

I. THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE, CANBERRA

Eight British Commonwealth countries—Australia, Burma, Canada, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, and the United Kingdom—met at Canberra between 26 August and 2 September, upon the invitation of the Australian Government, for a preliminary discussion of the main issues likely to arise in the drafting of the treaty of peace with Japan. The delegates of these countries were as follows :

Australia : Rt Hon. H. V. Evatt, Hon. J. J. Dedman, Hon. R. T. Pollard. *Burma* : Hon. Thakin Lun Baw. *Canada* : Hon. Brooke Claxton, Mr K. A. Greene. *India* : Sir Rama Rau, Sir Raghunath Paranjpye. *New Zealand* : Rt Hon. Peter Fraser, Mr J. G. Barclay. *Pakistan* : Mirza Mohammed Rafi. *South Africa* : Hon. Harry Lawrence. *United Kingdom* : Rt Hon. Viscount Addison, Rt Hon. Hector McNeil, Rt Hon. E. J. Williams.

Following the practice of previous British Commonwealth meetings the Canberra conference made no attempt to arrive at binding decisions ; but it demonstrated once again the value of a frank, informal, and provisional exchange of views upon subjects of common concern and great importance to the members of the Commonwealth. There was general agreement among the delegates upon most aspects of the Japanese peace settlement ; this agreement was the outcome not of any process of negotiation, but of similar viewpoints based upon the facts available to all members. That this wide measure of agreement emerged after the short period of a week, was, moreover, largely due to the nature of Commonwealth discussions, which involve no commitments, and to the frank but friendly atmosphere in which they always take place. These circumstances made it possible for all delegations to express, withdraw, or criticize viewpoints without fear of injuring susceptible national feelings.

Like all Commonwealth meetings, the Canberra Conference was characterized by a high sense of responsibility. This was due in very large measure to the fact that the countries represented had taken an active part in the great Allied effort which defeated Japan, and each was fully conscious of the need to share in the measures which will be incorporated in the treaty to keep Japan disarmed.

The Canberra Conference was the first Commonwealth meeting to be attended by independent India and Pakistan and by Burma. Delegates from the older members of the British Commonwealth derived much value from the views advanced by the representatives of these Eastern members of