

United Kingdom was of little practical effect because successive Governments had availed themselves of the flexibility of the common law and the King's prerogative (foreign affairs being within the prerogative). Nor did adoption of the statute affect the Government's desire, shared by the country as a whole, to remain closely associated with other members of the Commonwealth. The chief effects of the adoption of the statute and the enactment by the United Kingdom Parliament of the New Zealand Constitution (Amendment) Act were to give the New Zealand Parliament full legislative capacity by freeing it from the legislative restrictions imposed by certain anachronistic United Kingdom statutes, and to clarify New Zealand's international status in the eyes of foreign countries.

A parliamentary paper (A-13, 1947) outlines the purpose and effect of the adoption of the Statute of Westminster and the Constitution Amendment Bill.

3. INDIA AND PAKISTAN

The attainment of independence by India and Pakistan, and their decision to exercise that independence within the British Commonwealth, were among the outstanding events of the year. As a member of the Commonwealth, New Zealand was directly concerned in the events leading up to these decisions; to enlarge the group of Dominions is to increase the duties and privileges of all existing members, and it was necessary to consider the consequences of such enlargement. Even before the partition took place the Prime Minister made it clear that the New Zealand Government would welcome a continuation of their association with India on this new basis, and he expressed the view, based on New Zealand's experience, that a member of the Commonwealth possesses all the benefits of full independence plus the many additional advantages which come from sharing in a free and powerful association of States. But whether the people of India chose to remain inside or to leave the Commonwealth, the Prime Minister assured them of New Zealand's friendship and goodwill.

Owing to the inevitable disorganization attending the establishment of the two new Dominions and the desire of the New Zealand Government to avoid any rapid expansion of representation overseas, it has not been possible to establish with India and Pakistan the full measure of consultation and exchange of information that exists between New Zealand and some of the other members of the Commonwealth. It is, however, the Government's policy, as fellow-members of the Commonwealth, to enter into relations with India and Pakistan whenever opportunity offers.