

MEETING OF COMMONWEALTH PRIME MINISTERS, 1964

(London, 8-15 July)

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

The Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers ended today. Pakistan, Ghana and Tanganyika and Zanzibar were represented by their Presidents. Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ceylon, Malaysia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Kenya and Malawi were represented by their Prime Ministers. India was represented by the Minister of Finance; Cyprus by the Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Jamaica by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

This was the first Meeting at which Uganda and Kenya were represented as independent Members; and the other Commonwealth Heads of Government were glad to greet their Prime Ministers. They expressed their satisfaction at the establishment of Malaysia which they had welcomed at their last Meeting in 1962 and they greeted Tunku Abdul Rahman as Prime Minister of Malaysia. They also welcomed the attainment of independence by Malawi on 6th July, 1964 and agreed that Malawi should be admitted to Membership of the Commonwealth. They invited the Prime Minister of Malawi, Dr Banda, to join their Meeting; and Dr Banda took his seat on 9th July. They noted that Northern Rhodesia would become independent on 24th October, 1964 as the Republic of Zambia; and they looked forward to welcoming Zambia as a member of the Commonwealth on the completion of the necessary constitutional processes.

In the course of their discussion, the Presidents and Prime Ministers reviewed the major issues of the day.

They agreed that one of the most important of these is race relations. It was agreed that the Commonwealth has a particular role to play in the search for solutions to the inter-racial problems which are threatening the orderly development of mankind in general and of many particular areas in the world today. As a community of many different races, the Commonwealth is itself an almost unique experiment in international co-operation among peoples of several races and continents. Within their own borders many of its members have faced and are facing issues raised by the co-existence of differing cultures within a democratic society. The Prime Ministers affirmed their belief that, for all Commonwealth Governments, it should be an objective of policy to build in each country a structure of society which offers equal opportunity and non-discrimination for all its people, irrespective of race, colour or creed. The Commonwealth should be able to exercise constructive leadership in the application of democratic principles in a manner which will enable the people of each country of different racial and cultural groups to exist and develop as free and equal citizens.

The Prime Ministers recalled the critical international situation which had developed shortly after their last Meeting in the autumn of 1962 and the grave

threat to peace which it had implied. They believed that the fact that it was successfully resolved may have been in some sense a turning point in the relations between the major Powers and may have marked the beginning of a new period in international affairs in which the world may hope for a gradual relaxation of tension. This will not be a short or simple process; but the Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction the further steps which had already been taken to reduce the causes of friction, particularly the conclusion of the Tests Ban Treaty and the subsequent agreements between the Governments of the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union not to place nuclear weapons in outer space. They also welcomed the reductions in the output of missile material for military purposes which these Governments have made.

Against this background, the Prime Ministers expressed their hope that these steps would lead progressively to general and complete disarmament. They reaffirmed their support for the work of the Geneva Disarmament Conference and their determination to seek to extend the scope of disarmament in accordance with the principles expressed in their statement of 17th March, 1961, particularly by endeavouring to promote an agreement to prohibit the further dissemination of nuclear weapons and of knowledge relating to their manufacture and use. They will maintain their efforts to reduce the areas of international disagreement by all the means within their power, while maintaining both the strength and the resolution to resist aggression from without or subversion from within. In this connection they assured the Prime Minister of Malaysia of their sympathy and support in his efforts to preserve the sovereign independence and integrity of his country and to promote a peaceful and honourable settlement of current differences between Malaysia and neighbouring countries.

They discussed the great significance of China for South and South-East Asia. They also discussed the question of relations with China and of her Membership of the United Nations. They expressed anxiety about the continuing tension in South-East Asia and affirmed their support for all measures which might promote a just and peaceful settlement and help to re-establish stability in the area.

The Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction the friendly public statements by the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India and expressed their hopes that the problems between their countries will be solved in the same friendly spirit.

While recognising that it was not a function of the Commonwealth to act as an arbiter in disputes between member nations, the Prime Ministers agreed that Commonwealth countries could play a role of conciliation and, where possible, consider using their good offices to help towards the settlement of disputes between member nations provided the parties concerned accepted such mediation.

The Prime Ministers renewed their support for the United Nations in its efforts to resolve disputes in various parts of the world. They reaffirmed their adherence to the principles of the Charter and emphasised the importance of reinforcing the strength and capacity of the United Nations to respond to the demands which it must meet if the Charter is to be fulfilled.

The Prime Ministers expressed concern about the situation with regard to Cyprus. They reaffirmed their full support for the United Nations Security Council Resolutions of 4th March, 13th March and 20th June 1964. The Prime Ministers asserted that the Cyprus problem should be solved within the frame-work of the United Nations and in accordance with the principles of democracy and justice.

They appealed to all countries concerned to refrain from any action which might undermine the task of the United Nations peace-keeping force, to which a number of Commonwealth countries are contributing, or might prejudice the endeavours of the United Nations to find a lasting solution in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.

The Prime Ministers undertook to consider practical measures to strengthen the peace-keeping machinery of the United Nations and to reduce the degree of improvisation required in an emergency. They agreed that consultation and co-operation among interested governments in this matter could be of great value in contributing to the improvement of the peace-keeping effectiveness of the United Nations.

The Prime Ministers expressed their concern at the possible effect on United Nations operations in all fields of a prolongation of the United Nations financial crisis. They expressed a common desire to work towards a long-term equitable solution of the problem of financing large-scale United Nations peace-keeping operations and agreed that any such solution should be based on the principles of collective financial responsibility and relative capacity to pay.

Britain made the following statement to the Meeting about the progress of British Colonial dependencies towards independence:

Already more than twenty countries (with a total population of some 700 millions) had achieved sovereign independence under British guidance. This process was continuing all the time. Northern Rhodesia would be independent in October and the Gambia very soon after. Basutoland had been promised that she could have independence in about eighteen months' time; Bechuanaland would be free to follow when she wished; and Swaziland's new constitution had now set her on the same course. In addition it had been agreed that the Federation of South Arabia should become independent within the next three and a half years. British Guiana would become independent as soon as she was able to assure internal peace. Southern Rhodesia would attain full sovereignty as soon as her governmental institutions were sufficiently representative.

There were a number of other Colonies which already enjoyed a wide measure of self-government. These included the Bahamas, Barbados, British Honduras and Mauritius. In addition there were some twenty other Colonies and Protectorates with a combined population of about five million. Of these over three million were in Hong Kong where the circumstances were exceptional. Of the remainder only two territories had a population of more than 100,000. Several had less than 10,000. The smallest (Pitcairn) in the Pacific had only 90 inhabitants. It was clear that no uniform pattern would fit all these very different territories. Some might feel strong enough to proceed to independence on their own. Some

might join with others to form larger and more viable units. Some might wish to couple independence with a treaty of friendship such as Western Samoa concluded with New Zealand. Some would for the present prefer to remain as they were.

The Prime Ministers of the other Commonwealth countries welcomed the progress of British territories to independent membership of the Commonwealth. They recognised that the authority and responsibility for leading her remaining Colonies to independence must continue to rest with Britain.

At the same time, Prime Ministers of other Commonwealth countries expressed their views to the Prime Minister of Britain on the question of the progress of Southern Rhodesia towards independence within the Commonwealth. They welcomed the decision already announced by the British Government that, as in the case of other territories, the existence of sufficiently representative institutions would be a condition of the grant of independence to Southern Rhodesia. They also noted with approval the statement already made by the British Government that they would not recognise any unilateral declaration of independence; and the other Prime Ministers made it clear that they would be unable to recognise any such declaration. The view was also expressed that an Independence Conference should be convened which the leaders of all parties in Southern Rhodesia should be free to attend. The object would be to seek agreement on the steps by which Southern Rhodesia might proceed to independence within the Commonwealth at the earliest practicable time on the basis of majority rule. With a view to diminishing tensions and preparing the way for such a conference, an appeal was made for the release of all the detained African leaders. The Prime Ministers called upon all leaders and their supporters to exercise moderation and to abstain from violence; and they affirmed their belief that the best interest of all sections of the population lay in developing confidence and co-operation, on the basis of tolerance, mutual understanding and justice. In this connection, they recognised the necessity for giving confidence to the minority community in Southern Rhodesia that their interests would be protected.

The Prime Minister of Britain said that he would give careful consideration to all views expressed by other Commonwealth Prime Ministers. At the same time he emphasised that the Government of Southern Rhodesia was constitutionally responsible for the internal affairs of that territory and that the question of the granting of independence was a matter for decision by the British Parliament.

The Meeting expressed concern at the political rivalries in British Guiana which had led to disorder and inter-racial strife and had prejudiced the attainment of independence. While several different views were expressed on the methods to be employed, a number of Prime Ministers expressed the hope that the political leaders of British Guiana would seek urgently a basis for collaboration in the interest of their fellow countrymen of all races in order to restore mutual confidence among the races and to strengthen a spirit of national purpose and unity. Only in these circumstances could British Guiana hope to sustain true independence.

The question of the progress of the smaller dependent territories in the Caribbean to independence was raised. It was emphasised that the problem for the territories was mainly one of viability; and the hope was expressed that every practicable effort would be made to help them to strengthen their

economies and so enable them to sustain the obligations of independence whether in a federation or in some other form of association.

The Prime Ministers reaffirmed their condemnation of the policy of apartheid practised by the Government of the Republic of South Africa. Some Commonwealth Prime Ministers felt very strongly that the only effective means of dealing with the problem of apartheid was the application of economic sanctions and an arms embargo. It was recognised however that there was a difference of opinion among Commonwealth countries as to the effectiveness of economic sanctions and as to the extent to which they regarded it as right or practicable to seek to secure the abandonment of apartheid by coercive action, of whatever kind. But the Prime Ministers were unanimous in calling upon South Africa to bring to an end the practice of apartheid, which had been repeatedly condemned by the United Nations and was deplored by public opinion throughout the world.

The Prime Ministers expressed their regret that Portugal had not so far given recognition to the principle of self-determination for her territories in Africa.

The Prime Ministers agreed that the issues of Commonwealth and international relations which confront them in the political field however complex and contentious, must be seen in perspective in relation to the many factors which bring together the peoples of the Commonwealth and enable them to make a unique contribution to the promotion of peaceful development. The Commonwealth now consists of 18 independent member countries, widely distributed over the globe and accounting for nearly a quarter of the population of the world. It is, indeed, a cross-section of the world itself; and its citizens have an unparalleled opportunity to prove that, by mutual co-operation, men and women of many different races and national cultures can live in peace and work together for the common good.

The Prime Ministers reviewed the world economic situation as it affects their countries and re-affirmed the resolve of their Governments to promote the economic development of their countries. To this end they emphasised the need of developing countries for improved and more remunerative outlets for their trade and for increased financial aid on easier terms and on a continuing basis. They took note of the problems presented to developing countries by the conditions and terms often attached by donor Governments to their aid, of the desirability of the encouragement of private investment in developing countries and also of the upward trend in the level of financial aid extended by the more developed countries in the Commonwealth and of the easier terms on which it is offered.

There was agreement on the importance for all Commonwealth countries of following up the work of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in particular with regard to expanding international trade in primary products through freer access to markets and, in appropriate cases, through commodity agreements and stabilised prices at equitable levels; working out arrangements for increasing access by preferences or otherwise to markets in developed countries for manufactured goods from developing countries; and elaborating proposals for supplementary finance to assist countries whose development might be threatened by adverse movements in their export earnings. The Prime Ministers affirmed their intention of working for a solution of these and other problems of the developing countries through

the new institutions resulting from the Conference as well as through existing international bodies such as the GATT.

The Prime Ministers reaffirmed the resolve of the member countries of the Commonwealth to promote the economic and social progress of developing countries. They wished to maintain their support of the work of the United Nations, its specialised agencies, the Colombo Plan and other similar arrangements in this field. At the same time they wished to establish how best the members of the Commonwealth could make a further distinctive contribution of their own to the development of its member countries. They conceived that the purpose of any new initiative in this respect should be not merely to increase the economic strength and material well-being of the recipients, vital though these considerations are, but also to strengthen the links between the countries of the Commonwealth by encouraging their peoples to work more closely together in a variety of practical ways. For this purpose they selected for further examination several fields of action in which they believed the practice of Commonwealth co-operation might be extended; and they agreed that these schemes should not be in substitution for existing arrangements but supplementary to them.

Commonwealth Development Projects

In particular they considered a proposal that development projects might be launched in individual Commonwealth countries, which would be implemented by various members acting in close collaboration and contributing whatever resources—in men, money, materials and technical expertise—they could most appropriately provide. Such projects, which would be additional to the support which Commonwealth countries already provide to the United Nations Special Fund and Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance could be directed to a number of different purposes—the improvement of agricultural production and the development of natural resources through extension services, training and research; the enlargement of professional and technical training; the development of new industries; and so forth. But they would all be inspired by the common purpose of promoting the development of the Commonwealth by a co-ordinated programme of joint or bilateral projects. The British Government said that they would be prepared to make a substantial contribution to projects of this kind within their expanding programme of development aid. The other member governments expressed support for the objective of the proposal and agreed that further consideration should be given to the basis on which such a programme might be established.

Administrative Training

Development projects of this kind would need to be planned, carefully and thoroughly, at all stages in their execution; and the Prime Ministers therefore considered that it might be valuable to supplement the existing arrangements for promoting the study of the techniques of administration and development planning throughout the Commonwealth. They considered that there might be advantage in making arrangements, which could include the formation of a new Institute, to provide facilities for specialised training and research for senior administrators concerned with administrative and development problems in relation to the needs of new countries. They agreed that further consideration should be given to the most appropriate form for arrangements for additional training, including the strengthening of existing institutions.

Education

The Prime Ministers took note of the scope which exists for co-operation between the Governments and peoples of the Commonwealth in social, as well as economic development. They noted with satisfaction that the Third Commonwealth Education Conference will be held in Ottawa in August; and they expressed warm wishes for its success, together with appreciation of the British Government's offer to increase to an average of £5 million a year, over the five years starting in 1965-66, the capital assistance which they already provide for higher education in developing Commonwealth countries, both independent and dependent.

Medical Conference

They decided in principle that an initiative similar to that which was launched in the field of education by the first of the Commonwealth Education Conferences several years ago should now be taken in the field of medicine and that for this purpose consideration should be given to the convening of a Commonwealth Medical Conference during the course of 1965. Such a Conference would enable the members of the Commonwealth to discuss mutual assistance in medical education including links between institutions; the provision of ancillary staffs, the development and planning of health services; and the supply of medical equipment and facilities for research.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

The links between the countries of the Commonwealth are strengthened not only by co-operation between their Governments in initiatives of this kind but even more by frequent personal contacts between individuals who share common professional interests.

The Prime Ministers recorded their support for the valuable work which the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association performs in bringing together members of the parliaments of all Commonwealth countries. The British Government stated that they would be prepared, if other Commonwealth Governments would do the same, to increase their contribution to the Association.

Commonwealth Foundation

The Prime Ministers considered that further steps should be taken to promote contacts in other fields and that it might be desirable to establish a Commonwealth Foundation to administer a fund for increasing interchanges between Commonwealth organisations in professional fields. This Foundation could be administered by an independent Board; and, while it could be financed by contributions from Commonwealth governments, it would also welcome support from all quarters, whether public or private.

Satellite Communications

The Prime Ministers also took note of the current international discussions on the establishment of a global system of satellite communications. They endorsed the desirability of establishing such a system and considered how Commonwealth countries could best co-operate with each other and with other

countries in its development. They discussed the provision of technical assistance to the developing countries in this field, particularly as regards the establishment of ground stations and inter-connections in Commonwealth countries. They agreed that further consideration should be given to the feasibility of such a plan and the basis on which it might best be implemented.

The Prime Ministers directed that the Commonwealth Liaison Committee with the assistance of special representatives should now give more detailed consideration to all aspects of these new initiatives in the hope that they could be launched and carried forward at an early date. They noted that thereafter further opportunities to review many of these projects would be afforded by the Third Commonwealth Education Conference in Ottawa in August and by the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council meeting in Kuala Lumpur in September.

Commonwealth Secretariat

Finally, they were anxious that some permanent expression should be given to the desire, which had been evident through their deliberations, for closer and more informed understanding between their Governments on the many issues which engage their attention and for some continuing machinery for this purpose. They therefore instructed officials to consider the best basis for establishing a Commonwealth secretariat, which would be available *inter alia* to disseminate factual information to all member countries on matters of common concern; to assist existing agencies, both official and unofficial, in the promotion of Commonwealth links in all fields; and to help to co-ordinate, in co-operation with the host country, the preparations for future Meetings of Commonwealth Heads of Government and, where appropriate, for meetings of other Commonwealth Ministers. This secretariat, being recruited from member countries and financed by their contributions, would be at the service of all Commonwealth Governments and would be a visible symbol of the spirit of co-operation which animates the Commonwealth.

15 July 1964

Heads of Delegation

Australia	The Rt Hon R G Menzies, Prime Minister
Britain	The Rt Hon Sir Alec Douglas-Home, Prime Minister
Canada	The Rt Hon Lester B Pearson, Prime Minister
Ceylon	The Hon Mrs S W R D Bandaranaike, Prime Minister
Cyprus	The Hon Spyros Kyprianou, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ghana	HE Dr Kwame Nkrumah, President
India	Shri T T Krishnamachari, Minister of Finance
Jamaica	The Hon D B Sangster, Minister of Finance
Kenya	The Hon Mr Jomo Kenyatta, Prime Minister
Malawi	Dr The Hon Hastings Banda, Prime Minister
Malaysia	Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, Prime Minister
New Zealand	The Rt Hon Keith J Holyoake, Prime Minister
Nigeria	The Rt Hon Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Prime Minister
Pakistan	Field Marshall Mohammed Ayub Khan, President
Sierra Leone	The Rt Hon Albert Michael Margai, Prime Minister
Trinidad and Tobago	Dr The Rt Hon Eric Williams, Prime Minister
Uganda	Dr The Hon A Milton Obote, Prime Minister
United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar	HE Julius K Nyerere, President