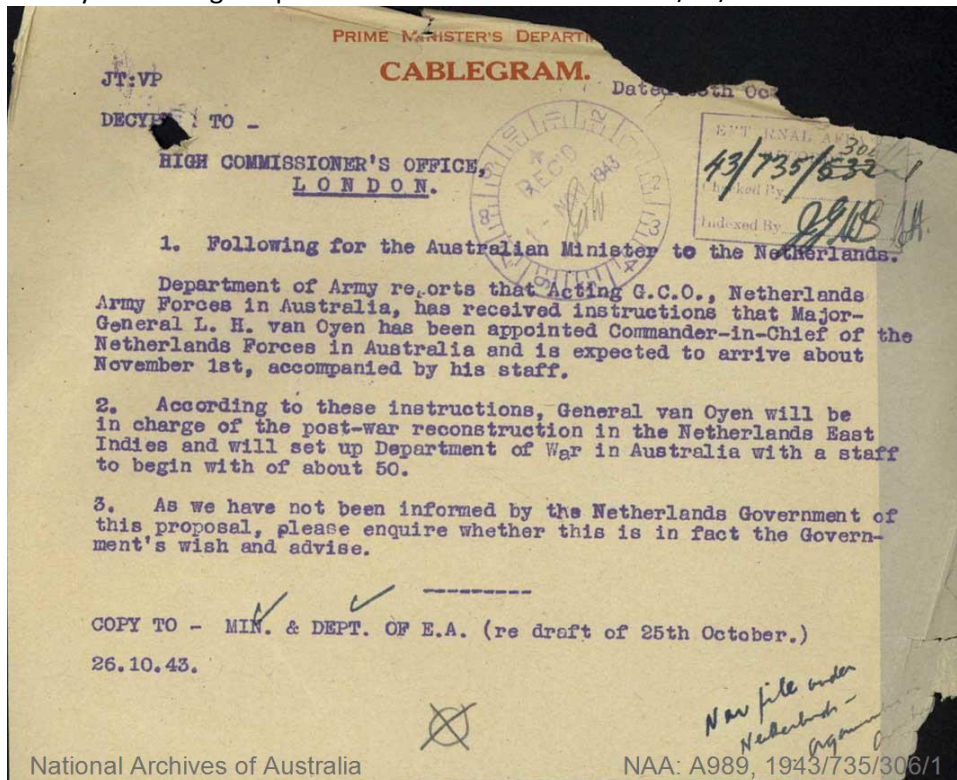


NAA File, series A989, item 1943/735/306/1, PWR (Post War Reconstruction) – NEI Organization in Australia, 1943-44

Van Oyen in charge of postwar reconstructions in NEI 26/10/43



Start of organisation of department of war

COPY:NR.

TELEPRINTER MESSAGE:

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
13/735/306/1-4
Checked By
Indexed By

D. 3649. 2049.

To : Secretary, Department of External Affairs, Canberra.

From: Secretary, Department of the Army, Melbourne.

The following letter dated 4th October, 1943, has been received from I.R.J. Verwijis (Major) for the acting C.O.

Netherlands Army Forces in Australia:

"This Headquarters was advised by the Netherlands Government in London, that Major-General L.H. Van Oyen, adjutant in special service of Her Majesty the Queen, has been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Netherlands Forces in Australia.

He is expected to arrive round about November 1st, and will be accompanied by his staff.

As he will be in charge of the Post-war Reconstruction in the Dutch East Indies, a Department of War will be organised.

Therefore, the kind assistance of Hirings Board is requested in order to find proper office accommodation.

A staff of about 50 people being expected to start with, it is suggested that 5,000 to 10,000 square feet office space be made available for this purpose.

It would be greatly appreciated if favourable consideration were given to this request".

Before authorising occupation of premises, this Department would appreciate advice as to whether the application is authorised by the appropriate Netherlands Indies Authorities and has the concurrence of your Department.

Message Ends 2057 22/10/43.



see 4/600/5/1/3

*N.S. J. - Aust.
Catal. of Dept of War in Australia*

Van Oyen not knowing his position as head of post-war reconstruction?

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

CABLEGRAM.

I. 48902.

190.
DATED:- 1st November, 1943.
2040.
RECV:- 2nd November, 1943.

DECYPHER from :-

Australian Minister
To The Netherlands,
LCEDON.

N.35.

For the Prime Minister.

Your telegram N.1 of October 25th.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RECORDS
13/23/306/1
Indexed By

Immediately on receipt of your telegram I saw Van Kleffens and took the matter up with him. He obviously had not a great knowledge of the subject but expressed the view that it was not the intention of the Netherlands Government that Van Oyen should be charged with the tasks set out in paragraph 2 of your telegram.

Van Kleffens promised to let me have a note on the position. This I have now received. It is as follows - Begins -

"Van Oyen has no instructions with regard to post-war reconstruction. What he has to do, within his own sphere, is to prepare the Administrative Agencies, which will be needed once parts of the Netherlands Indies are re-occupied."

Secondly, Van Mook tells me that Van Oyen will, for the time being, be no more than Commander of our Land Forces in the South-west Pacific, succeeding in that capacity Colonel Van Straaten. On the other hand, Van Oyen will take charge of the Reconstituted Netherlands Indies War Department when a nucleus of a Netherlands Indies Administration will be reconstituted.

Plans for this establishment are in active preparation. In any case, Van Oyen's task for some time to come will lie in the direction of the gradual and continuous expansion of our Far Eastern war activities.

Now that I have had an initial conversation with Van Kleffens, I will take an early opportunity of discussing the matter with Van Mook who is clearly handling this question.

Van Oyen has no instructions Bruce: regard to post-war reconstruction. What he has to do, within his own sphere, is to prepare the Administrative Agencies, which will be needed once parts of the Netherlands Indies are re-occupied.

Min. G. Dept. E. A. (Attention). Van Oyen will, for the time being, be no more than Commander of our Land Forces in the South-west Pacific, succeeding in that capacity Colonel Van Straaten. On the other hand, Van Oyen will take charge of the Reconstituted Netherlands Indies War Department when a nucleus of a Netherlands Indies Administration will be reconstituted.

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Now that I have had an initial conversation with Van Kleffens, I will take an early opportunity of discussing the matter with Van Mook who is clearly handling this question.

COFY:NR.

TELEPRINTER MESSAGE.

To : The Secretary, Department of the Army.

From: The Secretary, Department of External Affairs.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
INDEXED
43/195/306/1-5
Indexed By

1. Your D. 3649, 22nd October and my reply.

The Australian Minister to the Netherlands has been informed by the Netherlands Ministers for Foreign Affairs and for Colonies that General Van Oyen has been appointed Commander-in-Chief of Netherlands Land Forces in the South-West Pacific and will be charged :-

(a) With building up nucleus of an administration for the Netherlands Indies after its re-occupation; and

(b) With establishing a Netherlands Indies War Department in Australia in which the personnel for (a) will for the time being, be centred.

2. The Australian Minister was told that the Australian Government had been advised that General Van Oyen was to be in charge of post-war reconstruction in the Netherlands East Indies and would set up a Department of War in Australia with a staff of 50. He advised however in reply that it was not the intention of the Netherlands Government that Van Oyen should be charged with the tasks set out.

3. So far as this Department is concerned there is no objection to the provision to General Van Oyen of office space for the purposes mentioned in paragraph 1.

5.11.43.



see 48/600/5/1/3 (Estab. of Dept
N.E.I. - 1943/35/306/1)

DUTCH SHARE IN WAR Organising From Australia

"An important part of the Netherlands war effort is concentrated in Australia," said Dr. C. O. van der Plas, chairman of the Netherlands Indies Commission for Australia and New Zealand, in a review yesterday of the past two years of the Pacific War.

"It is no secret that on this second anniversary of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbour and our declaration of war on Japan, we are making our contribution in the air and on the sea, and that Netherlands merchant ships in the actual war zone have served, and are serving, the fighting forces with considerable risk. We are fighting in perfect harmony with our Australian and American Allies in great mutual confidence.

We are organising and training on Australian soil the steadily-growing number of Dutchmen and Indonesians who become available to the war effort for the greatest possible contribution to the Allied cause in the Pacific.

STRENGTHENING FORCES

"This includes not only the continuous strengthening of our armed forces and preparation for their further increase as soon as the Netherlands will be liberated, but also participation in the Australian broadcasts to enemy and occupied countries and in the monitoring services, and such diverse matters as getting the maximum effect of our shipping, technical training of Indonesians to accompany the Allied troops as engineers, training of Indonesian and Dutch officials as civil administrators to give the maximum civilian support to the forces in liberated territory, forming the organisations necessary to ensure proper functioning of all those services indispensable to the Allied armies in such territories, and many other activities.

"The turn the war has taken promises that in a relatively short period these organisations will have to function. We are looking forward to a more comprehensive organisation for the Netherlands Indies in Australia in the near future.

"My heart warms when thinking of the generosity, the unflinching friendship we have experienced from Australia. Australia has made us feel at home. She has made us feel that we share the same goals. She has filled us with admiration for her war effort.

PRAISE FOR MacARTHUR

"Our contribution to the war effort is greatly enhanced by the understanding of the Commander-in-Chief, General MacArthur is not only a great general, but has also an unerring understanding of the psychology of the Malay and Filipino races.

"Our most important work, perhaps, is being done in Netherlands New Guinea. In that territory we are trying out our organisations, and we are endeavouring to build there the new Netherlands Indies.

"Our experiment confirms us in our faith that we can make the Netherlands Indies into a country whose inhabitants will feel at home and where those great gifts of the Western peoples—government of the people for the people by the people, independent, impersonal justice—will forge them into a strong community.

"Then, just because every group is free in its cultural and spiritual life, a people of 70 million in one of the most important strategic centres of the Pacific will become an even greater force in defence against all aggression and make an ever-increasing contribution of idealism, tolerance, and strength to the building of lasting peace."

S. M. Herald

Wednesday 8 DEC 1943



Dr Van Mook's presence in Australia to help extend the powers of the NEI Commission

POWERS OF N.E.I. COMMISSION

Dr. van Mook's Aims

At a Press conference yesterday, the Lieutenant-Governor-General of the Netherlands East Indies, Dr. H. J. van Mook, said he was in Australia to help extend and make more definite the powers of the N.E.I. Commission. Since his departure early last year, Dr. van Mook has spent a considerable time in Great Britain and two months in the United States. He returned on February 24, and visited Melbourne, Canberra, Brisbane, and New Guinea before coming to Sydney on Sunday. He will go back to London soon to complete the arrangements on which he is engaged.

He said that the newly-constituted N.E.I. Commission would practically consist of former members of the N.E.I. Government, some of whom would be brought back from England and the United States. It had been necessary to handle supply problems in America. Even after the commission had been re-formed, however, the paramount Dutch authority would still be the Netherlands Government in London.

POST-WAR PLANS

"We have done a lot of economic planning for the first phase after the war," said Dr. van Mook. "Most of the details were worked out in the United States, because I had my people and most of my data there. We have also been working on national and international plans to get expatriated people back. We think that about a million people have disappeared, torn away from their homes in Holland by the Nazi police and thrown into concentration camps or dragged off as labour for German industries. The Germans have destroyed agricultural industries, and removed much machinery."

Dr. van Mook said that, as soon as possible after the liberation of Holland, as many men as possible would be obtained for the fighting forces against Japan. They might be trained in Australia, and the best distribution of them would have to be decided.

"There is a growing resistance in the Indies to Japanese domination," Dr. van Mook said, "but it takes a different form from that in Europe. It is more passive, and takes the line of non-co-operation. Japanese propaganda has always been pan-Asiatic, but in practice the Japanese have introduced forced labour, wrecked the educational system, and disbanded councils. In November, the Japanese admitted that fighting was still going on in Sumatra, we conclude by mixed Dutch and Indonesian forces."

ENEMY SHIPPING LACK

"Economically," said Dr. van Mook, "the Japanese system has gone haywire through lack of shipping and experienced administrators. He said that the south-west part of New Guinea in Dutch hands was now well organised."

Although the bombing of Germany had a big cumulative effect, said Dr. van Mook, he did not think a war could be won by bombing alone. That seemed to have been proved by the experiences of Malta and London. People in England knew that a second front was necessary to win the war in Europe. When the second front was opened, the growing underground movement would prove of great assistance.

"Among Americans who take an interest in things, I think there is a full appreciation of what is being done by others in the Pacific," Dr. van Mook continued.

"I found that people in the United States were very eager to come to a better understanding with the rest of the world," he said, "but propaganda is needed to combat isolationism."

Dr. van Mook was given a civic reception by the Lord Mayor, Alderman Bartley at the Town Hall yesterday.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES
44/735/306/1-3
Indexed by: [Signature]

"S. M. Herald"

Tuesday

21 MAR 1944

About van Mook's presence, and his discussion with Prime Minister Curtin about establishing a NEI Government in Australia

AIDE MEMOIRE.

By letter of the 24th December 1943, the Netherlands Minister in Australia informed the Right Honourable John Curtin, Prime Minister, of the forthcoming arrival in Australia of Dr. van Mook, Netherlands Minister for the Colonies, the purpose of whose visit was to acquaint the Commonwealth Government with the intention to establish a Netherlands Indies Government organisation (to replace the existing Netherlands Indies Commission for Australia and New Zealand), and to approach the Commonwealth Government concerning the temporary sojourn of the said Netherlands Indies Government organisation in Australia.

As explained during the visit which Dr. van Mook and the Netherlands Minister Baron van Aerssen paid to the Prime Minister on the 28th of February 1944 in Melbourne, and to the Minister for External Affairs on the 7th of March 1944 in Canberra, the reorganisation in question will probably consist of the appointment of a Lieutenant Governor-General and a Council of Heads of Departments. This reorganisation will not affect in any way the relations with the Commonwealth Government, the Minister for the Netherlands continuing in the future, as in the past, to be the accredited representative of Her Majesty Queen Wilhelmina with the Commonwealth Government in Australia, for the Netherlands Realm, comprising the Motherland and the overseas territories in East and West Indies.

Canberra, 8th March, 1944.

Approval to Baron van Aersen to promote an NEI Government in Australia by Australian external Affairs 21st March 1944



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
CANBERRA.

21st March, 1944.

Dear Baron van Aerssen,

With reference to your letter of 8th March enclosing an Aide-Memoire on the establishment of a Netherlands Indies Government organisation in Australia, I am glad to inform you that the Australian Government welcomes the proposal to appoint and establish for the time being in Australia a Lieutenant-Governor-General of the Netherlands Indies and a Council of Heads of Departments.

I note that this organisation will not affect in any way the relations between the Netherlands and Australian Governments, and that the Minister for the Netherlands will continue to be the accredited representative of Her Majesty Queen Wilhelmina in respect of the Netherlands and its overseas territories in the East and West Indies.

The Australian authorities will be glad to extend to the Lieutenant-Governor-General and his council all appropriate courtesies and facilities. May I add that I have every desire that both during the period of the domicile of the Lieutenant-Governor-General and his Council in this country and after the expulsion of the enemy from the Netherlands Indies, there should be close co-operation between our two Governments, more especially in regard to the future security and welfare of the peoples of the region in which we share so many common interests and responsibilities.

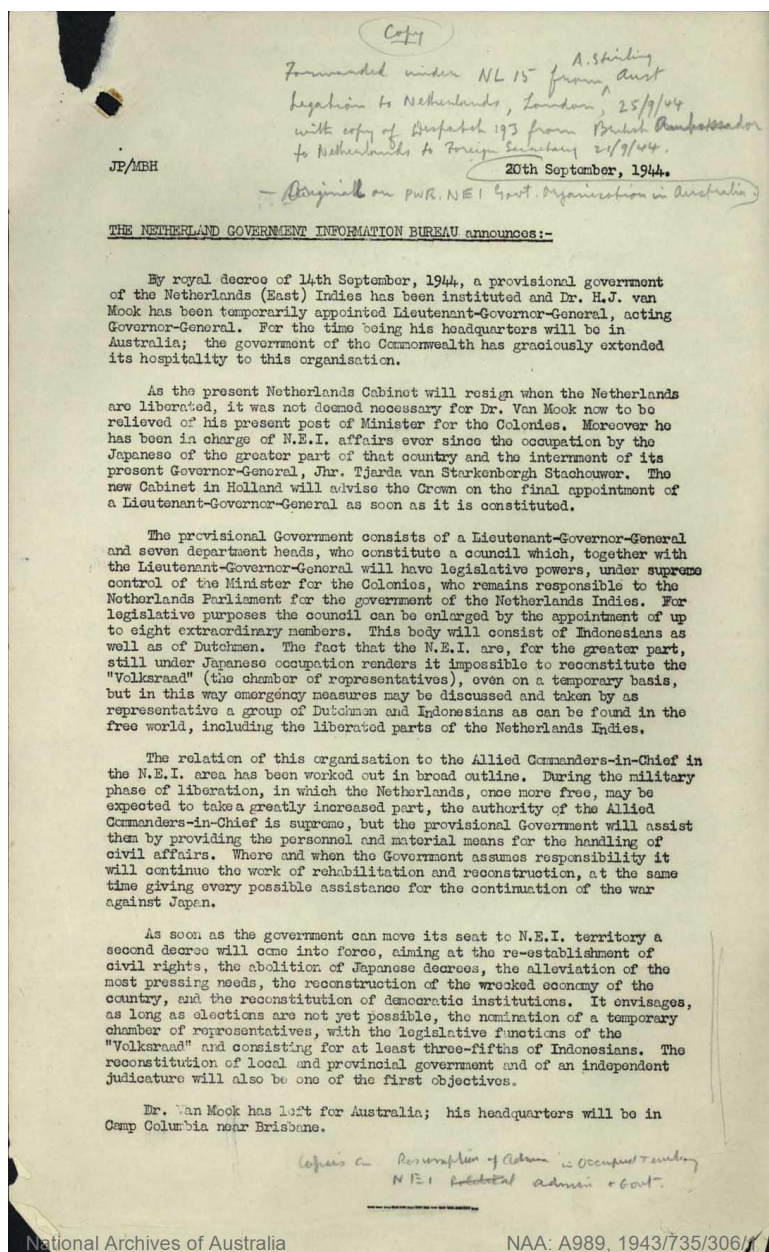
Yours sincerely,

*Secretary's instructions
this is
to be revised with
and conditions
added 27.3.44.*

His Excellency Baron F. C. van Aerssen
Beyeren van Voshol, M.W.O.,
etc., etc., etc.,
Royal Netherlands Legation,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

*Accordingly,
revised
preferred but
this version
sent 6.4.44.
MST.*

Royal decree approving NEI Government in Australia



A letter from Queen Wilhelmina and others on post-war matters of NEI

RIS 412

Extract from: Despatch to the Minister from S. M. Bruce.
Australian Legation to the Netherlands,
LONDON.

N.L. 26. 2nd December, 1942.

Dr. van Mook

The Minister for the Colonies, Dr. van Mook, left for Washington early in November. One of his first steps on arrival was to read an address by Queen Wilhelmina to the Annual Forum of the New York Herald-Tribune, dealing with post-war colonial problems. Her Majesty emphasized the progress made in the Netherlands East Indies since the beginning of this century:-

"In that island community, old forms of Government had become obsolete. A happy parallelism existed between the aspirations of the native intelligentsia and of My compatriots from Holland. Both wanted the progressive emancipation of the gifted races which live there. It is for that reason that, in spite of the inertia of tradition which is so strong in the masses of the East, and in spite also of very great ethnographical, linguistic and many other diversities and difficulties, a new political unit is being gradually formed there on the basis of co-operation between the Asiatic element and the European element from Holland, under the voluntarily accepted aegis of the Netherlands Kingdom of which the Indies are not the colonies, but a component part, just as the Netherlands in Europe. This process is, as you know, being continued, and no opportunity of advancing it is allowed to slip by."

I have gathered from recent conversations that members of the Netherlands Government have been perturbed by views held in certain quarters in the United States on European Imperialism and the future of the colonies in South-East Asia. Another aspect of the Queen's speech, as read by Dr. van Mook, dealt with the future treatment of Germany, Italy and Japan:-

"If wise measures are not taken in that respect, the best edifice for international security and trade will be of little or no avail."

The thirst for revenge will be great and understandable. Let not, however, revenge be our guiding motive. Revenge is barren, except in that it breeds revenge. Let justice be our aim, justice and firmness tempered by wisdom. Impracticable and exorbitant measures are just as bad as no measure at all. That has not always been remembered. Let us not lose sight of it again. We must be just, firm, realistic, and far-sighted. The future of those who come after us is at stake, and for that future we are to a large extent responsible."

Members of the Dutch Government in this country have made several notable pronouncements of late, all of them receiving considerable attention in the United Kingdom press. In an address to the Institute of Export on 5th October Dr. van Mook, after referring to the rough survey now being made of the commodities which will be needed for relief after the war, urged that similar work should be set in hand at once with regard to "reconstruction":-

"reconstruction, like relief will be a matter of urgency; perhaps a relatively greater urgency because it takes more time to produce the necessary goods and because production must mainly be deferred until after the war. I think therefore that any contribution to the

necessary data will be valuable. Any development of an agreed system of information will be of great assistance in speeding up the decision and the process of re-establishing trade relations after the war."

This suggestion was very warmly received in a leading article of "The Times" of 9th October.

M. Kerstens.

The Netherlands Minister for Economic Affairs, M. Kerstens, speaking at a luncheon of the Anglo-American Press Association on 11th November, urged that a combined Chiefs-of-Staff committee should be set up without delay to prepare plans for the economic rehabilitation after the war. There were many committees engaged on different aspects of this problem, but something more was needed in the shape of a single comprehensive organization to study it as a whole. Far from such work hampering the work of winning the war, determination would only be strengthened by the knowledge that preparations for winning the peace were proceeding simultaneously. Moreover, and it was a point to which he attached great importance, we had at present the right atmosphere for the successful handling of these questions. We were now all in the same deadly danger and ready to make sacrifices in the common cause, realising that we had to stand together to stand at all. No one could be sure that this broad-minded and generous attitude could be maintained for long after Germany and Japan had been defeated and nations began to feel themselves free to think more of their own interests and less of the common welfare.

In a leading article on 14th November "The Times", commenting on M. Kerstens' speech and recalling the earlier appeal by Dr. van Mook, said:-

"There can be no doubt that M. Kerstens and Dr. van Mook are right in urging that this work should be taken in hand at once and placed under a single authoritative body. Great Britain and the United States will have the major part to play both in determining policy and the actual work of rehabilitation. The Allied Board, for which M. Kerstens asks urgently, must be compact enough to take decisions without too much delay, but it must also be comprehensive enough to ensure a fair hearing for the interests of all the countries concerned."

Dr. van Kleffens

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. van Kleffens, made a notable broadcast on 25th November in which he spoke, as the "Manchester Guardian" put it, "cautiously but firmly" about the prospect of "security" for his country after the war.

"It is certain", he said, "that for Holland there cannot be any security if in the rest of the world no safety is to be found. The basic truth which we should keep in mind is: international security is indivisible."

Dr. van Kleffens leans towards "an organisation based on regions, not neglecting, however, the universal element of the indivisible peace. Such a thing can only be achieved by the collaboration of same-thinking States. For aggressor States there is no room in such an organisation. They will have to be kept in check". In other words, union for indivisible peace together with regional groups for quick action.

Netherlands Relations with the Soviet

Netherlands Relations with the Soviet

On the 25th anniversary of the Soviet Union Queen Wilhelmina sent a cordial message to President Kalinin, expressing her "utmost admiration of the unshakeable pertinacity of the Soviet peoples". A further message of greetings was sent by Dr. van Kleffens.

Netherlands and the Far East

At the present time the Netherlands Government are discussing with the Chinese the ending of Dutch Extraterritorial Rights in China, a question which was first opened between the two Governments in 1931. Although the negotiations are in the preliminary stages the Netherlands Minister in Chungking recently told the Chinese that his Government sympathised with the British and American moves to end Extraterritoriality.

The political Department in the Netherlands Foreign Office is now in charge of Jhr. O. Reuchlin who has just returned to this country after internment in Japan. Until the outbreak of war with Japan he was Charge d'Affaires of the Netherlands Legation in Tokyo. His predecessor as head of the Political Department, Jhr. Henri van Vredenburg, has been appointed Counsellor to the Netherlands Embassy in Washington.

I.P.R. Conference

In order that the Netherlands may be represented at the conference of the I.P.R. in Canada in December, which will discuss post-war co-operation in the Far East, the Netherlands and the Netherlands East Indies Council of the Institute has been reconstituted in New York. The nucleus of the Council will be formed by former members who are outside the Netherlands and Netherlands East Indies, namely: Jhr. F. Beelaerts van Blokland, Dr. H.J. van Mook, M. Lovink, M. Ch. O. van der Plas, Dr. Hart and Dr. Slotemaker de Bruine.