

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, February 19, 1962

The house met at 11 a.m.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

BERMUDA—CONFERENCE OF U.S., U.K.
AND CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY
REPRESENTATIVES

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I wish to announce that a delegation of Canadian parliamentarians has been invited to attend an informal conference of congressional and parliamentary leaders of the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada to be held in Bermuda from the 20th to the 25th of this month. The chairman of the Canadian delegation will be the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fleming), who will be accompanied by the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys (Mr. Flynn), the hon. member for Essex East (Mr. Martin), the hon. member for York West (Mr. Hamilton), and the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin).

I am informed that the purpose of the conference will be to hold informal and confidential discussions on a number of major foreign policy issues, and in particular east-west relations including cessation of nuclear tests, disarmament and the problem of Berlin; organization of NATO and connected problems in Europe; economic co-operation, trade and financial problems of Europe, and common market and aid to developing countries and, fourth, commonwealth-United States relations.

This conference is the second such meeting, and I think the meeting together of representatives of the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada is most beneficial and helpful.

[Later:]

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Prime Minister. The members of this united and forward looking group—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Herridge: —were very interested in his announcement concerning the interparliamentary conference in Bermuda and trust it will serve some useful purpose. However, I should like the Prime Minister to explain

to the house why he did not follow the traditional and usual practice of naming members of all parties to this interparliamentary conference as part of the Canadian delegation, so that parliament can be completely and properly represented.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, in so far as this particular type of delegation is concerned, the course the hon. gentleman suggests has not been followed in the past. In any event, far be it from me to inject anything into this day's proceedings that might be misunderstood, but I doubt whether agreement could have been secured.

FINANCE

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND—STATEMENT
ON MEETING OF EXECUTIVE BOARD

On the orders of the day:

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Finance if he has any comment to make on an observation attributed by the Canadian Press to a spokesman of the international monetary fund to the effect that the fund cannot give up its objective of having an effective par value established, that is for the Canadian dollar, in accordance with the articles of agreement.

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, at the meeting of the executive board of the international monetary fund last Friday morning, no new undertakings or commitments were entered into on behalf of Canada.

In view of the way in which what has been involved in these discussions has been exaggerated, perhaps I should make a further explanation of just what was involved in these consultations.

This was a routine consultation under the terms of article 8 of the fund. There were previously consultations under article 14 involving countries which had not established convertibility, before they did so. When convertibility was restored, certain countries which had been under article 14, then moved under article 8 and were then in the same position as Canada. Canada had never been under article 14. The wish at that time was expressed for the continuation of such consultations because they had been found to be helpful in the past.