



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
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## THE EEC, THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE WORLD

Notes for a statement delivered by Prime Minister Diefenbaker at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting in London, on September 17, 1962.

I should like to summarize briefly the Canadian position after consideration in the light of the statements made in the main sessions last week and also in the light of the committee meetings. In doing so, I think it is no longer necessary to sketch in the background considerations which we have all been over with some care.

We wish to emphasize first of all that the decision regarding the entry into EEC is one for Britain and Britain alone, after the consultation which this meeting has made possible and such further consultation as may be desired.

The Canadian Government is not taking a position on whether or not the U.K. should enter the Common Market because we respect the right of Britain to take this decision herself. We have been invited to tell the British Government of our assessment of the effects of such a decision upon Canadian interests and we have done so. There are many other considerations involved in this decision which only the British Government and the British Parliament can take properly into account.

You have asked for our appraisal of the effects upon our trade of Britain's entry into the Common Market on the basis of the terms so far negotiated at Brussels. We have given this. It is on record both in the statement I made on Tuesday last and in the record of the Committee concerned with temperate foodstuffs and other matters of particular interest to Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

### Safeguarding Commonwealth Interests

Our assessment is that, in the further negotiations planned to take place in Brussels in contemplation of entry by Britain into the Community, substantial further improvement will be needed in the terms of entry in the light of the undertakings that have been given regarding the safeguarding of Commonwealth

interests. In several fields, notably the tariffs to apply on raw materials and on processed foods and other products, little has yet been agreed on with The Six and there seems clear scope for negotiations more favourable to Commonwealth interests than those that have taken place. In the field of temperate agriculture, we think, as Mr. Green has stated in the Committee, that improvements are necessary in the paper to be agreed on between Britain and the Community. In regard to the treatment of our manufactured products on which provisional agreement has been reached, we would also hope and expect that some improvement could be achieved. We have made some suggestions to these ends, but we feel those actually engaged in the negotiations can best judge how the improvements can be obtained.

The clearly-expressed views of the Commonwealth should assist in securing this alleviation, including some of the terms already provisionally agreed on as well as matters still open. I would hope, too, that the notable progress made in the American Congress with the trade-expansion bill will contribute to the same end.

Canada will be glad to consult with the U.K. during such further negotiations as may be undertaken. We have sent experts to Brussels for this purpose and we are ready to make such further arrangements as may be desirable to ensure that this consultation is fully effective.

If it is the general desire, Canada is quite prepared to participate in a further Prime Ministers' Meeting to review the results of these final negotiations, but will co-operate in any other method of assessing the results, in so far as our views may be desired by the U.K. in reaching their decision.

It is now apparent that there is an almost unanimous desire among the Commonwealth Prime Ministers for something which will give greater assurance of expanding trade than the results to date of negotiations at Brussels now provide.

The Government of Canada has been giving careful consideration to what should be done to meet these new challenges which face Commonwealth and other countries. Solutions should be sought which would help all Commonwealth countries obtain their economic objectives, and at the same time avoid disruption of our established and fundamental economic and political relationships. Basically this programme would be applicable whether or not Britain decided to join the EEC.

#### The American Response

President Kennedy has placed before Congress a programme for expanding world trade. I believe, representing as we do members of the Commonwealth and a large proportion of the world's population, we should endeavour, in a spirit of co-operation, to

give world leadership in a concerted effort to meet the difficult and diverse trade problems of Commonwealth countries.

I propose, therefore, that this Conference should declare its intention to extend an invitation to all member nations of the Commonwealth, of the EEC, the EFTA, the U.S.A. and Japan and other like-minded nations indicating a desire to participate, to meet at the earliest practicable date to give consideration to how to deal with the trading problems before us in a way which will be to the mutual advantage to all. This should prepare the way for the prospective non-discriminatory tariff negotiations on a most-favoured-nation basis.

The European Community is already a reality. There has been no question here about the desirability of that Community, as it now exists, carrying forward its objectives. However, it does seem that, if we are to achieve still wider and more satisfactory trading arrangements before 1970, steps in the direction of further world-wide trading arrangements should now be taken.

I believe that this would offer a practical contribution to the solution of our difficulties which will advance the strength of Commonwealth association, will permit the Common Market to proceed with the expansion of its own activities, and will bring to bear the immense trading capacity of the U.S.A. and Japan.

If this plan is accepted, Canada would be most willing and honoured to be host country.

#### Not Tariff Problem Only

Reciprocal reduction of tariffs should not be the only matter for consideration by such a meeting. Our discussions here have again shown the urgent need to find solutions to the special difficulties in world trade in agricultural products. Work in the tariff field would need to be co-ordinated with what might be done through other means; for example through world-wide commodity agreements, both in the field of temperate foodstuffs and where particular problems arise with respect to basic materials. Other matters requiring attention would be trade in tropical products and trade of the developing countries generally.

It will be most essential for the Commonwealth to take a lead in bringing about the solution of the many problems which arise. It will be necessary to ensure that the diverse trade interests of all Commonwealth countries, large and small, are fully taken into account in coming to this end. Working together in this wider framework should provide an important new focus for Commonwealth co-operation.