

Prime Ministers held at London, England, in January 1951, devoted much time and attention to the above situation and the problems arising from it. In particular, developments in Asia, where the smaller non-communist countries have been exposed to communist infiltration or open invasion, called for the most careful consideration not only by the Commonwealth countries in that area but also by all members of the Commonwealth, whose ideals of freedom and democracy might be endangered by successful aggression.

It was clear that the backward agricultural and industrial condition of many countries of south and southeast Asia, along with the destruction and impoverishment in that area which had resulted from operations during World War II, would, if ignored, undermine any hope that these countries would have a healthy and continuous development along democratic lines. The 1950 Colombo Conference was greatly concerned with this situation and for that reason, among others, urged the necessity of assistance to the nations of south and southeast Asia from the more industrially advanced countries in the Commonwealth and elsewhere. The Colombo Plan (*see* pp. 116-117), which was fashioned at this meeting and in which Canada is participating, is one of the most promising contributions towards building up the free world and enabling it to stand against totalitarianism.

Another subject that engaged the attention of both the 1950 Commonwealth Meeting of Foreign Ministers and the 1951 Commonwealth Meeting of Prime Ministers was the question of peace settlements, particularly with Japan, and the allied question of security in the Pacific area. While the discussions were helpful in smoothing over some differences of opinion on the Japanese settlement, they did not result in all Commonwealth members reaching a common decision in this matter. The Government of India eventually decided to negotiate a separate treaty with Japan, while the other Commonwealth governments, including Canada, joined the United States and other interested countries in signing a Japanese Peace Treaty at San Francisco, on Sept. 8, 1951. At the same time the position of the more exposed Commonwealth countries in the Pacific area was safeguarded by the signature of a Security Treaty by the United States, Australia and New Zealand.

Developments in China also were among the matters discussed at both meetings. In regard to recognition of the Chinese Communist Government, as in all matters of concern to Commonwealth nations, it was understood that each government must take the responsibility of making its own decision. Until mid-1952, the Chinese Communist Government had been recognized by the three Asian members of the Commonwealth and by the United Kingdom, while the other members of the Commonwealth, including Canada, continued to refrain from recognition.

A new and very serious problem in northeast Asia was created by the invasion of South Korea on June 25, 1950, by North Korean communists. Canada and the other countries of the Commonwealth that were also members of the United Nations supported the action taken by the Security Council to assist South Korean resistance. Most of them, including Canada, contributed armed forces for this purpose. A Commonwealth Division, consisting of United Kingdom, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand combat forces and a medical unit from India, was organized as part of the United Nations forces, and has acquitted itself with distinction. The nations of the Commonwealth, like many other members of the United Nations, have been gravely concerned over the destruction to life and property in Korea, and are contributing to relief and rehabilitation.