

OUR LINKS WITH ASIA

THE possibility of New Zealand being called upon for such duty [observer work in Thailand for the Peace Observation Commission] . . . is an instance of the need for New Zealand to be adequately represented through diplomatic posts especially in South-East Asia—which, as the Minister of External Affairs has pointed out, is for New Zealand the "near north." We are so represented in Japan, but not anywhere else in this area, and Japan is a long way from South-East Asia. In the event of our undertaking United Nations responsibility such as I have spoken of, presumably the representative would be sent from New Zealand. This would not be so good as being able to call on a representative stationed in that part of the world. This applies particularly to such desirable considerations as immediacy or first-hand knowledge either of the situation or of personnel concerned. Whatever may be the nature of the settlement on South-East Asia, we are certain to be increasingly the neighbours of the people who live there. Channels of communication seem to be necessary through direct diplomatic representation at least at Singapore and perhaps also at Delhi. The annual con-

Extracts from recent commentaries on the international news, broadcast from the Main National Stations of the NZBS

ference of the United Nations Association of New Zealand earlier this year unanimously passed a resolution which would strongly support this view.

But we as citizens must share with the Government the responsibility of intelligent and constructive participation in international affairs. On more than one occasion I have heard the Minister of External Affairs exhort us as citizens to do our part to build up an informed public opinion on our international interests and obligations. In a democracy such as ours the Government, while it has a responsibility to give leadership, cannot go far ahead of the citizens it represents.

As long ago as 1950 Mr. Nehru said that the present-day ferment in Asia is the ferment of "minds in movement," of minds that are "changing and shaking." Even allowing for the influence from outside, recent events in Asia, particularly in the South-East, justify Mr. Nehru's words. A glance at a map of the Pacific Ocean shows that on the way

from New Zealand to South-East Asia by far the longest break in land connections is between us and Australia. We are helping to make some impact on the situation by our part in the Colombo Plan and similar technical assistance programmes. But more than that is needed. Especially through modern communications, people sense the basic attitudes one to the other, just as individuals do one to the other. If the way of international living to which we are committed is to be achieved, our minds must be "in movement" as well as those of the peoples of Asia. And the movement required is not "at" those peoples as in patronage, but with them—in partnership. If we have something to give them in technology, health and education, they have much to give us in philosophy, the wisdom of cultures much older than ours, and in some of the basic spiritual values.

—G. C. BURTON,
May 29, 1954.

ONLY a very thin line separates espionage from the legitimate collection of useful information by legations and embassies. Mr. Eric Halstead, M.P., spoke in Auckland this week of the need for a "window" on South-East Asia

WINDOW ON MOSCOW

and indicated how useful a diplomatic mission to Singapore could be. Since the Petrov affair has led to the closing of the Australian legation in Moscow yet another window on Russia

has been shut. Therefore, even more today than it did at the time, it seems a great pity that we had to withdraw the New Zealand Legation from Moscow, because it would have been particularly useful now. While the cold war continues and there is a serious possibility of open warfare with Russia, every scrap of first-hand information we can gather about the Russian Government, their plans and their military preparedness, would be of the greatest value. On the other hand, since this is a topsy-turvy world where America busies herself with re-arming Japan, her mortal enemy of 10 years ago, we might find ourselves on friendlier terms with Russia, and, once again, a window—this time a shop window—in Moscow would be a great advantage. Mr. Marshall, chairman of the New Zealand Dairy Products Marketing Commission, reported from London this week that the Russians are keenly interested in buying New Zealand butter, and prefer it to margarine, which is looming up as such a threat to the New Zealand butter market in Britain. If Russian trade is to develop with New Zealand, trade and diplomatic representation in that country would be almost essential.

BRITAIN is obviously placing her hopes on the slow, patient negotiations at Geneva. There can be no suspicion that men such as Sir Winston Churchill and Mr. Eden have become fellow travellers and are playing the Russian game. We all know that when



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