

*Commonwealth Conference*

wished to make arrangements with the Canadian government. This can be done out of existing appropriations that will be before parliament or in some cases have been before parliament, if parliament approves of them. It can be done, if necessary, by the transfer of some of these appropriations to Southern Rhodesia. We are already doing a good deal in this regard, but I suggested we might do more.

I have taken a good deal of time, Mr. Speaker, in reporting on this question of race relations because at this conference it was crucial to the success of the conference. I think the communiqué represents a considerable achievement in regard to the handling of this very explosive and difficult matter. It will take time to weigh the value of this achievement, and it is foolish to be final and dogmatic in our conclusions at the present time. The long term assessment of its importance must depend upon the implementation by those concerned of the principles on which we agreed and on the influence on the thinking and future actions of the governments represented in London.

It is still a convention of the commonwealth prime ministers' meetings that we do not discuss disputes between commonwealth countries, although that convention is becoming a little shaky in the light of the experience of the last two conferences. We faced this convention on the question of relations between India and Pakistan, particularly of course in regard to Kashmir. There is no specific reference to this dispute as such in the communiqué, but we were all conscious at the conference of the importance within the commonwealth of this dispute, and what a wonderful thing it would be if the conference could do something to encourage the settlement of this dispute which has been making relationships between the two largest members of the commonwealth difficult for some years. At the same time we did not wish to do anything by any formal intervention which would make such a solution more difficult. It is rather apparent that at the moment there is not much an outside nation can do, but the commonwealth conference gave the two governments concerned an opportunity to talk about this in London, an opportunity which would be easier to take advantage of, perhaps, than by arranging a special meeting at this time in Pakistan or in India. I think some progress was made in that direction.

The conference also directed a good deal of attention to two localities, small in area but large in problems and in potential dangers,

[Mr. Pearson.]

Cyprus and British Guiana. The paragraph in the communiqué on Cyprus includes an appeal to the countries concerned—and we had in mind particularly the countries most concerned, Greece and Turkey—to refrain from any action which might undermine the task of the United Nations peace keeping force to which members of the commonwealth are contributing, or might prejudice the endeavours of the United Nations to find a solution in conformity with the charter of the United Nations. So far as British Guiana is concerned, it is almost a hopelessly confused situation down there, and it is very difficult indeed to see what can be done by the intervention of the commonwealth to clear up that confusion, remove the danger and bring back some order to that very distracted colony.

It was suggested at the conference that perhaps the United Nations could move in there and in some way hold the line while elections were being held. But it became clear from the evidence we received that the basic difficulty, and the underlying danger in that difficulty, is the fact there are two parties in British Guiana organized completely along racial lines, one Indian and one African, and that the leaders of these parties are getting their support entirely from one race or the other. This has aroused emotions, prejudices and fears that can only be removed by some kind of arrangement between the leaders to bring the people together in the way they used to be together before this division occurred. There is no difficulty about independence. The British government is only too anxious to give this colony independence as soon as any government can assure order. In our communiqué we made an appeal to the leaders of the two parties, that is the leaders of the two races, to get together and do something about this.

There was considerable discussion of trade and economic questions, but I do not propose to go into those in any detail. They are referred to at some length in the communiqué, and the substance of the matters dealt with in our discussions has been covered in reports to the house by the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Trade and Commerce at various times during this session. The developing countries attach the very greatest importance, according to their statements and according to their policies, to the United Nations trade conference which has been meeting in Geneva. They called attention to the fact that along with race relations, one of the serious problems and dangers in the world today is the division of nations into the haves and