

Supply—Finance

is the treaty which has brought the community into being and which keeps the six in community relationship, there would be changed political relationship involving the United Kingdom. In the second place, there would be changes in the terms of trade between the commonwealth countries and the United Kingdom.

My next observation is that this discussion came about because an item had been placed on the agenda involving consideration of this subject. Here is the item which appeared on the agreed agenda. It reads: "European Economic Problems". This agenda was drafted, at least in part, by the United Kingdom. The ministers representing the United Kingdom at the conference expected a full discussion of the matter and were well aware of the importance attached to it by the commonwealth countries assembled there. At the meeting of heads of delegations prior to the opening of the conference it was agreed that, having regard to the importance of this subject, one complete day should be set aside for it. The second day, by agreement, was therefore set aside. The discussion occupied the whole day and was concluded at the end of the day.

A communique was issued at the conclusion of the conference, and hon. members have had an opportunity of perusing that communique. Therefore, when the Leader of the Opposition intimated to the house, as recorded at page 8407 of *Hansard*, that Canadian ministers at that conference were squealing before they were hurt, he completely overlooked the fact that this item was placed on an agreed agenda and that the United Kingdom ministers came to Accra expecting a full discussion of the subject.

It is now said in some quarters that the decision recorded at that conference and set down in the communique was what is called "a Canadian decision". It was said here in this house two days ago by the hon. member for Laurier that Canada led "a ganging up on the United Kingdom." There is no shred of truth whatsoever in those charges—not the slightest. They are based upon a complete distortion of the facts. Here is the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate adding to that by a statement he made in Toronto last evening. I have in my hand the *Ottawa Journal* of this afternoon which contains a Canadian Press dispatch. The *Journal* has surmounted it with a headline reading, "Pickersgill Charges Tories Anti-British". The opening paragraph reads:

Toronto (CP)—Liberal member of parliament J. W. Pickersgill accused the Conservative government last night of being "consistently anti-British"—

Those charges of the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate are false in all particulars. I hope I have made myself quite plain. He has been playing his old game of cheap politics.

Mr. Chevrier: The minister does that pretty well.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Chairman, the communique reveals very completely the unanimity that was reached at this conference. It is a report of agreement on the part of the commonwealth countries. Indeed, a quite extraordinary unanimity was achieved at the conference of the views of the commonwealth countries in relation to this issue. A great injustice is done to the other commonwealth countries by those who pretend and mislead by saying that this was a Canadian decision. Canada played her proper part at this conference. My colleague and I would be open to censure if we had not played a proper part at this conference. However, as the communique shows, the decisions were unanimous decisions on the part of the commonwealth countries in expressing their opinions to the government of the United Kingdom.

The opinions which were expressed by Canadian ministers were government policy, the same policy that was indicated to Mr. Duncan Sandys when he visited Ottawa on July 14 and which are reported in the communique of that date.

The Canadians were not the first to open up this subject at the conference. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, so great was the interest in this subject that in the public session of the conference which preceded our going into private session the Right Hon. Harold Holt, the treasurer of Australia, made reference to the subject. Here is a passage from his remarks in his speech in the public session. He said:

A decision by the United Kingdom to join the community would be a step of such tremendous historical importance that it must, my government believes, affect the commonwealth to some degree. We in Australia recognize that the question whether the United Kingdom should or should not join the community is one which the United Kingdom government alone can decide. But we have been concerned at the weakening effect that a decision to join might ultimately have on the commonwealth relationship. None of us wishes to see that happen. The United Kingdom has told us of the great importance it attaches to maintaining the commonwealth relationship unimpaired. We have welcomed the assurances the United Kingdom government has given us on this point. This is more than a matter of trade and financial relationships, but these aspects are of far-reaching importance also. It would be a most unhappy outcome if the long established trade within the commonwealth were not fully maintained and, indeed, given adequate opportunities for expansion.