

Supply—External Affairs

time in New York is that the six seats would be divided as follows: Two to the Latin American countries; one to west Europe; one-half seat—that would be a one-year term—to eastern Europe, and to the Asian and African delegations, two and a half seats. As I have said, this half seat means a one-year term instead of a two-year term. The commonwealth seat would be eliminated.

I know this question has been brought up in this house on many occasions this session. Just recently, on November 20, the Prime Minister replied, as follows, to a question of mine in this regard, as reported on page 4963 of *Hansard*:

The principal aim of the Canadian delegation in these talks, and at meetings of the commonwealth group, has been to emphasize the importance of retaining the commonwealth seat. Pressure for enlargement has developed—

The first sentence I read is the cogent one. It is my understanding, Mr. Chairman, that the government has given up hope of retaining the commonwealth seat. I realize there has been very great pressure, and this seat may have to go. I recognize it is difficult and the pressure from the Asian and African countries is very great. Since they cannot enlarge the council, the redistribution of seats seems to be the alternative. I understand there have been suggestions made that since the commonwealth seat is going to go, Canada might find a seat with the Latin American countries or with the western European countries with whom we are dealing. Perhaps that has to be, I do not know. While I recognize the difficulties in connection with this problem, so far as I can see there has been no active, constructive work done at the United Nations to try to retain the commonwealth seat.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Will my hon. friend permit an interjection? I am sure he would not want this suggestion to go unnoticed. There is great activity in this connection at the United Nations, and has been now for some time.

Mr. Nesbitt: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am glad to hear the Secretary of State for External Affairs say that. However, I was at the United Nations for some time, and I am not exactly unfamiliar with it, but that certainly was not my impression at all. I was going to suggest to the minister—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): There are some things one does not discuss on the hilltops, as my hon. friend knows.

Mr. Nesbitt: I beg your pardon?

[Mr. Nesbitt.]

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I was just observing that there are some matters that can be best handled without giving too much public attention to them.

Mr. Nesbitt: I am quite aware of that, and I have a number of acquaintances at the United Nations, who are not associated with the Canadian delegation, and from whom I was able to gather some of this information. I am naturally aware that these things are being discussed on all sides and I have tried to point out to the Secretary of State for External Affairs that I know what he is up against in this matter. But instead of assuming the commonwealth seat is going to go, why not get out and do a real selling job? The Secretary of State for External Affairs did a wonderful job in 1955, against almost impossible odds, in bringing in all these new countries—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Chairman, I do not make the assumption the commonwealth seat is going to go, and I do not expect that will be the result in the immediate period to which my hon. friend is directing my attention.

Mr. Churchill: What is that immediate period?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Well, within a foreseeable period.

Mr. Nesbitt: I am very glad to hear this. It is my understanding this matter is going to be settled before the end of the present assembly, unless things have changed very much in the last 10 days or so. But some arrangement has to be made and I understand that is what the intention is.

If it is not possible to retain the commonwealth seat, under present circumstances we will not get a seat until the security council is enlarged by Russian permission. We cannot get a seat unless we go in with Latin America. They have 20 members and have two seats, and this would mean we would not have one for 10 or 11 years, which is not commensurate with the contribution we make to the United Nations. If we go in with the western European nations, there are about 14 of them and they have only one seat, which would mean we would have less chance still.

However, there is another course of action which the Secretary of State for External Affairs could follow. I hope he is right in his forecast; but if the commonwealth seat should go, then Australia is out in the cold, New Zealand is out in the cold and Canada is out in the cold. But there are also other countries such as Israel, Cyprus, and perhaps South Africa after its policy changes, and all these countries might be included in a block.