

mind the difficult circumstances arising from the situation in South Africa, the Conference was generally useful and successful.

Many observers have, of course, pointed out that the proceedings of the meetings did not result in any perceptible change in the attitude of the South African Government. It was not to be expected, however, that magic improvements could take place in a situation of such tension and complexity. I believe that those who in future will examine and judge this period in Commonwealth history will decide that this meeting did not fail to respond to the stern test to which it was put.

I would be the last to say that everything was achieved that I would have desired. I do not contend that, in so far as the communiqué is concerned, it can convey the full nature and substance of the deliberations that took place. On occasions in the past I have heard my predecessors, Right Hon. Mackenzie King and Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent, report on conferences they had attended. In every case it was made perfectly clear that while no decisions were made or can be made in these informal circumstances, there is a oneness of mind that comes about through the exchange of ideas.

No Evasion

There was no disposition on the part of any of the representatives to evade this issue, and there was no lack of frankness in private and informal discussions. I underline the fact that . . . only in unanimity can there be a final communiqué issued. Everything that is included therein represents the agreement of all. To bring together the representatives of one quarter of the world's population, belonging to many races and being of many colours, I think it is quite an unusual result that several conclusions were arrived at unanimously which cannot but result in the possibility of change along the lines generally desired.

Despite the profound differences which prevailed and persisted throughout, it was possible for a communiqué to be issued. This was difficult with two inherently conflicting elements to be reconciled. First, it had become essential that a way be found for Commonwealth governments to make clear their intentions on this central question of racial relations. Second, it was desirable that this should be done without violation of the traditional practice of these meetings that the internal affairs of member countries are not the subject of formal discussion. I believe now more certainly than I did when I spoke here on April 27 that any departure from this last principle would mean the end of the Commonwealth as we know it; because if we ever arrive at the point where we will discuss the internal affairs of other countries and determine the course by a majority, then there will be problems that will arise and it could only mean that several countries in the Commonwealth could not accept the decisions of the majority. I need not go into particulars in that regard; I think a number would come to mind immediately, including the question of migration.

Personally, as the House knows, I was of those who thought it worth while to try to achieve the first objective of enabling the views of Prime Ministers to