

and that they will permit me to include them in this word of praise for our colleague and friend, the Honourable the Speaker.

**Hon. Mr. Vaillancourt:** Honourable senators, on my own behalf and on behalf of my French colleagues in this chamber, I wish to pay tribute to His Honour the Speaker, and offer him our best wishes for the future.

*(Translation):*

Our French Canadian motto is: "I remember". We will remember, tomorrow and forever, Mr. Speaker, the courtesy with which you have always treated us; we will recall your great urbanity. When you are no longer speaker, your memory will remain deeply engraved in our hearts.

*The doors were opened.*

Routine proceedings.

### COMMONWEALTH PRIME MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

#### OFFICIAL STATEMENT

**Hon. Wishart McL. Roberison:** Honourable senators, I should like to ask the house at this time to implement the suggestion of the leader opposite (Hon. Mr. Haig), that the statement made by our Prime Minister in another place on the momentous conference of Prime Ministers recently held at London, be incorporated in our records; and I would so move. The most difficult constitutional problem concerning India's relation to the commonwealth has been happily solved.

**Hon. Mr. Haig:** I would like to have the honour of seconding that motion.

The motion was agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Roberison:** The statement is as follows:

During the past week the Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan, and Ceylon, and the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs have met in London to exchange views upon the important constitutional issues arising from India's decision to adopt a republican form of constitution and her desire to continue her membership of the Commonwealth.

The discussions have been concerned with the effects of such a development upon the existing structure of the Commonwealth and the constitutional relations between its members. They have been conducted in an atmosphere of goodwill and mutual understanding, and have had as their historical background the traditional capacity of the Commonwealth to strengthen its unity of purpose, while adapting its organization and procedures to changing circumstances.

After full discussion the representatives of the governments of all the Commonwealth countries have agreed that the conclusions reached should be placed on record in the following declaration:

"The governments of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Ceylon, whose countries are united as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations

and owe a common allegiance to the Crown, which is also the symbol of their free association, have considered the impending constitutional changes in India.

The Government of India have informed the other governments of the Commonwealth of the intention of the Indian people that under the new constitution which is about to be adopted India shall become a sovereign independent Republic. The Government of India have however declared and affirmed India's desire to continue her full membership of the Commonwealth of Nations and her acceptance of the King as the symbol of the free association of its independent member nations and as such the Head of the Commonwealth.

The governments of the other countries of the Commonwealth, the basis of whose membership of the Commonwealth is not hereby changed, accept and recognize India's continuing membership in accordance with the terms of this Declaration.

Accordingly, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Ceylon hereby declare that they remain united as free and equal members of the Commonwealth of Nations, freely co-operating in the pursuit of peace, liberty and progress".

These constitutional questions have been the sole subject of discussion at the full meetings of prime ministers.

### COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

#### WELCOME TO DELEGATES

**Hon. Mr. Roberison:** Before the business of the house is proceeded with, and as having some relation to the subject we have just considered, I should like, on behalf of honourable members on this side of the house to extend a very warm welcome to the delegates to the General Council of the Commonwealth Association.

Honourable senators will perhaps remember that in October, 1948, the Empire Parliamentary Association, now the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, formed a General Council of the association. At that time it was arranged that the first meeting would take place in Canada in April, 1949. The General Council of the association was formed as a means of establishing local contact between the various branches. It meets once a year in such place as may be determined at its annual business meeting, and at this very moment a meeting is being held in this building by representatives from the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia—its Commonwealth and State Branches—the Union of South Africa, New Zealand, Pakistan, Malta, Bermuda, and the Gold Coast. The deliberations will continue for the next few days and, although no particular resolutions will be passed, the opinions of the various delegates will be printed and circulated, I presume that following any constitutional changes which are made, India will soon become a member of the Association.

While I have always been a member of the association I have not yet had the opportunity of attending any of its meetings in the various