



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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THE EEC, THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE WORLD

Notes for a statement delivered by Prime Minister Diefenbaker at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting in London, on September 17, 1962.

I should like to summarize briefly the Canadian position after consideration in the light of the statements made in the main sessions last week and also in the light of the committee meetings. In doing so, I think it is no longer necessary to sketch in the background considerations which we have all been over with some care.

We wish to emphasize first of all that the decision regarding the entry into EEC is one for Britain and Britain alone, after the consultation which this meeting has made possible and such further consultation as may be desired.

The Canadian Government is not taking a position on whether or not the U.K. should enter the Common Market because we respect the right of Britain to take this decision herself. We have been invited to tell the British Government of our assessment of the effects of such a decision upon Canadian interests and we have done so. There are many other considerations involved in this decision which only the British Government and the British Parliament can take properly into account.

You have asked for our appraisal of the effects upon our trade of Britain's entry into the Common Market on the basis of the terms so far negotiated at Brussels. We have given this. It is on record both in the statement I made on Tuesday last and in the record of the Committee concerned with temperate foodstuffs and other matters of particular interest to Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Safeguarding Commonwealth Interests

Our assessment is that, in the further negotiations planned to take place in Brussels in contemplation of entry by Britain into the Community, substantial further improvement will be needed in the terms of entry in the light of the undertakings that have been given regarding the safeguarding of Commonwealth