

motion Canada's actual position within the Commonwealth.

It will be observed that the resolution is broad and general in scope. Hence, it is perhaps easy to believe that the proposed inquiry could become merely an exercise in futility, and without tangible results. On the other hand, the Commonwealth is very much a fact of Canadian life. Canada spends large sums of money on projects that are of the Commonwealth. Furthermore, only in July of last year at a meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers an important new step was determined upon, namely, the formation of a Commonwealth Secretariat. This is a step that has been consistently opposed by Canadian statesmen for two or three generations, but which now appears to be accepted without too much controversy.

Many significant developments are responsible for this departure from previous policy, and assuredly it would be of interest to our committee to consider the matter of these changed conditions.

I might remark here that we are all aware of the fact that a conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers is to be held in June of this year, in London, at which the Canadian Prime Minister will, as usual, be an important figure.

A very few years ago Canada's then Prime Minister, seemingly with an all-party Canadian approval, took a firm stand with reference to the doctrine of apartheid in South Africa, and the question of whether the racial policies of the South African Government were consistent with continued membership by that country in the Commonwealth. Repercussions of that stand were, in important places in the Commonwealth, anything but friendly, indeed hostile.

About three years ago Canadian newspapers abounded with news of the United Kingdom's bid to join the European Economic Community, generally referred to as the Common Market. Rightly or wrongly, Canada seemed to be deeply concerned—perhaps on both sides of the question—as to the outcome of this endeavour by the senior partner in the Commonwealth. For instance, did this effort by the United Kingdom mean that this senior partner had no further interest in preserving the Commonwealth?

I merely refer to these isolated instances to indicate that Commonwealth affairs are still seemingly important to Canada. Nevertheless, as we all know, the Commonwealth today is much changed from the Commonwealth of 1948, namely, just after the admis-

sion of India, Pakistan and Ceylon as partners in it. The Commonwealth has now been expanded to include many other countries—Ghana, Nigeria, Cyprus, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Kenya, the Federation of Malaysia; it includes also various colonies of Great Britain and Protectorates, as well as several Territories under trusteeship.

In regard to these additions to the Commonwealth, it is of interest to recall that the Imperial Conference of 1926, on whose deliberations the Statute of Westminster was based, defined Great Britain and the Dominions, as they were then called, as:

—autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or foreign affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

It would greatly stretch one's imagination that this definition can include all of the newer membership of the Commonwealth.

To complete the record of membership in the Commonwealth, I just wish to recall the fact that South Africa withdrew from the Commonwealth in 1961 on the issue of racial discrimination.

These matters I have referred to are, it is true, of a general character, and some honourable senators have suggested to me that the committee must not bury itself in generalities, but rather let it get down to consideration of specific problems. That is quite right; otherwise, its work might become an exercise in futility.

So what are some of the specific problems that should come before the committee? There is indeed no shortage of them. It may, and no doubt will, be proposed that the committee study the contemporary Commonwealth of Nations as an institution, as an aspect of Canada's external relations, and as a group of nations representative of all continents, in relation to which arise such important international questions as economic and technical assistance, trade between developed and developing countries, decolonization and racial tensions.

It might also study the present state and nature of the Commonwealth with reference to its institutions for consultation and collaboration, the special problems in the various areas, intra-Commonwealth disagreements, commercial and financial relations, security