

Mr. CONVEY: Most of them are visitable, but there are other phases of their operations which they would prefer not to show around.

Mr. FAULKNER: Does that apply both in this country and in the Soviet Union?

Mr. CONVEY: Yes. We have an exchange arrangement between us which is quite simple to operate and we have industry co-operating with us, and when we wish to say "no" to any visit, they understand, and in return we receive the same answer. On the other hand, up to the present time, areas which we have been interested in visiting, the Russians have been quite open.

Mr. FAULKNER: How do their mining techniques compare—this may be slightly off the estimates, but it might be interesting—in your view? What is their level of technology in this field; is it comparable to ours, superior to ours?

Mr. CONVEY: We were over there for only three weeks, but I could say this, that we saw areas in their mining technology which matched anything we have, and we saw areas in which they were not as forward. In other words, they are suffering from this modern change into mechanization just the same as the rest of us; they have old mines which they are trying to reconvert; they have new mines which are very modern. This is particularly true with respect to some of their coal mines.

Mr. SALTSMAN: I have a rather tenuous supplementary question. This relates to a question of co-operation with other countries. At the various commonwealth conferences that have been held in the last number of years, the question of commodity stabilization prices has arisen and the question I would like to direct to you, Mr. Convey, is this: has there been any discussion with the other commonwealth countries regarding commodity stabilization prices in the mining products?

Mr. CONVEY: As a rule, at the commonwealth conferences that you refer to, for the most part, our discussions are associated with, really, the technical matters having to do with mining and processing. The question of prices and commodity fixing—if you wish—no, not to any extent that I know of.

Mr. SALTSMAN: This is of particular significance, of course, you understand, to the developing countries whose chief source of income and foreign exchange, in many cases, are their mineral exports. They have expressed great concern about the wide fluctuations that take place in world markets in these particular commodities, and they cause serious disruption to their economies, either when the price goes up too quickly, or when the price comes down. It was for that reason I asked the question. I might ask you another question: are you giving any serious consideration to meeting with other commonwealth nations to discuss this problem?

Mr. CONVEY: I think what you find, in partial answer to your question, is that a lot of the major mining companies are all sort of intermarried in different countries, and they themselves are the groups who are looking at the stabilization—