, p. 5: 'Mr. Colville is a near connection of Lord Auckland, your Governor General, to whom he will write on the subject.'
45. John Scoble, *Hill Coolies: A brief Exposure of the Deplorable Condition of the Hill Coolies in British Guiana and Mauritius—and of the Nefarious Means by which they were Induced to Resort to these Colonies* (Harvey and Darton, London, 1840).
46. In the face of growing pressure from the abolitionists in London, hostility from the Governor (Sir James Carmichael Smyth) in Demerara, and with the British Government considering whether to stop immigration of Indian labourers altogether, John Gladstone felt that the best way to satisfy the Secretary of State and prevent such a decision was to send him copies of his instructions to Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co., together with the entire correspondence, and with permission to publish: see, Checkland, op. cit., p. 323. The correspondence was eventually published as House of Commons No. 232 of 22 March 1838: see, (1838) 13 *Colonial Papers Parliamentary* No. 2. Included in Appendix B is the covering letter from Gladstone to Lord Glenelg, along with his initial letter of 4 January 1836 to Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. and the reply to it of 6 June 1836 from Calcutta.
47. For a broader treatment of such convergences see, S.S. Ramphal, *'Roots and Reminders: reflections on Slavery, Indenture and, Apartheid—and some personal conjunctures'*, op. cit.

48. Appendix B.
49. *Liverpool Registry Book of Shipping*, 1842, entry No. 20 (built at Shields, 1834); Gladstone gave its measurements as 334 tons, see his letter of 10 March 1837, *supra*, n. 44. The *Whitby* was a three-masted sailing ship (contra Light's despatch of 5 September 1839, which suggests it was a 'barque', *supra*, n. 2) of 347 tons, built at Whitby in 1837; see *Lloyds Register of Shipping*, 1838, entry No. 140.
50. (1838) 13 *Colonial Papers Parliamentary*, House of Commons No. 180, 2 March 1838, *British Guiana and Mauritius*, p. 23. And see, for example, J.W. Boddam-Whetham, *Roraima and British Guiana* (Hurst and Blackett, London, 1879), p. 129: "Demerara and swizzles are inseparably connected in my mind.... The exact time for indulging in a swizzle has not been clearly defined but as a general rule in Demerara it is accepted whenever offered. It is taken in the morning to ward off the effect of chill, before breakfast to give a tone to the system, in the middle of the day to fortify against the heat, in the afternoon as a suitable finale to luncheon, and again as a stimulant to euchre, and a solace for your losses. Before dinner it acts as an appetizer, and it is said that when taken before going to bed it assists slumber."
51. (1838) 13 *Colonial Papers Parliamentary*, House of Commons No. 1980, *op. cit.*, at p. 3.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 21 (Order in Council of 1 March 1837).
54. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
55. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-6.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

58. (1838) 13 *Colonial Papers Parliamentary*, House of Commons No. 232, 22 March 1838, p. 5.
59. Ibid.
60. Scoble, op. cit., p. 7.
61. Ibid.
62. Dr. Basdeo Mangru, *Benevolent Neutrality: Indian Government Policy and Labour Migration to British Guiana 1854-1884* (Hansib, London, 1987), p. 234.
63. *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Third Series Vol. 40 (16 January to 20 February 1823), 29 January 1838, 597.
64. In a despatch of 15 February 1840 to Governor Light, Lord John Russell, in refusing to sanction an Ordinance of the Court of Policy authorising £400,000 to be raised for immigration purposes gave as the Government's reasons: "Admitting that the mortality of the Hill coolies first sent may have been accidental, I am not prepared to encounter the responsibility of a measure which may lead to a dead loss of life on the one hand, or, on the other, to a new system of slavery". He went on to argue that the relative cheapness of labour in India favoured the growth of sugar there: "the plantation will be found for the labourer and not the labourer for the plantation." Adamson, op. cit., p. 43.
65. *Kala Pani*: a term originally used for the penal settlement of Port Blair on the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal. Initially, 'life imprisonment' convicts were sent there; later the term came to be used to signify a 'land of no return'.
66. Arthur Seymour, 'First of August' in *Selected Poems of A.J. Seymour* (Georgetown, 1983), p. 12.
67. Hugh Tinker, *A New System of Slavery. The Export of Indian Labour Overseas 1830-1920* (Oxford University Press for the Institute of Race Relations, London, 1974), p. 60.

68. Rodney, op. cit., pp. 36-39.
69. Tinker, *A New System of Slavery*, op. cit., p. 105.
70. *Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the Treatment of Immigrants in British Guiana*, 1871 (Cmd. 393), cited in Tinker, *A New System of Slavery*, op. cit., p. 224.
71. George Lamming in Foreword to Walter Rodney, *A History of the Guyanese Working People 1881-1905* (John Hopkins University Press, London, 1981), p. xxii.
72. Ibid., p. 39.
73. Appendix B.
74. Scoble, op. cit., p. 16.
75. Ibid., p. 19.
76. Ibid., p. 20.
77. Checkland, op. cit., pp. 325-6.
78. Shannon, op. cit., p. 99.
79. Checkland, op. cit., p. 368.
80. Susan Sanders (ed.) Unfinished Memoirs of J.I. Ramphal, (unpublished typescript). See, also, Hugh Tinker, *The Ordeal of Love*, pp. 235 and 243 citing C.F. Andrews, *An Interim Statement Concerning East Indian Conditions in British Guiana* (Colonial Office, File 111/689/75141 of 1930).
81. Tinker, *A New System of Slavery*, op. cit., p. 381. See, also, C.F. Andrews, *India and the Pacific* (Allen and Unwin, London, 1937), cited in Tinker, *The Ordeal of Love*, op. cit., p. 285.
82. Martin Carter, 'I come from the nigger yard' in *Poems of Resistance from Guyana*, (Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1954), p. 38.

83. For a discussion of this aspect of the indenture system, see Tinker, *A New System of Slavery*, op. cit., pp. 52-60.
84. *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates* Third Series, Vol. 41 (22 February to 28 March 1838), 6 March 1838, 427.

APPENDIX (A)

John Gladstone's slave compensation

British Guiana Compensation

Class.	Number.	Rate.	Amount of Comp.
1. Head People	63	£ 87. 3. 0 1/4	£ 5506. 7. 11 1/4
2. Tradesmen	42	£ 68. 8. 0 1/2	£ 2872. 17. 9.
3. Inf. Tradesmen	12	£ 38. 0. 1/4	£ 456. 0. 3.
4. Field Labourers	756	£ 64. 8. 4 3/4	£ 48741. 27. 3.
5. Inf. ditto	250	£ 36. 0. 5.	£ 9005. 4. 2.
Children	139	£ 19. 0. 0.	£ 2641. 0. 0.
Invalids &c.	47	£ 11. 8. 0.	535. 16. 0.
	<u>1309.</u>		<u>£ 69718. 13. 4 1/4</u>

  

$\begin{array}{r} \text{£ } 53. 5. 2 \frac{1}{2} \\ 58. 12 \\ \hline \text{£ } 2. 8. 3 \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 1309) 69718 \text{ (53£} \\ \underline{6545} \\ 4268 \\ \underline{392} \\ \text{£ } 341 \\ \underline{5820} \\ 13 \\ \hline 1309) 68853 \text{ (55£} \\ \underline{6545} \\ 238 \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 637 \\ \underline{282} \\ 3456 \\ \underline{6} \\ 1309) 3460 \text{ (2 1/2£ nearly} \\ \underline{2618} \\ 842 \\ \underline{1362} \end{array}$
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Per caput £ 53. 5. 2 1/2 nearly.

William Gladstone's calculation of his father's slave compensation from Guiana

**Note :** To the above would be added some £15,000 as Gladstone's share of the compensation for slaves he 'owned' jointly with Robertson Gladstone and George Grant.

**APPENDIX (B)**

**Correspondence on Indian Indenture**

COPY of a LETTER from JOHN GLADSTONE ESQUIRE to  
LORD GLENELG—With Enclosures  
(as recorded in Colonial Papers: Parliamentary—1838)

Carlton Gardens, 28th February 1838

My Lord,

Agreeably to what passed Yesterday, when we had the Honour of an Interview with your Lordship, I now beg to enclose for your Perusal Copies of the Instructions which I transmitted to my Correspondents at Calcutta, authorizing them to provide and engage a limited Number of Hill Coolies, who were disposed to emigrate as free Labourers to British Guiana, for the Purpose of being employed on our Plantations there, under the Order in Council dated the 12th July last, together with their Letter which replied to the first of mine. I have not yet heard of the Ship's Arrival there on board of which they were intended to embark, but expect to do so daily. As the Instructions given by Messrs. Davidson, Barkley, and Co., and Mr. Colville, were in all respects similar to mine, we think it unnecessary to trouble your Lordship with Copies of them, but we enclose one of a Letter received by them from our Correspondents at Calcutta. Should it be your Lordship's Wish to have these Papers laid upon the Table of the House of Lords, and printed for the Use of their Lordships, it is not only agreeable to us that this should be done, but our Hope that it will be adopted. To these Papers we solicit your Lordship's Attention as connected with a Measure which we consider to be one of vital Importance to the West India Colonies; believing, as we do, that unless such or other Means are adopted to promote the Emigration of free Labourers to be employed in their future Cultivation, their productive Advantages are likely to be greatly diminished if not wholly lost to the Mother Country, particularly in the Colonies of Jamaica and British Guiana, from the Period in 1840, when the Negro Apprenticeship will terminate. It is a

Subject in which we are deeply interested as Planters and Merchants. We speak advisedly; and beg to invite further Enquiry, if desired, that Evidence might be produced at their Lordships Bar in support of these Statements.

I have the Honour to be,

on behalf of Messrs. Davidson, Barkley, and Co.,  
Mr. Colville and myself,  
My Lord, yours, &c.

(signed) JOHN GLADSTONE.

To the Lord Glenelg,  
&c. &c. &c.

(Enclosures of Mr. Gladstone's Letter 28th February, 1838.)

- (1) -

COPY of a LETTER from JOHN GLADSTONE Esquire to  
Messrs. GILLANDERS, ARBUTHNOT, and Co.

Liverpool, 4th January 1836.

Dear Sirs,

I met with an Accident here about Three Weeks ago, which confined me to the House, from which I am now recovering, and hope in a few Days to be able to return to Edinburgh; this will account to you for using my Son's Pen for writing in place of my own.

I observe by a Letter which he received a few Days ago from Mr. Arbuthnot, that he was sending a considerable Number of a certain Class of Bengalees, to be employed as Labourers, to the Mauritius.

You will probably be aware that we are very particularly situated with our Negro Apprentices in the West Indies, and that it is a Matter of Doubt and Uncertainty how far they may be induced to continue their Services on the Plantations after their Apprenticeship expires in 1840. This to us is a Subject of great Moment and deep Interest in the Colonies of Demerara and Jamaica. We are therefore most desirous to obtain and introduce Labourers from other Quarters, and particularly from Climates something similar in their Nature. Our Plantation Labour in the Field is very light; much of it, particularly in Demerara, is done by Task Work, which for the Day is usually completed by Two o'clock in the Afternoon, giving to the People all the rest of the Day to themselves. They are furnished with comfortable Dwellings and Abundance of Food; Plantains, the Produce of the Colony, being the most common, and preferred generally by them, but they have also occasionally Rice, Indian Corn Meal, Ships Biscuits, and a regular Supply of Salt Cod-fish, as well as the Power of fishing for themselves in the Trenches. They have likewise an annual Allowance of Clothing sufficient and suitable for the Climate; there are Schools on each Estate for the Education of the Children, and the Instruction of their Parents in the Knowledge of their Religious Duties. Their Houses are comfortable, and it may be fairly said they pass their Time agreeably and happily. Marriages are encouraged, and when improper Conduct on the Part of the People takes place there are public Stipendiary Magistrates, who take cognizance of such, and judge between them and their Employers. They have regular Medical Attendance whenever they are indisposed, at the Expense of their Employers. I have been particular in describing the present Situation and Occupation of our People, to which I ought to add, that their Employment in the Field is clearing the Land with the Hoe and, where required, planting fresh Canes. In the Works a Portion are occupied in making Sugar and in the Distilleries, in which they relieve each other, which makes their Labour light. It is of great Importance to us to endeavour to provide a Portion of other Labourers whom we might use as a Set-off, and, when the Time for it comes, makes us, as far as it is possible, independent of our Negro Population; and it has occurred to us that a moderate Number of Bengalees, such as you were sending to the Isle of France, might be very suitable for our Purpose; and

on this Subject I am now desirous to obtain all the Information you can possibly give me. The Number I should think of taking and sending by One Vessel direct from Calcutta to Demerara would be about 100; they ought to be young, active, able-bodied People. It would be desirable that a Portion of them, at least One Half, should be married, and their Wives disposed to work in the Field as well as they themselves. We should require to bind them for a Period not less than Five years or more than Seven Years. They would be provided with comfortable Dwellings, Food, and Medical Attendance; they would also, if required, be provided with Clothing, or Wages to provide themselves, which, for the able-bodied, would not exceed Four Dollars per Month, and in that Proportion for Females and their Children as they grow up; a free Passage would be given to them to Demerara, where they would be divided, and Twenty to Thirty placed on One Plantation. I do not know whether the Class referred to are likely to be of a particular Caste, and under the Influence of certain Religious Feelings, and also restricted to any particular Kind of Food; if so, we must endeavour to provide for them accordingly. You will particularly oblige me by giving me, on Receipt, all the Information you possibly can on this interesting Subject, for should it be of an encouraging Character I should immediately engage for One of our Ships to go to Calcutta, and take a limited Number to Demerara, and from thence return here. On all other Subjects I refer you to Letters from the House; and always am,

Dear Sirs,  
Yours truly,

JOHN GLADSTONE.

Since writing so far it has occurred to me, that in bringing Lascars from India Security is required that they shall be returned to the Country. I do not know whether this would extend to any particular Caste being brought to the West Indies, or whether it is applicable in the Instance you have mentioned of those sent to the Mauritius. Several Importations from the Madeiras and Azores have taken place into Demerara, and so far with good Effects on the Minds of the Blacks.

- (2) -

COPY of LETTER from Messrs. GILLANDERS,  
ARBUTHNOT, and Co. to JOHN GLADSTONE Esquire

Calcutta, 6th June 1836.

Dear Sir,

We beg to acknowledge your Letter of the 4th January, referring to your Desire to procure Natives from this part of the World to work upon your Estates in the West Indies, and in some Degree render you independent of the Negro Population at the Termination of the present System; and it is with Regret we find that at the Time the Letter under Reply was written you were suffering from an Accident, the Effects of which, however, we hope ere this are entirely gone.

Within the last Two Years upwards of Two thousand Natives have been sent from this to the Mauritius by several Parties here under Contracts of Engagement for Five Years. The Contracts, we believe, are all of a similar Nature; and we enclose Copy of one, under which we have sent 700 or 800 Men to the Mauritius; and we are not aware that any greater Difficulty would present itself in sending Men to the West Indies, the Natives being perfectly ignorant of the Place they agree to go to, or the Length of the Voyage they are undertaking. The Tribe that is found to suit best in the Mauritius is from the Hills to the North of Calcutta, and the Men of which are all well-limbed and active, without Prejudices of any Kind, and hardly any Ideas beyond those of supplying the Wants of Nature, arising it would appear, however, more from Want of Opportunity than from any natural Deficiency, of which there is no Indication in their Countenance, which is often one of Intelligence. They are also very docile and easily managed, and appear to have no local Ties, nor any Objection to leave their Country.

In the event of your determining to introduce these People in the West Indies and sending a Ship for them, a Contract such as the one enclosed, if approved of, or modified or enlarged as you may think necessary, may be entered into with any Number of Men you would wish us to procure, and this Contract upon landing the Men in the West Indies and being registered at the Police Office, would we conclude give your Managers sufficient

Power to insist upon their performing any reasonable Task they may be set to. Such has been the Case in the Mauritius, and in one or two Instances where the Men have been idle or lazy, they have been punished by the competent Authority. It would perhaps avoid After-discussion were the Currency in which the Men will be paid, and its equivalent Value with the Rupee, stated in the Contract. The best Period for procuring and shipping the Men is, in our cold Season, between the Months of November and April, and the Instruction to procure the Men should precede the Ship about Two Months, to give Time to collect them; we should of course not be able to find a Cargo for the Ship, but some morghy Rice might be sent, which with a little Care would keep for Three Years.

The Security taken by Government here upon taking Natives to England is to protect the East India Company from Loss in the event of Natives being left in England without the Means of Subsistence or of finding their Way back, in which Case the Company are bound to provide for them until a Passage to India can be procured, but no Guarantee is required upon sending Men elsewhere; as however the Colonial Government will probably make the Importer enter into an Agreement that these Men shall be no Burden to the Colony, a Provision is made in the Contract to withhold so much of their Allowances as will pay their Passage back, should it be found necessary to discharge them before their Period of Service has expired.

We fear we should not find so many as Half of the Number provided with Wives; as, however, our Friends at the Isle of France have always discouraged the Men being so accompanied, we are not very well able to say how far the Women might be induced to go.

Our Letters from the Isle of France speak very favourably of the Men hitherto sent, many of whom our Friends write to us have their Task completed by Two o'clock, and go home, leaving the Negroes in the Field.

We are not aware that we can say any more on this Subject, unless we add, that in inducing these Men to leave their Country, we firmly believe we are breaking no Ties of Kindred, or in any way acting a cruel Part.

The Hill Tribes, known by the Name of Dhangurs, are looked down upon by the more cunning Natives of the Plains, and they

are always spoken of as more akin to the Monkey than the Man. They have no Religion, no Education, and in their present State, no Wants beyond Eating, Drinking, and Sleeping; and to procure which they are willing to labour. In sending Men to such a Distance, it would of course be necessary to be more particular in selecting them, and some little Expense would be incurred, as also some Trouble; but to aid any Object of Interest to you, we should willingly give our best Exertions in any Manner likely to be of Service.

We are,  
Dear Sir,  
Yours very faithfully,

GILLANDERS, ARBUTHNOT, and Co.

P.S.—You will observe, upon reading over the Form of our Contract, that it is registered in our Police Office, and authenticated by One of the Magistrates, in whose Presence the Document is signed, after the Nature of it has been explained to the Parties in their own Language.

(Signed)      G., A., & Co.

COPY FORM OF CONTRACT alluded to in preceding Letter.

Between the undersigned \_\_\_\_\_ acting on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ of Mauritius, and the Natives whose Names are hereunto affixed, the following Agreement has been entered into by the several Parties binding themselves to the Observance of the Conditions thereof:

1st. The Natives agree to proceed to the Isle of France, to work as Labourers there, upon a Sugar Estate the Property of \_\_\_\_\_ and to remain there, if required, for the Time of Five Years.

2dly. The Passage of the Natives to the Mauritius shall be paid by \_\_\_\_\_ who shall also provide a Passage again to this Country, at the End of Five Years, for each Native who may then wish to return; but if any Individual, from any Cause, should be discharged or leave the Employment of \_\_\_\_\_ before the Expiration of Five Years, such Individual shall have no Claim on him for a Passage.

3dly. The Pay of the Natives shall be fixed at the Rate of Five Rupees per Month for each Man. The Labour required from them will be that of digging Holes, weeding Canes, working in the Sugar-house, repairing Roads and Bridges, or otherwise making themselves useful, according to their Ability, as \_\_\_\_\_ may order them; the Quantity of daily Labour required from each to be fixed by the Manager of the Property; the Pay of One Sirdar shall be fixed at Seven Rupees per Month, and that of One Mate Six Rupees, and Boys at Three Rupees per Month.

4thly. As \_\_\_\_\_ must be responsible to Government that the Natives shall not be a Burden to the Colony, in the event of their being discharged or leaving their Employments, One Rupee per Month shall be retained from the Pay of each Individual, until there shall be a sufficient Sum to provide a Passage for each to Calcutta; should no such Contingency take place, the Money shall be restored at the End of Five Years.

5thly. In addition to the Pay as above fixed, Food and Clothing shall be supplied to each as follows—

Fourteen Chettacks of Rice (about 2 lbs.), Two Ditto of Dhall, Two Ounces of Salt, and some Oil and Tamarind, daily; and annually for each, Clothing as follows; Two Dhooties, Two Blankets, One Jacket, and One Cap.

6thly. Each Individual shall receive Six Months Pay in advance, for which he shall give an Acknowledgement here; their Pay to commence from the Date of their going on board the Ship.

7thly. The Nature of this Agreement (which shall be registered at the Police) is such, that each Native is individually responsible for the Observance of its Conditions by every one whose Mark it bears; and it is further agreed, that while in Hospital from Sickness or any other Cause, the Pay is stopped during such Time.

# **NO ISLAND IS AN ISLAND**

*The Third Norman Manley Memorial Lecture  
Royal Commonwealth Society, London,  
24 June 1988*

*T*he first two lectures in this series which commemorates the life and work of one of the greatest West Indians, Norman Washington Manley, were concerned with Manley and with Jamaica.<sup>1</sup> In honouring me with the invitation to deliver the Third Memorial Lecture you have specifically asked me to cast the net of analysis and reminiscence somewhat wider and to speak on the theme of the Caribbean or, as I would prefer to say, the West Indies. It is a theme, of course, that was central to Norman Manley's life and work. Indeed, it was in his role of a committed believer in West Indian unity that I first came under Manley's spell. He was the first West Indian politician to move and inspire me in that cause: and it was here in London, at the LSE, during one of his visits in the early 1950s. The preparatory work on West Indian federation was gathering momentum and Manley shared with us—some of the generation that would play a part in its unfolding—his vision of the future West Indian nation. It is a vision I have never lost: or lost faith in. I was to see, and work with, Norman Manley in the coming years through the increasingly intensive West Indian conferences leading to the establishment of the Federation in 1957: conferences in which he played such a leading role.

My next reminiscence of 'N.W.' is very different. It was ten years later, 1964; the federal experiment was over; Jamaica was independent and Norman Manley was in opposition. A dream we had shared and which he had tried so hard to make come true—the dream of West Indian nationhood—lay shattered. The Federation of the West Indies which I too had worked to bring to independence had been dissolved on the very day—31 May 1962—that had been agreed upon, at the last West Indian conference Norman Manley attended (May/June 1961), as the date for the independence of The West Indies, and thus for the establishment of the West Indian nation.

I was the Assistant Attorney-General of the Federation and involved in drafting what was to be the Independence Constitution. We were half-way through when the Referendum in Jamaica

answered 'No' to Federation and, as it was to transpire, to Norman Manley. I left Port of Spain, until then the Federal Capital, on 30 August 1962, the day before Trinidad and Tobago's Independence and 24 days after Jamaica's. I left for Harvard on a Guggenheim Fellowship where I would reflect and write on the prospects for the Caribbean—no longer the West Indies.

Looking back on it all now, did the acute disappointment which I felt border on petulance? Perhaps it did; but let it be said that we had been stirred by a loftier vision of nationhood than that which independence on an island basis seemed to offer: a vision of one West Indian nation, not of the 12 that did emerge. After Harvard, I joined my friend and former colleague, Harvey Da Costa, who had been Federal Attorney-General, in law practice in Jamaica. My name-plate, I am glad to say, is still there at the entrance to our old Chambers at 20 1/2 Duke Street, Kingston. It was in practice that I last encountered Norman Manley. He too had returned to the Bar, although he only did opinion work. He was a revered figure at the Bar, but caused more than a little concern among his younger colleagues by adhering resolutely to the low level of fees he had been accustomed to years earlier. Since he was 'N.W.', his fees were the bench-mark for us. But, let me turn, as you have asked, to the Caribbean.

"The islands are separated by miles of sea and to a close and more territorial political union it may be said 'opposit natura'." So concluded Walwyn Shepherd in 1900, writing of the West Indies in the *Journal of Comparative Legislation*.<sup>2</sup> In other words, as the 20th century dawned, nature itself seemed to say 'no' to West Indian nationhood. Sixty-three years later, writing in *Foreign Affairs* just after Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago had become independent, Philip Sherlock had this to say:

Division is the heritage of the Caribbean. The separateness of the islands in the archipelago that curves for a thousand miles from the tip of Florida to the mouth of the Orinoco is reflected in the fact that they have no common name. Each island shares with the others the same startling beauty of sun-drenched mountains and peacock seas; each has the same social configuration resulting from the same techniques of production, the

intensive cultivation of one crop, and slavery. Yet the keynote is contrast, the dominant theme competition. The rivalries of Western Europe broke the region into segments, each tightly integrated into the trading system of the metropolitan power, sealed off in an almost watertight compartment and stocked with people brought together from Europe, a score of West African kingdoms and the central provinces of India. Nowhere else in the New World is there so sharp a juxtaposition of different races, languages, religions—different legal, educational and political systems.<sup>3</sup>

In 1975, in my last speech in the Caribbean before coming to London as Commonwealth Secretary-General, a speech I called 'To Care for CARICOM', I myself said this:

A consequence of our relative success over the last ten years is a readiness to believe that unity is our natural state—one which will subsist despite ourselves. It is a dangerous falsehood. A history of colonialism and the geography of a scattered archipelago deny its validity. The natural state of our Caribbean is fragmentation; without constant effort, without unrelenting perseverance and discipline in suppressing instincts born of tradition and environment, it is to our natural state of disunity that we shall return.<sup>4</sup>

Yet there is another side that is unifying: and it, too, is part of our natural state and our heritage. It is the unmistakable, unchanging fact of a West Indian identity. Over 250 years ago, in 1722, Père Labat, writing about his travels among the islands and states, invoked that identity, so palpable to him, in support of the common destiny to which he saw us all committed as part of an even wider Caribbean. He wrote:

I have travelled everywhere in your sea of the Caribbean from Haiti to Barbados, to Martinique and Guadeloupe, and I know what I am speaking about.... You are all together, in the same boat, sailing on the same uncertain sea... citizenship and race unimportant, feeble little

labels compared to the message that my spirit brings to me: that of the position and predicament which History has imposed upon you... I saw it first with the dance... the merengue in Haiti, the beguine in Martinique and today I hear, *de mon oreille morte*, the echo of calypsoes from Trinidad, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Antigua, Dominica and the legendary Guiana.... It is no accident that the sea which separates your lands makes no difference to the rhythm of your body.<sup>5</sup>

In many ways, the two and a half centuries since Labat sailed the Caribbean should have strengthened both the reality and the awareness of a common identity and developed among our people an instinct for unity. The shared experience of bondage that slavery and indenture imposed, the common experience of colonialism and, in later years, of struggle for release from it, compel a sense of community. An almost identical environment, propitious to the flowering of the cultural traditions of its transported people, ensures a socio-cultural unity. Joint patterns of colonial administration result in a uniform legal-political framework; transmitted traditions of the rule of law and of parliamentary democracy are part of a West Indian ethos. How natural, then, is our state of disunity, how real our heritage of division?

Perhaps, we need to look back before we can look forward with confidence. Let me try to do so by recalling two episodes in the constitutional cross-stitch of the Leeward and Windward Islands—today's OECS countries—who are once again exploring the ways of political unity: different people of a different age renewing the effort to overcome the vicissitudes of smallness by building bridges across a dividing sea.<sup>6</sup>

By the 1660s English settlements had been established in St. Christopher, Barbados, Nevis, Antigua and Montserrat; all of them—the Caribbean Islands—came under the executive authority of a common 'Governor-in-Chief' stationed at Barbados.<sup>7</sup> In the beginning, there was union. But the marriage was unpopular with the planters of the islands other than Barbados and, through political pressure locally and representations in London, a separation was arranged. In 1671, a special Commission was issued appointing Sir Charles Wheeler "Governor-in-Chief over

St. Christopher, Nevis, Montserrat, Antigua, Barbuda, Anguilla and all other Leeward Islands which His Majesty has seen fit to separate from the Government of Barbados.”<sup>8</sup> Thus began the long series of island configurations, groupings and re-groupings, unions and federations and confederations, which were to characterise constitutional developments in the West Indies for nearly 300 years.

Wheeler’s commission established no more than a personal union, but it was not long before the difficulties inherent in dealing with the islands separately and the obvious convenience that would result from a more centralised form of government convinced him of the need for a general assembly of some kind. It was his successor (Stapleton), however, who pursued the bold course of summoning such an assembly comprising representatives of the various island legislatures meeting on an *ad hoc* basis.<sup>9</sup> From a modest beginning as a consultative body the assembly gradually assumed the character of a Federal Council legislating on matters of common concern. In 1705, it passed an Act ‘to settle General Councils and General Assemblies for the Caribbee Islands their peculiar Laws and Customs’.<sup>10</sup> In effect, it created a bicameral federal legislature having wide powers; a federal executive, of course, already existed in the person of the Governor. It has been suggested that, apart from the feeble New England Confederation of 1643, this Act represents the earliest attempt at federalism in the British Empire:<sup>11</sup> a not insignificant assertion.

Whatever its other claims to fame, however, this initial attempt at political union in the Leewards was a success; legislative activity quickly shifted back to the Island Councils. After a lapse of over seventy years the assembly (General Assembly) met for the last time in 1798 to discuss the resolution on slavery passed the year before by the House of Commons.<sup>12</sup>

The nineteenth century saw a revival of federalism in the Leewards. Peace in Europe after 1815 ushered in a period of calm in the West Indies and Whitehall could give more attention to the problems of government in the Caribbee Islands. In 1816, the experiment was tried of dividing the Leewards into two groups under separate Governors, but in 1833, as part of a more general policy of consolidation, the islands were again united under a common Governor,<sup>13</sup> with Dominica, which had been a separate

colony since 1770, added to the group.<sup>14</sup> However, the need which had prompted even earlier attempts at federalism in the 17th century persisted, and, in 1869, the Colonial Office, inspired by Canada's efforts two years earlier, became the champion of federalism in the Leewards. Sir Benjamin Pine was appointed Governor with a mandate "to form these islands into one colony, with one Governor, one Superior Court and one Corps of Police":<sup>15</sup> a formula for Union not so unlike that currently being advanced by some OECS leaders.<sup>16</sup> But Pine was soon to discover that even the most modest alteration in the *status quo* presented innumerable difficulties. "It must be remembered", he wrote, "that these islands, small and insignificant as they may be, have for centuries possessed forms of not only wholly unsuited to the times when they were founded, but which while ceasing to be applicable to present circumstances have kept up among the ruling classes a spirit of self-importance and narrow patriotism which may seem ludicrous but cannot be ignored."<sup>17</sup> Note that reference to 'ruling classes'; it has its present-day resonances.

The greatest obstacle to agreement was the proposal for a common Treasury: "What! they say," reported Pine on the attitude of the planters of St. Kitts, "shall the rich and prosperous island of St. Kitts share its overflowing Treasury with the bankrupt island of Antigua?"<sup>18</sup> Alexander Bustamante was to say as much at the Montego Bay Conference in 1947—three-quarters of a century later—when he described 98 per cent of the other islands as "pauperised and in a state of bankruptcy". "I have never heard", he protested, 'that in joining with bankrupts one can become successful or prosperous'.<sup>19</sup> This time St. Kitts was among the bankrupts. Faced with an almost unanimous opposition from the islands, the Secretary of State was forced to abandon that nineteenth-century plan of union in favour of federation, though for a time he remained adamant over the strength of the central authority. When, after eighteen months of negotiation, Pine obtained the approval of all the Island legislatures, it was to a federal union far removed from Whitehall's earlier plans.

In 1871, the British Parliament passed the Leeward Islands Act,<sup>20</sup> and this, as amended by the Leeward Islands Legislature, embodied the federal Constitution which remained in operation until 'defederation' in 1957. The Act established the colony of the

Leeward Islands consisting of six presidencies—Antigua, St. Kitts, Nevis, Dominica, Montserrat and the Virgin Islands. These were later reduced to four, first by the amalgamation of St. Kitts and Nevis in 1882,<sup>21</sup> and later, in 1940, by the separation of Dominica.<sup>22</sup> Caught between the pressure for union from the Colonial Office and the determination of the Island councils to preserve the *status quo* a formula of political union was evolved which produced little more than a confederation. Judged even as such, it was far from effective. A former President of Nevis once described the resulting Leeward Islands Federation as “a government powerless in itself to do good, but which has developed great capacities for hindering any good being done by the several parts.”<sup>23</sup> The Royal Commission of 1884 hoped that the inhabitants would “take the further step of securing all the advantages of co-operation by making the union real and complete”,<sup>24</sup> but nothing was done and the federation entered the century in its old ineffectual form.

By the 1920s “defederation” had become a political catchword in the Leewards; yet the Wood Report of 1922 recommended neither a strengthening nor a loosening of the ties. The Fergusson Commission which conducted an inquiry into the possibilities of closer union between Trinidad, the Windward and the Leeward Islands, or some of them, reported in 1933 that so far as Trinidad was concerned “no proposal for closer political union with any of the northern islands would receive support at the present juncture and that it would be useless to discuss the matter further”, and they advised that it would be impracticable to establish a ‘real federation’ between the Leeward and Windward groups. They suggested, however, the dissolution of the Leeward Islands Federation and the groupings of the islands of both the Leewards and Windwards under one Governor.<sup>25</sup> The resulting organisation would have been “an association of eight colonies under one Governor, but otherwise independent of each other and autonomous in every respect.”<sup>26</sup> The proposal was referred to the island legislatures, but there was such a divergence of opinion, particularly over the justification of the additional expense involved, that the Secretary of State decided not to pursue it.<sup>27</sup> Nothing was in fact to happen until ‘defederation’ in 1957 as a prelude to the more inclusive federal union. No less than three hundred years had been spent in a contest

between rationality and pettiness with the latter consistently triumphant.

In the Windwards, meanwhile, the same forces were at work. Unlike the Leewards, they were all conquered colonies and so never enjoyed traditions of representative government to the same degree. In fact, during the seventeenth and much of the eighteenth centuries they felt the full impact of European wars fought in West Indian waters and although sporadic attempts were made to establish British authority over them, anything like organised government must have been virtually unattainable during those troubled years. It has been estimated, for example, that in the 170 years between 1633 and 1803 St. Lucia changed hands between the British and French no fewer than twelve times.<sup>28</sup> The real story of island groupings in the Windward begins, therefore, at a somewhat later date.

The Peace of Paris in 1763 had brought a temporary lull to Anglo-French conflict in the Caribbean; and Grenada, with the little Grenadines attached, St. Vincent, Dominica and Tobago were ceded to Great Britain. Grouped together as the 'Southern Caribee Islands', they were immediately formed into one Government at Grenada.<sup>29</sup> Once again, in the beginning, there was union. The experiment, however, was short-lived. In 1771, Dominica was separated and placed under a separate governorship, with a bicameral legislature of the old representative type. In 1776, St. Vincent followed suit. When, in 1783, Tobago was ceded to the French by the Treaty of Versailles the union had ended by elimination.

When the War of American Independence left off, the French Revolutionary Wars took over; and not until the Treaty of Paris in 1814 was it finally decided that the English and not the French were to be responsible for the Windwards. All four of the "Southern Caribee Islands" were returned to Great Britain, with the addition of St. Lucia, but no attempt was made to revive the former union. In 1833, however, when Dominica was transferred to the Leewards;<sup>30</sup> a new arrangement in common administration was tried out among the remaining islands of the Windward group.

Barbados, not strictly a member of the Windwards and, since her separation from the Leewards in 1671, independently administered, was brought into the scheme of association and Sir

Lionel Smith was appointed Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Barbados, St. Vincent, Grenada and Tobago.<sup>31</sup> This was, however, a mere ghost of the former union. The separate island legislatures all continued to function; the sole co-ordinating influence was the common Governor-in-Chief who resided in Barbados which superseded Grenada as the centre of government; while the other islands were administered by resident Lieutenant-Governors.

Viscount Goderich was the Secretary of State at this time and he was greatly impressed with the possibilities of a real union of the Windwards.<sup>32</sup> But to a large extent his hands were tied. The islands by now what were euphemistically called all possessed 'representative' legislatures; under prevailing constitutional law it was no longer open to the Crown to legislate for them. Union, if it were to be achieved, must emanate from the island legislature themselves. It never did.

What changes have taken place since then have been confined to alterations among the constituent members of the executive union, and have been achieved by the simple process of amending the Governor's commission. In 1835, Trinidad and St. Lucia were brought into the so-called 'union', when a commission was issued to Smith, already Governor of Barbados, St. Vincent, Grenada and Tobago, appointing him "Governor and Commander-in-Chief over our said islands called Trinidad and St. Lucia in America."<sup>33</sup> From the beginning, however, Trinidad enjoyed a certain independence when Sir Henry George McLeod was appointed Governor of the Island.<sup>34</sup> From that time onwards, Trinidad developed as a separate colony.

In 1869, with Pine's mandate to federate the Leewards there came out of the Colonial Office a "Scheme of union" for Trinidad, Grenada and Tobago. Draft Letters Patent were prepared to give effect to the union, but the proposals clearly did not go beyond a common Governor and the scheme was abandoned in the same year. Nevertheless, Pine's moderate success in the 1870s in securing the federation of the Leeward Islands encouraged the Colonial Office to hope for similar developments in the Windwards; and, in 1871, Governor Rawson was instructed along such lines: "As you have been aware from the time of your appointment as Governor," wrote the Secretary of State to him some time later, "Her Majesty's Government are anxious that the

Islands of the Windward group should be federated under a stronger and more efficient system of administration than can be secured to each of them while they continue separate.”<sup>35</sup> Far from convinced himself of the wisdom of ‘confederation’—as the proposal was referred to in the Windwards—and certain of the opposition of the legislatures in Barbados, Grenada and Tobago he recommended that it should be preceded by the conversion of the now ‘representative’ legislatures into single chambers, in which the Crown would have power to bring about united action.<sup>36</sup> But if ‘confederation’ was distasteful to the island legislatures, confederation on the basis of Crown Colony Government was absolute anathema. In the minds of the planters—remember, it was still only the planters—the issues became intermingled; once that had occurred, the fate of ‘confederation’ was sealed.

Rawson was succeeded in 1875 by J. Pope Hennessy, at once a courageous administrator and a confirmed federalist. At the same time the Earl of Carnarvon became Secretary of State and one of his first acts was to dissociate the issues of confederation and internal constitutional amendment. Carnarvon’s ability for compromise, however, soon led him to disavow one of the Scheme’s cardinal features. Confronted with the opposition of the Barbados House of Assembly to a common treasury, Carnarvon agreed that “this community of financial arrangements” need not be a feature of the confederation and that, subject to such contributions as might be agreed to be levied for the maintenance of joint public institutions, the revenue and expenditure for each island would be administered separately as before. ‘Confederation’ was taking on its real meaning. In the result, Hennessy’s actual proposals ‘a scheme for administrative confederation’ amounted to little more than a six-point programme for the creation of certain common public institutions financed by the islands of the Windward group, including Barbados.<sup>37</sup>

In the smaller islands the proposals were favourably received, but in Barbados by this time the very mention of the word ‘confederation’ had become the signal for political agitation. The House of Assembly was adamant, and in 1876, on a motion proposing a joint conference of representatives from all the island councils to discuss the matter, it passed a resolution in the

following terms: "That the House of Assembly in Barbados have no intention to become one of a Federation of Islands, or to merge their independent separate legislatures, either for local or general purposes of legislation in a federative legislature."<sup>38</sup> The story of the events following has often been told. Suffice it to say that the opposition of the planters hardened and became organised and at the same time there arose a more widely held fear and distrust of 'confederation'—a situation, in Pope Hennessy's view, deliberately created by the systematic misrepresentation of the proposals by their enemies. Local demonstrations grew into riots and there was talk of landing troops to maintain the peace. Proposals from Pope Hennessy for reform in the system of land tenure ensured his unpopularity with the planters who petitioned the Secretary of State for his recall. Towards the end of the same year Pope Hennessy was promoted to Hong Kong.<sup>39</sup>

In 1884, the Royal Commission seeking a formula of closer association in the Windwards, recommended that the four islands of Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Tobago should separate from Barbados to form "a real union among themselves."<sup>40</sup> Local feeling in the islands other than Barbados was, however, unanimously against the proposal and nothing was done to implement it; union without Barbados was obviously a much less attractive proposition than confederation with her. Notwithstanding this, the separation from Barbados was arranged in 1885, but in all other respects the constitutional position remained as before.

In 1899, following a recommendation of the Royal Commission of 1896, Tobago was converted into a local government district of Trinidad and since that year has remained a part of the renamed colony of Trinidad and Tobago; Tobago's place in the Windward union being taken by Dominica in 1940. Until the establishment of the Federation of the West Indies in 1957, the system established for the Windward Islands in 1885 remained intact. The governor resided in Grenada and was the common executive head, while the other islands were presided over by resident Administrators working in co-operation with and under the authority of the Governor. There was no common legislature and, as a consequence, neither common laws nor a common treasury or tariff. Indeed, apart from special arrangements relating to the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal, the only

expressions of functional unity were in the common audit system established in 1889, and a common lunatic asylum at Grenada. Within the latter years of the union the nucleus of a central civil service had been provided through the addition of specialist officers to the Governor's staff but even "administrative confederation" remained unrealised. Rationality had not triumphed in the Windwards either.

Jamaica was over a thousand miles removed from the scene of these activities in the Lesser Antilles and, not surprisingly, was a stranger to them. Isolated though she was, however, she has played a small part in this story of regional groupings taking under her wing the Turks and Caicos Islands, grouped together more than six hundred miles to her extreme north-west and the Cayman Islands on the west. The Caymans had been vaguely associated with Jamaica from as early as the middle of the seventeenth century, and in 1863 they were, by an Act of Parliament, definitely placed under the authority of the Governor and Legislature of Jamaica.<sup>41</sup> The connection with the Turks and Caicos Islands has a somewhat longer history. They are geographically the southernmost of the Bahamian group and were included originally in the colony of the Bahamas. In 1848, however, they were separated from the Bahamas and became subject to the supervision of the 'Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of the Island of Jamaica'. Ten years after the position of the Cayman Islands had been clarified a similar treatment was applied to the Turks and Caicos Islands and under the authority of an Act in Parliament they were finally annexed to and became a dependency of Jamaica.<sup>42</sup> It might be mentioned also, when talking of Jamaica's part in this story of regional association, that between 1862 and 1884 the administration of British Honduras had been placed in the hands of a Lieutenant-Governor acting under the authority of the Governor-in-Chief of Jamaica. British Guiana is thus the only territory in the area which has not experimented with these early constitutional linkages; but British Guiana is itself the product of a union of the three former Dutch colonies of Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice.<sup>43</sup>

It was only late in these experiments that there began the movement towards a wider political association of all the West Indian colonies and it is tempting to suggest that the early regional groupings in the Lesser Antilles have been a part of an

evolving pattern of this federal movement. It is clear that there never was such symmetry in the constitutional developments. In the first place, the circles of association have not generally widened. The Leewards lost first Barbados and later Dominica; while contraction has been the theme of all Windward development. In 1835, the Governor of Barbados held six islands under his executive authority; by 1889 Barbados was on her own, and Trinidad and Tobago had united outside the Windwards, and until 1940, when Dominica returned, the Commission of the Governor of the Windwards extended over only three of the former islands. It follows that the circles have never merged. Attempts in 1934 and 1947 to achieve a Windward-Leeward Union both ended in failure, and there was little done hitherto to bring the eastern and western groups together.

There clearly has not been any ordered constitutional progress towards political unity. Yet it is undeniable that from the very beginnings of British influence in the Caribbean there has been a centripetal force steadily driving these territories together. The source of the energy has not always been the same. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a period of constant struggle for supremacy of metropolitan authority, it derived from the need for common defence. In the nineteenth century, in a time of comparative peace, it derived from the need for greater efficiency and economy in the administration of the territories, and its impetus came from those responsible for their administration. This need remained, but the twentieth century has added a new and more dynamic force generated by the demand for political independence and the concomitant desire for economic progress.

It is in this respect that these regional groupings, achieved or merely contemplated, are so important; for they represent the earliest stages in the growth of the idea of association which reached maturity in the Federal experiment. Its development was by no means easy. The impotence of the Crown before the doctrine of *Campbell v. Hall*,<sup>44</sup> and, indeed, the recognition by the Colonial Office, even after the actual power to legislate had in many cases reverted in the Crown, that in matters such as a union of territories nothing should be done which did not meet with the approval of their legislatures, in effect gave the island councils a veto over any such scheme. It was on this basis in 1885,

after the Windward Islands had surrendered their representative institutions in return for Crown Colony Government, that Her Majesty's Government declined to impose a union which it obviously favoured after it had been made clear by the island councils that 'they would have none of it'.<sup>45</sup> The battle for unity had, therefore, to be fought in the local legislatures, and in most cases, as we have seen, it was lost.

A congenital parochialism; a fear on the part of the wealthier islands of having to carry their weaker associates; a sense of security in entrenched power: all contributed to form an effective resistance at this level. At the heart of this was the fact that the 'old representative system', which traditionally has been regarded as a proud inheritance, and which, in the islands, in many cases preceded the establishment of Crown Colony Government, was truly representative in little more than name. As late as 1876 in Barbados the Lower House was returned by an electorate of 1,000 out of a population of 180,000.

In 1849, an intriguing proposal came from an anonymous 'officer of the Jamaica Government' who suggested the establishment of 'the West Indian Joint Stock Company' with a Court of Directors who would take over from the Colonial Office the direction of the affairs of the Colonies.<sup>46</sup> Another proposal was made in the 1880s that the various colonies should join the Canadian federation as individual provinces. From time to time since then this proposal has been revived but nothing like the same concentration of effort which went into the early proposal has since been achieved. Sir John MacDonal was supposed to have given his blessing to the project and a vigorous campaign on its behalf was launched in Canada by its champion—a Canadian journalist named A. Spencer Jones. The proposal got as far as being debated in the Jamaica Legislative Council but was rejected.<sup>47</sup>

These individual efforts were carried over into the twentieth century, and of them perhaps the most important, certainly the most comprehensive, was the plea made in 1911 by the Honourable C. Gideon Murray, later Viscount Elibank, then a member of Parliament and a former administrator of St. Vincent. Murray's scheme of political association was confined to the eastern group of the West Indian colonies and his proposal was modelled on the lines of the Australian Federal Council of 1885.

In short, there was to be an association of legislatures through a General Assembly, founded on 'the principle of legislation for States or Governments in their corporate or collective capacities and contra-distinguished from the individuals of whom they consist'.<sup>48</sup> The scheme was unfavourably received by the West India Committee to whom it was first unfolded and it later failed to arouse enthusiasm in the colonies.

The First World War interrupted these individual efforts, but with the advent of peace the possibility of unity was again pursued. In 1920, Sir Edward Davson, then President of the West Indian Associated Chambers of Commerce, put forward a plan of association embracing all the colonies. Even more modest in its nature than Murray's the scheme provided for a Central Conference composed of official and unofficial representatives of the various colonies with a permanent secretariat and meeting at fixed intervals to make recommendations on matters of common interest. The authority of this representative body was admittedly to be only advisory; its decisions were in no way binding on the individual governments. The scheme was submitted to the Secretary of State, and he referred it to the legislatures. In a majority it was favourably received, but there were some important exceptions; Barbados politely declined the invitation. In the absence of unanimity, the matter was allowed to remain in abeyance.<sup>49</sup>

In 1922, the Wood Report was published.<sup>50</sup> Major Wood's mission on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Colonies had been promoted by the growing demand throughout the territories for a larger measure of representative government, and he was, therefore, more particularly concerned with this aspect of constitutional reform than with the larger question of federation. He did, however, consider it, and in so doing he conceded 'that it would be to the evident advantage of these colonies to secure the machinery for greater unity and co-operation'. Nevertheless, he advised that there were practical and political objections which made the establishment of federal government at that time impossible. The practical objection to 'federating an archipelago' lay in the barriers to social, economic and political integration which the stretches of water inevitably create. Again, that 'dividing' sea! These barriers, he suggested, had not yet been sufficiently demolished by the development of a West Indian

consciousness, and, as a result, there was not a deliberate demand of local opinion for political unity. 'So long as public opinion stands where it does today', he concluded, 'it is both inopportune and impracticable to attempt amalgamation of existing units of government into anything approaching a general federal system'.<sup>51</sup>

In the following year, on the initiative of the Jamaica Legislature, Sir Edward Davson's scheme for a standing Conference was revived and, following on a preliminary conference in London in 1926, the first West Indian Conference assembled in January 1929, in Barbados. The agenda comprised such matters as agriculture, the future of the sugar industry, a West Indian university, aviation and shipping, marketing and publicity, the extension of scientific research and problems relating to public health. For little more than a week the representatives of the colonies discussed the common problems facing their governments, and 'there was a deep-seated realisation that real progress could only be achieved through the development of inter-colonial unity and co-operation'.<sup>52</sup> Public opinion, it appears, had at last begun to move.

The 1930s began the final and decisive phase in the federal movement. During those years and after them the scene changed entirely and it is important before moving on, to note two features of the pre-1930 scene. The first is that the federal movement, if one can so dignify those sporadic flirtations, had not yet become a West Indian movement. Although the idea of political unity had attracted adherents beyond the pale of the Colonial Office, federation was yet too delicate a plant to flourish in West Indian soil. Neither Sir Edward Davson nor the Hon. Gideon Murray, unpretentious as were their proposals, were representative of West Indian political thought, and there had not yet arisen on the local scene any important body of opinion prepared to undertake the transplanting.

The second feature was more dynamic. During the period the case for closer association was put on a new and altogether more satisfactory basis than that nineteenth century preoccupation with administrative economy. Federalism, it was now contended, created the machinery for co-operation between the various colonies, and it was only as a result of such co-operation that social and economic prosperity could be secured in the changed

conditions of the modern world. This was the theme of Murray's proposal; it was also clearly the basis on which Major Wood had recognised the advantages of political unity. Major Wood's visit in 1921 had been arranged because of the demand which had arisen in the West Indies for a measure of representative government. This did not mean that there was a clamant demand for self-government.

What it did mean can only be understood against the background of constitutional developments in the individual colonies. The fifties and sixties of the nineteenth century saw the advance of the North American and Australian colonies from representative to responsible government. The sixties and seventies were marked in the Caribbean by the retrogression of the West Indian colonies from representative to Crown Colony Government.<sup>53</sup> In 1866, the authority of the United Kingdom Parliament was employed to so remodel the Jamaican legislature,<sup>54</sup> and this procedure was followed in 1876 to achieve a similar result in Grenada, Tobago and St. Vincent.<sup>55</sup> British Honduras and the Leeward Islands undertook the conversion themselves by virtue of their constituent powers. Only Barbados, the Bahamas, and Bermuda retained their institutions intact. The constitutional process by which the change was made was the abolition of the bicameral legislature and the reconstitution of a nominated Legislative Council in its place. In effect, the elected lower house was destroyed and the nominated upper house preserved as the sole legislative body.

By 1876, of the thirteen 'old representative' legislatures eight had lost their elected members entirely. Only in Barbados, the Bahamas, and Bermuda, and in Dominica and Montserrat in the Leeward Islands Federation were elected representatives employed in the business of government. Of the others, Trinidad and St. Lucia continued with wholly nominated chambers, and, in 1870, when the elected majority was demolished, the council of British Honduras assumed a similar form.<sup>56</sup> British Guiana persisted with the nicely balanced Dutch arrangement.

In 1884, after eighteen years of pure Crown Colony Government, Jamaica commenced the climb back to representative institutions with the reintroduction of elected members to the Legislative Council.<sup>57</sup> Her example, however, was not followed in the other colonies: indeed, in 1898 Dominica and Antigua were

compelled to accept wholly nominated chambers.<sup>58</sup> By the end of the century, only Barbados, the Bahamas, Jamaica and British Guiana returned elected members to their legislatures. In Jamaica, although the elected members had been increased in 1895 from nine to fourteen,<sup>59</sup> they were nonetheless in a minority, while in British Guiana an elected majority existed only in respect of financial measures. The first two decades of the new century brought no substantial changes in the composition of the councils and, although the political situation had altered vastly since the 1860s, the expedients which were then adopted continued to be employed.

It was against this background that Major Wood investigated the demand for 'representative government'. It amounted in most colonies to a demand for the re-introduction of the elective principle, and in others, such as Jamaica and British Guiana, where the principle was already active, to a demand for an elected majority in the council. In many cases these demands were coupled with proposals for a liberal franchise on which such members would be returned; for from the point of view of the disfranchised section of the community an elected majority would otherwise be worth very little. It must be stated, however, that this latter claim for an extension of the franchise was neither strenuously nor generally pressed in 1921, the reason being that the working class movement which brought the question of electoral reform to the fore in the thirties had only just begun.

Major Wood advocated no sweeping reforms, but the elective principle was to progress slightly. He proposed an elected majority for Jamaica, and recommended an elected minority on the councils of Trinidad and the Windward Islands. He did not approve of similar reforms for the Leeward Islands, but he did leave open the question of their applicability to Dominica. British Honduras was not considered, and although British Guiana was, he proposed no changes. The question of franchise was almost entirely untouched. The Report, in the result, fell short of the aspirations of the new indigenous political movements, and the attempts to implement its recommendations did not result in political calm.

By 1930, elected members had been introduced into the councils of Trinidad,<sup>60</sup> the Windward Islands<sup>61</sup> and Dominica,<sup>62</sup> in no case, however, was there a majority of non-officials, and

in all cases elected numbers were in a minority. Jamaica had not received the proposed increase in elected members, and although she enjoyed an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council, had to be content with an elected minority. Meanwhile, British Guiana had lost her Dutch legislative institutions and with them the elected majority which had existed in the Combined Court.<sup>63</sup> In 1935, British Honduras,<sup>64</sup> and, in 1936, the Leeward Islands,<sup>65</sup> adopted elected minorities. These new vestments, however, were but the trappings of representative government. The franchise was restricted to a mere fraction of the population. As late as 1938, the registered electorate of Trinidad was 6.6 per cent of the colony's population, and the corresponding figure for Barbados in the same year was 3.3 per cent. Moreover, a wide gap yawned between the electoral qualification and that for membership of the Council. In Trinidad in 1938 the income qualification for membership of the Legislative Council was six times as high as the income qualification for registration as a voter; in Barbados the multiple was four.

The call for political reform grew louder and more insistent throughout the thirties. The economic depression brought to maturity the growing working-class movement, and the demand for economic justice dominated the social scene. The initiative in political agitation passed to these working-people's hands and the need for social reform reinforced the demand for constitutional advance. Between 1935 and 1938, labour unrest produced a succession of serious strikes throughout the islands and attention was forcibly called to the need for remedial measures. As a result, in 1938, the West India Royal Commission was appointed with wide terms of reference "To investigate social and economic conditions in Barbados, British Guiana, British Honduras, Jamaica, the Leeward Islands, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Windward Islands, and matters connected therewith, and to make recommendations".<sup>66</sup>

These movements of the thirties were, of course, centred in the respective colonies, and the traditional insistence on reforms in the individual legislatures was by no means dropped. Extension of the franchise and of the elected membership of the Legislative Council was the immediate demand. In fact, however, the situation had altered rapidly since 1921 when Major Wood (later Lord Halifax) had reported "the absence of a popular

demand of local opinion for federation.” By 1938, the concept of federation had been transplanted and was flourishing in West Indian soil. The explanation of this lies almost wholly in the political situations which had developed during the period.

Neither the 1921 Wood Report nor that of the Closer Union Commission of 1932 had resulted in any substantial satisfaction of the demands for constitutional reform; as a result, West Indian leaders of the new labour movements struggled in an atmosphere of political frustration. Already, however, the practical advantages of co-operation had been recognised, and the system of intercolonial conferences had established a basis of functional association. Gradually the idea began to take root that the path to political progress lay through a federal union. As a political entity, it was argued, the colonies, through a co-ordination of their economic and political strengths, would be in a position to establish their economic stability and demand their political independence. Economic prosperity and political freedom would be the twin products of federation. In any event, dominion status for a federal union held safer promise of attainment than self-government for the individual colonies. The idea possessed obvious attractions and it is noticeable that throughout these years whenever the need for social and political reform was advanced the claims of federalism were never far behind.

The West Indian Conference of 1932 was the first demonstration of the new movement. In that year the Closer Union Commission had been appointed, and when it was revealed that its terms of reference did not embrace either the possibility of a West Indian federation or the problem of internal constitutional reform, a number of grass-roots West Indian politicians gathered at Roseau in Dominica with the avowed purpose of elaborating proposals for federation. The Conference was attended by representatives from Barbados, Trinidad, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and the Leeward Islands. They decided that it was “desirable in the general interests” of those colonies that a federation should be effected, and they proceeded to design a federal structure and draft the first indigenous federal constitution for the West Indies.<sup>67</sup>

Let the flowing oratory of ‘Captain’ Cipriani of Trinidad as he brought the Dominica Conference to a close, catch the fervour of those early West Indians:

And now as I pull the curtain down on the final stages of this important and far-reaching meeting, and watch the West Indies take on her mantle of nationhood and dip behind the horizon like some threatening storm-cloud only to rise again on the dawn of a new day, I look forward and see in letters of fire emblazoned: **'THE WEST INDIES MUST BE WEST INDIAN'**. And through the dark and grim grey dawn methinks I hear a whisper saying 'West Indians awake—awake West Indians: Victory, Freedom and Liberty is yours'.<sup>68</sup>

The West Indian National League was formed at Roseau to carry on the work of the Conference, but as an organisation it never played a real part in later developments. Nevertheless, political leaders in all the colonies kept the hopes of the Conference alive and maintained a certain identity of purpose. As the Royal Commission of 1938 reported—"it is evident that throughout the British West Indies contact is being maintained between those in each colony who are most interested in securing rapid political progress, and constitutional developments, such as the widening of the franchise, in any area may be found to reinforce the strength of the movement for federation of the whole group".<sup>69</sup>

Contact had indeed been maintained. Some time earlier the West Indies and British Guiana Labour Congress had been established, and in 1938 a conference of the Congress attended by representatives from Barbados, Trinidad and British Guiana was held in British Guiana with the object of preparing a memorandum for submission to the Commission. An extensive programme of social reform was agreed upon and a comprehensive scheme for federating all the British West Indian colonies was prepared.<sup>70</sup>

Such was the progress which federation had made since 1921. The Royal Commission became aware of the development at an early stage in their inquiry, and accordingly, they put to most of the witnesses who appeared before them in a representative political capacity the question whether they favoured the idea of the closer union of the West Indian colonies. In the words of their Report: "Almost every witness thus questioned was in favour of closer union, but few of them were able or prepared to define

the degree or nature of federation which they conceived desirable."<sup>71</sup> On the basis of their general impression, however, they doubted whether the time was yet ripe for the introduction of any large scheme of federation. Local pride, an active insularity, and the scepticism of well-informed opinion based on it, made them doubt the "readiness of West Indian opinion to accept federation in principle."<sup>72</sup>

Having advocated caution, the Commissioners were both more hopeful and more positive in their recommendations as to future developments. Their concluding remarks on the subject were important: "Nevertheless a combination into one political entity of all the British possessions in the Caribbean area is the ideal to which, in our opinion, policy should be directed. With that in view an attempt should be made to overcome local prejudice against federation, both by the exposition of its theoretical advantages and by testing these in practice, as soon as a suitable opportunity presents itself, through the amalgamation of some of the smaller units."<sup>73</sup> In pursuance of the Commission's recommendations a Windward-Leeward Union was proposed at a Conference held in St. Kitts in 1947.<sup>74</sup> It is, of course, extremely doubtful whether such an association could have provided an adequate test of the advantages of a West Indian Federation.<sup>75</sup> Opposition to the proposal came from Montserrat in the Leewards, and, with much greater force, from Grenada in the Windwards. But the federal movement was not to be stayed; before further progress could be made the pilot scheme was overtaken by the major enterprise itself.

The war years drew the West Indian colonies much closer together. United in a common cause, they achieved a new identity of purpose and of action which went a long way towards destroying the psychological barriers which Major Wood in 1921 had found so obstructive to "federating an archipelago". These developments gave added vitality to the federal movement. The ramparts of separatism and prejudice had been breached; contact produced understanding; association revealed how unfounded were many fears. A West Indian consciousness had developed to the point where West Indian nationalism had been born. On the other side, the inadequacies of *ad hoc* expedients born of necessity had been painfully demonstrated, and a recognition of the need for federation now replaced in many minds a vague

appreciation of the advantages of co-operation.

But if the experience of the war years reinforced one aspect of the case for federation it weakened it in another. Political frustration had enhanced the attractions of federation. Now, for the first time since the 1860s, the West Indian colonies really began to advance politically. 'Representative' government, which was the goal of the twenties, was now firmly established. 'Responsible' government which, even in the thirties, must have appeared largely unattainable, was by the fifties within the grasp of Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and British Guiana. In all but Trinidad reform of the legislature was virtually complete; universal adult suffrage prevailed in all the colonies.

Such reforms were, in the main, the product of the war years and those which immediately followed. They were long overdue and, having come at last, everything changed. Federation, in particular, which possessed an appeal as a possible alternative to improbable local self-government, began to be suspect for that very reason. Much emphasis, therefore, was laid in the post-war period on the need for a guarantee that federation would not in any way prejudice political advance in the individual colonies. It was a sentiment evident in many of the speeches at the Montego Bay Conference in 1947. The destiny of the West Indies was now moving into West Indian hands.

Montego Bay itself was preceded by a meeting of the Caribbean Labour Congress which was really a meeting of leading West Indian political parties (other than Bustamante's J.L.P. which was in office in Jamaica) asserting, as it were, their right to be heard, and heard in support, at the very outset of the federal process. The names of those present tell their own story: Grantley Adams, V.C. Bird, Robert Bradshaw, Hurbert Critchlow, Albert Gomes, T.A. Marryshow, and Norman Manley himself among many others.<sup>76</sup> 'Knitting together', as Rex Nettleford put it, 'the ideas of federation, nationhood and self-government'. Manley, who led the Jamaica delegation, put the matter thus:

I put first, and I put above all other things, the desire to see in the future a West Indian nation standing shoulder to shoulder with all other nations of the world. Is that a large ambition? I say it is the smallest ambition that responsible people can utter in the face of history. I say

that we in the West Indies can prove one great thing to the world—and that is that a people, none of whom are native to these territories, all of whom have for one reason or another been torn from their countries and brought here, partly willingly, partly by compulsion or by distress in their own homelands, that we with our many strands, from Africa, from India, from China, from an assorted variety of European territories—we are capable of welding the power of that diversity into a united nation.

I pray, before God, if we can prove that to the world, we would have accomplished something which would write West Indian history large across the pages of history for all times. It is a problem to stir and inspire every man who knows anything about the long and bloody history of the common humanity beset and perplexed and torn by artificial divisions without any real meaning in the face of the purpose of life.

But, he added:

...if we federate, we must federate as self-governing units who voluntarily surrender some of the power which each has over his own to the common whole. I reject totally any sort of mismatch between colonial rule and federation, and I would predict for such a marriage such an abortion as politics has never seen; and I say that a federated West Indies cannot aim at any smaller immediate objective than dominion status. I cannot imagine what we should be federating about if it is not to achieve the beginning of nationhood.<sup>77</sup>

Alexander Bustamante was later at the Montego Bay Conference to assert with characteristic bluntness:

Before I shall even advise the people of this country that they should have federation, I want to be told—and not just by word—I want documents to the effect that the same day federation comes the same day self-government comes....<sup>78</sup>

The Secretary of State was quick to reassure the Montego Bay Conference on this latter point<sup>79</sup> but even so, the Conference insisted on placing its position on record in terms of a resolution which recorded the view:

that an increasing measure of responsibility should be extended to the several units of the British Caribbean territories whose political development must be pursued as an aim in itself without prejudice and in no way subordinate to progress towards federation.<sup>80</sup>

The truth is that a race had begun which no one could have foreseen even ten years earlier between independence on an island basis and West Indian nationhood fulfilled through an independent West Indian Federation. It was a race 'federation' was to lose. For the time being, however, even at Montego Bay, there were few who imagined that independence was achievable at the level of the individual islands. Norman Manley could state the Federal aspiration in terms wholly compatible with Jamaica's political goals. He did so in words characteristically elegant and penetrating:

How to marry expectation with reality, how to create a larger field for ambition, how to overcome the disadvantages of being too small to be heard in a world where silence means stagnation, how to make a real culture and a real unity out of all the richness of our diversity, how to show the world that differences of origin and colour can come together on a level of tolerance and oneness, how to overcome distance and poverty; these are the challenges that federation faces and may meet to make a worthy end.<sup>81</sup>

Norman Manley might so easily have become the father of the West Indian nation. As it was, when the moment came to lead the nation, political realities at home constrained this great man to stay at home, to decline the mantle of regional leadership and, ultimately, to take Jamaica to a separate independence. The referendum which Manley called to confirm Jamaica's commitment to Federation, and through it to West Indian nationhood,

was a wrenching experience for himself, as it was to prove to be for all West Indians. The moving account given us this evening by Rachel Manley, Michael's daughter, 'N.W.'s' granddaughter, of the night the referendum vote came in bears repeating for both its poignancy and historical significance.

Still a young girl, Rachel was close to her grandfather throughout the campaign and had fallen asleep after the polls had closed. Late at night she awoke and sought out 'N.W.'—to find him seated, as he often was, at the head of the long table in the family dining room. He was quiet and thoughtful, his head cradled in the thumb and index finger of his left hand—that meditative pose she knew so well. Before him on the table lay the Federal Flag which her grandmother, Edna Manley, had designed—a rising sun set on the white waving lines of the Caribbean sea, against a blue sky. "Pade", she asked, "did we win the referendum?" "No, 'Pie'", he replied, "we did not win; everybody lost". And so saying he wrapped her in the flag and hugged her close to him. Was he passing on the mantle of West Indian unity to another generation, in fact, to one once removed, conscious he had done all he could do in his time?

This year, the West Indies might have been celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Federation. I wonder what would have happened had Jamaica's referendum gone the other way? What would have happened had the decision taken at the 1961 Lancaster House Conference which settled outstanding details of the federal system, and fixed the date for the independence of the Federation, not been frustrated by the 'No' vote in that referendum? Perhaps the forces working for fragmentation—which led to both the referendum in Jamaica and the arithmetic of 'one from ten leaving nothing'—would ultimately have destroyed the Federation, even in a post-independence context. We cannot discount it altogether; but, somehow, I doubt that they would have succeeded had the vote in Jamaica been 'Yes' and the West Indies become independent as a federal nation on 31 May 1962. I believe with John Mordecai that the tenuous Lancaster House patchwork would have held,<sup>82</sup> that the Federation would have grown stronger and faith in it firmer; that, ultimately, Manley's early vision of a strong West Indian nation would have been fulfilled. Prospects for the Caribbean would now be very different.

But the present comes out of the past; and, not surprisingly for the West Indies, it seems to come out of a rejection of federalism. Yet, in a sense, federalism never had a real chance to be tried. The truly West Indian federal Constitution agreed in 1961 never ever became operational. It was not so much that federalism was rejected as that it lost out to separatism in the race to independence. In the result, however, the present has had to be built upon that reality with remembrance of the federal option, at most, as a yearning for what is not. The present has had to be constructed instead on a fragile regionalism. Having let federalism slip from our grasp—regionalism became a necessity, and we have spent the last twenty-six years—not always with total conviction—trying to make a virtue of it. That effort has been on the whole a triumph of practicality over inclination—the compulsions of mutual interest in regional co-operation overcoming our natural archipelagic instinct for contrariness and fragmentation.

So, is the dream really shattered—the one I shared with Norman Manley 35 years ago at the LSE? Was the vision of a West Indian nation only a mirage? If we failed in the 20th century, can we afford not to try harder as we approach the 21st? My answer, unequivocally is 'No'. The dream is not shattered; West Indian nationhood is not a mirage; we do have to try harder. There is something now almost evolutionary about West Indian unity: a historical rhythm reaching to fulfilment, a rhythm reinforced by the compulsions of present realities and future prospects.

Those realities, I suggest, compel West Indian unity both in how we perceive the world of the 21st century and in how we act to secure a place of dignity for the people of the West Indies within that world. Yesterday was 40 years since the arrival of the *Empire Windrush* bringing Jamaicans who would help in the reconstruction of post-war Britain and of their own lives which British colonialism had moulded. They and other West Indians who came here so long ago from different parts of our archipelago have no doubt whatever about their West Indian identity. They need no counselling about solidarity and common purpose as they contribute to the multi-racial society that Britain is, and strive to make it a more just and equitable place for them to dwell in. They cherish their island origins, but there is no room in Brixton or in Handsworth for the petty irrelevances of island rivalry.

So it is, as well, in the wider world; and will be increasingly on the economic, political, security and environmental fronts. West Indian governments, for example, who faced up to Britain's entry into the EEC in the 70s will face even more perilous problems in the 90s as the European Community becomes a single market with implications for sugar, for bananas, for rum and for much else vital to the Caribbean's future. In that decade and beyond, survival is going to dictate real, not minimal, West Indian unity. We surely defile the memory of every slave and every indentured worker who laboured on West Indian plantations in the service of Europe if in our island postures today we become mimic men and women of a plantocracy that kept the West Indies apart so that they might better sustain their petty structures of economic and political power. We do well to reflect on this as we celebrate this year 150 years of the end of slavery in the West Indies and the beginnings of indentured labour. For West Indians that common heritage of bondage is a heritage of oneness also—within our countries and between them. We need to remember this in all we do.

“The Roots of the Caribbean Community are not buried in doctrines of integration economics”. So began the Report on the Caribbean Community in the 1980s by the group of Caribbean experts whom our Heads of Government asked to look to the future; and it continued:

CARICOM is not just the product of economic regional planning. Responsive as it is to the economic and political realities of the post-war world, Caribbean regionalism is the outgrowth of more than 300 years of West Indian kinship—the vagaries of the socio-economic political history of transplanted people from which is evolving a Caribbean identity. Without that element of West Indian identity a Community of the Caribbean would be mere markings on parchment—a Community without a soul, without vision of a shared destiny, without the will to persist and survive. It is not without significance that in the very first words of the Treaty of Chaguaramas, the Heads of Government of the region expressed their determination ‘to consolidate and strengthen the bonds which have historically existed among their people’.<sup>83</sup>

In the early 17th century, as the first people of the West Indies were being displaced by the new arrivals from Europe and the three hundred year regime of insularity was about to begin, John Donne was writing in England:

No man is an Island entire of it self; every man  
is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main.<sup>64</sup>

Today, as we look to the 21st century, the truth every part of the West Indies must respect and to which each West Indian must respond is that NO ISLAND IS AN ISLAND ENTIRE OF IT SELF. Every inch of our West Indian region from Belize to Guyana is a piece of one nation, a part of one people, a bit of one world. The vision of West Indian nationhood that Norman Manley cherished has only sharpened with the passing years. Its pursuit will remain our central challenge until eventually we reach it.

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## **NKRUMAH AND THE EIGHTIES**

- I — The Political Domain**
- II — The Economic Domain**

*The Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Lectures  
Kwame Nkrumah Conference Centre, Accra  
and University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast,  
12 and 15 November 1980*

## I—The Political Domain

*P*leasure and pride conjoin on the occasion of these lectures which salute the memory of Kwame Nkrumah. The pleasure is personal, out of my own respect for this man of many gifts; but I feel pride also on behalf of the Commonwealth, because it was Nkrumah who initiated Africa's outstandingly constructive role in Commonwealth affairs. I am grateful for the honour of having been asked to deliver these Memorial Lectures.

Three years ago I addressed the Seventh Commonwealth Education Conference in this Conference Centre in Accra which bears Kwame Nkrumah's name. By a happy coincidence the Conference opened on the first ever Commonwealth Day, when the Commonwealth is commemorated at the same time in all its member countries, and I was called upon to mark the event by planting a tree in the grounds of the Conference Centre. I saw that tree as symbolising the spirit of Africa's relations with the Commonwealth: a spirit rooted in patriotism but flowering in Africa's endeavours within man's collective pursuit of betterment. The tree, I am glad to say, has grown; and Africa's share in creating a future for us all has continued to grow steadily. What Kwame Nkrumah planted in Ghana, in Africa and in the world is a mighty growth indeed.

As I prepared for this address I reflected on Anthony's eulogy of Caesar:

The evil that men do lives after them;  
The good is oft interred with their bones.

So, perhaps, it is; but only in a very contemporary sense. Who among those we now acknowledge as the great men of all time has not been flawed? Yet, on the whole, what history remembers are not the transient flaws, grave as they sometimes were, but their grand achievements that transcend time, that make their having been part of human society the occasion of lasting human satisfaction. So let it be with Kwame Nkrumah. Certainly, so be

it for the purpose of this Memorial Lecture; for it is against the backdrop of those grand achievements of this great son of Africa that I look to the decade of the 80s.

The first Prime Minister of the first black African state in this century to regain its freedom, he was both the chief architect of Ghana's independence and the builder of much of her early development. These were real achievements which, because of their contemporary significance, their shock value to the old world system, translated easily on to the symbolic plane, and enabled Ghana to play a frontline role in one of the noblest campaigns of our time, the struggle to bring freedom to colonised peoples in Africa and the world at large. A man of ideas who believed that ideas should find physical, institutional expression, he contributed creatively to the modern Commonwealth, was a founding father of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), a vigorous champion of the United Nations and a leader in the Non-Aligned Movement.

With any visionary it is the vision itself that distinguishes him from others. Once he has communicated the vision, and it has been consummated even partly, it easily becomes commonplace. To appreciate Nkrumah's vision at its true value, we have to go back to the international system as it existed between the two World Wars. That was the period when the independence of African states was a far-off dream; when the European-oriented League of Nations showed itself less than resolute to help stricken Ethiopia; when other organisations of international and especially African co-operation were not thought of, and the Commonwealth embraced only the old white Dominions.

Nonracialism, a generosity of mind and an intuitive internationalism all seem to have merged naturally from Kwame Nkrumah's early life. But what about that feeling for Africa's limitless future, and that global vision? Among many influences contributing to the commingling in his ideas of Africa and the outside world I think of the revered example of Dr. Kwegyir Aggrey<sup>1</sup> of Achimota College who infused Nkrumah with his belief in the role of the youth of Africa in a multi-racial world; of the venerable black American thinker, W.E.B. Du Bois, who chaired the fifth Pan African Congress in Manchester in 1945, where the direction of Nkrumah's political career became plain; and men from my own part of the world, Marcus Garvey of

Jamaica, and George Padmore of Trinidad<sup>2</sup>—men whose forebears had travelled the cruel middle passage from Nkrumah's West Africa and whose association with him would be a bridge that both they and he would cross.

The title of the journal that Nkrumah published briefly in Britain after 1945, *The New African*, is instructive, because he himself embodied that new African restless to invent the future, passionate for change and freedom, and summoning all his powers to the supreme effort.<sup>3</sup> After he returned home in December 1947, he worked to create a national party drawn from the masses, which would reach beyond the inherited limits of tribe and language. His radical, populist approach was ideally suited to the task. This was the period when his supporters were sometime disparagingly described as "the verandah boys";<sup>4</sup> the *sans-culottes*, those who could afford no home but slept instead on the streets and verandahs. The example of Gandhi and the Indian equivalents of the verandah boys had already demonstrated the power that the masses could wield in pursuit of national independence.

In the struggle for independence, it was Nkrumah's achievement to be supremely a man of his time—times changed forever by the Second World War which brought the passion for freedom in its wake. Nkrumah grasped the need for political organisation, had the ability to fulfil it and the flair for using the machine created to maximum effect. One of his best-known pre-independence rallying-cries exhorted his countrymen: "Seek ye first the political kingdom"—an effective adaptation of the Biblical injunction. And when the time came to agitate for complete independence, he was equal to the challenge. He knew that it is never too soon to be free; that freedom is a man's inalienable birthright; often stolen, but never revoked.

If Nkrumah's role in bringing about Ghana's independence must be his great practical achievement, his contributions in realms beyond Ghana must rank as high. For his ambition did not stop at the independence of his own country. Time and again, in the run-up to independence, he saw Ghana's freedom within a wider continental perspective. In 1956, he observed:

How we conduct ourselves when we become independent will affect not only Ghana but the whole of

Africa. We have a duty not only to the people of this country, but to the peoples everywhere in Africa who are striving towards independence.<sup>5</sup>

And a year later, at the Independence Ceremony itself on the Polo Ground in Accra, he made perhaps his most celebrated and justly remembered assertion:

Our independence is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of the African continent.<sup>6</sup>

Freedom, Nkrumah knew, brought responsibilities; a lesson which so clearly bears reiteration that in 1979, the joint OAU-ECA Symposium on the future development prospects of Africa towards the year 2000 declared that freedom should not be that of “a free fox in a free hen house.”<sup>7</sup>

The moment of independence revealed Nkrumah at his greatest, at his most magnanimous, uniting in one instant Ghana’s past and Africa’s future. He had a naturally centrifugal mind; it constantly whirled out ever-expanding political visions, sweeping a wide path in time and range. The very name chosen for the new country illustrates this, because ‘Ghana’ was not just a name from the history of the West African region but an ancient empire which spread across the whole southern Sahara. He craved for ever-broader political entities, in contrast to the balkanised Africa which European colonialism had carved out—a yearning that, perhaps, derived from this experience; for in the process of balkanising Africa, the colonisers blurred ethnic and linguistic boundaries, leaving behind a new kind of nation state with a new potential for the future. Hence Nkrumah’s vision of a united Africa; accepting, as a modern man must, the realities of existing national boundaries, but recognising from the very way they had been drawn that change need not stop there. Hence, also, his support for a multi-racial Commonwealth and for an internationalism rooted in the United Nations system.

This is not to say that he was always right; indeed his critics might well argue, with reasons, that realities cannot be changed by vision alone. But there are times when vision and reality coalesce. Midnight on 6 March 1957, with all the implications of that moment for the watching and waiting world, was one of

those times.

Let us remember that it would have been possible for African countries, attaining independence, to have voluntarily balkanised themselves, returning to older limits and narrower loyalties of tribe and language. That they did not; that grander, more modern visions have on the whole prevailed, has been due in no small part to the example of Nkrumah's Ghana. He knew that Africa could be central in world affairs, but that it might well become marginal if its passion was the pursuit of narrow nationalisms—mimicking the nationalisms of an era that was already passing in Europe.

From the moment of Ghana's independence, the pace of change in Africa quickened inexorably, by the force of Ghana's example, as much as by any physical assistance afforded to those working, and sometimes fighting, for independence in other parts of Africa. In 1958, the Conference of Independent African States and the All-African People's Conference kept up the momentum for change, as did Nkrumah's personal tour of independent African countries. The wind of change was indeed blowing through the Continent; and it was blowing predominantly from West Africa. It is singularly appropriate that Harold Macmillan's famous phrase about 'the wind of change' in his speech to the South African Parliament in February 1960,<sup>8</sup> in fact first came to Africa in a speech he made in Accra three weeks earlier, and that Nkrumah himself qualified the phrase by calling it "no ordinary wind, but a raging hurricane."<sup>9</sup>

In describing the impact of an independent Ghana on the process of decolonisation in Africa, metaphors recalling an elemental force come naturally to mind. At any rate, the wind was a forceful and cleansing one. Three years after Ghana's independence, twenty-three African countries had followed the trail blazed there. And now the number of independent African states in the United Nations has reached fifty.

Freedom for other African states remained Nkrumah's goal right to the end. After his loss of power, from exile in Conakry, he described how he looked towards the shores of then Portuguese Guinea, and thought of the liberation struggle going on there.<sup>10</sup> How much he would have rejoiced in Zimbabwe's freedom for which he fought so resolutely in so many fora; and how fitting a memorial to those efforts it was that one of his early

young assistants—Sam Ikoku from Nigeria—should have been one of the team of Commonwealth Election Observers whose work made such a vital contribution to the consummation of the freedom struggle.

Nkrumah inevitably sought to bring Ghana's prestige and influence to bear not only in Africa but in the wider world. He offered to mediate in several conflicts, from the Middle East to Kashmir to Vietnam.<sup>11</sup> And he contributed in important ways to a saner global society by his efforts to keep Africa a nuclear-free zone. He protested vigorously against atomic bomb testing in the Sahara, and in June 1962 convened a "World without the Bomb" Conference in Accra. These particular efforts did not change the policies of the nuclear powers; but he showed that those policies were questionable and he created fora for the circulation of alternative ideas. The contribution itself might have been small. Its significance, and it was a major one, lay in Nkrumah's assertion of Africa's right to contribute to the evolution of human destiny.

His adherence to Non-Alignment was a natural development of his own background and education. He saw it in ideological terms as enlarging Ghana's freedom and as an activist involvement in service to the wider world community. The "positive neutrality" of which he spoke did not imply a passive spectator role.<sup>12</sup> Ghana's balance on the delicate fulcrum of Non-Alignment was, admittedly, not always steady; but in all this Nkrumah was first and foremost an African working, as he often said, for African solutions. After his loss of power, he still maintained "The experiment which was tried in Ghana was essentially one of developing the country in co-operation with the world as a whole. Non-Alignment meant exactly what it said."<sup>13</sup> Nkrumah's bent was towards a naturally open and eclectic ideological system and his commitment to it came under strain only in the disappointment of his final years.

He took a leading part in the famous initiative of the Belgrade Conference of 1961 in sending a letter in identical terms to Kennedy and Khrushchev appealing to them to renew their negotiations "in order to avoid the danger of war in the world and allow humanity to proceed along the road of peace."<sup>14</sup> How near might we not be to the need for another such invocation in the name of human survival, and how much in need of Nkrumah's

early vision of Non-Alignment if it is to be made today?

If the strengthening of Non-Alignment as a worldwide movement was one of Kwame Nkrumah's achievements, another which has a special meaning for me is that he led the way for independent African nations to join the Commonwealth. That, in itself, was not necessarily the simple step it has become. While India was the first Third World country to join, and also gave a lead in Non-Alignment, there was the example of Burma to suggest that Commonwealth entry was by no means a matter of course. But it was clear at an early stage that the concept of a Commonwealth family voluntarily joined appealed to Nkrumah; perhaps because, in its friendliness and flexibility, it resembled the West African extended family situation in which he had been so happy. At any rate, in the historic "Motion of Destiny" of 1953 in which he called for independence, he expressed the country's desire to become a member of the Commonwealth.<sup>15</sup>

When he visited the United States in 1958 he explained Ghana's decision in what still remains one of the best definitions of the Commonwealth:

We believe that the evolving form of the Commonwealth is an institution which can work profoundly for peace and international co-operation. It is the only organic world-wide association of peoples in which race, religion, nationality and culture are all transcended by a common sense of fellowship. No policies are imposed on it from above. It does not even seek unity of policy. But it provides a unique forum in which men of different culture and different approach can sit down together and see what can be done to lessen tensions and to increase the economic and social well-being of themselves and their neighbours. This is not a bloc. It is not a power grouping. It is a club or family of friends who see their continuing friendship as a strand of peace in a troubled world.<sup>16</sup>

Ghana joined the forces of change, especially Nehru's India, that were already at work within the Commonwealth to make it a modern grouping aptly geared to our changed and changing world. In 1964, Nkrumah took the lead in proposing the

establishment of a permanent Commonwealth Secretariat<sup>17</sup> in order, as he put it, "to make the Commonwealth more in tune with the common aspirations of its members."<sup>18</sup> The Commonwealth's collective decision to set up a Secretariat was not without its critics and there were those who would have limited it to being a mere conduit for Commonwealth communications.<sup>19</sup> Time, and the many ways we have devised of working together for our collective and individual betterment, have confounded the doubters and proved the wisdom of Nkrumah's leadership and the validity of his vision, expressed in a working institution.

As with the Commonwealth, so with the United Nations; Ghana entered and changed the organisation. Ghana was a leader in the vanguard of that great army of Third World, Afro-Asian-Pacific-Caribbean, nations which have fundamentally altered the nature of the world organisation, complicating yet enriching it with a multiplicity of view-points, fortifying it as a force for peace, enlarging its role in development. At the United Nations, Ghana came to be at the hub of the African group which rapidly made its voice heard, especially in the continuing debate on decolonisation, reaching always toward the goal of self-determination for all enshrined in the Charter. Nkrumah made the United Nations Charter a plank of his foreign policy, and the United Nations a forum for the practice of Non-Alignment as he worked with other Afro-Asians between the blocs and ideologies.<sup>20</sup>

In the United States in 1958 he declared that "our task as a group in the United Nations is to use our strength wisely and objectively on the side of peace."<sup>21</sup> When the Congo crisis arose in 1960, Ghanaian troops were among the first United Nations forces sent to the country. They played their part with distinction; but the difficulties of the situation there seem to have confirmed Nkrumah in his belief that African problems demanded African solutions, which in this case included an African High Command.<sup>22</sup> The Congo strengthened his conviction of the need for pan-African approaches and made him redouble his efforts to achieve a functioning pan-African organisation.

When the Organisation of African Unity finally came into being in 1963, it was not the decision-making African Parliament, the vital step towards the unity of the Continent, for which

Nkrumah had hoped. It was the result of the labours of many men and a compromise between many views. In itself, that was perhaps no bad thing. The fact that a workable compromise was possible shows the power and the potential of the unifying ideal. And the important point is that the spirit of African unity is captured in the Organisation's Charter, a precious spark which may yet light the lamps of the future.<sup>23</sup> Historians of the formative discussions agree that this vital gleam was infused into the Charter above all by Kwame Nkrumah.<sup>24</sup> With the Commonwealth Secretariat, so with the OAU: the organisations exist, that is the achievement of Nkrumah and his fellow pioneers. It is for us to make of them what we will.

What are we doing with them—these large visions? How is the world of the 80s, our world, reflecting in its concerns the glimpses of universality, the intimations of mutual need, that Nkrumah in the wider reaches of his endeavours passed on to us? How is the Third World, more especially, responding to the challenges he never failed to hold out?

As Nkrumah perceived so clearly in his own time, human history is not predetermined. It is for us constantly to strive to move the course of events in desirable directions. We shall have to do so in the 80s; certainly the Third World must do so; but so also must all those of the other worlds in this one who share their hopes and see in their non-fulfilment implications for their own future. I do not need to press on this audience the validity of such a vocation. You know only too well what a struggle the people of Africa have waged to gain their freedom from colonialism and are continuing to wage as they seek to translate legal rights into genuine human entitlement.

Decolonisation required a quantum leap. A similar leap will have to be made to move relationships between developed and developing countries on to a more humanistic course. It will be inspired by successes in the political field but will need to be propelled by commitment and contribution and by passion of the kind that moved Martin Luther King to cry out against deprivation within his own country: "We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream."<sup>25</sup> But with economic deprivation as an aspect of the 80s I shall be in the main concerned in my second address. In this one, I dwell instead on those elements of the decade ahead that fall more

naturally in the political domain.

While many factors will shape the world of the 80s, none, perhaps, will play a greater formative role than the reality that we have actually begun to move from a world of dominance and power to one of growing interdependence and shared responsibility; one, therefore, in which, increasingly, global affairs will have to be decided by consensus and governed by contract. I feel that, quintessentially, the last two decades before the 21st century will confirm important limits to the power that so much of the 20th century was concerned with accumulating: limits that are already emerging. Cuba—Suez—Vietnam—were all testimony to those limitations on the ability of crude military power to determine events; and, even now, the same message echoes from the roof-top of the world in Afghanistan.

And limits to crude power are also appearing in economic relations. Mutual dependencies arising, for example, from the need for unimpeded expansion of world trade, from the prospect of mineral shortages and, more specifically, of oil depletion, are now imposing compulsions for global consensus on fundamentally new arrangements and relationships. And the imperatives of global agreement in areas of the environment like the future of the forests and the life-sustaining qualities of the seas and the atmosphere defy all notions of 'going it alone'. No one nation or group of nations can resolve these issues independently of others, or impose solutions of its own devising.

And, not surprisingly, it is not only that the world is changing, it is also that mankind is coming to a new awareness of global realities and needs. We, too, are changing in our changing world. This new awareness responds in large measure to the kind of signals that Ghana's freedom and Nkrumah's articulation of its meaning sent: that the developing countries are coming into the mainstream of international political and economic life, and bringing with them not only new aspirations but new insistences. Their very involvement—the involvement on the world stage of some one hundred new countries since 1945 and their own one billion people—highlights the need for new vistas in international thinking, new approaches to international action.

My point is to register the need in the 80s for human society to proceed on the assumption that we have entered the era that Alastair Buchan foresaw as the "era of negotiations"<sup>26</sup>—an era in

which the old premises of power will no longer suffice as the touchstone of human destiny. At the heart of those negotiations, whatever their form and content, will be the issue of sharing—sharing of power and responsibilities; and the question for us all in the 80s should really not be ‘whether’ but ‘how’ that sharing is to take place. The Third World will need to harness all its strength for this new era; and the effort must begin at home.

Democracy, as Nkrumah once argued forcefully, needs no more justification than the manifest right of all human beings to be treated as equals.<sup>27</sup> It is, therefore, as imperative in the Third World as it is elsewhere. But the Third World’s search for equity in global relationships imposes a further obligation on it. Third World credibility on the world stage is too often eroded by domestic imperfections. Its case for global redress is weakened when it fails to promote social justice at home and denies democracy within its national societies. It is true that such efforts are harder to pursue in the stony ground of poverty, but we know only too well and too sadly that some times they are not even attempted.

The tendency to repression within some—by no means all—developing countries has been one of the sadder imperfections of our world. Surely, we can do better than mark the purity of our radicalism with refusal to tolerate another view, or the robustness of our democracy with bullets and bombs and *coups d’etat*, realised or aborted. The people of the Third World themselves know that this falls far short of their aspirations for nationhood.

The early decades of sovereignty are a testing time in a nation’s life. Dangers abound as colonial links are snapped and the search begins for solutions to the myriad problems of independent national growth. The cement of internal solidarity developed in the struggle for nationhood is often dissolved as the external target is withdrawn; national unity faces the threat of ideological polarisation or of baser factional conflict. Even the minimum consensus indispensable for the orderly working of political systems can be jeopardised, and sometimes fail to survive altogether. And the difficulties of achieving development that fulfils the expectations raised by the dawn of freedom only aggravate the dangers to democracy.

In the process, many nations have succumbed and democracy has been replaced by authoritarianism, sometimes by despotism.

The record, of course, is not everywhere shameful; it has its shining pages. Even where democracy has been subverted, recent years have seen the heartening resilience of man's instinct for freedom. Here in West Africa you have shown that in societies where an ethos of freedom persists it is possible for democracy to be restored by military regimes themselves.<sup>28</sup> From these triumphs of freedom and the less dramatic but steady successes of democracy elsewhere in the Third World, we must draw hope and sustenance for the better mobilisation of the strengths of the Third World in the decade of the 80s.

And that mobilisation will call for greater collective efforts rooted in the faith which Kwame Nkrumah brought so confidently to the struggle for self-determination—the belief, the assurance, that organisation, and where necessary institutions, are critical to the political process whether within nations or between them. As I have argued elsewhere, for the Third World in the era of negotiations, effective unity is the mandate of the world's poor.<sup>29</sup> But without organisation real unity will be forever a mirage. Certainly, without it, that strength that is supposed to be unity itself will be forever elusive. It is time that the domestic lessons of organisation were applied by the developing countries to their global objectives. If they are not applied, if the Third World does not organise for the era of negotiations, even the fruits of victories already won at home could yet be lost. It would be tragic and wasteful if we were to fail to fulfil in the world of the 80s Nkrumah's vision of the upliftment of the human condition world-wide.

There may be argument over some aspects of Ghana's diplomacy under Kwame Nkrumah; but on one fundamental human issue the international community is still following a course which Nkrumah did much to chart twenty years ago—the campaign to rid the world of racialism, especially of apartheid. In this cause Nkrumah used all the organs of international action, including the Commonwealth, with unswerving resolution. By the time of his first Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting in 1960, the Sharpeville massacre<sup>30</sup> had cast its grim shadow across the world, and several Commonwealth leaders were asking cautiously whether South Africa could continue as a member of the Commonwealth.<sup>31</sup>

But it was Nkrumah who publicly declared after that meeting

that "the Government of Ghana for one would find it embarrassing to remain in the Commonwealth with a Republic whose policy was not based upon the purpose and principles of the United Nations."<sup>32</sup> When Commonwealth Prime Ministers met again in 1961, Nkrumah was one of those who led discussion towards the incompatibility of apartheid with Commonwealth principles, and helped to mount the final assault on South Africa's racist policies, forcing South Africa to withdraw from the Commonwealth.<sup>33</sup>

The Commonwealth stands for inclusion, not exclusion. But if South Africa had not been forced out, the Commonwealth could not have become the credible and respected multiracial association it now is. Nkrumah greatly helped to ensure that the modern Commonwealth he had helped to nurture did not wither on the strangling vine of apartheid. At the United Nations too, Ghana and the other African members used the machinery of the General Assembly against the racist regimes of Southern Africa. The current call in the United Nations for sanctions against South Africa<sup>34</sup> is the unfolding in the 80s of a struggle that Ghana spearheaded in the early 60s.

Nkrumah's early use of one international organisation to reinforce action taken in another is now established practice. At the start of the current session of the UN General Assembly, President Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone, speaking as Chairman of the OAU, said that the OAU would press for total economic sanctions against South Africa because of her refusal to accept eradication of the apartheid system, and would call for enforcement action if the UN independence plan for Namibia continued to be delayed by South Africa.<sup>35</sup> President Shehu Shagari of Nigeria issued a grave and measured warning to like effect.<sup>36</sup> Both, of course, were African and Commonwealth voices reaffirming a long held determination to eradicate this deeply-rooted evil.

The Commonwealth has been much involved in the fulfilment of this resolve. At the Singapore Summit of 1971 the United Kingdom was dissuaded from selling frigates and helicopters to South Africa,<sup>37</sup> an internal dialogue that could have brought the Commonwealth to its knees but in which principle triumphed. It was a triumph that paved the way for the eventual international arms embargo on South Africa adopted by the United Nations

five months after its urging by another Commonwealth Summit—at London in June 1977.<sup>38</sup> The victory for principle at Singapore found expression in the Commonwealth Declaration of Principles adopted at that meeting—the nearest we have come to a Commonwealth ‘Charter’.<sup>39</sup> Six years later, in the Gleneagles Agreement,<sup>40</sup> Commonwealth leaders committed themselves in practical ways to the international sporting boycott of South Africa—a commitment which it is my duty to constantly hold up before the member states; and not only their governments, but also their people.

More recently, in 1979 the Commonwealth’s burning resolve to stamp out apartheid was expressed once more in the strongest possible terms in the Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice adopted on African soil at Lusaka. In it Commonwealth Heads of Government reaffirmed:

that it is the duty of all the peoples of the Commonwealth to work together for the total eradication of the infamous policy of apartheid which is internationally recognised as a crime against the conscience and dignity of mankind and the very existence of which is an affront to humanity.<sup>41</sup>

The Commonwealth’s discussion of an arms embargo in 1977 had been in the context of Namibia. South Africa’s consistent defiance of United Nations directives on bringing Namibia to independence has been a major factor in the Southern African problem, and one to which Nkrumah always accorded special attention. He argued that the Commonwealth had special responsibility for South-West Africa because when the United Kingdom accepted responsibility for the territory at the Versailles Peace Conference of 1919 it did so “in the name of and on behalf of the then British Empire”. He continued:

What, therefore, was done at Versailles was done in the name not only of the United Kingdom, but of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and, though they were not yet independent, of India and Ghana.<sup>42</sup>

And, by implication, he could have added all the other new

Commonwealth members.

Certainly the Commonwealth has felt a special involvement in the constant efforts of the United Nations to secure genuine independence for the territory. In 1975, at Kingston, Commonwealth Heads of Government initiated a programme to help prepare Namibia for independence,<sup>43</sup> and we have worked closely with the United Nations and with the South-West African People's Organisation in developing practical responses to a variety of needs. The Commonwealth can legitimately claim to be acting over Namibia in continuance of the tradition of Nkrumah. And we must sustain that commitment to action.

But the element of the Southern African problem which Nkrumah regarded as a test case for the effectiveness of the Commonwealth was Zimbabwe. It took longer than it should have done to reach the goal of Zimbabwe's freedom and it is, of course, to the people of Zimbabwe through their resolute and gallant struggle that must go the essential credit for success. But the role of the front-line States and of Nigeria, the role of other African countries, and the particular role of the Commonwealth and its Secretariat<sup>44</sup> were intimations of the fervour and commitment that Nkrumah had much earlier shaped. He, too, shared in that triumph.

Nevertheless, in all our pleasure at this new birth of freedom in Southern Africa, we must not lose sight of the magnitude of what still remains to be achieved. The struggle continues to the South and West; in Namibia and South Africa freedom still remains to be realised. In Namibia a ruling white minority strives to perpetuate its dominance, attempting to stall change by forging a coalition with amenable sections of the black leadership—exactly the formula which proved to be unworkable in Zimbabwe. Meanwhile, freedom fighters operate from outside the country in grim re-enactment of the Zimbabwe scenario.

In South Africa itself, the heartland of intolerance, the inhuman system of apartheid continues unchecked, while the seething cauldron of Soweto<sup>45</sup> signals both hope and danger—hope in these young Africans who aspire for progress and freedom, danger in the looming crisis of confrontation. If any proof were needed that the South African regime stands for a massive and flagrant denial of human rights to its citizens, there is the grim example of Robben Island where imprisoned African

leaders like Nelson Mandela await their deliverance.

The South African writer Mtutuzeli Matshoba tells of a man travelling by train to visit his brother on Robben Island. When he mentions his destination to African women on the train, they ask him to convey through his brother a message to Mandela and his comrades. "Tell him to say 'bayethe' for us to all the great men there who have sacrificed themselves for us".<sup>46</sup> 'Bayethe', the Zulu salutation for a great king, is their spontaneous gesture of respect towards these imprisoned warriors against apartheid. We too must salute them and ensure that they are not forgotten.

The example of Zimbabwe suggests that even in South Africa it is not too late for change; that even there conflict can be averted and the peoples come together for a genuine multiracial union which could offer hope to all. Yet we have to face the uncomfortable truth that, after decades of effort within the international community to remove the evil of apartheid, there is little to show by way of accomplishment, except a wider acknowledgement of its hideousness by people outside South Africa. Within South Africa itself the ruling minority remains obdurate in its refusal to countenance the dismantling of its system of racial oppression and determined to use an armoury of coercive measures to put down opposition within the country. There are, of course, much publicised gestures designed to create the illusion of change, gestures compelled by the growing pressure in the country and the wider condemnation outside. There are also moves to erode the growing solidarity between all the disadvantaged communities of South Africa, between the various shades of the non-white community. But apartheid remains, and white supremacy rules, seeking as ever—but heartened no doubt by the re-emergence of East-West tensions—to dissolve concern abroad by confusing the real issue of racism with the false one of ideology.

We need to ask ourselves why the world has failed, after all these years of campaigning against apartheid, to extract from the rulers of South Africa nothing more than gestures, why it has failed to secure significant lessening of the rigours of apartheid let alone its total rejection. If we do that honestly and squarely, we will have to admit that we all share in the responsibility for this failure. But a greater blame must surely lie with those countries that are in a stronger position to influence South Africa

and are better placed to compel concessions from its rulers.

It is sometimes said in justification of this neglect that they decline to use their full weight out of concern for South Africa's value to the "free world" and out of solicitude for their trading and investment interests.<sup>47</sup> The first is shameful and contradictory; the second downright short-sighted.

To say this is not to absolve the rest of the world from the duty to intensify its own action against apartheid. Others need not remain helplessly inactive. They can keep up the pressure on major powers to be more effective in constraining South Africa. And it need not just be moral pressure to summon them to the professed values of Western civilisation or to warn them of the folly of depending on South Africa to defend the world against threats to freedom. They can also give greater support to those African states that are in the front-line of the war against apartheid, both out of moral outrage and sympathy for the victims of oppression and also to protect their very sovereignty.

The countries in Southern Africa, through the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference,<sup>48</sup> are now seeking with determination to reduce their economic dependence on South Africa, a dependence which is the legacy of colonial history and is heightened by accidents of geography. They have been carrying heavy burdens, carrying them with admirable resolution and fortitude, but they remain exposed and vulnerable. As tension grows within South Africa, as opposition to the system mounts from within the country, these countries at the frontline will come under greater threat. It should be the duty of other nations to help them stand on their own feet and reduce their vulnerability to pressure from Pretoria.

There are just two roads to freedom in South Africa. If the world fails to force South Africa's rulers to dismantle apartheid, it will leave that task to be accomplished by the blood of the oppressed people of the country. That is the lesson of Zimbabwe. Readiness to come to the Conference table to negotiate a basis for a multiracial society was induced by the people of Zimbabwe, by the men and women, old and young, who became soldiers of liberation, ready to die so that racism may end and their country be free. The struggle in South Africa will be longer and bloodier, vastly more costly in human life and suffering. Its rulers have the Continent's most powerful military arsenal; the odds are

more heavily stacked against the oppressed than they were in Rhodesia. But how long will the passion for freedom count the cost?

Each generation strives to make the world better for its children. In South Africa, we are perhaps already seeing the signs that the next generation is losing faith in our capacity to assure its future. Driven to desperation by their present and denied hope for their future, the children of Soweto have signalled their resolve to make their own future, even if it be only death. Each day the world delays to compel South Africa, Soweto's children will grow in numbers and in desperation and the certainty that their blood will flow will be made greater.

Slavery once proved to be too unbearable an affront to man's nobler instincts. We must hope that apartheid, equally barbaric in its denial of dignity, will one day crumble because humanity finds it too repugnant to tolerate. Deliverance may lie in the hands of those who wield power in South Africa, but the world has the power to demand that deliverance. To the ultimate use of that power we must dedicate ourselves. And we must not leave it to governments alone, but seek to move governments through their people. Africa cannot do it alone, but must join hands with all those elsewhere in the world who value freedom. All must work to make that day of deliverance dawn so that the children of all of South Africa's Sowetos may live in the sunshine of a free society.

Now that he is no longer in the world of men, Kwame Nkrumah lives still as a symbol. If I need a reminder of that truth, I have only to turn to a quiet garden in Georgetown, the capital of my own country of Guyana. There, in the Monument to Non-Alignment, is the bust of Nkrumah next to those three other giants of the Non-Aligned Movement, Nasser, Nehru and Tito.<sup>49</sup> In these four patriots, love of country was enriched by a larger vision of the way nations can live together in a world at peace. All the world is heir to their achievement—the epilogue to their work serving also as the prologue to a new chapter in the chronicle of man's restless quest for peace and understanding with himself and his environment.

The words inscribed on that monument are these:

Having led their peoples to freedom  
They did not rest

But taking the whole earth for their nation  
and all peoples for their brothers  
They sought to free the world from war

Gave to the oppressed a sense of dignity and the  
hope of justice

Ensured for all peoples the right to freedom and  
independence,  
and to determine and pursue without hindrance  
the paths  
of their political, economic, social and cultural  
development.

Secured for all states respect for their sovereignty  
and territorial integrity and the right to equality  
and active participation in international affairs

With them through the Movement of Non-Align-  
ment  
our human race took a major step forward  
towards a world of peace, of justice and of  
progress.

They began the dialogue of all mankind.

That commemoration is testimony to Kwame Nkrumah's  
vision of the world and to its steady translation into the reality of  
our times. I invoke it in his memory.

## Notes and References

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## II—The Economic Domain

**K**wame Nkrumah is likely to be remembered most for having been in the vanguard of the battle for freedom in Ghana and all Africa and for pan-Africanism, Non-Alignment and a vibrant internationalism; in other words, for his vision and leadership in the political field. That was the theme of my first lecture. But he was also in the forefront of Third World recognition that political independence was only the beginning, albeit the necessary beginning, in the long uphill struggle to win genuine independence for Third World peoples. He put this view clearly in his autobiography:

No race, no people, no nation can exist freely and be respected at home and abroad without political freedom. Once this freedom is gained, a greater task comes into view. All dependent territories are backward in education, in science, in agriculture and in industry. The economic independence that should follow and maintain political independence demands every effort from the people, a total mobilisation of brain and manpower resources. What other countries had taken three hundred years to achieve, a once dependent territory must try to accomplish in a generation if it is to survive. Unless as it were 'jet propelled' it will lag behind and thus risk everything for which it has fought.<sup>1</sup>

In this statement of the challenge of development Kwame Nkrumah not only emphasised the importance of economic development for real independence; he highlighted the special challenge facing Third World leaders in the pressure of the time-scale—a dimension of the development problem still inadequately appreciated by developed countries when, in their constant admonitions to the Third World to be patient, they refer to their own long historical process of growth. Ghana's experience, in Nkrumah's time and later, as well as the recent economic

history of most of the new countries, have provided ample evidence of the difficulties in attaining development in one generation as Nkrumah sought. The task might have been hardest for the countries that won their freedom in the early years of decolonisation when development economics was a new discipline and countries such as Ghana were laboratories in which early theories of development were tested.<sup>2</sup> But while we have learnt much about what needs to be done both within and between nations to facilitate development, the pressure of the time-scale constantly rises. The imperative of urgent response is being constantly sharpened by the burgeoning expectations created by the communications revolution and mass participation in the political process—phenomena unknown to today's developed nations when they were themselves developing.

Ghana did not achieve the 'jet propulsion' for which Nkrumah hoped. It is understandable that in the immediate aftermath of his rule his failure should have been stressed. This is the toll the democratic ethic exacts, and there is no avoiding it. But, a better balance is now being struck in the assessment of Kwame Nkrumah. As I urged in my first lecture, a balanced appraisal will have to give due weight to his great contributions in such areas as post-war decolonisation, political unity in Africa, the dignity of black people everywhere through his espousal of the concept of the African personality, and the involvement of all African countries in the struggle to rid the Continent of institutionalised and blatant racism in the South. Even in areas where he is considered to have failed, his integrity of purpose, the influence of contemporary thinking on the role of industrialisation in development, and the sheer force of circumstance on the courses he followed, are being more fully acknowledged. Given the severity of the economic problems he faced, it is hardly surprising that Nkrumah went for radical solutions.

Foremost among these was a drive towards rapid industrialisation. In the context of his personal development and of his time, it is easy to understand how he came to give industrialisation such prominence. To begin with, he had spent twelve years abroad in the highly industrialised societies of the United States and Britain, and he had seen how their power to influence world events sprang from an industrial base. Secondly, he recognised that much of the developed world's industry was fed by raw

materials brought out of Africa. Nkrumah took special note of the United Nations figures for 1956, the year before Ghana's independence, confirming that, of world output, Africa provided:

96 per cent of gem diamonds (excluding USSR); 60 per cent of cobalt; 63 per cent of gold; 48 per cent of antimony; 37 per cent of manganese; 34 per cent of chromite; 32 per cent of phosphate rock; 24 per cent of copper; 19 per cent of asbestos; 15 per cent of tin; 4 per cent of iron ore and 4 per cent of bauxite.<sup>3</sup>

And he added that Nigeria, at that time, produced 85 per cent of the world's supply of columbite, and that Ghana was the second largest producer of manganese.

It is inevitable, and right, that African leaders should attempt to come to terms with this paradox of a resource-rich Continent in which so many people remain poor. At the current session of the United Nations General Assembly, President Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone, in his capacity as Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity, appealed for international support for African efforts to pull what he called "the least developed Continent" out of a state of poverty and suffering.<sup>4</sup> Facing this problem nearly twenty years ago, Kwame Nkrumah felt that there was even greater wealth to be discovered and tapped in Africa. He wrote:

So much was neglected under colonialism that would even have benefited the imperialist interests, if their concern had not been limited to developing the best land, the most lucrative mines, the harbours and towns connected with their economic engagements. They wanted quick and easy returns, and would not occupy themselves with what appeared to be less promising areas of exploitation. Our African view is different. There is no single part of the African Continent which is not precious to us and our development. And with the technological resources available today, what would formerly have been regarded as miraculous can now be done with the help of scientific aids, provided the means are there.<sup>5</sup>

One can appreciate the buoyant optimism of that passage. And he left some legacies of his grand ideas. Ghana still has cheap electricity, which you even export to your neighbours.

But there are, of course, other priorities to be considered in a primarily agricultural economy. If Nkrumah paid too much attention to industrialisation, it was a mistake extenuated by his passionate desire for rapid development and for the dismantling of colonial economic structures that relegated developing countries such as Ghana to be merely raw material providers. And his emphasis on industrialisation was also in line with the thrust of development theory at that time. With hindsight, and the benefit of experience elsewhere, and with advances in economic thought, we now know that while industrialisation is important, its progress can seldom be achieved if agriculture is neglected; the two must run in tandem and be mutually supportive.

And it was this emphasis on industrialisation that led him to give priority to public sector activity and to assign a prominent role to state corporations. This seemed to him the only road to rapid industrialisation in a country without a significant entrepreneurial class to create a thriving indigenous private sector. His interventionism was, however, viewed by his critics purely in ideological terms; and this was a major basis for the increasing hostility he attracted from the Western world. Nkrumah's policies tended to be seen all too readily not in the context of their domestic rationale and circumstance but in terms of the global ideological struggle between capitalism and socialism. That the sheer necessity for bold action to dismantle a dependence generating structure might require stronger state intervention was inadequately appreciated. At least in part, Nkrumah became a victim of the stereotyped perceptions of the rich about the motivations of the poor—perceptions which still remain a great impediment to better relations between developed and developing countries.

But it is on the question of industrialisation that I should like to dwell a while. Criticism of Nkrumah's economic policies, valid as they might be in some respects, must not help to create a climate in developing countries, or in the international community at large, that undervalues the role of industrialisation in the Third World—or, to put it more accurately, that gives theoretical justification for the imbalance that exists. Developing countries,

in particular, must not add psychological impediments to the practical hazards already facing fledgling Third World industrialisation. Nkrumah may have been wrong in making so sharp a turn towards industry. It is no part of the lesson of his mistakes that developing countries should not turn at all. India's early emphasis on industrialisation was itself severely criticised. Now, it is being increasingly recognised that this emphasis has helped significantly in building a base for self-reliant and genuine economic development.

The Third World has three-quarters of the earth's people, but less than a tenth of its industry. The hope is that by the end of this century developing countries will be able to increase their share of world industry to a quarter. It is a hope that can be realised if the industrialisation of the Third World is helped rather than hindered by developed countries and facilitated as a matter of international policy. As Nkrumah recognised, developing countries do not lag behind in industry for any lack of natural resources. They account for some 60 per cent of the world's major agricultural and mineral exports other than oil. But, for the greater part, they sell these commodities in the raw form. It is in the industrially advanced countries that processing and manufacturing take place, and their gain is much greater than that of the producing countries themselves who remain primary producers, and remain poor.

The extent to which the Third World loses by exporting commodities in unprocessed form has been documented by UNCTAD. For just ten commodities, including cocoa, processing even only partially within the countries of production would have raised their income by \$27 billion a year—an increase of 150 per cent.<sup>6</sup> It is ironic that this is also roughly one and a half times the total volume of official aid given by all the Western donor countries to all the developing countries in 1978. Trade, not aid, has long been a Third World plea. Its resonances are sharpened when the bid is for trade in the products of industries based on Third World resources. That extra \$27 billion of the UNCTAD study, representing the value added in semi-processing, today accrues to the industrialised countries. It becomes several times larger if the value added in converting the semi-processed commodities to manufactured goods is also taken into account.

This pattern of trade and industry is a result of history, a

product of the global relationships established during centuries of colonial rule, of deliberate measures—like tariff escalation and differential freight rates on processed goods—taken to discourage processing in the producing countries. Political imperialism may be extinct, but its imprint persists on economic relations like fossilised reminders of another era. The system itself serves to thwart the aspirations of developing countries to become part of the world's industrial society.

Structural change in the world economy to accommodate the new industrial capacity of the South is an urgent necessity. In the Brandt Commission on International Development Issues on which I had the privilege to serve we addressed ourselves to the problem. "Among the greatest challenges to international economic policy for the rest of this century", says the Report, "is the preparation for a new deployment of industrial capacity in the world economy—a shift of historic dimensions."<sup>7</sup> Nkrumah's vision has become a part of the perspectives of the 80s.

Whether from despair or disenchantment some among you may question in good faith if developing countries should not leave industry alone to concentrate on growing more food. My answer would be that there need not be a conflict between the priorities of industry and agriculture in a nation's development. They remain closely interdependent, with the income and production from the one providing the demand for the other. The experience of countries which have in the recent past made notable strides in agricultural productivity, countries like Japan, confirms that agricultural and industrial progress reinforce each other. So does India's experience; even the qualified successes of its green revolution would have been impossible without India's industrial achievements. To manage the critical balance between industry and agriculture and provide healthy conditions in both sectors is indeed one of the most urgent tasks of governments in the Third World.

It is now particularly crucial since in more than half of the developing countries, including those with the most severe food problems, increases in food production are not keeping pace with population growth. Up to the early post-war period, developing countries were net exporters of food. In 1977 they spent \$23 billion on food imports. They now import about 85 million tons of grain, and this is projected to increase to 120-145

million tons by 1990.<sup>8</sup> Third World countries that once fed themselves must do so again. This is where self-reliance must begin. This is where dependency must first end. The Third World, Africa itself, is not doing enough to feed itself. It must do better and must be helped to do better. There can be few higher priorities.

It is worth recalling that even in the early years of decolonisation Nkrumah was an enthusiastic advocate of economic (as well as political) co-operation among developing countries. His own initial efforts centred around West Africa. Soon after the War he started a West African National Secretariat, and called a West African Conference in London, to which with characteristic rejection of the colonial imprint he sought to attract fellow nationalists from the French-ruled territories. It was at this time that he met such other future leaders as Leopold Senghor of Senegal and Felix Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast. It is an interesting matter of record that, together, they considered a movement for a Union of West Africa Socialist Republics!<sup>9</sup>

Against this background, it seems particularly appropriate that after Nkrumah's loss of power it was Ghana that hosted the 1967 meeting to establish an Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and that, eventually, Ghana shared in the formal creation of the Community in 1975. ECOWAS has particular, and most welcome, significance as a pioneering effort at involving English and French-speaking African states in joint and co-ordinated economic planning. Moreover, another regional grouping has now crossed the language barrier—that between Portuguese and English-speaking communities in Southern Africa, where the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference has arisen out of solidarity with embattled Zimbabwe and a determination to be free of economic dependency on South Africa—an unequivocal answer to hegemonic notions of a “Constellation of Southern African States”.

By the time Ghana achieved independence Nkrumah had moved beyond sub-regionalism. He had become convinced that a pan-African political union was the ultimate objective.<sup>10</sup> It is in this wider context that we must view his establishment of customs union arrangements involving Guinea, Upper Volta, Mali and Ghana.<sup>11</sup> And it was his analysis of the economic realities of post-colonial Africa that underlay this political phi-

losophy, with its wholly admirable emphasis on self-help. He viewed the twenty or so unevenly-developed separate West African states as the products and the victims of what he called "colonial particularism": non-African considerations which subordinated African development to the needs of the colonial powers. Thus he wrote:

To reverse the position and bring Africa into the realm of highly productive modern nations, calls for a gigantic self-help programme. Such a programme can only be produced and implemented by integrated planning within an overall policy decided by a continental authority.<sup>12</sup>

To prove his thesis that union was a necessary prerequisite for rapid industrialisation, he pointed to the political unions which gave the United States and Russia their present size.<sup>13</sup> He was convinced that pan-African union would provide the integrated base upon which the under-used resources of the Continent could be fully developed for the benefit of its peoples. He may have been wrong in giving primacy to political union. No doubt he underestimated the problems involved in bringing it about—certainly in the early years of heady nationalism. However, in his emphasis on self-help among developing countries, he was a pioneer of ECDC—economic co-operation between developing countries.

And was it really so theoretical a concept as his critics claimed? If economic planning on a national scale is so widely acceptable, he argued, why not continent-wide planning? If giant financial combines—what we now call the transnationals—can plan throughout Africa a strategy which is in essence neo-colonialist, taking resources out of Africa to the greater benefit of the industrialised world, why cannot Africa unite on a continental basis to oppose them?<sup>14</sup> Nkrumah denied that an African Common Market of the kind he envisaged would simply be a pooling of poverty.<sup>15</sup> And his ideas are being vindicated in the 80s.

National and collective self-reliance was, after all, the guiding principle of the African leaders who met in Lagos early in 1980 for the Organisation of African Unity's first ever Economic Summit at which a Strategy and Plan of Action was outlined for

co-ordinating the economic development of Africa.<sup>16</sup> I shall return later to the themes of this crucial meeting; but, suffice it for the moment to note with admiration the OAU playing the kind of pan-African role which was prominent among Nkrumah's aims for the Organisation.

And the OAU is not alone. Since 1958 the United Nations Regional Economic Commission for Africa has been conscientiously carrying out continent-wide research and planning and has been propagating the view that regional integration and co-operation is important for development. The frequent collaboration of the OAU and the ECA in ventures like the 1979 Monrovia Symposium on the future development prospects of Africa towards the year 2000 is to be welcomed.<sup>17</sup> We are surely now seeing a thrust towards pan-Africanism—perhaps along more pragmatic lines than Nkrumah allowed for—but certainly on the basis of a wide acknowledgement of needs that Nkrumah was one of the first to identify.

Efforts at regional co-operation within Africa deserve not only pious good wishes but practical support from the international community. Their successful accomplishment will bring much nearer the realisation of Nkrumah's own vision; but time and emerging circumstances have also brought conviction about their inherent correctness. Nkrumah believed passionately that the future of all African countries was interrelated. Certainly, in economic terms, such a vision now claims wide acceptance. In a world that acknowledges our global interdependence, regionalism within Africa and pan-African regionalism are no longer exotic concepts. They are hardheaded responses to the realities of the 80s.

In these areas, Nkrumah's vision was valid, but I said before that he was not always right. It is no part of my purpose to urge that the Third World must absolve its leaders of error out of a sense of reverence or loyalty. They must take responsibility for the consequences of their policies. They take credit for their successes, whether they are circumstantial or personal; it is fair that they should be blamed for the adversities that follow from their mistakes. And it is only by being alert and tough about failures that we will ensure progress. But we do well to recognise that many Third World leaders are victims not of their own error but of the difficult and sometimes intractable situation which

confronts them. There is a danger that unless the Third World views their record in the light of the complexities and obdurances of the economic and political problems they face, and in terms of its own values and priorities, and not those of the developed countries, it will be playing right into the hands of those who find it convenient to see the problems of persistent poverty and political instability as reflections of levels of competence and ability and not as the product of intransigent and perverse circumstances and the workings of a pernicious system.

It is particularly important that the Third World does not lose sight of the essential relevance of structural change in the world economy to the prospects for real and lasting development within their countries. In both East and West there is a tendency to explain away the intractable economic problems that confront many developing countries by attributing them to the ideological orientation, whether to the right or to the left, that the leadership of those countries for the time being pursues. But the truth is that developing countries across the whole range of the ideological spectrum are finding the problems of real development equally obdurate. And it is from the evolution of development thinking, informed by practical experience rather than the contrasting ideologies of East and West, that they are receiving their best guidance.

Domestic policies are, of course, immensely relevant to enlarging the prospects of development; but in a number of major areas those prospects have nothing to do with ideology. Much of the restructuring that needs to be done at home, like land reform, is as valid in a capitalist as a socialist orientation. What is critical to the success of these efforts is a favourable, or at the very least, a non-hostile external environment.

If that environment remains unpropitious to development, as it now is; if developing countries continue to face such a range of external impediments to growth as unstable commodity prices, declining terms of trade, disincentives to the processing of their commodities, protective barriers against their few manufactures, intolerable debt burdens and massive payment deficits or their avoidance at the price of unacceptable human deprivation; if paying for the modest quantities of oil they use itself consumes 40, 50 or sometimes 60 per cent of their export earnings; if the multilateral international organisations remain

insensitive in critical areas of their need; if a world monetary system continues to prevail almost heedless of their requirements or of the impact of its disorderly behaviour on their economic welfare—if all this, and more, is part of the external environment that bears upon their domestic efforts, then socialist and capitalist leaderships alike will founder in the mire of poverty and sink in a modern-day 'slough of despond'.

The only thing that could make matters worse is for Third World leaders themselves to so completely adopt national prescriptions based on Northern ideological models that they fail to pursue their struggle for a new international economic order. The fact is that developed countries of West and East with less than 25 per cent of the world's population now account for 80 per cent of the world's income, 90 per cent of the world's scientific and technological output, 82 per cent of world trade, 60 per cent of the world's agricultural output, 55 per cent of the world's energy consumption and 69 per cent of its mineral use. The developing countries with 50 per cent of the world's population have only 18 per cent of the world's income. The one-third of the world's population in the poorest countries receive only one-thirtieth of the world's income, i.e., about one-tenth of their proportionate share.<sup>18</sup> According to World Bank estimates, 670 million in the developing countries consume about 200 calories per day less than the minimum daily requirements, and United Nations estimates show that there are 1,200 million people without clean drinking water and 1,100 million without basic education.<sup>19</sup>

That poverty, malnutrition and deprivation should exist on this scale and that such wide disparities should continue in a world still well served by natural resources and with tremendous technological capacity, questions not only the moral quality of our civilisation but also the level of its economic organisation. And it is revealing of the cynicism with which these problems are viewed in many parts of the developed world that references to a new order are still denigrated as Third World rhetoric—as if the old order any longer serves even those whom it once served well.

If any doubts linger over the injustices and inequities of the existing economic order a dispassionate appraisal of the economic problems confronting most African countries must surely dispel them. Africa remains extensively under-developed; in-

deed, as Kwame Nkrumah well knew, it is the most under-developed Continent in spite of a favourable natural resource endowment of land and minerals relative to population.

The serious economic problems of the Continent and its future development prospects were the subject under scrutiny at the OAU's Economic Summit in Lagos in April 1980. The Summit built on the "Monrovia Declaration of Commitment of the Heads of State and Government of the OAU"<sup>20</sup> of July 1979 and a series of in-depth considerations of economic problems which threw up a great amount of data about economic conditions in Africa. It will be remembered most of all for the renewed sense of dedication and hope it generated among those concerned intimately with the Continent's development problems. That the OAU is taking such important initiatives on the development issue and that the African leaders in Lagos saw the solution of many of the economic problems of Africa as possible only through concerted action at the level of the Continent, would have warmed the heart of Kwame Nkrumah. Once more, in the 80s, we are turning to his early vision. He aimed, as I have mentioned, at the creation of a Pan-African Common Market. The establishment of an African Common Market by the year 2000 was one of the objectives agreed upon at Lagos.<sup>21</sup>

Africa's current mood of change and challenge was nobly expressed in a powerful declaration at the United Nations General Assembly in October 1980 by President Shehu Shagari of Nigeria.<sup>22</sup> He asserted that "massive, special, immediate and effective measures are required to deal with the exceptional situation in Africa." Like Nkrumah, President Shehu Shagari superimposed his analysis of economic problems on a background of foreign aggression, spoliation and injustice—in other words, colonialism. President Shehu Shagari's call for a "a decade of reparation and restitution ... as a master plan for the economic recovery of Africa" is symptomatic of the new clarity and energy with which Africans are, in Nkrumah's phrase, seeking African solutions. I recall the words of Edem Kodjo, Secretary-General of the OAU, in his address to the 1979 Monrovia Symposium:

The ancients used to say: 'Woe to the man who is alone';  
today, we might say: 'Woe to the peoples that are alone'.  
To put it in another way, the prospects for growth and

development in Africa must be part of a global framework, a grand design which bears the fair name of co-operation. We cannot conceive of our development as being a separate process, all of a piece, taking place in a vacuum. On the contrary, we must plunge into the thick of the fray, try to influence the sluggish course of events, place new restraints on unreason, prepare a fresh blueprint for development and—who knows?—perhaps even impose a new ethos.<sup>23</sup>

African countries have over 10 per cent of the world's population but only 2.7 per cent of the world's product. A substantial proportion of the world's absolute poor are here in Africa and the infant mortality rate of 137 per 1,000 is the highest for any continent. Life expectancy is 45 years—ten years below the world average.<sup>24</sup> And in spite of its large land resources and low population density, between 1970-77 food production increased only by 1.5 per cent per year, just a little more than half as fast as population itself, thus leading to a sharp decline in the self-efficiency ratio in food, a large increase in the food import bill and worsening market levels.<sup>25</sup> Industrial production was less than 1 per cent of the world total. And yet this is a Continent well endowed with large land resources relative to population, rich in minerals, and with large hydro-electric potential.

It is clear that the situation now facing low-income African countries deserves urgent attention by the international community in the 1980s. And there are serious, urgent problems requiring emergency action. The plight of these countries was much in the mind of the Brandt Commission when it recommended an Emergency Programme. This Programme, which included large-scale transfers of resources to developing countries and a global food programme, as well as an international energy strategy and a start on structural reforms, was to be the main concern of a limited representative summit of world leaders.<sup>26</sup> Preparations are in hand for the convening of such a summit in mid-1981, a time-scale that is none too soon in relation to the urgency of the problems facing low-income African countries. The Summit deserves the active support of Africa.

Africa's response to current problems, as evidenced by the Lagos Summit, is to emphasise collective self-reliance. This

would have been appropriate even if there was not such international neglect of the development problems of Africa. The legacies from colonial times of political fragmentation, of economic, transportation and communications systems oriented to the old metropolises, and of persistent racial domination in South Africa all demand active pan-Africanism in the economic sphere. There are today 47 states south of the Sahara, 26 of which have populations of less than 5 million and 14 less than 1 million. Many of them have misfitting boundaries and some are without access to the sea. For most countries more than 80 per cent of exports are in unprocessed raw materials. With the emergence of these problems, the need for a level of pan-African economic co-operation of the kind that Nkrumah foresaw has now come into prominence.

But it is necessary, at least in the early stages, for self-reliant programmes to be buttressed by international assistance. In the immediate years ahead, concessional financial flows, bilaterally and through international financial institutions, for balance of payments support, as well as longer term investment for regional projects and other infrastructural development, will be crucial. The Brandt Commission recognised these needs in its call for an additional \$4 billion per year for regional projects for the poverty belts of the world.<sup>27</sup> The Commission's call for the achievement of the 0.7 per cent aid target by 1985 is also specially pertinent to Africa's problems.<sup>28</sup>

An effective response is required from the proposed summit and from a new Global Round of North/South negotiations if the urgent problems of Africa and indeed of all developing countries are not in fact to worsen. The African multilateral organisations—the OAU, the ECA, the ADB and the regional institutions such as ECOWAS and SADCC, will have important roles to play in bringing to the attention of the international community these urgent and neglected problems and participating actively in finding and applying solutions to them. The time has now come to make a move from verbal international resolutions to practical action.

Self-reliance does not mean pulling down the shutters on the world outside. On the contrary, it presumes global co-operation and provides the most secure basis for it. Self-reliance means that developing countries individually must do as much as possible

for themselves on the basis of their own resources; and that collectively they must exploit every possible advantage for development from dynamic co-operation among themselves—including the mobilisation of a global effort for beneficial change. Self-reliance is nothing if not a multi-dimensional strategy for development. By adopting it and, above all, by implementing it, developing countries will acknowledge what the developed have long known; that dependence, both material and intellectual, is a poor basis on which to build effective negotiations and that consensus is rarely, if ever, achieved save in the context of countervailing strength. Self-reliance, therefore, is not a substitute for doing business with the world beyond; it could be a major factor in doing business on better terms in 'the era of negotiations'.

If we have indeed entered such an era, the world community will have to be more enlightened in the 80s than it was in the 70s. Let me give you just a small example of what I mean; an example of how the shadow of habitual thinking, outmoded thinking, can fall between contemporary perception and action—how old attitudes, despite enlightenment, can frustrate progress. In 1974, the West, at the height of what it called the "energy crisis", turned down OPEC's offer of a price regime for oil based on indexation—rejected it as rhetoric and condemned it as heresy. The 'Chicago School' actually predicted that the price of oil would be back to \$3.00 per barrel within the year. In effect, it was rejection of an offer of contract in this critical area of energy, a rejection that relied on old-fashioned notions of power—economic, political and military—while ignoring the reality that its dispersal had already occurred. Today the reality is not the avoidance of indexation—for it is applied unilaterally, if convulsively, by OPEC; what was missed was the chance to apply it in a consensual and well-ordered manner. Behind the lost chance was a failure of political perception—failure to allow the glimpse of interdependence that had been offered to influence Northern responses to the events of 1974. We are living with the results—and the West is still not blaming itself but others, and other factors.

We cannot go on giving lip service to interdependence but believing that it requires obligations only of others. It derives from mutual needs and imposes mutual obligations. At its heart

is sharing of power and responsibilities, and—as I said in my first lecture—the question for us all in the 80s should really not be ‘whether’ but ‘how’ that sharing is to take place. Co-management of the world economy is surely the concomitant of interdependence. Irrespective of our preferences for economic theories there is a palpable need for shared management of world society; already excessive dependence on uncoordinated national choices in the economic area is clearly only making the global situation worse. If dominance is out and co-management is declined, the alternative can only be conflict, disorder and chaos. We could hardly then indulge the excuse that they have overtaken and overwhelmed us. For all our enlightenment, our human society, in the full flowering of its technological genius, will have chosen that way—backwards!

Yet the truth is that this issue of sharing—sharing of power, of management, of responsibility—lies at the heart of the present stalemate between North and South. No good purpose is served by calling it other names or pretending that the contention is about other issues. Nor should we be surprised that the sharing of power, the relinquishing of privilege, should occasion difficulty. Has it not always in human history? Yet the overcoming of such reluctance and resistance is the story of the enlargement of economic, social and political justice within national societies everywhere. But to understand the selfishness and even the contradictions of human nature is one thing; to acquiesce in their supremacy is quite another. We must, therefore, convert governments and people everywhere, but especially in the rich industrial societies, to the urgency of the need for change responsive to change itself.

We are clearly in transition from a world in which ‘the few are more than the many’ to a world that is less elitist and autocratic in its global structures; from a world governed by a small directorate of the strong to one whose future must be determined by negotiation and by consensus with the many who are weak; from a world in which we misused sovereignty as a sword to one in which we must increasingly fashion it only as a shield. We must make the transition in all these areas with swiftness because as the old premises of our global order fall away we court the danger of instability, disintegration and chaos unless we erect the new order in time. It is, alas, a danger that is upon us. The old

order is passing and the new one is not yet here. We now face, however, much we pretend otherwise, a crisis of global proportions—and not only in the economic field.

Nowhere are the dangers more acute than in the area of militarisation and its implications for the world's security. 1980, at its beginning, saw the end of the First Disarmament Decade; and at its end will see the close of the Second Development Decade; two decades that in the result both wore false labels. Development faltered—disarmament remained a mirage. The facts are ugly and shameful and searing. It now seems that the number of people in absolute poverty—those who live and die without ever knowing why—at present estimated at 780 million, or nearly one in every five, may actually increase during the 1980s. And, says the World Bank, with a certain clinical detachment, “many developing countries will find it hard to maintain political stability.”<sup>29</sup> In other words, what lies ahead for many as the legacy of the Second Development Decade is human misery and social disintegration.

In what was to be a ‘decade of disarmament’, total global expenditure on arms climbed from \$180 billion in 1970 to \$500 billion in 1980. On present trends, it will reach \$600 billion a year in the 80s at today's prices.<sup>30</sup> World military expenditure now exceeds the total income of all the people (more than 2 billion) in 37 low-income countries, including China. In effect, the developed countries of East and West spend annually on arms some \$365 for every one of their citizens—an amount substantially higher than the average annual income of people in low-income countries. They spend on the means of destruction more than billions of the world's poorest spend each year on the means of survival.

And the developing countries, themselves, are not immune from this propensity to ever higher militarisation—a propensity, what is worse, not always fuelled by considerations of an external character. Their arms expenditure amounted to about \$30 annually for each one of their people, which is admittedly vastly lower than the \$365 per capita spent in the rich countries but still higher than what they spend themselves on average on the health or education of their people. It has become a significant drain on their balance of payment. It is mercifully confined, with three-quarters of the total spent by only 15

countries, many of them located in troubled zones and some, fortunately, among the countries with surplus funds. Even so, how can it be anything but deplorable that the call for disarmament must now reach centres of the developing world whose freedom itself was wrested by the twin cries of decolonisation and disarmament, that were so much at the heart of Nkrumah's internationalism?

But at the centre of the arms race—and of the race to sell arms—is the rivalry between the two super-powers. In 1980 these two alone accounted for 58 per cent of world military expenditure and with their respective allies for 80 per cent. While more than three-quarters of that expenditure went on conventional weapons, it is around the development, accumulation and deployment of nuclear weapons that much of the world's immediate concerns are focussed. Once such weapons were the preserve of a few and these self-appointed custodians of power to annihilate the planet had charge of only a few weapons each. Today it is possible to talk of “a world nuclear map”—a new cartography that starkly portrays man's precarious future. Far from moving to Nkrumah's “World Without the Bomb”, nuclear weapons of varying size, shape and deadliness now number over 50,000. Their combined explosive power is already 1 million times that of the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima in seconds. A single missile can now carry 200 times the destructive force of that Hiroshima bomb. And it can carry it six thousand miles in less than 30 minutes. Fired from the other side of the world it can hit targets within a few hundred feet. Given the technology of early warning systems and the capacity for retaliation, if the button were pressed now in any of the capitals where they exist, life on this planet could have ended before this ceremony is due to end. We are as near as a finger's width to human extinction.

Why does the world permit it? Why do the people of the superpowers and the major powers, why do their leaders, endorse this contradiction of so suicidal a policy in the name of survival? It is in part because of what has been called “the dominance of military mystique”. Under its spell, the realities of diminishing returns are sublimated to the images of power and security. Peril wears the mask of safety. And beyond the danger of the holocaust, the links between fast depleting world resources and global economic and social tensions are ignored.

The simplistic identification of external enemies is easier and more politically profitable than coming to terms with the realities that an era in transition is producing both at home and abroad. A false rationality has overtaken reason. In mankind's long history over the millennia such moments have always been among the most dangerous for his future.

I have referred earlier to the Report of the Brandt Commission. We called it *North-South: A Programme for Survival*. In doing so, I assure you, we sought neither to be pompous nor dramatic, but simply to convey the gravity of the global situation as we saw it. And who were we? The Commission was drawn from North and South alike; practitioners for the greater part in the world of politics, of finance, of labour, of journalism, but most of all, of development—an incongruous, even improbable, but perhaps not altogether insignificant group of people.<sup>31</sup> For none of us was it a process of writing our own manifesto, but of finding a new route to global agreement. And in our Report which was the result of two years of considerable effort we believe we have offered the world that route. But we do so with no illusions of the dangers that lie ahead for the world economy, for development, for North and South alike; dangers, indeed, that will be encountered even along the route.

You will not be surprised that we say in the Report: "At the beginning of the 1980s the world community faces much greater dangers than at any time since the Second World War".<sup>32</sup> Against the back-drop of all I have said that is a very considerable danger indeed. But those words were written towards the end of 1979 and they were written in an economic, not in a political, context. In fact, in the twelve months since they were written the dangers we talked about have grown immensely more massive and more threatening. Between completing our Report and presenting it to the United Nations Secretary-General in February 1980, 'Afghanistan' occurred; and with it came a major deterioration in East-West relations. Western countries and the overwhelming voice of the Third World have already deplored the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. They have done so essentially in a political context in terms of the threat it poses to detente. That threat was wholly predictable. The responses of the international community should have been foreseen. But the point I make is a somewhat different one.

Events such as Afghanistan which heighten tension between East and West, whether they are triggered by the East or by the West, and whether or not they are responsive to provocations by each other—however they occur—are dangerous for the world. But beyond the area of general danger, they are calamitous for the Third World. East and West each sees itself as ‘the good guy’ and the other as ‘the bad’. Each professes the purity of its commitment to peace and its suspicion of the intentions of the other. In this context of reciprocal selfrighteousness, when East and West begin enlarging their arsenal of global destruction and justifying the escalation in terms of the others’ offensive intent we are, indeed, in a time of peril. And we are at such a time. It is the kind of time when the hawks fly high, when the doves of peace are grounded; when issues like development tend to be put aside, relegated to “less troubled times”; when a massive diversion of resources to military expenditure—resources desperately needed for development and indeed for assisting the developed world out of recession—provides a convenient excuse that there may not now be even the means to alleviate the problems of development.

But the situation is even more serious than that. We could be in a cycle of disaster with East-West tensions retarding North-South progress and widening disparities threatening peace. In a global environment characterised by a struggle for power, naked poverty makes a poor country a hapless hostage to fortune and a pawn in the struggle of the strong. When some of the world’s poorest countries fail to be helped in straightforward ways—like with fair prices for cocoa and an international commodity agreement to keep them remunerative and stable—when they fail to be helped to stand on their feet economically, to grow as nations with economic, social and political institutions established against the erosions of poverty, is it any wonder that they fail to withstand pressures from without?

Non-Alignment, as Nkrumah knew so well, is a great bulwark of detente, but can anyone doubt that persistent poverty and underdevelopment seriously impair it? The failure to find solutions to the problems of development, an inability to respond to the challenge of North-South issues, create conditions propitious to the burgeoning of East-West tensions. It is not only, therefore, that the retreat from detente places development in

jeopardy; it is also that the threat to development bears on the peace of the world—just as disparities within nations have shaken societies to their foundations.

In truth, this is but one dimension of the reality of our interdependent world. Pope Paul counselled us that “the new name of peace is development”.<sup>33</sup> Willy Brandt, in his Chairman’s introduction to the Report alerted us to the simple truth that “he who wants to ban war must also ban mass poverty”.<sup>34</sup> North-South and East-West are now inextricably linked. Failure on either front is clearly mutually dangerous. Success on either could be mutually reinforcing. What is at stake in the development debate concerns the poor directly; but, in truth, it concerns the future of the world.

We cannot, therefore, as some would have it, leave the issues of development for more tranquil times. Coming to terms with them now has become a pre-condition of more tranquil times ahead—and, not only for the poor, but for the rich as well whose threshold of social dislocation may yet prove to be much lower than that of the poor for whom troubled times have long been a way of life. There must be hope, however; for in his long history it is in times of crisis that man everywhere has risen to the greatest heights of courage, imagination and creativity.

There is, indeed, a glimmer of hope that the failures and disappointments of recent years and our present condition of danger may hope to move us, as Nkrumah urged us long ago, from outmoded grooves of thought towards new vistas of perception, towards that revolution in men’s minds which is the essential precursor to all else. If we have in the events of the 70s caught even a glimpse of the limitations of power, of its essential irrelevance to the central issues of our time, of the growing linkages between rich and poor in their common future; if we have begun to see why, in the world of the 80s and beyond, human destiny must be shaped by global management and shared responsibilities—our present condition, serious as it is, will not have been without some gain in the cause of human survival.

Man’s search for peace and development is now one quest. We must be unremitting in it and not allow ourselves to be exhausted by failures or delays; we cannot give up on human destiny. In its “Programme for Survival” the Brandt Report offers

not just a prescription for what the rich countries can do to help the poor; its programme is about what rich and poor can do together to make human survival on a tolerable basis more probable for all the world's people. It is now for the world's people to ensure, indeed it is for the people of the Third World to insist, that governments take this chance—this slender chance—while it still remains the option of hope.

And that brings me back to the democracy of which I spoke in my first lecture; for how else can the insistence of the people be heard and answered? Democracy is the balm which both soothes and invigorates the body politic. As I had occasion to remark elsewhere in my own region of the Caribbean, the therapy of free elections knows no equal.<sup>35</sup>

Democracy demands effort, sometimes self-sacrifice, but the benefits to humanity are incalculable and African solutions to African problems will be human solutions. Kwame Nkrumah may in the end have been overwhelmed by the problems, but in his best years he was himself the product and the pride of democracy; and I end with his advice which now has a wider meaning in our troubled world of the 80s:

History records that it is the peaceful means that endure; the gains of violence are transient; the fruits of patience are imperishable.<sup>36</sup>

That his people and the world's people should yet heed that advice would be the truest memorial to this great man of our time who may have been of Ghana but belonged to all mankind.

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## **REKINDLING NEHRU'S INTERNATIONALISM**

*The Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Lecture  
University of London, London,  
25 November 1985*

*M*any of those who preceded me in this Memorial Series have looked back to Nehru's life and work in India and appraised their significance for India. In such a series, some measure of looking back is inevitable; but I wish to speak more of what Nehru left, than of what he did; to make my glances to the past the basis of viewing Nehru's legacy, and of glimpsing its significance for a future that will take us to another era. And, in doing so, I want to place emphasis not on his legacy to India, but to the world—though they are, of course, entwined. Such an approach may be timely; not only because Nehru's vision took in the wider world, but also because it has remained relevant to our achievements and our failures at the global level and is assuming a heightened relevance to our prospects for the future.

Even so, I am slightly daunted. Nehru was, in the words of Norman Cousins, 'not one man but a procession of men.'<sup>1</sup> How to assess a life, and a legacy, so rich and varied, so purposeful in striving, so lofty in inspiration, so heroic in scale, and so ennobling in achievement? That Nehru enriched India and the world, indeed contemporary civilisation as a whole, is incontestable; what his place will be in the history of our age is a more difficult question to answer, partly because we stand so close to him in time; partly also because so much of what he strove for and accomplished is inextricably linked with the problems and the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Nearly 40 years have passed since the midnight hour when India awoke 'to life and freedom',<sup>2</sup> and over 20 since the death of Jawaharlal Nehru, who led India to that moment and for the first 17 years of independence. Since 1947, freedom has come to over 100 new nations, following India's example, and often inspired by its great leaders, Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi. Nehru's gaze, however, was fixed not on the past, but the future, and his dedication was not only to India and her people but "to the still larger cause of humanity".<sup>3</sup> It is in that spirit that I should like to look ahead, say to the year 2000—already a symbol of our

turning-point into the future, yet only 15 years away. The issue now is less the independence of nations than the interdependence of nations, and whether all nations not merely acknowledge but act upon its implications to construct a world order responsive to the needs of all the world's people. The major problems of world poverty and international security, for example, are now conjoined and in confronting them all the world's people face a tryst with destiny. It is primarily in this perspective of the modern world that I would like to look at the legacy of ideas Nehru has left us. If the ideas he championed have survived him and promise to lead towards a better, safer future for us all, constructed on surer foundations for us all, that would itself be the mightiest of memorials.

And I place the emphasis on ideas in reappraising his heritage. We must look not just to concrete achievements, or their absence, but to directions indicated; not to deeds alone but to the thought behind the deed; less to his governance of India than to the lessons of his rule there for the wider world, especially other developing countries; above all, to the relationship in which he placed India with the international community—in other words, to India's world role in the post-war world which Nehru and his India helped so powerfully to shape. I am reinforced in this approach of appraising Nehru by the value of his total achievement and, above all, of his ideas, by some remarkable words of his recent biographer, Pandey:

...throughout his life [Nehru] lived and worked in the realm of ideas. Filled as he was with the qualities of imagination, perception and intuition, he used them to identify norms and trends which were taking shape in every field of human progress. Through this exercise he acquired an idea of the world as it was going to be a vision which coincided with his concept of the world as it ought to be. He made his abode in this desired, expected world and therefore lived in a future which history had yet to bring into existence... Among the distinguished statesmen of the 20th century he alone could prophesy the future with any certainty, for he almost lived in it.<sup>4</sup>

If that analysis is correct, and I believe it is, it underlines just how remarkable was this man whose life was immersed in the practical details of politics, yet who could transcend the everyday to inhabit the realms of ideas and ideals and of the future. Nehru himself would have rejected such a description. As he put it, almost in defensive reflex, "We do not live in the upper stratosphere but in an imperfect world which we are trying to improve and change."<sup>5</sup> Yet, as the actual political events which preoccupied him recede into history, the principles governing his conduct stand out ever more clearly, and justify our recalling him as a pathfinder. His exceptional qualities were clearly visible to his peers. For example, John Kennedy, a man of a different stamp and culture, noted admiringly Nehru's "soaring idealism".<sup>6</sup> In truth, Nehru was a whole man; he constantly sought to reconcile the conflict between the practical demands of everyday affairs and more abstract ideals. The idealism grew out of the experience; the one guided the other forming, in his own words, "the realism of tomorrow".<sup>7</sup> We, who are living through the initial stages of that future which he envisaged, are well placed to offer a judgement on the validity of his ideals for our times and, necessarily more tentatively but with conviction, on their validity for the years to come.

But we are well placed also to bemoan the vacuum of 'soaring idealism' in world leadership. Instead, we live with a fashion that rejects idealism as the 'soft' option and idealists as the 'wet' people. We are seeing the recrudescence of what Ted Heath in the House of Commons last Friday called "a nasty, narrow-minded nationalism"<sup>8</sup>—one so nasty in its manifestations that it contradicts true patriotism—like 'double-think' on apartheid South Africa and 'double-speak' on 'star wars'; one so narrow that it turns inward on itself in a mode of self-destruction—like rampant protectionism or debt crisis management that chooses Shylock over Portia.

When I was growing up there were Roosevelt and Zhou En-lai, Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru himself. Later there were Hamarskjold and Willy Brandt and, for a time, John Kennedy. Where is their 'soaring idealism' now? On no continent, in no bloc or group or alliance, does it prevail. As a world community we are bereft without it. Does its absence not fill us with fear of the warning of 'Proverbs' that 'where there is no vision, the people perish'?

If the greatest statesmen are persons who anticipate great problems, foresee them and take action to meet them, then Nehru was assuredly in that category. He strove to make politically feasible what he saw to be best in long-term realities and basic principles. He changed both the style and the shape of international relations and, in world terms, was the first truly modern political figure of our time. That is a tall claim to make, in a century which has produced so many leaders whose record was outstanding in national terms. Many have exercised greater power; some have fashioned more coherent ideologies; but Nehru stands above them all in modernity of outlook, consistency of vision and accuracy of perception rising above national horizons.

In nothing was Nehru more ahead of his time than in his internationalism, in his determination to lay the basis of an international community which would enter the 21st century with its moral and material resources greatly augmented, and with values different from those of the past. He foresaw, as long ago as 1929, the interdependence which is a fact of international life today, in his remarkable address on becoming President of the Congress Party he said:

India today is part of a world movement... Civilisation has had enough of narrow nationalism and gropes towards wider co-operation and interdependence... Having attained our freedom, I have no doubt that India will welcome all attempts at world co-operation.<sup>9</sup>

Here was a man who, long before India's own nationhood found fulfilment in 1947, was already warning against narrow nationalism. It was a theme to which he never tired of returning. In 1947 he warned:

Nationalism ...is a curious phenomenon which, at a certain stage in a country's history, gives life, growth, strength and unity but, at the same time, it has a tendency to limit one... one thinks of one's country as something different from the rest of the world... The result is that the same nationalism which is the symbol of growth for a people becomes a symbol of the

cessation of that growth in the mind. Nationalism, when it becomes successful, sometimes goes on spreading in an aggressive way and becomes a danger internationally. Whatever line of thought you follow you arrive at the conclusion that some kind of balance must be found.<sup>10</sup>

A balance between nationalism and internationalism. Never has the need for such a balance been more urgent than it is today. Nehru was a democrat too—he moulded India into the world's largest democracy. And his democracy and internationalism went hand in hand. He was reaching to a relationship between nations that was responsive to an aspiration for democracy at the global level. How badly needed also today is such consistency, not only because anti-internationalism flourishes in some of the world's great democracies, but because democracy itself is being so managed that it is made to work against internationalism. To be 'anti-UN' or 'anti-aid'; to be hawkish in ideology or aggressive in militarism, is made electorally appealing, and the votes that are in it make a virtue of extremism.

It was because of his perception of the dangers of unbridled nationalism that Nehru passionately espoused the cause of world order. In his thinking, the atomic bomb—that first crude weapon that was to be the tip of a nuclear iceberg—the bomb, in particular, made the quest for world order more imperative and urgent than ever before. Nehru believed that the whole structure of human society was changing; that, as a result, it was becoming more and more obvious that while countries, small or big, wish to retain 100 per cent national independence, they could hardly continue to do so in the present context of the world.<sup>11</sup>

His view of the changing needs of nations in a world of disparate states, articulated even as India was attempting to wrest its own nationhood, mirrored a perception that sovereignty alone is a poor shield for a nation's security and a fragile basis for a nation's progress. He recognised that, though national independence was the first priority in the world in which colonial subjugation was the reality for many peoples, the world as a whole must move beyond national independence and sovereignty if the common interests of all its people were to be secured.

As we look to the 21st century, is there any challenge that is more central than that of adjusting our notions of sovereignty to the needs of human survival? Is our science and technology to be allowed to soar up above leaving us trapped below with increasingly archaic concepts of the nation-state? Are we to become known in history as the generation that excelled in management of everything save itself? The problems of peace and security, the problems of development, the problems of a global economy, the new challenges of the global commons—the sea and the sea-bed beyond national jurisdiction, and the still unmapped, and perhaps unmappable, frontiers of outer space—all cry out for a measure of global management that is inconsistent with unbridled sovereignty.

We speak of freedom within free societies, and recognise both a moral and a legal duty to our neighbour to take care lest he be injured by our conduct. We proclaim our world to be a society of free nations, yet we use sovereignty as a sword not as a shield. We have a long way to go in translating our perception of the world as a global village and its people as our neighbours into moral and, above all, legal obligations to other states and other people. Indeed, if anything, the trends are the other way. We are in danger of moving towards a more authoritarian world; one less constrained by principles and rules, one more prone to uncertainty and arbitrariness; a human society not governed by world order but ordered by the strong.

We have been commemorating this year the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the UN. A world community that in 1945 regarded internationalism as axiomatic, saw international cooperation as being essential to man's future, could not 40 years later even agree on a declaration commemorating the event. The Commonwealth did at Nassau and in terms which urged that even the achievements since 1945 "make the more disturbing any movement away from multilateralism and internationalism, from a world aspiring to be governed by fair and open rules towards unilateral action and growing ascendance of power in all spheres: economic, political and military."<sup>12</sup> "We warn," said Commonwealth leaders:

that a return to narrow nationalism, both economic and political, in a climate of tension and confrontation

between nations heightened by the nuclear arms race, invites again the dangers from which the world set out to rid itself at San Francisco in 1945. We issue that warning mindful that the nuclear menace imperils all peoples and nations and the very survival of our human species.<sup>13</sup>

How are we going to respond to all these challenges unless we shake ourselves out of the mental constraints of sovereignty as an end in itself and bring to the challenges of the 21st century a less crainitive spirit and a will for greater political innovation. Nehru exuded the spirit of political innovation. It followed from his great intellectual strengths. We need them now in abundance if we are to do better in the 21st century; perhaps, even to be sure that we reach it.

Perhaps this recognition of the wider compulsion of planetary existence stemmed in part from Nehru's acute consciousness of the need to reconcile many interests and divisions, many regions and peoples, in efforts to forge the Indian nation. "I belong to all states," he once said, "I am a Maharashtrian while I am in Maharashtra and a Tamilian while in Tamil Nad."<sup>14</sup> He sensed the need for loyalties to be broadened, for narrower affiliations to be progressively submerged in wider commitments, for India as a nation to see the fulfilment of its goals in partnership with other nations, for democracy to be given a wider reach than the nation state. Again how much we need the ascendancy of that vision. Our 'balkanised' world is an ever greater contradiction as we conquer space and look back on earth to see it as a small and fragile planet in the cosmos. But our science has outstripped our wisdom; technology may be a hymn to man's genius, it offers no praise to our sentience.

Nehru's modernity is all the more remarkable if we consider him in relation not to today but to his own time. When he died in 1964 at the age of 74 there were statesmen contemporary with him who could look back on longer politically-active lives—though none perhaps who had been devoted so single-mindedly over so many years to the one political goal of national freedom. Less than a year later his great adversary in India's freedom struggle, Winston Churchill, with whom he latterly had a relationship of mutual respect, was also dead. A comparison

between the two men is instructive. Both were superb readers of the current international scene, with an extraordinary intuitive understanding of the play of political forces; both had warned vigorously against the rise of Fascism and Nazism in the 1930s; both were leaders of and for their time. Yet of the two, Nehru's we now see, was much the more forward-looking vision. In 1949, the West was outraged when Nehru supported the admission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations.<sup>15</sup> Over 20 years later, a similar move by the Nixon administration was adjudged a triumph of US foreign policy. That is an isolated example, but the broad sweep confirms the detail. The world of today is essentially the world as Nehru saw it, a world for which he equipped India so well, one of plurality and diversity, in which nations have their own independent existence beyond empires and blocs.

It was not enough, however, to dream dreams about the future without the instruments to shape it. Nehru's institution-building within India was, of course, a monumental achievement, but it was mirrored by a comparable endeavour at the international level: without Nehru the future of the United Nations could well have been jeopardised; the Commonwealth could hardly have existed; and the Non-Aligned Movement might also not have been born.

To Nehru the United Nations was of central importance. He was conscious, of course, of its shortcomings; critical when its judgement and activities were influenced by the prejudices of the cold war. Nonetheless, he was tireless in affirming that "the United Nations is the chief repository of our hopes for ever closer and more effective international co-operation for security as well as welfare."<sup>16</sup> In 1952 he said:

I have ventured, in all humility, sometimes to criticise those developments at the United Nations which seemed to me to be out of keeping with its Charter and its past record and professions. Nevertheless... I do not wish this country of course to do anything which weakens the gradual development of some kind of a world structure. It may be that the real world structure will not come in our lifetime but unless that world structure comes, there is no hope for this world, because the only alternative

is world conflict on a prodigious and tremendous scale.<sup>17</sup>

It was for these reasons that Nehru's India was one of the countries which from the start sought to give practical effect to the UN's role as the guardian of international order and morality and the focus of efforts for peace. To Nehru, support of the UN was an article of faith. In words redolent with the Gandhian spirit, Nehru described himself as a "humble pilgrim" at the UN "who walked on foot in the midst of mighty charioteers."<sup>18</sup>

It was with confidence that he took the Kashmir issue to the UN; although gravely disappointed at the outcome, and the intrusion of superpower rivalry, his support of the UN remained unwavering. It was the Congo crisis of 1960-63 which above all showed the depth of Nehru's commitment to the UN, to national self-determination and to internationalism. At stake in the Congo was the right and the ability of the country to stand united and independent despite the machinations of the great powers and former colonialists. It evoked Nehru's moral commitment not only to the UN but to the people of Africa, who had suffered the worst of all from colonialism. Nehru remarked that: "In India an incident took place which has come to be known as the 'black hole of Calcutta' ... But for the African people, their entire life till now has been spent in a black hole."<sup>19</sup> He felt profoundly at one with the "astounding revolution" of freedom from colonialism taking place in Africa.

When the UN under Hammarskjöld was mandated to maintain the legal government in the Congo, Nehru fully supported the UN operation. The Secretary-General's special representative was an Indian diplomat, Rajeshwar Dayal. Nehru first despatched Indian non-combatant troops to the Congo and, when the UN operation was in difficulties, followed up with a full combatant brigade, so that the UN was ultimately able to secure the Congo's unity and continued independence. Hammarskjöld's response was: "Thank God for India!"<sup>20</sup> He saw India's support as decisive, and a remarkable, even historic act of faith. That still seems an accurate judgement today. For in the difficult international climate of those times, at no political advantage to India, but only to a newly-independent African government—the integrity of an African country and the cause of world order—Nehru kept to a

truly internationalist path and maintained support for the United Nations. This meant resisting great power pressures and also resisting the pull of Afro-Asian criticism of the United Nations operation, even when he had misgivings himself. Even after the armed conflict between India and China broke out in 1962, Nehru placed India's internationalist commitment before its national need, and left the Indian troops in the Congo till their job was done.

We see here a lesson which should be both example and inspiration; a singular sensitivity to balancing national interests with important internationalist ones; a capacity not to allow disillusion with some aspects of the functioning of the world body to spill over into destructive attitudes towards the institution itself; and a concern that long-term interests are not sacrificed on the altar of political expediency. These are lessons which the world forgets at its peril; their relevance becomes more, not less, as we approach the 21st century.

Similar imagination, vision, and political creativity were in evidence in the case of the Commonwealth. The means by which it was transformed to accommodate a Republican India is now a matter of history. Many have taken credit for the London Declaration of April 1949; yet, whatever the individual roles, the final outcome would not have been possible but for Nehru. The men of 'Empire' were sorely troubled. Menzies warned that "If we spread the butter of the British association until it is too thin it may disappear altogether".<sup>21</sup> Atlee was more certain of the wisdom of the change which would accommodate republics into the family of the Commonwealth and remove allegiance to the British sovereign as a badge of Commonwealth membership.<sup>22</sup> But many in Britain's establishment—of all estates—were not. Though I was not to know it, that moment of decision for Commonwealth leaders was to be a critical moment in my life; so critical, that you will perhaps permit a personal note.

For many nationalists of internationalist learnings whose countries were not yet free, the April Declaration was a sign of hope. I was a young undergraduate of King's College, London, at the time and, with the brashness and certainty of youth (but, as it turned out, not without some justification), I wrote in the *College Law Journal* that, notwithstanding the doubters, a "second Commonwealth of nations" was coming into being

whose new bonds:

may well... prove more acceptable and so more lasting than the now rusted link of allegiance; if that is so, [I ventured] the April Declaration augurs well not only for Commonwealth harmony but for world peace as well.<sup>23</sup>

I could little realise that I might one day have the chance to help to fulfil that promise; to help to make probable what Nehru had made possible.

Yet it could all so easily have been otherwise. Throughout the 1930s Nehru as well as the Congress Party had been committed to rejection of Dominion status and membership of the then British Commonwealth. But Nehru discerned the potential of the association and, despite political opposition within India to Commonwealth membership, insisted on finding a solution that would be responsive both to India's interests and longer-term international needs. Justifying India's continuation in the Commonwealth, Nehru said his first duty was to look "to the interests of India", but added: "I have always conceived that duty in terms of the larger good of the world."<sup>24</sup> Between Commonwealth nations, he said, there was what he called "unforeignness"—"although in a sense foreign... nevertheless, not completely foreign";<sup>25</sup> and again, "the closest ties are ties which are not ties".<sup>26</sup> He saw in the Commonwealth a valuable instrument to advance the wider causes to which he was dedicated—of peace, freedom for colonised peoples, racial equality, international co-operation and world development.

In 1960, reflecting on more than a decade of Commonwealth membership, he said:

The Commonwealth is certainly a form of free, uncommitted and non-binding association with the spirit of peaceful co-existence, a link or bridge which helps in bringing together nations for the purpose of co-operation and consolidation. Such associations are preferable to the more binding kind of alliance or blocs. We, of course, consider the problem of our association with the Commonwealth in terms of independent nations coming together without any military or other commitments. There are no conditions attached except this desire to

co-operate so far as it is consistent with the independence and sovereignty of each nation. One important factor about the Commonwealth association is that it reverses the other process of military or economic blocking together for what might be called the purposes of the 'cold war'. It has a certain warmth of approach about it, regardless of the problems that beset any such association. There may be differences. There are. Nevertheless the overall approach to such controversies is a friendly one which helps to tone down friction and difficulties. That, I think, is all to the good and a development worthy to be followed in other spheres, larger spheres, also.<sup>27</sup>

Nehru not only changed the Commonwealth, he did a great deal to save it after the Suez episode of 1956 had severely strained Britain's relationship with her Commonwealth partners.<sup>28</sup> He saw beyond the immediate crisis—and beyond the contemporary policies of some Commonwealth member countries which he strongly deplored—to the wider Commonwealth which was coming into being and which could not be allowed to lapse. With Ghana's accession to Commonwealth membership, he particularly welcomed "free Asian and African nations coming together" as a development which would be "good for the world and good for race relations."<sup>29</sup> The Commonwealth of nine countries that his vision in 1949 allowed to continue and to grow is now the Commonwealth of forty-nine.

It took courage for Nehru to remain in the Commonwealth; but it took an even rarer vision to look above the immediate contentions to see that in doing so he would help to mould the Commonwealth closer to world needs. That capacity is still rare; but no less vital in the councils of the Commonwealth and of the world. For the Commonwealth, that longer view taken in 1949 has left a legacy of faith in striving for consensus consistent with principle; in reaching together towards worthy goals even if they remain for the time being beyond our grasp. It is a faith with which the world community needs to be more infused when bloc or group or mere super-power confrontation threaten a decline from division to disintegration; when difference, even exasperation, encourages a mood of 'walking away'.

Passionately devoted to the cause of world-wide decolonisation and the elimination of racism, Nehru shaped the Commonwealth to serving as an instrument for the achievement of these objectives. He felt as well as saw the contradictions between Britain's profession of belief in multi-racialism and human rights and its actual policies in Africa. He spoke out:

We are all for the multiracial society, but I am getting a little tired of the repetition of this phrase when the African is being kicked, hounded and shot down....<sup>30</sup>

How many Commonwealth leaders at Nassau must have felt a similar vexation? Yet what prevailed was that capacity to persist, not to give up the effort of persuading even when it seemed to be a process of harmonising contrariness to principle. The legacy still held—and to the world's betterment.

Nehru's India was the first country to launch international questioning and criticism of South African racism at the United Nations. It did not even wait for full independence to do so: the issue was raised by the self-governing interim administration in 1946. And India was also the very first country to impose sanctions against South Africa when it terminated its trade and diplomatic relations with Pretoria in 1954—in advance of any international recommendations to that effect. This was the start of a campaign which has continued with increasing momentum to the present day. The current effort to rid the world of apartheid is thus partly the legacy of Nehru; but, of course, also of Nehru's guide and mentor, Mahatma Gandhi, whose practice of non-violent resistance was initiated on behalf of the Indian of Natal early this century.

In the Commonwealth forum, though at first the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs muted Nehru's criticism, his position quickly hardened to the point where he felt inaction over apartheid would rob the Commonwealth of meaning—as the Commonwealth itself was later to feel in relation to Amin's abuses in Uganda. He therefore insisted on the issue being raised at the 1960 Summit and formally mentioned in the Communiqué.<sup>31</sup> He saw, rightly, that the future of the Commonwealth depended on how the issue was settled. The following year he was instrumental in mobilising the strength of Commonwealth

feeling against South Africa to the point where it was forced to leave the association. The Commonwealth thus became the first international organisation to ostracise South Africa—a full 13 years before its suspension from the UN.

To those who still harbour notions that it would have been better to keep South Africa within the Commonwealth and argue with her, the answer is two-fold. The Commonwealth itself would have succumbed, infected by the canker of apartheid. But, more pointedly, Washington's current policy of "constructive engagement"—which may be little more than a new name given to an old process—has shown beyond contention that only apartheid would have benefited from such Commonwealth 'engagement'. What has been deficient over the years, and remains lacking now, lies not within the concepts of ostracism and pressure but the failure of many Western Governments to make ostracism complete or pressure real. Now, their own national interests are beginning to be seen as victims of the reprieve they have given Pretoria.

At the Commonwealth Summit last month,<sup>32</sup> the standing of the Commonwealth was seen no less clearly than 25 years ago to depend upon its attitude to the intensified struggle to end apartheid. This time, the voice of Nehru's grandson, Rajiv Gandhi, was among the clearest insisting that the Commonwealth had a special responsibility to hasten its demise. No one at Nassau bridged the years between 1961 and 1985; but one did not need to span the generations to hear in India's new Prime Minister echoes of Nehru's controlled passion or to see in his determined efforts to find common ground the sustained traditions of a great ancestor. The legacy continues to be both relevant and strengthening.

In the Commonwealth Accord on Southern Africa that was reached at Nassau,<sup>33</sup> Commonwealth leaders—all of them—representing a quarter of the world's people and a third of the world's states, issued clarion calls on the Pretoria regime. They called on it to declare that apartheid would be dismantled; to end the state of emergency; to unconditionally free Nelson Mandela and others imprisoned for opposition to apartheid; to lift the ban on his Party and others; and, in the context of a suspension of violence on all sides (including, therefore, a suspension of the violence of apartheid itself) to begin a process of dialogue to

establish a non-racial representative government. Commonwealth leaders agreed on a programme of common action,<sup>34</sup> including a series of economic measures, to increase the pressure on the apartheid regime; and they undertook to consider further economic measures if sufficient progress is not made within six months. But the Commonwealth went further. Taking up a proposal first made by the Prime Minister of Australia, Bob Hawke—a proposal much in the Nehru tradition—Commonwealth leaders set up a Group of Eminent Persons to act as a catalyst in encouraging a process of dialogue for democracy in South Africa.

Earlier today I announced the composition of that Group. It is to be chaired jointly by the former Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, and General Olusegun Obasanjo, the former Head of Government of Nigeria who in 1979 returned his country to civilian rule. And it includes Sardar Swaran Singh, one of Nehru's colleagues in the Indian Government. The Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, is one of the seven leaders entrusted with developing the modalities of this initiative, in conjunction with myself; and once the six months have elapsed these seven leaders will review the situation.<sup>35</sup> How appropriate it somehow seems that Nehru's own grandson should be at the centre of Commonwealth action within the international effort to end apartheid which began with Nehru's India raising the issue at the UN in 1946.<sup>36</sup> The Commonwealth, for its part, is keeping faith with Nehru by its collective stand on behalf of the 25 million dispossessed and disenfranchised non-white people of South Africa.

Only the co-operation of all concerned in South Africa—black and white alike, Afrikaaner and English-speaking, Coloured and Indian, the nationalist movement, the political parties, the churches, the businessmen, the women's organisations, the trade unions, all who speak in the name of the people of South Africa—only their co-operation can make this effort succeed. I hope there are none who do not wish it to succeed; because this is a most genuine effort to help to bring about meaningful change in South Africa through discussion, negotiation and consensus. The future does not seem to offer too many other chances of doing so.

The eminence of the Group is incontestable. So is their commitment to the objective of the Accord. Certainly, they will

have the confidence not only of the Commonwealth but of the wider world community. Together, they represent a vast range of experience and awareness of Southern African realities. They constitute the Commonwealth's offer of help, and they will work to encourage and facilitate the process of peaceful change—with co-operation if it is forthcoming; but, of course, without it (and with greater difficulty) if it is not.

I would like to think that when, one day, a South Africa released from the bondage of apartheid, and with the structures of a non-racial democracy in place, returns to the Commonwealth, it will look back on Nassau remembering any uncertainties about the process promoted there, but grateful that they were promoted—and that they did not reject them out of hand.

As we approach the year 2000, the elimination of racism must be seen as a prerequisite to Commonwealth effort to contribute a more just international society. The issue does not only concern South Africa. Apartheid is simply the worst manifestation of racism, which is an evil found in many places in one form or another, often compounding other injustices. When refugees, for example, are forced to move from one country or region to another, sometimes as a result of racial or religious persecution, their attempt at settlement is often seen as an alien intrusion, and becomes the trigger of further discrimination against them. Racism is also found far from frontiers, in the great cities of the modern world which have become test cases for the multiracial ethic which must inform the global society of the future. All too often it simply resides in our hearts—even of those who are themselves its victims. Yet, the setbacks to multiracialism which occur in truth underline the steady progress which has been made in the great experiment of living together in genuine brotherhood on which mankind is now embarked and upon which the future depends. Racial harmony will be achieved, I am sure, however difficult the road; interdependence demands it, commonsense and common humanity both urge it. It will be accomplished the more readily if we remember Nehru's wise advice:

Greatness [he said] comes from vision, the tolerance of the spirit, compassion and an even temper which is not ruffled by ill fortune or good fortune. It is not through

hatred and violence or internal discord that we make real progress. As in the world today, so also in our country, the philosophy of force can no longer pay and our progress must be based on peaceful co-operation and tolerance of each other.<sup>37</sup>

Last, but by no means least, Nehru inspired the Non-Aligned Movement. He was its prime mover and intellectual mainstay. Early during his Prime Ministership he remarked:

...it does not surprise me how the Great Powers of the world behave to each other. Quite apart from the principles involved, there is an extraordinary crudity about their utterances and activities... anything may happen to this unhappy world when the men in charge of its destiny function in the way they have been doing.<sup>38</sup>

Nehru saw clearly that over and above the existential needs of the new nations lay the awesome logic of nuclear war for rich and poor nations alike. The message of non-violence, which reflected the voice of Indian civilisation over the ages, was particularly relevant in the nuclear age, when humanity was threatened with annihilation. He, therefore, reinterpreted Gandhi's revolutionary notion of moral mediation between antagonists and extracted from it the concept of a third force in world affairs. He saw in non-alignment a means of ensuring an environment of peace in which India and other newly-free countries could promote a life of dignity and creativity for their citizens. But he saw it as a positive influence in the world, not as sterile neutralism.

Non-alignment as a philosophy was not easily understood or accepted in the early days of the Cold War, but Nehru held to it steadfastly. From those difficult beginnings it gradually acquired a world-wide following, and remains one of Nehru's most enduring gifts to our time. The movement may have lost some of its integrity by deviating from time to time from the narrow and often hazardous path laid down by its founders; but these wanderings have been occasional and non-alignment is resuming its standing in world affairs; it has never lost its validity.

It is right, in the context of equidistance from the military alliances, that we should recall Nehru's staunch opposition to nuclear weapons, and his international initiatives on nuclear disarmament. It is especially apposite to do so in the week following the Gorbachev-Reagan Summit in Geneva. It is too early to assess the results of last week's meeting; but that it took place at all is a gain in itself. Yet, if the super-powers treat it simply as a pause that refreshes their adversary relationships—a release of the lid to let off the steam so that the simmering may continue—we may all be the worse off for it. Similar hopes had been placed upon previous East-West Summits, including, in Nehru's time, the Eisenhower-Khrushchev Summit of 1959; yet the net result has been that the nuclear arms race has continued and intensified, with world armaments expenditure now running at some 1,000 billion dollars per annum—over 2 million dollars a minute. That obscenity explains the vast weight of the world's hope which rested upon the Geneva Summit and continues to rest on a positive follow-up to its conclusion.

Nehru the internationalist practitioner would have welcomed Geneva, but his ethic of internationalism would have led him to assert as he did 30 years ago that discussions on control, reduction and elimination of nuclear arms concerned the whole world, not simply the nuclear weapons powers. In 1953, India took the lead in registering the right of the non-nuclear countries to be involved in the negotiations.<sup>39</sup> In 1954, after the US explosion of a hydrogen bomb at Bikini Atoll, Nehru denounced this new and yet more terrible weapon in the Lok Sabha and made concrete proposals which included a stand-still on testing.<sup>40</sup>

Despite little immediate success at the United Nations, India's assertion of the legitimate concern of the non-nuclear countries was taken up by other non-aligned nations, and eventually led in 1962 to the inclusion of eight non-aligned countries together with nuclear-weapons powers in the 18-Nation Disarmament Committee, where the non-aligned group immediately pressed for an effective ban on tests. The following year their efforts were robbed of meaning both by the resumption of testing and the initiation of bilateral negotiations: which brings us back to Geneva. Nehru's legacy lives on in the hearts of all who worry not just about their future or their children's future but about the

future of our planet. And that living legacy finds embodiment today in the Six Continent Peace Initiative and in the role that India plays within it—the role that Nehru moulded for her.

Although I have spoken at length about the political aspects of Nehru's international legacy, there was as well an underlying economic dimension. Indeed, he had devoted much thought to the economic aspects of a free India long before 1947; and at the international economic level he was again to set down markers for the rest of the century. He was quick to recognise that, despite the cold war, the major division in the world was not between the United States and the Soviet Union, but the developed and the undeveloped countries. In this way he was among the first to discern the outlines of what we speak of today as North-South issues.<sup>41</sup> More than 30 years before the Brandt Report, with its emphasis on interdependence and mutual economic benefit, he foreshadowed it all in his address to the Canadian Parliament in 1949:

There can be no security or real peace if vast numbers of people in various parts of the world live in poverty and misery. Nor, can there be a balanced economy for the world as a whole if the undeveloped parts continue to upset that balance and drag down even the more prosperous nations.<sup>42</sup>

No developing country has played a more vigorous or more sustained role on development issues than has India; and in time both the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement were to make that role their own. The legacy has remained valid even if the returns from quite monumental efforts have been minuscule. Nehru's ideas persist and built into them is the conviction that they will one day prevail.

I have kept to my promise not to look to Nehru's domestic legacy; but there are some elements of it that touch his wider influence as one of the greatest of nation builders. He not only visualised a great future for India, but gave it form. He spear-headed India's political, economic and social transformation: democratic institutions and the politics of national consensus; strong industrial foundations; the creation of a buoyant agricultural economy in place of a stagnant one; the harnessing of

science and technology on an epic scale and the awareness that moral values must underline economic and social development. Few statesmen presided over changes as great as those brought about by Nehru. And through it all shone his modernity.

When asked towards the end of his life what he regarded as the greatest real advance achieved under his leadership, he had no hesitation in pinpointing the improvement in the condition of Hindu women. Decades before feminism was in vogue (as far back as 1928), Nehru had asserted that the test of a country's progress was the status of its women;<sup>43</sup> after 1947, when he had the opportunity, he more than lived up to that long-expressed belief. He did so despite hostility and opposition from important sections of the Congress Party, refusing once more to sacrifice or subordinate fundamental principles to political convenience.

There is one final aspect of Nehru's legacy which must also command our attention, and admiration—his character and style. He set an example which, however difficult, the Third World must endeavour to emulate. He was democratic to the core. He believed in the exercise not of power, but of influence; and he laboured mightily for the good of his people and his country, without thought of personal benefit or reward. His integrity was total. When a wealth tax was introduced in India, the Allahabad Municipality put a value on Nehru's ancestral home which the Prime Minister regarded as a gross under-estimate. He protested and saw to it that the valuation was increased five-fold.

Most endearing of all, Nehru remained free from dogma and refused to be type-cast. He had the honesty to proclaim that he did not have all the answers. When, in 1960, he last addressed the United Nations General Assembly, he said:

I am no man of wisdom. I am only a person who has dabbled in public affairs for nearly half a century and learnt something from them and what I have learnt mostly is how wise men often behave in a very foolish manner. That thought makes me often doubt my own wisdom. I question myself: 'am I right'?<sup>44</sup>

Intellectual humility and intellectual tolerance; how much better a place our world would be if its leaders displayed these qualities in even small measure.

Once, when Nehru was inaugurating a dam in South India, a worker approached him and said: "Here you have lighted a lamp." Nehru was moved by this comment as a judgement of work well done, and reflected on its symbolism. He asked himself: "Do we, in the course of our lives, light lamps, or do we snuff out the lamps or candles that exist?"<sup>45</sup> Nehru did light lamps not only in India but in the hearts of men and women throughout the world. They may not everywhere burn brightly; but they will never be snuffed out while they kindle in their turn the human conscience.

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## **PEACE: AN AMBITION BEYOND ARMISTICE**

- I — The Agenda of Anxiety**
- II — The Priorities of Peace**

*The Bertrand Russell Peace Lectures  
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario,  
28 and 29 September, 1987*

## I — THE AGENDA OF ANXIETY

I count it a great honour to be invited to deliver this third series of Bertrand Russell Peace Lectures. The two previous distinguished speakers in this series were 'peace activists' in a very practical sense; peace was more than simply their field of academic inquiry, it was their vocation.<sup>1</sup> As a practitioner of international affairs I have many pursuits, but because peace is an over-arching concern in my endeavours on behalf of the Commonwealth and the wider international community, I think of myself as an activist of sorts. I hope my predecessors at this rostrum would not be unhappy with my admission to their ranks.

Bertrand Russell himself was, of course, in a special sense an activist for peace, and it is a tribute to the judgement of this University that it has amassed an exceptional archive pertinent to the study of peace, including the Bertrand Russell papers, and that this Lecture Series has been established in his memory. Russell focussed the laser of his thought on practically the whole of human life. But he stood especially both for the achievement of civilisation and for civilisation's survival against the threat of global destruction posed by nuclear weapons—a cause in which he campaigned with unremitting vigour until his last breath.

He worked for peace in the universities and through the media and on the streets, everywhere that he could make his voice heard, and twice went to prison for his beliefs, the last time when he was close on ninety. His pitting of the power of reason against the anxieties of many decades, and pre-eminently against the gross unreason of war, teaches us to be rigorous in intellectual examination, just as his courageous action on his conclusions teaches us to be, as he was, passionate in pursuit of peace.

I have had the unique good fortune in recent years to have been a member of three international Commissions—independent Commissions whose mandates taken together represent a global agenda of anxiety. They dealt respectively with development, security and environment issues as they affect all countries

and all people. In retrospect, it is remarkable how closely entwined was the work of the three Commissions—not by some master plan, but by the interdependence of the issues themselves. The Brandt Report on Development Issues is also about security. The Palme Report on Security Issues is also about development. The Brundtland Report on the Environment is also about both development and security issues.

But there was another shared factor that emerged from this separate work. The Brandt Commission's Reports were called 'North-South: A Programme for Survival'<sup>2</sup> and 'Common Crisis'.<sup>3</sup> The Palme Commission's Report was called 'Common Security'.<sup>4</sup> The Brundtland Commission's Report, published this year, is called 'Our Common Future'.<sup>5</sup> The theme of one world, of an inseparable humanity, of a common human destiny, is a thread that runs through all three; it does so, because that thread of inseparability—of interdependence we call it now—runs through the lives of all who inhabit this planet. Nothing I say in these Lectures will make full sense if I fail to convey why we simply have to accept, as these Commissions came to accept, that the bedrock of our rich human variety is our oneness and the unity of our mutual needs.

Bertrand Russell recognised the reality of interdependence, the mutuality of human interests, as long ago as 1950 when he declared; "Mankind has become so much one family that we cannot insure our own prosperity except by insuring that of everyone else."<sup>6</sup> And near the end of his life he wrote: "It is necessary to teach both individuals and Governments that as one family mankind may prosper as never before, but as many competing families there is no prospect before mankind except death."<sup>7</sup> The relevance of peace studies here at McMaster could seek no better justification.

The link between the issues—one might almost say the 'missing link', the interconnecting theme of our human agenda of anxiety that emerges is, unquestionably, 'peace'. But it is peace whose parameters go beyond the conventional—peace with wider perspectives than those an East-West context impresses on it. War may be the ultimate antithesis of peace; but the absence of war is not necessarily peace. Peace is more than freedom from armed conflict; it is ambition that reaches beyond armistice. The real challenge that faces us, the basic moral imperative of our

time, is not merely to avoid war, but to achieve peace.

In this Lecture I want to focus on our contemporary agenda of anxiety; in the next, on the priorities of peace. To start with, however, let me make two basic points relevant to the Lectures. Both points relate to ethics.

Twenty-five years ago, when he was America's Ambassador to the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson, one of the truly great men of the post-war period, spoke of this being "the anxious age" and of our need for "an ethic of survival".<sup>8</sup> He acknowledged that the search for ethical guidelines of human endeavour is as old as man himself. But his point was that never before in human history has the need been as great as it is now to develop such guidelines and to live by them. Never before, indeed, have we faced the danger of total extinction. When we speak of human survival today, we no longer mean survival of family, of tribe, of race, of culture, or even of civilisation. We mean, comprehensively, what we say: survival of *homo sapiens*. That is a compelling incentive for finding a path to human self-preservation.

But why an ethical path? The answer to that must lie, in part, in the gravity of our situation. But it lies essentially in our growing awareness that it is precisely the undeveloped nature of a universal morality that has put human existence at risk. Bertrand Russell, again with relevance to your programmes at McMaster, held that "only a new kind of education, inculcating a new set of moral values, will make it possible to keep a peaceful world in existence."<sup>9</sup> Your own Pierre Trudeau has eloquently argued the need for a new international morality, a new outlook by peoples and governments about the morality governing our relations with each other.<sup>10</sup> I am sure they were both right; in our not heeding their urgings, the gravest questions remain unanswered today.

Yet the very enormity of our present danger has a tendency to narrow the thrust of that demand. An ethic of survival must, of course, be concerned with survival itself: with ensuring perpetuation of our human species; with securing for mankind as a whole the basic right to life. But this cannot be the only effort. There is another tributary of this ethical stream. There is an equally great moral compulsion to secure for all members of the human family a condition of life that does not deny their very humanity.

Human development over the aeons of man's existence is, in one sense, the story of our uneven progress towards this second goal—realisation of the right to a tolerable level of existence: at the level of family, of tribe, of nation and now of the wider human society. It is my contention that, as I will try to elaborate, the quality of life has a crucial bearing on life itself. Salvation is more than mere survival. The impulse for peace must be directed to the nature as well as the continuity of human existence. Humanity's most pressing need is to evolve effective responses to the predicament we face on both fronts: to the threat our anxious age presents to peace in this wider sense.

Like justice and freedom, peace is indivisible. As justice is about the quality of life that the law ordains not only within countries but within our global society, so peace goes beyond relations between states to the environment of every human life. And that environment is enhanced or polluted not just by war and preparations for war but by a whole variety of other relationships shaped by human conduct. At the heart of them are the relationships between rich and poor in the world.

We recognise that a national society cannot be at peace if power, privilege and prosperity are the prerogatives of only a few, with deprivation, degradation and despair the lot of the many. Why do we think our world society can be at peace when such disparities prevail within it, such yawning disparities between a few who prosper and the great majority trapped in poverty? Poor countries may not yet have the power to disrupt the international system as oppressed workers can within a nation, but poverty encourages regions of insecurity which cannot be confined discreetly within such boundaries. For those thus entrapped, but in truth for all of us, it cannot be a time of peace. It must be a supreme moral obligation to release humanity from such bondage.

I said earlier that the quality of life bears on life itself. For some it does so in fearfully practical terms. War, in our minds, conjures up a toll of human life: the tragedy of many who die prematurely and others whose lives are blighted by the deprivations and deformities that go hand in hand with conflict. By these same standards, many hundreds of millions pass all their lives in war-time: condemned by poverty to a state of perpetual siege. Life expectancy, for example, is less than 40 years in Sierra Leone or

Guinea, compared with 75 years in France or Japan; infant mortality rates are in excess of 150 per thousand in Mali or Ethiopia, compared with six in Finland or nine in Canada. If only one child in sixteen were to die in the Third World before the age of one, rather than the one in eight who on the average die at present, two and a half million lives would be saved each year. On present demographic levels, if average life expectancy in the Third World were to be raised to that of the developed countries, some 7 million more would live not die every year.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, over a period of five years, the ravages of poverty and under-development are estimated to take their toll of a minimum of 35 million lives. What of the rights of those millions? Ironically, that is the minimum number of combatants and non-combatants who perished in the five years of World War II. For some, war never ends. Per capita GNP—income per head—is our rough measure of poverty and wealth; it is less than \$200 per head in Mali and Bangladesh, compared with \$16,000 per head in Switzerland and \$15,000 in the United States.<sup>12</sup> It is more than futility, it is downright provocation, to ask Malians or Bangladeshis to hail the end years of the twentieth century as a time of peace. The Horsemen of the Apocalypse were charged to kill with famine as with the sword; today, they acknowledge no frontiers, certainly none that insulate the Third World, which has some disturbing parallels with the Biblical “fourth part of the earth” over which they were given dominion.<sup>13</sup>

But the paradox is that poverty diminishes humanity both directly by taking lives and indirectly by making life more unendurable for ever-enlarging numbers. In terms of the prospects of peace in the next century, few factors are likely to be more important than world population growth. The trends should fill us with foreboding, especially their conjuncture with poverty. It took 150 years (from 1750 to 1900) for the world's population to double; but from 1950 to 1980 it rose from 2.5 billion to 4.8 billion—doubling now in about 30 years.<sup>14</sup> The annual increment today is about 100 million people: equivalent to a new Bangladesh every year; an acceleration of both population and poverty. Twenty-two cities now have a population of more than 7 million. Twelve are in the developing world. By the end of the century—less that 13 years away—there will be 35 cities of over 7 million, and 23 of them will be in the

developing world. Mexico City, now 18 million, will have grown to over 26 million—the entire present population of Canada.<sup>15</sup>

None will suffer more from this urban explosion than tomorrow's children, for whom the future is anything but a promise of peace. Already, the phenomenon of street children—at present, some 30 million who know no home but the street—casts a grim shadow of abandonment, illiteracy, unemployment and alienation across a generation yet unborn.<sup>16</sup> How many millions are we condemning to life as primitives at the centre of our cities of the twenty-first century? Is theirs a prospect of peace? Have we no ethical compulsions to try to make it so?

If there is to be hope of improving on these prospects of enlarging the potential for peace, it must lie in real development, in reducing those gross disparities between prosperity and poverty. This is the central challenge of the Papal assertion that “the new name for peace is development”. Meeting that challenge requires a world economic environment that offers something more than that the rich will grow richer at no slower a pace, and that the poor will actually not get poorer. It means looking towards a new, more equitable, order of world economic relationships in which the gap, far from enlarging, begins to close. It means managing the world economy for the benefit of all the world's people. As Bertrand Russell urged, “A continual attempt to move towards economic equality must, therefore, be part of the pursuit of secure and lasting peace.”<sup>17</sup>

For most of the world's 5 billion people there is little in the world economic situation to justify encouragement, much less faith. Even in the industrialised world these are times of greater unemployment than anyone under 50 can remember; a debt problem threatens countries whose creditworthiness has never before been in question; commodity prices, the mainstay of the economies of most developing countries, have fallen in real terms to their lowest levels since the 1930s; currency distortions have become so gross that they have been authoritatively described as having reached a stage of ‘mature anarchy’.

And, in our ‘anxious age’ adopting Adlai Stevenson's term, the agenda of anxiety is a long one. It is a time of vanishing forests and encroaching deserts; a time once more of famine and of refugees; a time of disappearing persons. It is a time when rain sometimes falls with an acidic content the equivalent of lemon

juice. It is a time of drug abuse of the most frightening proportions, and of the excesses of national and international terrorism, sometimes even at the level of state action. More and more, we resemble that time in the sixteenth century when Sir Thomas More described the world as “ruffled and fallen into a wildness”.<sup>18</sup> It is a time of world-wide hunger for peace in its deepest, most profound, and most universal sense.

The Brundtland Commission, the World Commission on Environment and Development, has now alerted the world to the need to be guided by concepts of sustainable development, by “an approach to human progress which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”<sup>19</sup> We are talking here not just of the economic development of developing countries but of all development—of human progress. The requirement that such development be ‘sustainable’ is an injunction to all countries and all people. Since the ability of future generations to meet their own needs can be compromised as much by the excesses of industrial and technological development as by the environmental degradation of under-development, sustainability has to be both perceived and measured in global terms.

In specific and important areas, careful management of resources is already needed to avoid sustainable limits being surpassed—in drinking water, in fish stocks, in the extermination of biologically valuable and irreplaceable plant and animal species through the clearance of tropical forests. Perhaps the most serious of the limits now being recognised relates to the atmosphere. The long-term energy problem has traditionally been seen in terms of the world running out of non-renewable fuels. A more serious and immediate threat is the steady build-up in the atmosphere of carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuel burning. Acid rain from emissions of sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides destroy forests thousands of miles away. Other atmospheric pollution includes damage to the ozone layer by chlorofluorocarbons (like those released daily from millions of aerosol cans) and the ‘greenhouse’ warming of the planet from both carbon dioxide emissions and deforestation.<sup>20</sup> Here we are much in the hands of the scientists; but the scientific consensus is now such as to serve notice on us all that in tampering in these ways with the composition of the atmosphere we court an

awesome peril. Is it not almost unbelievable that in this situation what seems uppermost in the policies of some governments is not so much the fate of their populations as the fortunes of their chemical industries?

At the very least, until we understand this phenomenon better, there must be a large question mark over growth in the use of fossil fuels. At the same time, in the aftermath of Chernobyl, can anyone be surprised at the conclusion of the Brundtland Commission that “the generation of nuclear power is only justifiable if there are solid solutions to the presently unsolved problems to which it gives rise”<sup>21</sup> These two constraints—on the expansion of fossil fuel use and nuclear power—present an acute dilemma that bears on human survival: how to provide the necessary energy for the growth of developing countries, much of which will inevitably be centred on energy-intensive forms of development? ‘Sustainable development’ must mean growth, but growth which respects limits to environmental resources such as clean air, water, forests and soils; which maintains genetic diversity; and which uses energy and raw materials efficiently and safely—in ways not endangering human survival.

And growth and conservation objectives have to be balanced against equity. In the international context this arises specially in respect of the global ‘commons’: the oceans, including the seabed; Antarctica; and space. These are all the world’s resources which no individual or nation owns. They must all ultimately be regarded as the common heritage of mankind, and present trends are in that direction. But management has evolved on an *ad hoc* basis and has tended to be dominated by countries whose wealth or advanced technology has given them a head start.

The Law of the Sea Convention has created a legal basis by which maritime states can defend offshore resources; but, for the same reason, small and weak states still remain vulnerable to predatory fishing and waste dumping—no collective security system protects their resources. And a major unresolved problem relates to the ocean sea-bed, where the failure of the present American Administration to sign the Convention, and of a number of industrialised countries to ratify it, has left a large hole in the evolving system of management of the global commons. The ethic of ‘one world’ lags too far behind the separatist habits

of an earlier era.

The Antarctica Treaty is a somewhat happier story—at least in terms of conservationist objectives; but there is growing restiveness among many countries that a self-elected group of strong states should usurp a continent by asserting the right to manage it on behalf of the rest of mankind.<sup>22</sup> As the hole in the ozone layer widens over Antarctica, threatening life on the planet, the possessiveness of earlier times seems wholly out of place.

The empty wastes of space have not yet been brought within the ambit of ‘possession’; but there is a growing awareness of its great potential as a global resource. And, immediately, the potential for conflicts of interest also emerge; for example, in respect of the geosynchronous orbit—increasingly seen as crucial for satellite communications. And as awareness of the communications value of space—including its value for development—increases, there is growing questioning of the assumption by the superpowers that they can use inner space as a kind of free-fire-zone for space weapons and a dumping ground for space debris.

Let me turn, therefore, to the larger issue of militarisation which bears both on the quality of life and on life itself—on peace in its widest sense. Perhaps I should start by saying that the disarmament debate, whatever form it takes between the superpowers and in Europe, is now a debate which concerns all humanity. When I was growing up as a boy in Guyana it was natural for us to assume detachment from the arms race. Viewed from the Caribbean it was tempting to conclude that if the Americans and the Europeans, East and West, chose to blow themselves up in a new round of tribal wars, that would be their affair: sad, tragic, deplorable in every respect; but their affair. Today, we know better. The Third World is acutely aware that real disarmament is not merely a matter of domestic concern to the super-powers or nuclear powers only.

One year ago, at a meeting in Mexico of the Six Nation Peace Initiative, former President Nyerere of Tanzania expressed these common concerns of the Third World in this way: “We have a right to be heard. As nations and people we exist. And whatever other rights our peoples lack, they have at least the right to continue to exist.”<sup>23</sup> At that same meeting, the novelist Gabriel

Garcia Marquez gave vivid expression to the right of every human being to join the crusade for disarmament when he evoked a post-nuclear holocaust world of everlasting night, hurricanes and polluted orange rain, a world 'peopled' only by cockroaches.<sup>24</sup> A few months later at Madrid, International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War, which links the medical professions of the United States and the Soviet Union, re-asserted that human life could cease on this planet in the wake of a major nuclear war.<sup>25</sup>

The Brundtland Commission highlighted nuclear war as "a threat to civilisation," a threat before which "other threats to the environment pale into insignificance." In doing so, the Report drew attention to the prospect of 'nuclear winter' authoritatively explored by some 300 scientists from the United States, the USSR and 30 other countries, working on a collaborative basis across ideological divides. It concluded that "a nuclear war cannot be won, and must never be fought"; that "in the aftermath, there would be no difference between so-called victor and vanquished."<sup>26</sup>

In the early aeons of existence, human beings on our planet faced, and soon overcame, real challenges to survival from a hostile and untamed environment. But never since has the threat of human extinction ever been seriously revived—until now. Our response, of course, must depend on the nature of the threat. And here there is a difference from immemorial times. Now, in strange reversal of man's predicament, the threat to human survival—the threat to peace—comes not from forces ranged against the human race on a hostile planet, but from the power which man's genius has vouchsafed him over a bountiful planet—the threat comes from man himself. Accepting this reality, and taking it as axiomatic that it must be the primordial duty of every generation to preserve for the next at least the right to life, can the ethics of human survival be anything but compelling and ineluctable? It is to this ethical dimension of ensuring human survival that I call attention—as others have done from time to time. But I do so all the more insistently today as the threat to human survival constantly enlarges, and as the policy debate on relevant issues ignores (or sometimes denies) the implications of those issues for human survival and relegates ethics to an irrelevancy.

In 1945, with the pain and anguish of war fresh and raw, nations acknowledged this man-made threat and their moral duty to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. The war, after all, had ended with the first nuclear explosions ever to take place in conflict; and nations knew that these had to be the last. Indeed, it helped to soothe troubled consciences that those explosions, above all the other horrors of the conflict, might ensure that the Second World War did end all wars. In founding the United Nations, they solemnly promised “to beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks”.<sup>27</sup> In making that early Biblical injunction their own, they accepted as well that “nation shall not lift up sword against nation. Neither shall they learn war any more.”<sup>28</sup> They understood in that brief moment of enlightenment the need for an ethic of human survival.

That understanding, sadly, has faded over time. It was made so subordinate to doctrines of deterrence that global militarisation now has little need for rationality, though it has long passed levels which ‘deterrence’ could defend. All the fire-power expended in World War II amounted to no more than 6 megatons of TNT. The world’s current nuclear arsenal is the equivalent of 18,000 megatons—3,000 World War IIs. A single US Trident submarine represents 24 megatons of destructive power—four World War IIs. For the two atomic bombs that changed the world in 1945, there exist today some 50,000 nuclear warheads. We have fallen, indeed, “into a wildness”.<sup>29</sup>

And this armoury has its huge and unacceptable cost—both in money terms and in terms of the corrupting influence of a military culture. Today, annual global military spending has probably reached US\$1,000 billion;<sup>30</sup> more than US\$2.5 billion a day—nearly US\$2 million a minute; figures so enormous as to make the imagination boggle. The real cost, of course, is how the same resources might otherwise be used. Earlier this month an international conference on the relationship between disarmament and development ended at the United Nations in New York. That it was convened only after postponement and international wrangling, and in the absence of the United States, is a measure of the reluctance of governments to acknowledge the real cost of militarisation. To the credit of this country, Canada’s Secretary of State for External Affairs put on record the

fact that Canada is investigating the possibility of a national study on the conversion of defence production into civilian production, in order to identify and publicise the benefits of conversion.<sup>31</sup> Few governments have gone so far. We can choose to ignore, we can never defend, the ethical implications of the choices our generation has made. In the end, despite all the promises of the United Nations 'operation ploughshares', we have turned the post-war period into an era of militarisation.

The argument of both NATO and Warsaw Pact Governments that military expenditure is a necessary insurance against war, and that the nuclear deterrence strategy which underpins the arms race has succeeded in keeping the peace between East and West for over 40 years, cannot easily be dismissed. It is arguable, of course, that there is no evidence that supports this claim. Nonetheless, many do believe that an element of deterrence has been a factor in preserving an uneasy peace between the superpowers in the post-war period. What is clear, however, is that this situation has changed qualitatively as it has changed quantitatively.

In present circumstances, the argument that if our children are to inherit the earth we must have the capacity to destroy it several times over has no credibility with the vast majority of people—and not only the man in the street. Many leading politicians, scientists and doctors from all regions of the world are now convinced that the continuing competitive stockpiling of lethal weapons threatens the very survival of our humankind. That is, of course, the conviction of the hundreds of thousands of people who participate in the peace demonstrations that have become such a feature of the contemporary scene in North America and Western Europe, and who would surely be marching as well in Eastern Europe were they allowed to do so.

Apart from anything else, they know that as weapons systems grow more complex and more sensitive, the danger also grows that the world could be destroyed not only by design but also by misadventure. When Pershing II and Cruise Missiles were recently deployed in Europe in reply to Warsaw Pact deployments, what was done in the name of NATO's security interests produced a heightened sense of insecurity in many Europeans. Quite apart from any predictable Soviet response, they knew that the safety margin in accidental terms had been dramatically

reduced.

And now the American Strategic Defence Initiative, 'Star Wars', threatens a major new dimension of military expenditure—and apocalyptic danger—taking the arms race into outer space. Of course, as with all weapons development, this is sold politically as another 'defence' capability. SDI is a 'shield' not a 'sword'. I wonder what the tortured survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki would think about that reassurance. An ethic of survival, the imperative of peace, demands an end to this truly terrible danger. But the need for such a response goes deeper; and it is on these less visible, less apocalyptic, implications of global militarisation that I wish to place some emphasis.

The two super-powers, with only 11 per cent of the world's population, control 97 per cent of its inventory of nuclear weapons. They account for more than half the world's military budget and 80 per cent of the military research budget. But, as important as any of these, is that between them they account for such a vast proportion of the arms moving abroad. During 1980–83, the value of world exports of arms was US\$141.6 billion. The United States held its lead as the world's major arms exporter with 38.7 per cent of this total, but the Soviet Union was not so far behind at 27.6 per cent, while France, at 10.6 per cent, had sprinted into double figures—high achievers in the export of the militarist culture almost frenetically promoted at the arms bazaars.<sup>32</sup>

Attractive credit terms, often unavailable for food or medicines, are never in short supply for arms and, in the case of the United States and the Soviet Union, arms come often as part of aid programmes. In the decade up to 1980, US weapons (on the authority of the Department of Defence) were sold and transferred to 130 different countries.<sup>33</sup> There is talk now of an arms embargo against the combatants in the Gulf War—a war waged with arms supplied by all five permanent members of the Security Council, the self-appointed paramount custodians of peace. And this is to say nothing of the thriving illicit trade in arms. No wonder the world's terrorists have no difficulty in getting hold of Kalishnikovs, Uzis and M-16s! But, what, after all, is 'illicit' when arms become barter for hostages, with profits re-invested in other militarist adventures?

And the virus of militarisation has taken firm hold in the Third

World. By 1985, Third World military spending had increased five-fold since 1960, amounting to about 20 per cent of annual global expenditure.<sup>34</sup> As much as one quarter of the Third World's crippling debt burden has resulted from arms purchases.<sup>35</sup> Of course, there are minimum needs of security, and sometimes—as in Southern Africa—major needs imposed by gross and unremitting threats to the security of new and largely defenceless states. I do not mean to impugn expenditure that responds to such needs. But there is more besides. And Third World arms production has grown steadily, with fifty-four developing countries having indigenous arms industries in 1985.<sup>36</sup> At present, the spread is of old conventional arms technology; but Third World countries will soon begin demanding 'ET'—not a friendly being from another planet, but the 'Emergent Technology' of the next generation of conventional weapons systems now in the hands of the industrialised countries.

The link between technology and the arms race must also be high on our agenda of anxiety. Of all the world's scientists and technologists at work today on research and development, one out of every four is employed on weapons and, to adopt Bertrand Russell's distinction, many serve the ends of governments rather than those proper to science. Yet scientists could help to cauterise the danger they have created and allay the anxiety. Arthur C. Clarke, the science writer who first suggested geostationary and communications satellites, has recently proposed, as a counter to 'Star Wars', 'Peacesat'—reconnaissance satellites controlled by an international monitoring satellite agency as a watchdog to verify arms control agreements and warn of other visible threats to the peace. As he notes, "the real problem is not military hardware, but human software."<sup>37</sup>

Numerous companies exist chiefly on what are euphemistically described as 'defence' contracts. What vested interests are being acquired in the preservation of this military culture? How hard will these interests strive to sustain it? Already, it is being said that a major cutback in defence expenditure in the United States would severely disrupt its economy and add significantly to unemployment. Are we building prosperity for industrialised societies, and perhaps some newly industrialising ones, on the production of increasingly unusable weapons of destruction?

And are we doing so to the point where sustaining this production becomes for these countries a desirable, even compulsive, objective in itself? If this is so, what are the implications for disarmament, or even for arms control? Has the military culture spawned an economic structure which now, in turn, generates new incentives, even imperatives, for further militarisation? And all this in the name of peace!

Were we really, then, at the super-power summit in Reykjavik last autumn, on the threshold of a decade that would bring us close to the end of nuclear weapons? I remember saying at the time that, while the promise to release the world from nuclear thralldom was not sealed at Reykjavik, nothing could ever be the same again in the entire field of disarmament. My point was that for a long time, many (like Bertrand Russell) had argued that there existed no military purpose for nuclear weapons of any kind; that their role, including deterrence, is essentially political; and that what is needed is a decision to advance to a post-nuclear political era of international relations. Reykjavik, I suggested, had put that proposition beyond serious contention.<sup>38</sup>

Now, substantial and welcome progress has been made towards the elimination from Europe and beyond of US and Soviet intermediate nuclear forces. As the leaders of the Six Nation Peace Initiative said as long ago as last May, such an agreement “would constitute the crossing of an important psychological threshold, since, for the first time, it would lead to mutual withdrawal and destruction of fully operational nuclear weapon systems.”<sup>39</sup> But, we must recognise (with the British Foreign Secretary) that this is only “the beginning of the beginning.”<sup>40</sup> An INF agreement will eliminate a substantial number of nuclear weapon systems; many tens of thousands more—some 96 per cent of nuclear war-heads in existence—will not be affected. The level of economic effort dedicated to both nuclear and conventional arms will not be significantly reduced. There is even a danger that the INF agreement will be used by some to promote increases in other military sectors.

If the present prospect of progress is not to be nullified it must be sustained—through, for example, the pursuit and fulfilment of the Shultz-Shevardnadze promise of negotiating on “50 per cent reductions in strategic offensive weapons in the framework of the Geneva talks”.<sup>41</sup> The Secretary-General of NATO may be

right in asserting that the INF agreement will not by itself lead to “some mythical non-nuclear nirvana”;<sup>42</sup> but, that is precisely what the world’s people expect the world’s leaders—all of them, not just the leaders of the super-powers—to secure in the name of disarmament.

So peace must not grow complacent. Not everyone, remember, was disappointed by the retreat from agreement at Reykjavik; some, specially in Europe, said openly: “Thank goodness, they didn’t agree.” Nor should we ignore the strength of the military/industrial lobby against disarmament, within both alliances. They will now be re-grouping. There is no shortage of spoilers. The Pentagon thought it necessary to underline American commitment to a ‘Star Wars’ programme even as the INF agreement was being announced.<sup>43</sup> A non-nuclear peace is not about to break out.

The real challenge ahead, however, is whether the spoilers of that peace are able to resume ascendancy. If they are able to miniaturise the disarmament process; if the negotiations that follow the INF agreement are an exercise in arithmetic mainly, ignoring altogether the ethics of human survival, even the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons will prove beyond our grasp. As the pace of arms control negotiations between the super-powers quickens, it must not be forgotten that there is no basis for halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons on our planet save through the genuine commitment and example of the major nuclear powers themselves. A world that is not free from all nuclear weapons, is a world that lives forever with the prospect of their proliferation.

The agenda of anxiety I have put before you in these Lectures is a long one. It may strike a sombre note but, in truth, for many in the world community the present is a bad enough time—even if, for a few, it may look like the best of times. This is because we live with the most extraordinary disparities between prosperity and poverty. Yet even for the few who are advantaged, complacency is wearing thin in the political environment of our anxious age. Why this environment? Why are so many governments ready to embrace—or, at least, acquiesce in—a world characterised by disorder, insecurity and massive human suffering? The world’s governments are not evil; they are not in conspiracy to enlarge human disparities, to destabilise world

society or to destroy us altogether.

At least in part, the answer lies in the drift away from the global morality that once underpinned internationalism. With that erosion of moral values as the foundation of human solidarity, the vision of our oneness, of an inseparable humanity, of a world community of people, has not sharpened as it should have done and found expression in new or strengthened internationalist institutions; the spirit of global co-operation so carefully nurtured in the early post-war years has withered; an old, narrow, inward-looking nationalism has re-emerged, fortified by an adversary system of international relations, nurtured by concepts of national sovereignty and, in the case of the super-powers, national sufficiency and even primacy. This is bad enough in itself; it becomes more dangerous for the world's political system and more debilitating for the world economy when it is so much at variance with the palpable unity of human needs and the mutual dependence of nations in meeting them. Internationalism has lost its ethical moorings just at the moment when it needs a firm base from which to respond to our insistent agenda of anxiety—to the expanded dimensions of global interdependence that the 70s and 80s have highlighted.

But consideration of these issues evokes the true priorities of peace, to which I shall turn in my next Lecture.

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Attached to the Mexico Declaration is a document on verification in which the six nations state their readiness "to assist in the monitoring of a mutual moratorium or a test ban" and outline a number of measures aimed at facilitating the achievement of adequate verification arrangements in co-operation with the Soviet Union and the United States. (1986/1987) 10 No. 1 *Disarmament: A periodic review by the United Nations* (United Nations, New York, 1987) pp. 25-26; and UN Doc. A/42/319/1 -S/18894. Also the *Financial Times*, London, 6 August 1986 and *The Times*, London, 8 August 1986.

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## II—THE PRIORITIES OF PEACE

*I*n my first Lecture I put before you the agenda of anxiety that I believe demands attention on a global basis. Will we give it that attention and, if we do, how will we respond to its compulsions for peace? In the early 1970s—in the early days of her writing that was to flow so bounteously—the Canadian writer Margaret Atwood in her poem ‘They are Hostile Nations’ warned us:

It is cold and getting colder:  
we need each other’s  
breathing, warmth, surviving  
is the only war  
we can afford.<sup>1</sup>

She did not know in those days of the prospect of a nuclear winter; but her poet’s prescience led her to warn in memorable verse how compelling were the priorities of peace. In this Lecture I want to ask: what are those priorities; and, even more immediate, what is peace?

It was Margaret Atwood also who once reminded us that the Eskimo people have 52 names for ‘snow’—because it is so important to them. She urged that “there ought to be as many for ‘love’”.<sup>2</sup> I would add: there ought to be as many for ‘peace’—not only because it is so important to us, but also because it has so many faces. I have little doubt that we would find that those 52 names would work for both ‘peace’ and ‘love’. When Bertrand Russell declared in the Prologue to his Autobiography that ‘the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind’ were the three simple but overwhelming passions that governed his life,<sup>3</sup> I have little doubt that subsumed in all these was the goal that dominated his closing years, his passion for peace.

Yesterday, I stressed that peace is more than the absence of war; that its ambition reaches beyond armistice; that it pertains both to the quality and the continuity of human existence; that

human salvation is more than mere survival. If we are to 'give peace a chance'; if we are to respond to its priorities, we shall have to keep these wider parameters in focus.

The trouble is that the image of peace is all too often cast in the obverse mould of strife. We know what war is; indeed, in the evolution of human history, we have come so much to accept its inevitability, almost its naturalness, that we make rules for it: 'rules of war' made, with supreme irony, in response to high humanitarian instincts. We have rules that govern the conduct of war, the treatment of prisoners, of the sick and wounded, of the victims of war at sea and the treatment of civilians. It is as if we have inherited the perceptions of some earlier era when war was accepted as a natural if unpleasant element of human existence, given a place even within a system of world order. It is a touch of humanity amid the horrors of war that these rules and conventions exist, and that organisations like the International Red Cross sustain them. But what about the 'rules of peace'? Are there no priorities that enjoin respect for them?

As people everywhere recoiled in horror in 1939 from the looming calamities of World War II, that war, like its predecessor, came to be seen and eventually to be fought as a "war to end wars". As it ended in 1945, the United Nations was devised in a rare moment of collective enlightenment—a creative act to which many contributed, almost as a symbol of the new world that peace would bring. This time we would, through the United Nations, "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war";<sup>4</sup> we would make it the repository of what were agreed to be the 'rules of peace'. The post-war era would be an era of peace.

Has it been? There are some who assert that, in the absence of a major war, it has been an era of peace. But does this not represent tunnel vision or even myopia, or is it a case of the triumph of hope over logic? The questioning goes beyond 'major' and 'minor' wars. It took the United Nations ten years to agree this year even on a draft declaration enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of refraining from the threat or use of force in international relations;<sup>5</sup> and as long as thirty years to reach agreement on the definition of 'aggression' for the purposes of the Charter.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps those who are so certain about the meaning of 'peace' and 'war' would cite that as the ultimate in international semantics. In truth, it was a groping for a deeper understanding

of 'war'; for an acknowledgement that, as between states, there is behaviour other than outright war—techniques of aggression short of mass destruction—that our human society must regard as unacceptable and, therefore, outlaw.

The agreed definition of 'aggression' did not ultimately encompass all such acts. But that definition has not ended the debate; people will continue the quest for a world order in which, both by definition and intuition, war is understood and acknowledged to be the absence of peace, rather than peace perceived as the absence of war. Over fifty years ago, W.B. Yeats, decrying, in his "Supernatural Songs", mankind's endless cycles of destruction, wrote with poetic insight that:

Civilisation is hooped together, brought  
Under a rule, under the semblance of peace  
By manifold illusion.<sup>7</sup>

It is against that semblance of peace that I warn.

Such illusions are not new. The nineteenth century used to be described by English writers as "the Great Peace", when Britain was, broadly speaking, 'at peace' between Waterloo and World War I. It is a description which, in its own terms invites inquiry about, for example, the Crimean or the Boer Wars. But, those apart, what of the many other wars of empire which kept Britain's forces permanently employed somewhere on the globe—in the Chinese Opium Wars, on the frontiers with Afghanistan, in India during the so-called Mutiny, in the Sudan, in Ethiopia even—what Kipling aptly called "the savage wars of peace"?<sup>8</sup> The British public were able to celebrate victories, to enjoy their spoils—and to forget. For them, it was a time of peace. Pax Britannica.<sup>9</sup> And as is often the case, the perceptions of the dominant become falsely the predominant consciousness.

But those who were conquered or subdued by force of European arms saw things in a different light—and still do. It would be hard to persuade the Ashanti, the Zulus, or the Maoris that Britain had not been at war. They know that they had been. The dichotomy, of course, has parallels in the history of other imperial powers. Those conflicts, quickly forgotten in Europe, were often the inspiration for renewed nationalisms after 1945—sometimes well after. In Zimbabwe right up to 1980, the armed struggle, the 'second Chimurenga', as ZANU called it, took its

name from the unsuccessful resistance to white settler rule in the 1890s.<sup>10</sup> In such conflicts lie deep the roots of the world's new states. And still, today, illusions persist. Is it not, for example, essentially a major-power fallacy that the post-war era has been a time of peace? Were the Hungarians of 1956, or the Czechs of Dubcek's "Prague Spring" of 1968, in their enforced submission, casualties of someone else's peace? Was military intervention in Suez in 1956, was the 'Bay of Pigs' in 1961, or the mining of Managua's harbour in 1984 not each an act of war? And were there, are there, not many others?

Is there peace within South Africa? Obviously, today, the answer is 'no': the brutal repression of a racist regime and the struggle of a people yearning for freedom from it make the spiral of violence visible. But was there peace for fifty years before, when many would have readily answered 'yes'; years in which the West invested and helped, almost without demur, in building apartheid South Africa into what some even chose brazenly to describe as 'a bastion of the free world'? Illusions of peace again! Whose freedom? And, without freedom, what peace?

Such illusions are dangerous, for they encourage deliberate obfuscation—including obfuscation of our ethical choices. Mr. Botha claims, for example, the right to preserve 'his' culture in the land of 'his' birth, not only inverting history and ignoring the claims of others, but, more insidiously, encouraging the world not to notice that an essential element of 'his' culture is the suppression of the rights of others—in this case, the rights of the majority black population. He implies that a 'whites only' election can settle the destiny of that majority non-white population and, in legitimation of the fraudulent process, claims that sanctions will help those opposed to democracy.<sup>11</sup> How can we find a way through such obfuscation without ethical values to guide us? It is, of course, Mr. Botha and the apartheid system that violates the 'standards' his perfidy espouses; it is he and the apartheid system that opposes and defies democracy. It is apartheid that requires a totalitarian regime—his regime—as its bedrock. This is the 'double speak' of apartheid. When bolstered by illusions of 'peace' contrived by distortion and sustained by censorship they help it to become the 'double think' of even decent people, and, of course, the masquerade of the South Africa lobby.

And such illusions in the end lead to massive contradictions. Recently, in France, we witnessed the great show trial of Klaus Barbie, the former Nazi officer, who was both the symbol and the instrument of the most horrific torture meted out to those who struggled for freedom against oppression in occupied France.<sup>12</sup> France, and Europe in general, indeed people everywhere, cannot forget or forgive the inhumanities for which he was brought to book. How can they, when those atrocities so brutalised humanity itself? Today, atrocities of that same nature and scale are being systematically carried out in South Africa against those who struggle for freedom from the oppression of apartheid. And yet France not only does business with South Africa but does business in arms, helps the regime of repression, is hesitant even about economic sanctions.<sup>13</sup> Does race so colour our ethical standards that what we rage against as an assault on our own people we can acquiesce in when the assault is upon others of a different hue? What are the moral underpinnings of these incongruous responses? Are they incongruous because our morality denies itself by being selective and occasional?

Selectivity of moral viewpoint is a major element of distortion encouraging the wider illusion that the post-war period has been an era of peace. Even if we view peace in conventional terms, reality world-wide is very different. A 1985 Report of the United Nations Secretary-General revealed that, since 1945, there had been over 150 armed conflicts (defined as having more than 1000 casualties), accounting in all for some 20 million dead—almost all of them in developing countries and a great many of them civilians.<sup>14</sup> There are currently nearly 50 wars or armed conflicts of varying degrees; indeed, it has been calculated that there has not been a single war-free day since September 1945.<sup>15</sup> Is it possible then to say we are at peace?—unless we really are in an Orwellian ‘1984’ situation where ‘peace means war’—or the desolation that war brings. Remember how Byron, updating Tacitus, wrote about the Roman super-power long ago:

Mark! Where his carnage and his conquests cease!  
He makes a solitude, and calls it peace!<sup>16</sup>

Those lines may yet serve as an epitaph to our human species—etched in the frost of a ‘nuclear winter’.

But my essential point is that the aftermath of war is by no means the only solitude we make or the only one we venture to call peace. What of the deepening silence of the world's millions overborne by poverty—for whom life is a series of transitions to tomorrow, always only to tomorrow; millions who simply pass away from want without ever knowing the reason why? Are they at peace? What of their human rights? Do we dare to speak of peace in our time while they endure the ravages of poverty's aggression against basic human values? When we talk of 'preserving' peace, what do we preserve for them?

But, in truth, it is a question that concerns all people. Interdependence makes a unity of the prospects for peace. For one thing, few of the problems on our agenda of anxiety fit neatly within national frontiers. They arise within and between both developed and developing countries. One country's cheap electricity is paid for elsewhere in polluted air and acid rain; unchecked desertification in one place manifests itself in a tide of refugees somewhere else; one community's ample diet of fish is at the expense of another's protein deficiency if stocks are being fished out; what is seen from a creditor's standpoint as an admirably sound policy of exporting natural resources to pay foreign debts is experienced by the debtor nation as a reckless squandering of real capital.

And who among us is free of myopia of some kind from our disciplines or our background? What to the scientist is valuable technological advance may be seen by the economist as economically unviable; and what the economist pronounces viable is sometimes plainly nonsensical to the ecologist.

As someone who approached environmental issues from a 'development' background, I confess to having had some initial reservations about the environmental movement. It had, after all, emerged essentially from the changing preoccupations of post-industrial societies; having achieved affluence, the rich now wanted to concentrate on improving the quality of their lives: clean air and rivers; more hedgerows and meadows; more bicycles and fewer heavy lorries; saving whales and seals—all a little late in the day but, if anything, worthier because of that. Yet these were concerns and causes far removed from the daily preoccupations of the majority of humanity, for whom improving basic living standards—for some, survival itself—were not so

much causes as compulsions. And when Northern environmentalists turned their attention to the South they sometimes seemed more concerned with pandas than people; with the static needs of conservation rather than the dynamic needs of a growing population seeking to escape from poverty.

On the Brundtland Commission it soon became clear that such reservations were an indulgence, given the sheer magnitude of the challenges of environment and development. It was an acknowledgement made easier by the perception that environmental degradation, poverty, the skewed international distribution of wealth and power, the selfish pursuit of national interests over global needs, were but different aspects of the same set of problems. All lie at the heart of peace.

Remember the despairing cry of Camus: "The absurd is born of this confrontation between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world".<sup>17</sup> That unreasonable silence in our time is rooted in the challenge that multilateralism faces: a challenge from nationalism that takes us back to the decade before 1939; from anti-internationalism that batters the structures of global co-operation built patiently and with sacrifice over the entire post-war era; from militarism that reflects a recrudescence of power and authoritarianism in our global society; from arbitrariness and indifference to principle that erodes the foundations of world order; and even, sometimes, from fanaticism that makes a virtue of extremism.

I ended my last Lecture by regretting that internationalism had lost its ethical moorings just at the moment when it needed a firm base from which to respond to the expanded dimensions of global interdependence, including pre-eminently the priorities of peace.

This weakening of internationalism is the result of many factors, among them, regrettably, our experience of the inadequacies and frustrations of international co-operation since 1945. But it is also, in some measure, induced by the passage of time: time which has blurred human memory of how diminished international co-operation brought the world to economic disaster in the 1930s and to near self-destruction in the war that followed.

The United Nations was created at San Francisco for the express purpose of maintaining international peace and security.

Chapter VII of the Charter contains a blueprint for an international security system with an enforcement capacity to deter aggression and prevent local disputes from erupting in armed conflict. Had it been implemented, it could have gone a long way to establishing the rule of law world-wide and saving the world both from the scourge of war and the waste of resources on the instruments of war. But the Charter's promise was not kept. The security system it embodies was placed under the exclusive direction of the Security Council, on which the United States and the Soviet Union sit as permanent members with the right to veto its decisions. Their power struggle was carried into the Council chamber itself, frustrating agreement on implementing the Charter's key security provisions, and defying proposals for reactivation for reform of its powers, such as those of the Palme Commission in 1982.<sup>18</sup>

Today, the United Nations itself is under siege and there are several specific assaults on internationalism. There has been hostility from powerful states to the ILO, to UNESCO, to the World Court, to UNCTAD, to the International Fund for Agricultural Development—even to the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the UN Committee for Development Planning. The arduously-negotiated Law of the Sea Treaty has been stalled, and in place of the North-South dialogue there is a deafening silence. These are ominous developments—associated as they are with a new respectability for doctrines of dominance whose political and economic strands are interwoven. On the political side these doctrines translate into the ascendancy of unilateralism over pluralism, of militarist intervention over peaceful means of conflict resolution, of national will over global goals. On the economic side, there is the same emphasis on compulsion—the preference for bilateralism over multilateralism; the paramountcy of conditionality over dispassionate assistance; the elevation over social needs of what the Pope recently, and relevantly, in debt-racked Argentina, called “the inhuman forces of the market”.<sup>19</sup>

And, as frightening as anything else in this return to the cult of national power, are the indications that democracy itself is being made subservient to it. The bombing of Tripoli in 1986 had been preceded by American naval manoeuvres in the Black Sea and in the Gulf of Sidra: manoeuvres described by Pentagon

officials at the time as “intended in part to buttress President Reagan’s request for more military spending next year.” “After past incidents”, they said, “in which the United States flexed its military muscle, the President’s popularity boomed and his policy won renewed support in Congress”.<sup>20</sup> Today, it is accepted as obvious that American policy in the Gulf is informed by the need to strengthen the President’s standing after recent setbacks at home. The dangers of such indulgences are manifold and, increasingly, manifest.

And the macho militarist posture is not a secret political weapon new-found by the White House. France, the year before, displayed its own talent for it when, at a time of electoral choice at home, it persisted with nuclear testing in the Pacific.<sup>21</sup> Despite—or, perhaps, because of—the outrage of small nations whose habitat is that ocean, defiant testing was good for votes at home. I do not exempt the Soviet Union and its allies from criticism. But it is precisely my point that we do not expect an ‘Afghanistan’ style from the traditional defenders of democracy; still less that democracy itself should be manipulated to sustain an anti-internationalist culture or gratify lapses into it.

Small wonder then, when genuine democracies behave in this way, that imposters feel free to follow. Recently, on the eve of the ‘whites only’ election, South African forces flagrantly violated Zambian sovereignty and murdered Zambian citizens in Livingstone. According to the British newspaper *The Independent*, in a report datelined Johannesburg, 27 April 1987, “the weekend military clash involving South African forces inside Zambia was seen yesterday as having strengthened Pretoria’s hand in the white election now only ten days away”.<sup>22</sup>

The implications of these trends are horrendous. Under challenge are all our evolved concepts and structures of world order. However limited, they are the highest points we have reached as a global society in developing perceptions of the world as a community of people and nations and in creating structures of organisation and management consonant with such perceptions. As Ivor Richard said so picturesquely ten years ago in the Security Council, we simply cannot afford to reduce international affairs to a series of shoot-outs in a global ‘OK Corral’; internationalism ‘Rambo-style’ is a contradiction in terms.<sup>23</sup> All people and countries are the potential victims of such

a retrogression from world order. If we fail to alter course, how can we hope to respond effectively to the priorities of peace? These are not new questions; but, these priorities demand that they be asked with a new urgency.

We could express differently that imperative for changing course. Four years ago the German philosopher Professor C.F. von Weizsacker, in a lecture in London, referred to the ideas of Immanuel Kant when speaking to the theme of peace and ethics. What he said struck me as being of the utmost relevance to our present global condition. It was this:

Kant says that the civilised state has been achieved within our nations, but that between the nations the natural state still prevails. The civilised state means the rule of law... Kant continues that there will be no end to the sufferings and tragedies of history until the civilised state, the rule of law, is also established between nations.<sup>24</sup>

200 years after Kant, von Weizsacker's conclusion was that a minimal condition for both a functioning world economy and the political preservation of peace had to be the rule of enforceable law.

A few years earlier, in 1980, Willy Brandt's Commission on International Development Issues had reached a not dissimilar conclusion—albeit through processes for which none of us would claim the credentials of philosophical reasoning. In a key passage, the Commission underlined its essential thinking in these words:

One ambition of this Report is to propose steps along the path to what would genuinely be called a society of nations, a new world order based on greater international justice and on rules which participating countries observe.<sup>25</sup>

Earlier in the same chapter (which dealt with 'Mutual Interests') we had signalled the attributes of that society of nations:

We are looking [we said] for a world based less on power and status, more on justice and contract; less discretionary, more governed by fair and open rules.<sup>26</sup>

It is my general thesis that not just ‘sufferings and tragedies’, in Kant’s phrase, but human survival itself now makes it imperative that the rule of law be established between nations. My basic proposition is that it is inescapable that we should, and without further delay, devote our energies to giving to our human society the attributes of a civilised state.

The reach of the rule of law, the domain over which enforceable law rules, is central to both the reality of the civilised state and the quality of its civilisation. To underline this, let me remind you of a particular, almost colloquial, extension of the reach of the common law: both for its relevance to life within nations and its potential for life between them.

It derives from a famous decision of Britain’s highest court, delivered in 1932 by Lord Atkin. As a piece of litigation, it had humble beginnings—a snail in an opaque bottle of ginger beer. But what Lord Atkin adumbrated was an extension of the rule of law to relations between individuals in a way that allowed the common law to take a giant step; confirming, as it did, that we all owe a duty of care to our neighbour, a duty to act in a reasonable way to avoid injury to him, or her. Who is our neighbour, said Lord Atkin, is anyone we ought reasonably to have in contemplation as being affected by our actions. What is reasonable, is what ordinary people—“the man on the Clapham omnibus”—understand to be reasonable: like not selling an opaque bottle of ginger beer contaminated by the remains of a snail.<sup>27</sup> In a general sense, that had always been unreasonable. After that decision of the courts, it was unlawful—and that has made all the difference.

Today, as our planet becomes more and more a global village, a human neighbourhood, the duty of care we owe must be a duty to all the world’s people, for they—all of them—are our neighbours now. And, in fact, the nature of that duty, in terms of what is reasonable conduct in relation to other people in the world, is known intuitively by ordinary people everywhere. They know that our shrinking world holds no human sanctuaries; that there are no shelters that insulate anyone, anywhere, from disease, from poverty, from terrorism, from cultural penetration, from environmental collapse. It is surely time that, in a new and broader jurisprudence, we provide conceptual space for these realities. We need to develop between nations new precepts of

rights and duties as relevant to our time as any that Lord Atkin formulated at the national level in an earlier era.

That is why we called, in the Brandt Report, for 'a world based less on power and status, more on justice and contract'—a continuation internationally, within the society of nations, of the struggle for just national societies. The challenge now is basically the same as that once faced within nations through earlier eras of slavery, of feudalism, of the beginnings of social and economic reform, to the flowering of just consensual communities. Today, for the greater part, we no longer face so many separate feudal societies; but we do confront a human society that bears too many of the attributes of a feudal state: not one state and two people but one earth and two worlds—and global warlords for good measure.

What more is required to convince us of the need to put in place a global regime of collective security under the rule of enforceable law? Isn't something badly wrong when the countries of the South Pacific, for example, resolve to declare their region a nuclear-free zone—only to command not guaranteed respect for that decision, which should be their right, but instant opposition of major powers outside the region? And in Southern Africa, is there not a palpable need for collective action now to compel an end to South Africa's 'policies of destabilisation'—policies that are a euphemism for systematic aggression directly, and by proxy, against African Front-Line States in general and Mozambique in particular. And, in quite another part of the world, in the Gulf, should we not be talking in terms of truly international action, United Nations action, rather than national assertiveness, to protect the world's shipping from the excesses of the combatants? What is needed is not unilateral vigilante action, but international enforcement of universally accepted norms. Only the rule of law, applied by all nations acting together, can make the world safe for each and every nation.

The truth is that 'Glasnost' and its potential notwithstanding—if the super-powers cling to such notions as 'spheres of influence', they will prove themselves both short-sighted and old-fashioned; and, in the process, become a calamity for the rest of the world. Inexorably, we are moving into the kind of truly interdependent world where 'spheres of influence' Bhrznev-style will be wholly unacceptable: not merely because repugnant

to sovereignty, but because anachronistic in a global milieu in which increasingly everywhere is everyone's sphere of interest. Who can doubt that we shall have to redefine sovereignty itself in the twenty-first century in terms more compatible with our maturity as a human society and more conformable to its insistence on the norms of a civilised state? Nor need this trouble us; and particularly not small states. Freedom at home is enhanced by the rule of enforceable law. So will sovereignty be, under the rule of law world-wide.

But we are short of time. To borrow words used by Freud in his famous letter to Einstein on the danger of war in 1934, these failures "conjure up an ugly picture of mills that grind so slowly that, before the flour is ready, men are dead of hunger".<sup>28</sup> The 'common security' of the world's people cannot be left to those whose concept of an ordered world is one ordered by themselves alone. Bertrand Russell recognised and never ceased to act upon this reality; and, among great scientists and thinkers, he was not alone. Readers of his *Autobiography* will recall that in July 1955, just before the Big Four summit in Geneva, he penned a resolution which was to be signed by Einstein himself and nine other Nobel Prizewinners in science. The resolution took note of the fact that, in any future war, nuclear weapons would threaten the continued existence of mankind, and urged governments to acknowledge that their purposes could not be furthered by a world war, and to find peaceful means for the settlement of all disputes.

Before Einstein had agreed to sign the resolution, news of his death was conveyed to Russell during a journey by air to Paris; but arriving later at his Paris hotel, Russell found a letter from Einstein agreeing to sign.<sup>29</sup> That protest against war was truly Einstein's final word to humanity. Their examples are there to be followed. At no time in the post-war era has there been more pointed a need for a return to the internationalism which was the dominant ethic of the men of 1945 who built the UN as the foundation of a new world order, and the ideal of great men like Russell and Einstein.

Winston Churchill, by contrast, was a pragmatist and a man of empire; but his internationalism, shaped by his long crusade against the weakness of the League of Nations and the conflict he saw looming, over-rode imperialist ambition. The lessons of

the 1930s never left him. On 6 September 1943, World War II was at its apogee when, receiving an honorary degree from Harvard University, Churchill spoke of his vision of the future beyond the conflict.<sup>30</sup> His theme was Anglo-American unity and the fraternal association of the Commonwealth. As so often, he used words which have since passed into legend: “We have learned from hard experience [he said] that stronger, more efficient, more rigorous world institutions must be created to preserve peace and to forestall the causes of future wars.” He saw as a central and creative task the working out of the “form a system of world security may take”—a task which included coming to grips with “whatever derogations are made from national sovereignty for the sake of a larger synthesis.” Churchill complained that if the League of Nations had failed, it was “largely because it was abandoned and later on betrayed”. He counselled the youth of America and Britain: “There is no halting place at this port. We have now reached a stage in the journey where there can be no pause. We must go on. It must be world anarchy or world order”.<sup>31</sup>

Already, in August 1941, in a sea-tossed meeting with President Roosevelt off the coast of Newfoundland for the signing of the Atlantic Charter, they had together sketched out the form of peace, when for the first time the adhering countries called themselves ‘the United Nations’. Among their aims—it is useful to recall—were economic co-operation between all nations in a new world order to be ushered in by, among other measures, general disarmament.<sup>32</sup>

And that, of course, was the compelling vision that led, two years after the Harvard speech, to the United Nations; the vision that Roosevelt did not live to put into words himself but left Truman to convey to the founding Conference at San Francisco:

We still have a choice between the alternatives: the continuation of international chaos... or the establishment of a world organisation for the enforcement of peace.

If we should pay merely lip-service to the inspiring ideals and then later do violence to simple justice, we would draw down upon us the bitter wrath of generations yet unborn.<sup>33</sup>

Notice that same insistence on a choice between 'world anarchy' and 'world order'; the same emphasis on 'enforcement' of peace. But we have paid lip-service to the 'ideals' of the Charter and done violence to 'simple justice'.

A few years ago, the Independent Commission on International Security Issues—the Palme Commission—in its Report, *Common Security*, called specifically for the strengthening of the United Nations security system by a return to the concept of collective security—at least initially in the context of Third World conflicts.<sup>34</sup> It recognised that the world, as it evolves into a more mature community, must somehow ensure that the answer to a threat of aggression, and to aggression itself, must not depend only on the capacity and resolve of the victim to respond. That recognition is timely and relevant in our present situation. States do not permit the law of the jungle to hold sway within their national societies; they should not allow it in the global society. It is time to ensure, as the Charter promised, that the burden of making the world safe for all is shared by all. This is the essential beginning of the rule of enforceable law.

The Palme Commission's recommendations envisage a structure of preventive peace-keeping, involving fact-finding missions, military observer teams, and military collective security forces, all to be deployed in advance of armed conflict. A vital element of the proposal is that such action under the Charter should be underpinned by a political 'concordat' between the permanent members of the Security Council to exercise restraint in the use of the veto, thus ensuring that the UN has both the will and the means to prevent armed conflict rather than having to face the imponderables of political reaction to a conflict once it has broken out.<sup>35</sup>

The Palme Report was followed by a call by the UN Secretary-General in 1982 "to reconstruct the Charter concept of collective peace and security" and to meet the need of governments for "a workable system of collective security in which they can have real confidence".<sup>36</sup> Over forty nations sponsored a resolution requesting the Security Council to give due consideration to the Secretary-General's Report.<sup>37</sup> Once more, however, after two years of wholly ineffectual consultation, the Security Council failed to respond to the hopes of the world. And apathy has been piled on inertia.

Mahatma Gandhi was once asked what he thought of Western civilisation. He reflected for a while and then answered cautiously: "I think it is a good idea".<sup>38</sup> He was not, I believe, being cynical. Fifty years later, it is becoming clear that a final judgement on our 'civilisation' is, indeed, going to depend on how we respond to the wider challenge of making human society a civilised state through applying the rule of law between nations.

Was Woody Allen, after all, right when he said:

More than at any time in history, mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other, to total extinction. Let us [he added with scathing cynicism] pray that we have the wisdom to choose correctly.<sup>39</sup>

Whether right or wrong, we have, assuredly, to do more than pray. Hopelessness is intellectually indefensible and extinction an unacceptable human choice. We have to work as well: whatever the frustration, however incremental the progress, we cannot face the next generation—or perhaps have a next generation to face—unless we can give a good account of our stewardship of peace in our time.

And I do see signs of hope. They lie, in part, in the idealism and international solidarity which many of you, in your several pursuits of peace in its widest sense, symbolise. And, in the longer-term, I see hope, too, in the realisation by hard-headed people in developed countries that the poor world, if it is not helped to achieve sustainable development, could wreck not only its own environment, but also that of the planet as a whole. The message of the Brandt Report was that mutual interest bound rich and poor countries together. The World Commission on Environment and Development has given that message powerful reinforcement. The Palme Commission, in between, pointed the way to the machinery of world order through collective security.

The way forward requires vision and genuine internationalism. Both may now be in short supply; but cannot forever be smothered. I have no doubt that, as we approach the twenty-first century, our perception of the future will cease to be defined in national terms. The present century may, indeed, come to be

seen as the time in which the concept of sovereignty and the nation state reached its peak and began to provide diminishing returns. In its place, must come what Bertrand Russell himself called for insistently: a measure of world governance—a more democratic world; one less susceptible to the usurpation of power on a global scale, less vulnerable to the imposition of one nation's will: one more hospitable to world order, more hostile to arbitrariness and compulsion. A world, in short, not permanently skewed, with the few always more than the many, the wronged forever wrong, the righteous never right, poverty in the midst of plenty, a life of crisis for most, a crisis of leisure for some; pursuit of peace through preparations for war; search for survival through enlarging our capacity for self-destruction.

But, most of all, we must work for a world in which our efforts are directed to ending 'the sufferings and tragedies of history' by establishing (in Kant's terms) the civilised state, the rule of law between nations. The pursuit of this goal remains, I believe, the highest priority of peace today, as it was to Bertrand Russell, however differently he expressed it. Our generation's historic mandate is to respond steadily and with unswerving resolve to this challenge. We must do so by helping to secure in many spheres—economic, political, military, perhaps even scientific—the governance of enforceable law; helping to make the world 'one based less on power and status, more on justice and contract, less discretionary, more governed by fair and open rules'.

If peace is, indeed, ambition that reaches beyond armistice, can there really be any higher priority than establishing the rule of law between nations? Can we pay higher tribute to the memory of Bertrand Russell than by committing ourselves to being activist in that cause? We like to think of ourselves as the 'management generation'. It is time we gave some priority to managing genuine peace in the world, and in the lives of the world's people.

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5. Draft declaration included in Report of the Special Committee on the Enhancement of the Effectiveness of the Principle of Refraining from the Threat or Use of Force in International Relations, 9-27 March 1987, adopted by UN General Assembly on 18 November 1987, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-Second Session*, Supplement No. 41 (UN Doc. A/42/41).
6. Article 1.1. of Chapter 1 of the UN Charter signed at San Francisco on 26 June 1945 states that one of the purposes of the organisation is 'to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the repression of aggression...'. Over 20 years later the UN General Assembly, by Resolution 2330 (XXII) of 18 December 1967, set up a Special Committee on the Question of Defining Aggression, stating that 'there is still no generally recognised description of aggression.' The Assembly, having considered the Committee's report, finally adopted a definition by Resolution 3314 (XXIX) of 14 January 1975.
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12. See *The Times*, London, 25 February 1987 (7a), 9 May 1987 (7a, b) and 4 July (1e, 7e, 10b).
13. *Compliance with UN Arms Embargo*, the 1987 US Department of State Report to UN Congress, pursuant to s. 508 of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986, on compliance with the mandatory UN arms embargo concluded that companies in France (among other countries) have continued to be involved in the maintenance and upgrading of major weapons provided to South Africa before the arms embargo. And for the past two years, France has been South Africa's sixth largest trading partner in the world.
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27. Donoghue v. Stevenson [1932] A.C. 562.
28. *Why War?* 'Open Letters' between Einstein and Freud (New Commonwealth Society, London, 1934),
29. Bertrand Russell, op. cit., p. 567.
30. Winston S. Churchill, *The War Speeches of the Rt. Hon. Winston S. Churchill*, compiled by C. Eade in 3 vols., Vol. II, p. 514.
31. Ibid., pp. 514, 511.
32. *Treaties and Alliances of the World* (Keesing's Reference Publications, Longman, London, 4th edition, 1986), p. 14. See, also, G.J. Mangone *A Short History of International Organisation* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1954), pp. 167-8, and, at p. 194. "On the morning of December 31, (1941) while Prime Minister Churchill was having a bath at the White House, the President came to him and suggested that the Joint Declaration carry the title, 'Declaration of the United Nations'. The distinguished bather agreed, and thus the term "United Nations" came into being."
33. Address by President Truman to the Opening Session of the Conference on International Organisation, Opera House, San Francisco, 25 April 1945.
34. *Common Security: A Programme for Disarmament*, op. cit., pp. 162-166.
35. Ibid, pp. 162-164.
36. *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organisation* (United Nations, New York, 1982), p. 2.

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38. Mahatma Gandhi, to an interviewer (attr.), cited in *Penguin Dictionary of Modern Quotations*, J.M. and M.J. Cohen (ed.), p. 128.
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# ONE WORLD TO SHARE

*The 'One People' Oration  
Westminster Abbey, London  
5 July 1988*

*I*t is humbling to deliver this year's 'One People' Oration. It is awesome to do so in this great abbey church of Westminster, this sacred place which has been the scene of so much which has passed into history. Sir Christopher Wren, the architect of another of London's great churches, St. Paul's Cathedral, and the restorer of this, once said that 'architecture has its political use; public buildings being the ornament of a country; it establishes a nation, draws people and commerce; makes people love their native country ....'<sup>1</sup> That certainly is true of Westminster Abbey, as it is true of St. Paul's. But Wren knew that architecture has more than a political use, and in many of its finest examples the inspiration and the purpose is, of course, religious.

This building, and what goes on in it, stands for the human, moral values by which people at their best live, and which are unfortunately not always to be found in commerce and politics; and it stands for more than this. It stands for something beyond the obvious and the everyday; for the religious values from which morality normally derives; values which transcend and unify, bringing people together in love and fellowship and understanding. It stands for faith—the faith which built it, the faith which sustains it, and which now must sustain the effort to build the shared and safer future for all, of which our world so badly needs assurance. That faith is, indeed, in the title of the hymn we shall sing later, the 'Hope of the World'.

On one particular occasion each year, the Abbey becomes the focus of that hope in a rather special way: the multifaith Observance on Commonwealth Day. On the second Monday in March each year, religious leaders from the major faiths in the Commonwealth, which are most of the great religions of the world, say prayers in their own languages and there are readings in English from the different sacred texts. The flags of the 48 Commonwealth member countries, from all of the world's continents and oceans, are carried in procession in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen, the Head of the Commonwealth, who

is herself such a powerful focus of unity. It is a moment of solemn reaffirmation in the life of the Commonwealth—one enhanced by being spent in the sanctity of the Abbey; and I acknowledge our gratitude to the Dean and Chapter.

This Abbey is, therefore, to me, a very natural setting for reflection on the reality that we are, from all corners of the world, one people: in the words of today's hymn, from the 'Hills of the North, Isles of the Southern Seas, Lands of the East and Shores of the Utmost West'.<sup>2</sup>

In the past, religion has been a source of difference and division as well as of unity. There are parts of the world, indeed of these Islands, where that is still so today. But that is not the spirit of this place nor, I believe, of the most creative tendencies of our times. At the religious level, the ecumenical response is a timely one to humankind's deepest needs, for communication, for understanding and for sharing. As a non-theologian I must not advance too boldly in this area; but I do not need to hesitate in asserting (in the language of the recent Report of the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues) that the holy texts of many religions, as well as legal traditions, philosophies, and customary practices 'abound in moral injunctions that imply an ethic of human solidarity':<sup>3</sup> that 'for centuries, the great religious texts have taught the essential oneness of the human race'.<sup>4</sup> This Abbey bears proud witness to that teaching.

I speak to you in the conviction that we are one people worldwide; that interdependence is no empty concept but a living reality; that sharing suits the whole world's purposes better than selfishness; that, in Mahatma Gandhi's words, 'there is enough in the world for every man's need but not enough for his greed'.<sup>5</sup> Yet, I would be guilty of thoughtless optimism if I did not also lay out before you some of the threats and challenges which must be overcome before we can fully respond to being one people in one world—and some of the special problems which closer interdependence brings.

I mentioned the Commission on Humanitarian Issues. That Commission is one of five international Commissions that have worked throughout the eighties, and on all of which I have been privileged to serve: a tribute, I like to think, to our Commonwealth. The most recent, still just beginning its work, is the South Commission chaired by a Commonwealth elder statesman,

former President Nyerere of Tanzania. The others were the 'Brandt' Commission on International Development Issues, the 'Palme' Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues and the 'Brundtland' Commission on Environment and Development. Each was an effort—through membership across the world—to find a new vision and a new way in an area crucial to human survival. Each has functioned, independently of governments, as a kind of international 'think-tank' not burdened by orthodoxy and short term national interest. Together, both in their existence and in their work, they have authenticated the reality that we are all 'one people'; that all we have is one world; and that there is a great need to care and share it better than we have done.

The Brandt Report, *North-South: A Programme for Survival*,<sup>6</sup> issued in 1980, had urged the world to cease to see itself and organise itself in adversarial ways as so many opposing forces competing for primacy; but, more and more, as a community of states mutually dependent, with jointly shared rights and obligations and a common commitment to co-operation for the good of all. It was a message better received by the world's people than the world's governments; but it is a message that remains alive. Indeed, now, in the late 1980s, though governments might not admit it, a new functional acknowledgement of the need for closer international co-operation in many areas of global economic affairs reflects something of the spirit and the ideas of Brandt.

But the Brandt Report was about more than international co-operation between some parts of the world some of the time. It was also about the goal, the ambition, of meeting the needs of all the world's people through new ways of sharing the bounty of our planet. And here it is necessary to acknowledge and regret how little has been achieved. Just over a week ago Professor Hans Singer of the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University pointed out in a timely way the contrast between the Toronto Communiqué of the major industrialised countries, which characterised the 1980s as 'the longest period of economic growth in post-war history',<sup>7</sup> and the recent report of the UN World Food Council, which highlighted declining food production in all developing regions in 1987, a rise in the number of hungry people, more children suffering from malnutrition than a decade ago—with over 14 million under the age of five dying

needlessly from malnutrition and disease every year.<sup>8</sup> So great remains the gap between perception and reality. The unmet challenge of mass poverty and starvation in our one world, among our one people, should surely be a matter for universal reproach. It cannot be a time for complacency; still less for smug satisfaction.

But global realities must in the end change our narrow national perceptions. Already it is becoming clear that the world's major problems must be confronted in holistic rather than in narrow national terms. Few of those problems on our agenda of anxiety fit neatly within national frontiers. They arise within and between both developed and developing countries.

In industrial countries, for example, hazards like pollution from chemical and industrial plants used to be perceived essentially in local terms: smog in London and Detroit and Hamburg. Today, we know that acid rain, rain that sometimes has the acidic content of lemon juice, falls thousands of miles away from the smoking chimneys that contribute to it. North American pollution destroys the forests of northern Europe.

But forests are being destroyed in other ways as well, and with other consequences. In my part of the world, Belize used to be a great producer of mahogany; but there are few mahogany trees left. Belizean mahogany, some of the finest in the world, is all over the world in furniture and panelling, produced by some of the finest craftsmen of Europe. But those who exploited the forests did not plant new trees. They moved on to other forests. We thought of it as a terrible plunder of Belize—but only as a local tragedy. Today, we know better. We know that, as the world loses its forest cover with the cutting down, for example, of the great forests of Indonesia and of Brazil, we are tampering with the limits of our ecological balance.

Within fifty years all this, added to fossil fuel burning, could produce an increase in the planet's average temperatures; the 'greenhouse' warming of the planet.<sup>9</sup> This could lead in turn to a rise in the sea-level large enough to inundate many low-lying coastal cities and river deltas all over the world, and to upset dramatically national and international agricultural production and trade systems. And this is to say nothing of what deforestation will cause in terms of the loss of plant resources which we require for future agricultural and medical progress. It is no

longer a problem for Brazil or Indonesia alone. It is a problem for all the world.<sup>10</sup>

Similarly all countries, not just the super powers, have a vital stake in ending the risk posed by nuclear weapons to the whole world. Growing up in the West Indies fifty years ago, it was tempting to surmise that if Europeans chose to blow themselves up in 'tribal' wars, it was essentially their affair—sad, tragic, but their affair. That was, even then, a superficial reaction; but, to some degree, it was harmless. Today, we dare not indulge in superficialities of that kind. We know that war in Europe would probably involve a nuclear exchange, and we know that nuclear war will involve us all. The 'nuclear winter'<sup>11</sup> it brings on will not stop at the Equator, it will be a winter that envelops the world, one that shuts out even the Caribbean sun.

What all this means is that we should have learned, through our propensity for destruction and exploitation and waste and general wantonness, that there are no places 'far away' in which these irresponsibilities can be indulged without hurting ourselves; that there are some irresponsibilities that we cannot indulge even at home without hurting others; to say nothing, of course, of obscenities like nuclear testing or the dumping of nuclear waste in other people's regions precisely because they are perceived to be far enough away from home.<sup>12</sup>

But have we learned those lessons? For the first time twenty years ago, our human species saw our planet in outer space from outside itself. Earth-rise was a sobering experience. It confirmed not just that the world is round, but that it is whole; that there is no North or South, no East or West; one earth, small and indivisible. It is a glimpse of human reality we badly needed, and need now to hold in focus. As man stood on the moon and looked at earth, what he saw was oneness; one planet earth, not the separate worlds we strive so hard to sustain. How petty from that vantage point are the divisions of race and tribe, of creed and country, which remain central features of the 'civilisation' we boast of in our vanity.

It is through these new eyes, with these new perceptions, that we must see the world. It might help us to do so to reflect on how others might fairly see us. Just think if, one day, we did receive on this planet visitors from outer space, who studied us as we have in mind studying them in our travels in outer space. How would they report on us? Might they say, for example:

Earth is a strange planet of great natural beauty and wondrous human accomplishment, but amazingly inefficient and insensitive in managing its global affairs; and full of strange contradictions.

The humans who live on it have divided themselves into little groups they call 'states' and each one struggles for its own prosperity even at the expense of others. Today, all are theoretically free and equal, but that is not so in practice. The inequalities are startling.

A few humans, less than a quarter, enjoy great material prosperity which they measure in terms of money—between \$6,000 and \$16,000 a year for each person. The remaining three-quarters exist in varying degrees of wretchedness with about \$600 a year per person, but some with as little as \$150.<sup>13</sup>

In some groups, out of every hundred children born, only one or two will die before the age of one; but for others the figure will be as high as fifteen.<sup>14</sup>

In the poorest groups most people can afford only one meal a day, their life expectancy is below fifty years, and only one in three is literate. In the richer ones, most families have a car, many luxuries and three meals a day; life expectancy is over seventy-five years and literacy almost 100 per cent.

The population of this planet is growing at such an explosive rate that it will double within thirty years.<sup>15</sup> Most of the increase will occur within the poorest groups who, in the absence of social security of any kind, see children as their only protection against the insecurity of old age; but the planet as a whole does not seem to understand this link between poverty and population or its implications for the future of all groups.

Most contradictory of all, is the fact that only some \$40 billion is spent each year on what they call 'aid' to narrow these great differences in the condition of life on the planet.<sup>16</sup> Yet, some \$1,000 billion is spent annually, mainly by the groups regarded as most advanced, on arms designed to be used against each other.<sup>17</sup> They have weapons of such high destructive power aimed at each other that if firing ever starts it will eliminate all life

on the planet.

Earth is a dangerous enigma. It is advanced in some ways; yet primitive in others. It espouses compassion as a virtue; yet is dominated by greed. It is beginning to understand its oneness; yet has not overcome its habits of separateness. This combination of genius and perversity may yet cause it to self-destruct?

Could we, in all conscience, question the fairness of such a report?

But we can't just stop there; we surely must ask what such dispassionate judgements mean for the way we have developed as a community of nations. We have to ask these questions ourselves, about ourselves; and we have to begin to understand our human reality and the need for change responsive to it. We must come to accept, in our hearts no less than our minds, our condition as a human family; our oneness; our inseparable humanity. We must begin to acknowledge what our unspoken judgements tell us, namely, that the national sovereignty which we prize so much may now be producing diminishing returns; that the adversary system of relations between states which we superimposed on it, or which it imposed on us, is becoming not just outdated but far, far too dangerous.

What holds us back from these acknowledgements? In part at least it is that the curse of separateness or 'otherness' still afflicts our humankind despite all the forces drawing us together. By 'otherness' I mean the distortion of vision which makes one person see another as crucially different, ignoring the fundamental similarities, emphasising the differences to the point where the other is perceived as alien, unequal, even in the last resort less than human, to be excluded from what William Wilberforce so well described over a century and a half ago as 'that equitable consideration and that fellow-feeling which are due from man to man'.<sup>18</sup>

The consequences can be disastrously far-reaching. One of the worst was institutionalised slavery. All forms of enslavement of one human being by another begin in the mind, in the perverted judgement that those enslaved are not fellow members of the human race. For slavery to be formulated by law and institutionalised into a system, a measure of dehumanisation was

essential—often gross, sometimes subtle. Slavery rested on an assumption of superiority by the enslaver, and it is ‘the other’, perceived consciously as different and inherently inferior, who is enslaved. To the Romans, all those outside the Empire were barbarians. That, consciously or unconsciously, was the conviction of the now-ended Age of Empires, which set out with unwarranted arrogance to bring the virtues of ‘civilisation’ to ‘the lesser breeds without the Law’.<sup>19</sup>

Sometimes, the basis of ‘otherness’ has been religion. European Christians were for centuries enslaved as ‘infidels’ by the Islamic Turks and Moors; captured Muslims were made the galley-slaves of the Christian West. Religious differences and sectarianism promote doctrines of otherness even in our own time. What is it but ‘otherness’ that compels the fellow Islamic nations of Iran and Iraq to remain locked in their unyielding war of attrition, leaving on both sides countless ‘martyrs’ who are in fact victims?

And is it not also the persistence of doctrines of ‘otherness’ which prevents the people of Ireland from ending a political conflict dramatised by religious differences but deriving from centuries of ‘colonisation’? Ironically, in Ireland, the last two decades, in which a real effort has been made to respond to ancient grievances, have seen a counter upsurge of sickening, barbaric violence—yet one met increasingly by the most amazing compassion, as in the case of the courage, faith and forgiveness of the father of the nurse killed in the Eniskellen bombing last year. And just last week, the Protestant and Catholic schoolfriends of a girl badly wounded in the bombing of a school bus said that the attack brought them closer together; and they urged a change of heart from their elders. Surely all this shows that the time for ‘otherness’ in Ireland has passed; that it is time for forgiveness to prevail over the dogma of difference; for impulses of understanding to reach across the borders of the mind.<sup>20</sup>

‘Otherness’ has many accomplices. Extreme nationalism is one: the division of the world into ‘we’ and ‘they’; ‘our side’ and ‘the others’; a ritualistic patriotism which displaces dispassionate judgement and deepens division. In the end, of course, it drives out internationalism, and we enter the danger zone which threatens to turn our global village into a global jungle. For over a year now internationalists have been warning of the need to

secure freedom of passage in the Gulf for the ships of all nations through a naval presence which flies the flag of the United Nations. But instincts of nationalism have prevailed instead, and we are today in that danger zone. Yet some responses to the terrible loss of life on Sunday<sup>21</sup> are still being conditioned by who the victims are and who it is that made them victims. How deeply worrying that our human solidarity should prove to be so fragile and the instinct to respond even to massive human tragedy on the basis of 'otherness' so persistent a malaise.

But otherness can deepen divisions even within nations. Feudal society had its serfs and bondsmen. The West Indian and American plantations were worked in their earliest decades by indentured poor whites or white criminals. The ruling groups within some African tribes actually sold their own serfs into the plantation slave trade, together with captives from 'other' tribes, the spoils of war.

And what is it but that same bane of 'otherness' that makes terrorism in all its horrible forms possible? Whether as practiced by the state, as in South Africa, or by misguided zealots in many a troubled region of our world, terrorism has its roots in alienation. Both its ends and its means repudiate our oneness and therefore our humanity. And how can I speak in this Abbey without calling for the freedom of all those held hostage—innocent persons of many nationalities? If I think rather specially of Terry Waite it is naturally because of his special role on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury, as a friend of all humanity who, interceding on behalf of men held captive, was to become a captive himself. His release, and that of others held hostage, can only open the doors of human reconciliation, a process in which all people, all nations, all sects, all groups, have an ultimate interest. And the scourge of terrorism reaches beyond people to entire nations, like the Lebanon itself torn apart by relentless conflict. It is a scourge we must remove from our human society; but perhaps we only will when we succeed—all of us—in changing the way we see ourselves and each other.

The history of our own century affords the most complete example of 'otherness' as a reason for enslavement. Nazi Germany used pseudo-scientific theories based on perverted Darwinism to justify the persecution and enslavement of the Jews. That brings us dangerously close to the present; close

enough to put us on notice for our own time.

Despite all our human progress, unless we lift this curse of 'otherness' from our civilisation we can never fulfil our human potential as 'one people' and may well destroy ourselves. It is so vile a curse on our humanity that mere whispered disapproval of its excesses comes close to acquiescence. Recently, when Archbishop Trevor Huddleston was asked on his 75th birthday, after a life-time of standing tall against apartheid, about attitudes to South Africa, he said that what troubled him most was the absence of anger: given the enormity of the crime that apartheid is, mere sadness could not suffice as a human response.<sup>22</sup> That really is the heart of the matter: that our humankind, in a kind of complicity with 'otherness', finds it possible to be tolerant of even massive wrongs committed in the name of 'otherness', when the victim is perceived as someone else—the other. Yet the lessons of history are so clear that each and every one of us is in time a victim of such wrongs. Remember, as Lord Elwyn Jones urged in his Oration three years ago, the anguish of Pastor Niemoeller, eventually himself a victim of the Nazis: he had failed to speak out when they came for the Jews, when they came for the communists, when they came then for the trade unionists—because he was not one of them; but then they came for him—and there was no one left to speak out for him.<sup>23</sup>

Over a century and a half ago when Wilberforce and the Anti-Slavery Movement crusaded against that most abhorrent of inhumanities, they did not lack for anger. The 'Evangelical Saints' of the Clapham Sect did not whisper their revulsion or conceal their passion. They attacked the 'otherness' of slavery root and branch: Wilberforce himself, Thomas Buxton who succeeded him, Zachary Macauley, James Stephen, Thomas Clarkson and the many others in whose name Wilberforce spoke in Parliament. 'Am I not a man and a brother' became their cry on behalf of those held in bondage in the name of 'otherness'.<sup>24</sup>

Their passion and their anger against slavery kept a candle burning for humanity. By their refusal to acquiesce and their eventual victory, they helped to soften the judgement of history on the generation that permitted slavery. Reviled as he was by the establishment for most of his life, Wilberforce, at the end, on a motion by both Houses of Parliament was buried here in Westminster Abbey. Why then do we have to argue—as it were

all over again—the need for passion and anger against human bondage? Why is apartheid for all too many people a matter for whispered disapproval and for accommodation of innumerable kinds in almost all fields of endeavour: economic, social, military, and even political? Is not the black South African ‘a man and a brother’ too, a woman and a mother, a child like any other child? What will soften the judgement of history against us for allowing apartheid to stain the pages of 20th century civilisation?

When President Reagan spoke at the Mansion House recently of ‘a new era in history’, he concluded with the call: ‘let us seek to stand for freedom, to speak for humanity’.<sup>25</sup> That surely is a call all governments must heed; and since freedom is nowhere more in chains or humanity nowhere more degraded on our planet than in South Africa, ending apartheid must surely be the primary challenge and the first test of our resolve.

But to stand for freedom in South Africa and to speak for humanity against apartheid requires more than that whispered disapproval of which I spoke. It requires passion and steadfastness in disallowing apartheid as a blot on our humanity. It requires sacrifice and courage in compelling Pretoria—by sanctions as well as other means of pressure—to end apartheid. It requires a stand with all those in South Africa who truly stand for freedom and speak for humanity like the South African Council of Churches and church leaders like Archbishop Tutu, whose personal freedom is now in jeopardy. We cannot stand for freedom or speak for humanity anywhere with conviction and credibility, unless we do so in relation to South Africa itself.

Let me end, by returning to those International Commissions with which I began. What their collective experience confirmed for me—their collective search for human responses to many problems—is the interconnectedness of the issues with which they were concerned. Development, security, environment, humanitarian issues—cannot be isolated from each other; poverty, population, refugees, debt, street children, nuclear war, famine, vanishing forests, encroaching deserts, climate change—are not so many separate crises as elements of one human crisis. Our human response must have a unifying dimension. It is that dimension with which I end, but which in a sense I place in the forefront of these reflections on our world of ‘one people’: the dimension of ethics.

That dimension was present in the work of all the Commissions: when Brandt said, for example, “we are looking for a world based less on power and status, more on justice and contract, less discretionary, more governed by fair and open rules”;<sup>26</sup> it was there. When Palme said, “international security must rest on a commitment to joint survival rather than on a threat of mutual destruction”;<sup>27</sup> it was there. When Brundtland looked to a common future through “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”;<sup>28</sup> it was there, too. Beside the economic strategies for overcoming poverty; beside the complex programmes for disarmament; beside the technical prescriptions for preserving a sustainable environment; beside, if you like, the science of survival, there must be the ethics of human solidarity.

What does it profit the human race if, unconstrained by the ethics of survival, its genius leads it to self-destruction? How content can we be to live by the politics of power if at its apogee it condemns us all to death? How proud can we be of our science if at the pinnacle of its achievement it threatens not to save but to sacrifice us? W.H. Auden gave the answer to such questions when he wrote, as if on behalf of an entire generation yearning for survival: ‘We must love one another or die’.<sup>29</sup>

It is that same understanding—more intuitive, it is true, than spiritual—that has led millions of ordinary people the world over to call for the ascendancy of ‘peace and love’; to demand, in the words of John Lennon’s song, that we “give peace a chance”.<sup>30</sup> In our threatened world there is in the human spirit an irresistible urge to elevate the moral imperative to a place of primacy in global affairs. And that urge is manifest everywhere in people; especially, young people. When the Report of the Commission on Environment and Development was launched in London in 1987 one of the young people invited to receive it from Mrs. Brundtland, Jenny Damayanti of Indonesia, made this moving plea:

Please, Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Generals, listen to the poor, to the voice of the hungry people who are forced to destroy the environment. Listen to the silent death of dying forests, lakes, rivers, and the seas, the

dying soil of the earth, poisoned and trampled by human greed, poverty and inequality. We, the young, hear them loud and clear!<sup>31</sup>

Other young people are helping us to fill out that vision of one people in one world. The Council of Europe's current 'Public Campaign on North-South Interdependence and Solidarity' has as its theme: 'One World is enough for all of us'—from the song by Sting and Ziggy Marley. Another generation is understanding better than we did that the world is more than a totality of sovereign states and separate people; that there is a human society; one global people.

Nor is the ethical choice a soft option. There is no morality without some passion; there are no ethics without some emotion; there is no credo that does not call for consistent action. What is involved is much more than a new philosophy, a new intellectual fashion. How can I put it better than Dylan Thomas did, writing of individual death? How much more pertinent his insistence when we ponder our common future?

Do not go gentle into that good night,  
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.<sup>32</sup>

Where the peace of the world by any of its many names is threatened, the righteous, virtuous rage of the people of the world is the most authentic testimony of a people everywhere keeping a vigil for peace in all its meanings; a vigil against poverty and the abuse of power; a vigil for an end to terrible evils like apartheid; a vigil in support of 'Live Aid' and 'Sport Aid' to end the horrors of famine; a vigil for an end to the arms race and its threat of human extinction; a vigil to preserve our one earth for its one people. Each is the testimony of people demanding to be heard while there is still time for someone to listen and to act; people ready to show by example that they care about their neighbour and understand that their neighbour now is everyone on earth. An ethic of human solidarity is stirring in the world. We need to help it to develop and grow strong. Where better to say so than here in this reverential place?

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**'THE BLACK MUST BE DISCHARGED'**

**Race Relations, the Common Law  
and the Commonwealth**

*The Kapila Memorial Lecture 1988  
Gray's Inn, London  
15 December 1988*

*M*y Lord Chancellor, you do us all a great honour by your presence here this evening, particularly me. I recall that our paths first converged in Edinburgh, at the highly successful 1977 Commonwealth Law Conference, on whose Organising Committee you served, as James Mackay QC, Dean of the Faculty of Advocates. I was able to tell the Conference then of my admiration for Scots lawyers and Scots law—to dissent from Lord Maugham’s invective against ‘those interesting relics of barbarism tempered by a few importations from Rome, known to the world as Scot’s law!’<sup>1</sup> I pointed instead to the role of the two Scots Law Lords who, with a Lord Chancellor of Welsh-Australian extraction, had been able to override the views of English brethren and ensure immortality, for reasons I will stress later, for what may or may not have been a snail pickled in ginger beer—and, in the process, vitality for the Common Law.<sup>2</sup>

Transformed both in name and in office, you were again in Commonwealth company when we met in Sri Lanka in 1983, at the triennial Meeting of Commonwealth Law Ministers. In private discussions, a number of Law Ministers confided that the meeting had shown that the lawyers did things rather well North of the Tweed, and how important it was to tap this well of ideas and enterprise in Commonwealth law-making. I can also confess now that your own contributions to the discussions in Colombo tempted the more rash among us at the Commonwealth Secretariat into realms of speculation. But on sharing these thoughts with members of the English Bar we were roundly debunked: no Scot—we were informed with that assurance which is the hallmark of the English barrister—no Scot could ever become Lord Chancellor! Not for the first time, Commonwealth thoughts were only wrong by being right too soon.

This is, of course, the Kapila Lecture. It does honour not to great luminaries of the law, but to a father and a son who were clearly very special in their own quiet ways. A father who was a teacher—as was my own—and one who throughout his long

life in India, in Africa and in Britain was concerned to foster racial harmony. A son who was a member of Lincoln's Inn and worked steadily here in Britain until he predeceased his father some years ago. The Lecture thus has its origins in the special concern with race relations of the Kapila family, who have founded the occasion, and whose members here this evening I acknowledge.

Yet it was not without some diffidence that I accepted the invitation extended by Mr Justice Steyn, as Chairman of the Bar's Race Relations Committee, to present the Kapila Lecture. The challenge to offer some observations on race relations in a forum such as this was obviously tempting, indeed inescapable; but I cautioned myself that it was a field of mines not of tulips through which I must tiptoe. And that was even before the experience of the Speaker of the West German Parliament, Herr Philipp Jenninger, whose primary offence seems to have been one of infelicity of language as he tried to recall how contemporary Germans had viewed the rise of Hitler. And, of course, I was not helped by the awareness that I would follow the masterly exposition given by Vice-Chancellor, Sir Nicolas Browne-Wilkinson, in this Lecture two years ago on the Race Relations Act.

In accepting the challenge, let me start, therefore, with what is obviously uncontentious: my deep admiration for so much that is best in Britain's heritage—a heritage shared with much of the world and especially with the Commonwealth. At the heart of that shared inheritance is the Common Law. It is one that has enriched all our societies. If anything in what I say implies criticism, let it be heard in a context in which I speak of these matters as part of a common heritage—one which we can impugn because it is in part our own.

At the risk of sounding a little like the late Professor Joad, it surely is the case that any discussion of race relations should properly begin with establishing what we mean, first by 'race' and, second, by 'racism'. "Race", wrote Charles Husband 'like love, is a word often used with innocent spontaneity, and yet it remains highly problematic to determine adequately the boundaries of its... meanings'.<sup>3</sup> Today, when we speak of 'race relations' we tend to think only in terms of colour. Yet think on this passage written just over a century and a quarter ago:

I am haunted by the human chimpanzees I saw  
along that hundred miles of horrible country. I don't

believe they are our fault, I believe there are not only many more of them than of old, but that they are happier, better, more comfortably fed and lodged under our rule than they were. But to see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they ever were black, one would not feel it so much, but their skins, except where tanned by exposure, are as white as ours.<sup>4</sup>

Not, it has been noted by one commentator, 'some imperialistic reference to an exotic tribe of albino Africans', but Charles Kingsley writing to his wife in 1862 on his visit to Ireland.<sup>5</sup> He was writing of the Irish, a people who from the twelfth century had been denigrated by such Norman observers as Malachy of Armagh who, as he wrote:

discovered it was not to men but to beasts he had been sent; in all the barbarism which he had yet encountered, he had never met such a people so profligate in their morals, so uncouth in their ceremonies, so impious in faith, so barbarous in laws, so rebellious to discipline, so filthy in life, Christian in name but Pagans in reality.<sup>6</sup>

Nor, to put things in perspective, did the Normans have a very high opinion of the native Anglo-Saxons! Gerald of Wales, himself a literary scourge of the Irish, observed that the English were 'the most worthless of all peoples under heaven... In their own lands the English are slaves to the Normans, the most abject slaves'.<sup>7</sup>

Consideration of such antique authors leads me to the reflection that race is at heart 'otherness'—by which I mean a view of another individual which wrongly sees him or her as 'the other', alienated from the observer by perceived or imagined differences, without shared human qualities, and so not only unequal but also, at the worst extreme, less than human. And when the question of colour is introduced, it merely becomes a new and potent factor in distinguishing between groups of people, in identifying the types of behaviour expected of them, and in influencing perceptions.

As the European empires grew through the 17th and 18th centuries, the conquered lands provided wealth, power and glory. Commerce flourished; with access to over half the world's natural resources, Britain was transformed from an agrarian into a modern industrial society. The impact of all this on non-Europeans was, of course, both dramatic and traumatic. In Africa, many became forcefully subjected in their own lands to foreign masters, while many others were for two centuries plundered from West Africa—not without collaboration from African ruling classes. And if the trade in African slaves drained that continent of many of its able-bodied men and women, the Indian sub-continent too was not spared. Indians in large numbers were exported as cheap, almost slave, labour under the 'indenture' system that took my own forebears half-way around the world to Guyana on the South American coast, never to return—a flight into bondage;<sup>8</sup> but a flight (let it be said) from bondage of another kind that caste and poverty imposed.

For Western societies, there had to be some philosophical justification for this barbarous treatment of human beings, and it was provided by the simple expedient of denying their very humanity. Books, tracts, newspapers and magazines: all caricatured the Black (as they did indeed, the Irish) to such a degree that their influence throws a shadow forward, even into the present and beyond. The views of the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1788 were not in its time considered extreme, but if we listen to these words two hundred years on, do we not hear all the echoes of bigotry and racism?

The Negro is possessed of passions not only strong but ungovernable; a mind dauntless, warlike and unmerciful; a temper extremely irascible; a disposition indolent, selfish and deceitful; fond of joyous sociality, riotous mirth and extravagant shew. He has certain portions of kindness for his favourites, and affections for his connections; but they are sparks which emit a glimmering light through the thick gloom that surrounds them, and which, in every ebullition of anger or revenge, instantly disappear. Furious in his love as in his hate; at best, a terrible husband, a harsh father and a precarious friend. A strong and unalterable affection for his

countrymen and fellow passengers in particular seems to be the most amiable passion in the Negro breast .... As to all the other fine feelings of the soul, the Negro, as far as I have been able to perceive, is nearly deprived of them.<sup>9</sup>

This ribald stereotype was reinforced time and again by such writers as Carlyle and Trollope.<sup>10</sup> On emancipation, Carlyle—who was later to support Governor Eyre's butchery of the former slaves in Jamaica's Morant Bay revolt of 1865—depicted the Black Jamaican—in what has been described as 'one of the most nakedly racist tracts to be laid before the English reading public'<sup>11</sup>—as a 'black gentleman', 'with rum-bottle in hand ... no breeches on his body, pumpkin at discretion, and the fruitfulest region of the earth going back to jungle around him'.<sup>12</sup> For his part, Trollope ten years later saw the Black West Indian as 'idle, unambitious to worldly position, sensual and content with little.... He lies on the ground surrounded by oranges, bananas and pineapples'.<sup>13</sup> It was a commentary as vicious in its denigration as it was unworthy of those who contrived and sustained it.

Yet, this racial stereotype is not so very different from the prototype stage Irishman who emerged from Edmund Leach's study of anti-Irish 'jokes', not a mere figure of fun but an object of contempt merging into deep hostility:

He is a drink-addicted moron, reared in the bog, who wears his rubber boots at all times, cannot read or write, and constantly reverses the logic of ordinary common sense. His female counterpart shares the same qualities, except that she is sexually promiscuous, rather than perpetually drunk.<sup>14</sup>

Racism in clown's clothes!

Jean-Paul Sartre captured the process succinctly when he wrote:

How can an elite of usurpers, aware of their mediocrity, establish their privileges? By one means only: debasing the colonised to exalt themselves, denying the title of humanity to the natives, and defining them simply as absences of qualities—

animals, not humans. This does not prove hard to do, for the system deprives them of everything.<sup>15</sup>

Hand in hand with such an attitude went the systematic repression and destruction of the indigenous industries, economies and cultures of the colonised.

Racism as the hand-maiden of colonialism was not, of course, unique to the British Empire, or even to European empires of recent centuries. For evidence that it is endemic to the very philosophy of imperialism we need look no further than to the traumatic effect the three words of Saint Paul had on his gaolers when he uttered the magic sentence: '*Civis Romanus sum*'.<sup>16</sup>

But where stood the law in relation to racism in its heyday? Where did the Common Law, for example, stand in relation to the barbarity that was slavery? It is five years since we marked the 150th anniversary of the passing of the Abolition of Slavery Act, a monumental reform achieved by new economic realities aligning with the passionate crusade in this country of the Anti-Slavery Movement: a conjuncture of material self-interest and humanitarian impulse. Yet how was it that for 100 years before that Act, slavery had subsisted, sanctified under British law, Magna Carta notwithstanding?<sup>17</sup>

Lord Mansfield has asserted in *Somerset's* case as early as 1772 that 'the black must be discharged.'<sup>18</sup> He might, of course, have declared: 'Let the slave go free!' But that would have been going rather further than Mansfield intended. Somerset was discharged on the return to a writ of habeas corpus not because slavery was untenable under English law; it palpably was not; but because within the metropolitan jurisdiction there was no apparatus of enforceability that would allow rights of property primacy over the liberty of the subject.<sup>19</sup>

Once Somerset had slipped the bonds of slavery there was no police power in England to shackle him in its name. Hence, 'the black', still a slave, had to be 'discharged'. In other words, Mansfield's judgement was essentially a commentary on life in England. It had no implications for life which English law ordained and enforced elsewhere.

Half a century later this fine distinction came to be explained in jurisprudential terms in the case of *The Slave 'Grace'*, who, having been brought by her owner to London and then taken back to Antigua, found that the freedom she had enjoyed while

in England had not liberated her from slavery. Seized on her return to Antigua she pleaded in vain the precedent of *Somerset's* case, only to have Lord Stowell assert in the High Court of Admiralty that Mansfield's judgement looked no further than to the peculiar nature, as it were, of British soil: 'the air of our island is too pure for slavery to breathe in'.<sup>20</sup> Not so the air of Caribbean countries, polluted by slavery's legitimation under English law.

These double standards in matters of high principle carry over well beyond colonialism. They represent a seamy side of human nature which allows us to inflict on others evils from which we scrupulously shield ourselves. What really is the difference between the inverted values of Lord Stowell's judgement and, for example, French nuclear testing in the Pacific or the export of sub-standard drugs to poor societies or, now, the dumping of toxic waste in developing countries?

Mansfield's judgement, of course, was of great importance for *Somerset*, the triumph of liberty over property. But in another sense, it confirmed, as one commentator put it, that 'English law was wonderfully flexible in accepting systems that were fundamentally different inside and outside the metropolis'.<sup>21</sup> In the end, the Anti-Slavery Movement recognised that it was the legal framework, both metropolitan and colonial, which sustained slavery. What the Abolition of Slavery Act did was to change the law. It gave Magna Carta a reach beyond the banks of Runnymede—a reach that common lawyers had hitherto not felt that they lacked as they proudly viewed the legal order within narrow domestic walls.

This matter of the reach of the rule of law, the domain over which enforceable law rules, is central to both the reality of the civilised state and the quality of its civilisation. Its definition is among our most critical human challenges.<sup>22</sup> It confronts every society unto this very day. The demise of slavery did not usher in an age of enlightenment; the law continued to allow racial prejudice and discrimination wide reign—both in Britain and in the colonies, even colonies on the brink of achieving their independence.

Little wonder, then, that confronting racism was accorded the highest priority by newly-independent countries, or that the emerging Commonwealth was offered a stark early choice—between accepting apartheid South Africa or the prospect of a wider, growing, truly global membership; between being a white

man's club of dwindling significance, or a truly multi-racial family with expanding reach and relevance. We can look back now and wonder that the choice should have been so agonising. But it was no small matter to see apartheid South Africa off in terms of Commonwealth membership. For some, like Britain, there were ties of kinship no less than of commerce. Yet choice was unavoidable, and without question the right choice was made.<sup>23</sup> It was a defeat for racism; but, alas, not a conclusive one.

From this turning-point, the Commonwealth's concern with South Africa has intensified; and not, as some would have it, from a desire to punish apartheid's perpetrators—though there are no limits to the punishments they inflict on those who oppose their own wrong-doing—but rather to end the evil system itself and allow a free South Africa to reclaim its place in the Commonwealth. It was not far from this hall, in the rooms of the Royal Commonwealth Society, some months ago that Oliver Tambo was asked: 'If you become the government of your country, will you apply for South Africa to be readmitted to the Commonwealth?' 'I don't understand your question,' the President of the ANC replied. 'We (black South Africa) never left'.<sup>24</sup>

I will come back to apartheid, but let me, for the moment, look elsewhere. Even as the sun was setting on empire, and a modern Commonwealth was emerging in the light of a new day, a huge movement in population was taking place which was to alter irreversibly the nature and character of Britain and of other European imperial powers: the movement that gives rise to this series of Lectures.

In one sense, the former imperial powers were being confronted with the legacies of their empires—by colonised people of every shade. Some had served and fought loyally for 'King and Country' or its equivalent, and felt an affinity for its people—one reciprocated more freely in the trenches than in 'civvy street'. Others were young hopefuls who came with schoolbook images of a land of plenty in search of a new beginning in a context of boundless opportunity.

The amazement and disillusionment of one young West Indian in the 1950s has been described thus by Roy Sawh:

We came with innocent dreams and expectations of being treated as full citizens of our Motherland, a country which only recently we had fought for in

the Second World War. But we were quickly and starkly disillusioned and shocked by white racist rejection and cruelty. My own personal experience, which is similar to that of many black people i.e. personal attacks, being spat on, refusal to be served in pubs, not being able to find suitable accommodation, and which symbolises our common and shared experience of Britain, is that of harassment and false imprisonment. Our daily struggle and anxiety was to find a job and somewhere secure to live, but these basic human efforts were constantly thwarted. As Sam Selvon, the Trinidadian novelist wrote in *The Lonely Londoners*, 'after a while, we didn't even get on, we just wanted to get by!'<sup>25</sup>

This experience is not, of course, unique to Britain, or unique to blacks. Throughout recorded time, migrants—where they have not also been conquerors—have moved into subservient economic and social positions for at least a generation. This tends to be masked where the outward differences are marked principally by language—for example, Greeks and Italians in Australia. But it is a condition which is exacerbated by colour. As the prophet Jeremiah rhetorically inquired: 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard its spots?'<sup>26</sup> The black in Britain wears a badge of difference unaffected by the more subtle rankings of school tie, dress and accent whose acquisition over time or over a generation can fudge social origins to the point of obscurity.

In the aftermath of the Brixton disorders, Lord Scarman conducted his searching inquiry with customary genius and insight, and his conclusions remain pertinent, perhaps even more pertinent today than when he wrote almost exactly seven years ago. After rightly observing that the plight of young blacks was no reason for releasing them from the responsibilities for public order, which they share with the whole community, he observed:

Although there is evidence to suggest that the position of the ethnic minority groups has seen some improvement relative to the rest of the population in recent years, overall they suffer from the

same deprivations as the 'host community' (i.e. the white population), but much more acutely. Their lives are led largely in the poorer and more deprived areas of our great cities. Unemployment and poor housing bear on them very heavily: and the educational system has not adjusted itself satisfactorily to their needs. Their difficulties are intensified by the sense they have of a concealed discrimination against them, particularly in relation to job opportunities and housing. Some young blacks are driven by their despair into feeling that they are rejected by the society of which they rightly believe they are members and in which they would wish to enjoy the same opportunities and to accept the same risks as everyone else. But their experience leads them to believe that their opportunities are less and their risks are greater. Young black people feel neither socially nor economically secure.<sup>27</sup>

That is a penetrating analysis. Proceeding from there, it cannot help black people in this situation if they perceive ambivalence in the attitudes of a substantial segment of the British population towards apartheid—the very apotheosis of racism—in South Africa. They see incongruity and an inherent inconsistency between a society which purports to oppose racial discrimination at home whilst tolerating its most outrageous manifestations in South Africa. It is the same ambivalence to which I referred in the context of slavery under the law—the situation in which slavery was unlawful in Britain yet practised under, and ordained by, law in the colonies.

My comment would be that you cannot separate the two, and it is wrong to do so. Attitudes towards apartheid inevitably impact upon domestic race relations. I know that the Government of which you, Lord Chancellor, are such a distinguished member, is strongly and irrevocably opposed to racial discrimination everywhere; and particularly to the perversities of apartheid. It is with the nature of the response to the problem both at home and abroad that your friends in the Commonwealth, bilaterally and multilaterally, have had serious difficulties. My point concerns perception of a need, and communication; the need for your opposition to apartheid, and your sense of outrage at it, to

be communicated effectively to that significant section of the population which, to one degree or another, experiences racial prejudice in their everyday lives. I sometimes feel, for example, that if British voices could be raised with as much passion against apartheid and racism generally as they are sometimes raised against sanctions, the British Government's opposition to the latter would at least be better understood.

I said much earlier that racism was not merely a matter of colour but resulted from the curse of 'otherness'. I speak today of race relations in a British context, for this is the Kapila Lecture. But 'otherness' rears its ugliness in many a Commonwealth country—including my own. Each society has to struggle to suppress unworthy impulses; each community of people—especially a majority community—has to be vigilant lest it diminishes itself by denying to those perceived as 'others'—rather specially ethnic minorities (black or white or brown)—the rights of equal opportunity, genuinely equal rights, that in many cases they have struggled to secure for themselves against earlier usurpers. In the end, that vigilance is truly assured only when a sense of 'oneness' replaces 'otherness' not just in the statute books but in our hearts—here and in all countries.

And, of course, the picture is far from being wholly negative. A generation of white British children has grown up unaware, in urban areas, at any rate, of how mono-cultural Britain once was. Integration is obviously a fact of life for many children, who do not see anything threatening in schoolmates from African, Caribbean, Asian or Middle Eastern homes. In a recent survey to ascertain the person urban school-children would most like to be, Daley Thompson topped the list<sup>28</sup>—anecdotal evidence, to be sure, but evidence which has what we lawyers sometimes describe as 'the ring of truth'. The stalwart efforts of Prince Charles's Trust to support incipient black businesses is a tangible expression of determination to help. His is a lead which others must surely follow in taking affirmative action, such as leaders in the business community and in the professions.

The emergence of blacks in small businesses, in literature, in entertainment and on the sports fields, points to the new and exciting well of creativity—dare I say enterprise?—which post-war migration has introduced to a country whose long history had already been marked by the enrichment which successive

waves of immigration have brought: a London, in particular, which has, over centuries now, absorbed waves of newcomers and made them all in time its own, is already working its immemorial magic changing immigrants into 'Black Londoners' and then into 'Londoners' simply; and changing London itself in the process. I venture to suggest that coming generations will look back at this period of Britain's social history and see it as a time of transition: awkward as all periods of adjustment are, but a transition to an era of multiculturalism enriching in every sense of the word—economic, social and cultural. But there is a long road to travel and much to be done before these gains are secured. Without conscious thought and action, things will not simply work themselves out.

One conspicuous area in which blacks have yet to make a significant contribution is the law, and as a result the legal system has attracted considerable public criticism; both as regards the profession and regarding the way the courts treat the black population. Again this is a situation which is far from unique to these islands, and one which finds echoes as far away as New Zealand, albeit for very different reasons. The concept of 'equality before the law' can be an extraordinarily difficult one to realise in a multicultural society where law is, inevitably, and for reasons of history, in the hands of a single dominant culture.

For these reasons, particular importance lies in the steps taken recently by the Bar of England and Wales (of which, of course, I am a member) in accepting an overriding commitment to ensure that all its members are treated fairly, regardless of race, and actively to counter the degree of racial disadvantage which exists at the Bar.<sup>29</sup> The creation of the Bar's Race Relations Committee, to focus on practical reform, was another major advance,<sup>30</sup> as was the revision of the Bar's Code of Conduct to set standards for members of the profession in their dealings with each other.<sup>31</sup> The survey you are undertaking to establish the nature and extent of racial disadvantage, too, is a bold one—as searching self-examination is never a comfortable exercise.<sup>32</sup> Particularly important, also, are the practical steps you are taking both to ensure that black barristers receive a fair share of prosecution briefs and to draw them into consultations on judicial appointments. I applaud the amendments to the Race Relations Act which the Bar is promoting and which seek to extend the ambit of the Act to both the Bar itself and to solicitors,

and to prohibit, absolutely, racial discrimination in relations between solicitors and barristers.<sup>33</sup>

All this is the more remarkable as our profession—here and everywhere else in the Commonwealth—has never been notable for its pursuit of social engineering. I hope that what we have seen in recent times, especially in the work of the Race Relations Committee under the leadership of Mr Justice Steyn, may be a portent for broader and more adventurous action. The proud boast of the common law throughout the ages has been 'no wrong without a remedy', and it found its highest expression in Lord Atkin's judgement in *Donoghue v Stevenson*,<sup>34</sup> for what Lord Atkin adumbrated was an extension of the rule of law to relations between individuals by a truly giant step; confirming, as it did, that we all owe a duty of care to our neighbour, a duty to act in a reasonable way to avoid injury to him or her. In Lord Atkin's judgement, who is our neighbour is anyone we ought reasonably to have in contemplation as being affected by our actions.<sup>35</sup> What is reasonable, is what ordinary people—'the man on the Clapham omnibus'—understand to be reasonable: like not selling an opaque bottle of ginger beer contaminated by the remains of a snail. In a general sense, that had always been 'unreasonable'. After that decision of the courts, however, it was 'unlawful'—and that has made all the difference.

Quite clearly, the black communities in Britain are 'neighbours' now; some, indeed, would be among those riding on the Clapham omnibus, or driving and conducting it. They, too, have their duties; but does it not lie primarily with the powerful and the strong, the dominant and the secure, to accommodate the humanity of these newcomers?

And if we cannot extend the hand of neighbourliness at home, what hope can there be for the wider world—an interdependent world which is increasingly a global neighbourhood? Our closely-knit, interlinked human society is a contemporary reality, however much the instincts of yesterday recall us to old nationalisms and summon up the adversary habits of crude sovereignty and separateness. What interdependence means in the global context is that we all need each other, in some measure: for prosperity, for subsistence, for survival even. Our shrinking world holds no human sanctuaries. There are no shelters that insulate anyone, anywhere, from disease, from

poverty, from nuclear holocaust, from environmental collapse. The rich might be able to prosper in a world from which the poor had vanished; the poor might be less poor in a world without the very rich; the West might be able to dwell in harmony if from the East there came neither torment nor threat; the East, the centrally-planned economies, might be able to accept a procrustean bed if capitalism were not there to provoke envy. The simple truth is, however, that these are wholly irrelevant scenarios; for neither rich nor poor, West nor East, have the option to go it alone—as all are finding. For better or worse, all of us must share this planet, acknowledging our mutual needs, and acknowledging too that in their fulfilment lies a mutual interest.

And what is true of the world is, *a fortiori*, true of its several parts. Especially to the lawyer, therefore, the words of WH Auden have special meaning—when he wrote:

All I have is a voice  
To undo the folded lie,  
The romantic lie in the brain  
Of the sensual man-in-the-street  
And the lie of Authority  
Whose buildings grope the sky:  
There is no such thing as the State  
And no one exists alone;  
Hunger allows no choice  
To the citizen or the police;  
We must love one another or die.<sup>36</sup>

‘We must love one another or die.’ In those seven words the poet encapsulates for us precisely what must have been the concerns that moved Krishna Dev Kapila and his son Sudarshan Kumar Kapila, and the Kapila family. For in a real sense, the more we face up squarely to the challenge of race relations the better, the healthier, race relations will be—until they are seen not as a profound worry but a true wealth, a source not of problems but of pride.

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15. Jean-Paul Sartre, in Curtis, op. cit., at back cover.
16. *The Holy Bible*, Acts of the Apostles, Ch. 22, vrs. 25-27.
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the Act; and Parliament would not be acting justly if, in making arrangements for the liberation of the slaves, they neglected to give a fair consideration to the claims of both the mortgagees and the mortgagers. By the 58th of George 3rd, the manner in which these mortgages should be effected was particularly specified; and in another very important Act, ... the Act of Registration, the right of property in slaves was expressly acknowledged.... It was not only in the colonies that the existence of slavery had been recognized by Act of Parliament; it existed in Scotland up to 1775, at which period it was abolished, as the preamble of the Act stated, not because of the grievances suffered by the bondsmen, nor for the sake of principle, but for the sake of the owners of the mines to which these bondsmen were attached.' (1833) *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Third Series, Vol. 18 (May 30 to July 1, 1833), 361.

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29. The Hon. Mr. Justice Steyn, Chairman, Race Relations Committee (10 October 1987 to 31 December 1988), 'Race Relations at the Bar', in *Counsel*, the Journal of the Bar of England and Wales, November/December 1988, pp. 9-10, at p. 9.
30. The Race Relations Committee was created by the Senate of the Inns of Court and the Bar (now the General Council of the Bar) in 1985.
31. The Code of Conduct which now, *inter alia*, prohibits racial and sexual discrimination was revised in 1988 to include, in an annex, guidelines affecting applications for pupillages and tenancies and the distribution of work in Chambers. The General Council of the Bar has recommended that these be adopted by all Chambers, which should, where necessary, revise their procedures in the light of the Code of Conduct.
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## ENDANGERED EARTH

*Inaugurating the Cambridge Lectures  
on Environment and Development:  
'Our Common Future'  
St John's College, Cambridge  
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**I** start by thanking the organisers of the Cambridge Lectures on Environment and Development for the honour of my initiating what promises to be a prestigious and influential series.

It is timely too. Back in 1983, when Mrs. Brundtland invited me to join the World Commission on Environment and Development, the world's environment was well down the list of priority political issues almost everywhere; academic interest in ecology was often treated by practitioners of more traditional disciplines with suspicion and disdain; as for 'environment and development', that was a specialism within a dubious specialism or, as Churchill might have said, a mystery wrapped in an enigma; even environmentalists themselves sometimes seemed less concerned about people than pandas. I hesitated before accepting the Prime Minister's invitation. If the world wasn't ready for 'Brandt' on development, would it be ready for 'Brundtland' on environment and development?<sup>1</sup>

Now—barely five years later—such hesitation would seem strange. The interrelated issues of environment and development now vie with nuclear disarmament as the dominant issue of our time. Politicians—from Mr. Gorbachev to Mrs. Thatcher—and financiers—from the President of the World Bank to environmentally 'clean' unit trust managers—advertise their 'green' credentials. Britain—one of the few countries not to contribute to the costs of the Commission's work—decided to host the presentation of its Report at the end; and is now convening (in March) an important international conference on the ozone layer. The *National Geographic* carried on its December 1988 cover a holograph of the planet which fractures as it tilts.<sup>2</sup> *Time Magazine*, at the start of 1989, dropped for only the second time in 60 years its 'Man of the Year' theme to emphasise that this is to be the year of 'endangered earth'.<sup>3</sup>

How has this transformation in perception come about? I like to think that the World Commission, and its Report *Our Common Future*,<sup>4</sup> had something to do with it. But perhaps more important was the way in which a succession of disasters all over the world

triggered intellectual awareness about the possibility of some underlying pattern of causality, and aroused those emotions of fear and anger that are often the mainspring of political action. While the Commission met, some of those happenings graphically illustrated the dangers faced by humanity: Bhopal, Chernobyl, the Rhine chemical spillage, the mud slide in Colombia, the Mexican liquid gas explosion, drought and famine in Africa. When Commonwealth leaders debated the work of the World Commission at their last meeting in Vancouver in 1987, the whole discussion was given immediacy by the recent experience of disastrous flooding in Bangladesh (worse was to come) and the inundation of the low-lying islands of the Maldives by unprecedented waves. Reinforced by empirical evidence that such disasters have steadily increased in frequency in recent decades, political leaders were beginning to accept that all these—and more—are not purely random events.

But, while this spate of disasters has raised public and political consciousness about environmental stress, it is the quieter, less immediately dramatic, trends which are, in many respects, more disturbing. The most recent estimates suggest that 11 million hectares of tropical forest—an area the size of East Germany—are being lost every year, mainly to land clearing for crops and cattle ranching.<sup>5</sup> In India, where there tends to be a more honest and open discussion of environmental issues than elsewhere, it is now publicly acknowledged that forest loss is far more serious than previously recognised and, on present trends, little if any of the remaining 30 million hectares of forest will be left by the end of the century.<sup>6</sup> In Brazil, one of the few remaining tropical forest areas of any size, destruction proceeds apace. You may well have seen reports over Christmas that Chico Mendes, the rubber tappers' leader who fought, using non-violent Gandhian methods, to preserve Amazonia—and whose Association, incidentally, gave eloquent testimony to the Brundtland Commission when it visited Brazil—was murdered because he stood in the way of powerful interests wanting to destroy the forest.<sup>7</sup> The costs of this forest destruction are only just beginning to be understood: long-term soil erosion; substantial contribution to the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere; and irrevocable loss of plant and animal species which are becoming extinct at a rate of, perhaps, hundreds or even thousands of species a year.<sup>8</sup>

Deforestation is only one symptom of the declining health of the earth:<sup>9</sup> six million hectares of new desert—an area almost the size of the Irish Republic or Holland and Belgium combined—form annually; thousands of lakes and rivers are biologically dead or dying; there is growing toxic contamination of water and soils. In India, 130 million hectares—almost 40 per cent of that country's land area—have been classified as degraded beyond the point of productive use. In Poland, one-quarter of the soil is regarded as contaminated beyond the point of safe use and only one per cent of fresh water is now considered safe for drinking. In Mexico City, residents have been advised to jog indoors because of the dangers of breathing the air.<sup>10</sup> Even in England's green and pleasant land, the claims of bottled water and organic farming no longer contend in vain—and not only because of 'princely' support.

For much of humanity, however, an even more pressing issue than where to jog or how to farm is how not to starve—how to rise above absolute poverty. Perhaps the most distinctive contribution of the Brundtland Commission was to provide a clear explanatory link between Third World poverty and global environmental deterioration—between economy and ecology. Traditionally, pollution has been seen largely as a by-product of wasteful life styles and harmful production processes in the rich world. And in many respects that remains the case. Eighty per cent of all commercial energy is generated in the industrialised world, including Eastern Europe; almost all the world's chlorofluorocarbons—the CFCs, those gases that are helping to destroy the ozone layer—originate in rich countries. But, in other respects, poverty is as environmentally degrading as it is in human terms. The imperatives of daily survival force poor families to think (and live) short term—to overgraze grasslands, to overexploit soils to maximise immediate yields, to cut down dwindling forest stocks for farmland or firewood. What is, individually, rational behaviour becomes a collective disaster.

Nowhere is there a wider disparity between understandable human choice and inevitable human disaster than in relation to population. For an individual family on the brink of survival it makes eminent sense to have large numbers of children in the hope that some survive and help around the family farm or find work to support parents, brothers and sisters. But when many families do the same the combined result is to produce far more

people than the stock of available fertile land and the infrastructure of schools, health and other services can sustain. In Kenya, a country that suffers acutely from land hunger, urban unemployment and environmental stress, a woman now produces eight children on average and the population is expected to rise from 25 to over 80 million in the next 35 years—even if the birth rate halves over that period. In Bangladesh, where almost every last acre of cultivable land is already used—and millions live precariously on mudbanks facing imminent disaster—the population is expected to double from 110 million to 220 million over the same period of 35 years<sup>11</sup> and, again, assuming a halving of the birth rate. These are the pressures which contribute to many of the world's most acute environmental problems. And the process is circular, since it is poor people and poor countries which depend more than others on land and natural resources for survival and which are consequently more vulnerable to environmental deterioration.

It is important to realise that these problems do not arise from ignorance, let alone stupidity. There is, in most poor countries, a sophisticated awareness of the kind of agricultural practices that are sustainable. Particularly in India, China, Indonesia and also in many parts of Africa, there are, in peasant farming communities, traditions of terracing, crop rotation, natural fertilizers and animal husbandry that long pre-date the arrival of European technology. But poor countries often find themselves trapped in a downward spiral in which the pressures of poverty and rising population lead to sound practices being abandoned. There is also a generally wide awareness of the undesirability of excessive population growth: in a recent survey, while only 10 per cent of women in rural Ghana were practising contraception, 90 per cent expressed a clear preference for having no more children.<sup>12</sup> But partly because of the high levels of child mortality—and the generally low status of women—these wishes do not prevail over the seeming compulsions of economic need; they go unfulfilled, with disastrous consequences for development, and eventually for global living.

What makes all this so acutely critical is that all the signs point to the incidence of poverty growing in the Third World. For example, the number of people on inadequate diets, excluding China, rose from an estimated 650 million to 730 million in the 1970s and, since 1980, matters have turned from bad to worse.

Among children under five alone, 160 million are reported to suffer protein energy malnutrition—and this includes two-thirds of all children in South Asia. In 21 out of 35 low-income developing countries, the overall daily calorie supply per capita was lower in 1985 than in 1965. Almost half of 115 developing countries have experienced falling per capita staple food consumption this decade. In most parts of the developing world, there have been sharply reduced growth rates, falls in real per capita income, rising unemployment and cut-backs in educational and health provision as a result of austerity measures consequent upon economic crisis. Such poverty is the worst form of pollution.

Let no one dismiss this as rhetoric. The simple, and terrible, truth is that poverty and environment are inextricably linked in a chain of cause and effect. Problems of environment cannot be tackled in isolation from those national and international economic factors that perpetuate large-scale poverty. This is why those concerned with environment in Latin America and Africa see links with international economic problems such as oppressive debt servicing and depressed commodity export prices—which, together, force developing countries to overexploit their natural resource base in order to maintain export earnings. Imagine, then, how utterly galling it is for them to find Western aid agencies and multilateral institutions (like the World Bank) preaching about the need for greater environmental concern in developing countries against a backdrop of grossly inadequate financial flows, the consequence of which is to perpetuate the very underdevelopment which contributes to environmental neglect. Man has stood on the moon and looked on the earth's oneness; yet centuries of preoccupation with ourselves—in family, then tribe, then nation state—still stand in the way of those holistic global perceptions and solutions that are essential to human survival.

Amidst this catalogue of negative trends it is easy to be defeatist. The message of the World Commission was, however, by no means a negative one; and while, for example, the massive burning of fossil fuels continues to degrade the physical environment everywhere (as the burning of books degrades the intellectual!), some decidedly positive developments are now beginning to emerge. In Scandinavia, Canada and West Germany, environment is close to the top of the political agenda; in Britain, Mrs.

Thatcher has made a strong and welcome intervention in this area; now, President Bush has appointed a strong conservationist to head his Department of the Environment. It is, of course, somewhat easier to espouse and pursue environmentalism in rich countries where there are no great pressures of rising population and where resources can be diverted to environmental protection. But it is no less welcome for that. There has been, too, significant progress in, for example, recognising the need to curb the sulphur emissions that cause acid rain, and introducing more environmentally-sensitive agricultural policies.

So far, most 'green' politics has been in, and for the benefit of, developed countries; but some developing-country politicians have also taken up the challenge. Rajiv Gandhi has launched a programme to turn back five million hectares of land every year into fuelwood and fodder plantations.<sup>13</sup> Robert Mugabe has tackled the sensitive issue of population and family planning; within two years of his launching the programme, contraceptive practice in Zimbabwe rose from 14 per cent to 38 per cent.<sup>14</sup>

Of comparable significance is the way President Gorbachev is trying to lead international opinion. When the World Commission visited Moscow two years ago, the administration was reeling in the aftermath of Chernobyl, and was very much on the defensive. Soviet authorities now freely admit that, no less than in the West, great damage has been done to the Russian environment by insensitive industrial planning. The planning system has quite disastrously neglected environmental factors and has promoted—through irrational pricing—a wasteful use of energy and raw materials. The emergence of the Soviet Union as a major and constructive participant in global environmental discussions adds a whole new dimension to what is possible.

These stirrings of awareness at a national level are now beginning to create the basis for tackling those environmental problems that are truly international. The most striking success has been the international agreement, under UNEP auspices, to cut the production and use of CFCs.<sup>15</sup> It has been estimated that the Montreal Accord, if fully implemented, could avoid two million future skin cancer deaths.<sup>16</sup> Even before the agreement came into effect, however, scientific research suggested that far more dramatic curbs will be necessary to prevent continuing

increases due to ozone depletion. Still, the agreement was remarkable from several standpoints. It was the first time Governments had acted together, not in response to a demonstrated calamity, but to predictions and warnings of scientists. It imposed effective restraints on some of the world's most powerful multinational companies. And, at a time when the whole idea of multilateralism has been called into question, it showed that global co-operation to face global threats is, after all, possible.

The agreement is propitious, too, for dealing with the much bigger and more complex problems of global warming produced by greenhouse gases, notably carbon dioxide. Within the last few months, a major step forward has been taken with the formulation of a clear consensus among scientists of the scale of global warming that is likely. The Expert Group the Commonwealth has established in the light of the Vancouver Summit discussions to look at the issue of climate change estimates that, even with policies adopted now to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, there is a 90 per cent probability of mean global warming of at least one to two degrees by the year 2030 and continued warming after that.<sup>17</sup> Some estimates are of much higher figures. I deliberately present the estimates in a cautious way since there is a danger of environmentalists overstating their case and inviting the kind of ridicule which one leading columnist captured a few weeks ago when he claimed to have read that 'if we continue to use underarm deodorants, drive motor cars and burn fossil fuels unchecked the consequent greenhouse effect may create temperatures at which lead melts and other metals become red hot.'<sup>18</sup> Even so, scientific consensus does suggest that the speed of warming—which is already being monitored—is historically unprecedented.

While the precise effects of this process on particular countries or even regions cannot yet be predicted with any certainty, among the more probable is growing aridity in already semi-arid tropical areas—those parts of Africa, for example, that have recently experienced severe drought and famine. Another is a greater incidence of extreme events, such as major hurricanes in tropical areas. The US Space Agency (NASA) has suggested that hurricane 'Gilbert' was a harbinger of a more powerful and disastrous generation of hurricanes engendered by global warm-

ing.<sup>19</sup> Even small climatic changes can have dramatic effects; it is believed, for example, that the lethal strain of mosquito which has killed tens of thousands of people in Madagascar in the last year, could have flourished due to slight warming.<sup>20</sup> There may be some beneficiaries—if, for example winter warming in Canada and the USSR permits agriculture in the more northerly, currently frozen, latitudes. But, there is no basis for complacency that global warming could be a 'zero sum game'; adjustment will be necessary everywhere, with attendant costs.

Among these costs will be those of adjusting to higher sea levels. The Commonwealth Expert Group conservatively predicts—again with a very high level of probability—that the sea will rise at least 20 to 30 cm. (approximately 12 inches) by 2030 and possibly as much as three times that level (approximately three feet) with continuing increases for decades—perhaps for centuries—to come.<sup>21</sup> For areas at, or below, sea level—the big, highly populated deltas of Egypt, India and China; large areas of the United States, Britain and Holland; coastal atolls in the Indian and Pacific oceans; and the capital of my own country Guyana, which is built behind dykes—there is the prospect of widespread, perhaps catastrophic, flooding in years to come.<sup>22</sup>

Surveys of some of these areas conducted for the Commonwealth Group suggest brutal options. One is large-scale abandonment of land; conceivably, abandonment of whole countries. In the case of the Maldives, for example, the overwhelming majority of the 1200 islands in the chain are already barely above sea level. Who will house the displaced population of low-lying areas? Current attitudes to refugees and immigrants, in most countries, do not suggest that large population movements are feasible. Acceptance of an enhanced risk of large-scale drowning is clearly not an option. The 1970 cyclone in Bangladesh, when 300,000 were killed in one storm surge, and last year's lesser but serious disaster, when hundreds more perished,<sup>23</sup> are warnings of what could happen on an even larger scale. Common humanity alone prevents us regarding this as an acceptable risk. A possible option is to build defences. But this is simply beyond the means of most poor countries. A single four kilometer barrier in Holland cost over \$3 bn; many countries would require much more. Is it not a global challenge to make our planet habitable for all its people? And is the challenge not at hand?

The costs of doing nothing to prevent climate change are simply unacceptable. Concern is now such that for the first time, following a little-noted meeting in Geneva in November, governments have at least started to consider—under UN auspices—the issue of climatic change and global warming collectively. The problems in progressing from collective study to collective action are, however, immense. There is no obvious way of stopping some greenhouse gas accumulations. There should be some help as an indirect by-product of the Montreal Accord on CFCs, and also if deforestation can be slowed. The core issue, however, is the carbon dioxide emitted by burning carbon based fuel, especially coal. The main clean, renewable, source of energy—nuclear power—is, to say the least, problematic as well as costly and is likely to remain so, especially for countries with a limited technological base. Non-conventional sources of energy have been shown to be useful at the margin; but cannot substitute for traditional sources on a short time scale.

The approach of many environmentalists to this dilemma is to advocate a world of slower economic growth. While this may be superficially appealing to those already materially comfortable, it is both selfish and unwise. Given the extent and growth of mass poverty and the link between poverty and environmental stress, rapid economic growth in developing countries is essential; also developing countries can grow more rapidly in a buoyant world economy that bolsters trade opportunities, particularly commodity markets. The World Commission spoke of 5 per cent as representing a rough normative minimum economic growth for developing countries taken as a whole. At present, only a small number of countries, mainly in Asia, are reaching that level. Some parts of the Third World have experienced much lower economic growth in the last decade or so—notably Africa and Latin America—and have experienced declining per capita incomes, deepening poverty and the most extreme forms of environmental stress. Unless growth is revived there is no prospect of reversing these trends. And growth is necessary not only for developing countries; ‘perestroika’ in the Soviet Union is quintessentially concerned with transforming stagnation into growth. And few seriously imagine that the major problems of the West—with large pockets of poverty and unemployment, and fraying public services and infrastructure—can be solved except in dynamic economies. The last decade has seen, in almost every

part of the world, a combination of slower economic growth and accelerated environmental decline. The experience does not commend itself for the future.

So, as long as large-scale poverty and rapid population growth remain, 'no growth' is no solution. The Brundtland Commission made a major break with earlier environmental analysis—such as the Report of the Club of Rome in the early 1970s—by recognising this explicitly. It positively looked forward to 'a new era of growth'.<sup>24</sup> But it stressed that growth must be qualitatively different from that experienced in the past; it must be growth that contributes to sustainable development: as we defined it, 'progress (in all countries) that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.<sup>25</sup> This means, for example, not being too mesmerised by GNP figures; in some countries these show impressive progress which is entirely illusory when we take into account the depletion of forests and other environmental assets, and the quality of life.

In most respects, growth and environmental sustainability reinforce each other naturally. This is the case in agriculture. There is now abundant evidence that the kind of protective Common Agricultural Policy system operated by the EEC, and comparable arrangements in Japan and elsewhere, have both retarded economic efficiency and added greatly to the pressures for excessive, and chemical-intensive, production; while in developing countries, the artificial suppression of farm prices in the interest of urban consumers has retarded economic development and made environmentally prudent farming uneconomic.

Equally, there are some real conflicts of interest. Growth, even if carefully managed, is bound to result in a rapid growth of demand for some natural resources, particularly energy. Electrical generation multiplied eight times worldwide between 1950 and 1980. The electrification of villages; the replacement of wood burning by commercial power; industrialisation: these are integral parts of development. But technology provides at least the hope that it will be possible to counter this problem. Over the last decade, Western countries have achieved an annual growth of energy efficiency of 2 per cent and the potential undoubtedly exists for further major savings and on a worldwide basis.<sup>26</sup> It is possible to reconcile rapid growth with frugal energy and material use. But it will not be easy; it requires a willingness by

consumers to pay high prices that fully reflect their environmental as well as narrowly economic costs; and governments to tax depletable resources and to finance major long-term research—difficult enough in secure democracies, let alone in countries where government is fragile and the rise in petrol and kerosene prices can precipitate riots and even *coups d'états*. And fresh water supplies—of which there are reported scarcities in 80 countries<sup>27</sup>—now provide an even more acute constraint on expansion—particularly of agriculture.

These problems will present painful dilemmas to which technology will not always provide solutions. It is, however, possible to say with reasonable confidence that those countries which are able to surmount the external and internal impediments to growth will find it easier to deal with the dilemmas. Korea, for example, is one of the very few developing countries expanding its forest acreage; Singapore has become the very antithesis of urban squalor; among the less publicised developmental success stories, Cyprus has been a leader in energy conservation and solar power, and Mauritius is pioneering a comprehensive approach to economic and environmental planning.

While there are pieces of evidence and experience which suggest that brisk economic growth and respect for environmental values can be reconciled, we would be fooling ourselves if we imagine that 'sustainable development' is as yet well established as a working principle. To achieve it globally will require a transformation of attitudes in some fundamental respects. It requires, first of all, a long-term perspective; a recognition that we all have an obligation to future generations as well as to ourselves. This is difficult to realise where key policy-makers in the rich world are geared to the daily stock exchange index and monthly balance of payment figures, and in the poor world to watching the levels of foodstocks in granaries and foreign exchange reserves at the Central Bank. Even when priorities shift from the immediate to issues of long-term investment, investment criteria in both public and private sectors invariably discount future costs and benefits so that the very long term is always effectively ignored. In almost every country policies are being formulated whose long-term implications—for climate change, sea level rise, species extinction and nuclear waste disposal—are not part of the calculus of decision-making. This has to change.

A second imperative which deserves to be stressed, particularly in a university context, is the need to see environmental problems in interdisciplinary terms, not in terms of narrow specialisations. The world is replete with projects that made excellent engineering sense but were economically disastrous; or were economically sound but environmentally catastrophic. The current work on greenhouse gases and global warming and their effects requires the combined skills of physicists, meteorologists, oceanographers, biologists, geographers, economists, lawyers, engineers and students of international relations among others. To deal with such problems satisfactorily is a challenge to both statesmen and thinkers. There are pressures—of institutions, of culture, of fashion—to work in national and disciplinary compartments. These must be resisted. The wide range of patrons to this Lecture Series suggests that at Cambridge such a step forward is already being made. I hope that you will build on it in future work at the University, and also help policy-makers to translate the concept of ‘sustainable development’ into operationally useful advice.

Finally—and this is a factor I particularly stress as the head of an international organisation—a large and growing number of environmental issues are cross-border problems which simply cannot be solved nationally. Norwegian lakes and trees have been polluted by power stations in England and East Germany; the Chernobyl fallout affected farmers as far afield as Wales and Scotland; tree cutting in Nepal has led to flooding in Bangladesh, and in Ethiopia it has caused water supply problems in Sudan and Egypt; CFC emissions in the northern hemisphere could cause skin cancer in Australia, Chile and Argentina.<sup>28</sup> Unless there is a regional or global framework for handling such issues we will see some of them escalating dangerously—in some cases to conflict, as may already have occurred as a consequence of large-scale environmental refugee movements in the Horn of Africa. It is not at all implausible to hypothesise that if environment and development problems become even more serious—with, for example, the large-scale involuntary migrations many believe will follow climatic change—some of the most serious consequences could be in the field of security.

Some international problems—those concerned with the global commons, the oceans and the ocean bed, the atmosphere, Antarctica, which no one owns—present particular problems.

Unless access is regulated in some way, rising demand will result in over-use. For the global commons this means internationally agreed controls. In some respects—such as deep-sea fishing, dumping of waste, fisheries agreements and Antarctica—there have been embryonic forms of multilateral control. But they tread a very delicate dividing line between the competing claims of conservation, private business and governments—all with different interests. To handle these common problems requires strong multilateral institutions and respect for international law. That means a change in habits by some of the major powers.

An effective Law of the Sea to manage the ocean bed has been frustrated for the last decade by the refusal of the US to conform.<sup>29</sup> Russia and Japan have often shown a cavalier disregard for the need to observe fishing agreements. More seriously, there is insufficient attention to the position of poorer countries which are trying to develop in a world in which much of the world's environmental capital has already been drawn down and effective control of much of the remainder lies elsewhere. For example, the Treaty governing Antarctica,<sup>30</sup> in some respects an admirably enlightened and conservationist arrangement, which has kept the world's last true wilderness free of both weapons and developers, is currently faced with the issue of whether or not to allow mineral and oil exploration. The decision will be made only by the 18 Treaty countries; the decision-making process will, for example, have no African representation except for South Africa. Regulation of all the world's global commons—which are truly part of the common heritage of mankind—face similar problems of inequity and unrepresentative control.

An enduring message of the Brundtland Report was that questions of the global environment cannot be separated from the political, economic and moral issues posed by a world in which there is great wealth and also great poverty; with states trying to co-exist that range from the super-powers to vulnerable microstates; and with still only tenuous legal and institutional arrangements preserving international order. Underlining its message of a common future was the unspoken premise that we must think of our planet not only as a world of many states but also as the state of our one world; that we must be ready to nurture tomorrow's concepts of global governance, not have them stifled at birth by yesterday's notions of national sovereignty; that our common future may not be secured save by the reach of

enforceable law across environmentally invisible frontiers. I trust that during this series you will, in dealing with the technical issues, not lose sight of this wider, and necessary, dimension of saving our endangered earth.

## Notes and References

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29. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea closed for signature on 9 December 1984, having received a total of 159 signatures. It will enter into force 12 months after the date of deposit of the sixtieth instrument of ratification or accession. As at 6 October 1988, 35 instruments of ratification had been deposited with the UN Secretary-General. The Convention has continued to receive broad support not only on the national level but on the international plane as well, as an instrument regulating the uses of the oceans and their resources in a manner consistent with the interest of all nations and as an essential pillar in the process of strengthening co-operation and peace. The UN General Assembly, on 1 November 1988, called on more countries to ratify the Convention so that the new international legal regime for the uses of the ocean and deep sea-bed, and their resources, can come into force as soon as possible. A Commission has been preparing for two institutions—the International Sea-bed Authority and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea—which will come into being when the Convention takes effect.
30. The 1989 Antarctic Treaty, which generally administers the Antarctic continent and waters south of 60 degrees south latitude, has 18 Consultative Parties. These have adopted a Convention on a minerals regime in the Antarctic. In November 1988, the UN General Assembly's First Committee (Political and Security) approved two draft resolutions, one regretting that the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties had adopted a Convention on a Minerals Regime in the Antarctic despite a resolution calling for a moratorium on such negotiations, and the other appealing to the Treaty Parties to exclude the racist apartheid regime of South Africa from participation in their meetings at the earliest possible date. *UN Press Release No. GA/PS.27422* (United Nations, New York, 22 November 1988).



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