

ing. Before leaving Great Britain for Canada on the 17th August, 1918, I had been actively engaged as a member of a Committee of the Imperial War Cabinet, the constitution and purpose of which were somewhat notable. This Committee had its genesis in a very frank and full discussion which I initiated in the Imperial War Cabinet immediately after my arrival in June, 1918. The whole issue involved was relegated for consideration to a Committee consisting of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the Prime Ministers of the Dominions, General Smuts representing General Botha. The Committee called into consultation the Secretary of State for War, the Chief of the General Staff and the highest military experts from the more important theatres of war. Its duty was to determine what further effort was necessary to win the war according to the views of these experts, who were also asked to express their opinions as to the place where and the time when the supreme effort should be made and the conditions under which it should be attempted. An elaborate report was prepared which, however, was superseded within a few weeks by the rapid and wholly unexpected march of events.

Dominion Representation at Peace Conference

Shortly before the Armistice the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom strongly urged that I should arrive in London as soon as possible, and with three of my colleagues I left Ottawa on the 8th November last. The status of the Dominions at the Peace Conference came immediately into question and was the subject of earnest discussion. Various methods, which it is not necessary to explain, were suggested. In the end I proposed that there should be a distinctive representation for each Dominion similar to that accorded to the smaller Allied Powers, and in addition that the British Empire representation of five Delegates should be selected from day to day from a panel made up of representatives of the United Kingdom and the Dominions. This proposal was adopted by the Imperial War Cabinet. Early in December preliminary conversations on the making of peace took place in London between representatives of the British Empire, of France, and of Italy, and the proposal which I had already put forward was accepted in principle. The Preliminary Peace Conference began at Paris on January 12, 1919, and the question of procedure, including that of representation, was immediately taken up by the representatives of the principal Allied and Associated Powers, afterwards commonly known as the Council of Ten. At first strong objection was made to the proposed representation of the British Dominions. Subsequently there was a full discussion in the British Empire Delegation, at which a firm protest was made against any recession from the proposal adopted in London. In the end that proposal was accepted.

Effective Position of the Dominions

The adoption of the panel system gave to the Dominions a peculiarly effective position. At Plenary Sessions there were sometimes three Canadian Plenipotentiary Delegates, two as representatives of Canada and one as representative of the Empire. Moreover, throughout the proceedings of the Conference the Dominion Delegates, as members of the British Empire Delegation, were thoroughly in touch with all the proceedings of the Conference, and had access to all the papers recording its proceedings. This enabled them effectively to watch and check those proceedings in the interests of their respective Dominions, and placed them in a position of decided advantage. Dominion ministers were nominated to and acted for the British Empire on the principal