

APPENDIX "A"

(See p. 76)

MEETING OF COMMONWEALTH PRIME MINISTERS
FINAL STATEMENT

The meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers was concluded today. This was the first Commonwealth meeting at which Ghana was represented, following her attainment of independence in March, 1957. Other Commonwealth ministers welcomed Ghana's participation in the meeting as a full member of the Commonwealth, and took note of this occasion as further practical evidence of the progress made by the United Kingdom Government in the pursuit of their policy of fostering constitutional development in their dependent territories.

In the course of their discussions the Commonwealth ministers have reviewed all the major international questions of the day which are of common concern to their countries. In this association of free and independent nations it is inevitable that there should be some differences of viewpoint and opinion. But these meetings reveal a broad similarity of approach and purpose. It is not their function, nor is it the object of this communiqué, to record agreed decisions or formal resolutions. Their value lies in the opportunity which they afford for a full and candid exchange of views in the light of which each Commonwealth Government can formulate and pursue its separate policies with deeper knowledge and understanding of the views and interests of its fellow members.

The primary objective of all Commonwealth Governments is world peace and security. They believe that this objective can only be assured by increased co-operation between nations. They themselves accept the principle and practice of co-operation; it is the foundation of their own association. They will continue to work for its wider adoption.

The United Nations was designed to provide one of the main opportunities for the practical exercise of the principle of co-operation between nations. Experience has, however, revealed certain deficiencies and weaknesses in the functioning of the organization. The Commonwealth ministers agreed that constructive action is needed to strengthen and improve the United Nations as an instrument for preserving peace, justice and co-operation throughout the world in accordance with the principles of the charter.

In discussion of developments since their last meeting, Commonwealth ministers expressed their grave concern at the tragic events in Hungary. They took note that the forthcoming consideration by the General Assembly of the report presented by its special

committee will provide the occasion for the United Nations to record its views.

Commonwealth ministers reviewed the course of the developments in the current discussions on disarmament. They noted that proposals relating to a first stage of disarmament were put forward on 2nd July in the disarmament subcommittee on behalf of the governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and France. They recognized that even a limited agreement, by reducing the suspicions and tensions throughout the world, would help to create conditions in which a more comprehensive scheme of disarmament could be developed.

The Commonwealth ministers discussed the international problems of the Middle East. They agreed that, in the long term, economic and social progress must be the foundation for stability in the Middle East. They agreed, however, that in the short term the need is to work toward a relaxation of the tension arising from the dispute between the Arab states and Israel, the plight of the Arab refugees and the unresolved problems in connection with the Suez canal. They considered that solutions of all these urgent questions should continue to be pursued by all practicable means.

Consideration was also given to the contribution which might be made by the Commonwealth governments concerned toward the easing of tension and the maintenance of peace, stability and political freedom in the Far East and Southeast Asia. Commonwealth ministers welcomed the important contribution already made by mutual assistance under the Colombo plan toward raising standards of living and promoting economic development in the underdeveloped countries of this area.

In their general review of economic questions the Commonwealth ministers gave special attention to the impact of the major programs of development on which many of their countries are now engaged. These programs call for high levels of domestic saving which can only be secured by sound internal policies. But they also call for conditions favourable to investment from other countries. The United Kingdom will continue to play its leading role in furthering economic development in the countries of the Commonwealth, and important contributions are also being made by other Commonwealth members. But, in view of the continuing need for capital investment, it is also