

issue and our relief was therefore correspondingly great, a relief shared in full measure by the Asian members of the Commonwealth, where the separation pressures were most intense, when this danger to the Commonwealth was removed by the Anglo-French decision to accept the cease-fire resolution of the United Nations Assembly. So the Commonwealth association remains strong and close. The friendly, informal and frank exchange of views in a sincere effort to reach agreement on all matters of common concern goes on, and the Commonwealth continues to play its invaluable and constructive role in today's troubled world; a role for which the whole world has reason to be grateful.

Mr. Churchill: What nations of the Commonwealth would have left the Commonwealth had the British and French not abided by the resolution of the United Nations?

Mr. Pearson: There is evidence, strong evidence, which I and others have received, to suggest that if the fighting in Egypt between Anglo-French and Israeli forces and Egyptian forces had continued and if the United Nations Assembly cease-fire resolution had been repudiated or rejected, the pressures in regard to separation from the Commonwealth in certain Asian members of the Commonwealth would have been so great that it would have been indeed very difficult to resist them. We have had evidence to that effect both from New Delhi and from Karachi.

Mr. Churchill: Has that not been denied by both Ceylon and India?

Mr. Pearson: This has been questioned, I believe, in Ceylon, including the Prime Minister. Mr. Speaker, I am giving my opinion on the basis of information which I have received from the highest authorities in the Government of India. I am not suggesting, Mr. Speaker—and in my earlier statement on this I think I made it clear in the House I did not suggest—those pressures affected what we sometimes call the old members of the Commonwealth, but they certainly did affect those new members which, as I have just said, constitute four-fifths of the population of the Commonwealth.

It seems to me that this Commonwealth association, which all its members wish to preserve, to be of enduring value must strive for the widest possible areas of agreement between its members. It seems to me also that the limits of such areas, though not often expressed, may be pretty clearly discerned. Whether or not we speak of it, there are certain fundamental things that unite the governments and the peoples of the Commonwealth: freedom, personal and national; parliamentary democracy and the supremacy of the individual over the state. There is also a certain basis of morality in political action to which Commonwealth members are by tacit consent expected to adhere. Such a basis can easily be disregarded, on the other hand, by those who do not share our Commonwealth beliefs and our ways of doing things. They

have, for instance, often been and are being disregarded by the Soviet Union in Hungary; but the barbaric luxury of this type of conduct is not open to us. Indeed, it is completely foreign to us and that is one reason, perhaps a main reason, why we can and must work together in the Commonwealth. It is more important than ever for us at this time to strengthen within the Commonwealth our will to work together in defence of these principles; for very significant events are now about to occur in the Commonwealth, as significant perhaps as those which took place 10 years ago when India, Pakistan and Ceylon became members.

We often also, Mr. Speaker, speak of the Commonwealth as a bridge, as it is, between Asia and the West; and perhaps it would not be inappropriate at this moment if I expressed my own feeling of gratitude for what the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Martin), in his recent trip to Asia, has done to strengthen that bridge. If there is such a bridge, it has been made possible by the accession of India, Pakistan and Ceylon, which was in its turn the result of an act of constructive abdication by the United Kingdom to India in 1947. Now, this evolving process is about to shift to Africa. On March 6 next we shall welcome a new member into the Commonwealth, the state of Ghana, at present known as the Gold Coast. It will be the first native African member, and its progress as an independent nation inside the Commonwealth will be watched with great interest throughout Africa and Asia, and also in the West and by the Soviet Union.

Ghana will probably be the first of a series of new members to emerge from the Continents of Africa and Asia. It may be that by 1960 and 1962 the Commonwealth will include also Malaya, Nigeria, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and nearer home the Caribbean Federation.

Thus the process of what I might call creative withdrawal continues to the special credit and indeed to the glory of the heart and centre of the Commonwealth, the United Kingdom. As has been said, "The smaller the Empire the greater the Commonwealth." New nations arise from former colonial territories to take their place among the free democracies of the world. As an older member of the Commonwealth Canada is proud, I am sure, to assist in welcoming these young countries, as they attain independence, to our growing family and to assure them of our friendship and our support.

United Nations

A second factor influencing Canadian foreign policy, Mr. Speaker, is the United Nations, now going through a testing period that will have far-reaching effects on its future as an organization effective for the promotion of international peace, security and justice.

It should, I think, be clear to us that so long as we try to discharge our obligations we