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'United as Free and Equal': The New Commonwealth, Prime Ministers' Meetings, and the Korean War

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ABSTRACT

The New Commonwealth emerged from the first wave of decolonisation in South Asia in the late 1940s. The seminal moment occurred with the signing of the 1949 London Declaration that allowed republican India to remain a Commonwealth member. However, India, Pakistan and Ceylon were divided at the first two Prime Ministers' Meeting after independence and made no attempt to unite in opposition to the Old 'white' Commonwealth members. This article will thus demonstrate that the three Prime Ministers' Meetings that took place during the Korean War marked a watershed for the New Commonwealth. In 1951 with the Korean War close to escalating into a global conflict, Jawaharlal Nehru, Liaquat Ali Khan and D. S. Senanayake worked in unison to forge a Commonwealth policy to end the fighting before Washington pressed the UN to brand China an aggressor and used its atomic arsenal. This effort met resistance from the Old Commonwealth countries but at least partially achieved its goal. The 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting, therefore, set the precedent for united New Commonwealth action at future Prime Ministers' Meetings. Nevertheless, at the 1952 and 1953 Prime Ministers' Meetings conditions were not right for further New Commonwealth attempts to influence Commonwealth policy.

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Introduction

The 1949 Prime Ministers' Meeting and the resulting London Declaration that allowed republican India to remain in the Commonwealth have long been recognised as crucial to transforming the Commonwealth from a 'white man's club' based on allegiance to the Crown into a modern multi-racial organisation based on supposed shared values. This decision undoubtedly secured the continued existence of the Commonwealth against the odds with the onset of rapid decolonisation in the post-war period.¹ This article, however, will demonstrate that the subsequent Prime Ministers' Meetings held during the Korean War, especially the 1951 meeting, marked a watershed for the New Commonwealth members – India, Pakistan and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka)² – since they worked together with a common purpose for the first time. Jawaharlal Nehru, Liaquat Ali Khan and Don Stephen (D. S.) Senanayake, the prime ministers of India, Pakistan and Ceylon respectively, had spoken openly on issues that interested their countries at the 1948 and 1949 Prime Ministers' Meetings and had not simply made up the numbers after gaining independence. Yet, even during the divisive constitutional discussions that took place in 1949, a general desire

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– cutting across the Old-New Commonwealth axis – clearly existed to find a mechanism that would permit India to remain a member of the organisation. The talks were thus largely conducted in the cordial, non-confrontational manner that Commonwealth leaders claimed at the time was at the core of the Commonwealth. Indeed, the only significant friction at the first two Prime Ministers' Meetings after the three South Asian members joined the organisation occurred not between the Old and New Commonwealth but between India and Pakistan. This was hardly surprising considering the violence surrounding Partition and their recent war over Kashmir. But, even then, tempers never frayed to breaking point and, as Pallavi Raghavan has emphasised in his excellent revisionist study of the India-Pakistan relationship in this period, animosity between Nehru and Liaquat was kept at bay.³

Nonetheless, it was at the 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting – taking place at the height of the crisis following Chinese intervention in the Korean War when an atomic Third World War appeared to be a real possibility – that the New Commonwealth first stood together and challenged the Old Commonwealth members. To coin the phrase from the 1949 London Declaration, the New Commonwealth thus demonstrated that they could be 'united as free and equal'. Nehru – with the help of Liaquat and,⁴ to a lesser extent, Senanayake – sought to utilise the Prime Ministers' Meeting to influence global events and prevent the United States from having the United Nations (UN) condemn Beijing as an aggressor and impose sanctions that risked escalating the conflict. This New Commonwealth unity created rifts with many of the Old Commonwealth members who, despite also fearing the escalation of the fighting, were much more wary of upsetting Washington. Consequently, the Commonwealth prime ministers engaged in difficult negotiations over what policy they should pursue both towards the United States and at the UN. In the end a compromise position was settled on that helped temporarily delay Beijing being branded an aggressor.

Yet, while the other Commonwealth leaders were satisfied with this outcome, Nehru left London disappointed. His hope of transforming the organisation into a counterweight to the United States had been shown to be groundless but this is not to say that Nehru was completely disillusioned with the Commonwealth after 1951. In the short term, though, during the discussions on the Korean War that took place at the 1952 and 1953 Prime Ministers' Meetings, the New Commonwealth did not make another concerted bid to shape Commonwealth policy. Nehru remained particularly vocal in his criticism of the United States in 1953 but changing circumstances – including the presence of new and less experienced counterparts from Pakistan and Ceylon and the abating of the crisis in Korea – contributed to the relative inactivity of the New Commonwealth at these meetings. Indeed, divisions between the New Commonwealth leaders were again more pronounced than the areas of agreement between them. Still, the Prime Ministers' Meetings during the Korean War had shown that the New Commonwealth members would not always play by the Commonwealth club's unofficial rules of only discussing matters informally and not establishing a collective policy. They were also prepared to challenge the consensus viewpoint when they felt strongly about an issue. And, crucially, this was happening half a decade before the divisive 1956 Suez Crisis and the admission of Malaya and Ghana to the Commonwealth a year later that are commonly seen as crucial to uniting and emboldening the New Commonwealth members.

Yet, despite the growing scholarship on the diplomatic role played by the Commonwealth countries in the Korean War, scant regard has been paid to the three Prime Ministers' Meetings that took place during the Korean War.⁵ The notable exceptions are the works by Robert Barnes, Thomas Hennessey, Ian McGibbon, Graeme Mount, Robert O'Neill, F. H. Soward, and William Stuck.⁶ Still, the sections of these works on the Prime Ministers' Meetings are brief; focus more on the Old Commonwealth prime ministers and gloss over the friction between these leaders and those of the New Commonwealth; and argue that these gatherings did not produce any new proposals to resolve the Korean War. Only Vineet Thakur places Nehru and, to some extent, Liaquat at the centre of events, emphasising their ability to influence Commonwealth policy. But

even Thakur goes into little depth, only covering the 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting while ignoring those in 1952 and 1953 as well as the role played by Senanayake. Thakur also does not consider the broader implications of the New Commonwealth's role during the 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting for the organisation.⁷

Furthermore, while a growing body of work now exists on the Commonwealth in the early post-war period, it remains overwhelmingly focused on the Old Commonwealth and there is a relative dearth of literature focused on the New Commonwealth's relationship with the organisation. Even so, these works pay very little attention to the role played by the New Commonwealth members at Prime Ministers' Meetings. In fact, the only in-depth study of Prime Ministers' Meetings covering the Korean War period is Robert O'Shea's excellent doctoral thesis. But even this work includes little detail regarding the substance of the controversial discussions on Korea and does not highlight the unity displayed by the New Commonwealth members in trying to influence Commonwealth policy.⁸ In addition, Patrick Gordon Walker, the British secretary of state for commonwealth relations between 1950 and 1951, later described the 1951 Prime Ministers Meeting as a 'high point' of Commonwealth cooperation and 'almost an organ of collective policy' with 'continuous and unanimous' messages being sent by the prime ministers to Washington to constrain US policy. But Gordon Walker goes into little detail and pays no special attention to the central role played by the New Commonwealth.⁹ This article, therefore, will fill an unwarranted gap in the literature by examining the Prime Ministers' Meetings during the Korean War in detail and emphasising the extent the New Commonwealth members were able to unite to influence the organisation's approach to the conflict.

Before examining the Prime Ministers' Meetings during the Korean War, though, it is first important to understand the nature of these gatherings that Nehru affectionately described as a 'slightly novel feature in international developments' that he claimed led to 'friendly talks'.¹⁰ Prime Ministers' Meetings – the Commonwealth's flagship events between 1944 and 1969 – had their roots in the periodic Imperial Conferences of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Still, the Prime Ministers' Meetings, held at 10 Downing Street in London on every occasion except one,¹¹ were more informal and intimate than both their predecessors as well as their successors, the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings held in different Commonwealth countries. While Prime Ministers' Meetings also occurred roughly every two years, they did not follow a set pattern and were organised whenever it was agreed that discussion on certain common issues – usually relating to security and economic matters – was desirable and practicable. In theory no issue was off the table and the meetings were structurally flexible with no set constitution. But in practice members' domestic policies and disputes between members were considered *inter se* and not discussed. Moreover, unlike the meetings of other intergovernmental organisations, such as the UN General Assembly, Prime Ministers' Meetings were private affairs and were not intended to make decisions through the adoption of resolutions. Instead, they were designed to establish meaningful and consensual cooperation – reflected in final communiqués – within the Commonwealth 'family'. In addition, at these meetings prime ministers were considered equals but the fact that they were held in London, chaired by the current British prime minister, and organised by Whitehall until the creation of the Commonwealth Secretariat in 1965, ensured that the UK unofficially remained *primus inter pares*.¹²

Furthermore, while rather unique in their familiarity and informality, Prime Ministers' Meetings were another form of international summitry or what David Dunn describes as 'diplomacy at the highest level' and Kjell Engelbrekt calls 'high-table diplomacy'.¹³ Prime Ministers' Meetings provided a platform for Commonwealth leaders, especially those from smaller newly independent countries, to negotiate personally – with few or no advisers present – in the hope of bestowing prestige upon themselves and their nations by influencing the perspectives of their counterparts and shifting the Commonwealth's focus in new directions. As David Reynolds argues, it is 'the epic character of summitry' that entices statesman who see it as the 'the ultimate test' of their 'capacity' as leaders.¹⁴ Similarly, James Cooper writes that world leaders view summits as

opportunities 'to participate at the highest level of politics, surpassing domestic politics and engaging with the historical processes of international diplomacy'.¹⁵ John Young also stresses that successful summits, resulting from good preparations and expert choreography, carry considerable weight if genuine breakthroughs are achieved and provide good publicity for those involved.¹⁶ All these sentiments are just as applicable to the Prime Ministers' Meetings during the Korean War as better-known historical summits. This article, therefore, will borrow Reynolds' three-phase framework for understanding summitry. First, the preparations undertaken by the Commonwealth leaders involved before each Prime Ministers' Meeting will be considered. Second, the dynamics of the negotiations themselves will be analysed in detail. And finally, the subsequent implementation of the decisions taken by the prime ministers in London will be examined.¹⁷

The New Commonwealth and Prime Ministers' Meetings before Korea

It is first necessary, however, to consider the advent of the New Commonwealth and the role played by its leaders at the two Prime Ministers' Meetings before the outbreak of the Korean War. Upon gaining political independence in August 1947 and February 1948 respectively, the governments of India, Pakistan and Ceylon chose to become members of the Commonwealth while Burma did not and became a republic. For Ceylon this process had been largely straightforward. Senanayake, a moderate nationalist and proud anglophile, had willingly accepted Commonwealth membership – as well as a defence agreement with the UK – as a condition of independence. Despite some protests by radical nationalist and Marxist opposition parties, Senanayake and his United National Party saw no contradiction between independence and being a loyal member of the Commonwealth, especially if this helped to secure their small island nation from Indian encroachment. Senanayake was thus deeply devoted to Commonwealth membership and maintaining Ceylon's connection to the British Crown.¹⁸

Nehru, though, had for decades – and for considerably longer than his mentor Mohandas Gandhi – argued that India should become a republic and sever all ties to the British Empire at independence. However, with independence fast approaching after the Second World War both Nehru and Gandhi realised the advantages Commonwealth membership offered India and battled to convince many of their fellow veteran freedom fighters within the Indian National Congress of these. While Nehru maintained close cultural and personal ties with the UK and respected British liberal democratic traditions, the first Indian prime minister, unlike Senanayake and Gandhi, had no sentimental attachment to the Commonwealth and viewed the organisation almost exclusively in terms of India's national interests. For Nehru, Commonwealth membership helped secure trade links within the sterling area and offered something of a defence umbrella. The Commonwealth also provided a forum to enhance India's international standing as an equal to its former colonial master and allowed Nehru to promote Asian issues and his evolving message of non-alignment. Indeed, in the Cold War context Nehru hoped that the Commonwealth could be utilised as a counterbalance to US dominance of the non-Communist world. As a result, once Nehru had gotten his way and India had joined the Commonwealth, he swiftly became one of organisation's most enthusiastic advocates. Nehru particularly endorsed the Prime Ministers' Meetings since they were more intimate and less formal gatherings than the American-dominated public-facing UN General Assembly, allowing those present to express themselves more candidly.¹⁹

In contrast, both Muhammed Ali Jinnah, the long-standing leader of the All-India Muslim League and Pakistan's first Governor-General, and Liaquat, his loyal lieutenant, had for a many years firmly advocated Commonwealth membership. These two leaders were principally concerned with the advantages Commonwealth membership offered Pakistan *vis-à-vis* India. Jinnah and Liaquat realised that at Partition most of the Raj's military assets would go to India and feared that Pakistan's territorial integrity would be threatened. They thus hoped that Commonwealth membership would provide a security guarantee to Pakistan, including facilitating the retention of large numbers of British officers in its army, increase its international status,

especially in Washington, and allow it to keep an eye on India. What is more, Liaquat emphasised the shared history and cultural practices of the Commonwealth countries, claiming that these were stronger than racial ties. For these reasons, Liaquat enthusiastically advocated strengthening Commonwealth political, economic and security ties and emphasised the multiracial character of the organisation.²⁰

The three New Commonwealth prime ministers made their first appearance at the Prime Ministers' Meeting that took place in London in October 1948.²¹ The momentous nature of this occasion was not lost on Nehru who stressed that he had 'long looked forward to the participation of a free India at a meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers' and emphasised that the 'atmosphere of friendship and goodwill' present was more important than 'logical argument'.²² Nevertheless, as the 1948 meetings progressed it became apparent that Nehru was prepared to challenge the majority viewpoint. During discussions on future Commonwealth consultation, Nehru opposed on practical grounds the idea of Commonwealth regional meetings and more frequent personal contacts between prime ministers to discuss specific problems.²³ Nehru also opposed proposals to create regional Commonwealth defence plans to deter Soviet aggression. Nehru argued that the danger of war was not great and that the spread of communism in Asia was the result of poor standards of living and resentment against European imperialism. Moreover, he stressed that India was opposed to both Soviet and American expansionism.²⁴

The New Commonwealth, however, was not a united entity at the 1948 Prime Ministers' Meeting. Liaquat – now the dominant figure in Pakistani politics after Jinnah's death – presented himself as a firm advocate of Commonwealth cooperation, going as far as to support the creation of a permanent Commonwealth organisation in London and emphasising Pakistan's desire for close consultation on defence matters. In fact, with India in mind, Liaquat stated that Pakistan would play its full part in Commonwealth defence and asked if a Commonwealth member was attacked whether all other members would come to its aid even if they were not 'of British stock'. Senanayake also stressed his desire for defence cooperation and stressed that Ceylon would take its 'full share in fighting the cold war'.²⁵ But Senanayake's main priority in 1948 was garnering Commonwealth support for Ceylon's application to join the UN. This had recently been vetoed by the Soviet Union on the grounds that Ceylon was not yet fully independent given its continued security ties to the UK.²⁶ Importantly, Senanayake got what he desired at the meeting and its final communiqué affirmed that Ceylon enjoyed the same sovereign independent status as other Commonwealth members of the UN.²⁷

The initial presence of the New Commonwealth members, therefore, despite some differences of opinion between themselves, indicated that they would acquiesce to the standard practice at Prime Ministers' Meetings of friendly discussion without agreeing to anything resembling a Commonwealth policy. Indeed, O'Shea emphasised that the most remarkable aspect of the 1948 Prime Ministers' Meeting was that Nehru and Liaquat willingly discussed defence matters together at the same time that their countries were fighting each other in Kashmir.²⁸ Notably, though, the 1948 Prime Ministers' Meeting also witnessed the beginning of an informal two-tier system operating at Prime Ministers' Meetings where certain issues would be discussed outside of the main meetings without the New Commonwealth members. In the 1950s this became the case over defence matters but in 1948 it specifically concerned Ireland's imminent departure from the Commonwealth.²⁹ The Irish government had already declared that it had ceased to be a Commonwealth member and was on the verge of becoming a republic. Yet, while Old Commonwealth representatives met informally at Chequers to discuss this matter, the New Commonwealth prime ministers were not invited on the grounds that they had no background in this long-standing issue.

Still, like Ireland, India was inexorably moving towards becoming a republic. Nehru, despite much domestic opposition, however, still wanted India to remain in the Commonwealth for the political, economic, and strategic benefits membership appeared to entail. This question thus posed the greatest challenge to the Commonwealth to date since if India left the organisation,

it was feared that all New Commonwealth members would eventually leave and other colonies on gaining independence would not join. At the same time, in many Old Commonwealth countries the Crown connection remained sacrosanct. A special Prime Ministers' Meeting, therefore, was held in April 1949 to resolve this issue. From the outset Nehru campaigned hard to find a solution to the Indian membership question acceptable to all.³⁰ Interestingly, he received significant support from the prime minister of the UK, Clement Attlee, the Canadian secretary of state for external affairs, Lester Pearson, and the Afrikaner nationalist prime minister of South Africa, Dr Daniël François (D. F.) Malan, at the time at loggerheads with Nehru over the treatment of the Indian population in South Africa, who also aspired for his country to become a republic within the Commonwealth. Liaquat and Senanayake, though, joined those Old Commonwealth members, particularly Australia and New Zealand, that argued that nothing be done to weaken allegiance to the Crown for those members that desired to keep it.

Consequently, Nehru proposed that the meeting issue a declaration emphasising the continued allegiance to the King of all the other members while emphasising India's new status as a republic and acceptance of the King as symbol of the Commonwealth. However, Nehru made it clear that he did not want the King to be described as 'Head of the Commonwealth' in the declaration since many in India would question whether they were truly a republic and fully independent. Even so, almost all the other prime ministers were adamant that the phrase 'Head of the Commonwealth' needed to be retained. As a result, Nehru proposed that the wording in the declaration be changed to 'Head of Commonwealth as Symbol of Free Association'. He argued that this would limit the 'headship' to being the 'symbol' and not imply any authority on the part of the King. This formula proved acceptable to the other prime ministers albeit grudgingly. Even Liaquat, who could have made life much more difficult for Nehru if he had wanted to, acquiesced on the condition that it be put on record that if it proved necessary for a member - namely Pakistan - to become a republic but wished to continue membership under conditions identical to those of India, they would be accorded the same treatment. The other prime ministers immediately agreed to this condition although Senanayake made it clear that Ceylon had no intention of becoming a republic.³¹

The modern multiracial Commonwealth was thus conceived with the 1949 London Declaration, and the precedent had been set for future republican members to join the organisation after independence.³² What is more, these difficult negotiations had been carried out in an atmosphere of general cooperation and compromise. Crucially, Nehru had played by the rules and worked tirelessly both in the formal discussions and outside of them to find a solution that worked for all parties. Inevitably, his efforts had met opposition from some Old Commonwealth members. But Liaquat and Senanayake had been just as, if not more, obstructive. Evidently, therefore, while the Commonwealth as an organisation had been irrevocably altered in 1949, the New Commonwealth as a grouping still only existed in name and there were few indications before the outbreak of the Korean War that it would soon seek to work as a cohesive unit to shape Commonwealth policy at Prime Ministers' Meetings. The New Commonwealth members remained fundamentally divided and nothing in the late 1940s had forced them to overcome their differences.

The 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting

The 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting, however, firmly indicated for the first time that the New Commonwealth members could, when their interests aligned, work together. In particular, after his success at the 1949 Prime Ministers' Meeting, Nehru felt emboldened when the Commonwealth leaders next gathered in London at the height of the Korean crisis. The Korean War had erupted on 25 June 1950 following North Korea's invasion of the South. After a very testing start, fortunes had then shifted dramatically in favour of the UN forces in mid-September following daring amphibious landings at Inchon. However, in November, just as the military victory over North

Korea neared completion, approximately 300,000 Chinese troops launched a devastating offensive that led to the UN Command withdrawing in chaotic scenes to south of the 38th parallel. In response, there were loud American calls, including by General Douglas MacArthur, the Commander of the UN forces, for the use of atomic bombs against the People's Republic of China (PRC) as well as for Beijing to be branded an aggressor at the UN. This situation then intensified massively following the Chinese New Year's Eve Offensive across the 38th parallel when it appeared that the UN Command would be pushed off the peninsula. The winter crisis of 1950–1 thus marked the gravest threat to global peace since the Second World War.

The United States' allies, especially the Commonwealth members with their close ties to Washington and as contributors to the UN forces in Korea,³³ as discussed in greater detail in the other articles in this special edition, were thus thrust into the position of trying to constrain the Western superpower and avert a global war. In early December Attlee – with the backing of the Commonwealth and many Western European countries – had flown to Washington after Truman had infamously suggested in a press conference that the use of atomic bombs was under active consideration. What is more, Truman implied that the decision to use these weapons would be decided by MacArthur whom the Commonwealth leaders all viewed as a warmonger and blamed for China's intervention in the conflict. But at this meeting Attlee had only gained vague assurances that the United States would seek to limit the war to Korea, not abandon the peninsula unless forced out, and try to consult the UK before utilising atomic bombs. Much of the Commonwealth members' efforts, therefore, were focused at the UN where their delegations sought to prevent, or at least delay, adoption of the US aggressor resolution. However, the January 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting presented a unique opportunity to try to coordinate Commonwealth policy. Nehru recognised this during the preparations for the meeting, writing to Attlee almost a fortnight before negotiations commenced of his great concern at the seemingly inevitable drift towards world war. Nehru then attacked the United States' 'utter lack of understanding' of conditions in Asia, especially its attitude towards the PRC that had merely antagonised Beijing. He also warned that any escalatory measures against the PRC, especially the use of atomic weapons, would likely be militarily ineffective and only 'embitter people's minds' in Asia. Consequently, Nehru argued that the Prime Ministers' Meeting must frankly consider all steps to prevent catastrophe and persuade Washington 'to take a more realistic view'. He believed that this could only be achieved if the Commonwealth 'spoke firmly and together'.³⁴

Nehru clearly had grand – if somewhat unrealistic – ambitions to launch a personal crusade at the Prime Ministers' Meeting to both find a means to end the fighting in Korea and resolve other outstanding Cold War issues in East Asia. In fact, that same day he wrote to the Indian ambassador in Beijing, K. M. Panikkar, stressing that India would use the meeting 'to work for peace' and 'seek to enlist support of all Commonwealth countries for this purpose'. Nehru thus instructed Panikkar to find out if the PRC would accept a ceasefire in Korea followed immediately by negotiations on Korean reunification and the future of Taiwan based on the 1943 Cairo and 1945 Potsdam declarations that returned the island to China after the defeat of Japan. Nehru viewed this as an 'entirely reasonable' basis for a settlement.³⁵ Furthermore, before arriving in London, Nehru made several public statements emphasising the importance of the Prime Ministers' Meeting in averting war and finding a lasting peace. In this way Nehru had tied his own and India's prestige to achieving a result in London.³⁶

Nevertheless, the omens for united New Commonwealth action were not good. Just days before the 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting commenced Liaquat made his attendance conditional on the question of Kashmir being placed on the agenda and formally discussed with all the prime ministers.³⁷ Since the First Kashmir War (1947–9) Liaquat's confidence in the Commonwealth had been undermined since his repeated calls for the Commonwealth to mediate the dispute and lobbying for a defence commitment if India resumed fighting had met a muted response. And, despite still recognising the practical benefits of Commonwealth membership for Pakistan, he had made it increasingly clear that Pakistan's enthusiasm for the organisation was not

unconditional.³⁸ Liaquat's even firmer stance in 1951 placed Attlee in a difficult position since the agenda for Prime Ministers' Meetings was determined by common agreement but Nehru, while willing to hold informal talks with two or three other prime ministers, refused to discuss Kashmir formally with all the Commonwealth prime ministers. In addition, Attlee was wary that a dangerous precedent would be set if the Commonwealth practice of *inter se* was ignored and a dispute between two members was formally discussed. Besides, the South Africa government had made it clear that it was unwilling to discuss Kashmir since this issue did not directly affect them and only risked further antagonising their relations with India.³⁹ Still, Attlee went ahead and proposed to Liaquat that purely informal talks be held on Kashmir but the Pakistani Prime Minister claimed he 'saw no advantage' attending the meeting, not even to discuss Korea, if the Commonwealth premiers refused to discuss Kashmir even informally.⁴⁰ Additionally, Senanayake gave no indication before the Prime Ministers' Meeting that he desired to utilise it to find a solution to the Korean crisis. Indeed, Ceylon's membership of the UN remained blocked by Moscow and so Senanayake had less interest in the conflict than any other Commonwealth prime minister. Senanayake's priority while in London was, in fact, negotiating the details of the UK-Ceylon Defence Agreement to maintain a British military presence on the island at the minimum cost to Ceylon. He thus hoped to avoid getting embroiled in controversial discussions on Korea.⁴¹

Consequently, when negotiations at the Prime Ministers' Meeting commenced on 4 January 1951 on what Attlee described as the 'very grave world situation', Nehru responded first to the British prime minister's calls for the Commonwealth to make a 'concerted effort' to give a 'very valuable lead to the world'. Nehru stressed that the emergence of the PRC as an integrated and centralised power was 'one of the most important events of the century' and had changed the balance of power in Asia. As a result, the only realistic policy, unlike that of president of the United States, Harry Truman, was recognising this fact and making it clear that the Soviet Union was 'not the only possible friend to whom China could look'. Nehru also revealed that Panikkar had been told by Zhou Enlai, the Chinese premier, that the PRC hoped that the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting 'might help to ensure the preservation of peace in Asia'. Nehru emphasised, therefore, the importance of the Prime Ministers' Meeting in convincing Washington to abandon its aggressor resolution at the UN that would 'bring the world close to world war'.⁴²

Nehru's comments, however, met a mixed response from the Old Commonwealth representatives. The prime minister of Canada, Louis St Laurent, was the most enthusiastic, stressing the need to listen to India as a leading Asian power, and agreeing that the best policy to avoid legitimate national aspirations in Asia being exploited by Moscow was to preserve cordial relations with the Asian great powers, including the PRC. Even so, St Laurent maintained that Beijing had committed aggression in Korea and only hoped to avoid early action on this issue.⁴³ In addition, the British secretary of state for foreign affairs, Ernest Bevin, while also recognising the PRC as an aggressor 'in an ordinary sense', agreed with Nehru that Beijing was not a satellite of Moscow and that the Commonwealth 'could exercise an important moral influence' to find a solution avoiding the risk of escalation. Bevin, though, warned that great care had to be taken by the meeting to avoid undermining the United States given its heavy military responsibilities in Korea.⁴⁴

In contrast, the prime minister of Australia, Robert Menzies, the prime minister of New Zealand, Sydney Holland, and the South African minister of the interior, Theophilus Ebenhaezer (T. E.) Dönges, present in Malan's absence, were much more critical of Nehru's approach. While they all supported making a concerted Commonwealth effort to preserve peace, they stressed that Chinese aggression needed to be recognised to preserve the effectiveness of UN collective security. More importantly, they were extremely wary of taking any action that risked unity between the Commonwealth and the United States. Instead, they called for the Prime Ministers' Meeting to demonstrate solidarity with the Truman administration during this crisis given the Commonwealth's dependency on American support in any future war. Otherwise, they feared that Washington would return to isolationism.⁴⁵

Notably at this early stage, Senanayake also adopted a position more in line with these Old Commonwealth members than that of Nehru. Senanayake thought that the Commonwealth should act in unison but focus on how to bring Moscow and Beijing to 'think less about world domination'. He also stressed that the Commonwealth should do nothing to undermine the United States' position and only seek to influence Washington's policy through persuasion and not by denying them support and sympathy. Still, despite emphasising that Ceylon was not a UN member and had not sent forces to Korea, Senanayake thought it essential that the UN take no action that escalated the conflict.⁴⁶

Now that the cleavages between the Commonwealth members had been exposed Bevin took it upon himself to table a memorandum proposing a solution that he hoped both Old and New Commonwealth members could rally behind. His memorandum called for an immediate ceasefire in Korea and the creation of a safety belt between the two armies followed by the phased withdrawal of all non-Korean forces to gradually enlarge this safety belt. At the same time, North and South Korean forces would be disarmed. Meanwhile, the PRC would be invited to become a member of the existing United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK) or a new commission that would assume responsibility for the interim civil administration of Korea before supervising nationwide elections to establish a unified Korean government. As a sop to Nehru, Bevin also suggested that the PRC be granted representation at the UN and that a UN commission be established to study the fate of Taiwan and make recommendations for a final solution based on the 1943 Cairo Declaration.

Nonetheless, before Bevin's memorandum was discussed all the Commonwealth representatives, including Nehru, agreed they needed time and that the upcoming debate on Korea in the General Assembly needed to be postponed preventing the US aggressor resolution being adopted before the Prime Ministers' Meeting could influence events. It was thus agreed that all Commonwealth officials in New York and Washington be instructed to seek to delay discussions in the First Committee for at least a week. O'Shea writes that this decision represented 'the very sort of formal decisions the Prime Ministers' Conferences claimed not to make.'⁴⁷ Still, this was as far as agreement went once attention shifted to Bevin's proposals since the Old Commonwealth leaders – except St Laurent who maintained the importance of accommodating both India and the PRC – thought it went too far in appeasing Nehru. Menzies stressed that Australia had not yet recognised the PRC – despite admitting that Beijing did represent the true government of China, not Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist '*émigré* regime' on Taiwan – and that it would be difficult to argue for admission of the PRC to the UN 'on their act of aggression'. Dönges was even more emphatic on this last point stating that it would be 'tantamount to offering a reward for aggression'. Instead, he suggested that Bevin's proposals be taken in stages with Chinese reaction to the proposals on Korea being assessed before any action was taken regarding Chinese representation at the UN and Taiwan.⁴⁸ Nehru, however, argued that Beijing would reject a staged approach since similar proposals had already unsuccessfully been made by the UN Ceasefire Committee established earlier in the crisis. Moreover, Nehru felt that there was too much detail in Bevin's proposals regarding the Korean settlement that would lead to disagreements.⁴⁹ Consequently, Nehru tabled his own memorandum stripping back Bevin's proposals on Korea while reinforcing the commitment to return Taiwan.⁵⁰

While the Prime Ministers' Meeting considered these proposals, though, the battlefield situation in Korea was becoming increasingly dire with the Chinese offensive capturing significant territory in South Korea and inflicting heavy losses upon the UN Command. MacArthur even recommended that UN forces be withdrawn from the peninsula as rapidly as possible before atomic bombs were dropped on the PRC. This strategy gained widespread support within Congress and amongst the American public and US pressure at the UN for action swiftly mounted. In consequence, Pearson from New York expressed his exasperation repeatedly by telegram to St Laurent and in his own diary at the deliberations in London. Pearson and the other members of the UN Ceasefire Committee – Sir Benegal Rau of India and Nasrollah Entezam of Iran – had been

formulating a set of 'ceasefire principles' that they wanted to table in the General Assembly to prevent, or at least delay, adoption of the US aggressor resolution. Pearson was thus 'mystified' with the Commonwealth leaders' attempts to substitute these principles with another set of proposals. Furthermore, he warned that Bevin's and Nehru's memoranda would be less acceptable to Washington than the principles since they would be seen as rewarding Chinese aggression. He also believed that any delay would result in the Truman administration losing its patience with the Commonwealth and proceeding with its aggressor resolution. Pearson argued that the principles should be tabled immediately and was deeply critical of Nehru for refusing to allow Rau to endorse these while he pursued his goals in London.⁵¹

Nevertheless, the US government realised the importance of carrying the Commonwealth with it and on 7 January the General Assembly agreed to postpone debate on Korea for a few days while the Commonwealth deliberations in London took place. Resultingly, Pearson pressed the Prime Ministers' Meeting to use this short window to either amend the existing principles or formulate an alternative proposal. If this was not possible, he warned that the Ceasefire Committee would have to abandon its principles, leaving the way open for the aggressor resolution.⁵² The following day, however, Nehru made his boldest bid yet at the Prime Ministers' Meeting. He reported that Panikkar had been told that the Chinese government already knew of the Ceasefire Committee's principles and found them unacceptable since they favoured the American position. Additionally, Beijing had indicated that it would only agree to a Korean ceasefire after the PRC had been admitted to the UN and the Cairo and Potsdam declarations regarding Taiwan had been reaffirmed. Nehru, therefore, emphatically questioned the importance of keeping in step with the United States when the Truman administration's policies were contrary to what the Commonwealth 'believed to be right'. Instead, he urged his colleagues to persuade the United States to conform to the Commonwealth's viewpoint and abandon the aggressor resolution that, at best, would prevent negotiations with the PRC and, at worst, might lead to global war and the end of the UN.⁵³

Crucially, with the Korean crisis intensifying, Nehru's position was shared by the other New Commonwealth leaders who, for the first time, adopted a collective voice at a Prime Ministers' Meeting. During the first day of the meeting Nehru had accepted a proposal tabled by Attlee and Menzies that some of the prime ministers join with Nehru and Liaquat in informal talks about the Kashmir question. As a result, a telegram was sent to Liaquat regretting his absence 'at this critical moment'.⁵⁴ With his point made, the prime minister of Pakistan had readily conceded, partly in realisation he was missing out on the important discussions on Korea, and soon arrived in London.⁵⁵ And significantly, despite their bitter animosity over Kashmir, Liaquat revealed that he essentially agreed with his Indian rival on Korea. Liaquat argued that the only possibility of preventing war was to bring the Americans and Chinese to the conference table. He thus suggested that a simple resolution be put forward recommending that representatives of the United States, the UK, the Soviet Union, and the PRC negotiate at the earliest moment to resolve all outstanding East Asian issues, including Korea, Taiwan, and Chinese representation at the UN. Liaquat also believed that the Commonwealth should go as far as possible with the Truman administration but could 'not afford to plunge into everything they proposed without being sure of the consequences'.⁵⁶ In addition, Senanayake, who had purposefully remained quiet in the Korean talks since the first session of the meeting, was now more vigorous in his view that the aggressor resolution should be opposed. He also welcomed Liaquat's proposal for a great power conference to resolve outstanding issues.⁵⁷ The three New Commonwealth leaders were now evidently working in concert, in spite of limited contact with each other, to utilise the Prime Ministers' Meeting to find an alternative solution to avert a wider conflict.

Yet, the New Commonwealth's views were not shared by the Old Commonwealth representatives. While they remained concerned about the aggressor resolution, fears were mounting that American attitudes were hardening and that a split with the Commonwealth might occur.

Holland, Dönges, and Eric Harrison, the Australian Resident Minister in London present while Menzies was suffering from influenza, predictably opposed making any proposals that might offend Washington. More significantly, Bevin and St Laurent, the two Commonwealth leaders most willing to appease Nehru and break with the Old Commonwealth, had clearly been affected by Pearson's warnings as well as reports from their embassies in Washington. Bevin and St Laurent thus suggested that the Commonwealth simply support the Ceasefire Committee's principles since the Truman administration had indicated that it would support these as an interim step.⁵⁸ The very next day Bevin, though, changed tact again, buoyed by the news that the General Assembly had agreed to a further short postponement of the debate on Korea. As a result, he was convinced that Washington was looking to the Prime Ministers' Meeting for a fresh move. In consequence, Bevin urged his counterparts to swiftly agree to a proposal – relating to a public statement by Truman from the previous evening stressing that the president of the United States was prepared to negotiate with any party ready for discussion – calling upon China to withdraw from Korea; expressing 'disapproval' of China's intervention in terms 'sufficiently condemnatory to secure US support but without branding China an aggressor'; and proposing that representatives of the United States, the UK, the Soviet Union, France and 'any other powers the General Assembly cared to invite' to meet with Chinese representatives to discuss all outstanding East Asian questions.⁵⁹

Bevin's compromise proposal, however, could not close the gap between the Old and New Commonwealth leaders. Holland was the most enthusiastic but St Laurent, Dönges, and Harrison were worried that it would be rejected by the Truman administration on the grounds that it implied recognition of the PRC. Moreover, Liaquat warned that it was crucial to get Chinese as well as American acquiescence and that recent military successes would not make Beijing more desirous of a negotiated settlement. He also reiterated his view that a resolution should do no more than invite the four powers to meet in a conference to discuss outstanding issues. Importantly for New Commonwealth unity, Nehru strongly endorsed Liaquat's view, stating that there was 'no point framing resolutions assigning responsibility for past events'. Nehru argued that since the Ceasefire Committee's principles, including no condemnation of China, were acceptable to the United States, it could be assumed Washington would not insist on a condemnatory resolution. Nehru also stressed that failure to mention Taiwan would make the resolution unacceptable to Beijing but any resolution affirming the Cairo and Potsdam declarations would be resisted by the United States. Nehru thus thought that Liaquat's less detailed resolution provided the answer.⁶⁰

Despite these differing perspectives, the Prime Ministers' Meeting agreed that Bevin should instruct the British embassy in Washington and delegation at the UN to ascertain whether the United States would support a resolution on the lines favoured by the New Commonwealth. Consequently, Bevin's telegrams to Washington and New York stressed the Commonwealth's 'unanimous agreement' that the central objective was to get the US and Chinese governments to the conference table and that the invitation must be presented to have best prospects of securing the attendance of both. Bevin claimed that the Prime Ministers' Meeting agreed that a resolution should contain little more than a strong request for the four big powers to meet to consider outstanding East Asian questions in conformity with existing international obligations. Still, Bevin concluded by reiterating how anxious the Commonwealth was 'to avoid making the position of the [Truman] Administration more difficult' and that the Prime Ministers' Meeting was willing to revise its proposals to make them more acceptable to US public opinion.⁶¹

In the meantime, Pearson and Rau had grudgingly revised the Ceasefire Committee's principles to bring them into line with the views emanating from London.⁶² The revised principles stated that an immediate ceasefire needed to be agreed. This would be followed by the establishment of a free and united Korea based on free popular elections and the withdrawal of all non-Korean forces. Additionally, as soon as a ceasefire had been arranged the General Assembly

would appoint a committee, with the United States, the UK, the Soviet Union, and the PRC represented, with a view to achieving a settlement of all East Asian questions, including Taiwan and Chinese representation at the UN.⁶³ Pearson was optimistic that these revised principles would go far towards reassuring Beijing and stressed to St Laurent that the United States would support them provided Nehru authorised Rau to sponsor them.⁶⁴ Yet, in the early hours of 11 January a clearly tired and exasperated Nehru sought to influence the Prime Ministers' Meeting from the margins, writing to Attlee that there was 'no point whatever in proceeding with these "principles"' since Beijing would not accept them. Instead, Nehru maintained that to achieve peace Beijing's legitimate claims to Taiwan and its seat at the UN needed to be recognised. Nehru also argued that the 'only difficulty' was the United States and that it would be a 'fatal error' and 'show of weakness' on the Commonwealth's part to follow what it considered the wrong policy to avoid disagreement with Washington. In contrast, the Commonwealth members needed to show the Truman administration 'in all friendliness' that they would not give up their position. Otherwise, Nehru warned that American policy would lead them into 'further entanglements'. Nehru concluded that it would be a 'great pity' if the Prime Ministers' Meeting ended without producing results.⁶⁵

At the formal sessions later that day, however, all the Old Commonwealth representatives, despite some reservation, indicated that they would back the Ceasefire Committee's principles. Significantly, now that breaking point had been reached Liaquat and Senanayake quietly consented to this position, seemingly content that they had helped to get the principles revised. Nehru, though, remained torn since, while he was prepared to accept the principles, he argued it was no good putting forward proposals that he knew would be unacceptable to Beijing and opened the way for the US aggressor resolution. Even so, the Old Commonwealth representatives had clearly lost patience with the prime minister of India and stressed that speculation of what would follow rejection by Beijing could not profitably be discussed. They simply agreed that if a rejection came 'the whole question must be reconsidered' and they would not be tied to approving the aggressor resolution. As a result, the Prime Ministers' Meeting agreed that instructions be sent to the Commonwealth delegations in New York to vote in favour of the revised principles while pointing out their continued anxieties over whether they would be acceptable to the PRC.⁶⁶

Consequently, the next day Pearson introduced the revised principles in the General Assembly, and they were immediately approved by a massive majority.⁶⁷ Most of the Commonwealth representatives in London were pleased that they had contributed to at least temporarily delaying passage of the US aggressor resolution. Yet, Nehru was clearly frustrated that they had not gone far enough in assuaging Chinese concerns and had focused on mollifying the United States. Nehru's despondency came to the fore during the final couple of days of the Prime Ministers' Meeting when he argued that the declaration to be issued at the end of the meeting should recognise the PRC's just claims and not praise US policies since these formed 'the principal danger at present.'⁶⁸ With their main issues resolved, though, neither the Old nor the other New Commonwealth representatives were prepared to make major concessions to Nehru. The prime minister of India, therefore, grudgingly accepted a more anodyne declaration penned by Menzies calling for peace, affirming the Commonwealth's hope that the great powers would compose their differences at the conference table, confirming the Commonwealth's desire to cooperate fully with the United States, and offering a frank exchange of views with Stalin and Mao.⁶⁹

Still, in the immediate wake of the 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting there was consensus that it had played a positive role, and this was initially reflected in the implementation of the decisions taken. In particular, the New Commonwealth members believed that they had exercised some influence. Senanayake reported to the Ceylon Parliament that on Korea the meeting had had 'some salutary influence' on the General Assembly debate.⁷⁰ In addition, Nehru wrote to Panikkar that his presence had 'helped greatly' in making the other Commonwealth leaders, particularly Attlee, Bevin, and St Laurent, 'realise the importance of coming to an agreement with China'. But

Nehru criticised the other Old Commonwealth leaders for being 'anxious not to break with the United States or to drive the United States into isolation'. Even so, he was pleased that the United States, despite 'suffering from mass hysteria', had supported the revised principles and tacitly recognised the PRC as a great power. Nehru, therefore, remained hopeful of a settlement provided Beijing took no false steps such as 'bare rejection' of the principles.⁷¹ What the New Commonwealth leaders did not highlight, though, is that their voices had been amplified at the 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting by working together to pressure the Old Commonwealth members to compromise.

The 1952 Prime Ministers' Economic Conference and 1953 Prime Ministers' Meeting

Within a week, however, Nehru's hopes that the fighting might end were shattered and his disappointment with the Commonwealth soon mounted.⁷² On 17 January, with military fortunes still appearing to be on its side, Beijing rejected the ceasefire principles. As such, the Truman administration pressed ahead with its aggressor resolution. Under intense pressure from Washington, one by one the Old Commonwealth members fell into line. In contrast, India and Pakistan, with Ceylon absent from the UN, worked with their Arab-Asian counterparts to table an alternative resolution based on a Chinese proposal for a conference involving both great and small powers, to first agree a Korean ceasefire before resolving all East Asian questions. Nonetheless, this Arab-Asian resolution was firmly rejected while the US aggressor resolution was adopted on 1 February by a considerable majority. Consequently, Nehru publicly stated that he had supported the Prime Ministers' Meeting's declaration but subsequently felt let down by the Old Commonwealth countries who 'did not fully cooperate' in implementing what had been agreed earlier at the UN. Clearly, Nehru's belief in the Commonwealth and his ability to influence Prime Ministers' Meetings had been shaken.⁷³ At the same time, Liaquat's enthusiasm for the Commonwealth further diminished at the 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting but this had nothing to do with the Korean discussions. He was bitterly annoyed that no formal deliberations on Kashmir had taken place, especially since only one informal meeting had been held in Menzies' suite at the Savoy Hotel that had failed to produce any results since, while he had accepted the various proposals put forward, Nehru rejected all of them.⁷⁴

By this time, however, the winter crisis in Korea was abating. The Chinese advance soon petered out south of Seoul as its forces outran their supply lines. At the same time, Lieutenant-General Matthew Ridgway, recently appointed to command the US Eighth Army, restored the morale of his battered troops and launched a series of successful counteroffensives taking full advantage of the UN Command's aerial and artillery advantage to inflict heavy losses on the enemy. In addition, after MacArthur was relieved of his commands by Truman on the grounds of insubordination on 11 April all the Commonwealth governments were less worried about the conflict escalating. Moreover, while Beijing rejected further overtures to negotiate a ceasefire, the UN did little more than impose a limited economic embargo against China. With the battlefield then stabilising near the 38th parallel after the failure of the Chinese Spring Offensive in late April and May, the Soviet Union informally called for military ceasefire negotiations in June that Washington duly accepted. These talks began in July but by early 1952 had become deadlocked over the fate of prisoners of war. Initially, the Old Commonwealth members had supported Truman's insistence on the principle of non-forcible repatriation for prisoners who would violently resist returning to the PRC or North Korea. But as the costly war of attrition dragged on the Commonwealth governments began to lose patience with Washington's handling of the negotiations and refusal to allow its allies to play any part. When the General Assembly met in the autumn of 1952, therefore, the Commonwealth delegations, especially those of India, the UK, and Canada, worked extremely closely to try to find a means to resolve the prisoner-of-war issue. This took the form of the so-called Indian Resolution adopted on 3 December with

overwhelming support, including reluctantly by the Truman administration, that created a Neutral Nations Repatriation Committee to decide the fate of prisoners after a ceasefire.

Coincidentally, the 1952 Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Economic Conference had opened just a few days earlier. Unlike in 1951, though, the Commonwealth leaders gathered in London had not come prepared to discuss Korea and did not attempt to influence the simultaneous deliberations at the UN. This was largely because the Indian Resolution had already been adopted by the First Committee and simply needed to be rubber-stamped by the General Assembly. In addition, this special conference – as opposed to a standard Prime Ministers' Meeting – focused almost exclusively on economic matters, specifically the strengthening of the sterling area and the reduction of imperial preference. Furthermore, there was no impetus amongst the New Commonwealth members to push the agenda and reopen negotiations on Korea. To begin with, Nehru, the main driving force in 1951, was not present at the Economic Conference. The official reason for his absence was that Nehru could not visit London while the Indian Parliament was in session and he had important domestic issues to attend to. Nehru also thought it more appropriate that the Indian minister of finance, Shri Chintaman Deshmukh, attend in his stead.⁷⁵ Nehru may also still have been smarting from the previous Prime Ministers' Meeting. In addition, both Pakistan and Ceylon had relatively new and inexperienced prime ministers who were far more concerned with domestic issues than Korea. Sir Khwaja Nazimuddin had stepped down as governor-general to replace Liaquat as the prime minister of Pakistan in October 1951 after the latter's assassination. But Nazimuddin's premiership was dogged by rioting in East Pakistan over the official use of the Bengali language. Also, Dudley Senanayake had been appointed prime minister of Ceylon in a wave of emotion following his father's death in a freak horse-riding accident in March 1952. Yet, Dudley Senanayake was preoccupied with Ceylon's dire economic problems caused by a steep drop in global rubber prices as well as food shortages.

Nevertheless, while the Economic Conference did not formally discuss Korea, on 4 December, the day after the adoption of the Indian Resolution, a special British Cabinet meeting was held including all the Commonwealth representatives present in London. This meeting covered a whole range of global issues although the discussions concerning Korea dominated. Anthony Eden, the British secretary of state for foreign affairs since Winston Churchill's Conservatives had been returned to power in October 1951, took the lead focusing on his own role at the General Assembly helping to formulate the Indian Resolution with his Commonwealth counterparts. Eden also outlined his informal discussions with the president-elect of the United States, General Dwight Eisenhower, who had assured him that 'one of his chief aims was to co-operate with the Commonwealth'. The secretary of state for foreign affairs had thus concluded that it was unlikely that Eisenhower would undertake a major military operation in Korea since this would need additional American divisions which would be politically difficult. Eden believed, therefore, that the Commonwealth's priorities were to cooperate with Washington and seek to divide Beijing and Moscow.⁷⁶

In the discussion that followed the Old Commonwealth representatives largely limited their comments to insisting that the fighting not be extended beyond Korea and praising Eden for helping secure adoption of the Indian Resolution. In fact, only St Laurent made a point of singling out India for the success of its initiative at the UN. Deshmukh, however, warned that the situation in Korea continued to give India 'cause for grave anxiety' and he believed that there was no alternative but to 'persevere on the lines' of the Indian Resolution. Furthermore, in a noticeable shift in tone from Nehru's stance in 1951, Deshmukh stressed that India 'had fewer illusions than was sometimes supposed' about Beijing's policies. There was no indication at this meeting, though, that the New Commonwealth leaders were united and sought to influence Commonwealth opinion. Dudley Senanayake remained silent while Nazimuddin questioned whether the Indian Resolution could bring the Korean War to an end. Indeed, indicative of Pakistan's westward shift in the Cold War in the hope of gaining an American security guarantee, Nazimuddin warned that the Soviet Union had weakened the Western powers through its proxy wars, including Korea, and urged them to consolidate their forces 'to offer a more effective resistance if aggression should come'.⁷⁷

What was clear during the 1952 Economic Conference was that all the Commonwealth representatives present hoped that the Indian Resolution would bear fruit, no future negotiations on Korea would be necessary, and no further decisions would need to be implemented. Yet, just three days after the Economic Conference closed, Beijing rejected the Indian Resolution, stating that it opposed any solution that brought the fighting to an end before the fate of the prisoners was resolved. As a result, the ceasefire negotiations remained deadlocked into 1953 while the incoming Eisenhower administration considered strategies to bring about a military solution. The essential breakthrough came, however, after Stalin's death on 5 March. This development allowed the new war-weary Soviet leadership, as well as Mao, to accept resumed armistice talks based on the terms of the Indian Resolution.

Despite heavy fighting continuing along the 38th parallel as both sides sought to negotiate from a position of strength, a ceasefire appeared imminent when the 1953 Prime Ministers' Meeting commenced in early June. This meeting had been called to coincide with the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II when it was expected that all Commonwealth prime ministers would be in London. Yet, for Nehru attendance at the coronation was controversial now India was a republic. Nehru, therefore, publicly stressed that he was going to London principally for the Prime Ministers' Meeting as part of his efforts to conclude the Korean War.⁷⁸ Before the 1953 Prime Ministers' Meeting the Commonwealth leaders thus prepared themselves to discuss what part they could play in helping to facilitate an end to the fighting.

Nonetheless, when the Prime Ministers' Meeting began on 3 June, the day after the coronation, negotiations focused squarely on the aftermath of the war. Specifically, Churchill stressed that he was impressed by Moscow's change in external policy since Stalin's death and believed that there was no risk trying to ascertain if the Soviet Union truly sought to establish peaceful coexistence with the West. The Old Commonwealth prime ministers then backed Churchill to seek agreement at the upcoming Bermuda Conference with Eisenhower and the prime minister of France, Joseph Laniel, for a summit with the Soviet Union.⁷⁹ Interestingly, though, while Nehru agreed on the desirability of a conference, he anticipated difficulties convincing the Eisenhower administration since his recent discussions with the secretary of state of the United States, John Foster Dulles, had given him the impression that Washington thought waging peace would be more difficult than continuing the Cold War. Indeed, Nehru sympathised with Soviet and Chinese demands for evidence of American good faith, such as the PRC's admission to the UN. On this last point, however, Churchill stressed that there needed to be an interval following the conclusion of the Korean War and it was wrong to press the United States on this issue for the time being given it had borne the burden of the fighting in Korea.⁸⁰

The following day the Prime Ministers' Meeting focused more specifically on Korea. With Eden seriously ill at the time, the minister of state for foreign affairs, Selwyn Lloyd, led off focusing on the political conference to settle the future status of the Korean peninsula envisaged in the draft armistice agreement. Lloyd thought that to have a useful outcome, the Soviet Union, the PRC, North and South Korea would have to be represented but thought that unification was 'hardly practicable in the immediate future'. Lloyd also stressed that the Communist powers thought that the conference should discuss all East Asian problems while the United States opposed this. He thus thought it best to wait and see how the conference developed and whether it was a suitable forum to discuss Chinese representation at the UN. The Old Commonwealth prime ministers essentially agreed with Lloyd's viewpoint, but Nehru argued that the political conference was the best place to decide on the ultimate fate of non-repatriate prisoners of war. Furthermore, Nehru was 'much embarrassed' by pressure from both sides to send an Indian force into South Korea to take custody of these prisoners while their fate was decided. But he stressed that India was 'prepared to play her part'. Finally, Nehru was concerned that if the truce negotiations broke down that the United States would resort to increased military operations.⁸¹

Nevertheless, Nehru was largely isolated at the 1953 Prime Ministers' Meeting since his New Commonwealth colleagues remained quiet on Korea. Despite later claiming that he had adopted

‘an uncompromising Asian attitude’ in London, Dudley Senanayake clearly had little interest in getting involved in these deliberations with Ceylon not a UN member and an armistice so close. In fact, Dudley Senanayake stressed that there were ‘differences in emphasis’ between the New Commonwealth leaders and that there was no sense of them ‘ganging up’ over Korea.⁸² Moreover, Mohammed Ali Bogra – the prime minister of Pakistan recently appointed after Nazimuddin’s dismissal for refusing to remove members of the Ahamdiyya religious minority from his government – did not want to do anything that might incur the United States’ ire. Ali Bogra had close ties to Washington as Pakistan’s former ambassador there and only a few weeks before had welcomed Dulles to Karachi to agree to Pakistan joining a ‘northern tier’ of Middle Eastern states to contain the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the Old Commonwealth prime ministers, while concerned that the Eisenhower administration might pursue a military offensive to Korea’s ‘wasp’s waist’ if negotiations broke down, were united in their view that the Commonwealth should support Washington. Indeed, Churchill reminded the meeting that the United States ‘bore nineteen-twentieths of the military and financial burden’ in Korea. He was also confident that the US government would consult the Commonwealth before any offensive since, he claimed, ‘the Americans set considerable store by our [Commonwealth] moral support of their actions.’⁸³

Any prospect of the 1953 Prime Ministers’ Meeting resulting in friction between the Old and New Commonwealth then vanished completely on 5 June when Churchill reported that the ceasefire negotiations now looked likely to succeed.⁸⁴ As a result, the negotiations in London petered out without any decisions being taken that needed to be implemented. The prime ministers simply welcomed the arrangements finalised by the military negotiators in Korea.⁸⁵ Notably, even Nehru was content to do nothing more since he had received numerous messages from Zhou Enlai indicating Beijing’s expectation that a ceasefire would soon materialise. Nehru, accordingly, wrote to Churchill stressing that peace in Korea was the ‘first great step’ leading to further ‘steps which will ensure peace in the world’, and urging the prime minister of the UK to play a leading part ‘in this great world drama.’⁸⁶ Nehru’s faith in the Prime Ministers’ Meetings also appeared to have been restored as he extolled to the press after the 1953 Prime Ministers’ Meeting the benefits of these informal and friendly gatherings. More specifically, Nehru emphasised that at these meetings the Old Commonwealth countries had now ‘begun to realize that the Asian point of view counts.’⁸⁷

Conclusion

The admission of India, Pakistan, and Ceylon – the so-called New Commonwealth members – after gaining political independence in 1947 and 1948 redefined the nature of the Commonwealth. No longer was it a white man’s club and by 1949 allegiance to the Crown was not the defining criteria for membership. It was now a multiracial inter-governmental organisation linked loosely by a shared imperial history and, to some extent, shared values. But, more importantly, its members felt that the Commonwealth served their national interests, particularly in the areas of trade and defence. Each member, therefore, pursued their own goals at the roughly biannual Prime Ministers’ Meetings that took place in London. Prior to 1950 these meetings rarely resulted in united Commonwealth policies, but divisions were usually downplayed, and consensus was sought. However, after Suez in 1956 and with decolonisation accelerating and shifting the organisation’s composition in favour of its new members, the Commonwealth became increasingly divided on its Old-New Axis and Prime Ministers’ Meetings were dominated by disagreements over issues relating to race and colonialism, notably South Africa’s *apartheid* policies that led to Pretoria withdrawing from the organisation in 1961 before being thrown out.

Yet, historians have largely overlooked the Prime Ministers’ Meetings during the Korean War, particularly the 1951 meeting, that witnessed the first time the New Commonwealth members truly uniting and embracing these unique forms of summitry to influence Commonwealth policy. Prior to this, tensions between the South Asian prime ministers, especially over the Kashmir conflict, had prevented them from acting in unison at the 1948 and 1949 Prime Ministers’ Meetings. These issues,

though, were temporarily put to one side during the winter crisis when the world stood on the brink of general war. Nehru, adopting a more confrontational approach than was the norm at such gatherings, and Liaquat, after ending his boycott over Kashmir, with limited help from Senanayake, sought to use the Prime Ministers' Meeting to find a means to end the conflict and prevent the UN, under intense US pressure, taking action that risked escalating the crisis. While this New Commonwealth front met resistance during the negotiations from some Old Commonwealth representatives, particularly Menzies, Holland, and Dönges, it was greeted sympathetically by Attlee, Bevin, and St Laurent and led to a concerted – if more moderate than Nehru hoped – approach being pursued by the Commonwealth in its attempts to mollify the Truman administration. What is more, the implementation of the decisions taken did at least help delay the adoption of the United States' aggressor resolution at the UN until the winter crisis was beginning to abate.

While the 1951 Prime Ministers' Meeting had set an important precedent for the New Commonwealth, this impact was not really felt at the next two gatherings in London. The special 1952 Prime Ministers' Economic Conference was not a suitable forum for such action given the focus of negotiations was not the ongoing war in Korea; Nehru was not present; the new prime ministers of Pakistan and Ceylon were relatively inexperienced on the world stage; and the Indian Resolution had just been adopted at the UN. Furthermore, at the 1953 Prime Ministers' Meeting, with the end of the Korean War within sight, Nehru's attempts to rally the Commonwealth behind supporting the resolution of all East Asian problems after the ceasefire fell on the deaf ears of Old and New Commonwealth representatives alike. Still, despite being disappointed at this response and the fact he had not gotten everything his way in 1951, the Prime Ministers' Meetings during the Korean War had demonstrated to Nehru that when the New Commonwealth was 'united as free and equal' they could influence Commonwealth policy. As a result, the prime minister of India did not abandon Commonwealth membership in favour of non-alignment and the New Commonwealth was able to fully flex its muscles at future Prime Ministers' Meetings.

Notes

1. For more on the events leading to the 1949 London Declaration see, for instance, A. K. Bahl, 'Significance of India's Membership of the Commonwealth', *The Indian Journal of Political Science* xx (1959), 247–54; D. N. Banerjee, 'The Commonwealth Agreement and India', *The Indian Journal of Political Science* xi (1950), 30–8; Frank Bongiorno, 'Commonwealthmen and Republicans: Dr H. V. Evatt, the Monarchy and India', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* lxvi (2000), 33–50; E. Malcolm Hause, 'India and the Commonwealth of Nations: A Study in Contemporary Political Thought', *The Indian Journal of Political Science* xxiii (1962), 225–39; Raphaëlle Khan, 'Sovereignty After the Empire and the Search for a New Order: India's Attempt to Negotiate Common Citizenship in the Commonwealth (1947–1949)', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* li (2021), 1141–74; Beth Kreling, 'India and the Commonwealth: A Symbiotic Relationship?' *The Round Table* cxviii (2009), 49–66; Harshan Kumarasingham, 'Between Insignificance and Importance: The Commonwealth Headship in Contemporary History', in Saul Dubow and Richard Drayton (eds), *Commonwealth History in the Twenty-First Century* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 127–9; Harshan Kumarasingham, 'The "New Commonwealth", 1947–49: The New Zealand Perspective on India Joining the Commonwealth', *The Round Table* cxv (2006), 441–54; Nicholas Mansergh, *The Commonwealth Experience, Volume Two: From British to Multiracial Commonwealth* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 135–62; Peter Marshall, 'Shaping the "New Commonwealth", 1949', *Round Table* ccl (1999), 185–97; W. David McIntyre, 'Peter Fraser's Commonwealth: New Zealand and the origins of the New Commonwealth in the 1940s', in Alister McIntosh (ed), *New Zealand in World Affairs* (Wellington: Price Milburn, 1977), 37–88; J. D. B. Miller, *The Commonwealth in the World* (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1958), 137–59; R. J. Moore, *Making the New Commonwealth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Philip Murphy, *The Empire's New Clothes: The Myth of the Commonwealth* (London: C. Hurst, 2021), 24–6, 96–7; S. K. Pachauri, 'India's Decision to Remain in the Commonwealth – 1949 A Major Landmark in foreign Policy', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* lxx (2009–2010), 1134–43; Sunil Purushotham, 'Jawaharlal Nehru, Indian Republicanism, and the Commonwealth', in Saul Dubow and Richard Drayton (eds), *Commonwealth History in the Twenty-First Century* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 143–59; Anita Inder Singh, 'Keeping India in the Commonwealth: British Political and Military Aims, 1947–49', *Journal of Contemporary History* xx (1985), 469–81; S. A. de Smith, *The New Commonwealth and its Constitutions* (London: Stevens & Sons, 1964), 12–14, 22; Krishnan Srinivasan, *The Rise, Decline and Future of the British Commonwealth* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 5–21, 107–8, 110; Patrick Gordon Walker, *The Commonwealth* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1962), 132–40, 181–94, 312.
2. Ceylon officially changed its name to Sri Lanka in 1972. Ceylon will be used throughout this article as the name of the country at the time.

3. Pallavi Raghavan, *Animosity at Bay: An Alternative History of the India-Pakistan Relationship, 1947–1952* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).
4. Liaquat Ali Khan is commonly referred to by his familiar name, Liaquat. This form will be used throughout this article.
5. For an overview of the scholarship on Commonwealth diplomatic relations during the Korean War see Robert Barnes, 'Britain and the Commonwealth', in Donald Boose and James Matray (eds), *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Korean War* (London: Routledge, 2014), 73–84.
6. Robert Barnes, 'Branding an Aggressor: The Commonwealth, the United Nations, and Chinese Intervention in the Korean War, November 1950–January 1951', *Journal of Strategic Studies* xxxi (2010), 231–53 (242–6); Robert Barnes, *The US, the UN and the Korean War: Communism in the Far East and the American Struggle for Hegemony in the Cold War* (London: IB Tauris, 2014), 78–82, 200–1; Thomas Hennessey, *Britain's Korean War: Cold War Diplomacy, Strategy and Security, 1950–53* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 138, 140, 142–6, 148, 162; Ian McGibbon, *New Zealand and the Korean War – Volume I: Politics and Diplomacy* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992), 192–8, 329–31; Graeme Mount, with Andre Laferriere, *The Diplomacy of Constraint* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2004), 95–103, 147; Robert O'Neill, *Australia and the Korean War, 1950–53 – Volume I: Strategy and Diplomacy* (Canberra: The Australian War Memorial and the Australian Government Publishing Service, 1981), 168–78, 355–6, 404; F. H. Soward, 'The Korean Crisis and the Commonwealth', *Pacific Affairs* 24.2 (1951), 115–30 (115–17, 125–7); William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 152–4.
7. Vineet Thakur, 'India's Diplomatic Entrepreneurism: Revisiting India's Role in the Korean Crisis, 1950–52', *China Report* LI (2013), 273–298 (286–7).
8. Robert O'Shea, 'Not foreign to each other: Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conferences, 1944–1969' (DPhil dissertation, University of Oxford, 2016), 29, 52, 88–9, 91, 238, 242, 271.
9. Gordon Walker, *Commonwealth*, 315–6, 380.
10. [Selected] *Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, *Second Series, Vol[ume] 22* (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 1998), 402–3, 489–91, 518–22, 526–9.
11. The January 1966 Prime Ministers' Meeting was held at Lagos in Nigeria to discuss how to end white minority rule in Rhodesia after its Unilateral Declaration of Independence the previous year.
12. For an excellent succinct overview of Prime Ministers' Meetings see O'Shea, 'Not foreign to each other', 1–19.
13. David Dunn, 'What is Summitry?', in David Dunn (ed), *Diplomacy at the Highest Level: The Evolution of International Summitry* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996), 14–19; Kjell Engelbrekt, *High-Table Diplomacy: The Reshaping of International Security Institutions* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2016), xv–xviii.
14. David Reynolds, *Summits: Six Meetings that Shaped the Twentieth Century* (London: Penguin, 2007), 5, 402–3.
15. James Cooper, *A Diplomatic Meeting: Reagan, Thatcher, and the Art of Summitry* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2021), 2.
16. John Young, *Twentieth-Century Diplomacy: A Case Study of British Practice, 1963–1976* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 115–9.
17. Reynolds, *Summits*, 10, 397–402.
18. For more on Senanayake and the Commonwealth see, for instance, Robert Barnes, "In the Mutual Interest": The Making and Breaking of the United Kingdom-Ceylon Defence Agreement, 1947–1957', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* I (2022), 1093–1122 (1095–1099); Harshan Kumarasingham, 'The "Tropical Dominions": The Appeal of Dominion Status in the Decolonisation of India, Pakistan and Ceylon', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* xxiii (2013), 223–45 (242–5); Moore, *Making the New Commonwealth*, 181, 189; L. M. Ratnapalan, 'Britain and the Politics of Ceylon, 1948–1961', *The Historical Journal* lix (2016), 541–65 (547–9); Paul Tonks and L. M. Ratnapalan, 'Bound "Together by the Golden Thread of a Common Tradition"? Decolonization, Identity, and the Legacies of Empire in British-South Asian Relations', *The International History Review* xlv (2023), 114–33 (121); W. Howard Wriggins, *Ceylon: Dilemmas of a New Nation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960), 92, 383–5, 391; Gordon Walker, *Commonwealth*, 137–8.
19. For more on Nehru and Gandhi and the Commonwealth see, for instance, Y. Rafeek Ahmed, 'India's Membership of the Commonwealth - Nehru's Role', *The Indian Journal of Political Science* liii (1991), 43–53; Michael Brecher, 'India's Decision to Remain in the Commonwealth', *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* xii (1974), 62–90; Judith Brown, *Nehru* (London: Routledge, 2000), 127–8, 184–5; Judith Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 178–9, 248–9, 251–8; Judith Brown, 'Nehru', in Steven Casey and Jonathan Wright (eds), *Mental Maps in the Cold War Era* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 201–2, 209–15; Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979), 43–55; Kumarasingham, 'Tropical Dominions', 232–7; Mansergh, *Commonwealth Experience*, 146–8, 151–7, 232–5; S. R. Mehraotra, 'Gandhi and the British Commonwealth', *India Quarterly* xvii (1961), 44–57 (53–7); Moore, *Making the New Commonwealth*, 6, 14, 120–57, 181–91; B. R. Nanda, 'Nehru and the British', *Modern Asian Studies* xxx (1996), 469–79 (476–8); Purushotham, 'Jawaharlal Nehru', 143–59; Raghavan, *Animosity at Bay*, 142–3; G. Ramachandram, *Nehru and World Peace* (New Delhi: Sangam Books, 1990), 98–114; Srinivasan, *Rise, Decline and Future*, 10–11; Tonks and Ratnapalan, 'Bound Together', 118–9; Tonks and Ratnapalan, 'Ideologies of the New Commonwealth', *International History Review* xliii (2021), 887–905 (890, 892, 898); Gordon Walker, *Commonwealth*, 135–8.
20. For more on Liaquat and Jinnah and the Commonwealth see, for instance, M. Rafique Afzal (ed), *Speeches and Statements of the Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah [1911–34 and 1947–48]* (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1966), 247, 424, 451, 460; M. Rafique Afzal (ed), *Speeches and Statements of Quaid-i-Millat Liaquat Ali Khan [1941–1951]* (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1967), 181–2; Ayesha Jajal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 257–8, 270; Muhammad Reza Kazimi, *Liaquat Ali Khan: His Life and Work* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 304–

- 5; Kumarasingham, 'Tropical Dominions', 237–42; Moore, *Making the New Commonwealth*, 6–8, 180–1, 189, 191; Tonks and Ratnapalan, 'Bound Together', 119–20; Gordon Walker, *Commonwealth*, 137–8.
21. For more on the 1948 Prime Ministers' Meeting see, for instance, Commonwealth Secretariat, *The Commonwealth at the Summit: Communiqués of Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings 1944–1986* (London: Marlborough House, 1987), 25–6; Mansergh, *Commonwealth Experience*, 142–3, 151–3; Moore, *Making the New Commonwealth*, 90–3, 142–3, 153–4; O'Shea, 'Not foreign to each other', 79–84, 140, 159, 259, 270–1; Gordon Walker, *Commonwealth*, 137–8, 175, 182, 193, 312.
 22. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 8* (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 1989), 245.
 23. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 8*, 246–7.
 24. Minutes, P.M.M.(48)12th Mtg., 20 Oct. 1948 [Kew, United Kingdom National Archives, Public Record Office], CAB[inet Office Records] 133/88.
 25. *Ibid.*; *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 8*, 247.
 26. Memo by Senanayake, P.M.M.(48)12, 18 Oct. 1948 [Kew, United Kingdom National Archives, Public Records Office], PREM [Prime Minister's Office Records] 8/726.
 27. Minutes, P.M.M.(48)8th Mtg., 18 Oct. 1948, UKNA, PREM 8/726.
 28. O'Shea, 'Not foreign to each other', 82–3.
 29. For more on the controversies surrounding Ireland's membership of the Commonwealth see, for instance, Donal Lowry, "'Cuckoo in the Commonwealth Nest': The Irish Impact and the Commonwealth Legacy for Ireland", in Saul Dubow and Richard Drayton (eds), *Commonwealth History in the Twenty-First Century* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 181–205; Donal Lowry, "'Ireland Shows the Way": Irish-South African Relations and the British Commonwealth of Nations, 1902–61", in Donal McCracken (ed), *Ireland and South Africa in Modern Times* (Durban: Sais, 1996), 89–135; Mansergh, *Commonwealth Experience*, 137–45; Ged Martin, 'The Irish Free State and the Evolution of the Commonwealth, 1921–49', in Ronald Hyam and Ged Martin (eds), *Reappraisals in British Imperial History* (London: Macmillan, 1975), 201–25.
 30. For more on the 1949 Prime Ministers' Meeting see, for example, Bahl, 'Significance of India's Membership', 248–9; Banerjee, 'Commonwealth Agreement', 30–8; Hause, 'India and the Commonwealth', 225–6, 231–7; Khan, 'Sovereignty After the Empire', 1158–60, 1162–3; Kreling, 'India and the Commonwealth', 49–50; 57, 62; Mansergh, *Commonwealth Experience*, 156–8; Marshall, 'Shaping the New Commonwealth', 189–93; Moore, *Making the New Commonwealth*, 188–93, 199–200; O'Shea, 'Not foreign to each other', 83–6, 111–12, 156–62, 169, 236, 241–2, 262–3, 279–80; Srinivasan, *Rise, Decline and Future*, 11–12, 107–8, 110; Gordon Walker, *Commonwealth*, 138, 175, 182, 3–4, 235, 312.
 31. Afzal, *Speeches and Statements*, 245–7, 256–7; *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 10* (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru, 1990), 170–6; O'Shea 'Not foreign to each other', 159–60.
 32. Commonwealth Secretariat, *Commonwealth at the Summit*, 29–30.
 33. The UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa all contributed military forces while India contributed a field ambulance unit. Pakistan supported the UN action in Korea but argued that it could not spare military forces. Ceylon was not a member of the UN at the time so did not contribute forces.
 34. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 15, Part 2* (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 1993), 456–7.
 35. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 15, Part 2*, 458.
 36. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 15, Part 2*, 14–5, 460–1.
 37. Afzal, *Speeches and Statements*, 521–2.
 38. Afzal, *Speeches and Statements*, 185–6, 247–9, 363–4, 421–2, 487–8; Moore, *Making the New Commonwealth*, 90–1; Gordon Walker, *Commonwealth*, 173–6, 315; Srinivasan, *Rise, Decline and the Future*, 12–13.
 39. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 15, Part 2*, 278; Minutes, C.M.(51)1st Conclusions, UKNA, CAB 128/19, 2 Jan. 1951.
 40. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 15, Part 2*, 279.
 41. For more on the UK-Ceylon Defence Agreement see, for instance, Barnes 'In the Mutual Interest', 1103–5; Ratnapalan, 'Britain and the Politics', 546–9.
 42. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)1st Mtg., 4 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
 43. *Ibid.*
 44. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)3rd Mtg., 5 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
 45. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)1st Mtg., 4 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4; Minutes, P.M.M.(51)2nd Mtg., 4 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
 46. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)2nd Mtg., 4 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
 47. O'Shea, 'Not foreign to each other', 88.
 48. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)4th Mtg., 5 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
 49. *Ibid.*
 50. Memo by Nehru, P.M.M.(51)8, 5 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
 51. Pearson to St Laurent, 5 Jan. 1951; Pearson to St Laurent, 6 Jan. 1951; Pearson to St Laurent, 7 Jan. 1951 [Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 25], 4741/50069-A-40 Part 17; Lester Pearson, *Memoirs, 1948–1957: The International Years – Volume 2* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1974), 286–91.
 52. Pearson to St Laurent, 8 Jan. 1951, LAC, 4741/50069-A-40 Part 17.
 53. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)5th Mtg., 8 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
 54. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)1st Mtg., 4 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
 55. Afzal, *Speeches and Statements*, 523–4.
 56. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)5th Mtg., 8 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
 57. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)7th Mtg., 9 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
 58. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)5th Mtg., 8 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
 59. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)7th Mtg., 9 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.

60. Ibid.
61. Note by the Secretariat, P.M.M.(51)15, 9 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
62. Pearson to St Laurent, 9 Jan. 1951, LAC, 4741/50069-A-40 Part 17; Pearson, *Memoirs*, 292–3.
63. Note by the Secretariat, P.M.M.(51)9, 11 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
64. Pearson to St Laurent, 9 Jan. 1951; Pearson to St Laurent, 10 Jan. 1951, LAC, 4741/50069-A-40 Part 17; Pearson, *Memoirs*, 293–5.
65. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 15, Part 2*, 468–70.
66. Minutes, P.M.M.(51)10th Mtg., 11 Jan. 1951; Note by the Secretariat, P.M.M.(51)17, 11 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4.
67. Pearson to St Laurent, 12 Jan. 1951, LAC, 4741/50069-A-40 Part 18; Pearson, *Memoirs*, 295–6.
68. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 15, Part 2*, 468–71.
69. Note by the Secretariat, P.M.M.(51)20, 13 Jan. 1951, UKNA, PREM 8/1405 Part 4; Commonwealth Secretariat, *Commonwealth at the Summit*, 33–6; O'Neill, *Australia in the Korean War*, 178; O'Shea, 'Not foreign to each other', 236–8.
70. *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) - Volume 9, House of Representatives Official Report, Second Volume of Fourth Session of the First Parliament of Ceylon, 14 George VI* (Colombo: Ceylon Government Press, 1951), 1265–7.
71. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 15, Part 2*, 476–7.
72. Thakur, 'India's Diplomatic Entrepreneurism', 287.
73. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 15, Part 2*, 20.
74. Afzal, *Speeches and Statements*, 525–33; K. Sarwar Hasan, 'The Foreign Policy of Liaquat Ali Khan', *Pakistan Horizon* 1x (2008), 37–52 (40, 42–3); Kazimi, *Liaquat Ali Khan*, 313; O'Shea, 'Not foreign to each other', 89–91; Gordon Walker, *Commonwealth*, 176.
75. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 15, Part 2*, 508–510.
76. Minutes, C.C.(52)102nd Conclusions, 4 Dec. 1952, UKNA, CAB 128/25.
77. Ibid.
78. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 22*, 45–8.
79. Churchill had been calling for such a high-level conference since 1950 when he first coined and then popularised the term 'summit'. See Cooper, *A Diplomatic Meeting*, 1–2; Dunn, 'What is Summitry?', 4; Reynolds, *Summits*, 3–5; Young, *Twentieth-Century Diplomacy*, 115.
80. Minutes, Mtg., C[ommonwealth] P[rime] M[inisters], 3 June 1953, LAC, MG26L/85/C-10-21 Vol. 5.
81. Minutes, Mtg., CPM, 4 June 1953, LAC, MG26L/85/C-10-21 Vol. 5.
82. Memo by Dudley Senanayake, 23 June 1953, [Department of National Archives Sri Lanka, Series 1551], POL/1/130.
83. Minutes, Mtg., CPM, 4 June 1953, LAC, MG26L/85/C-10-21 Vol. 5.
84. Minutes, Mtg., CPM, 5 June 1953, LAC, MG26L/85/C-10-21 Vol. 5.
85. Minutes, Mtg., CPM, 8 June 1953, LAC, MG26L/85/C-10-21 Vol. 5; Commonwealth Secretariat, *Commonwealth at the Summit*, 39–40.
86. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 22*, 483–7.
87. *SWJN, Second Series, Vol 22*, 402–3, 489–91, 518–22, 526–9.

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