

urgency, in part because of the race riots at Sharpeville and in part because of the consideration being given by the South African Government to a referendum on the question of becoming a republic.

The prime ministers, while acknowledging that "the choice between a monarchy and a republic was entirely the responsibility of the country concerned", considered the procedure whereby, if South Africa adopted a republican form of government, it might continue in the Commonwealth and stated in their *communiqué* of May 13:

In the event of South Africa deciding to become a republic and if the desire was subsequently expressed to remain a member of the Commonwealth, the meeting suggested that the South African Government should then ask for the consent of the other Commonwealth Governments either at a meeting of the Commonwealth prime ministers or, if this were not practicable, by correspondence.

In concluding the *communiqué*, the ministers "emphasized that the Commonwealth itself is a multi-racial association and expressed the need to ensure good relations between all member states and peoples of the Commonwealth." It had long been understood that all Commonwealth members were equal in status within the association. The *communiqué* could be interpreted to mean that the principle of equality of peoples within states was now recognized as an aspiration of the Commonwealth. As Mr. Diefenbaker stated on May 16 in the House of Commons, ". . . in Canada there is no sympathy for policies of racial discrimination, on whatever grounds they may be explained, and . . . such policies are basically incompatible with the multi-racial nature of the Commonwealth association."

The Parliament of Canada adopted on August 10, 1960, an Act for the Recognition and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Concerning the significance of this act for the Commonwealth, Mr. Diefenbaker made the following statement in his speech of September 19:

Under the Bill of Rights it is recognized and declared that, in Canada, basic rights and freedoms have existed and shall continue to exist without discrimination by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion or sex. The Rule of Law means equality of all without regard to race or colour under Law. Can the Commonwealth stand for less?

### Practical Co-operation

During 1960 a number of important decisions were taken for the organization of new programmes of Commonwealth co-operation. As envisaged in the *communiqué* issued at the close of the Commonwealth prime ministers' meetings in May 1960, an economic aid programme for Africa has been initiated, to be called the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Programme. In addition, great progress has been made in implementing the recommendations of the Commonwealth Education Conference held at Oxford in July 1959. Programmes of teacher training, arrangements for scholarships and fellowships, the supply of teachers and assistance to technical education all have gone forward. At the end of the year, 101 citizens of Commonwealth countries were in Canada under this Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, and the total number in Canada will be more than doubled by the end of 1962. A second Commonwealth education conference is now scheduled for India in 1961. These programmes have arisen following the initiatives taken at the Montreal Trade and Economic Conference of September 1958.