

III.—GENERAL VIEW OF THE CONFERENCE

15. The Conference opened in Canberra on 28 January, 1947, and closed on 6 February, 1947. Both the Plenary meetings and the meetings of Committees were held in the Canberra Boys' Grammar School.

16. The work of the Conference proceeded smoothly on well-ordered lines, no time being lost in issues that were not relevant to the main task of the meetings, which was to find means of establishing a regional body in the South Pacific.

17. The Australian delegation circulated certain Agenda Notes, which were used as a working paper. As a result rapid progress in Committee work was facilitated. In addition, other delegations circulated papers dealing with specific topics, which were of the greatest assistance in providing material for discussion. The New Zealand delegation circulated several papers dealing with their own Island Territories, and giving special emphasis to problems which appeared to be susceptible of regional treatment.

18. The Conference was officially opened by the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Chifley. Dr. Evatt, Minister of External Affairs, was elected President, and Mr. Nash, Deputy President, of the Conference. The text of the speech delivered by Mr. Nash at the opening Plenary Session is appended (Appendix C). Mr. Nash also spoke at the conclusion of the closing session held on Thursday, 6 February.

IV.—DELEGATIONS

19. Delegations were present from Australia and New Zealand, the two sponsoring Powers, and from the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and the Netherlands.

The New Zealand delegation was composed as follows:—

Delegates—

Rt Hon. W. Nash, Minister of Finance.

Mr. A. G. Osborne, M.P., Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Prime Minister.

Mr. J. G. Barclay, High Commissioner for New Zealand, Canberra.

Alternate Delegates and Advisers—

Lieutenant-Colonel F. W. Voelcker, Administrator of Western Samoa.

Mr. C. G. R. McKay, Secretary of Island Territories.

Mr. W. Tailby, Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

Mr. G. R. Laking, Department of External Affairs.

Mr. C. A. Sharp, Assistant Secretary, Office of the High Commissioner for New Zealand, Canberra.

Mr. C. Craw, Department of External Affairs.