



Bulletin

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MR. TRUDEAU REPORTS ON COMMONWEALTH LEADERS' CONFERENCE

The opportunity for regular discussion of problems by the "men of good will" who represented the 850 million people comprising the Commonwealth was perhaps its greatest strength, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau said in a statement to the House of Commons on January 20, on his return from the Commonwealth Conference in London.

Further in his statement he said:

"...My impression is that this meeting was not only successful as Commonwealth meetings go, but significantly so. Indeed this conference may have marked some kind of watershed for the Commonwealth. For one thing, the Commonwealth is now close to its maximum size, and future meetings will not note the presence of many new members. For another, the scope of the secretariat seems now to have been defined and its services identified. But most important, and here I rely not simply on my own observations but on the comments of several veteran heads of government, the Commonwealth meeting appears to have attained a new plateau of maturity. Those who anticipated dramatic events at this meeting were incorrect; those who forecast an emotional confrontation over racial issues have been proved wrong...."

AGREEMENT TO DISAGREE

Referring to Rhodesia, Mr. Trudeau stated that no easy solution existed for the problem in that strife-torn country. He said that, after considering all the aspects of the situation, various Commonwealth representatives who held opposite views, understood better the nature of Rhodesia's difficulties. Some members were even capable of modifying their "rigid attitudes". "Of most importance, however," the Prime Minister continued, "honourable men agreed honourably to disagree."

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VISIT TO THE VATICAN

After his report on the Commonwealth Conference, Mr. Trudeau made the following statement regarding his audience with Pope Paul VI and his meeting with President Saragat of Italy:

"At the close of the Commonwealth conference, I went to Rome where, after a most cordial interview at the Quirinal Palace with His Excellency the President of the Italian Republic, Mr. Saragat, I was received at the Vatican by Pope Paul VI.

"We spoke of peace in the world, the difficulties of maintaining it, for instance in Vietnam and in Nigeria, and of the importance of promoting it more particularly through the respect of human rights and international aid.

"In the course of the conversation, I informed the Holy Father that Canada was considering setting up diplomatic relations with the Vatican. The Pope welcomed the idea, stating that the Vatican would be honoured by such relations. But he added that he would leave it to Canada to decide on taking that initiative.

"Pope Paul VI spoke very warmly of Canada, the problems and the tremendous possibilities of which he is well acquainted with. Speaking of our