

Class A.

Class A
2nd Prize

1st Prize

Will be
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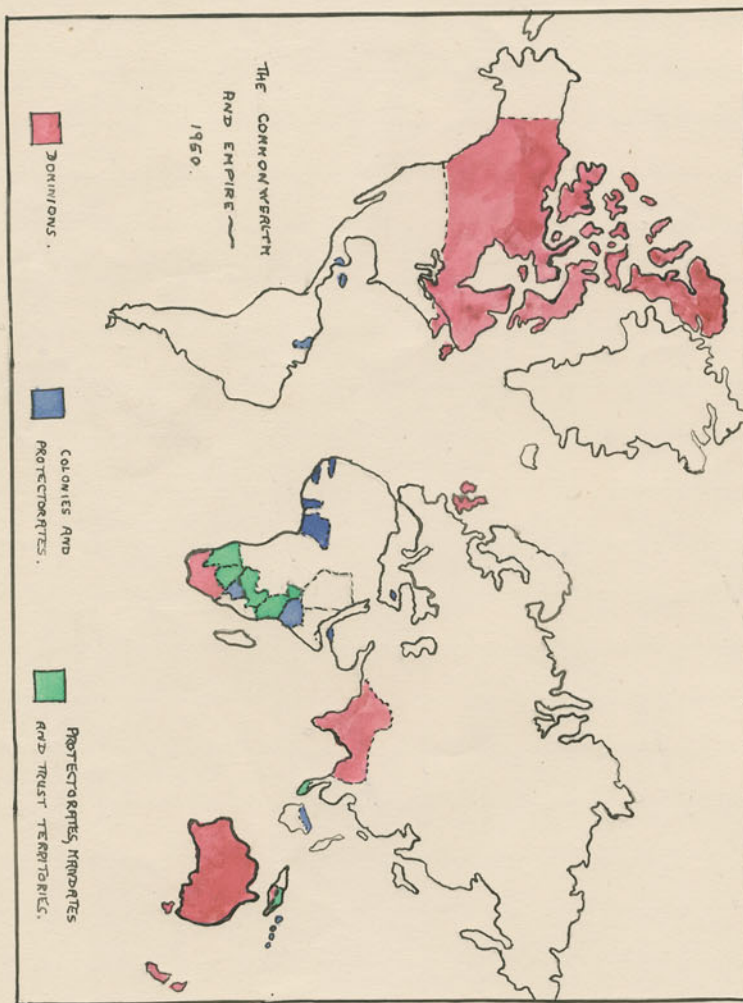
SCHOOL : BARRY GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

PREFACE

- a) Today, a clash between spirit of nationalism and internationalism in the post-war world.
- b) This clash is no where more apparent than within the Commonwealth.
- c) The rise of nationalism in the Commonwealth is the result of a deliberate Imperial Policy which contained declared aims of autonomy. In this way Britain has created new nations.

Problems

1. Racial and cultural differences, e.g. Nigeria.
 2. The claims of the minorities e.g. Kenya.
 3. Economic problems, - a colony must be able to pay its own way e.g. Malta.
 4. Strategic considerations, e.g. Cyprus.
 5. Relationship between the new nation and the rest of the Commonwealth.
- d) The importance of the Commonwealth in world affairs.



CONSIDER SOME OF THE PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS ARISING FROM
NATIONALISM IN THE COMMONWEALTH AND EMPIRE

Although the post-war world has witnessed a strong movement towards the creation of supra-national organisations, it has also witnessed a resurgence of nationalism. Thus, along side the post-1945 creations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, the European Union Movement and the Communist bloc, we have to place the new nations, such as Indonesia, Burma, Pakistan and Ceylon. Nationalism is still a dynamic force in world politics, and the problem of reconciling it with internationalism is one of the most complex problems that confronts mankind.

Nowhere are nationalism and internationalism more apparent than within the British Commonwealth. Since 1945 we have seen the creation of new nations which have completely altered the composition of that most intangible and yet most real of the creations of British political genius, - the Commonwealth. India, Pakistan and Ceylon have emerged as new nations and have opted to remain within the Commonwealth, while Burma has peacefully and with our blessing, chosen to leave. Thus, we have, on the whole, secured a dual triumph, - the creation of new nations and the adherence of these new nations to a wider unity; "libertas" and "imperium" have been reconciled.

Inevitably, the transition from a colony to a nation presented and presents innumerable problems. We should not, of course, be surprised at the emergence of new nations within the Commonwealth. We are simply reaping a harvest of our own sowing. It has been the declared aim of the British Government since the end of the first world war to bring the colonial territories to self-governing status within the Commonwealth as quickly as possible. But the conferment of "Dominion Status" in its fullest sense is not simply an act of grace or a reward for good behaviour. It should be the hall-mark set on a territory after it has reached a stage of political, economical and social development which enables it to meet other independent nations on a footing of equality.

The first problem, then, is that the nationalist spirit should be supported by a real national self in the political sense. "Nationalism" for most of the colonies is a modern invention based on a common affinity of interest, rather than historical or even ethnic grouping. Thus, Nigeria, with a population of over twenty millions is composed of three distinct regions, socially and culturally mixed. Lagos was joined to Southern Nigeria in 1906. Only in 1914 were Northern and Southern Nigeria merged into the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria. Again, the Federated States of Malaya, who are to receive a great measure of self-government next year, includes Europeans, Malays, Chinese and Indians. So often the "affinity of interest" has been to get rid of British control; anti-colonialism is an insufficient basis for nationalism. Moreover, the people of the territory concerned must feel that they are first and foremost citizens of their country and only secondly members of their tribe or local community. The West African colonies are now reaching this stage, but many colonial territories have a long way to go yet.

Inextricably bound up with the problem of the national self is that of the plural society, particularly where there is a large white minority, as in the case of Nigeria and Northern Rhodesia. Here we are faced with the problem of the colour bar. The white settler who has done such great work in the development of Kenya materially, must feel that he is a Kenyan whose fellow citizens include Mau-Mau and the Indians of the coastal region. The same applies to the newly-created Central African Federation. Much remains to be done before all the coloured peoples of these colonies are ready to take their places as citizens of mature self-governing nations based on equality has been attained. The native educated minority must be safeguarded from frustration, for frustrated native intellectuals can become the nuclei of Communist cells.

The second great problem of nationalism is the economic one. In addition to the political self, there must be an economic self. A country cannot properly call itself independent unless it can pay its own way. The sphere in which

a country can exercise its power of self-government is inevitably diminished in proportion as it is economically dependent on other countries. This economic dependence is not necessarily a bad thing in itself. But there is always an optimum measure of economic dependence beyond which political independence is adversely affected. The small individual colony may lack the necessary economic self. Here, as in the case of the West Indies, the answer seems to lie in Federation.

But there are colonies where federation cannot solve the economic problem; indeed, their geographical location prevents such a solution. Malta is an obvious example. Here we have a small island of some 122 square miles with a population of some 268,000 whose greatest source of wealth is its naval importance. It can never hope to attain economic independence. So the novel solution of integration has recently been proposed by an all-Party Parliamentary delegation. True, the result of the recent referendum has been indecisive. But this might be due to Mr. Mintoff's insufficient preparation for the plebiscite. Integration seems to be a rational solution to an otherwise insoluble economic problem. After all, Welsh Nationalism and Scottish Nationalism were "integrated" into the greater British unit. The miraculous improvements effected in transport make it no longer utopian to speak of the integration of other colonies who can never hope to achieve an economic independence which will assure a standard of living equivalent to our own. Gibraltar, St. Helena, and Mauritius spring to mind.

Thirdly, there is the problem of the social self. The people of the territory must feel that they are all members of a society whose mutual relationships are familiar and whose destiny they can influence. Social services cannot be properly organised or fully developed unless there is a large measure of common agreement between the people on the way, ^{in the} for example, their children should be educated, their labour organised, their

illnesses presented and cured, social insurance schemes devised and applied. In most colonial territories, not least, for example, in West Africa, this is the most difficult self of all to create. In the long run it must be created by the people themselves. In the short run, if the social self is not to lag behind the emergence of the political and economic selves, some outside stimulus is necessary. It was with this problem in mind that £120,000,000 was made available by the British Government under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts of 1940 and 1945. Later Acts have made similar generous financial aid. Thus sums are intended to "prime the pump" (in both the economic and the social sense), to give the colonial peoples a push forward in the arduous business of developing their economy and providing at least a minimum measure of social welfare.

The social self cannot, however, be brought into being solely by a form of economic charity. It must be accompanied by measures which will encourage the people's own initiative and make them realise that it lies within their own power to live fuller lives and to conquer the ill-health, inertia and illiteracy that has been their lot for centuries. Education is the key to the solution of the problem. There is tremendous enthusiasm for education throughout the colonies, but unfortunately at present, and probably for many years to come, financial resources will not permit of the establishment of universal free primary education.

Again, there is the nationalism within the colonies which strives for integration not with Britain, but with another country. Cyprus is, of course, at the moment, the only example of this serious problem. Moreover, the whole problem is made more difficult by Britain's strategic necessity of retaining a base for the whole security of the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly as we have now left the Suez Canal zone. We

have in Cyprus a microcosm of the larger macrocosm of the problem of nationalism vis-a-vis the British Commonwealth. Cyprus itself has a most tenuous basis for an economic self and the presence of a large Turkish minority of some 64,000 bedevils the situation. The Cypriots' resort to terrorism has not helped matters, neither has the propaganda intervention of the Greek Government and its antagonising of Turkish sentiments, (both incidentally linked with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation). It would be difficult to hazard even a suggestion for the solution of the Cypriot problem. But the British Government has already publicly committed itself to the granting of self-determination when the time is ripe. It is to be hoped that the policy of moderation will triumph.

Finally, there is the problem of the relationship between the new nation and the Commonwealth. There is always the possibility of the new nation deciding to contract out of the Commonwealth, as Burma did in 1948. After all, the Commonwealth does not constitute an economic bloc. There is no Imperial Zollverein. Neither does it constitute a defence organisation. Canada is geographically "forced" into the American military sphere, as is Australia and New Zealand (witness the creation of A. N. Z. U. S.) Nevertheless, despite this, all three retain their membership of the Commonwealth. It may be argued that in these cases, sentiment and blood ties make for the continuation of the association. But even Pakistan, India (both, incidentally, republics,) and Ceylon have remained within the Commonwealth. Why do they do so? An answer to this question will possibly suggest the solution of the future problems of reconciling colonial "nationalism" with Commonwealth "internationalism". The answer is that the Commonwealth, while not possessing much military force, is extremely important in other ways. To Canada, the Commonwealth as an institution offers a very useful counterweight against what

might otherwise prove the overwhelming force of the United States of America. Commonwealth membership gives Canada more effective independence than she would otherwise enjoy, and enables her to exploit contacts outside the American hemisphere. The Commonwealth is even more important to South Africa. For if she were not a member of the Commonwealth, she would not be in any important international association at all. She would still belong to the United Nations, but she is hardly happy there; and her only friends would be European colonial powers, such as Portugal, whose capacity to help her is almost non-existent. Again, India, who follows a policy of neutralism can do so quite happily and yet retain her membership of the Commonwealth.

Indeed, the Commonwealth has become an association of mutual convenience. It is something that the Commonwealth countries would feel poorer without, for the Commonwealth is a useful addition to their resources in the international field. It adds to their stature, gives them room to manoeuvre, (tips them off) about the happenings in international life, provides informal consultation where formal communication might break down and acts as a shock-absorber against some of the blasts of the Cold war.

Diverse peoples, languages and kinds within an imperial system wish to live their own lives: their wish must be reconciled with the unity of the large association. Our method of achievement, - which some far-sighted thinkers envisaged as far back as the American troubles of the eighteenth century, - is by turning the British Empire into a Commonwealth of equal nations. Imperial sovereignty is thereby transmuted into free association. If this process, which has succeeded in some parts, can succeed everywhere, the result will be a multi-national polity of a type the like of which the world

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