

therefore being given to the possibility of co-operative action among members of the Commonwealth in assisting the economic development of countries in Africa which have recently attained or are approaching independence. This matter will be studied by the various Commonwealth governments, and will be examined at the next meeting of the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council in London.

On behalf of the Government, Canada indicated willingness, subject to Parliament, to participate in such a programme. I cannot at present, however, indicate the scope of the aid programme which may flow from the decisions of the Conference, or offer any forecast of what will be required from Canada.

Then in connection with the need for technical assistance for the newly independent countries of both Asia and Africa, the Prime Minister of Malaya drew attention to the fact that his Government required the services of persons with specialized skills and experience in the administrative and technical fields. There was general support that everything should be done to foster and encourage exchanges of specialized personnel, and that the question should be taken into consideration by the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council.

#### Constitutional Development

A further subject — and this was one that will become of increasing importance — was the constitutional development of the Commonwealth. Up to the present time it has been possible to preserve the intimate character of the Prime Ministers' meetings. The essence of these meetings is that they are conducted, as I said, in an informal way. No resolutions are moved; no votes are taken. Progress is made by agreement after discussion. However, as the membership of the Commonwealth grows, new problems as to how these meetings will be conducted will arise.

One has only to note that, at the present rate of accession to the Commonwealth, within a very few years the present membership of 11 will be expanded to 16 or 18. How shall such a wide membership be reconciled with the maintenance of frank, intimate and profitable discussion? What about the size of the gathering? What about the size of the nations? There will be tremendous and fantastic disparities in population, importance and size, India with a population of 450 million and Sierra Leone with 2 million.

The various Commonwealth governments will have to give consideration to such questions as membership, weight by population, the rotation of membership as in the Security Council, regional groupings of nations within the Commonwealth, and representation of such groups. These are some of the problems which will have to receive consideration. I am not indicating any view with regard to them. These are some of the problems that will now have to be examined in the light of the tremendous expansion that is taking place and the number of nations which are joining us.

To those who say there is nothing in the Commonwealth relationship, may I say that it is of interest to note that in all the years the Commonwealth has