

There are, of course, a great many specific subjects on which Commonwealth co-operation has developed. For example, a Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux Review Conference was held in London from August 24 to September 30, 1960, and the British Commonwealth Scientific Committee met in July. The Commonwealth Economic Council, whose existence dates from 1925, has been effective and useful as a research and information centre. Its functions were enlarged and its organization made more permanent during 1960. There are, besides, a Commonwealth Shipping Committee, a programme for Commonwealth biological control stations—indeed a very large number of other Commonwealth institutions. All those operating in the economic field were brought together under the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council set up in 1958 by the Trade and Economic Conference held in Montreal. Commonwealth countries are planning a round-the-world Commonwealth cable, and important progress has been made towards Commonwealth co-operation in the fields of civil aviation and aeronautical research. Many Commonwealth governments act for others in consular matters and in other ways.

Commonwealth Consultation

Throughout the world Commonwealth consultation is continuously occurring. The series of consultations involves not only formal exchanges at such international meeting places as the United Nations and the annual meetings of the Consultative Committee of the Colombo Plan but also continuing informal exchanges among the representatives of Commonwealth countries on every conceivable subject. It is one of the great benefits of the Commonwealth association that the political leaders and the officials of Commonwealth countries are almost invariably able to establish close, friendly and useful relations with their Commonwealth colleagues wherever and whenever they meet.

It is, of course, at the meetings of Commonwealth prime ministers that this consultation is of the greatest value. Recently, when announcing in the House of Commons that a Commonwealth prime ministers' meeting would be held in London beginning March 8, 1961, Mr. Diefenbaker said: "In the past I have stressed the usefulness of frequent and if possible annual meetings with Commonwealth prime ministers. In view of the important international and Commonwealth subjects which will be discussed, I am sure the House will agree that a meeting in March will be timely and significant and, I trust, beneficial to all members of the Commonwealth."

Economic Aspects

The emergence of the European trading communities has created serious problems for the countries of the Commonwealth. In their *communiqué* of May 13 the Commonwealth prime ministers expressed the hope that the countries of Europe ". . . would follow trade policies in accordance with the principles of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and thus avoid damage to the economies of the primary producing countries and those that are also developing exports of manufactured goods. In addition, European countries have an important contribution to make in assisting the economic development of the less advanced countries. The ministers hoped that these problems could be speedily and satisfactorily resolved, with due regard to the interests of countries outside Europe."