

31. The United States was determined that there should be no international body in Japan which would interfere with the executive responsibility of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, and was equally determined to keep the policy towards Japan on a broad collective basis through the establishment of the Far Eastern Commission. To accommodate the Soviet insistence on an Allied Council in Tokyo the United States finally proposed a Council composed of four representatives - the United States, the U.S.S.R., China and the British Commonwealth. Its function would be to consult with and advise the Supreme Commander on questions arising out of the Japanese surrender terms. The suggestion of a British Commonwealth representative no doubt arose from the fact that the United Kingdom, Australia, India and New Zealand occupation forces in Japan had been combined under a single command. On instructions from Ottawa, the Canadian High Commissioner in London informed the United Kingdom Government that the Canadian Government was of the opinion that the designation of one member of the Allied Council for Japan as the British Commonwealth member would be misleading and would convey an inaccurate impression of Commonwealth relationships. It was recommended that the nations of the British Commonwealth which were to be represented should be specified by name to avoid the interpretation that the Commonwealth as a whole was being represented. At this point, just before the opening of the Moscow conference in December 1945, the United Kingdom indicated that while they still favoured a five power council to include Australia if the United States and the U.S.S.R. insisted on a four power council they would propose joint representation of Australia, the United Kingdom and possibly India by a single representative to be jointly nominated by the countries concerned. New Zealand indicated that if this arrangement became necessary they would wish the representative in question to be responsible to the New Zealand Government as well.

32. At the Moscow meeting of the three Foreign Secretaries in December, 1945, Mr. Molotov insisted that the Allied Council should consist of four members only and that the British Commonwealth should be regarded as a unit. Mr. Byrnes would not agree to Australian membership on the Allied Council and also favoured a Council of four members only. Mr. Bevin consequently fell back on the principle of one British member representing jointly the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and India as those members of the British Commonwealth whose forces were to participate in the occupation of Japan and this proposal was finally adopted.

33. This precedent for joint representation of certain of the Commonwealth members may become important in the procedural negotiations for the Japanese settlement. If the present United States proposal for an eleven nation conference under a procedure which precludes the use of the veto by any one power fails of implementation, and if the United States and the United Kingdom are sufficiently anxious to secure Soviet cooperation in the peace negotiations with Japan, some concession may have to be made to the Soviet point of view that the bulk of the treaty drafting should be done by the Four Great Powers only. Should any