

P.M. No. 9/1961

SOUTH AFRICA AND THE COMMONWEALTH

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. R.G.Menzies

The following is the full text of the Statement made by the Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, in London, on the South African situation :

"This is a very unhappy day for those who attach value to the Commonwealth as an association of independent nations each managing its own affairs in its own way, but all co-operating for common purposes. The criticisms which we all had to make of South African policies were plainly expressed in the Conference in a debate which took place with the complete concurrence of Dr. Verwoerd. The debate was of a frankness and intimacy which, in my experience, is possible only in a meeting of Prime Ministers. It is, I think, deplorable that it can never be conducted in such a forum and atmosphere again. What the implications for the future nature of the Commonwealth may be we do not as yet know. For myself, I am deeply troubled."

CANBERRA,

16th March, 1961.