

the first instance by officials of Commonwealth governments, and the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council will examine it at its next meeting.

10. The Ministers also reaffirmed their belief in the value of exchanges between Commonwealth countries of persons with specialized skills and experience. They agreed that further efforts should be made to foster and encourage these exchanges, whether on a regional or other basis, and that the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council should take this question into urgent consideration. They trusted that employers in Commonwealth countries — whether governments, statutory bodies or private companies — would be ready, wherever possible, to encourage members of their staffs to undertake a period of public service abroad and would do their best to ensure that their prospects in their home countries would not thereby be prejudiced.

11. The Ministers considered various questions of constitutional development within the Commonwealth. They noted that the Federation of Nigeria would attain independence on 1st October, 1960. They extended to the Federation their good wishes for its future and looked forward to welcoming an independent Nigeria as a member of the Commonwealth on the completion of the necessary constitutional processes.

12. The meeting was informed that, in pursuance of the recent plebiscite, the Constituent Assembly in Ghana had resolved that the necessary constitutional steps should be taken to introduce a republican form of constitution in Ghana by 1st July, 1960. In notifying this forthcoming constitutional change, the Prime Minister of Ghana assured the meeting of his country's desire to continue her membership of the Commonwealth and her acceptance of the Queen as the symbol of free association of its independent member nations and as such the head of the Commonwealth. The heads of delegations of the other member countries of the Commonwealth assured the Prime Minister of Ghana that the present relations between their countries and Ghana would remain unaffected by this constitutional change and they declared that their governments would accept and recognize Ghana's continued membership of the Commonwealth.

13. The meeting noted a statement by the South African Minister of External Affairs that the Union Government intended to hold a referendum on the subject of South Africa becoming a republic. The meeting affirmed the view that the choice between a monarchy and a republic was entirely the responsibility of the country concerned. 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 Commonwealth Prime Ministers or, if this were not practicable, by correspondence.

14. The Ministers reviewed the constitutional development of the Commonwealth, with particular reference to the future of the smaller dependent territories.