Address by the Prime Minister of Jamaica, 
The Honourable Michael Manley, to the 
ACP/EEC Ministerial Meeting, Kingston, 
Thursday, July 25, 1974

Mr. Chairman, 
Mr. Prime Minister, 
Mr. Vice President, 
Premiers, 
Ministers, 
Excellencies, 
Delegates, 

Distinguished Guests:

Two days ago my distinguished friend and colleague, 
the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, was afforded the pleasure 
of welcoming the representatives of the African, Pacific and Caribbean 
countries who have honoured us with their presence on this historic 
occasion. It is now my wider privilege to welcome not only those 
distinguished persons but those who are here to represent the Member 
States of the European Economic Community and the European 
Commission itself. We offer to you all and without reservation, the 
hospitality of Jamaica and, through Jamaica, the welcome of the 
countries of the Caribbean Community.

On Tuesday, Dr. Williams set this Conference in historic 
perspective when he described the situation of the world as one of: 
"confusion, dislocation, tension and economic realignment ....... 
which probably has no parallel in modern history". Certainly, it is
already clear that we are in the midst of one of those convulsions in human affairs in which the processes of change accelerate almost beyond our capacity to understand events and are seen in the subsequent calm as providing a "watershed of history."

There are those who claim to have been surprised by recent events. There may even be some among us who are sufficiently naive to justify the claim. But the truth is that the recent world inflation with its entire train of consequences was only the final and conclusive evidence of the fact that the world's economic system as it relates to the relationship between nations has been overtaken by events and is no longer capable of containing the political realities of our times. In short it has outlived its usefulness.

The fact of the matter is that the classical notions of free trade in which prices and the movement of resources respond to free market forces cannot inhabit the same world which subscribes to the political notion of equality and international justice. It is not for me to weary this Conference, before it has even begun, with a recitation of the political rhetoric of justice. We have always known that the equality of men is the only viable philosophical foundation for social organisation. We have more recently understood that equality cannot be a prerogative of the wealthy nations.

We well understand that the world cannot permanently contain the gross inequalities of wealth either as between classes or as between nations. We have been proclaiming these truths...
for a generation and have, with each proclamation, added to the climate of popular expectation. Now the events of the last twelve months have brought us to that crisis where the entire world demands of its leaders and of its political systems that the will to action be found.

If it is true that the world is now familiar with the political rhetoric that summons us to action, it can equally be asserted that every delegate to this Conference knows what the practical problems are. We all know that aid from the richer to the poorer countries is of assistance but cannot solve our problems. We all know that the transfer of technology can also help. We know that no programme which involved a combination of aid and technological assistance could by itself provide a solution.

Any new arrangement of the world’s international economic relationships which intends seriously to grapple with the problem of poverty and the growing gap between the rich and the poor nations must begin by providing a decisive answer to the problem of the terms of trade. We all know that so long as it takes more Third World cotton or sugar or ground nuts to buy a metropolitan tractor tomorrow than it does today, so long are we condemned to a relentless transfer of income from the poor to the rich. Equally we know that no flow of aid that can be devised by the political systems of the metropolitan countries can reverse that flow. So we must find the answer to the terms of trade or confess, each in his own private confession, to either incompetence or hypocrisy.
4.

The principle of the stabilization of real export earnings must form a part of any new arrangements between the A.C.P. countries and the European Community. There must be full commitment on all sides to an acceptance of the principle that the adverse movement of the terms of trade against the countries of the Third World must be brought to a stop and that equitable terms of trade are the foundation of any world economic order that accepts the idea of international justice for all.

I realise that great technical difficulties present themselves but assume that there is gathered in this room a common, collective will to pool our resources of ingenuity until viable solutions can be found insofar as the relationship between these trading partners are concerned.

Mr. Chairman, the choice that faces us in the largest matter of the terms of trade is clear, provided we assume the sincerity of the political declarations to which we are all committed. It is between clinging to the conventional wisdom or applying a creative imagination to the search for solutions. This choice faces us equally in a number of areas.

Let us take the case of "across-the-board" access to the Community market for the exports of the A.C.P. countries. Every development expert knows that the hope of economic salvation for Third World countries must begin with equitable terms of trade. But those same experts also know that there is no hope of providing
a decent life for people unless we can diversify Third World economies. This means the establishment of an expanding manufacturing and agro-industrial element in Third World economies. If this effort is to succeed, there must be access to the markets of the Community. Therefore, a failure to concede "across-the-board" access on preferential terms is not a minor technical decision. That failure would be part of the process by which we condemned to death the very efforts at economic development which we so earnestly implore our people to attempt.

Then again, we cannot consider the question of access to the market without dealing with country of origin rules. Now if we look at those rules, we are driven to recognise that it is one thing to set up a set of rules that provide a rough justice for the regulation of dealings between countries of comparable levels of economic development. It is an entirely different thing to take those same rules and apply them to the relations between countries at totally different stages of development. If you apply the strict rules that are relevant to the metropolitan dialogue to the economy of a country struggling at the point of economic take-off,
you kill that country. Therefore, again we must comprehend
the reality of our situation and, if our intentions are sincere,
device a new set of rules which take into imaginative account
everybody's needs. Equally, it should not be too difficult
to understand that the principle of cumulative treatment
within the origin rules applicable to Third World countries is
both one of the pre-conditions of their capacity to compete
internationally and a vital inducement to the process by which
regional economic integration can be promoted.

In another area, and reverting to questions
of preferential entry, we gather that there still is less than
unanimous acceptance of the proposal to guarantee access for
1.4 million tons of sugar to the enlarged Community. I ask the
question: How could we, in conscience, weigh in the same
scales the interests of those nations who produce sugar as
part of the total fabric of powerful and wealthy economies
against the interests of those nations for whom sugar exports
are a life-line upon which their very national existence depends?
Surely, any accommodation here needs only to be marginal.
And from whom should that margin be exacted? Surely,
commonsense no less than common justice demands that the
adjustment be made by those who are so incomparably better
able to afford it.
Even the transfer of capital and technology present us with decisive choices between the new and the traditional, and where the choice may determine the outcome. For example, it used to be assumed that the metropolitan world was entitled to exact the price of large economic returns as their due reward for the provision of technology. But in that formulation technology may assist a young economy to up-grade its skills; but at the end of the process resources have still been transferred from the poor to the rich with the gap wider than ever, in mockery of the process. And even where technology has not been tied to the investment of exploitative capital, it has been so beset with management and consultant fees and astronomical \( \text{funds} \) as to inflict grievous burdens. Surely, some more reasonable formulae can be arranged. And so, too, one could range across the questions of technological relevance where the very rules that are tied to loans conspire against the interest of Third World nations. When massive equipment provide the cheapest means of accomplishing a particular task, it may suit the manufacturer of the equipment but denies to the recipient country the opportunity to fully mobilise its own human and other resources for the accomplishment of its own tasks.

I do not...
I do not advance this as a plea for inefficiency, but rather in the search for relevant methodology. Of course, where capital is concerned, I suppose that we can assume a common acceptance of the view that it is in everyone's interest that the transfer of capital from the metropolitan to the Third World nations should be on a basis that accommodates the legitimate interests of both, interpreted in the light of present-day political and economic reality. And this reality again must comprehend the underlying truths of the Third World's principal needs.

These then are the problems with which we must grapple in this Conference. As I said, Mr. Chairman, we share a common rhetoric of intention and the knowledge that the entire world has heard it. We share a technical comprehension of the central elements of the problem. What remains is the political will. Europe has had the political will to form the European Economic Community and is demonstrating that larger will that is required for the enlargement of the Community. For our part, we, the forty-four nations of the A.C.P. group have demonstrated a similar will and stand, at this moment of history, united as never before. Our will has been forged in the fires of colonialism. It is that simple and sturdy thing to which adversity must give birth sooner or later - the will to justice for all men.
At this Conference we of the A. C. P. group speak immediately for over 130 million members of our forty-four States. But we are conscious that we carry with us the hopes of the entire poor of the world. To our will we have added a growing maturity. We understand that we must learn to fashion regional groupings so that we can plan our economic development in a larger arena of opportunity. We are evolving new social structures which are aimed at creating more equitable systems of distribution amongst our people.

We are proud, in the Caribbean particularly, of our achievement of a Caribbean Community and Common Market which we have constructed within a decade of the first of us entering into independence. We have already accepted within our own Region the distinctions between the more and the less developed nations because we understand that justice is indivisible but that injustice is relative.

We have already, as just one example, begun to tackle the problem of equitable commodity pricing in the trading arrangements within our Region.

Therefore . . .
Therefore, we do not come morally empty to the table, nor do we come as people who seek our solutions in other people's generous. We are committed to self-reliance and even as we struggle with that mountainous unemployment which mocks every tenet of decency, even as we grapple with the problems of world inflation, in whose storm some of us nearly foundered last year, we proceed with pride proposing nothing that is not supported by the logic of justice, asking nothing that must rest upon generosity.

Sometimes we are almost dumbfounded by the insensitiveness of our metropolitan friends. We have watched for years while we paid more and more for processed foods and manufactured goods. We have watched vast accumulations of wealth out of the exploitation of our mineral resources. And simultaneously we have watched our efforts to progress condemned by the system to a seemingly permanent walk up the down escalator. In the end, we have been driven to construct simple groupings of mineral or raw material producers like the International Bauxite Association. Immediately, masking economic self-interest behind irrelevant phrases of classical economic jargon, we are accused of forming cartels. And every kind of spectre and bogey of any time and situation are invoked to spread fear and confusion. Yet Association like that of the bauxite producing countries is simply evidence and expression of a common will on the part of these producing countries.
countries which recognise their community of interest. It is the result and the end product of that common will, not its originator. The development of producer associations should have come as no surprise to the advanced nations. No one who has had the opportunity to hear even the merest snatches of the litany of prayer from the developing countries in every economic forum over the past decade, or even more, could have failed to understand how profound was the common yearning on our part for better terms of trade and a better chance to narrow the gap between our living standards and those of the rich nations. A more acute listener would not have failed to detect the overtones and the existence of that common will, to do what we must do to break out of the vicious circle. The conditions which faced us in the autumn of 1973 when the price of so many imports rose dramatically made it no longer possible to defer the necessary action.

I have a word, however, for those who view the creation of a body like the International Bauxite Association with such concern. I wish to say, be calm my friends, there is no need for alarm. We have no undisclosed political aim. Our aims are positive and have to do with organising a new relationship between producing and consuming countries; new methods of bringing the productive process into harmony with social purpose; new and just relationships between those who own resources, those who control capital, those who control technology, those who supply labour and those who consume the final products.

/This, ...
This, Mr. Chairman, is a tremendous moment in history. In a more profound sense than some realise and others care to admit, the world is at a crossroads where it is the collective political intelligence of mankind that is going to tell the difference between whether the opportunity of the crisis is seized or the danger allowed to overtake us by default.

It is fitting that the moment should confront some of the oldest and some of the youngest of the nations of the world. If we exercise our choice in these negotiations in favour of the needs of our times we will have laid the first foundation of that new world economic order to which we are summoned by conscience and common sense. If we can find the will, we may have opened a new chapter in human history not through war or violence or confrontation, but rather through the conquest of difficulty and disagreement by intelligence and common sense; by the willingness to take infinite pains over stubborn detail; and by the professional courage whereby officials tell their politicians what they need to know, and the political courage whereby politicians tell their people what they need to know; and above all, by remembering that no Treaty will endure that cannot first face the test of simple conscience as it operates in the mind of a reasonably well informed man.

If we fail through political intrasigence, short-sightedness or even indecisiveness, then we may have presided over one of the turning-points in history when man confounds his own best hopes /his...
his inability to match political insight with the will to act.

If we should fail, we will find that the world will slide into a mounting confrontation between the metropolitan world entrenched in its wealth and the developing world asserting its need. It is my faith that we shall not fail.