

The Address—Mr. Diefenbaker

Mr. nine numbers. The only one to be named would be the clergyman. Sir, this is a step that cannot be justified, and it is one that is being introduced under the pretext that it is simply carrying out a course that had already been started with reference to those who have unemployment insurance. I make no further reference to this matter, except to say that this subject will arouse Canadians as none other will to the danger that is inherent in the course that is to be taken.

Before I deal with one or two economic matters I am going to make passing reference to the international situation and to the commonwealth. Today a reference was made to the possibility of a prime ministers' conference. The Prime Minister gave a full and frank answer to that question. There has not been one since September, 1962. I believe there is a serious need today of action being taken by a prime ministers' conference. There are serious problems within the commonwealth that will have to be faced.

There are some who say that the commonwealth we have known can no longer continue. The membership today, the Prime Minister said, is 17. A few years ago it was five or six or seven or eight. Countries have joined in which there have been serious difficulties, difficulties which are based on reasons peculiar to those countries—in Zanzibar, in Tanganyika, in Kenya and in Rhodesia.

As I said a moment ago, it has been suggested that national interests, racial feeling, regional loyalties and economic circumstances will cause the commonwealth to break up. I do not believe that. I think this institution has a great work to do in the bridging of difficulties between races and colours, in bringing together peoples in all parts of the world who cannot, who will not, go to war one against the other. We used to be bound together by common institutions, by the parliamentary system. That is no longer the case. Speaking of the parliamentary system, one has only to think of Ghana. One has only to think of some of these other countries in which there are such differences that the bonds which brought us together in the past are no longer in existence.

I think it is all to the good that we should have the widest possible extension of the commonwealth family, except that under no circumstances should we have within the commonwealth communist nations. That is a stand that I took as prime minister. It think it was a proper stand.

I think we have to do something to expand our trade. Certainly the trade between Canada and the United Kingdom in 1963 showed a trend that is not beneficial either to Canada or to the United Kingdom. In 1962 Canadian purchases from the United Kingdom were

valued at \$563,100,000. In 1963 this figure fell to \$527½ million. At the same time we exported goods worth \$1,015 million to the United Kingdom in 1963, a gain of nearly \$100 million over 1962.

I can understand the attitude of the United Kingdom in this regard. They are asking that we do something to assure a reasonable equalization of our trade, and I think Canadians as a whole would consider that desirable. The Conservative party made a tremendous contribution to the preservation of the commonwealth in 1932 when the Ottawa agreements were entered into, largely as a result of the leadership of the Conservative prime minister of that day, Right Hon. R. B. Bennett as he then was. I know the Prime Minister will agree with this because he was one of those who at that time had a strong belief in Mr. Bennett's views. I am not going to go into fuller particulars in that regard unless pressed to do so.

In 1958, as a result of representations made by myself as prime minister in 1957, a trade and economic conference for the commonwealth was convened in Montreal. It was also through the instrumentality and initiative of the government of that day that the idea of the exchange of students was brought before that conference and accepted. I feel that trade conditions being what they are today, with all the uncertainties that are apparent, an international conference should take place. Without in any way bringing about any exclusive arrangement, Canada should take the lead in having another trade and economic conference convened here in the city of Ottawa, to the end that we may make our contribution to the bringing about of an extension of trade not only between Canada and the United Kingdom but in the commonwealth as a whole. The Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Sharp) smiles and sneers.

Mr. Sharp: I was not sneering.

Mr. Diefenbaker: A sneer is still a sneer.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I hope you will suggest to the right hon. gentleman that he should not make personal remarks of this kind. It is unbecoming to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Diefenbaker: When the hon. gentleman starts giving lessons in unbecoming conduct, I will start to learn. Let me say this. This has been his attitude throughout in connection with commonwealth trade.

Now I pass to the next item. I suggest that at this time we ought to do something within the commonwealth to bring about the establishment of a commonwealth loan and development fund, so that the nations of the