

C222744

Mr. Fraser pointed out that the Agreement omitted the Dutch. He understood that they would be willing to come in. MR. CHURCHILL said that they would certainly wish to be associated with any regional colonial body in the area.

MR. FRASER went on to point out that New Zealand, and he thought Australia too, desired above all else to see the United Kingdom play her full part in the Pacific. His country was willing to help to the utmost of its abilities and could, he thought, contribute in practical ways, e.g. health services.

MR. CURTIN explained that his Government had contemplated two areas for regional colonial commissions to the northward of Australia. The more northerly area might include S. East Asia and the Dutch East Indies, the southerly area might be delimited as suggested in the Australia-New Zealand Agreement. Mr. Curtin called attention to the welfare and social development of the native inhabitants as one of the primary objectives. In New Guinea the local inhabitants had proved themselves loyal. This was no doubt partly due to the excellent foundations of administration laid down by Sir Hubert Murray. But his information was that in the Dutch and Portuguese territories the position was not so good. The Japanese had received a certain amount of aid from the local inhabitants and he did not think that the same loyalty had been shown to the Dutch and Portuguese authorities as had been the case in British territories. Another aspect to which he would like to call attention was the opinion voiced by certain sections in the United States, typified by the recent senatorial mission, that the United States should hold on to territories re-occupied by American arms at the cost of American lives. While he - and he thought he could speak for Mr. Fraser too - would welcome the intrusion of United States influence between their countries and Japan, they did not wish this to occur at the expense of British territory, but at the expense of the Japanese and if need be the Dutch and the French. Australia and New Zealand had not the resources to cater for such far-flung defence lines as the Marshalls and the Carolines. He hoped that the United States would undertake responsibility in such areas, but at the same time his Government had felt that some declaration of its claim to have a full say in matters affecting their interest was called for. This had been one of the reasons underlying the Australia-New Zealand Agreement. He was not altogether happy about the possibility of allowing large colonial territories to remain the responsibility of weak parent states which had not the resources to provide adequately for defence. The position could not but remain precarious and, if the Japanese succeeded in building up their power again, it would become dangerous. For this reason he hoped that the United States could be persuaded to undertake definite defence commitments abutting on Malaya. Subject to these considerations he was in agreement with the general principles enunciated by Colonel Stanley.

MR. CHURCHILL pointed out that the future of the islands to which Mr. Curtin had referred was bound up with questions of strategic security. He contemplated that all islands removed from their original possessors should pass under the authority of the United Nations for strategic purposes. Some might be held by the United States in trust for the United Nations. In reply to questions regarding the precise nature of the sovereignty which the United States would exercise, Mr. Churchill said that he thought the matter should be approached as a question of high principle. All over the world there were islands of great strategic consequence. These would come under the authority of the world organisation and be allocated amongst the great powers, which would undertake strategic responsibilities