

THE FAR EAST AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA

1. GENERAL

During this year major political adjustments in the Far East have continued, many of which will undoubtedly prove of far-reaching ultimate significance to New Zealand. Through Commonwealth channels and through correspondence with New Zealand posts overseas, the Department has been kept informed concerning these developments, despite the limitations imposed by the small size of its Far Eastern Section and the absence of New Zealand posts in the Far East which might appraise events with this country's interests in mind.

The general aspect of contemporary problems has concerned the Department, particularly where they have been brought before the United Nations, as in the case of the problems of Indonesia, Korea, and Kashmir. The Department has, however, been equally concerned with many practical questions arising from changes which have affected the British Commonwealth, notably the attainment by India and Pakistan of Dominion status and by Ceylon also of fully responsible status within the British Commonwealth; the constitutional revision in Malaya, resulting in the establishment of the Federation of Malaya on 1 February; and the decision of Burma to exercise its independence outside the British Commonwealth. In other cases it is frequently the particular aspect of the general problem which has engaged the immediate attention of the Department—for instance, with the continuance of the civil war in China, the protection of New Zealand nationals there and the work of relief agencies operating in the country. The Siamese *coup d'état* of 9 November, 1947, was of some immediate practical interest to New Zealand in that it appeared that the treaty rights of New Zealand nationals might have been affected.

Especially noteworthy are the several contacts, chiefly in the economic and welfare fields, made between New Zealand and the Far East during the year. New Zealand delegates attended the Regional Study Conference on Fundamental Education held under the auspices of UNESCO at Nanking in September, 1947, the Preparatory Asian Regional Conference of the International Labour Organization held in New Delhi in October and November, and the second session of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), held in Baguio in November and December. Although personnel attending these conferences were drawn from the External Affairs Department only in the case of the ECAFE meeting (which is discussed more fully in the section dealing with the Economic and Social Council), these meetings all have their importance in