

One has only to note that at the present rate of accession to the Commonwealth, within a very few years the present membership of 11 will be expanded to 16 or 18. How shall such a wide membership be reconciled with the maintenance of frank, intimate and profitable discussion? What about the size of the gathering? What about the size of the nations? There will be tremendous and fantastic disparities in population, importance and size, India with a population of 450 million and Sierra Leone with 2 million.

The various Commonwealth governments will have to give consideration to such questions as membership, weight by population, the rotation of membership as in the Security Council, regional groupings of nations within the Commonwealth, and representation of such groups. These are some of the problems which will have to receive consideration. I am not indicating any view with regard to them. These are some of the problems that will now have to be examined in the light of the tremendous expansion that is taking place and the number of nations which are joining us.

To those who say there is nothing in the Commonwealth relationship, may I say that it is of interest to note that in all the years the Commonwealth has been in its present form only one nation which attained independence, namely Burma, did not apply for membership. In other words, these nations representing various colours have of their own volition decided to remain with the institution and become active and effective members.

... One other matter I want to refer to is the question of trade. Western Europe represents a very important market for all Commonwealth countries. With the exception of the United Kingdom most of them, like Canada, are important suppliers to Western Europe of agricultural products. It was therefore recognized that it would be a matter of much concern if our competitive access to these markets was impaired in any way by the agricultural policies which may be followed by the European Economic Community. This Community can have a tremendous influence in the direction of world trade, and this is significant for the primary producing countries of the Commonwealth. It was urged that both The Six and The Seven should pursue trade policies that are consistent with their obligations under GATT. In this way Western Europe would be contributing to the general economic well-being of the world, and particularly of the under-developed countries.

Some concern was expressed about the possibility that the plans to create a successor organization for the OEEC might lead to exclusive or restrictive arrangements which would not take into account the interests of countries outside Europe. I explained that while Canada expected to be a full member of the revised organization, we attached great importance to ensuring that its efforts should be directed toward improving multilateral trading conditions and that we did not regard this as in any way an exclusive organization which would be harmful