

That was the core of the issue which engaged our attention for three days. It was, I have been told, a discussion without parallel in the annals of the Commonwealth association. It is a great organization where men -- and a woman this time, the Prime Minister of Ceylon -- with strong convictions, can sit down together and yet not speak to one another at any time with bitterness, virulence or in the manner described in some of the articles written by persons who must have secured their information from sources not present at the meeting.

### Principled Compassion

I said, and I repeat, that it was a time for the exercise of the utmost compassion, and I have no apology to offer for that. That does not mean an acceptance of what is wrong; and I have found through life that if you follow that course you do not too often have to look back on events and say: "If only I had acted otherwise". Compassion does not mean sacrifice of principle. It is based on a seriousness of purpose and a desire for accommodation. Though viewpoints were diametrically opposed, there was a determination to explore every possibility of a solution. If that attitude had not been followed the meeting might well have ended in an angry outburst of mutual recrimination.

Last night at the hour of 11.30 there were gathered in London the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth -- and South Africa is still a member of the Commonwealth -- and you could not have detected there the tremendous effect of what had taken place a few hours earlier.

We tried to do whatever was humanly possible to avoid a break without making a sacrifice of basic principles. South Africa sought consent on the ground that continued membership was a virtual formality. I took the position that if we were to accept South Africa's request unconditionally our action would be taken as approval, or at least condonation, of racial policies which are repugnant to and unequivocally abhorred and condemned by Canadians as a whole. Speaking for Canada -- and I do not have to say that this attitude represents no recent conversion -- I pointed out that we were opposed to racial discrimination, and made it clear that I could not approve any formula or solution which did not maintain beyond any doubt that non-discrimination in respect of race and colour is an essential principle of the Commonwealth association.

This was not a stand which was taken then and not before; I have followed that course over the years. All but the Prime Minister of South Africa were in agreement that no expression of consent to South Africa's continuing membership was possible without an expression of the strongest views on their part regarding apartheid.

I shall not go into detail in this connection. We spent a long time on this. The general attitude we took was to