

regarded as sacred, will it ever be possible for a civilization based upon contractual relations to exist hereafter. The summary continues:

They all desired earnestly to see as wide a measure of disarmament as could be obtained. At the same time they were agreed that the several governments of which they are the representatives are bound to adopt such measures of defence as they may deem essential for their security, as well as for the fulfilment of such international obligations as they may respectively have assumed.

Being convinced that the influence of each of them in the cause of peace was likely to be greatly enhanced by their common agreement to use that influence in the same direction, they declared their intention of continuing to consult and cooperate with one another in this vital interest and all other matters of common concern.

And then, with respect to defence we find the following in the summary:

The conference gave close attention to the subject of defence, and considered ways in which it would be possible for the governments concerned to cooperate in measures for their own security. The occasion was taken for a detailed review of the state of defence in each of the countries represented at the conference and this opportunity was generally welcomed.

The discussions began with a review of the events which led up to the adoption by His Majesty's government in the United Kingdom of their rearmament program, and of defence problems generally. The members of the conference noted with deep concern that since the session of 1930 international tension had increased in a marked degree, and that there had been a large and rapid increase in the armaments of all the principal powers. They were impressed by the world-wide effect of these increased armaments on the international situation and on the financial and economic position of the nations concerned.

Then, at another point:

Reference was made to the increasing importance of the industrial side of defence owing to the progress of technical development in armaments, and emphasis was placed on the advantages attending cooperation in the production and supply of munitions and raw materials as well as of food and feeding stuffs to meet the several requirements of the United Kingdom, the dominions and India, and the colonial empire.... The conference took note of the measures, recently adopted by the various countries represented at the conference, often at a heavy cost, and recognized that the increased programs of armaments were no more than sufficient for the defence of their territories and trade and the fulfilment of such obligations as each might have assumed.

The conference recognized the vital importance of measures to safeguard maritime communications, including routes and waterways essential to defence and trade, and to provide naval bases and facilities for repairs and fuelling of ships....

The conference heard with satisfaction of the important steps taken by His Majesty's government in the United Kingdom for the maintenance of a home defence air force of sufficient strength to afford adequate protection against attack by the strongest air force which may be at any time within striking distance of

the shores of the United Kingdom. In this connection the conference took note of the extensive preparations that are being made by His Majesty's government in the United Kingdom in the spheres of both active and passive defence against air invasion.

The conference also recorded the progress made by the several governments in creating and maintaining an adequate chain of air bases and refuelling stations along the lines of communications between the different parts of the Empire.

The conference noted with satisfaction that in accordance with recommendations of previous conferences a common system of organization and training and the use of uniform manuals, patterns of arms, equipment, and stores had been adopted, as far as practicable, for the naval, military and air forces of their several countries. Each of them would thus be enabled to ensure more effectively its own security and—

Please note these words:

—if it so desired, to cooperate with other countries of the commonwealth with the least possible delay....

The conference gave careful attention to the question of munitions and supplies required for defence both by the United Kingdom and other parts of the commonwealth, and also to the question of the supply of food and feeding stuffs in time of emergency. The conference was impressed with the value of the free interchange of detailed technical information and recommended that it should be continued between the technical officers of the governments concerned, it being understood that any questions of policy arising in connection with any such technical exchange and discussion would be submitted to the respective governments for decision and that each government reserve to itself complete freedom of decision and action.

In the course of the discussions, the conference found general agreement among its members that the security of each of their countries can be increased by cooperation in such matters as the free interchange of information concerning the state of their naval, military and air forces, the continuance of the arrangements already initiated by some of them for concerting the scale of the defences of ports, and measures for cooperation in the defence of communications and other common interests. At the same time the conference recognized that it is the sole responsibility of the several parliaments of the British commonwealth to decide the nature and scope of their own defence policy.

I have read these extracts to make perfectly plain that when in 1937 the different members of the British commonwealth were gathered together it was expressed in the clearest terms possible that each parliament of the British commonwealth was to decide for itself the nature and scope of its own defence policies, and that any action that might be taken in the case of a grave situation such as has developed to-day would be taken only after independent action by the parliaments affected. I have read these extracts for another purpose. They help to make perfectly clear what in 1937 was thought by the representatives of