

and the United Kingdom has continued to be that all the Pacific belligerents are entitled to an equal voice at the peace conference, while the Soviet Union has refused to recede from the position that there should be a preliminary examination of the question by the Council of Foreign Ministers.

In January, at the Commonwealth Conference on foreign affairs held in Colombo, views were exchanged on the more important problems relating to Japan and the broad objectives to be pursued in drawing up the peace settlement. The New Zealand delegate (Hon. F. W. Doidge) emphasized the importance which the New Zealand Government attached to the conclusion of a treaty which, while releasing Japan from many of the disabilities of the existing régime of control, would at the same time establish long-term safeguards against the resurgence of Japanese militarism. At the conclusion of the general discussion the Conference agreed that a working party should be appointed to consider the detailed terms of the treaty under the direction of the Commonwealth High Commissioners in London with the object of co-ordinating the views of the Commonwealth countries.

Far Eastern Commission

Members of the New Zealand Embassy in Washington have continued to represent New Zealand at the regular meetings of the Far Eastern Commission. In November the Commission's membership was increased to thirteen when Burma and Pakistan were invited to participate.

The deterioration in the value of the Commission's proceedings, noted in last year's annual report, has become a matter of increasing concern to those member nations which of necessity retain a close and continuing interest in Japanese affairs. Its extended term of operation, resulting from the unforeseen delay in the conclusion of a peace settlement, and the relative difficulty with which consequent modifications can be made in the policy framework established earlier, as well as the growing divergence between the aims of the Soviet Union and other Commission members, have progressively reduced its effectiveness in determining current occupation policy. The right of the United States to take unilateral action in cases of urgency has been more frequently exercised and there has been a further extension of the administrative authority vested in the Supreme Commander. In January the Soviet representative, pursuing the same policy as that adopted in the Security Council, announced that the Soviet Union would take no part in the Commission while the Chinese Nationalist representative continued to attend its meetings.