

*Supply—Finance*

this conference, because they have given such a completely misleading impression of the conference, what was said there and the spirit in which it was carried on.

It is acknowledged by all the commonwealth countries that if they are shut out of the market in the United Kingdom for any of their products as the result of terms made with the six, these commonwealth countries will have to look for markets elsewhere. These advantages are a matter of exchange; they are a matter of contract. These advantages are bought and paid for in terms of reciprocal exchange of advantages, and this is the way that in the world today countries exchange trade opportunities.

Our effort has been to preserve for Canadian producers all of the markets that they have had. I say this, that if my colleague and I had not taken that position there—as did other commonwealth countries on behalf of their producers—we would have been failing in our duty to Canadian agriculture, Canadian primary producers and Canadian producers of manufactured goods for the United Kingdom market.

The communique has been said by some to be a strong document. Well, Mr. Chairman, it was an accurate document. It correctly reported the views expressed by the numerous countries that attended that conference. The views recorded there—and that communique, of course, was an agreed document and every phrase in it was carefully weighed—properly express the consensus of views. It was written by those who have a high appreciation of the importance of the commonwealth and the contribution it makes to the world.

We make sacrifices because of our belief in the commonwealth, because we believe that the commonwealth should be strengthened. Canada has provided substantial assistance through the Colombo plan. It has been axiomatic in the policy of this government that practically all of our Colombo plan aid goes to commonwealth countries. Look at the other things that we have done with a view to bringing aid to other commonwealth countries, particularly those that are seeking to develop their resources. We do this because we believe in the commonwealth as an institution. We believe that it has a mission in the world that no existing international institution has. As the communique of July 14 points out, we would view with grave concern anything which would weaken the commonwealth, so high a value do we attach to it and to its mission in the world today as a multi-racial group or family of self governing nations bound together by ties which are really indefinable.

[Mr. Fleming (Eglington).]

An attempt has been made to play down the Canadian government's interest in trade with the community. This does a grave injustice to the government's efforts to expand trade with the six and to strengthen our trade and economic interest in that quarter. Canada has played a leading part in the re-organization of O.E.E.C. into the organization for economic co-operation and development. We are their fellow-members with all the members of the community. Indeed, we are allies, in NATO, of all these members of the community. We have a very close relationship with it. It is not as close as our relationship with the commonwealth countries, but we value our relationship with these countries of the six and look forward to expanding our trade with them. That has been government policy and it continues to be our policy.

Because of our relationship with these countries we have been able to impress upon them, I think, the importance which we as a great trading nation attach to the pursuit of their goals by outward-looking policies and not by inward-looking policies which would have the effect of restricting trade between the community and the rest of the world.

On the subject of the attitude of the United States to this important question, I simply draw attention to the fact that at least one member of the United States cabinet has recently declared publicly that the United States would not wish the United Kingdom to adhere to the community on a basis of a continuance of the commonwealth preference system. While we were still in Accra my attention was drawn by telegram to remarks made by the secretary of agriculture of the United States, as reported in the *New York Times* of September 8, that if the United Kingdom were to join the community it would produce an intolerable situation, in the view of the United States, were it to result in a continuance of the preferential trade system of the British commonwealth on its present basis. It is the policy of the Canadian government to seek to preserve to Canadian producers the opportunities and advantages which they enjoy under the commonwealth preference system. At the Montreal conference of 1958, all the commonwealth countries reaffirmed the value of that system to them. The Canadian government also reaffirms its belief in the advantages of that system to its producers, regardless of the views other nations may have toward the preference arrangements.

Finally, may I say that I think this conference has produced very beneficial results. All the countries of the commonwealth now know fully what the views of all other countries of the commonwealth are in relation to this subject of such far-reaching importance. There can be no possibility now