

BERMUDA CONFERENCE

Following is the text of a communique issued at the conclusion of the Conference of United Kingdom and Canadian Prime Ministers on March 26.

The Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom and of Canada met in Bermuda on 25-26 March. Mr. Macmillan was accompanied by the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. Mr. St. Laurent was accompanied by Mr. C.D. Howe, Minister of Trade and Commerce, and Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs.

In the course of their talks the Canadian Ministers noted with satisfaction the results of the Anglo-American Meeting of 21 to 23 March. They welcomed, in particular, the joint declaration on nuclear tests as a contribution towards an international solution of this problem.

The Ministers discussed the steps which might be taken to secure acceptable settlements of the short-term problems in the Middle East. They also reviewed a number of less immediate political and economic questions in this area.

Views were exchanged on a number of questions concerning Europe and the North Atlantic Alliance. The Canadian Ministers expressed their interest in proposals for the closer association of the United Kingdom with Europe. A discussion was held on the consequences for Canadian trade of the plans for a common market and a free trade area in Europe, and on other trade and financial questions of common concern to the United Kingdom and Canada. The Ministers recognized the need to strengthen and improve the working of the United Nations as an instrument for preserving peace with justice.

A contract was approved (see annex below) which will assure over a period of years the

supply of uranium needed for the expanded nuclear power programme recently announced by the United Kingdom Government.

A restricted session was held on defence questions.

This meeting has again demonstrated the value of the family relationship between the peoples of the Commonwealth, and the close and continuous co-operation between the Governments of the United Kingdom and Canada. While there may from time to time appear to be differences in their approach or reaction to international developments, the two Governments are confident that their special relationship will always enable them to work together effectively with a constructive purpose.

ANNEX

During the meeting, approval was given to a large-scale contract for the purchase of uranium which will greatly assist in carrying out the expanded nuclear power programme of the United Kingdom. Under this contract, the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority will purchase, during the next five years, uranium to the value of about 115,000,000 dollars from the Canadian Government Agency (Eldorado Mining and Refining Limited) which in turn has entered into purchase contracts with Canadian mining companies. This contract has been worked out with the co-operation of the United States Atomic Energy Commission and is similar in terms to the contracts by which that Commission purchases uranium from the same Agency.

The Ministers also discussed arrangements to supply United Kingdom requirements of uranium fuel after this five year period, and agreed that further discussions on this matter should proceed between the agencies concerned.

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WAGE INCREASES COMMON: Out of 545 collective bargaining agreements negotiated between October 1, 1955 and October 1, 1956, 474, or 87 per cent, covering 397,347 workers, provided for wage increases, according to information released by Hon. Milton F. Gregg, Minister of Labour.

The information was based on a study of 545 collective bargaining agreements conducted by the Labour Department's Economics and Research Branch. The 545 contracts studied covered 425,181 workers and represented a sample study.

More than half the 474 agreements providing wage increases were contracts for more than one year. In past years there has been a pre-dominance of one-year agreements. The study showed that the two-year agreements frequently provided for an increase of a stated amount effective on the date the contract came into force and a further increase at the beginning

of the second year. Agreements of longer than two years sometimes provided automatic increases on each anniversary date.

Most of the wage increases in the one-year agreements were in the range of 5 to 9.9 cents per hour. However, among those agreements negotiated in 1956 there was a substantial number of increases above this range as compared to the 1955 findings. Among the two-year agreements, the largest number provide wage increases of 5 to 9.9 cents an hour in each year.

About 26 per cent of the agreements studied showed revisions in vacation plans, either in the form of an added week or a reduction in the service requirements or both. In 45 contracts, employees with 15 years' service will now be entitled to a third week of vacation either through a reduction from a longer period of service or through the addition of a third week where none previously existed.