Asia and Africa

In January, 1957, the United Kingdom and the Federation of MALAYA agreed on the future status of Malaya. Malaya will be self-governing with its own Legislative and Cabinet. The United Kingdom will assist in defence and in the training of forces. Malaya is expected to become an independent state within the Commonwealth in August, 1957.

SINGAPORE was separated from Malaya after the Second World War and became a colony. Talks were held in London in March, 1957, as a result of which a new constitution was made public. Singapore will govern itself but the United Kingdom will be responsible for defence and external relations.

NIGERIA obtained its present constitution in 1954. It has a Governor, a Council and a House of Representatives. The British Government granted more autonomy to the Regions of the Federation and in 1956 a conference on the constitution was arranged for May, 1957. The Federal Assembly in March, 1957, requested independence for 1959.

BRITISH EAST AFRICA comprises Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda. The Governors of these areas act as a High Commission and are assisted by a Legislative Assembly.

The Governor of Uganda said in 1956 that there might be direct elections in 1960. The Ministerial system is also to be developed.

In Kenya emergency legislation has been relaxed and elections took place in 1956 and 1957.

Tanganyika is under UN trusteeship. It has a Governor and a nominated Council.

The Growing Commonwealth 1957

West Indies, Malta and Cyprus

After ten years of negotiations the delegates of ten Caribbean colonies at London in 1956 reached agreement on federation. The first government and elected legislature of the WEST INDIES will take over the government in March, 1958. The Federation will control its own internal affairs and its own defence. A draft constitution is being drawn up and the site of the new capital has been fixed on the Island of Trinidad. It is expected that the new Federation will become a full-fledged member of the Commonwealth.

The constitution of MALTA went into effect in 1947. Malta has a Governor, Nomination Council, Legislative Assembly, a Prime Minister and a Cabinet. A referendum in 1956 showed that, of those who voted, a majority was in favour of integration with the United Kingdom. Conferences with the British Government have taken place in accordance with the vote. Agreement has been reached on Maltese representation in the Parliament at Westminster but the question of implementing proposals for Maltese parity with British living standards has not yet been decided.

CYPRUS was taken over from Turkey in 1975 and a Legislative Council was set up. This Council became partly elective in 1952 but a budget crisis resulted in its abolition six years later. In recent years there have been demands for self-government and possible union with Greece. Negotiations for a new constitution broke down and a struggle with the extremists took place. In 1956 a new constitution was prepared which would protect the Turkish-Cypriot minority. It reserved defence, external affairs and internal security to the British Government. All other functions would be controlled by a Chief Minister and a Cabinet drawn from an Assembly.