

Widening Educational Horizons

COMMONWEALTH MEETING

In London's old Lancaster House the leaders of the member countries of the Commonwealth of Nations began a conference on January 31. These leaders were the representatives of the eight self-governing Commonwealth lands. Long ago Britain ruled the other seven, but today all are equal. Here is a list of the eight, showing how many million people each country has:

India	357 million
Pakistan	76 million
United Kingdom	51 million
Canada	15 million
South Africa	13 million
Australia	9 million
Ceylon	8 million
New Zealand	2 million

The Head of the Commonwealth is Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada and of all the Commonwealth countries except those having republican constitutions. In each member country, however, her official acts are on the advice of the responsible ministers of that particular country. She rules, but does not govern. It is impossible to measure the loyalty and affection of her peoples in the world-circling Commonwealth and Empire.

Love of the Queen is, however, by no means the only thing that holds the Commonwealth together. The members of the Commonwealth find that the partnership helps them. As a group, they are very strong. Separately, they would be much weaker.

Britain's Prime Minister Churchill, Canada's Prime Minister St. Laurent, India's Prime Minister Nehru, Pakistan's Prime Minister Ali, Australia's Prime Minister Menzies, New Zealand's Prime Minister Holland, Ceylon's Prime Minister Kotelawala, South Africa's Minister of Justice Swart, and Central African Federation's Huggins, represented their countries at the London meeting. These men planned to go over a long list of problems. At the top of the list was the question of how Commonwealth members can best meet the threats of communist expansion in various parts of the globe.

The London delegates also discussed plans for: 1. strengthening the bonds which unite them in a family of nations. 2. expanding trade with one another and with other countries. 3. the Asian-Af-

rican meeting scheduled for April in Indonesia. 4. the settlement of the Communist Chinese-Formosan problems.

On February 2, Great Britain announced two steps which were reported to line up not only that country but also the majority of the British Commonwealth even more closely with the United States in the defence of world freedom.

First, London declared its intention of forming a two division military "fire brigade" which can fly to any part of the world threatened by aggressive Communist penetration.

Second, an official spokesman announced that there was a large degree of unanimity among the Commonwealth Prime Ministers meeting in London on "the vital importance" of standing side by side with the United States in the Formosa crisis.

Prime Minister Nehru of India took a slightly different stand. Nehru is known to be a strong neutralist.

FORMOSA
United States officials have been centering their attention on the island of Formosa in recent weeks. This small body of land off the China coast is today a major link in the United States defence chain in the Far East.

In December United States concluded a treaty with Nationalist China's government, located on Formosa. This pact states that the United States will go to Formosa's aid in case she is attacked. It also provides that Nationalist China's government will help the United States if it should be attacked.

The agreement with Formosa is looked upon as another link in the chain of alliances the United States has forged with lands about the world. In the Far Pacific, it has treaties with such other nations as South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand. The alliances are aimed at maintaining strong defences against the Soviet Union and Communist China.

The United States alliance with Formosa is one of the results of the Civil War in China. With the defeat of Chiang Kai-shek, he fled with his government and the remnants of his army to Formosa. This tropical island is about half the size of New Brunswick, and

there Chiang set up his government in the city of Taipei in the northwestern part of the island. When the Korean war broke out in 1950, the United States announced that it would defend Formosa and the Pescadores, a small chain of Nationalist-held islands close to Formosa. At the same time the United States asked Chiang Kai-shek not to attempt any military operations against the mainland.

The reason for the United States' action was that that country did not want Formosa to fall into enemy hands at a time when United Nations forces were so deeply involved in Korea, nor did they want another war started just then. What they did in effect was to neutralize Formosa.

As it turned out, Communist China also became involved in the Korean war. The United States has continued to patrol the strait by different stand. Meanwhile

the United States has helped Chiang in other ways. It has given his government more than 400 million dollars worth of economic aid to boost crop and industrial output and to put finances on a sound basis. Large scale military assistance of an undisclosed amount has helped build up Chiang's forces.

In February, 1953 the republican administration announced that the United States would no longer keep Chiang from attacking the China coast if he wished to do so, this he has not done, however, his troops have harassed the Chinese Communists from some 20 tiny islands close to the mainland.

The most important of these small islands are the Tachens and Quemoy. The Chinese Communists say they are determined to take all these islands as well as the more distant Pescadores and Formosa.

In connection with the recent U. S. - Nationalist treaty, Chiang has again agreed to make no attempt to reconquer the mainland without the consent of the United States. Thus, the Nationalists are

under the same restraints that existed from 1950 - 1953. Certain of the U. S. law makers have not looked favorably on the idea of letting Chiang launch a big attack, which they fear, might draw the U. S. into war. Also some of the United States allies - Great Britain and Canada for two - have indicated they will not support a Nationalist offensive.

The new agreement, then, between Nationalist China and the United States makes plain that the latter will come to the aid of the former if Formosa and the Pescadores are attacked. The big reason for the U. S. stand is the strategic importance of the islands.

United States defences in the Far East stretch in a great arc from Alaska's Aleutian Islands down through Japan, South Korea, Okinawa, Formosa and the Philippines. Formosa is the very centre of the arc. Another reason why the United States wants to keep Formosa in the free world is that the island has become the symbol for all Chinese who oppose communist rule. They know that

so long as Formosa is free, there is hope that some day non-communist rule may be restored on the mainland of China.

On the other hand, if Chiang's government fell, it would be just about impossible to keep Red China out of the United Nations. At present, Chiang's government holds China's seat in the world body, a fact which the communists keenly resent. Some members of the United Nations also feel that Red China should be the Chinese Representative within the U. N.

The U. S. A. and others feel that a nation which has fought against United Nations troops and killed so many of them, that imprisons men without reason, and that aided in the downfall of North Vietnam is not worthy to be represented in a world peace organization. Moreover, Communist possession of Formosa would hasten the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia.

Practically all Americans agree that Formosa must be kept out of communist hands. There is disagreement, though, over just what course of action the U. S. should take, some think they have

gone too far in supporting Chiang, others think they have not gone far enough.

United States leaders recognize the danger that Red China's warlike ways could set off a global struggle. Despite this threat to peace, however, most U. S. officials feel that war is much less likely now than it was back in 1941 when a Japanese assault on the U. S. forces brought that country into World War II. They give these reasons for their views:

1. In 1941 the world was not properly alerted to the danger of war. Japan knew this and thought she could cripple the U. S. before it could grow strong enough to fight back. Today the U. S. fully realizes the danger of war, and it is ready for trouble.

2. When nations in the past launched an attack, the aggressor knew it would take time for the victim to strike back. Now with atom bombs and swift jet planes, the attacked country could hit back at any attacker instantly and with deadly effects.

started by nations which felt they would be the winners. Today, even the Communists leaders realize that modern weapons could destroy both sides if war comes.

4. Britain, India, and even Russia, have asked Communist China to discuss a cease fire. No country can discount world opinion if that opinion comes in united form.

On February 9, the U. S. Senate approved ratification of the Formosa Defence Treaty 64-4.

On February 9, Prime Minister Nehru of India appealed for a bloodless solution of the Formosa dispute by means of informal negotiations. He said he feels the Chinese Communists should avoid trying to gain Formosa by force.

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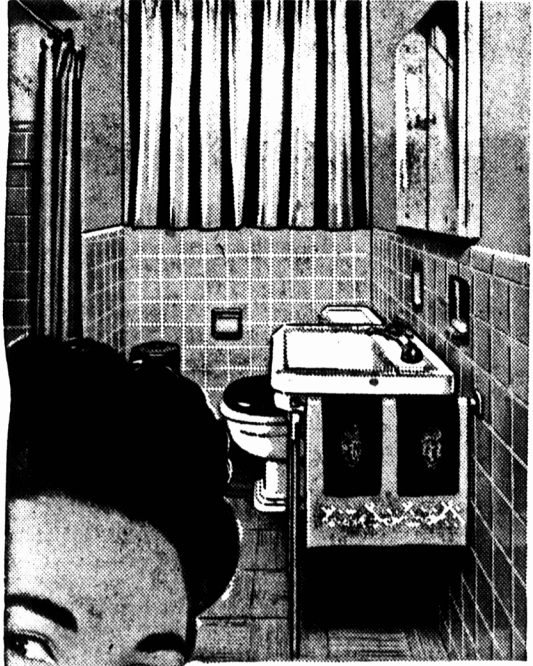
about the huge continent on the other side of the globe. Here are some facts we should remember about Asia.

Asia is the largest of all the continents. It has an area of 17 million square miles. The continent stretches almost half-way around the world. You could put Europe, and Africa on top of Asia and still have room for about half of Canada.

Asia is surrounded by oceans except where it touches Europe. The Suez Canal keeps Asia from touching Africa. The Behring Strait off Alaska puts about 50 miles of water between Asia and North America. Asiatic Islands, including the Philippines and Indonesia are stepping stones to Australia.

It is almost impossible to think of land or climate that can't be found somewhere in Asia. The continent stretches from the Arctic to the equator.

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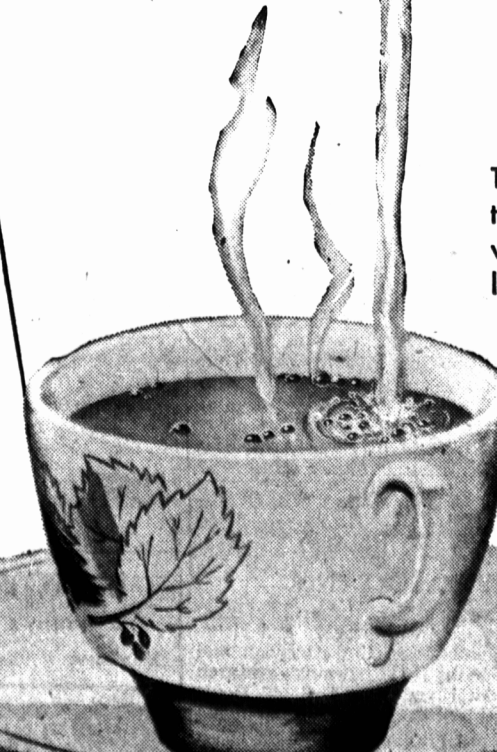
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